

St. Clair's Defeat: Improving Interpretation in Collaboration with American Indian Tribes

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**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**
College of Sciences
and Humanities
Applied Anthropology Laboratories

Learning in Action: Student Centered Research

Learn. Work. Discover.

Abstract

The Northwest Indian War battle St. Clair's Defeat (1791) involved multiple Native Tribes and the U.S. military. Archaeological research has evolved into updated interpretation co-created with descendent Tribes. We share two interpretive products including an online walking tour and traveling exhibit "St. Clair's Defeat Revisited: A New View of the Conflict".

Topics

- 1. St. Clair's Defeat (1791)**
2. Archaeological and preservation research
3. Updated interpretation
4. Evolution of Tribal Involvement
 - A. Lessons learned and Tips
5. Co-created interpretation

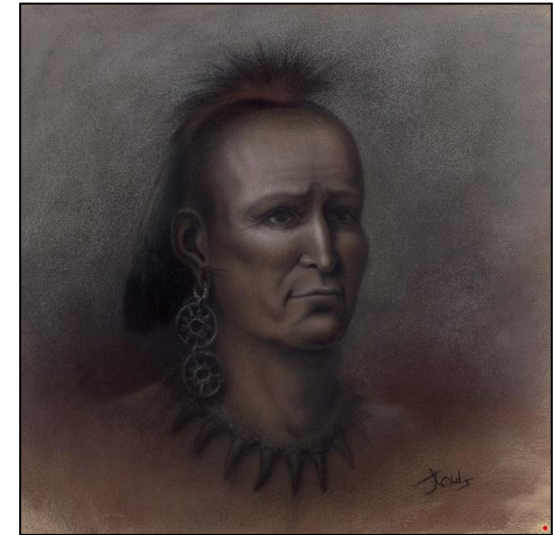
Northwest Indian War Timeline

- 1783 – Treaty of Paris
- 1785/6 – Western Indian Confederacy formed
- 1787 – Northwest Ordinance
- 1790 – Harmar's Campaign
- **1791 – St. Clair's Campaign**
 - Nov 4, 1791 – St. Clair's Defeat
- 1793 – Battle of Fort Recovery
- 1794 – Battle of Fallen Timbers
- 1795 – Treaty of Greenville
- 1803 – Ohio Statehood

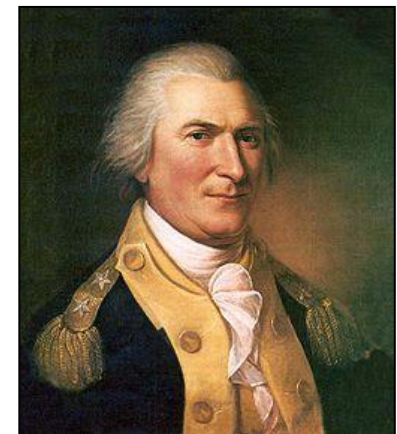


St. Clair's Defeat – Nov 4, 1791

- U.S. Army ~1,400 soldiers & camp followers, Gen. Arthur St. Clair
- Devastated by American Indian confederacy of ~1,400+ warriors
 - Weyapiersenwah (Blue Jacket, Shawnee)
 - Mihšihkinaahkwa (Little Turtle, Miami)
- Worst defeat ever of U.S. Army at the hands of the American Indians
 - 632 soldiers plus nearly all camp followers killed; 250+ wounded
 - ~20-30 Native Americans killed



Mihšihkinaahkwa by Julie Olds,
Myaamia citizen and artist



*Arthur St. Clair Official
Portrait* by
Charles Wilson Peale,
c. 1783

Battle of the Wabash
Militia Retreat and Camp Encirclement

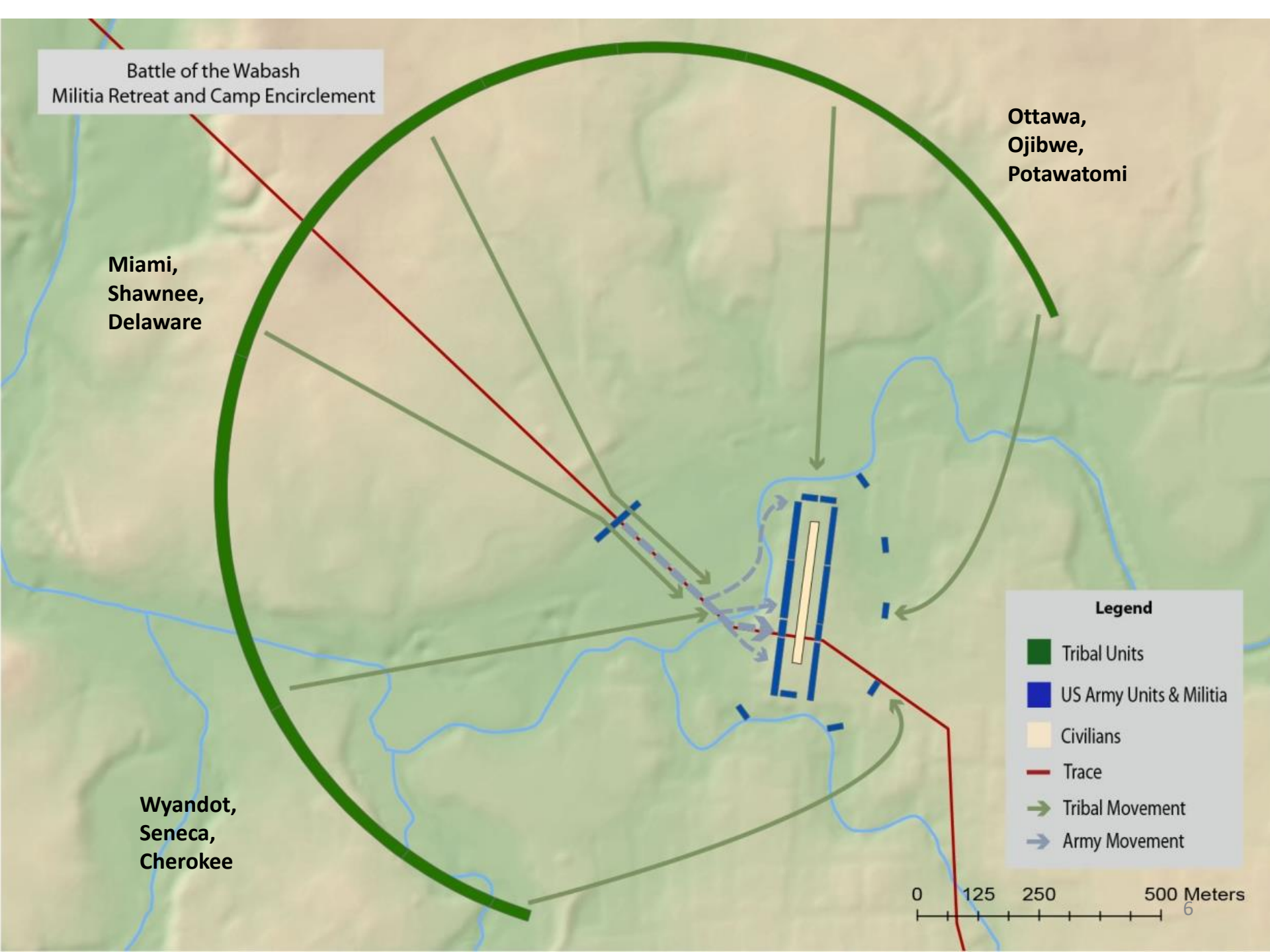
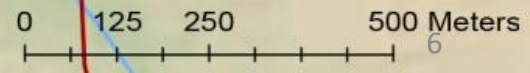
Ottawa,
Ojibwe,
Potawatomi

Miami,
Shawnee,
Delaware

Wyandot,
Seneca,
Cherokee

Legend

- Tribal Units
- US Army Units & Militia
- Civilians
- Trace
- Tribal Movement
- Army Movement



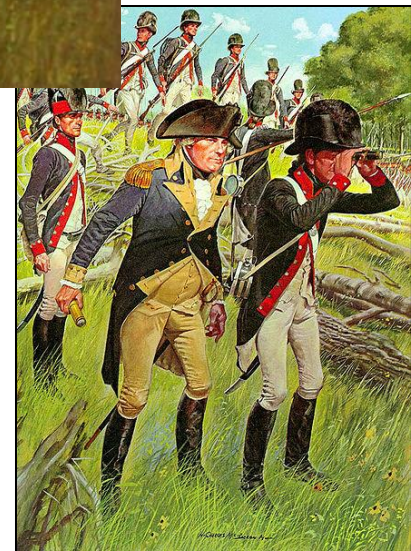
Restructuring of Wayne's Legion 1792-1793



Battle of Fort Recovery

June 30, 1794

- As many as 2,000 Native Americans
- Two day battle, U.S. victory
- U.S. victory at Battle of Fallen Timbers 6 weeks later
- Effectively ended Indian resistance in Northwest Territories and led to the Treaty of Greenville



