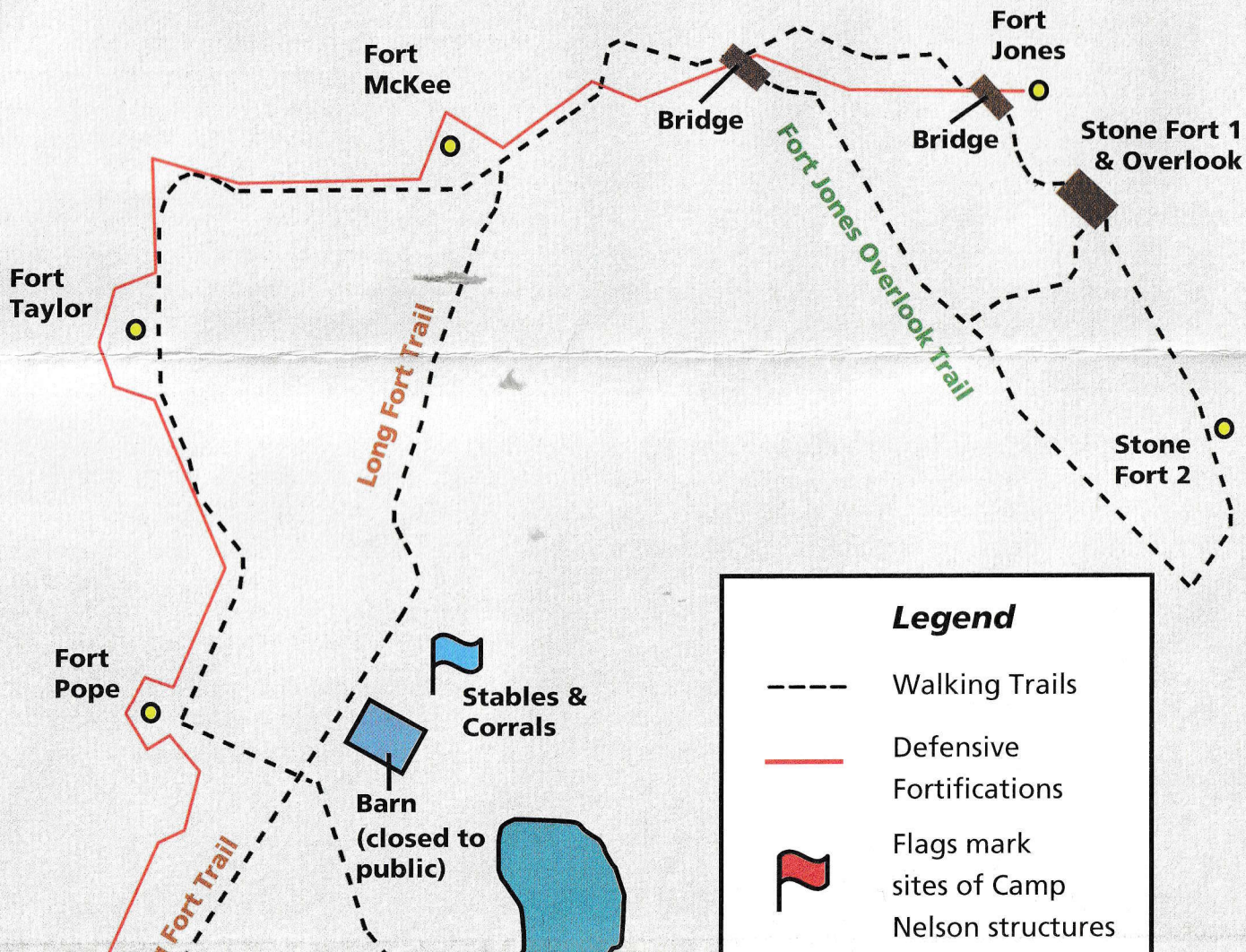
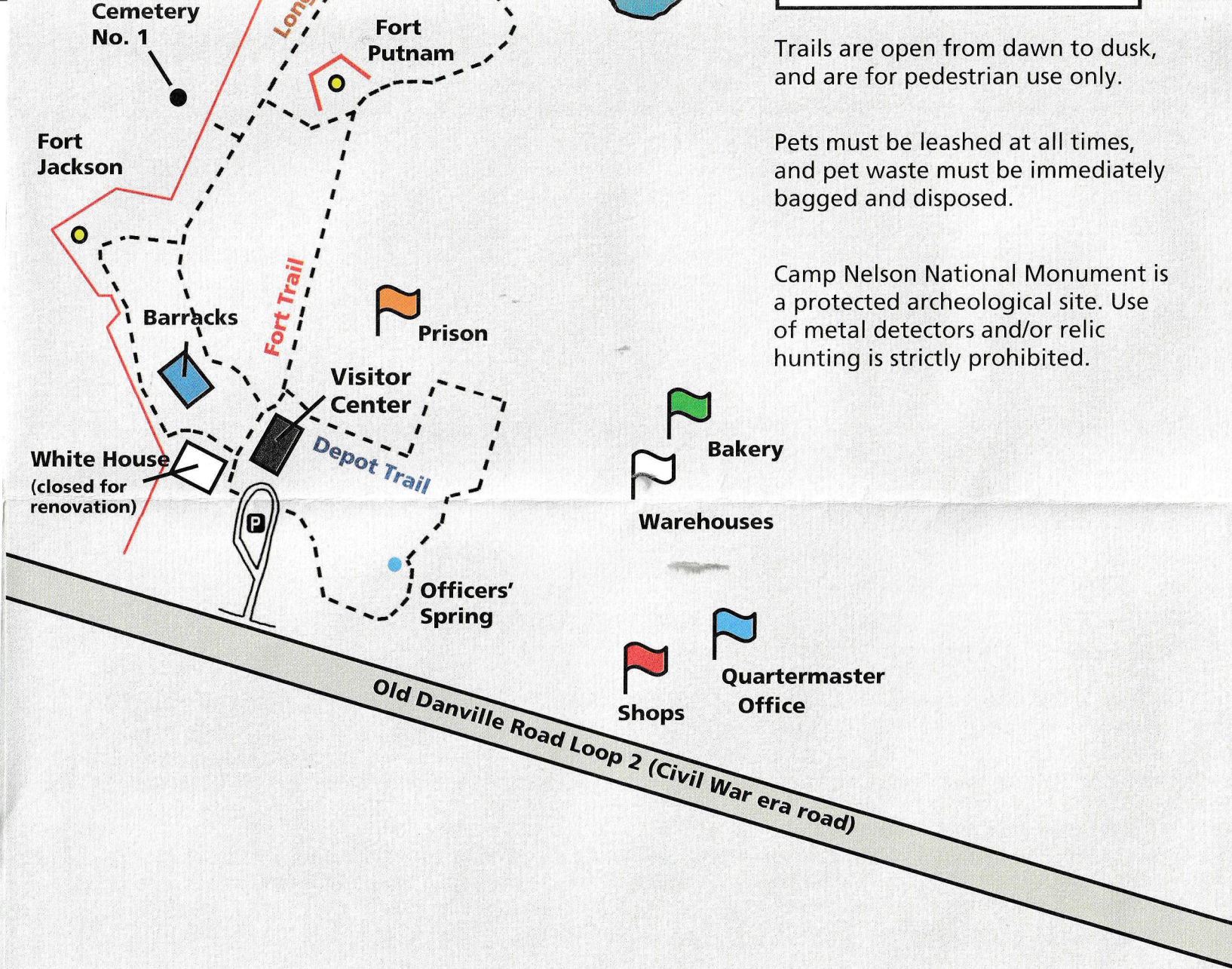


