

# Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania  
National Military Park  
Virginia

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



FROM THE PAINTING BATTLE OF THE BLOODY ANGLE BY THURE DE THULSTRUP. COURTESY THE VETERANS OF THE SEVENTH REGIMENT, N.Y.



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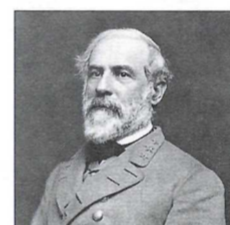
In 1861, Fredericksburg was a quiet city of some 5,000 inhabitants nestled along the Rappahannock River. Its strategic location midway between Richmond and Washington caused it to become a focal point during the Civil War.

Confederate infantrymen standing in a sunken road (right) and concealed from view by a stone wall repulsed thousands of attacking Federals during the 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg.

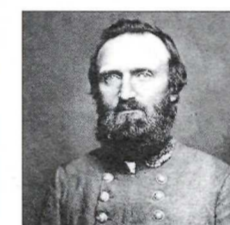


BATTLES AND LEADERS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Robert E. Lee (near right) led Confederate forces at all four battles around Fredericksburg. Stonewall Jackson (far right), Lee's most trusted subordinate, fell victim to the mistaken fire of his own men at Chancellorsville.



U.S. ARMY MILITARY HISTORY INSTITUTE



VALENTINE MUSEUM

The opening battles of the campaign that led to final Union victory in Virginia were fought west of Fredericksburg at the Wilderness and at Spotsylvania Court House. Some of the most savage fighting took place at Spotsylvania during the

Union attack on the Confederate-held "Bloody Angle" (above). Losses were fearful, but to Ulysses S. Grant (right), commanding all Union armies, the results were important to his overall plan to destroy Lee's army and end the war.



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## Where Uncommon Valor Was Commonplace

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park memorializes the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House—four major engagements of the Civil War. No other area of comparable size has witnessed such heavy and continuous fighting. Here, within a radius of 17 miles, occurred more than 100,000 American casualties. The park preserves and interprets some of the scenes of those battles. The quiet, peaceful woods and fields are constant reminders of how much we owe to the sacrifice of others.

### Fredericksburg

The Union army commanded by Ambrose E. Burnside arrived on Stafford Heights overlooking Fredericksburg in mid-November 1862. Not until December 11, however, did the Federals cross the Rappahannock River. By that time Robert E. Lee's forces were firmly posted on the high ground west of the city. On December 13, Burnside ordered two attacks. An assault led by George G. Meade against Jackson's corps at Prospect Hill achieved temporary success before Confederate reserves drove the Federals back to their original position. The second attack was launched against the heart of Lee's defenses on Marye's Heights west of Fredericksburg. Confederate artillery on the heights and infantry behind a stone wall slaughtered the Union soldiers. When the day ended, Lee had won his most one-sided victory of the war.

### Chancellorsville

Following the Fredericksburg debacle, President Abraham Lincoln replaced Burnside with Joseph Hooker. On April 27, 1863, the new commander marched most of his army upstream, crossed the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers at various fords, and within three days was at the Chancellorsville crossroads. Lee discovered this threat to his position and rushed westward, prompting Hooker to abandon the initiative and establish a defensive line, which was vulnerable on

the right flank. Stonewall Jackson exploited this weakness on May 2 by leading his corps on a risky 12-mile march around the Union army and destroying Hooker's right in a spectacular surprise attack. The day ended tragically for the Confederates when Jackson was unwittingly shot and mortally wounded by his own troops. For three more days Lee pressed his advantage and eventually drove the Federals back across the river.

### The Wilderness

The first of the classic encounters between Lee and Ulysses S. Grant took place in the dense thickets and tangled undergrowth of the Wilderness on May 5–6, 1864. Along the Orange Turnpike the armies sparred indecisively for two days. To the south, on the Orange Plank Road, the Federals almost crushed A. P. Hill's troops on May 5, only to be thrown back by a dramatic Confederate counterattack the next day. Tactically the battle was a draw, but Grant broke the stalemate by marching his army south toward Spotsylvania Court House.

### Spotsylvania Court House

On the night of May 7–8, 1864, both armies raced for the vital intersection at Spotsylvania Court House that controlled the shortest route to Richmond. Lee arrived first, entrenched, and successfully withstood a series of Union attacks. On the morning of May 12, two Federal corps charged from the woods opposite a vulnerable section of the Confederate line known as the "Mule Shoe Salient." Thanks in part to thick fog and wet Confederate powder, the initial Union advance overwhelmed the Southerners. Confederate reinforcements counterattacked, and for the next 20 hours this sector witnessed the most intense hand-to-hand combat of the war. This desperate fighting came to be called the "Bloody Angle" and earned Lee enough time to build new earthworks, which he held until Grant abandoned the field on May 21.

