

Agency Official 106 Effect Report

*Rehabilitation the War Department Log Garage for Curatorial Storage
Spotsylvania 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.

The park has a museum collection of over 77,000 artifacts. Some of these artifacts are currently on display as part of museum exhibits and historic furnishings in various park facilities and buildings. The vast majority of the collection is currently housed in curatorial storage in the basement of the Chancellorsville Visitor Center. A third of the archaeology collection is stored in the office of the Green Springs National Historic Landmark District, which is located at the Chatham Unit of the park.

Need

The 2009 Collection Management Plan for the park identified the need for improved collections storage. The need for bringing all of the storage together under one roof and provide for better climate control and fire suppression was acknowledged.

As recent as 1994, the basement of the Chancellorsville Battlefield Visitor Center experienced major flooding after a severe storm knocked out power for extended period and rendered the sump pump inoperable. The water rose to several inches above the floor and some artifacts were under water. While improvements have been made, the possibility exists that the basement could flood again, thus putting the collection at risk. The need to move the collection to a better storage environment was recognized and suggested in the 2009 Collection Management Plan.

The storage space in the basement of the Chancellorsville Battlefield Visitor Center measures 335 square feet. The collection has outgrown that space and boxes containing artifacts are stacked on the floor for lack of cabinet or shelf space. The collection continues to grow, specifically the archaeological collection, and there is no more space to house additional artifacts. As a result, boxes containing artifacts from the archaeological collection are currently being housed in the closet in the Green Springs National Historic Landmark District, which is

located at the Chatham Unit of the park. The closet is not secure for more boxes and this building lacks a fire suppression system.

A new storage location is needed to provide adequate space and to protect the collection with appropriate climate control and fire suppression systems. The park is now proposing to move the collections storage to a new building. This would require the rehabilitation of the War Department Log Building, an existing historic structure on the Fredericksburg Battlefield.

The War Department Log Garage was constructed in the 1930s to serve maintenance staff on the Fredericksburg Battlefield. It operated in that capacity through the 1980s, at which time the building was turned over to the park's law enforcement division, which used it for storage of excess furniture. In the 1970s, the log garage was altered with the removal of one of its two sliding-door bays. This bay was framed and enclosed with plywood, with a single entrance door and a modern overhead garage door added.

Property Description

A. Major Physical Components – The War Department Log Garage sits on National Park Service land on the Fredericksburg Battlefield. It is part of a compound that consists of four structures that serves as the offices for the park's law enforcement unit. The compound is enclosed by a fence and sits along Lee Drive, the primary park tour road on the Fredericksburg Battlefield.

B. Architectural Significance – The War Department Log Garage was constructed in the 1930s to serve maintenance staff on the Fredericksburg Battlefield. While its exact date of construction is unknown, the garage did exist by 1939. In the most recent draft of the park's National Register of Historic Places documentation update, the log garage (NR #FR0130e) is considered a contributing structure under the park's subtheme: Military Park Development by the War Department, Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Park Service – 1927 to 1956. The War Department Log Garage is on the park's List of Classified Structures (LCS) – LCS#83058. According to the LCS, the preferred ultimate treatment for this structure is rehabilitation. It is a one-story, double pen, debarked, saddle notched building with lapped metal roof, 23-feet by 40-feet. It retains one original double-sliding door on the west elevation. The second set of double-sliding doors was removed in the 1970s and that opening was framed and enclosed with a plywood front and a single entry door. The garage is open on the inside and lacks any walls dividing the interior space.

Description of Alternatives

Alternative A – No Action

This alternative would hinder the park's ability to adequately store and protect the park's curatorial collection.

Alternative B – Renovate Residential Quarters #6 for Curatorial Storage

Under this alternative one of the park's residential quarters on the Chancellorsville Battlefield would be renovated for curatorial storage. Quarters #6 is a Mission-66 residential house built in 1963 and currently used as living space for seasonal and part-time staff. In the most recent draft of the park's National Register of Historic Places documentation update, Quarters #6 (NR #CH0079) is considered a non-contributing structure. Unfortunately, this building's location in the woods of Chancellorsville has given rise to a damp environment that has resulted in mold growth within the building and insect infestation that the park has been unable to resolve. These are not conditions conducive to the storage of the park's curatorial collection.