Treaty of Greenville 1795

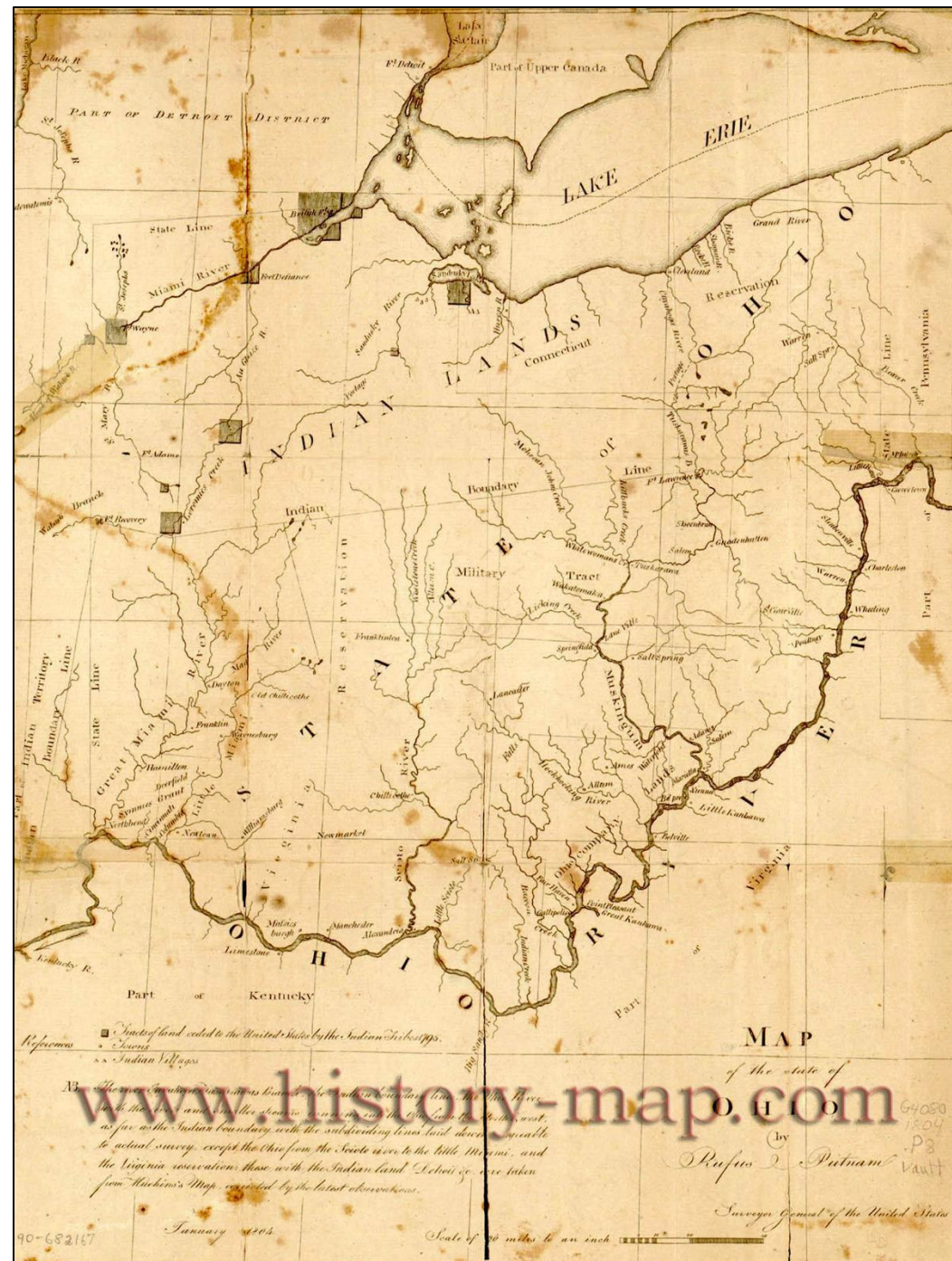


A Treaty of Peace
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND THE
TRIBES OF INDIANS,
CALLED THE
*Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanoes, Ottawas,
Chipewas, Putawatimes, Miamis, Eel-
river, Weeás, Kickapoos, Pian-
kashaws, and Kaskaskias.*

TO put an end to a destructive war, to settle all controversies, and to restore harmony and a friendly intercourse between the said United States, and Indian tribes; Anthony Wayne, major-general, commanding the army of the United States, and sole commissioner for the good purposes above-mentioned, and the said tribes of Indians, by their Sachems,

1803 - Ohio

- Ended Northwest Territory
- Mix of towns and Indian villages
- “Fort” Recovery was destroyed most likely ca. 1814
- Fort Recovery, the town, was settled in 1817, incorporated in 1858



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Research Focus: landscape analysis, both in the context of the location of recovered artifacts and in the role the landscape played in the battle strategies of both the American Indian alliance and U.S. forces.

Research results: a more nuanced interpretation of the battle, one that more fully recognizes and balances the involvement and decisions of both the American Indian tribes and the U.S. military.