### Stonewall Jackson Shrine

Following his accidental wounding on the night of May 2, 1863, Jackson's left arm was amputated at a field hospital near Wilderness Tavern. On May 4, he endured a 27-mile ambulance ride to Thomas C. Chandler's Fairfield Plantation at Guinea Station. Here, well behind Confederate lines and at a point convenient to the railroad, Jackson lay in a small frame office building. Pneumonia set in after his arrival and he died here on May 10.

### Old Salem Church

Built in 1844 to provide the Baptists of upper Spotsylvania County a more geographically convenient place of worship, this structure harbored scores of refugees who fled Fredericksburg during the 1862 battle. Union and Confederate soldiers later fought here during the Battle of Chancellorsville. When the fighting ended, Southern surgeons attended to wounded soldiers of both armies in the building.

### Chatham

This gracious Georgian plantation house, built by William Fitzhugh beginning in 1768, hosted two of America's most famous Presidents—George Washington in 1785 and Abraham Lincoln in 1862. During the Battle of Fredericksburg the building served as headquarters for Edwin V. Sumner, commander of the Union army's Right Grand Division, and as a field hospital. Army medical personnel, assisted by volunteers like Clara Barton, treated hundreds of Union soldiers within its walls. Graffiti scrawled by soldiers is still visible today.

### Fredericksburg National Cemetery

More than 15,000 Union soldiers killed in and around Fredericksburg are buried in this 12-acre cemetery located on Marye's Heights. The identities of 85 percent of the soldiers are unknown. Confederate soldiers are buried in Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania Confederate cemeteries.



