



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Fort Worth District

**Sponsor: East Texas Council of Governments
with the Historic Jefferson Foundation**

Saving historic Civil War Powder Magazine

Project Fact Sheet
Continuing
Authorities
Program (CAP)

Jan. 20, 2016

Type of Project: Stream bank stabilization

Authorization: Section 14, Flood Control
Act of 1946, as amended

Latest Milestone: Feasibility study funded

Status: Corps of Engineers is developing a
recommended alternative

Background: The project is located 0.3 miles northeast of where U.S. 59B crosses Big Cypress Bayou in Jefferson, Marion County, Texas. The 0.4-acre site, Baldwin Park, is owned by the Historic Jefferson Foundation. It is surrounded by undeveloped land that conveys the intended isolation required for a magazine built circa 1863. It is the only remaining structure in Texas purpose-built for the Civil War. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places as #95000102 in 1995.



The magazine is on a high bank on the outside of a river bend composed of sandy, highly erodible soil. Flood events in 2010, 2011 and 2015 caused extensive erosion and moved the bank back to less than 15 feet of the structure. It faces imminent collapse unless the stream bank can be stabilized.

It is the only survivor of three black powder magazines sited, about 250 feet apart, on Big Cypress Bayou for ease of off-loading munitions. It was a vital link in a supply network the Confederate States of America built connecting production facilities and major arsenals in



East Texas and Louisiana. The magazines served the Trans-Mississippi Department, which was organized in 1863 by the Confederate governors and military officials of Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri and Texas to help them coordinate wartime efforts west of the Mississippi as communications with the East weakened. Interior vents just above the floor connect to hollow spaces with openings about six feet above the ground to the outside walls. This kept the building cool and dry for safe storage of powder and munitions with security not obtainable with ground-level windows.

