

Chapter 6

Application of National Heritage Area Feasibility Criteria

The National Park Service has outlined four critical steps that should be taken prior to congressional designation of a national heritage area. These steps are:

1. Completion of a suitability/feasibility study.

This report documents the analysis and conclusions of the suitability/feasibility study for a Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area.

2. Public Involvement in the suitability/feasibility study.

There has been extensive and on-going public involvement before and during the feasibility study. Chapter 1, Introduction outlines the history of public involvement. The effort to achieve heritage area designation originated with the research and promotion of the Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance beginning in 1999. This private, non-profit corporation has provided financial administration and organizational support for the heritage area effort. In January of 2002, officials in Douglas County appointed a committee to investigate the possibility of a heritage area, and by 2003, that committee hosted a heritage summit meeting to expand the scope of the heritage area effort.

Monthly meetings of the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Alliance began in February of 2003, and have continued ever since. Local involvement has been enthusiastic and committed. Members of local and county groups have taken a systematic approach to determine unifying themes shared among counties and have remained committed to the broad goal and purpose of a heritage area designation. Public education, promotion,

and historic preservation are important activities needed to maintain local history among the interested counties as well as to benefit from heritage tourism that can positively affect local economic conditions.

3. Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed legislation. The extensive support for this project comes from these twenty-three counties:

Allen	Anderson	Bourbon
Cherokee	Clay	Coffey
Crawford	Douglas	Franklin
Geary	Johnson	Labette
Leavenworth	Linn	Miami
Neosho	Pottawatomie	Riley
Shawnee	Wabaunsee	Wilson
Woodson	Wyandotte	

Grass-roots support for the BKNHA primarily comes from the listed counties. The alliance includes citizens, organizational, and governmental representatives who requested that Bleeding Kansas be designated a National Heritage Area, but also have secured support from their organizations and worked within their own counties to explain and promote the heritage area effort.

Kansas Governor, Kathleen Sebelius, recognized the heritage area effort in her October 2003 state economic revitalization plan. The governor and staff at the Kansas Department of Commerce set the goal of defining a state-wide tourism strategy which now includes the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area feasibility study. Also, along with the Governor and the Department of Commerce, Mary Allman, Executive

Director of the Kansas State Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Officer, has endorsed the study and the theme of Bleeding Kansas. The Director offered assistance from Cultural Resource Division staff and society historians. These staff members have been instrumental in helping to identify important sites, in assessing integrity, and contributing to improving the feasibility study.

Members of the Kansas Legislature have also indicated their support or have requested that resources in their districts be included.

County support comes from county commissioners and county clerks. Other county organizations include historical societies, travel and tourism, and chambers of commerce. Community support has come from newspapers, community colleges, churches, event organizers, city governments, clubs, and local historic attractions. Appendix E is a complete list of the letters of support and financial contributions to date. For many of the Kansas communities and county governments which are represented, with relatively small population and economic bases, their financial contributions represent a significant endorsement of the heritage area study.

Besides the involvement and contributions shown in Appendix E, the organizations and groups listed have helped identify contacts, supply data regarding their local history, have arranged public meetings and workshops, and met with governmental, tourism, and economic development officials to promote the heritage area effort.

Dedicated public involvement has been characteristic of this heritage area campaign since the beginning in 1999. Over the years, these efforts have resulted in a shared sense

of the importance of state and local history as told through the Bleeding Kansas theme and a strong belief by those involved that this history can enrich America's story as well.

4. Commitment to the proposal from appropriate stakeholders, which may include governments, industry and private nonprofit organizations in addition to the citizenry.

The chapter has documented the formal support and financial commitments to the implementation of a Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area among all potentially affected levels of government from the Governor's office to local city government. Support ranges from financial commitments from the state, to programmatic and other commitments from the Kansas State Historical Society. Nine of the society's own sites interpret Bleeding Kansas history and staff interprets, maintains sites, and educate through exhibits, talks, and special events.

This feasibility study will be used to request funds from private non-profit organizations and foundations.

