

G E O R G I A

BATTLEFIELDS

Published by Georgia Battlefields Association, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of Georgia's Civil War history and sites. Contact newsletter editor by e-mail: info@georgiabattlefields.org

FY 2027 Georgia budget has no funding for battlefield preservation

As passed by the Georgia legislature, the state fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget included \$150,000 for the Vince Dooley Battlefield Fund, but Governor Brian Kemp exercised his line-item veto power to remove that money from the final budget act.

To review, the state fiscal year in Georgia runs from 1 July through 30 June of the following year. Absent the governor calling a special session, Georgia legislators are in session for 40 days each year (typically from January into late March or early April) in what is known as the General Assembly, and the law requires of each General Assembly only one task, namely to pass a budget for the following fiscal year. The 2025 General Assembly passed, and the governor signed into law, the Vince Dooley Battlefield Trust Fund Act <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70326>. See [May 2025](#) and [June 2025](#) Georgia Battlefields newsletters. Even though creation of the Act was a good sign for preservation, no money was appropriated when the Act became law in 2025.

The General Assembly almost always considers a supplemental budget for the current fiscal year, in this case FY 2026 (1 July 2025-30 June 2026). The [FY 2026 supplemental budget](#), signed by Governor Kemp on 3 March 2026, included \$2,000,000 for the Dooley Fund, which will be administered by the Department of Natural Resources.

As mentioned above, the FY 2027 budget passed by the legislature included \$150,000 for the Dooley Fund, but the governor vetoed that line item. The governor's office estimated the legislature-approved FY 2027 budget would spend \$1.3 billion more than the expected revenue. Read the governor's 12 May explanatory letter and the content of the final FY budget at this link. <https://opb.georgia.gov/budget-information/budget-documents/appropriations-bills>

The Dooley Fund line item is number 1308 on page 95 of the budget document, and the order to not spend those funds is item 88 on page 12 of the governor's cover letter.

Georgia Battlefields Association certainly favored the \$150,000 appropriation, but we are hopeful that even greater funding will be appropriated in the coming years.

Purchase of properties near Kennesaw Mountain finally closes

About ten years ago, a Georgia Battlefields Association (GBA) member asked to meet with one of the GBA trustees. The member said he would make a substantial donation towards acquisition of a battlefield property if GBA could find one for sale in the Atlanta area, as he wanted to be able to take his grandchildren to a property and show them what he and their grandmother had saved. As you might imagine, battlefield properties in the Atlanta area rarely become available, and when they do, the land is very expensive and is likely to have 20th century buildings on site.

