



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania
National Military Park
120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22405

February 25, 2008

Reference: Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Restoration and Rehabilitation of the Ellwood House on Wilderness Battlefield

Subject: Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

The National Park Service (NPS) is developing plans to preserve, restore and rehabilitate Ellwood on the Wilderness Battlefield in Orange County, Virginia. The project would provide for improved interpretive opportunities and help to preserve a key park resource. Furthermore, this project will support the park's goal, as outlined in its most recent General Management Plan (1986), which states that "Ellwood will be restored..."

Built ca. 1799, Ellwood is a historic plantation house on the Wilderness Battlefield in Spotsylvania County, Virginia. During the 1864 Civil War Battle of the Wilderness, the home was used as a headquarters for a number of Union generals, as well as served as a hospital for many of those who fell in that battle. In 1971, the NPS purchased Ellwood and granted its final owner a life tenure estate. When that individual died in 1977, the NPS took possession of the house and incorporated it into the Wilderness Battlefield unit of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park (FRSP). The structure was stabilized and moth-balled, and for twenty years has existed as essentially an outdoor exhibit.

About ten years ago, a local organization, sympathetic to both Ellwood and the Wilderness Battlefield, became interested in the future of the building. The Friends of Wilderness Battlefield (FOWB) started staffing the building on weekends, and handle interpretation of both the structure and grounds. The FOWB's long-term goal was to raise money for the building's restoration. In 2007, FOWB reached its first fundraising goal and planning commenced on the first phase of restoration. More recently, as part of the NPS Centennial Challenge, additional monies are being allocated for additional work on Ellwood.

The first component of the planned continuation of restoration and rehabilitation of Ellwood will be three rooms on the first floor. These are the stairhall, the west ell, and the south addition. Plans include restoring and covering the walls, many of which are missing plaster and lathe; restoring historic wood trim; restoring and covering the ceilings, which lack any plaster or lathe; and re-opening the porch on the south addition. The plan is to utilize these rooms as space open to the public, which will house interpretive exhibits.

The second component will involve the rehabilitation of the five rooms on the second floor: south bedroom, center room, north bedroom, stairhall, and west ell. The plan, at the moment, is to stabilize these rooms and retard any further deterioration. Creating a climate controlled environment is important, so holes in the ceilings must be closed, and windows repaired so that they operate correctly. Plans also include restoring and covering walls that have deteriorated and

where plaster is failing, many of which are missing plaster and lathe; restoring historic wood trim; restoring and covering the ceilings, which lack any plaster or lathe; and the replacement of the chimney cap on the north end of the house. No determination has yet been made whether to open these rooms to the public, or perhaps utilize them as office or storage space.

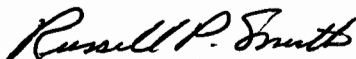
In addition to the overall rehabilitation and restoration, the park also plans to take care many of the smaller issues that can arise when working on a historic building. Sagging floors, which might pose a hazard, need to be addressed; electrical, fire and intrusion alarm systems that might need to be replaced or relocated.

In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.4, the NPS proposes to phase implementation of preserving, restoring and rehabilitating Ellwood by implementing these actions over a period of five years, depending upon funding and other factors. We have determined that these undertakings may have an effect upon properties included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Because we will not be able to determine the nature of the project's effects prior to approval of the undertaking, we have initiated consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office in the development of a programmatic agreement to set forth the process we will follow. In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.14, we are inviting interested parties and organizations to participate in the development of this programmatic agreement. Please consider this letter notice of our intent and an invitation for your organization to be involved in this process.

Please let us know if your organization wishes to participate, and at what level, in this process. I may be reached at 540-372-3032 if you have any questions or additional needs.

Sincerely,


Russell P. Smith
Superintendent