Stonewall Jackson Shrine NPS

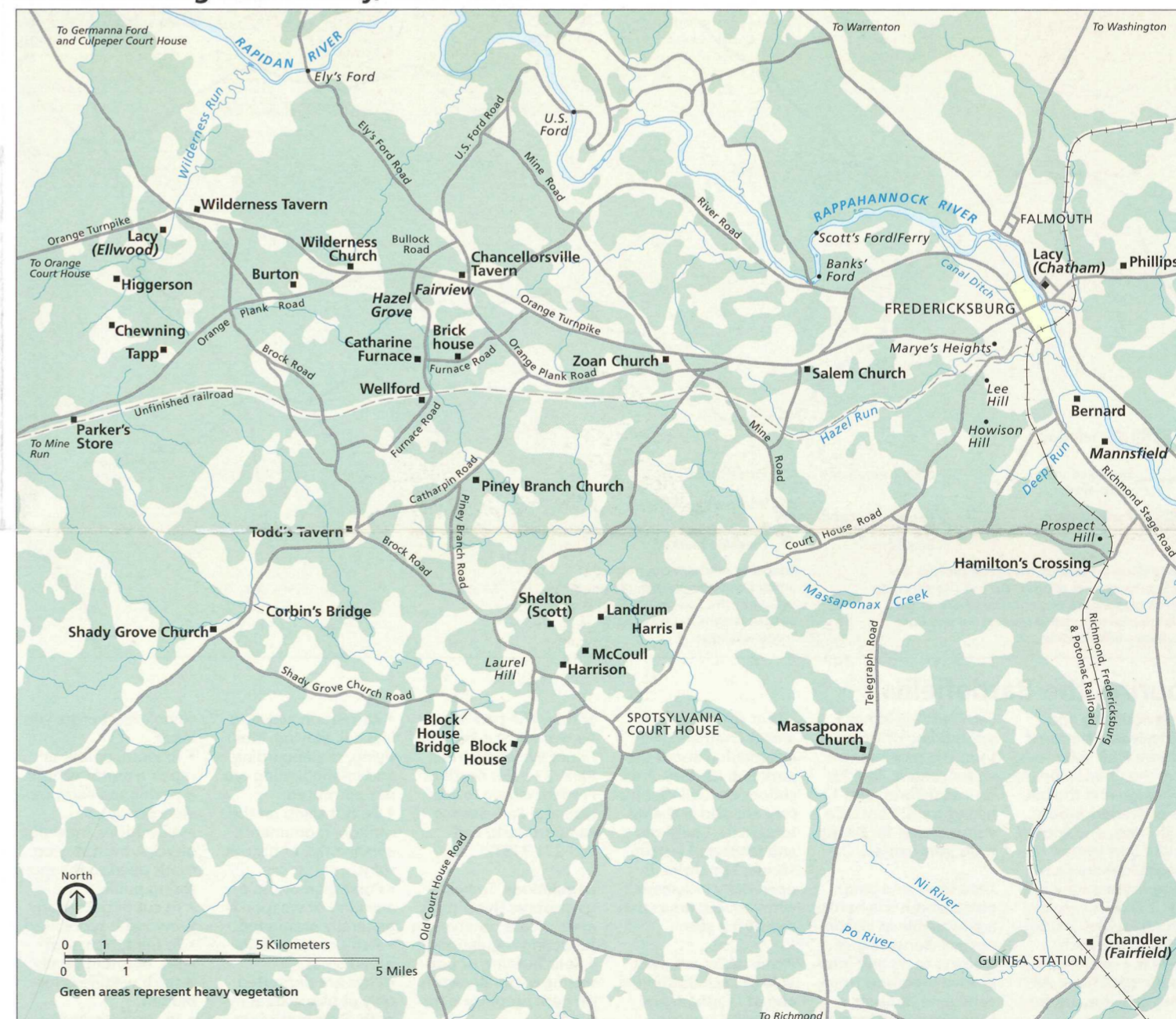


Fredericksburg National Cemetery NPS



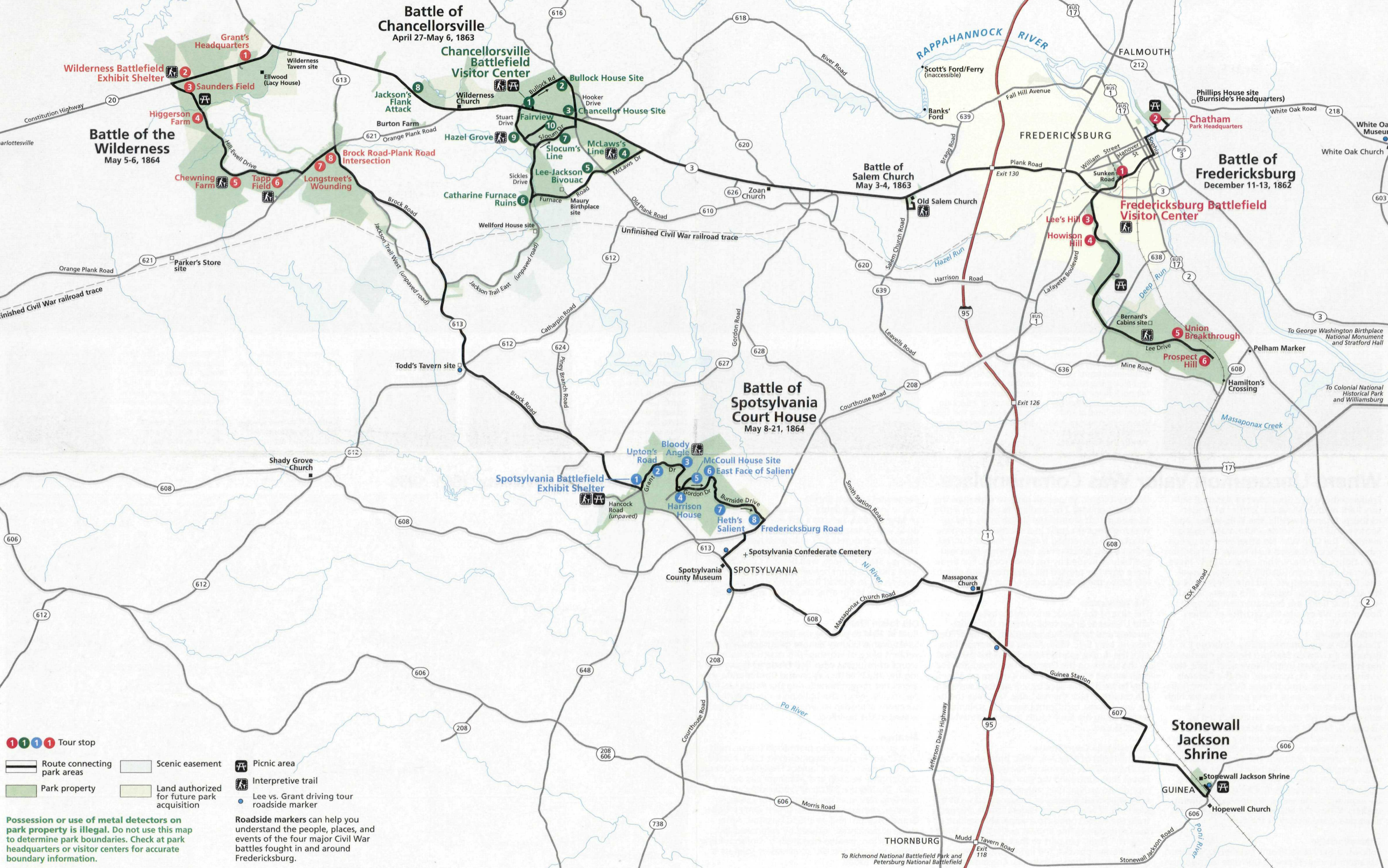
Chatham NPS

## Fredericksburg and Vicinity, 1861–1865



To Culpeper and Shenandoah National Park  
 Germanna Ford  
 Rappahannock River  
 North  
 0 1 2 Kilometers  
 0 1 2 Miles

