

Agency Official 106 Effect Report

*Rehabilitate and Resurface Roads, Parking Areas and Driving Tour-Stops at Fredericksburg
Battlefield, Chancellorsville Battlefield and Chatham Manor
City of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania County, and Stafford County, Virginia*

**U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park
120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22405**

Description and Purpose of Undertaking

Purpose

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park was authorized by an act of Congress on February 14, 1927 (44 Stat. 1091). The purpose of the park, as stated in the act, is “to commemorate the Civil War battles of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania Court House, Wilderness, and Chancellorsville, including Salem Church ... to survey, locate, and preserve the lines of the opposing armies in said battles, to open, construct, and repair such roads, highways, paths, and other approaches as may be necessary to make the historical points accessible to the public and to students of said battles ... and together also with such additional land as the Secretary of War may deem necessary for monuments, markers, tablets, roads, highways, paths, approaches, and to carry out the general purposes of this Act.” By Executive Order 6166 in 1933 the park was transferred to the Department of the Interior to be administered by the National Park Service.

Need

Today, the National Park Service maintains approximately 30 miles of roads within the boundaries of the park, 27 miles of these roads are classified as public use park roads. These roads were constructed in the 1930s to provide visitors an opportunity to see the battlefields and the 38 miles of earthworks in the park. Parking areas were later installed to facilitate access to prominent sites along these roads and at designated stops along the park’s driving tour.

In 2010, over 2 million people visited the park and used the park roads. Increasing visitor-use and traffic strains the efficiency and carrying capacity of many of the park roads. Today, many of the roads are in need of attention and maintenance. Moreover, in the last ten years, the park has seen a steady increase in use of the park by recreational visitors. Lee Drive on the Fredericksburg Battlefield has become a destination for joggers, bicyclists, and other recreational users. As a consequence, the designated parking areas frequently experience overflow problems and visitors are forced to park along road shoulders and other non-designated locations. Erosion and parking overflows have created safety hazards and intrude upon the historic setting and ultimately the visitor experience.

In 2000, the park opened a tour stop at the Jackson Flank Area on the Chancellorsville Battlefield. Utilizing an existing former residential driveway, visitors access the site directly off of State Route 3. With increased traffic along Route 3, it has become dangerous for visitors to make the turn into the driveway.

The park proposes to use monies supplied by the Federal Highways Administration to rehabilitate and resurface park roads, parking areas and driving tour-stops on the Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville Battlefields. The park is proposing to install a deceleration lane along State Route 3 of the Chancellorsville Battlefield. The park is also proposing to rehabilitate existing parking areas and pull-offs on the Fredericksburg Battlefield, as well as formalize additional parking spots at existing parking areas and vehicular pull-offs. Finally, the park is proposing to

install an asphalt apron at the junction of the Chatham Manor Carriage Drive and Stafford County Route 607.

Property Description

A. Major Physical Components

1. Fredericksburg Battlefield – The area of the proposed project lies within the Fredericksburg Battlefield in the City of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County. Spotsylvania Battlefield is comprised of 1,563.83 acres and is a mixture of open fields and wooded ridges, bisected by numerous streams and swamps. Lee Drive, the primary battlefield tour road, is a paved road constructed in 1931 that stretches 4.69 miles from its intersection at Business US Route 1 (Lafayette Boulevard) to its termination at the Prospect Hill Tour Stop parking area. Along its course, Lee Drive contains a number of parking areas and vehicle pull-offs.
2. Chancellorsville Battlefield – The area of the proposed project lies along State Route 3 within the Chancellorsville Battlefield in Spotsylvania County. Chancellorsville Battlefield is comprised of 2,587.04 acres and is a mixture of open fields and gently rolling wooded plateaus, bisected by numerous streams and swamps. State Route 3, a four-lane divided highway, bisects the Chancellorsville Battlefield from east to west.
3. Chatham Manor – The area of the proposed project lies within the Chatham Manor property in Stafford County. Chatham Manor is comprised of 85.01 acres and is a mixture of open fields and wooded plateaus, bisected by deep ravines. The property consists of three 18th century domestic structures and numerous 20th century buildings.

B. Historical Significance

1. Fredericksburg Battlefield – The project area lies within the core area of the December 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg. Lee Drive and its associated parking areas were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1931 as the first tour road opened within the park. The park road, parking areas and tours sites occupy, and provide access to, sites crucial to the planning, execution and consolidation of the armies engaged on the battlefield.
2. Chancellorsville Battlefield – The project area lies within the core area of the May 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville.
3. Chatham Manor – The brick plantation house and two outbuildings were built between 1768 and 1771. During the Civil War, the house served as a Union army headquarters, hospital and communications center. It remained a private residence until the 1970s, at which time it was donated to the National Park Service.

