



## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release  
March 10, 2014**

For more information, contact:  
Leigh Mawyer  
Tourism Manager  
(540) 661-5328

### **ORANGE COUNTY RECOGNIZES COMMEMORATION EVENTS FOR THE 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS**

Orange County, VA – Special tours, encampments, and activities will commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the “Battle of the Wilderness” in Orange County, Virginia on May 3-7, 2014.

The Battle of the Wilderness was fought on May 5-7, 1864. When it was over, nearly 20,000 men were wounded and about 3,700 were killed, most ultimately buried in unknown graves. The fierce clash marked the beginning of what became known as the Overland Campaign, the bloodiest in American history, and what some historians today consider the turning point in the war in the east.

“This battle was certainly significant in the war as the start of that historic campaign,” says Leigh Mawyer, Tourism Manager at Orange County Tourism and Visitors Bureau. “Visitors during the May commemorations will have opportunities to experience the past and reflect on the costs of war as well as the impact the battle had on the people of this region.”

Activities in Orange County from May 3-7, 2014, will include a temporary visitor’s center at the southern end of Saunders Field, the spot where the Battle of the Wilderness first erupted and where Confederate troops forced the amassing Union army to change its plans for battle. There are also opportunities to experience living history camps, demonstrations, an “eve-of-battle” campfire gathering and more. Walking tours and history guides will be available at various times throughout the anniversary days tracing troop movements and visiting the sites of various headquarters and key points in the battle.

In addition to unique National Park Service programs open to the public, the Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield is coordinating several special programs including two (2) two-day battlefield bus tours: “The 1864 Winter Encampment: Union and Confederate” and “The 1864 Battle of the Wilderness,” as well as an array of living history programs and guided tours at Ellwood Manor on May 3-4, 2014. Details are available at [www.FoWB.org](http://www.FoWB.org).

The Wilderness Battlefield is located in eastern Orange County, approximately 15 minutes west of Interstate 95 at Fredericksburg, Virginia. It is part of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The sesquicentennial commemoration of the Overland Campaign has been identified as a National Park Service Signature Event for 2014.

Orange County is located 72 miles from the State capital, Richmond; 75 miles from Northern Virginia; 87 miles from the Nation’s capital, Washington, D.C.; and only 25 miles from Charlottesville. For more information, please visit [www.visitorangevirginia.com](http://www.visitorangevirginia.com).

###