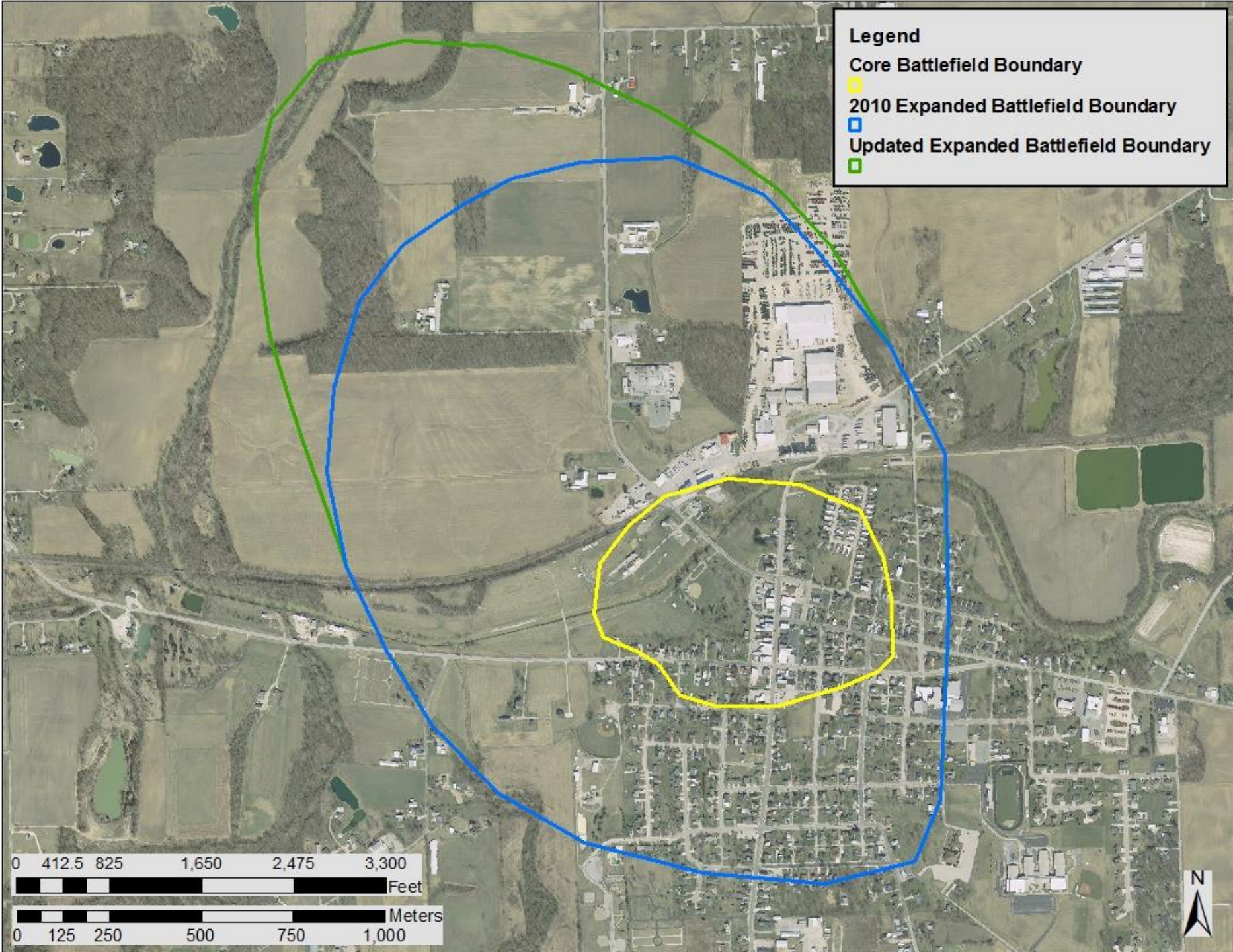
Legend

Core Battlefield Boundary

2010 Expanded Battlefield Boundary

Updated Expanded Battlefield Boundary

Core Battlefield Boundary



0 412.5 825 1,650 2,475 3,300

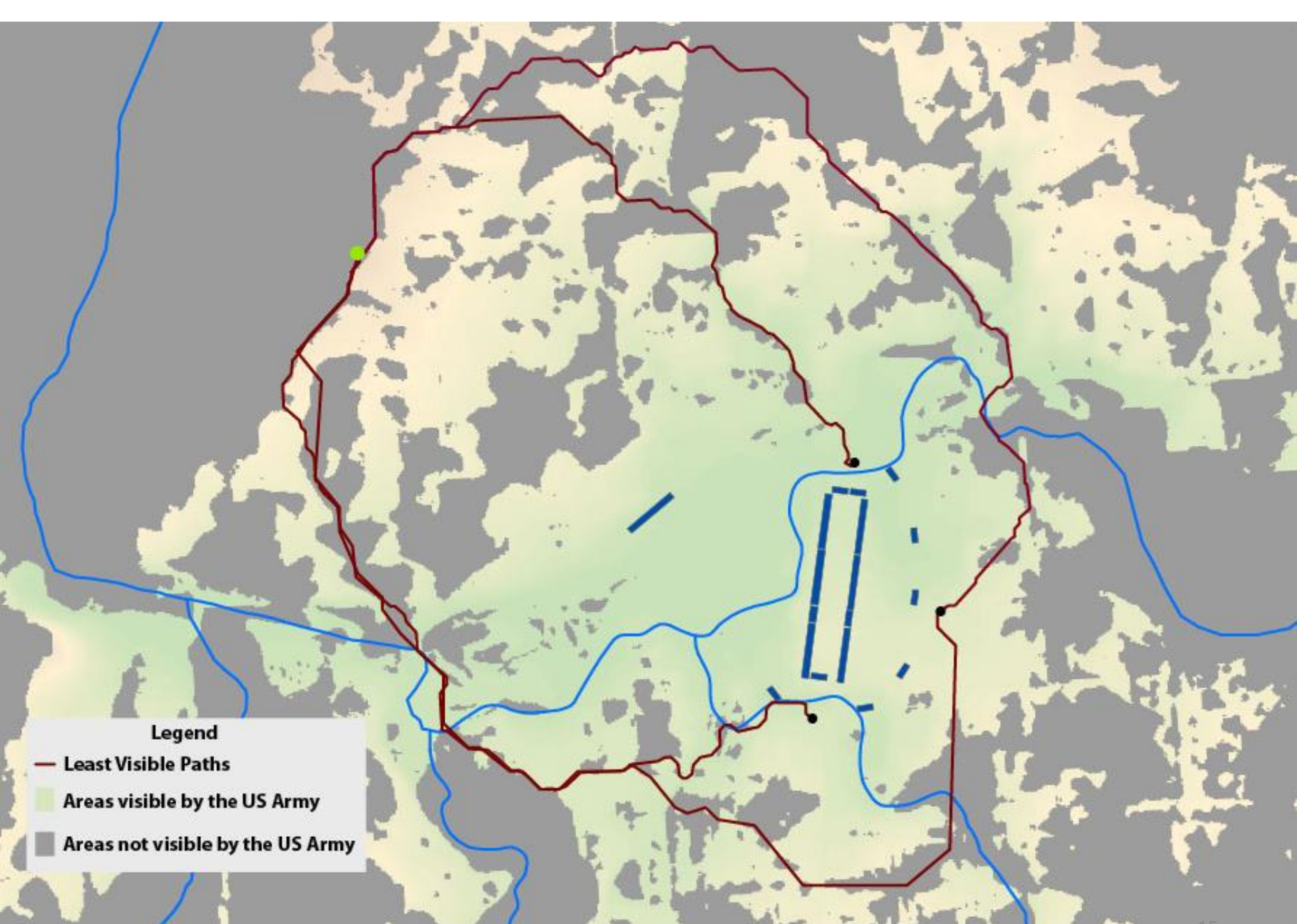
Feet

0 125 250 500 750 1,000

Meters





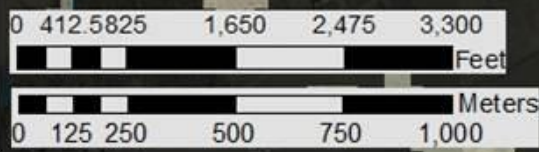
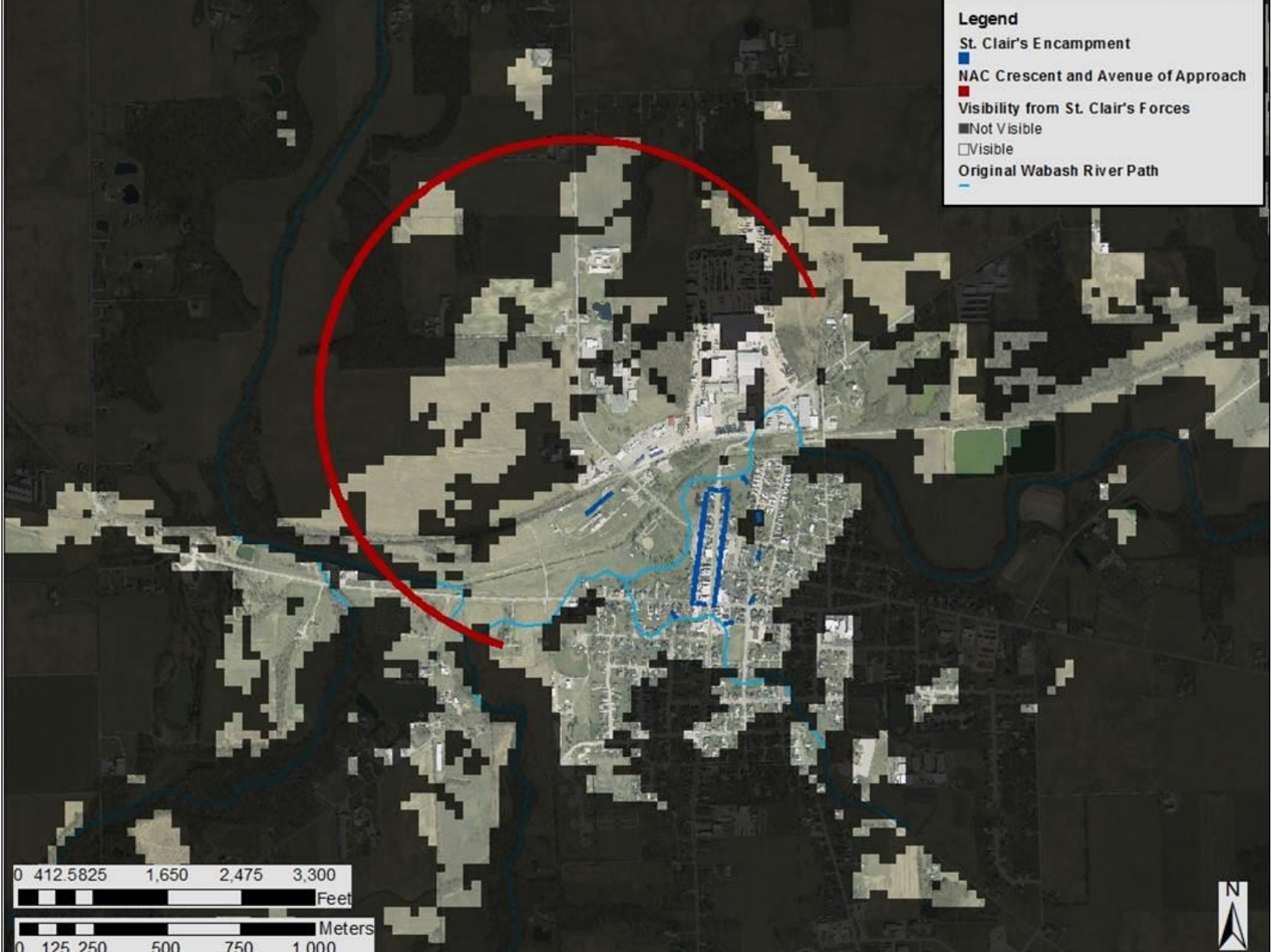


Legend

- Least Visible Paths
- Areas visible by the US Army
- Areas not visible by the US Army

Legend

- St. Clair's Encampment
- NAC Crescent and Avenue of Approach
- Visibility from St. Clair's Forces
- Original Wabash River Path



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THE BATTLE OF THE WABASH AND THE BATTLE OF FORT RECOVERY:

MAPPING THE BATTLEFIELD LANDSCAPE AND PRESENT DAY FORT RECOVERY, OHIO

A Cooperative Project with
National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program
Grant # GA-2255-12-001; GA-2287-13-001; GA-2287-13-002
Ball State University
Ohio History Connection
Fort Recovery Historical Society



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Kevin C. Nolan, Co-Principal Investigator

Contributions:

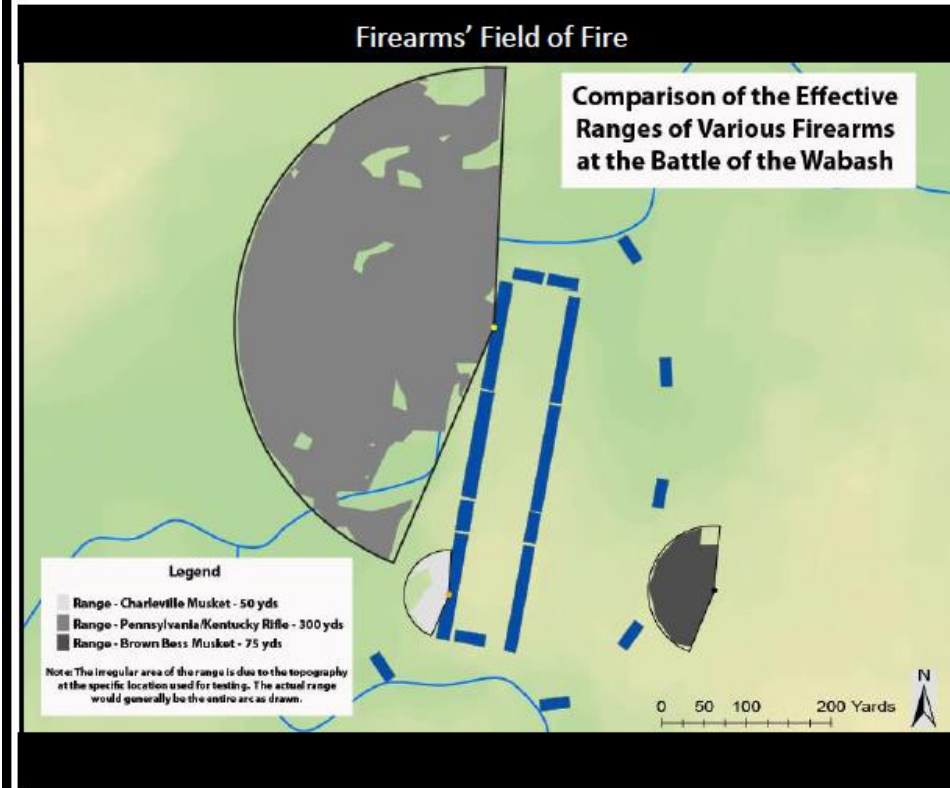
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March 2016

Reports of Investigation 94
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For copies: Kristen L. McMasters, Archeologist Planner and Grants Manager, National Park Service, American Battlefield Protection Program, 1201 Eye Street NW (2287), Washington, DC 20005
(202-354-2037)

Battle of the Wabash – Field of Fire Map A



The ability to see the enemy and the ability to effectively fire upon the enemy are not necessarily the same thing. In this analysis, the field of fire of individual weapons was considered. Field of fire calculations include variables such as height between the muzzle and ground, effective range of the firearm, and general accuracy of the firearm. A comparison of the relative fields of fire for the Charleville musket (carried by most of the U.S. Army), Brown Bess musket (carried by most of the Native Americans), and Pennsylvania Kentucky rifles (carried by most of the Kentucky militia) reveals the obvious advantage of a rifle in effective range.

1770 1781 1787 1797 1798 1799 1800 1801 1802 1803

Prologue to 1774



At the time of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Ohio River valley was a region of intense competition between the British and the Americans. The British had established a strong presence in the region, and the Americans were determined to drive them out. The Ohio River was a vital link between the two sides, and the struggle for control of it was a key part of the war. The British had a strong presence in the region, and the Americans were determined to drive them out. The Ohio River was a vital link between the two sides, and the struggle for control of it was a key part of the war.

2







List

Map

Media



1

Welcome to the Battle Museum

SHOW TITLE

This 1.5 mile battlefield tour loop with 15 stops can be enjoyed on any computer, smart phone, or tablet. Museum



2

Northwest Indian War 178...

The Northwest Indian War pitted the U.S. against an alliance of American Indian tribes. In 1790, President George...



3

The Battle of the Wabash, ...

In spring 1791, Major General Arthur St. Clair became leader of the U.S. military campaign. St. Clair was to build... Image



4

The Old Wabash River

The Wabash River (since rerouted) played a key role in the Battle of the Wabash. Major General Arthur St. Clair...



5

Kentucky Militia Encampm...

St. Clair's Kentucky Militia camped across the Wabash River from the main encampment. The 1,500 warriors of th...



List

Map

Media



6

American Indian Alliance Strat...

The American Indian alliance, led by Weyapiersenwah (Blue Jacket) and Mihsihkinaahkwa (Little Turtle) consisted of...



7

The Battlefield, It's Bigger Tha...

Since 2010, the Applied Anthropology Laboratories (AAL) at Ball State University has conduc... View of Battlefield West of Town



8

Camp Followers Caught in the ...

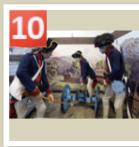
Inside the two lines of St. Clair's main encampment were campfires tended by camp followers who were responsible for cooking



9

Construction of a Fort named "...

In 1792, Major General Anthony Wayne was named the U.S. military leader. While at G... Major General Anthony Wayne Image



10

The Battle of Fort Recovery, Ju...

