



Foundation Document Overview

Kings Mountain National Military Park

South Carolina



Contact Information

For more information about the *Kings Mountain National Military Park Foundation Document*, contact: kimo_superintendent@nps.gov or (864) 936-7921 or write to:
Superintendent, Kings Mountain National Military Park, 2625 Park Road, Blacksburg, SC 29702

Purpose



KINGS MOUNTAIN NATIONAL MILITARY PARK is commemorates the relatively brief but decisive all militia Battle of Kings Mountain, the first major Patriot victory of the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution on October 7, 1780, in South Carolina.



Significance

Significance statements express why Kings Mountain National Military Park 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.

1. The park preserves the entire battlefield site in a natural setting evocative of the Carolina frontier of 1780 and commemorates one of the most important Patriot victories of the American Revolution and the first major Patriot victory of the Southern Campaign. This battle was recognized by both sides as a turning point in the war.
2. The battle at Kings Mountain was one of the few battles of the war where the American long rifle (and associated tactics) was the primary weapon of the Patriot troops, and this fact was instrumental in the outcome of the battle.
3. The Colonel William Chronicle Marker is the second oldest battlefield monument (1815) in the United States. (Completed on July 4, 1799, the Revolutionary Monument on the Common or Battle Green in Lexington, Massachusetts, is the nation's oldest Revolutionary War memorial and is the gravesite of those colonists slain in the Battle of Lexington.)
4. The park contains some of the best preserved remnants of Colonial-era roads and trails that are associated with the route traveled by the troops in the Battle of Kings Mountain campaign, which are Department of the Interior-certified segments, and it marks the southern terminus of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.
5. The park contains mixed hardwood forest resembling the upper piedmont during the 18th century. Kings Mountain National Military Park preserves several species of concern such as the Georgia aster and the northern bobwhite. The size of the total area (15,000 acres) preserved in a continuous band of national and state parks, including Kings Mountain State Park in South Carolina and Crowders Mountain State Park in North Carolina, is important in preserving critical ecosystems.

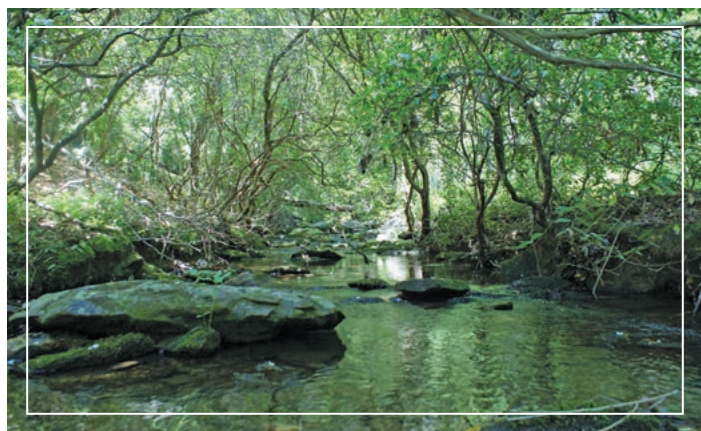
Fundamental Resources and Values

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 Site Including Routes To and From It**
- **Weapons and Tactics**
- **Personalities and Motivations**
- **Visitor Experience**
- **Commemoration of the Battle**

Kings Mountain National Military Park contains 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.

