



Updated April 18, 2022

American Battlefield Protection Program

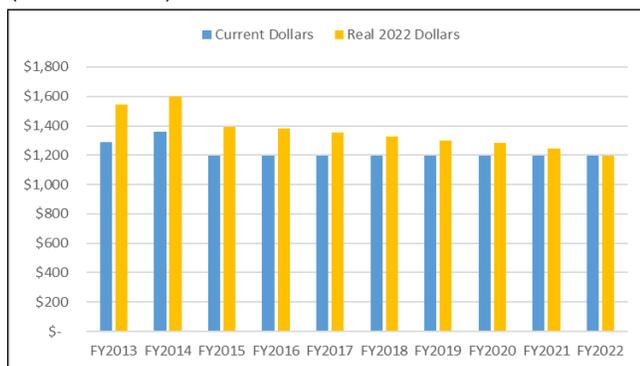
The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) promotes the preservation of significant sites where “historic battles were fought on American soil” (54 U.S.C. §§308101-308103). Initiated by the Secretary of the Interior in 1991, the program was authorized by Congress in 1996 in the American Battlefield Protection Act (P.L. 104-333) and is currently administered by the National Park Service (NPS). For most of its existence, the ABPP comprised two distinct competitive grant programs: the Battlefield Planning Grant Program and the Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program. Congress authorized two new grant programs in 2019, bringing the total number of ABPP grant programs to four (see “New ABPP Grant Programs”).

ABPP Planning Grant Program

Under the Battlefield Planning Grant Program, NPS awards grants to groups, institutions, organizations, governments (local, state, and tribal), and federal entities sponsoring preservation projects at historic battlefields. The program supports projects that include site identification and documentation, planning and consensus building, and educational programs, among others. Any battlefield or associated site on American soil is eligible for funding under this grant program. Planning grants are not awarded for land acquisition or capital improvements. Applicants are encouraged but not required to provide matching funds or in-kind services for these grants.

Figure 1. Appropriations for ABPP Planning Grant Program: FY2013-FY2022

(\$ in thousands)



Source: CRS, with data from annual NPS Budget Justifications for FY2015-FY2023. “Actual” figures were taken from the volume published two years following the fiscal year in question (e.g., for FY2015, figures are from FY2017). FY2022 figures are “enacted” totals.

Notes: Totals do not reflect appropriations for grant administration. Current dollars have been converted to real (constant) 2022 dollars using the GDP (Chained) Price Index column in Table 10.1 from the Office of Management and Budget, “Historical Tables,” at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/historical-tables/>.

Authorization and Funding History

NPS first awarded Battlefield Planning grants for preservation projects at historic battlefields in 1992 under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior. Upon authorizing the program in 1996, Congress authorized to be appropriated \$3 million annually for a duration of 10 years. In 2009 (P.L. 111-11), Congress permanently authorized discretionary appropriations at \$3 million annually for the program.

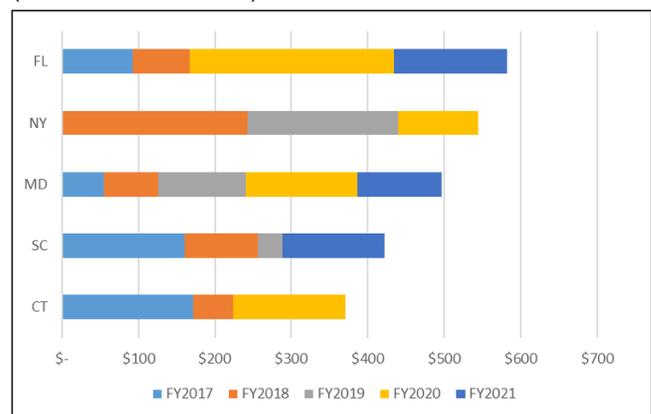
Battlefield Planning grants are funded as part of NPS appropriations within the agency’s National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P) account. Appropriations for the program are split between two subaccounts within the NR&P account: direct grant-making funds are provided under the “Cultural Programs” activity, and grant administration funding is provided under a separate “Grants Administration” activity. Typically, Congress has not funded the program at the full authorized level. Actual appropriations for the program have remained unchanged at roughly \$1.2 million annually since FY2015. **Figure 1** shows the appropriations for FY2013-FY2022.

Recent Grant-Making Trends

According to NPS, the program has helped to protect and enhance battlefields through more than 600 projects in 42 states and territories. Individual project funding historically has ranged from \$5,000 to more than \$100,000. Florida received the largest amount of program funding since FY2017, at just under \$600,000 for six projects. See **Figure 2** for an overview of the five states that received the largest amount of funding for FY2017-FY2021.

Figure 2. FY2017-FY2021 Planning Grants: Five Most-Awarded States

(current \$ in thousands)

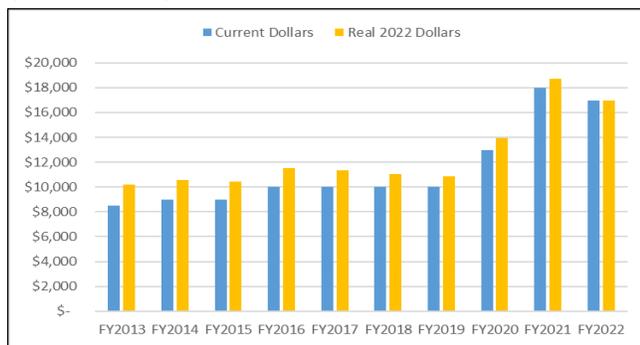


Source: NPS, “Battlefield Planning Grants,” at <http://www.nps.gov/subjects/battlefields/battlefield-planning-grants.htm>.

