Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation
FAQ Sheet

Who are we?
The Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation (BIBPF) is a 501c3, not-for-profit organization of volunteers whose mission is to **preserve**, **interpret**, and **increase public understanding** and knowledge of the Battle of Buffington Island, Ohio's largest Civil War battlefield.

What do we do?
- Provide opportunities for the public to be able to identify the geographic location of the Buffington Island battlefield on the national landscape.
- Provide opportunities for the public to be able to experience the engagement, troop movements, actions and tactics, on land and water, through enhanced interpretation.
- Protect the character and integrity of the landscape, structures, and archaeological resources of the battlefield by acquiring easements or fee simple ownership of property to ensure a respectful and meaningful interpretive experience for future generations.
- Act as a liaison between the battlefield and the local community and other interested individuals and groups.
- Increase knowledge of and participation in activities, programs, and projects related to the battlefield for the local community and other interested individuals and groups.
- Plan programs and develop the battlefield.
- Conduct and provide volunteer support for battlefield programs, projects, and special events.
- Advocate the battlefield's needs to government officials.
- Develop and implement fundraising programs for the battlefield.

How are we organized?
The BIBPF is led by a board consisting of four officers and nine voting members. All officer and voting member seats are elected positions with staggered term limits. The board meets four times a year.

How do we raise funds for our work?
All funding to the BIBPF currently comes in the form of private donations. We do not require membership dues at this time. Future use of public grants are being investigated.

Why is the Buffington Island Battlefield important to all Americans?
The Battle of Buffington Island, fought on July 19, 1863, was the largest Civil War battle fought north of the Ohio River. The battle had more men engaged (approximately 4,800 men) and more combined casualties (146 men killed and wounded) than any other armed contest from the Civil War in the Eastern Midwest States. It was the pinnacle of General John Hunt Morgan's Great Raid, or Indiana-Ohio Raid, a three-week special operations mission that occupied nearly 130,000 Union soldiers and sailors. The Union victory at Buffington Island essentially destroyed the effectiveness of Morgan's once-feared Confederate cavalry force. The Civil War Sites Advisory Commission of the National Park System has

listed Buffington Island as one of the 384 battlefields that should be preserved from among the 10,500 Civil War armed conflict sites (see http://www.nps.gov/abpp/civil.htm). The study of Buffington Island Battlefield is important to students in order to know Ohio's reaction to an invader on its soil, and how its citizens and soldiers worked together to bring defeat to their enemies. The American Civil War defines much of who we are as Americans today. The Buffington Island Battlefield can serve as a unique, physical destination where people, young and old, can come to understand the impact of the Civil War on our state and national history.

Why is the Buffington Island Battlefield important for the economy of Meigs County and Ohio?
Heritage tourism is clean development that does not require huge infrastructure costs to the local citizens. Heritage tourists typically stay longer at a destination, spending more money at local businesses, including on meals and lodging. This increases state and local tax revenue. Battlefield parks also are known to boost property values. A 2013 economic impact study of battlefield parks confirms these benefits: http://www.civilwar.org/land-preservation/blue-gray-and-green.pdf. Buffington Island is the largest Civil War battle ever fought in the Eastern Midwest states, which makes it a draw for history-goers from that region. It is also the largest Civil War battlefield in the Upper Ohio Valley, which will lure history-minded tourists from western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In addition, with Buffington Island Battlefield being a major site along the John Hunt Morgan Heritage Trail, the battlefield offers a greater national appeal.

How much of the Buffington Island battlefield land is protected from future development?
The core of the battlefield, where most of the fighting occurred, consists of approximately 1,236 acres of Ohio bottomland surrounding the village of Portland. None of the battle was fought on the island itself. As of today, about 12 acres of the battlefield are in public hands. About 490 acres have either been developed or are slated for gravel and sand mining. The remaining 734 acres of core land are privately owned, but this land retains much of its historical integrity from the Civil War era. The BIBPF never gets involved with "taking land," or with eminent domain issues. We deal only with willing sellers and pay fair market value for properties.

What are some of the projects we are working on for the Buffington Island Battlefield?
- Hosting a reenactment of Morgan's Raid on the battlefield and nearby areas of Meigs County to draw attention to the battlefield on a national scale.
- Develop a documentary film on the Battle of Buffington Island and/or Morgan's Great Raid. Several producers, including an Emmy-award winner, have stated they wish to do this.
- Conduct a feasibility study for a new battlefield visitor center at Portland.
- Establish relationships with willing landowners of the core battlefield to present them possible options on preserving their land holdings in the short or long term.
- Create a brochure and a driving tour of the battlefield that can be hosted on the internet or through the Chamber of Commerce.
- Interact with local school districts and with the Ohio History Connection to develop an education plan that covers Morgan's Great Raid with a focus on the Battle of Buffington Island.