The letters from county and local organizations previously mentioned support the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area. The significance of this support is directly related to local activities which already interpret the sub-themes of Bleeding Kansas. Many of the county historical museums have developed programming, exhibits and special events that relate to the sub-themes. These organizations are ready to participate more actively in building the heritage area program. Numerous organizations are currently raising funds to restore and maintain Bleeding Kansas sites and buildings so that

the public has better access to attractions representing this period of Kansas and American history.

Examples of notable demonstration projects in progress include the purchase of the Black Jack Battlefield site which, at the same time, preserved a landscape in Douglas County threatened with development. The Black Jack Battlefield Trust plans to manage and develop the forty-acre property as a battlefield park because of its significance as the site of “the first regular battle fought between Free-State and Pro-Slavery men in Kansas.” Also in Lawrence, Douglas County, the U.S. House of Representatives has approved a \$100,000 allocation for the restoration of the Hobbs Park Memorial, a building dedicated to Lawrence antislavery activist and newspaper publisher John Speer. In Wyandotte County, the Quindaro Ruins, an abolitionist and Underground Railroad center dating from 1857, will be interpreted as an Archaeological Park.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

The following components are essential in assessing whether an area may qualify as a national heritage area. A suitability/feasibility study should include analysis and documentation that:

1. The area has an assemblage of natural, historic and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation and continuing use and are best managed as such assemblage through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and some times noncontiguous resources and active communities.

Chapters 2 and 3 document the historical

importance of “Bleeding Kansas and the Enduring Struggle for Freedom,” and Chapter 4 shows the distinct assemblage of historical and cultural resources related to the proposed Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area. These include nationally significant resources and many others that are regionally significant. Together these represent Bleeding Kansas’s distinctive and unique contribution to American heritage. These resources are worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation and continuing use. The territory’s critical position in the national struggle over slavery, a unique history as “Bleeding Kansas,” and the consequences an enduring struggle for freedom, deepen the interpretation of America’s history. As noted in Step 3 above, there are partnerships among public and private entities which include state and local governments and organizations to manage and protect this heritage area. The distinct advantage of a heritage area designation, however, would be the capacity to present to Kansans and visitors an integrated and powerful story about the meaning of the assemblage of cultural resources. Because there is already a foundation of stewardship and appreciation of these resources by residents and visitors, planning and programming could be significantly enhanced by the combined efforts of public and private sectors under the broad organization of a Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area. Coordinated efforts will provide residents and visitors with a more comprehensive and multi-faceted experience. One of the most significant results would be the opportunity to tell the complex and significant story of the state’s formation to Kansans as well as out-of-state and international visitors.

2. Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs and folk life that are a valuable part of the national story.

Bleeding Kansas abounds with traditions, beliefs and folklife that are regionally valuable, but also exceptionally important to the national story of an enduring struggle for freedom. Eastern Kansas was the site of memorable events during the territorial and Civil War periods, which are celebrated in festivals and reenactments today. These are discussed in Chapter 4. The people and events of Bleeding Kansas riveted the nation's attention to the state and the outcomes of the Kansas conflict contributed to the politics of the United States during a critical time. Abolitionist activists, such as John Brown, believed Kansas had to remain free of slavery and brought his family to the state to help insure such.

Native American history in the proposed heritage area has been told in stories of indigenous inhabitants and their interaction with emigrant Indians who arrived in Kansas in the 1830s. The subsequent removal of both Native American groups to Indian Territory was integrated into what happened in the early history of Bleeding Kansas.

Nevertheless, their place names and routes still are evident in many counties within the study area. Many counties in the BKNHA are named for Native American groups.

African American culture has also played a significant role in the heritage area. Kansans were active on the Underground Railroad and many African Americans came to Kansas with the help of abolitionist conductors when they fled north to Lane's trail and away from Southern cause supporters. Both Native and African Americans fled north from Indian Territory at the beginning of the Civil War toward Union forces and their experiences are told in stories, history and interpreted on the historic "Trail of Blood on Ice." Kansas's complex ethnic heritage also includes European immigrant groups and Mexican Americans. The stories and history

from these groups are part of Kansas history and remain potentially significant stories to develop within the Bleeding Kansas theme.

3. Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic and/or scenic features.