ABPP Land Acquisition Grant Program

Under the ABPP Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program, grants are awarded to state and local governments seeking fee simple acquisition of eligible battlefield land or the acquisition of permanent, protective interests (easements) in battlefield land. Eligible sites for Battlefield Acquisition grants pertain to Revolutionary War, War of 1812, or Civil War battlefield lands. Specifically, eligible sites are limited to Civil War battlefields listed in the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission's 1993 *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* and, as of 2014, those listed in the 2007 *The Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Historic Preservation Study* (P.L. 113-291). Grants awarded through this program require at least a 50% nonfederal cost share (54 U.S.C. §308103(d)).

Figure 3. Appropriations for ABPP Land Acquisition Grant Program: FY2013-FY2022
(\$ in thousands)



Source: CRS, with data from annual NPS Budget Justifications for FY2015-FY2023. “Actual” figures were taken from the volume published two years following the fiscal year in question (e.g., for FY2015, figures are from FY2017). FY2022 figures reflect “enacted” totals.

Notes: Current dollars have been converted to real (constant) 2022 dollars (see note in **Figure 1**). Figures for FY2021 and FY2022 include grant administration funding for three programs—the Land Acquisition program and the two new ABPP programs funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (see “New ABPP Grant Programs”).

Authorization and Funding History

Funding for the Land Acquisition program comes from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF; 54 U.S.C. §§200301 et seq.). Appropriations were previously considered discretionary funding provided to NPS in its Land Acquisition and State Assistance account, under the “Federal Land Acquisition” activity (although the grants are for state and local acquisition). Congress first appropriated funding for this program in 1998 as part of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (P.L. 105-277). Congress authorized appropriations for the program multiple times, most recently in 2019, by increasing authorized appropriations to \$18 million per year through FY2028 (P.L. 116-94).

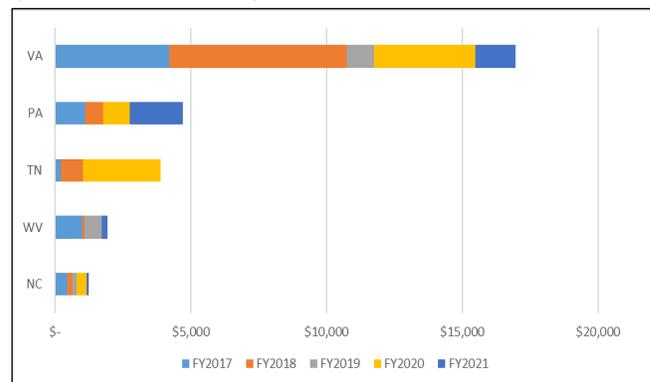
In August 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA; P.L. 116-152) established mandatory spending for the LWCF. As a result, funding for the ABPP Land Acquisition program is now a mandatory appropriation, and the President and/or Congress may determine the level of

funding for the program. For FY2022, Congress allocated \$18.9 million from the LWCF to the ABPP program, nearly \$17 million of which was for the Land Acquisition program. **Figure 3** shows the appropriations for FY2013-FY2022.

Recent Grant-Making Trends

Since FY2016, ABPP has awarded grants to 15 different states. From FY2017 to FY2021, the state that received the most grant funding was Virginia, with nearly \$17 million. (**Figure 4**). The second-most-awarded state, Pennsylvania, received just under \$5 million. See **Figure 4** for an overview of the five states that received the largest amounts of funding for FY2017-FY2021.

Figure 4. FY2017-FY2021 Land Acquisition Grants: Five Most-Awarded States
(current \$ in thousands)



Sources: FY2020 and FY2021 totals are from NPS, “Annual Report on the Programmatic Agreement Regarding the Preservation Planning Grants and Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants.” FY2017-FY2019 totals were provided to CRS by NPS.

New ABPP Grant Programs

In 2019, Congress authorized two new ABPP grant programs (P.L. 116-94). The Battlefield Interpretation Modernization Grant Program (54 U.S.C. §308104) funds projects and programs that deploy technology to modernize battlefield interpretation and education. The Battlefield Restoration Grant Program (54 U.S.C. §308105) provides funding for projects that restore day-of-battle conditions on land preserved under the ABPP Land Acquisition Program. Both programs require a minimum 1:1 federal to nonfederal match for project proposals. Congress authorized up to \$1 million in appropriations for each program for each of FY2020 through FY2028.

Congress first appropriated funding for these programs in FY2021. In October 2021, NPS announced that 11 grants, totaling more than \$900,000, were awarded as part of the Battlefield Interpretation program. Grants for the Battlefield Restoration program were not awarded in FY2021; however, NPS announced the first grant cycle for the program in FY2022. For FY2022, each program received \$0.9 million of the \$18.9 million LWCF mandatory appropriation.

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