C. Archaeological Significance

1. Fredericksburg Battlefield - It is doubtful that archeological resources will be adversely affected by the road rehabilitation and formalizing of additional parking spaces. The repaving and rehabilitation of the park roads is limited to areas disturbed archeologically

during the construction and landscaping that created the tour road in 1931. The formalizing of additional parking spots will only occur in areas already disturbed during the construction and landscaping that created the 1931 tour road, or has already been disturbed through use as unauthorized parking.

2. Chancellorsville Battlefield – It is doubtful that archaeological resources will be adversely affected by the construction of the deceleration lane, as the area is within the Virginia Department of Transportation’s right-of-way and is obviously within the area impacted by the construction of State Route 3.
3. Chatham Manor – It is doubtful that archaeological resources will be adversely affected by construction of the carriage lane apron, as the area has been used by vehicles for decades and has had numerous surface treatments and the target of constant invasive maintenance.

D. Historical Landscapes

1. Fredericksburg Battlefield – It is doubtful that the cultural landscape will be adversely affected by the road rehabilitation and formalizing of additional parking spaces. The repaving and rehabilitation of the park roads, as well as the formalizing of additional parking spaces, is limited to areas that area adjacent to the 1931 road construction.
2. Chancellorsville Battlefield – It is doubtful that the cultural landscape will be adversely affected by the construction of the deceleration lane, as the area is within the Virginia Department of Transportation’s right-of-way and is obviously within the area that was landscaped in the 1970s as part of the highway construction.
3. Chatham Manor – It is doubtful that the cultural landscape will be adversely affected by the installation of the carriage lane apron, as the area proposed for treatment is relatively small and adjacent to a paved county road.

E. Historic Architecture

1. Fredericksburg Battlefield – Lee Drive is on the park’s List of Classified Structures as IDLCS #82056. Pickett’s Turnout, aka Pickett’s Circle, is also on the park’s List of Classified Structures as IDLCS #82061. Both are considered eligible for listing on the National Register. In the draft of the park’s most recent updated National Register documentation, these two structures are considered contributing. It is doubtful that they will be adversely affected by the proposed work. The replacement of pavement along Lee Drive will not alter the characteristics of the road and the addition of pavement at Pickett’s Turnout will not adversely affect the structure’s defining characteristics.
2. Chancellorsville Battlefield – There are no known historic structures that could potentially be affected by the construction of the deceleration lane.
3. Chatham Manor – Chatham Carriage Lane is on the park’s List of Classified Structures as IDLCS #082039. It is considered eligible for listing on the National Register. In the draft of the park’s most recent updated National Register documentation, the drive is considered contributing. It is doubtful that it will be adversely affected by the proposed work, as the area proposed for treatment is relatively small and only a very small fraction of the overall structure.

Description of Alternatives

Alternative A – No Action

This option would 1) hinder the fulfillment of the park's General Management Plan directive to interpret historic resources and 2) foster continued deterioration of the historic scene.

Alternative B – Construct New Parking Lots

This option would involve the construction of new parking lots along Lee Drive. While this would provide additional parking and alleviate the overcrowding in the existing parking areas, it might have an adverse effect on the landscape by the introduction of more pavement and structures on the battlefield.

Alternative C – Preferred Alternative

This option would involve the following:

1. Resurface Lee Drive – This will entail resurfacing Lee Drive in the Fredericksburg Battlefield, from its intersection with Lafayette Boulevard (Business US Route 1) to its termination at the Prospect Hill Tour Stop parking area. This covers a distance of 4.69 miles. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing roadway and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current road. (Plans: sheets C4 and C4A)
2. Resurface Lee's Hill Parking Lot (Tour Stop #3) – This will entail resurfacing the parking lot. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing parking lot and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current lot. (Plans: sheet C5)
3. Resurface Howison's Hill Parking Lot (Tour Stop #4) – This will entail resurfacing the parking lot. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing parking lot and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current lot. (Plans: sheet C6)
4. Resurface Chief Ranger's Office Driveway and Parking Lot – This will entail resurfacing the driveway and parking lot. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing driveway and parking lot and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current driveway and lot. (Plans: sheet C7)
5. Expansion of the Pickett Circle Parking Lot – This will entail the resurfacing and addition of pavement at the Pickett Circle parking lot. The current parking lot is only about 10 feet deep, which does not allow much space for the parking of vehicles carrying bicycle racks on the back. The result is that an additional 10 feet or so has been impacted by vehicles pulling farther into the parking area. This will entail the expansion of the parking lot to 18 feet in depth by the addition of 8 more feet of pavement. This will cover an area approximately 80 feet in length. Excavation of 6 to 8 inches in depth will occur in this expansion area, with a gravel base and asphalt installed to match the grade of the existing paved parking area. This area has been disturbed by unauthorized vehicular use and parking. (Plans: Sheet C8)
6. Addition of Parking Spaces at Pickett Circle – This will entail the paving of an area 10 feet by 120 feet along the road edge of the entrance to Pickett Circle. Park visitors and