The "Bleeding Kansas" theme presents an opportunity for preservation of associated sites through education and technical training as well as increased protection for other cultural and historic resources. The coalition of interested and supporting parties provides an outstanding opportunity for new initiatives and greater financial efficiency.

Support for a national heritage designation begins with the governor and has been demonstrated by county and municipal governments, tourism and economic development organizations, and citizens groups and individuals. This coalition of interests is powerful and, with federal assistance, can greatly enhance the process of identification, designation and recognition of Territorial Kansas sites. While many territorial and Civil War period resources have been identified, there is little systematic protection afforded to them from development, demolition or demolition by neglect. In many cases, ordinary citizens and civic leaders lack the knowledge about their early local and state history and therefore fail to recognize the significance of early historic structures and sites.

Natural and scenic sites in the heritage deserve further identification and interpretation. Many important events occurred at creeks, fords, or on prairie or forested landscapes. Such sites today have little visual history to reveal to a causal visitor, yet they are important in understanding and experiencing the events of Kansas history. A heritage area management organization will be

able to continue the process of identification, evaluation and prioritization of those sites that need protection and interpretation.

While some county and city officials and residents are becoming more aware of their responsibility to protect our nation's past and the economic benefits, a Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area will provide an outstanding opportunity to conserve natural, cultural, historic and scenic features that are dispersed among a variety of resources which is difficult for individual groups, governments, or citizens to do alone.

4. Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.

Chapter 4 provides information related to existing cultural opportunities and resources. As noted on the "Map of Kansas Recreational Areas," the proposed heritage area will offer outstanding recreational and educational opportunities for residents of the area and visitors. Recently, one of the issues identified by the Kansas Natural Resources Legacy Alliance Final Report was that "growing demands for outdoor recreation from expanding urban centers and communities throughout the state are creating pressures and opportunities for both public and private lands." Since greater than 95% of Kansas land is privately owned, the proposed National Heritage Area will help to meet the growing desire for outdoor recreation in eastern and southern Kansas. The heritage area will promote access to outdoor recreation through private sector enterprises, public/private partnerships, technical assistance, funding and tourism enterprises.¹

Some of the essential Bleeding Kansas sites are well-established and managed by the Kansas State Historical Society. These feature exhibits, markers, and educational pro-

gramming that convey the significance of the proposed heritage area theme. Trails and forts, such as the National Park Service's Fort Scott, relate the story of the territorial period to the struggle for statehood. The opportunity for the development of integrated interpretive and educational programs at publicly and privately owned historic locations throughout the region is outstanding. With the strength of the existing coalition, both residents and visitors will have the opportunity to learn of Bleeding Kansas's critical role in national history. Topics may include the John Brown legacy, the Underground Railroad, battles and skirmishes of the territorial period and the Civil War, the political arenas of Northern and Southern differences, the personalities who participated in the events of Bleeding Kansas, and the state's role in the struggle for enduring freedom.

At present the Kansas State Historical Society offers a unit to teachers on the Territorial Conflict which meets Kansas educational standards. The development of additional heritage education materials and programming will provide Kansas youth opportunities to supplement and enrich materials they receive in school or through field trips to sites.

The most important aspect of a Heritage Area designation, however, is the outstanding opportunity for conservation, recreation and education that such a designation would provide.

5. The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation.

Chapter 4 documents that the landscapes and resources from the "Bleeding Kansas" peri-

¹ Kansas Natural Resources Legacy Alliance Final Report (December 1, 2003), 10-11. See kdwp.state.ks.us/alliance/alliance/html , referenced 12/19/2003.

od retain a high degree of integrity. The staff at the Kansas State Historical Society assisted in the determination of physical integrity. These resources include major battle sites, topographical features associated with the period, trails, historic sites, buildings and monuments. Many of these attractions are open to the public and the opportunity to expand that number is promising. By using the theme identified during the study, these resources can be interpreted to provide a comprehensive experience for residents and visitors alike. The Bleeding Kansas theme will express a story of the heritage area's unique contribution to our nation's history.²

6. Residents, business interests, non-profit organizations and governments within the proposed area are involved in the planning and have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants including the federal government and have demonstrated support for designation of the area.

