

Outside Group Use Policy

Standard Operating Procedure Shiloh National Military Park

In addition to its regular education and interpretive program, Shiloh National Military Park will conduct public **commemorative and memorial activities**, relevant to the core mission of the NPS and the park. These activities may be held on Shiloh Battlefield (including the Shiloh National Cemetery and Shiloh Indian Mounds National Historic Landmark) and at sites within the Corinth Unit.

This policy governs only commemorative and memorial activities, and does not apply to weddings and First Amendment Activities, both of which are covered under separately established SOPs permitting those uses of the park.

The following policies will apply and be strictly enforced:

1. As the responsible agency for preserving the park's Civil War history on the ground it occurred, the National Park Service will be the primary sponsor of any such public commemorative and memorial events held on park grounds. In developing plans for these events, the park will actively seek partnerships with outside organizations whose participation can enhance the quality and character of such ceremonies. The park will issue invitations to participate in such events based on the nature of the event and an outside group's resources and its ability to contribute to a particular activity. In selecting appropriate groups to participate, the Superintendent will evaluate an organization's mission, interests, expertise, professionalism, peer reputation, and performance history.
2. Commemorative and memorial events will be held on either 1) federal or state holidays which have clear association with the planned observance, or 2) the anniversary date of historical events significant to the park's history. Such annual observances will be limited to a single ceremony on the designated date, unless multiple events on the same day are suggested by the nature of park resources (for example, holding multiple Memorial Day events at more than one of the park's widely dispersed military burial sites). The level of public interest, the impact of the special event on regularly scheduled park activities, and the cost of conducting such activities will all be considered in planning any such ceremonies.
3. The policy of holding ceremonies on anniversaries and holidays applies only to publicly announced memorial and commemorative events, and not to **educational and interpretive events** whose purpose is to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of the park's purpose and significance. As the park regularly updates its annual interpretive plan, Shiloh NMP will welcome proposals from any qualified group (such as Civil War "living historian" groups) who wish to come on the park to conduct such programs. Successful proposals by outside groups

must fit within the guidelines of the park's overall interpretive program, as determined by the Superintendent. Approval of such events is also subject to the availability of park resources to support the activity. Because of the inherent danger, the use of black powder weapons will be limited to park-sponsored events, and will be strictly governed by NPS regulation and policy.

4. Groups wishing to hold **private memorial services** (such as laying a wreath at an individual park monument) must apply for a special use permit. Such activities will be limited to groups of no more than 150 participants, and cannot be advertised outside the membership of the organization. Approved events must not inhibit normal visitor activity. Especially with larger groups, approval will also depend on availability of park support resources. Application for a permit should be filed at least one week before the event.
5. Groups wishing to conduct **public ceremonies** (including assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, or religious activities) whose purposes lie outside the scope of the commemorative and interpretive activities discussed above should make a request for a special use permit under the park's First Amendment Activity guidelines. Application for a permit should be filed at least one week before the event.
6. No group may have exclusive use of an area of the park. Areas within the park cannot be reserved.
7. No group may interfere with vehicle or foot traffic flow in the park. The only exception is that groups may temporarily hold up traffic for up to a minute to allow pedestrians to cross a park road.
8. No funds may be solicited in the park.
9. Roadways and parking areas cannot be blocked by group or spectator vehicles. Groups must be aware that visitors to the park arrive in recreational vehicles, buses, and pulling travel trailers. Space for these vehicles must be maintained. Tables can be used at activities, but walkways cannot be blocked.
10. Groups conducting authorized (permitted) private memorial ceremonies, as well as public ceremonies, gatherings, meetings, assemblies, demonstrations, or religious activities are required to pay the per person park entrance fee at the visitor center and obtain the required entrance permit receipt upon entry to the park. This policy does not apply to groups officially invited by the National Park Service to participate in a park sponsored commemorative, memorial, interpretive, or educational activity.
11. Groups may be required to provide a monetary bond to the park (amount determined by the Superintendent) to cover any damages or clean-up costs incurred by the park in connection with the groups activities. This bond may be

returned to the group upon completion of an area inspection by designated park personnel.

12. A special use permit issued for private group activities and public gatherings may contain additional conditions and stipulations as determined by the superintendent apply to the requested activity or event being authorized.

Reviewed by: Stacy D. Allen _____ Date: 04/06/04
Chief Park Ranger

Approved by: Haywood S. Harrell _____ Date: 04/06/04
Superintendent