



## United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service  
Fort Donelson National Battlefield  
P.O. Box 434  
Dover, Tennessee 37058-0434



**W48**

**March 20, 2009**

### **Standard Operating Procedure FODO-A-011**

**To: All Employees, Fort Donelson National Battlefield**

**From: Superintendent, Fort Donelson National Battlefield**

**Subject: Roadway Gate Management Procedures**

#### **I. POLICY**

In an effort to further protect the cultural and natural resources of Fort Donelson National Battlefield and assure staff and visitor safety when necessary, the National Park Service has installed metal gates on tour roads providing access to the park. One gate is across the main park tour road adjacent to the Visitor Center. The second gate is at the bottom of the park maintenance road (Eddyville Spur). The third gate is located at the main entrance of the Fort Donelson National Cemetery. Another gate is planned for the Graves Battery Road but it is unknown when this gate will be installed. This policy will remain in force until rescinded by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

This policy will be in effect for vehicular access along Park tour roads until further notice or staffing is available to monitor access for extended hours.

Extended hours currently are set according to daylight savings time. When daylight savings time is in affect (e.g. FY09- March 8, 2009 begins and ends November 1, 2009) gates will remain open 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Otherwise tour roads and gates are open to vehicular traffic 7:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**THIS POLICY DOES NOT INTEND TO LIMIT ACCESS TO PARK TOUR ROADS OR NATIONAL CEMETERY FOR NON-MOTORIZED/FOOT TRAFFIC. VISITORS MAY PARK IN LOTS OR ROAD SHOULDERS FOR THESE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES BUT SHALL NOT BLOCK GATES.**

## II. PREPARATION AND SET-UP

1. All gate arms will be marked with reflective tape or reflectors on both sides.
2. The three inbound gate arms will have "Road Closed" signs facing forward to instruct drivers to not drive around the inbound gate when it is closed.
3. All three gates will have signs posted facing inward instructing them who to call in case they are locked in behind the gates.
4. If necessary, all gate areas will have obstructions (i.e.: management rocks) placed between the gates and another feature (natural, man-made) to prevent drivers from going around the gates.
5. Signs indicating the road operating hours (FY09 Hours of Operation until further notice for all park roads is 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) must be placed facing outward in a conspicuous location to inform visitors of the closing times.
6. Locks for the three gates should have a unique core to minimize the areas a key will access. Keys will be issued to local law enforcement and the Dover Fire Department in case of emergency, as well as to all park employees with access rights.

## III. PROCEDURES

### 1. Main Park Gate

#### Opening Procedures

- A. The gate will be opened near the Visitor Center as early as possible before 8 am. Generally the Facilities Management Division will be responsible for opening this gate but will fall to the Ranger Division if there are no Maintenance employees on duty, or if they are not able to do so.

#### Closing Procedures

- A. At 4:30 pm the Visitor Center Ranger will take down the U.S. Flag and then close the inbound gate arm which should eliminate any further vehicles entering the tour road.
- B. As soon as practical the on-duty law enforcement ranger will be responsible for clearing the park tour road. If there is no law enforcement ranger on duty, then any park employee may use a government vehicle to clear the road. This will consist of notifying persons with vehicles beyond the gates that the road is closing and they will have to leave or park their cars in the Visitor Center parking lot. **Employee safety is of primary importance and they shall not place themselves in jeopardy or in a situation that compromises their safety. Employees shall contact law enforcement and notify them of any vehicles or activities that they observed and were not able to resolve in efforts to close the park and secure park gates (please see D below).**
- C. Once the Ranger has ensured that there are no vehicles beyond the gate, he/she will close and lock the outbound gate arm and will clear the scene.

D. If the Ranger is unable to locate the driver of a vehicle parked beyond the gates, he/she will notify the on-duty law enforcement ranger or in their absence notify the Stewart County Sheriff Office Dispatch and provide details of vehicles remaining within the park tour roads-make, model, color, license plate number and state. The outbound gate will be left open to provide access for the vehicle to exit the park and Dover City or Stewart County Sheriff Officers will secure the gate when feasible during the evening shift.

## **2. Park Maintenance Road (Eddyville Spur) Gate**

This gate will be the responsibility of the Facility Management Division. The first maintenance employee to arrive or who needs to use the road will open it. The best procedure would be to open the Main Park Gate, drive through the park and down the Maintenance Road, and open the Spur Gate. The last maintenance employee to leave the compound will ensure the gate is closed and locked. On weekends or when there are no maintenance employees on duty, the park law enforcement ranger may open the gate but in doing so will take responsibility for ensuring it is closed and locked at the end of the day.

## **3. National Cemetery Gate**

### Opening Procedures

Generally, the Facility Management Division will be responsible for opening this gate. On days in which there is no Headquarters staff or maintenance employees on duty, the Ranger Activities Division will open the gates as near to 8 a.m. as possible. In practice the first Headquarters employee arriving will open the gate.

### Closing Procedures

A. On weekdays, the first Headquarters employee leaving the National Cemetery at or near 4:30 will close the inbound gate arm to prevent or reduce the number of vehicles entering the drive. If this is the only HQ employee on duty, he/she should drive to the rear parking area to check for parked cars. If one is encountered, contact the driver and inform them that the cemetery is closing. If they refuse, follow the instructions listed above in section 1 D. Generally the park law enforcement ranger will check the gate before going out of service.

B. On weekends and Federal holidays the Ranger Activities Division-On-duty law enforcement will be responsible for assuring that the national cemetery gate is open and area is open for public vehicular access minimally between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

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Michael J. Manning, Chief Ranger

Approved by:

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Steven A. McCoy, Superintendent

Concurred by:

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Stewart County Sheriffs Office

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Town of Dover, Tennessee