Alternative C – Rehabilitate Chatham Carriage House and Stable for Curatorial Storage

Under this alternative, the park would rehabilitate the Chatham Carriage House and Stable for curatorial storage. The structure was built in the 1920s. In the most recent draft of the park's National Register of Historic Places documentation update, the carriage house and stable (NR #FR0138ii) is considered a contributing structure for its architectural expression. The Chatham Carriage House and Stable is on the park's List of Classified Structures (LCS) – LCS#07877. According to the LCS, the preferred ultimate treatment for this structure is preservation. Currently, the carriage house and stable contains the public restrooms and the office of the manager of the Green Springs National Historic Landmark District. Under this alternative, an additional area within the stable would be rehabilitated to accept the curatorial storage. This would entail pouring a concrete floor, where a dirt floor exists, constructing a pre-fabricated metal building within the existing open space of the stable in such a way as to not impact the historic structure. It would also entail installing necessary electrical, HVAC and fire suppression systems. Under this alternative, however, the available space inside the existing historic structure limits the size of the storage area. Under this alternative, no additional space would be gained over the existing storage location.

Alternative D – Rehabilitate the War Department Log Garage for Curatorial Storage

Under this alternative, the park proposes to rehabilitate the War Department Log Garage for curatorial storage. This would entail the construction of a pre-fabricated building that would sit inside the log garage. The garage currently has a concrete floor, which would be built up, with concrete, an additional two inches. The pre-fabricated building would sit on, and anchor to, the concrete floor. The pre-fabricated building would not anchor to any of the existing historic fabric inside the garage – it would simply sit inside the existing open space of the garage. A 1970s furnace will be removed from the interior of the garage and a modern HVAC system would be installed, as would a fire suppression system. These systems would run along the rafters of the log garage and access the pre-fabricated storage building. Electrical supply would come through the existing conduits. Water and HVAC would require holes drilled through the exterior of the building, but these access points would be through the log chinking, which is not historic fabric. The open bay that was altered in the 1970s would be dismantled and rebuilt to allow only a double-door access, all of which would be painted the same color as the log garage. The modern overhead garage door would be removed. As the existing fabric dates from the 1970s, no historic fabric would be impacted through this construction. Additionally, to assist with rainwater management, a drain will be installed in the pavement along the front of the log building and

terne coated steel gutters and downspouts added. This will also help to preserve the historic fabric of the building, which is suffering from rainwater splashing up from the pavement.

Under this alternative, the need for additional storage space, complete with climate control systems and fire suppression would be met with no impact to the historic fabric of the log garage. The pre-fabricated storage space would be constructed within the existing open space. Likewise, it could be dismantled in the future without impact to the historic fabric of the log garage. The rehabilitation of the log garage would be accomplished with “no adverse effect” to the building.

Description of Mitigation Measures

A. The pre-fabricated storage building would be assembled within the existing open space of the garage. No historic fabric would be affected.

B. The pre-fabricated building would not be anchored in any way to the historic log garage.

C. The construction of the pre-fabricated building would be reversible without and impact to the historic log garage or its historic fabric.

Park Consultation

The proposal is being circulated to the park’s Section-106 advisors for historic architecture and museums.

The proposal is going through a 30-day public comment and review period. During this time, the project will be posted on the park’s website. The park will contact representatives of interested local organizations such as Mary Washington College’s Department of Historic Preservation, the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table, the City of Fredericksburg, and the Friends of the Fredericksburg Battlefield.

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

Effect Analysis

During the rehabilitation of the log garage, no historic fabric will be affected. The construction of the pre-fabricated building for curatorial storage space will occur within the existing open space of the log garage – a building within a building. It is the park’s belief that the project as proposed will result in the better long-term overall protection of the curatorial storage. For this reason, the park’s opinion is that this undertaking will have “no adverse effect” on architectural resources.

Attached Supporting Documentation

- A. Park Map
- B. Exhibit Development Plans
- C. Photos

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