

Tree planting continues battlefield restoration

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Travelers along Mummasburg Road might have seen them Wednesday — row upon row of newly planted hardwood trees on National Park Service land along Doubleday Avenue.

The section of the park known as Oak Hill represents the latest section of the battlefield to undergo restoration to 1863 terrain conditions, a multi-phase, 15-year effort stemming from the park's general management plan adopted in the late 1990s.

In some parts of the park, the work requires cutting and removal of non-historic trees. In others, the park service has been planting trees to recreate historic wood lots documented by the park's historic resources.

This week on Oak Hill, workers planted more than 600 trees on 2.15 acres overlooking the roughly eastward path of the July 1, 1863 retreat by Union forces across the Gettysburg College campus, into Gettysburg Borough and up the high slope of Cemetery Ridge, park service officials said Wednesday.

Overall, the park service plans to replant 115 acres of historic wooded areas, with more than 37 acres completed so far. The park plans to buy and plant 3,326 trees on 5.8 acres with fiscal 2005 funding.

The park service draws upon 19th Century battlefield maps, photographs from the same era, and soldiers' descriptions of the battlefield to determine which areas need more trees, and which need fewer, officials said Wednesday.

"There's a lot to it," said Katie Lawhon, park spokesman. "It's a process that relies a bit on all those things."

Envirens, based in Freeland, Md., has been contracted to perform tree-planting on Oak Hill, and has completed similar planting near the Weikert Farm and along East Calvary Road, and also shrubby-planting along Snyder's Run, Lawhon said.

In addition to tree-planting, the battlefield rehabilitation plan includes:

✓ Clearing of 576 acres of non-historic trees from the bat-



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Workers began planting more than 800 trees in the area of Oak Ridge on the Gettysburg National Military Park, on Wednesday. Filling in the ground around this tree is Bobby Bouchaud, while

Harry Yingling, left, and Randy Krichten talk about where other trees will be planted. Included among the 840 trees will be: white oak, chestnut oak, red oak, black gum and hickory.

tlefield. More than 79 acres have been completed, with 176 more acres remaining under contract. More than 97 acres have been planned for clearing using fiscal 2005 funding.

✓ Trimming of 278 acres of historic wood lots, with 197 acres completed and more than 17 remaining under contract.

✓ Replanting of 160 acres of orchards, with nearly 13 acres completed. The park plans to

buy 723 trees for planting in fiscal 2006 on nearly 30 acres.

✓ Replanting and management of 65 acres of historic thickets, with more than 15 acres completed and plans to plant 4,540 shrubs on more than nine acres in fiscal 2005.

✓ More than 39 miles of historic fence restoration, with four miles completed and just over a half-mile planned for fiscal 2005.

✓ Restoration of 16.7 miles of historic farm lanes for hiking and horse trails, with more than four miles completed and 1.88 more planned for fiscal 2005.

✓ Removal of all non-historic structures from the battlefield, with six completed, including two Fantasyland buildings, the Bucher Barn and the Williams Quarry House. Scheduled for fiscal 2005: Removal of the Kump House and outbuildings.