On June 29, 1794, a convoy of over 360 packhorses arrived from Greenville. After unloading supplies, th... Initial Battle Map D



11

Discoveries of Today

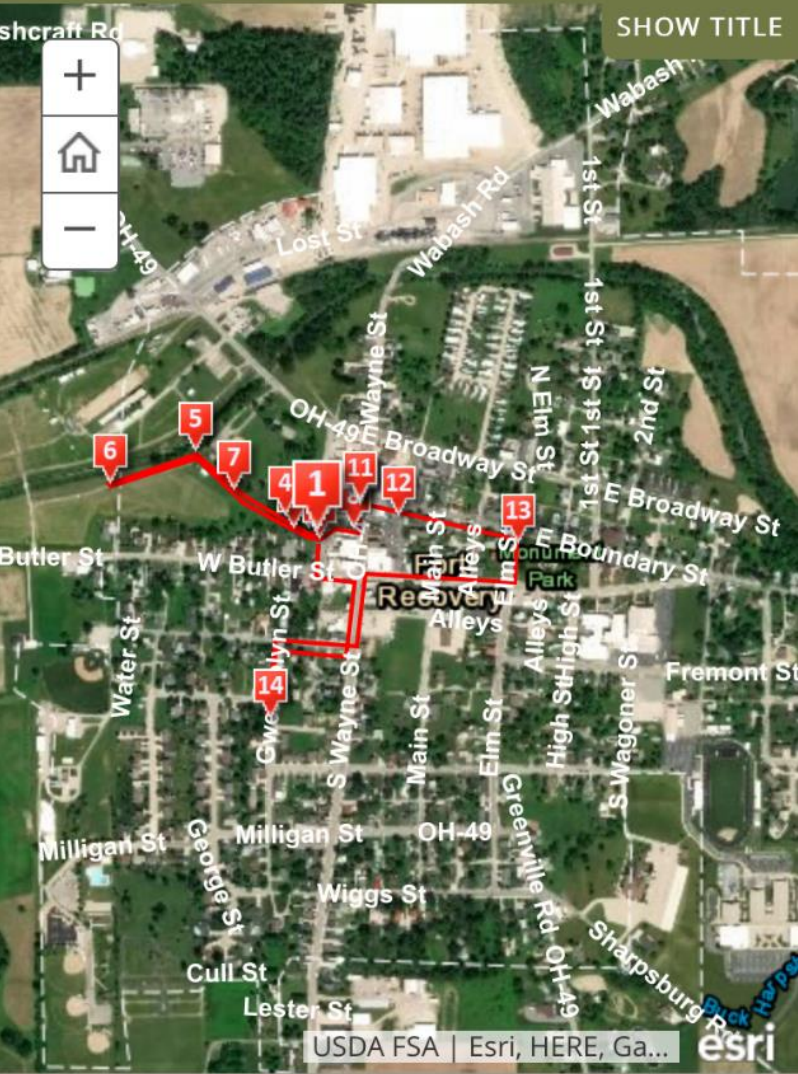
Based on historical records, the original Fort Recovery, constructed in 1793, was known to have been bui... Ground Penetrating Radar



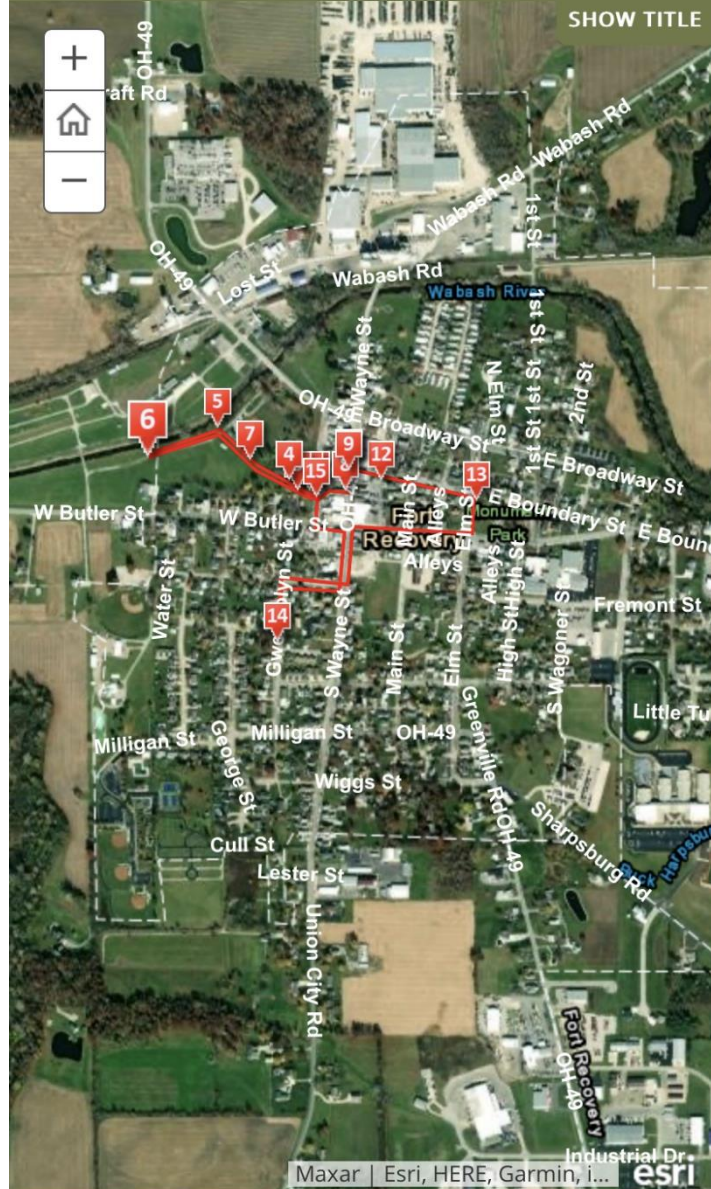
12

Weaponry of the Battles

In addition to traditional weaponry like war clubs, bows, and tomahawks, the American In... View of Fort Recovery Visitor Center



1 Welcome to the Battles of ...
 This 1.5 mile battlefield tour loop with 15 stops can be enjoyed on any computer, smart phone, or t... Museum



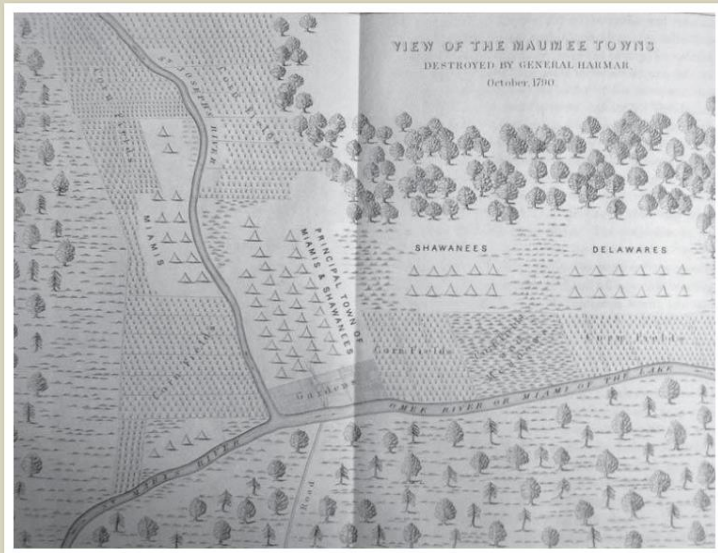
6 American Indian Alliance Strat...
 The American Indian alliance, led by Weyapiersenwah (Blue Jacket) and Mihsikhinaahkwa (Little Turtle) consisted of...

2 Northwest Indian War 1785-1795

SHOW TITLE

The Northwest Indian War pitted the U.S. against an alliance of American Indian tribes. In 1790, President George Washington ordered Brigadier General Josiah Harmar to lead U.S. forces into Shawnee and Miami territory near Kiihkayonki (present-day Fort Wayne, Indiana). The Indian alliance soundly defeated Harmar's troops, however Harmar destroyed the Kiihkayonki villages and crops. (Sketch map of the villages of Kiihkayonki from Major Ebenezer Denny's diary, dated October 1790)

Wayside Exhibit 2 View of Core Battlefield
General Josiah Harmar Image



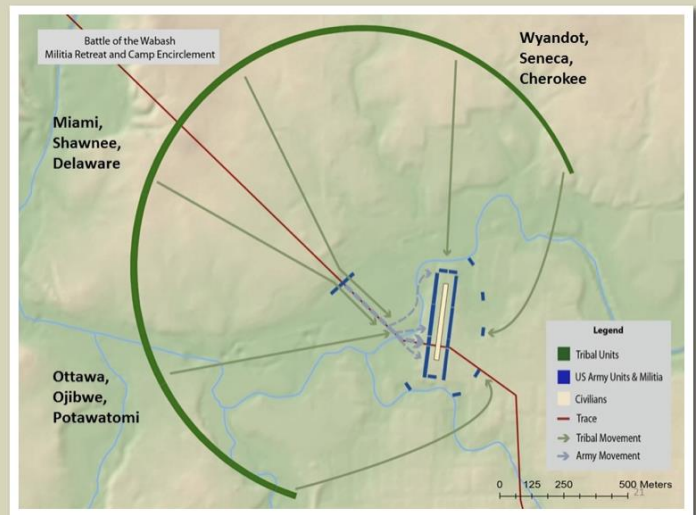
SHOW TITLE

6 American Indian Alliance Strategy

The American Indian alliance, led by Weyapiersenwah (Blue Jacket) and Mihsihkinaahkwa (Little Turtle) consisted of 150 Ottawa, 150 Ojibwa, 100 Potawatomi, 100 Miami, 300 Shawnee, 300 Delaware, 200 Wyandot, 75 Seneca Cayuga, and 25 Cherokee. While the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware in the center of the crescent attacked the Kentucky Militia, the two ends of the crescent surrounded St. Clair's army within 15 minutes. In less than 3 hours, over 800 U.S. soldiers and civilians were killed and 350 wounded. This crescent strategy to surround the enemy with minimal Indian casualties had been used in previous smaller battles, but never so successfully and so quickly.

Wayside Exhibit 6 View of High Ridge
Mihsihkinaahkwa Image

St. Clair Visibility American Indian Visibility
Initial Battle Map D Initial Battle Map E
Initial Battle Map F Initial Battle Map G



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Community Engaged Scholarship in Indian Country: Two Communities to Engage!!