- **Henry Howser House**
- **Tangible Resources and Infrastructure**



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- The battle at Kings Mountain was one of the few battles of the Revolutionary War where the American long rifle (and the associated tactics) was the primary weapon of the Patriot troops, and its use was instrumental in the outcome of the battle.
- The battle at Kings Mountain was one of the only major battles of the American Revolution fought exclusively between Patriot and Loyalist militias.
- Kings Mountain is the only unit of the national park system that commemorates a Revolutionary War battle for which the entire battlefield is preserved and protected within the unit.
- The park contains a National Register of Historic Places listed building (the 1803 Howser House) that is an extremely rare example of this type of vernacular architecture in the region.
- The park is a unit of the national park system that preserves significant cultural resources associated with the American experience including several historical monuments. (There was an early recognition that preserving this place and the story was very important.) Kings Mountain is one of few Revolutionary War battlefields where the British commander of the forces on the field is buried on the field.
- The park contains some of the best preserved remnants of Colonial period roads and trails that are associated with the route marched by the troops in the Battle of Kings Mountain campaign and that are part of the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail.
- The gathering of 75,000–80,000 people at Kings Mountain in 1930 to hear President Herbert Hoover on the occasion of the sesquicentennial celebration of the battle represents one of the largest crowds ever to hear a president speak at such a remote and inaccessible site with extremely limited facilities for food, water, and sanitation.
- The park contains mixed hardwood forest resembling the upper piedmont during the 18th century. Kings Mountain National Military Park preserves several species of concern such as the Georgia aster and the northern bobwhite. The size of the total area (15,000 acres) preserved in a continuous band of national and state parks, including Kings Mountain State Park in South Carolina and Crowders Mountain State Park in North Carolina, is important in preserving critical ecosystems.

Description

Kings Mountain National Military Park preserves the entire battlefield and part of the approach route used by the Overmountain Victory fighters for the October 7, 1780, battle between Patriot and Loyalist militias during the Southern Campaign of the American Revolutionary War. Thomas Jefferson referred to the decisive Patriot victory as “The turn of the tide of success.”

Kings Mountain National Military Park is between Charlotte, North Carolina, and Spartanburg, South Carolina, about 18 miles northeast of Gaffney, South Carolina, along Interstate 85. The park contains 3,945 acres in York County and Cherokee County, South Carolina. The park is administratively managed as part of the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution group, which, in addition to Kings Mountain National Military Park, includes Cowpens National Battlefield, about 30 miles to the west near Chesnee, South Carolina; Ninety-Six National Historic Site, about 110 miles southwest near Greenwood, South Carolina; and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, which runs for 270 miles from Abingdon, Virginia, through North Carolina, Tennessee, and South Carolina to its terminus at Battleground Ridge in Kings Mountain. Within this rural setting, the military park contains a broad range of significant historic and natural resources. The National Register of Historic Places lists Kings Mountain National Military Park as a historic battleground.

Kings Mountain National Military Park encompasses the entire field of battle for the Battle of Kings Mountain that occurred on October 7, 1780. Because the landscape has changed little in the past 237 years, it provides the visitor with a historic scene that greatly enhances the appreciation of the battleground, including 1,200-foot Battleground Ridge, forested slopes, and stream. In the park, visitors can view monuments to several commanding officers and other historical figures associated with the Battle of Kings Mountain and the park’s commemorative development period. The park also contains numerous historic structures, including buildings, monuments, markers, and roads. In addition, there are significant archeological sites in the park. Interpretive exhibits display weapons, clothing, and household artifacts of rural South Carolina during the Revolutionary War.

Kings Mountain National Military Park’s 3,945 acres contain multiple trails for interpretation of the battlefield and that are also used for recreation. Kings Mountain State Park, which adjoins Kings Mountain National Military Park on its southeastern boundary, significantly expands recreational access to visitors.

Kings Mountain National Military Park preserves substantial wildlife habitat within its boundaries. Many forest-dependent species permanently reside or frequently pass through the park. Kings Mountain National Military Park along with Kings Mountain State Park, Crowders Mountain State Park in North Carolina, and the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail provide a network of important resource areas for wildlife and wildlife viewing.

Annual recreational visitation to the park has averaged around 264,363 since the year 2000. The typical peak period of visitation at Kings Mountain National Military Park is May through September. The months with the lowest visitation levels are January and February. Most of the park’s visitors participate in day use activities such as hiking, walking, and educational programs.