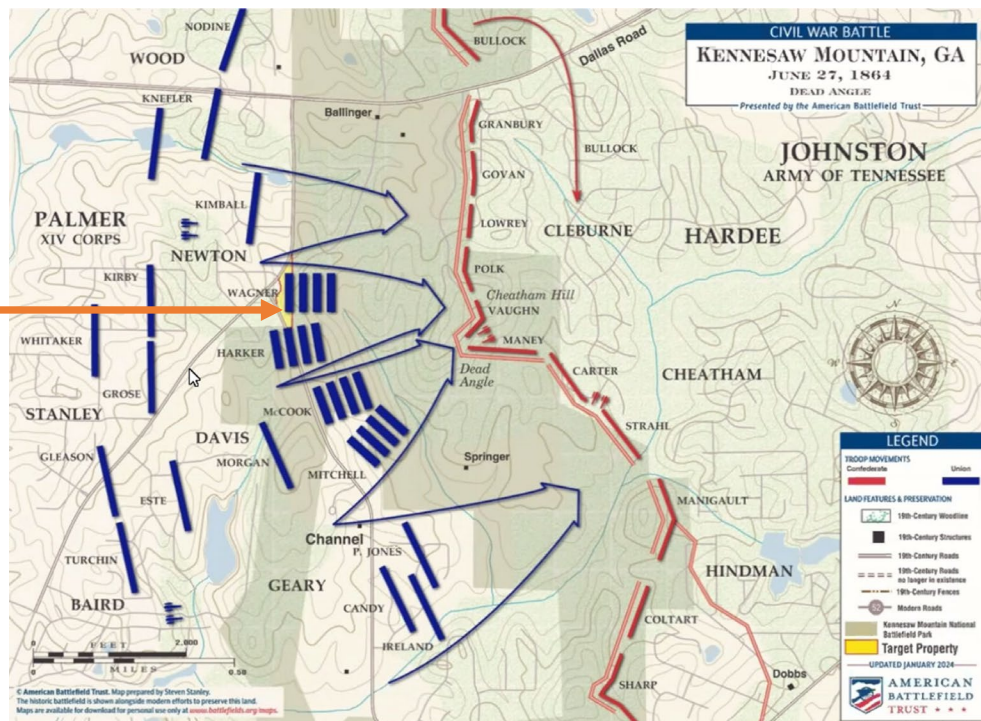
For several years, Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KMNBP) staff and volunteers have noticed for sale signs in areas near the park. Preservation organizations, such as GBA and American Battlefield Trust (ABT), have had some success in acquiring historically significant properties. In other cases, attempts to save battlefield land have failed. In 2024, three properties became available between the western boundary of KMNBP and the roundabout where Cheatham Hill Road splits off of John Ward Road. ABT staff took the lead in negotiations with the property owners. See [January 2025 GBA newsletter](#). This potential acquisition suited the prospective donor, and GBA advised him to deal directly with ABT since it would be the purchaser. With the donor's contribution and a donation by a private foundation with which GBA has a connection, ABT was able to get an [American Battlefield Protection Program](#) matching land acquisition grant and successfully reach an agreement with the property owners, as we reported in the [February 2025 GBA newsletter](#).

Every property acquisition has aspects that can vary, such as location, size and shape of the property, price per acre, presence or absence of non-historic buildings, and historical significance; but every acquisition has some aspects that are always necessary, such as a price and legal documents that transfer ownership.

In the case of the three properties adjacent to KMNBP, residences and a metal recycling facility were present, and one of the properties was also part of an estate that was difficult to settle. Consequently, the purchase of the properties was not closed until mid-May 2026. Kudos to Bob Jenkins for helping with the legal paperwork. Bob is an attorney and will be familiar to many GBA members because of his past work with and for GBA, including helping to lead our 2026 tour. Bob is now executive director of [Blue & Gray Education Society](#) as well.

While the ultimate goal is to have the properties added to KMNBP, that will require approval by Congress. Until such legislation is enacted, ABT will maintain the properties and prepare them for public access. Preservation can take time, but generous donors made this effort successful.

Properties are highlighted in yellow under the last regiment (blue rectangle) in Wagner's brigade as it approached Cheatham Hill on 27 June 1864.



New public television series focuses on Georgia's historical markers

As part of the Georgia 250 commemoration, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) debuted a new TV series called "Marked" on 18 May. Made in cooperation with the Georgia Historical Society, the TV series will use the familiar cast aluminum historical markers—in gold lettering on a green background for the older markers, and in silver lettering on a black background for the newer ones—to introduce segments on people or events relating to Georgia's role in the Revolution.

The 18 May episode told the stories of Georgia's three signers of the Declaration of Independence: Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, and George Walton. The 25 May episode used markers to introduce the story of Joseph Habersham's role in the Revolution, in the establishment of the University of Georgia, and as U.S. Postmaster General. A second segment told of President George Washington's 1791 visit to Georgia and its impact on uniting the young nation.

Presented in an engaging style with input from historians knowledgeable about the topics being addressed, the series is informative for people of any age.

GBA 2027 tour: Will be 8-11 April and will cover three weeks that followed the Battle of Resaca, including actions at Rome Crossroads, Rome, Adairsville, Cassville, New Hope Church, Pickett's Mill, and Dallas.

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June 2026