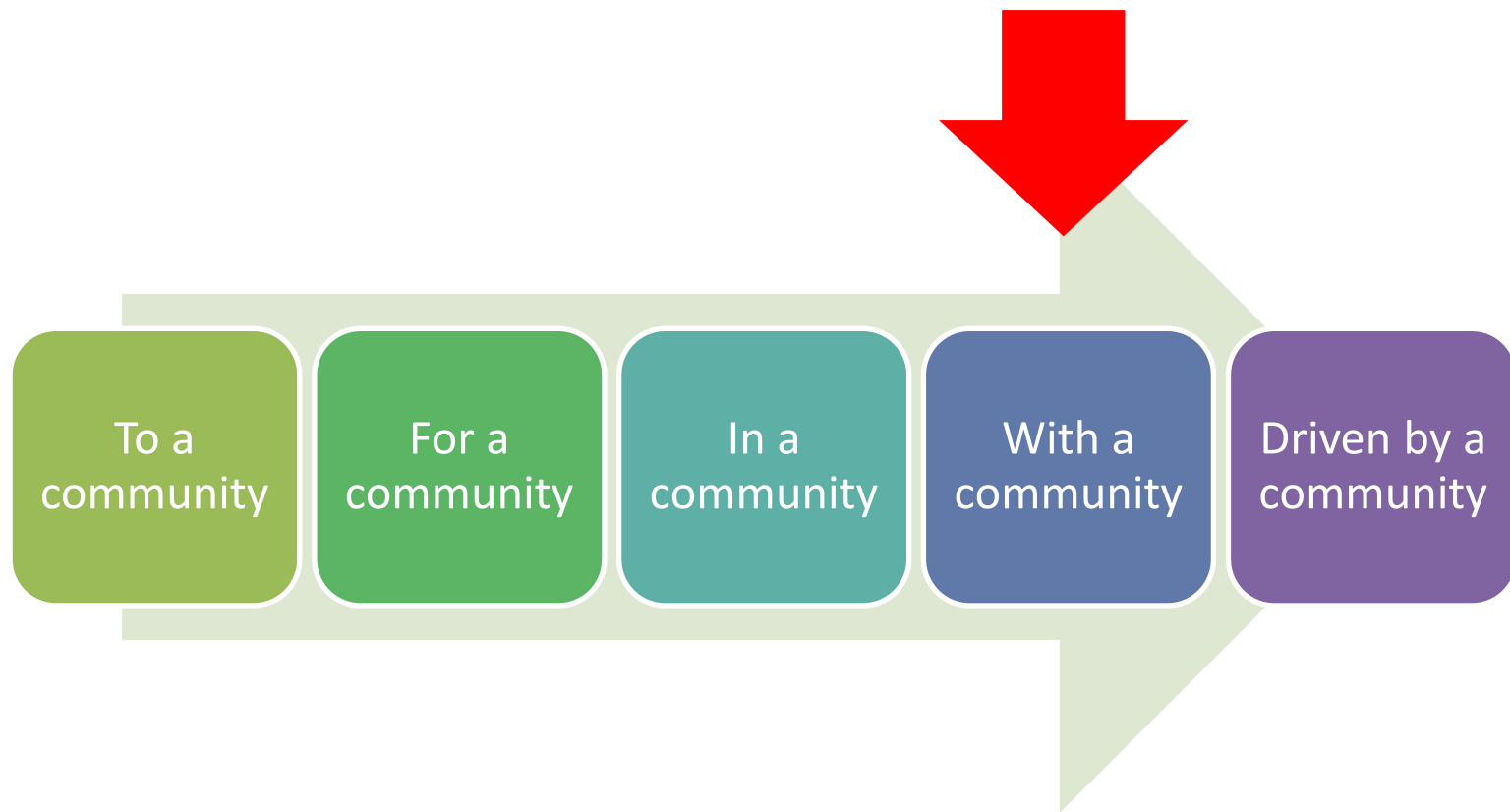
- Community of Fort Recovery
 - Local
 - Euro-American perspective of battle
 - Great pride in history and interest in our research
- Tribal Nations
 - Dispersed
 - Multiple tribal histories of battle
 - Great pride in history and interest in our research

Community Engaged Research and Scholarship

“The goals of community engaged scholarship are the generation, exchange and application of mutually beneficial and socially useful knowledge and practices developed through active partnerships between the academy and the community.”

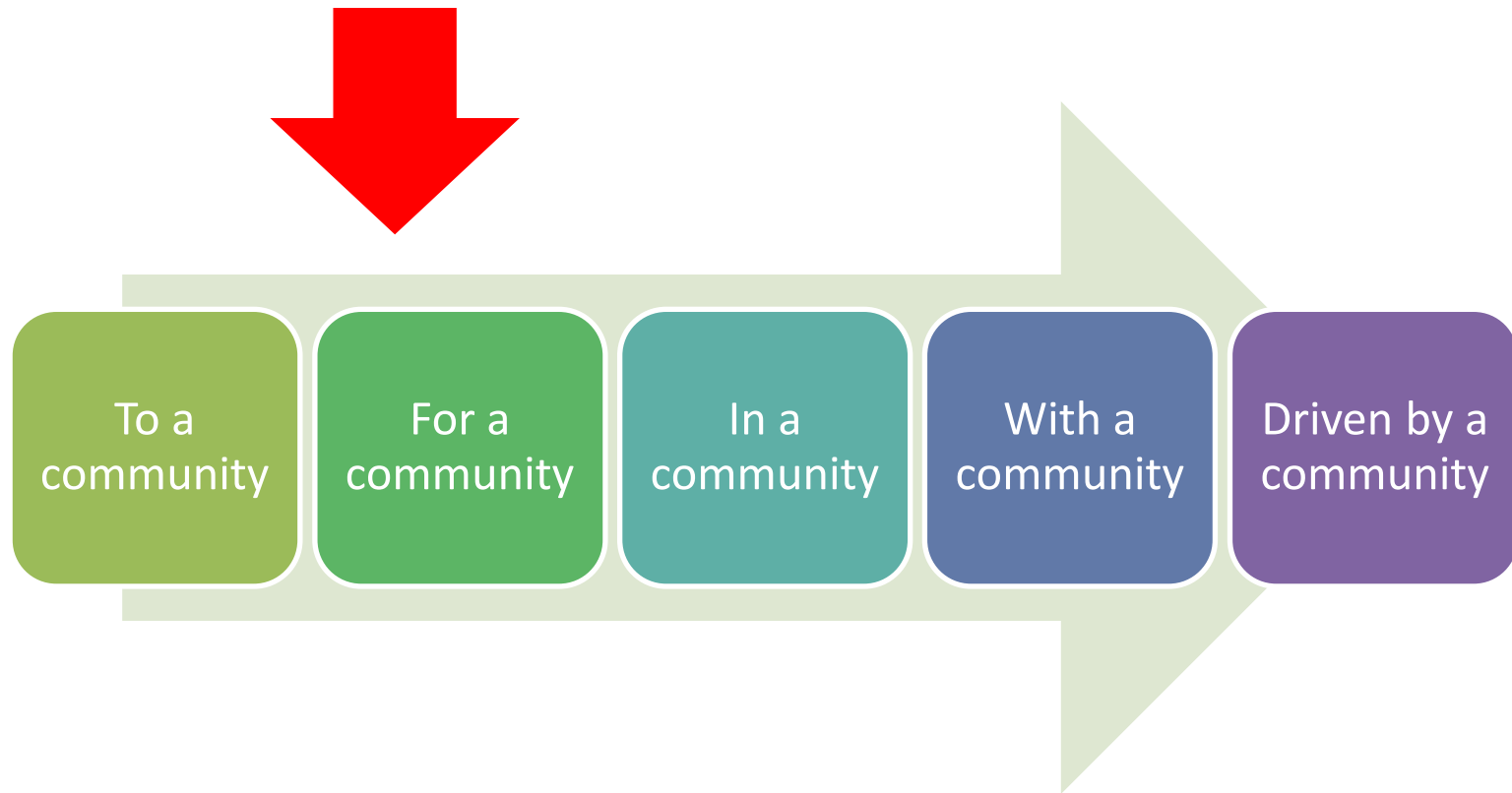


Levels of Engaged Scholarship In Fort Recovery



2016 - hadn't heard term CES, innately doing this + community support requirements

Levels of Engaged Scholarship with Tribal Nations



We needed to get better!
Tribes wanted to collaborate and co-create.

Battle of the Wabash
Militia Retreat and Camp Encirclement

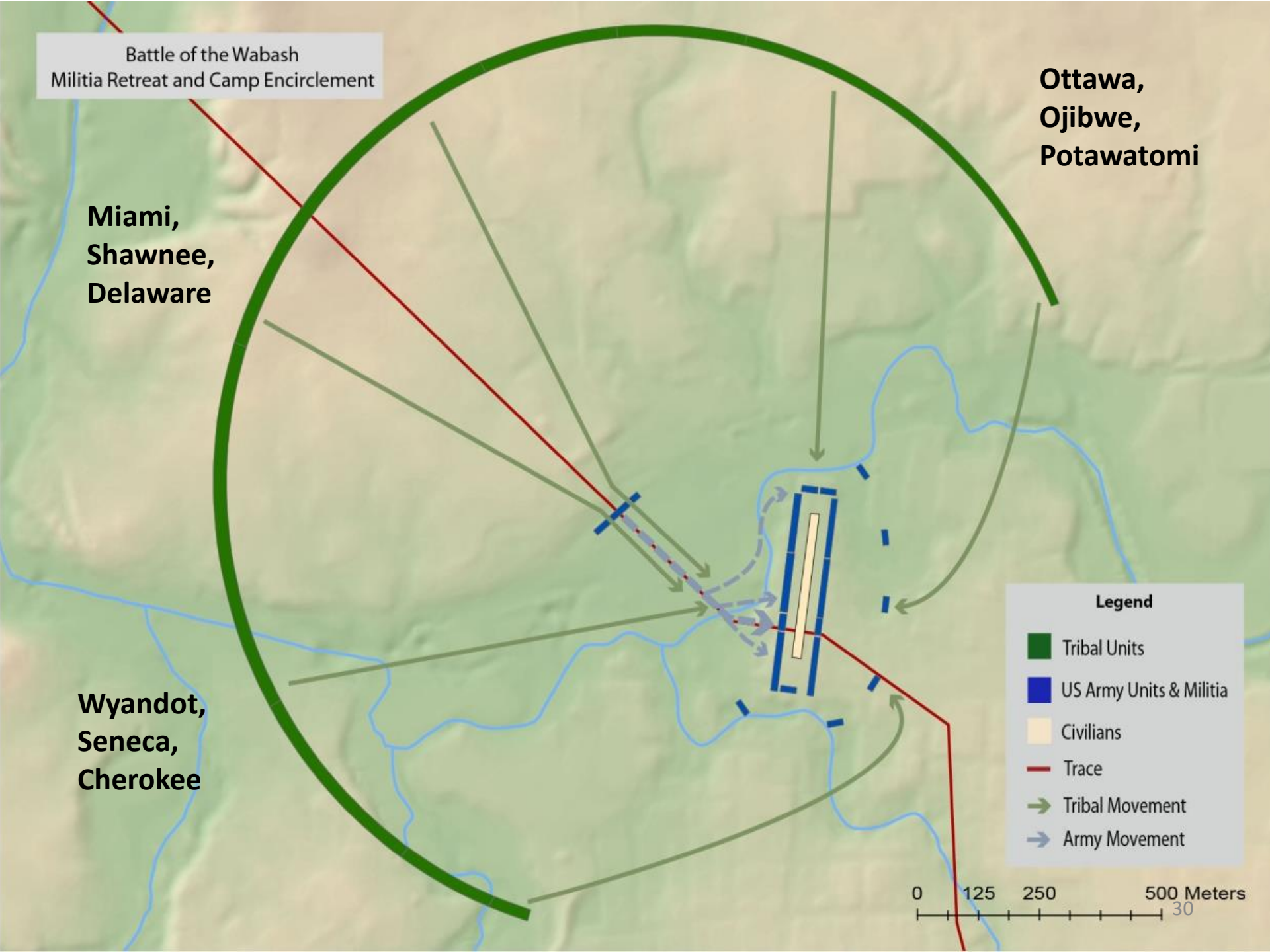
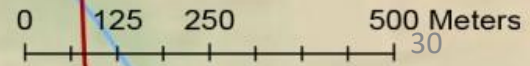
Miami,
Shawnee,
Delaware