recreational users have already turned this road edge into unauthorized overflow parking from the Pickett Circle Parking Lot. This work will involve the excavation to a depth of 6 to 8 inches with a gravel base and asphalt installed to match the grade of the existing entrance to the Pickett Circle. This area has been disturbed by unauthorized vehicular use and parking. (Plans: Sheet C8)

7. Expansion of Pickett's Circle – Pickett Circle is a circular drive and has become additional unauthorized overflow parking for the Pickett Circle Parking Lot. The proposed work will entail the extension of the paved circle by 5 feet around its entire edge. This will allow for parking along the outer edge of the circle while still providing space for vehicles to negotiate the circle. This will require building up the adjacent grade by about 12 inches and adding a gravel base and asphalt to match the grade of the existing pavement on Pickett Circle. (Plans: Sheet C8)
8. Expansion of the Lansdowne Road Pull-Off – This will entail expanding the vehicular pull-off along South Lee Drive near its intersection with Lansdowne Road. The current pull-off is being used for unauthorized long-term parking. The proposed work will entail expanding the pull-off into an authorized parking lot. This will involve expanding the paved area to 20 feet deep by 80 feet in length. This work will involve the excavation to a depth of 6 to 8 inches with a gravel base and asphalt installed to match the grade of the adjacent roadway. This area has been disturbed by unauthorized vehicular use and parking. (Plans: Sheet C9)
9. Resurface Bernard's Cabins Pull-offs – This will entail resurfacing the pull-offs. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing pull-offs and areas previously disturbed by construction of the pull-offs. (Plans: sheet C10)
10. Resurface Union Breakthrough Pull-offs (Tour Stop #5) – This will entail resurfacing the pull-offs. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing parking lot and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current lot. An addition of 3 feet of pavement will be added to the pull-off on the west side of Lee Drive. This will occur within an area previously disturbed by construction of Lee Drive. (Plans: sheet C11)
11. Resurface Prospect Hill Parking Lot (Tour Stop #6) – This will entail resurfacing the parking lot. Existing asphalt pavement will be removed and new pavement installed to match existing grade. The work will occur within the existing parking lot and areas previously disturbed by construction of the current lot. (Plans: sheet C12 and C12A)
12. Installation of Deceleration Lane Along State Route 3 – This will entail the installation of a deceleration lane along State Route 3 on the Chancellorsville Battlefield. Within the Virginia Department of Transportation's right-of-way, a 200 foot by 12 foot paved area will be constructed along the edge of State Route 3 and a paved curtain into the entrance of the Jackson Flank Attack Area. This will require the excavation to a depth of 12 inches with a gravel base and asphalt installed to match the grade of the adjacent State Route 3. This area was elevated with fill and disturbed during the 1970s construction of State Route 3. (Plans: sheet C14 and C14A)
13. Paving of Exit Apron Along Chatham Carriage Drive – This will entail paving approximately 1,010 square feet where the Chatham Carriage Drive empties onto Stafford County Road 607 (River Road). Increased traffic and along Route 607 and increased visitation at Chatham has resulted in traffic safety concerns. The gravel

carriage drive has become a concern as visitors accelerate to merge with traffic along River Road. Quick acceleration results in spinning tires in the gravel and also leads to erosion. This work will involve the excavation to a depth of 8 inches with a gravel base and asphalt installed to match the grade of the adjacent roadway. This area has been disturbed by over two centuries of use. (Plans: sheet C15)

Park Consultation

The park has consulted and worked with the Federal Highways Administration and Virginia Department of Transportation in designing this project.

The proposal is being addressed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), coordinated by the Federal Highways Administration.

The proposal is being circulated among the park's Section-106 Team of Advisors for archaeology, historic landscapes, and architecture.

The project will undergo a 30-day comment and review period with the Virginia SHPO.

Description of Mitigation Measures

A. The proposed road rehabilitation and installation of parking areas and pulloffs have been designed, as much as possible, to take advantage of areas disturbed archaeologically during the construction and landscaping of the adjoining tour-roads and highways, as well as by unauthorized disturbance through use.

B. Staging areas will either be off park property or on designated paved areas such, such as the Chief Ranger's Office and compound.

Effect Analysis

It is the park's opinion that this undertaking will have "no adverse effect" on historic resources.

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