

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE IMPACT OF ENCROACHING DEVELOPMENT UPON
ENDANGERED CIVIL WAR SITES WITHIN THE
LOWCOUNTRY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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This thesis examines the adverse effects of the increased level of development activity upon already endangered Civil War sites within the Lowcountry of South Carolina. A Civil War site, within the context of this thesis, refers to a significant location of military occupation or engagement. This thesis does not attempt to include other sites associated with the Civil War such as cemeteries or residences. By excluding these historic resources, it is not intended to diminish their importance but time and research limitations precluded including them.

The Civil War activity in the Lowcountry was largely concentrated in the Charleston area, Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County and Jasper County. Accordingly, this thesis focuses on selected sites in these areas. Many of these sites are located in areas that are still largely rural and but faced the immediate threat of nearby development.

Other sites are located on property in mature communities that property owners have elected not to develop. Many of these sites have been poorly documented with little available information regarding their historical significance. While people commonly associate Fort Sumter with the area's role in the Civil War, the preservation of these sites provides an opportunity to understand and promote the Lowcountry's other extensive Civil War actions.

The thesis provides background information on the geography and the war in the Lowcountry. A brief description of the evolution of the Civil War site preservation movement is included with an evaluation of the principal organizations dedicated to Civil War site preservation in South Carolina. The extent of site destruction that has occurred in the Lowcountry is examined and a chapter is devoted to a description of the extant and unprotected sites. The emphasis of the thesis focuses on preservation strategies used to protect historic places and protective measures available for these sites. The thesis also addresses the related benefits that can be realized with their preservation.

Recommendations to preserve two separate areas are provided with information detailing the tools available to the local community in order to protect Civil War sites that will be an attraction for visitors to the Lowcountry.

There are other issues related to the preservation of Civil War sites in the Lowcountry that are not addressed in this thesis. Time and research limitations have precluded addressing, for example, the care and management of earthwork fortifications and recommended preservation treatments. Information on the proper interpretation of the Civil War sites also has not been included in the thesis. These issues are worthy of

thorough research but, unfortunately, could not be properly addressed in the context of this thesis.