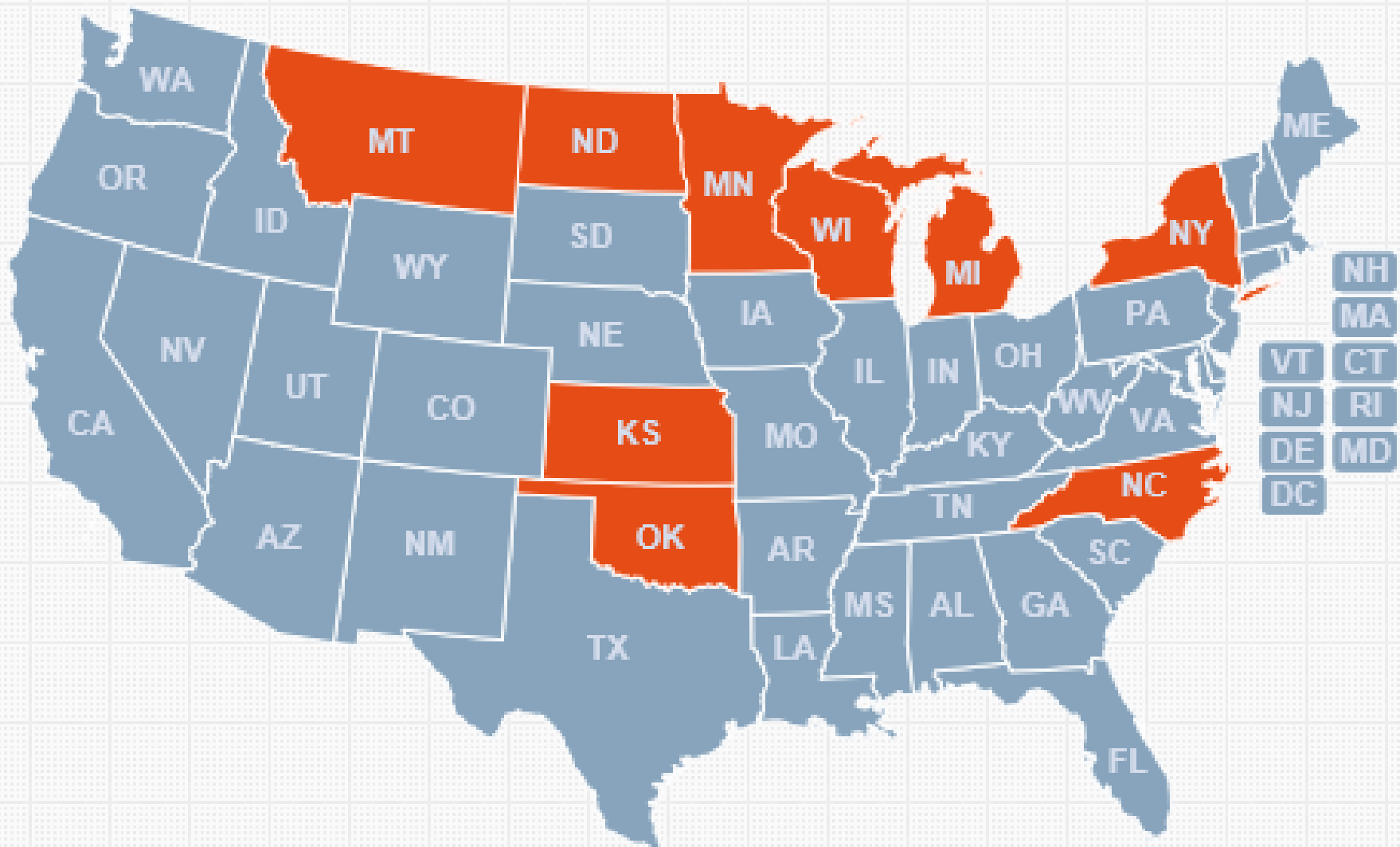
Ottawa,
Ojibwe,
Potawatomi

Wyandot,
Seneca,
Cherokee

Legend

- Tribal Units
- US Army Units & Militia
- Civilians
- Trace
- Tribal Movement
- Army Movement





9 Tribes in American Indian Alliance on Nov 4, 1791

= at least 39 federally recognized tribes today

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*AKA: Things I wish I had automatically known
or understood better in 2010*

Understand the Basics of Federally Recognized Tribes

- Sovereign Nation
- Government-to-government relationship with US
- Specific responsibility, powers, services and protections
- 574 federally recognized American Indian tribes in US
- ~44 have ties to Ohio – treaty claims, lived here, removal, hunting territory, etc.
- Not a club or group, a Sovereign Nation - citizens

Always Remember: Individual Tribes

- You are dealing with specific Tribes not American Indians as one large group
- Each Tribe will have different collective experiences, histories, and opinions
- Be aware of this in interpretation, use specific Tribal names when you can
- Deal with Tribes individually when you can
- Learn a little about each tribe's history – tribal website

Learn Your Geography

- What tribes lived in, hunted in, traveled through, or had a treaty claim in your area?
- A subset of the 44 Ohio Tribes will most likely be most interested in your project
- Review tribal websites - history
- Good place to start

<https://www.ohiohistory.org/learn/american-indian-relations>

Make Contact

- Have a project that involves tribes? Contact them!
- Look for: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Cultural Resource Officer or if NAGPRA, specific NAGPRA person
- Personal contact is best vs. mass correspondence
- If OHC site, ask their advice first

Do Good Research

- Tribes expect and deserve scholarly research based on best practices
- Researchers in your organization or existing partnership or form partnership
- Look for research partner with existing Tribal relationships
- OHC site, involve them!
- OHC American Indian guidelines/policy

Stop Talking. Start Listening

- Be prepared to think about things very differently
- Do not assume your worldview is the only worldview
- Seemingly innocuous questions or statements may spur answers that you never imagined. Be open and patient.

Building Lasting, Trusting Relationships

- Building relationships IS doing something
- Long-term investment
- Networking
- We build “visiting” into our OK trips
- Take a real interest in your Tribal collaborators culture and events, etc.

Watch Your Language!

- Word choice is very important
- Words are packing with meaning based on our experiences and worldview
- Tribal trust, so they can point these things out to you so your interpretation is respectful and imparts the correct meaning
- See your mistakes as opportunities to learn

Keep Showing Up

- Go hear citizens from Federally Recognized Tribes speak – introduce yourself
- Conferences (you're here today!)
- Special events involved Tribes
- OHC offerings
- Seek at academic partners
- Wonder what we would have missed had we not showed up for some things?

More on Community Engaged Research

- All of this takes time, better end product
- People are busy, plan ahead
- Be prepared to “unlearn” some things, so you can think differently
- “become an expert at not always being the expert” = sharing power (Jennifer Blatz, StriveTogether)

Be Prepared and Plan to Let Things Happen

- No idea in 2010 where this would end up
- If I would have predicted and planned it all, it would have been wrong
- Good Research
 - + Tribal Relationships
 - + Keep Showing Up
 - + Keep Listening and Collaborating
 - = Let Good Things Happen

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St. Clair's Defeat Revisited: A New View of the Conflict

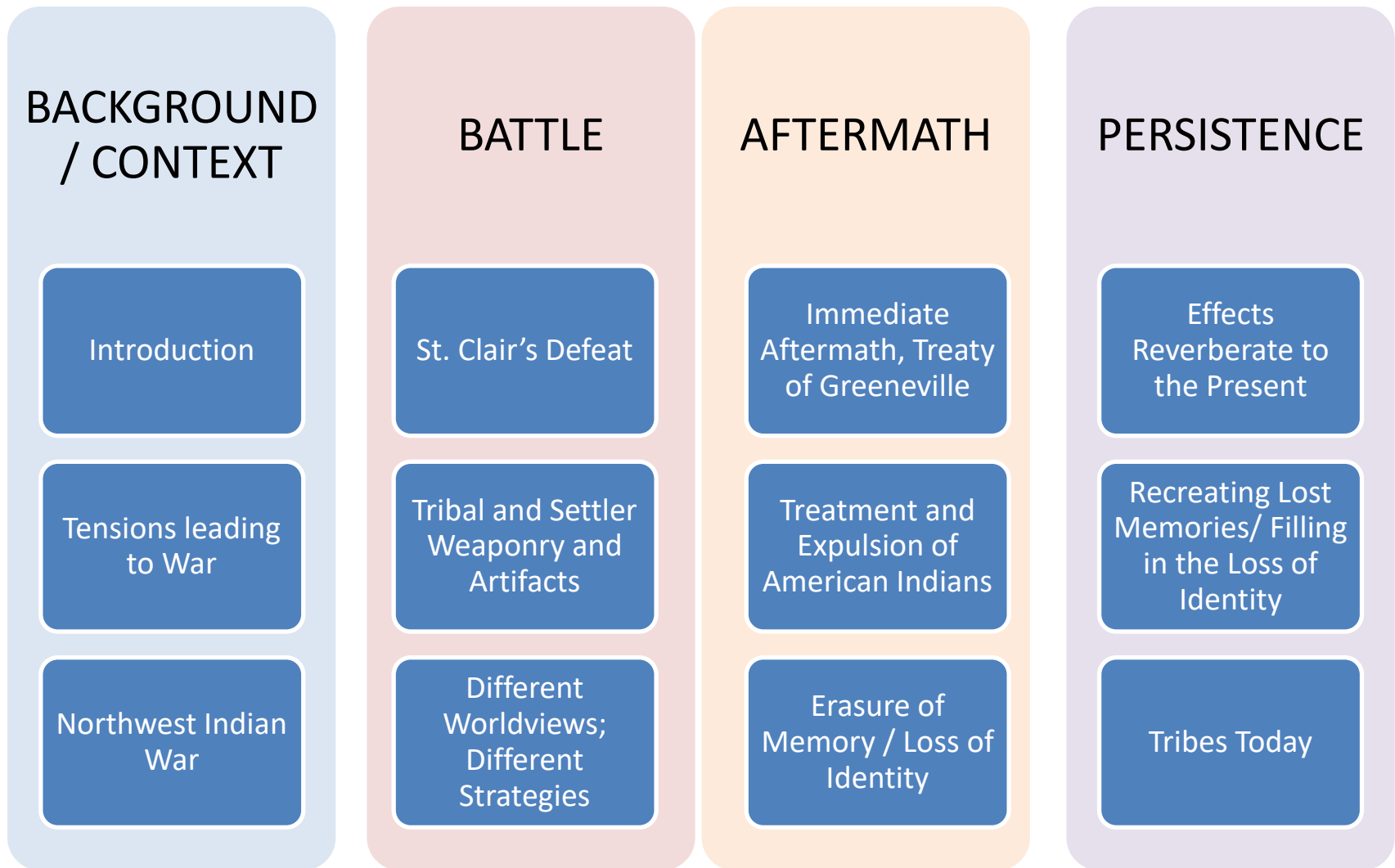
We build upon our trusting relationships with tribal partners to co-create and co-design a traveling exhibit that truly represents and reflects the views of American Indians. **The end product will be a traveling exhibit and presentations created *with* tribal communities *for* tribal communities.**



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES

Tribal Humanities Scholars

- Nekole Alligood (Delaware Nation), NAGPRA Specialist, Ohio History Connection
- Matthew Bussler (Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Chief Ethel Cook (Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma)
- Stacey Halfmoon (Caddo/Choctaw/Delaware), Senior Director Choctaw Cultural Center, formerly American Indian Liaison at Ohio History Connection
- Rhonda Hayworth (Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Larry Heady (Delaware Tribe of Indians), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Norman Hildebrand (Wyandotte Nation), Second Chief
- Diane Hunter (Miami Tribe of Oklahoma), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- William Tarrant (Seneca-Cayuga Nation), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Tonya Tipton (Shawnee Tribe), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
- Chief Glenna Wallace (Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma)



Traveling Exhibit themes became apparent not even 2 hours into first meeting.....