The Lee vs. Grant driving route, highlighting aspects of Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign, begins at Germanna Ford. It is part of the Virginia Civil War Trails, a network of driving tours linking Civil War sites in Virginia.



- 1 1 1 1 Tour stop
- Route connecting park areas
- Park property
- Land authorized for future park acquisition
- Picnic area
- Interpretive trail
- Lee vs. Grant driving tour roadside marker
- Scenic easement
- Land authorized for future park acquisition

**Possession or use of metal detectors on park property is illegal. Do not use this map to determine park boundaries. Check at park headquarters or visitor centers for accurate boundary information.**

Roadside markers can help you understand the people, places, and events of the four major Civil War battles fought in and around Fredericksburg.

### Touring the Battlefields

**Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park** commemorates the Chancellorsville Campaign and the battles of Fredericksburg, Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. The Chancellorsville Campaign included the battles of Chancellorsville, Second Fredericksburg, and Salem Church. There is a small fee to see the park films. All other activities are free.

Each battlefield has a self-guiding driving tour. The park has two visitor centers, four historic structures, and 12 hiking trails. Contact a visitor center for hiking trails information.

Tape tours and pamphlets about the battles are available at visitor centers. Rangers give walking tours and interpretive programs from early June through Labor Day. Park histori-

ans at visitor centers and at Chatham give information about the park and its story. Publications on Civil War history are sold at the visitor centers, Chatham, and Stonewall Jackson Shrine. The shrine is open daily in summer, with reduced hours the rest of the year.

Picnic tables are available at each battlefield and at Chatham and Stonewall Jackson

Shrine. The park has no overnight camping. Prince William Forest Park, 23 miles north of Fredericksburg, offers National Park Service campgrounds. Call 703-221-7181.

**Regulations** To help us preserve this historic area, please observe the following regulations:

- Relic hunting or possessing metal detectors on park property is forbidden.

- Recreation activities like ball playing, kite flying, skateboarding, and in-line skating are not permitted.
- Do not climb on the cannon, monuments, earthworks, or historic ruins.
- Possession or use of any kind of weapon is generally prohibited.
- Picnic only in designated areas.
- Fires are permitted only at picnic areas in grills. Extinguish fires

completely before you leave.

- To wash, polish, or repair a motor vehicle is prohibited except in emergencies.
- All vehicles, including bicycles, must stay on roads open to the motoring public.
- To cut or gather any firewood is prohibited.
- To hunt, trap, spotlight, or intentionally disturb wildlife is forbidden.
- To consume and/or

possess open alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

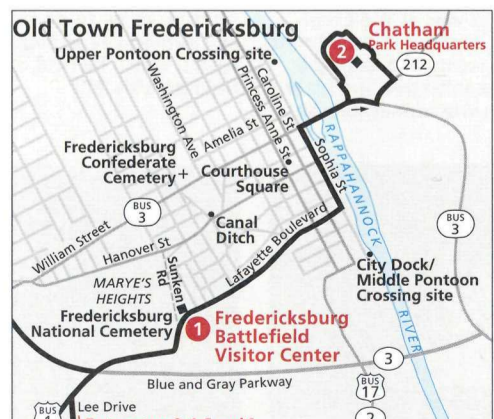
- Pets must be leashed.

**For Your Safety** Driving tours require turning onto and off of busy roads. Hiking, jogging, and bicycling are encouraged here, and motorists must be alert to these activities. Beware of stinging insects and poisonous plants. Wear sturdy walking shoes on trails, especially at Spotsylvania, and be alert

for hazards. Use caution and have a safe, enjoyable visit.

**Accessibility** The first floors of Chatham, Fredericksburg Battlefield Visitor Center, and Stonewall Jackson Shrine are wheelchair-accessible. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to visit the Chancellorsville Battlefield Visitor Center, which is completely accessible to wheelchairs.

**More Information**  
 Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park  
 120 Chatham Lane  
 Fredericksburg, VA 22405-2508  
 540-373-6122  
[www.nps.gov/frsp](http://www.nps.gov/frsp)



Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).