

# Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

Republic, Missouri

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



**The Battle of Wilson's Creek**, named for the stream that flows through the area, was fought on August 10, 1861, and marked the beginning of the Civil War in Missouri. The bitter five-hour struggle between Union and Confederate forces involved more than 17,000 troops, leaving 2,539 killed and wounded.

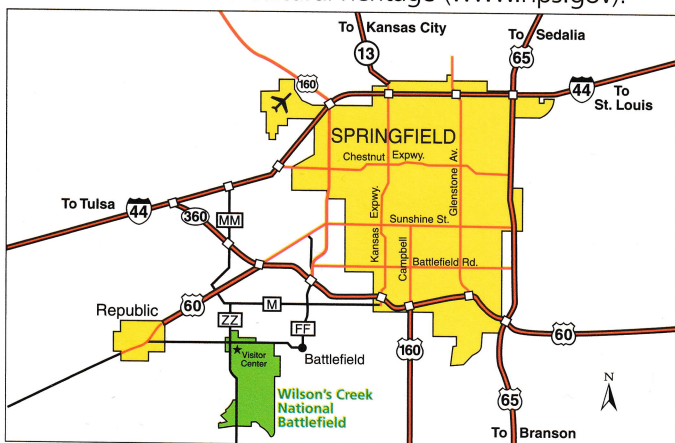
When the Civil War began in 1861, most people in Missouri desired neutrality, but many, including Missouri's governor, held strong Southern sympathies and planned to cooperate with the Confederacy. This, coupled with Missouri's strategic location along river supply routes, caused Missouri to become fiercely contested ground in an ever-changing bid for control by both sides.

Wartime engagements most often were dominated by guerrilla warfare, with small bands of mounted raiders destroying anything military or civilian that could aid the enemy. The Battle of Wilson's Creek typified much of the Civil War—Confederate victories of individual battles eventually giving way to the domination by Northern forces and the ultimate salvation of the Union.

**Wilson's Creek National Battlefield** includes a Visitor Center that features a film, electric battle map presentation, exhibits, and a bookstore. Our new Civil War museum, located just north of the Visitor Center, traces the history of the Civil War in the West with thousands of historical items. A 5-mile auto tour road provides convenient access to the battlefield with stops at important points of interest.

Outdoor recreation opportunities include walking, jogging, bicycling, picnicking, and equestrian riding. An entrance fee is charged and paid at the Visitor Center. Other programs such as tours of the Ray House, Bloody Hill and historic weapons firing demonstrations are offered based on volunteer availability during the summer. Contact our office or view our web site for current information on programs.

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is part of the National Park System, one of 390 areas that are examples of the nation's natural and cultural heritage ([www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)).



The battlefield is located three miles east of Republic and ten miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri. From I-44, take Exit 70 (MO MM) south to US 60. Cross US 60 and drive 3/4-mile to MO ZZ. From US 60 and US 65, take the James River Expressway to MO 60 south and/or the Republic Exit, then south on MO 60 to MO M, south on MO M 3/4 mile to MO ZZ. Turn south on MO ZZ for one mile to Farm Road No. 182, then turn left into entrance.

#### **More Information:**

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield  
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