BACKGROUND



Tensions Leading to War

Native peoples have occupied land making up Ohio and Indiana for over 12,000 years, managing waterways, transportation routes, and landscapes. This infrastructure sustained Tribal communities and trade centers across millions of acres. European contact in the 17th and 18th centuries was based on the fur trade, and Natives traded with the French and British. Thousands of Miami, Delaware, Shawnee, Wyandot, Ottawa, Seneca, and Potawatomi people hunted, traded, and lived in the Ohio Country.

Euro-Americans mistakenly saw this managed landscape as untamed wilderness with wasted potential. This view justified invasion and removal in the name of "civilization". The British, French, and U.S. used various means of acquiring land, including aggression, treaties, economic strategies to divide different Tribes, and creating maps to name and claim territory for settlement and "improvement".

The 1763 Treaty of Paris changed the dynamic of land tensions when Britain ceded "claimed control" of these lands to the U.S. The U.S. was already selling this land to generate revenue to settle debts, further justifying invasions into Native lands, and leading to uncontrolled Euro-American settlement.



Northwest Indian War

During the 1780s, settlers poured down the Ohio River into Native territory. Tribes attacked riverboats and encroaching settlements to stop invasion of their homelands. Hostilities escalated as the U.S. military initiated raids into Native territory. The U.S. needed money from sale and settlement of western lands; settlers demanded protection.

Miami, Shawnee, Delaware, Ottawa, Wyandotte, Ojibwe, Seneca, Cherokee, and Potawatomi met regularly in council to deliberate the responses to U.S. military invasion. Continued disregard for treaties, failed peace talks, and the 1789 construction of Fort Washington were clear signals that the U.S. had little intention of stopping the invasion.

In fall 1790, a U.S. military campaign targeted the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware village of Kikikayonki. Troops burned structures, destroyed crops, and killed 120-150 people.

Major General Arthur St. Clair's 1791 campaign also targeted Kikikayonki. Marching north from Fort Washington, 1,400 U.S. troops built a chain of forts. Miami and Shawnee scouts monitored the army's progress. Runners were sent to other Tribes, asking to assemble in Kikikayonki to prepare for an attack.

Reflections on Complicated Histories

The Northwest Indian War (1785-1795) is pivotal in Native history. St. Clair's Defeat is one of the greatest victories of Native Tribes over an invading force. A devastating defeat to the U.S. Army, the aftermath influenced U.S. relations with Native Americans for generations to come. The battle illustrates the coordinated Tribal efforts necessary to protect their homelands.

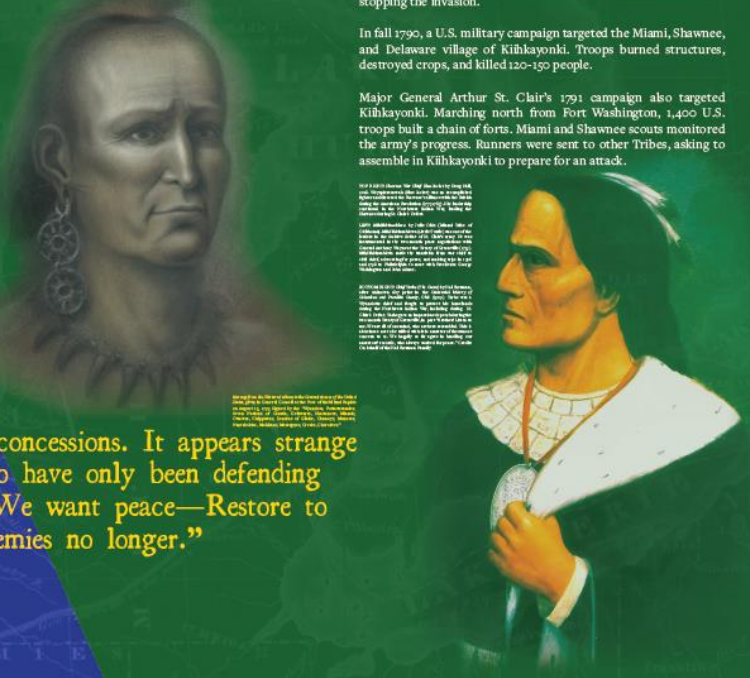
These events led to Euro-American settlement of the Northwest Territory and realization of "manifest destiny", often presented as brave European explorers and settlers conquering any obstacle to reach new heights of liberty. The other side of this narrative is often forgotten and includes invasion, violence, dispossession, forced removal, and attempted erasure of identity of Native peoples that still exist and persist today.

The true history of Ohio and Indiana's Native peoples is complicated, fascinating, and requires critical reflection upon past motives of people on both sides, and consequences for present-day descendants. It is a story frequently glossed over in public education and when told, often presents Native peoples as part of the past, the "Indian problem" that has been solved.



"I was much surprised to hear you say it was my forefathers had set the example to the other Indians in selling their lands. I will inform you in what manner the French and the English occupied those places... Brothers, these people never told us they wished to purchase our lands from us."

"Brothers you have talked to us about concessions. It appears strange that you should expect any from us who have only been defending our just rights against your invasions—We want peace—Restore to us our own country and we shall be enemies no longer."



"I was astonished to see the amazing effect of the Enemy's fire."



Weapons of War

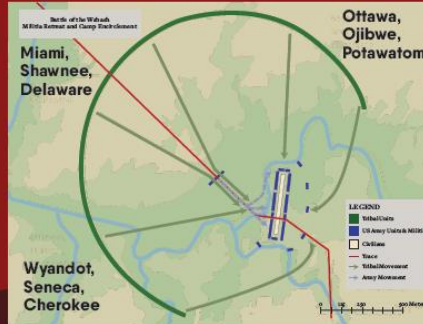
By the 1790s, Natives seldom used bows and arrows in war. Native fighters used a variety of smoothbore muskets and rifles, mostly acquired from the British. The British Brown Bess fired .75 caliber projectiles or combinations of different sized balls. They also used a variety of tomahawks, wooden clubs, and knives.

The U.S. Army used mostly .69 caliber smoothbore French Charleville muskets from the Revolutionary War, often with a bayonet. Many of the Kentucky Militia carried their own .40 to .48 caliber rifles, tomahawks, and knives. Rifles took longer to load than muskets and did not have bayonets, but were much more accurate. Officers often carried pistols.

St. Clair's army had eight cannons. The Native forces targeted the soldiers operating the cannons, rendering the heavy artillery totally ineffective during battle.



THE BATTLE



St. Clair's Defeat

After St. Clair left Fort Jefferson on October 24, men at Kikikayondi moved south in parties of 20 to 30, traveling 30 miles in seven days. On November 3, approximately 1,400 fighters from nine Tribes assembled in a huge crescent formation on a high ridge northwest of St. Clair's encampment on the Wabash River.

At dawn on November 4, the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware attacked the Kentucky Militia northwest of St. Clair's army. Native fighters caught the militia unaware, forcing a scramble across the Wabash, causing chaos and confusion in the main camp.

Simultaneously, Tribes on the left and right surrounded St. Clair's camp within 35 minutes. The three-hour battle was an overwhelming victory for Native Tribes.

U.S. casualties were enormous. Over 600 U.S. soldiers were killed, including 31 commissioned officers. Several hundred camp followers were killed or taken prisoner. Historical accounts show that between 20 to 35 Natives were killed. This well-planned and calculated victory is often called the greatest defeat of the U.S. Army.



"The attack was most impetuous and the carnage for a few moments shocking. Many Indians threw away their guns, leaping in among the Americans..."

"A terrible volley was poured in upon us, accompanied with appalling yells, as it might from a thousand throats, and at the same instant I saw Indians springing out from their covers in every direction and rushing down upon us in overwhelming numbers."

Different Worldviews; Different Strategies



Native Troops: What Could They See?

The crescent formation used to defeat the U.S. Army was not new. However, the tactic had never been used in such a large battle. The crescent strategy allowed a force to surround the enemy in a short time to maximize enemy losses and minimize casualties.

St. Clair's Encampment: What couldn't they see?

Native combatants used the natural landscape to their advantage: the hills and trees provided concealment and cover while they surrounded St. Clair's army undetected. The Wabash River and a creek were used to pen in St. Clair's troops. The environment hindered the U.S. military. They had no visibility of the crescent formation beyond the high ridge, while St. Clair's encampment was completely visible to the Tribes.

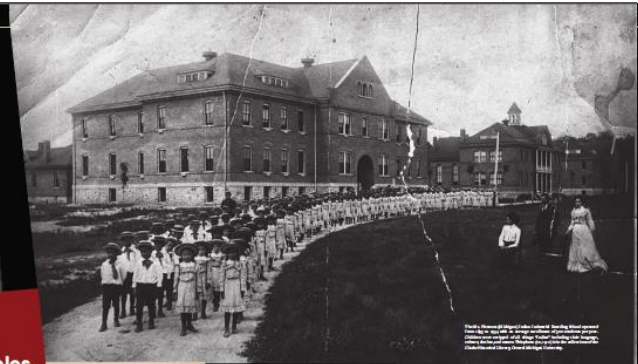
With no fortification for protection on an unknown landscape, the U.S. military depended on their cannons. A group of Miami, led by Epehshannita (Williams Wolf), was tasked with picking off the cannoners and making the cannons inoperable. The cannons were awkwardly positioned on high ground, causing fired shot to soar above incoming Tribal fighters.



With names about St. Clair's Defeat U.S. did a no conflict battle.

