



Foundation Document Overview

Moores Creek National Battlefield

North Carolina



Contact Information

For more information about the *Moores Creek National Battlefield Foundation Document*, contact: Park Headquarters, 910-283-5591 or www.nps.gov/mocr or write to: Superintendent, 40 Patriots Hall Drive, Currie, NC 28435

Purpose



The purpose of MOORES CREEK NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD is to commemorate and preserve for education and military study, the sites and stories surrounding the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, fought February 27, 1776.



Significance

Significance statements express why Moores Creek National Battlefield resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- This national battlefield preserves the site of the February 27, 1776, Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, the first decisive Patriot victory of the Revolutionary War.
- Local efforts to preserve the site of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge resulted in one of the first instances of commemoration of the Revolutionary War.



- Moores Creek Bridge was the site of the last Scottish Highlands broadsword charge, reflecting changing war and battlefield tactics.
- Moores Creek National Battlefield contains the last known remaining stretch of Negro Head Point Road that extended from Wilmington to Fayetteville. The road crossing over Moores Creek was chosen by Patriot forces to make a strategic stand against the Loyalists and led to the Battle of Moores Creek.
- The victory at Moores Creek Bridge helped delay a full-scale invasion of the South by British forces. The resulting Halifax Resolve of April 12, 1776, instructed the colony's delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence from Great Britain. North Carolina was the first colony to do so.

Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **The battlefield and its associated elements of earthworks, the bridge site, the causeway, Negro Head Point Road, and Moores Creek.** The site where Loyalist and Patriot forces met on February 27, 1776, includes many features that played a direct role in how the battle was fought and won. Defensive earthworks were constructed by Patriot forces, while the bridge over the creek was stripped down to its beams and covered in grease in order to slow down Loyalist advances.
- **Remnant of Negro Head Point Road outside the battlefield.** The remaining road segment of Negro Head Point Road is evidence of a historic transportation network built in the region that impacted countless lives. Providing access to commercial goods like the naval stores industry, the road also played a role in the transportation and trade of enslaved Africans.
- **Historic natural setting; woodlands, swamps, savannahs, longleaf pine stands, etc.** The natural environment of North Carolina and the topography of the region influenced the Battle of Moores Creek. Swamps and rivers limited people's ability to move through the area, making roads and bridges strategically important for troop movements.
- **Commemorative atmosphere.** An atmosphere of commemoration at the park provides an opportunity for visitors to reflect on and remember the sacrifices made on both sides during the Revolutionary War. The Battle of Moores Creek, along with the actions of the combatants, had an important impact on the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War and the future of the United States of America.



Other Important Resources and Values

Moores Creek National Battlefield may contain other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Museum collections; items from the battle and other original 18th-century weaponry not from the battle site.** Moores Creek National Battlefield museum collection totals over 82,000 objects, natural history specimens, and archival documents.



- **Tar Kilns and Negro Head Point Road sign.** Moores Creek National Battlefield houses tar kilns and the Negro Head Point Road sign that relate the history of the naval stores industry and the institution of slavery.
- **Involvement of the community and Revolutionary War descendants in commemorating the site of the battle and its participants.** Initial efforts to preserve the site of the Battle of Moores Creek were carried out by local community members, often the descendants of troops who fought in the battle.
- **Memorials, monuments, and gravestones.** The memorials, monuments, and gravestones present at Moores Creek National Battlefield illustrate and foster the commemorative atmosphere at the park.

Description of Moores Creek National Battlefield

Moores Creek National Battlefield commemorates one of the first battles fought during the Revolutionary War and provides an opportunity to understand how America's war for independence took shape in the South. Throughout the southern colonies, Patriot militias rallied around the cause of liberty and freedom while Loyalist armies organized in defense of British rule. These opposing forces would meet in the early hours of February 27, 1776, at Moores Creek in rural North Carolina. With its strategic location on Negro Head Point Road, Moores Creek became the site of one of the first clashes between Patriots and Loyalists during the early stages of the Revolutionary War.

As the path to revolution in the American colonies became inevitable, Loyalist armies attempted to rendezvous and organize with other British forces on the North Carolina coast. Having been informed of the approaching Loyalist army, a Patriot militia constructed earthworks at the strategic crossing of Moores Creek, stripped the bridge and covered its beams with grease, and laid in wait as the Loyalists approached.

After the Loyalists crossed the bridge, the battle cry "King George and Broadsword" rang out as the largely Scottish Highland Loyalist army charged the Patriot defenses. The traditional broadsword charge proved fatal to the Loyalist army, which was quickly defeated. The decisive Patriot victory at Moores Creek prevented Loyalist armies from consolidating into a larger British force and delayed a full-scale invasion of the South, marking an important victory in the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War. The events that took place at the battle of Moores Creek led to North Carolina casting the first vote for independence at the Continental Congress.

Moores Creek National Battlefield consists of 87 acres of land in Pender County, North Carolina. The park features the battlefield, monuments, interpretive trails, a visitor center and museum, and communal picnic areas. The natural setting consisting of woodlands, swamps, savannahs, and longleaf pine as well as key battlefield elements such as the earthworks, the reconstructed bridge site, Negro Head Point Road, and Moores Creek, tells the story of the Battle of Moores Creek.