Camp Nelson National Monument

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior





Trails are open from dawn to dusk, and are for pedestrian use only.

Pets must be leashed at all times, and pet waste must be immediately bagged and disposed.

Camp Nelson National Monument is a protected archeological site. Use of metal detectors and/or relic hunting is strictly prohibited.

Camp Nelson National Monument



In the Footsteps of Freedom...

From 1863 to 1866, Camp Nelson bustled with as much activity as a small city. Covering over 4,000 acres, Camp Nelson included over 300 buildings and was occupied by tens of thousands of soldiers, civilian workers and refugees from war and slavery.

In the aftermath of war, nearly all the shops, warehouses, and military facilities were taken down and the land returned to private

ownership. Although now mostly pastoral landscape, remnants remain of Camp Nelson, representing the force of military power, the struggles of emancipation, and the plight of refugees seeking freedom and safety.

Explore the trail system through Camp Nelson, and enjoy the rich and complex stories that define this historic landscape, set in the rolling hills of the central Kentucky Bluegrass.

Depot Trail - 0.5 miles (0.8 km)

The Depot Trail is a half mile loop that begins at the visitor center and extends south toward sites associated with the supply function of the camp, like warehouses, government shops and offices, and the bakery. Visitors will pass by the camp prison and merchants' row, where soldiers purchased specialty foods and goods. These buildings were dismantled after the Civil War, but visitors will see flags marking their former locations.

The Depot Trail offers views of the officers' spring with its dry-laid limestone retaining walls. The spring was for the exclusive use of officers and guarded by a detachment of USCT soldiers. The spring is a characteristic of karst geology that defines central Kentucky, and accounts for sinkholes throughout the historic landscape at Camp Nelson.

There is **some shade** on this trail going down hill near the spring and prison. This trail includes walking down and back up a moderately sloped hill.

Fort Trail - 0.5 miles (0.8 km)

The Fort Trail is a half mile loop beginning at the visitor center. This meadow trail offers views of infantry entrenchments, Fort Jackson, one of the earthen forts built to protect the camp, and the reconstructed barracks. Visitors learn about the defenses of Camp Nelson and the experiences of soldiers and officers living at camp.

There is **little to no shade** on this hike.

Long Fort Trail - 1.5 miles (2 km)

The Long Fort Trail begins behind the visitor center. This 1.5 mile trail presents four more earthen fortifications: Fort Putnam, Fort Pope, Fort Taylor and Fort McKee, as well as the engineer's quarters, corrals and stables. After archeological excavations, Fort Putnam was reconstructed to offer visitors a visual representation of Civil War era earthworks. This hike highlights the defenses and engineering designs of Camp Nelson and the camp's logistical role as a rehabilitation center for of thousands of horses and mules.

Along the northern loop of this trail, visitors can see the obelisk that marks Cemetery No. 1, the resting place of nearly 300 civilian refugees.

There is **little to no shade** on this hike.

Fort Jones / Overlook Trail - 1.2 miles (1.9 km)

The Fort Jones / Overlook Trail begins about a mile from the visitor center. Visitors must take the Long Fort Trail to Fort McKee to reach the trailhead. The trail leads visitors through the eastern side of the park, where they can see Fort Jones and the two Stone Forts, which served as the eastern defenses of Camp Nelson. Fort Jones, with its extensive stone revetment walls, is one of the best-preserved Civil War forts in the state.

The trail goes through the woods and has **plenty of shade**. The walk to the trailhead, via the Long Fort Trail has **no shade**. The Fort Jones / Overlook Trail includes a strenuous walk down a moderately steep and rocky path. It is prohibited to walk or stand on earthworks and fortifications. Visitors should keep to the trail to help preserve these fragile structures.