THE AFTERMATH

"We soon found ourselves on the grand prairies of Illinois, under a burning sun and without shade from one camp to another. They are as vast as the ocean, and the eye seeks in vain for a tree. Not a drop of water can be found there - it was a veritable torture for our poor sick, some of whom died each day from weakness and fatigue."



Photograph of the Indian Child Welfare Act, 1978. The photograph shows a line of children standing in front of a large building, likely a boarding school. The children are dressed in Western-style clothing, and the building has a prominent arched entrance.



A map of the Northwest Indian War, showing the boundaries of the various tribes and the military forts established by the United States. The map is titled 'Map of the Northwest Indian War' and shows the Ohio River and the surrounding region.

Treaty of Greenville

After their decisive victory, some Tribes wanted to attack Fort Jefferson, 30 miles south. However, lack of food was affecting Tribal families, as crops were destroyed by previous U.S. attacks. Unlike the U.S. military, Tribes were fighting in their homeland with families to feed, so the men returned to their communities.

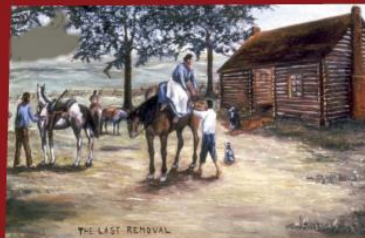
Councils failed treaty talks followed. Tribes demanded removal of the existing forts which violated previous treaties, and that the U.S. honor the established Indian Country boundary of the Ohio River. In response, the U.S. military built more forts, including Fort Recovery at the site of St. Clair's Defeat. Tribes attacked convoys traveling between forts to disrupt the U.S. military supply chain. The Battle of Fallen Timbers, a U.S. victory in August 1794, effectively ended the Northwest Indian War, followed by lengthy peace negotiations.

The 1795 Treaty of Greenville, "a treaty of peace", proved to be first of many land cessions. It established a boundary line stretching across what is today Ohio, ceding 2/3 of it to the U.S, while guaranteeing Indian hunting and fishing rights in the ceded territory.

The 1795 Treaty of Greenville, signed by the United States and the Western Confederacy of Native American tribes, established the boundary between the United States and the Indian Territory. The treaty was signed on September 3, 1795, at Greenville, Ohio.

"You have pointed out to us the boundary line between the Indians and the United States, but I now take the liberty to inform you, that that line cuts off from the Indians a large portion of country, which has been enjoyed by my forefathers time immemorial; without molestation or dispute. The print of my ancestors' houses are every where to be seen in this portion."

Treatment and Expulsion of Native Peoples



The Last Removal, by Howard Chandler Christy, 1872. The painting depicts a Native American family being escorted by soldiers on horseback, likely during the removal process.



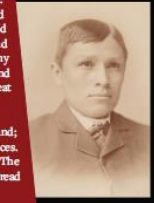
A photograph of a large, flat-bottomed boat, likely a steamship, on a river. The boat is long and narrow, with a flat deck and a small cabin structure.

Settlers flooded into ceded land and beyond treaty boundaries. Euro-American populations grew exponentially, supporting Ohio statehood in 1803. Native populations declined as they were constantly displaced, struggling for survival.

As non-citizens with laws restricting their rights and ability to survive, Natives were forced to make very personal, life-changing decisions. Some chose to flee further west and north. Others struggled to remain in Ohio and Indiana, sometimes assimilating Euro-American dress, housing, and agriculture to survive. The Shawnee, Ottawas, and Senecas were forcibly held on reservations.

The 1830 Indian Removal Act, signed by President Jackson, enabled the U.S. to remove Tribal Nations from their homelands. This systematic genocide devastated Tribes who had collaborated to defeat St. Clair. Removed Tribes were forced to survive on land different from their homelands, greatly disrupting lifeways and cultural practices. Removal journeys were tragic, with many people dying. Removed Tribes lost access to cultural places and sacred landscapes for generations, including St. Clair's Defeat battlefield.

Not all Tribes were physically removed from their homelands; sometimes families within Tribes had different removal experiences. Some Potawatomi and Ojibwe remained in their homelands. The experience of intended erasure of culture was a common thread among all Tribes.



Erasure of Memory; Loss of Identity

Many Tribal members admittedly know little about St. Clair's Defeat. Why has such a great victory been seemingly forgotten?

Despite acquiring millions of acres of Tribal homelands by breaking treaties and forced removal, the U.S. felt there was still an "Indian problem". The solution was to assimilate Native children into "civilized" society. By 1926, 357 Indian boarding schools housed 82% of school-age Tribal children. Children were often forcibly removed from families to attend schools across the country for instruction and manual labor. Children were renamed in English, and punished for speaking their language, practicing their culture, and acting "like an Indian".

Even after most boarding schools closed, Native children continued to be taken from families. Before the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act, 25-35% of Native children were in adoptive homes, foster care, or institutions, 90% with non-Native families. Decades of U.S. policy designed to "kill the Indian, save the man" broke up families and dismantled the chain of storytelling used to pass on history and culture, including accomplishments like St. Clair's Defeat.

Photograph of the Indian Child Welfare Act, 1978. The photograph shows a line of children standing in front of a large building, likely a boarding school. The children are dressed in Western-style clothing, and the building has a prominent arched entrance.

"Dear friend, none of the pupils whose terms are not over will be allowed to go home for vacation this summer, so your daughter Mabel will have to stay here with the others. I am very sorry I cannot comply with your request in this portion."

New Know We, the said Indians, do hereby certify that the said...
 consent of the Senate of the United States except liberty and confirm the same and every article and
 in testimony whereof I have caused the Seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed
 some with my hand. Given at the city of Philadelphia, the twenty-second day of December, in the
 first year of the said Independence, the twenty-seventh year of the said Independence and
 the United States.

M. Johnson

“We are not a people of the past. We are a living people with a past.”



Black Dancer, One of 13 Dancers from the Grand Central Mall in Cleveland, Ohio, performing at the 2014 National Native American Heritage Festival in Cleveland, Ohio.



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PERSISTENCE

Effects Reverberate to the Present

The tremendous victory on November 4, 1791, was a precursor to great loss of homelands and culture for descendent Tribes, with effects still felt today. The 1795 Treaty of Greenville resulted in loss of nearly 17 million acres of Tribal homelands in the Ohio Country. Subsequent forced removal caused death, fractured families, and physically removed people hundreds of miles from landscapes and sacred places known for centuries. Decades of cultural suppression resulted in loss of language and history that continues to be felt by Tribes today.

The battleground of St. Clair's Defeat is located in present-day Fort Recovery, Ohio. Like many Native sites in homelands, it was for years interpreted from a Euro-American perspective. The U.S. Military and St. Clair were lauded as fallen heroes. Native combatants, whose homelands were being invaded and cultures were forever changed, were given little mention and referred to as “savages”. Generations in Ohio and Indiana heard only this message, with few opportunities to learn about removal and today's descendent Tribes.



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Recreating Lost Memories; Filling in the Loss of Identity

Despite enormous hardships and unconscionable efforts by the U.S. government, Tribes persist. Native Americans are not “extinct” or simply part of history.

The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, encouraging continuance of Native traditions and culture, was a first step in reversing cultural genocide and forced assimilation that had taken place since the late 1700s. Many descendent Tribes of St. Clair's Defeat became federally recognized under the 1936 Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act, while others did not achieve federal recognition until the 1980s or after. Federal recognition and Tribal sovereignty enabled the rebuilding of Tribal government and socio-economic infrastructure.

Many descendent Tribes of St. Clair's Defeat now focus on language and cultural revitalization. These efforts often include “rediscovery” of and renewed interest in Tribal homelands and sacred places in what is now Ohio and Indiana. Knowledge of places such as the St. Clair's Defeat battlefield are shared with Tribal citizens hundreds of miles and generations removed from their homelands.

“The effects of it [the battle] are still ongoing, and impacting people today.”

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Welcome

ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT REVISITED

A NEW VIEW OF

THE CONFLICT

Aya

Hè

Hatito

Bozho

Kweh

Aanii

Boozhoo

Osiyo

Nya:weh sgeno



Glenna J. Wallace

Chief, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma

Northwest Indian War

During the 1780s, settlers continued to pour down the Ohio River into Indian Territory. Native Tribes attacked riverboats and encroaching settlements to stop the intrusion on their homelands. Hostilities escalated as the U.S. military initiated raids into Indian Territory. The financially unstable U.S. government needed money from sale and settlement of western lands; settlers demanded protection.

The Miami, Shawnee, Delaware, Ottawa, Wyandotte, Obijwe, Seneca, Cherokee, and Potawatomi tribes met regularly in council to deliberate the U.S. military invasion. Continued U.S. disregard for treaties, failed peace talks, and the construction of Fort Washington in 1789 were clear signals that the U.S. government had little intention of stopping the attack on their homelands.

In fall 1790, a U.S. military campaign targeted the Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware village of Kiihkayonki. U.S. troops burned structures, destroyed crops, and killed an estimated 120-150 people.

A second U.S. campaign in 1791, led by Major General Arthur St. Clair, targeted Kiihkayonki. Marching north from Fort Washington, the 1,400 U.S. troops built a chain of forts, with Fort Jefferson built in October. Miami and



Weyapiersenwah (Blue Jacket) was an accomplished fighter and directed the Shawnee's alliance with the British during the American Revolution (1775-1783). His leadership continued in the Northwest Indian War, leading the Shawnee during the defeat of St. Clair.

ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT REVISITED

A NEW VIEW OF
THE CONFLICT

St. Clair's Defeat Revisited: A New View of the Conflict

will be at the Fort Recovery Museum on these dates (free admission, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm)

- Nov 4 and 5 – Sat, Sun
- Nov 10, 11, and 12 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Nov 17, 18, and 19 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Nov 24, 25, and 26 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Dec 1, 2, and 3 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Dec 8, 9, and 10 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Dec 15, 16, and 17 – Fri, Sat, Sun
- Dec 21, 22, and 23 – Thurs, Fri, Sat
- Dec 28, 29, and 30 – Thurs, Fri, Sat
- Jan 5, 6, and 7 – Fri, Sat, Sun

Follow us at <https://fortrecoverymuseum.com/> or on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/FortRecoveryMuseum>

Relationships beget relationships



Beyond the Battlefield



Interpreting St.
Clair's Defeat
through the Eyes
of Tribal Citizens



Acknowledgements

- Tribal Humanities Scholars
- Fort Recovery Historical Society
- Fort Recovery Museum & Monument
- Ohio History Connection
- Ohio State Historic Preservation Office
- Myaamia Center
- Village Administrators, Community & Landowners

- National Endowment for the Humanities
- National Trust for Historic Preservation, Telling the Full History
- National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program
- Ohio History Fund
- Ohio Humanities Council
- Ohio Facilities Construction Commission
- Ball State University Immersive Learning, ASPIRE, ADVANCE grants

Contact Info

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