

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

Linda Caldwell
423-263-7232
lcaldwell@tennesseeoverhill.com

**Cherokee Nat'l Forest announces acquisition of Fort Armistead
historic site**

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On Saturday, August 26, 2006, the Cherokee National Forest will announce the acquisition of the historic site where Fort Armistead once stood at Coker Creek, Tennessee. The announcement and program will take place at the Coker Creek Ruritan Club at 10:00 AM. The public is invited to attend the ceremony and hear a presentation on the historic significance of the site.

Dr. Brett Riggs, University of NC Laboratories for Archaeology, will present a brief history of the site and the historical events that took place there. Fort Armistead played a significant role in the early development of Tennessee. It began as a "stand" on the Unicoi Turnpike but later served as a federal fort to protect Cherokee lands from the encroachment of gold prospectors. During the Trail of Tears the site was used as an encampment for more than 3,000 Cherokee Indians who were forcibly moved to the west.

According to Linda Caldwell, Executive Director for the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association, "Fort Armistead is tied directly to the history of our state and nation." She added, "It's location on the Unicoi Turnpike Trail presents an opportunity to research and interpret the site as part of the overall trail project."

Sandra Brewer, President of the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association, said, "We are grateful to Ken and Kathleen Dalton for preserving the site, the Cherokee National Forest for agreeing to be its caretaker forever, and our Congressional delegation for securing the funds for acquisition."

Directions: The Coker Creek Ruritan Clubhouse sits about 2/10 of a mile off Hwy 68 on Hot Water Road. At the junction of Hwy 68/Hot Water Rd turn onto Hot Water Rd (left if traveling North on Hwy 68 or right if traveling South on Hwy 68). The Clubhouse is located on the left side of Hot Water Rd, across from Coker Creek Gallery.

Refreshments will be provided by the Coker Creek Economic Development Group.

For more information please contact the Tennessee Overhill Heritage Association
Phone: (423) 263-7232
Fax: (423) 263-1670
Email: office@tennesseeoverhill.com