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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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H34(418)

JUL 12 1993

Mr. Philip D. Paschall
Co-Chair, Trail Lands Committee
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
118 Park Street, SE
Vienna, VA 22180

Dear Mr. Paschall:

I have reviewed your letter of April 27 addressed to Historian David Lowe, a staffer, on the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, and the eight attachments. Per your telephone request, Historian Lowe forwarded your correspondence to my office for assessment and reply.

Long before the publication of John Hennessy's justly heralded *Return to Bull Run* and Noel Harrison's study "A New Look at Chapman's (Beverly) Mill," I was aware of the significance of Thoroughfare Gap to the Second Manassas Campaign (August 20 - September 2, 1862), and to its use by the Confederates during the winter of 1861-62 as a meat processing plant. Until receipt of your April 1993 correspondence, I did not know about the adjacent John S. Mosby related sites. More important, I did not know that the 1200 acres on Bull Run Mountains, north of Broad Run, are in public ownership belonging to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.

At the same time I was troubled to learn, on reading the report *Bull Run Mountains Natural Area* prepared by the University of Virginia School of Landscape Architecture in 1980 that

During the Civil War the Bull Run Mountains were on the periphery of several major battles. Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart led famous marches through Thoroughfare Gap. However, the name and action most associated with the Bull Run Mountains is that of John Singleton Mosby who with "Mosby's Rangers" used the mountains as a staging area for guerrilla war against Union troops.

This paragraph as written, demonstrates that the University of Virginia group made little if any effort to inventory and evaluate cultural-resources in the study area. No mention is made of the military actions that took place on August 28, 1862, involving Confederates troops led by Maj. Gen. James Longstreet and

Brig. Gen. James Ricketts' Union division. This engagement is described in Mr. Hennessy's book and Mr. Harrison's study. As Mr. Hennessy notes:

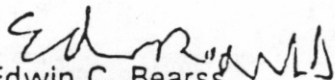
The fact remained, though, that Ricketts had not delayed Longstreet from his intended schedule so much as a minute. That failure had nothing to do with Ricketts's tactics, and everything to do with Pope's failure to understand the strategic opportunity offered him by a defense of Thoroughfare Gap. Never before and never again would he have the chance to do such serious damage to Lee's plan. A stubborn defense of the Bull Run gaps may well have delayed Longstreet long enough for Pope to beat Jackson in detail, or at least force Jackson to rejoin Longstreet by retreating to the north. But a stubborn defense required four divisions, not one, and it required forethought to gain the advantageous ground. Neither were forthcoming from John Pope.

The significance of the military operations in and around Thoroughfare Gaps documented by Historians Harrison and Hennessy and their integrity are such to merit their documentation and evaluation for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A, B, and D. The Mosby sites, although of local rather than national significance, also merit inclusion in the National Register.

The study of these Civil War sites and their documentation to National Register standards should be a part of the Virginia Outdoors Foundations planning process.

If I can be of any auditorial assistance, please write.

Sincerely,


Edwin C. Bearss
Chief Historian