The proposed management entity, described in criterion 10 below, will include a wide range of interests on its board of trustees and will provide opportunities for interested organizations wishing to participate in planning and programming for the heritage area. The following conceptual financial plan has been developed. It outlines the roles of the various participants including the federal government. Should the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area receive congressional designation,

the first task for a designated management entity will be the development of a comprehensive management plan that will include a detailed five-year financial plan based on specific commitments from heritage area partners.

The revenue projection includes federal appropriations to the management entity totaling \$1,586,000 over the three-year period. The projection assumes that the management entity will be successful in obtaining any combination of approximately \$1,586,000 a year in state grants and contributions, foundation, corporate, and local government contributions, individual donations, and miscellaneous revenues from memberships, fees for events and tours, and sales. The projection assumes that \$750,000 of the federal appropriations will be used by the management entity for grants to other organizations during the three-year period, and that those grantees will provide the necessary 50/50 federal match in the same amount.

The expense projection assumes an average annual operating budget of the management entity of \$224,000 for staffing, operational, and administrative costs for a total of \$672,000 over the three-year period. The cost for completion of a heritage area management and interpretive plan is estimated at \$400,000. The costs of actual heritage area projects and programs undertaken during the development of the management plan are estimated at \$300,000. Beyond the projected

Table 6.1, Three-Year Revenue Projection
Total Revenues - \$2,122,000

<i>Anticipated Federal Appropriations</i>	<i>Anticipated State Grants and Contributions</i>	<i>Direct Matching Contribution by Local Grant Recipients</i>	<i>Anticipated Foundation Grants, Local Government Contributions, Donations, and Miscellaneous Income</i>
\$ 1,061,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 111,000

2 Significant archaeological sites are located in the proposed heritage area, but have not been disclosed to the public to prevent vandalism and damage.

three-year period, grants to local organizations are likely to increase and direct project expenditures by the management entity will decrease.

Three-Year Expense Projection

Expenditures in Each Category Might Be Adjusted Based on Actual Federal Appropriations With the Exception of the Heritage Area Management Plan (see Table 6.2)

Table 6.2, Three-Year Expense Projection

<i>Operations</i>	<i>Grants to Local Organizations</i>	<i>Development of Heritage Area Management and Interpretive Plan</i>	<i>Heritage Area Projects (publication of brochures and maps; special events organization)</i>
\$672,000	\$750,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 300,000

Ten-Year Budget Projection

<i>Annual Operations (\$280,000)</i>	<i>Grants to Participating Organizations (\$350,000)</i>	<i>Planning and Development Projects</i>	<i>Total 10-year Budget</i>
\$2,800,000	\$3,500,000	<i>Signage design/installation - \$500,000 Visitors centers -\$450,000 Exhibits design -\$250,000 Special projects -\$2,500,000</i>	<i>Operations-\$2,800,000; Grants-\$3,500,000; Projects-\$3,700,000</i>
<i>Total</i>		<i>\$3,700,000</i>	<i>\$10,000,000</i>

7. The proposed management entity and units of government supporting designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area.

The strong cooperative relationships among the members of the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area Planning Committee demonstrate a commitment to work together in partnership to develop the area. Leaders of this group have already involved all levels of government in its planning. As the commit-

tee organized and expanded its focus, it has consulted with the Midwest Office of the National Park Service, environmental groups such as the Nature Conservancy, landscape preservation groups such as the Kansas Land Trust, state and county officials. The activities of the BKNHA will continue to develop partnerships with other public entities, other non-profits and private sector stakeholders. More specific responsibilities will be defined in preparing the Heritage Area management plan. The proposed management entity will include representatives of state and local governments on its board of directors to ensure that governmental interests are represented and involved in the planning and implementation of the heritage area.

8. The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area.

Designation of the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area is expected to increase tourism, educational and recreational activities as well as the development and expansion of businesses associated with these endeavors. The designation can also benefit businesses involved in historic rehabilitation and community renewal.

Kansas has a state tax credit program for his-

3 Center for Rural Affairs, "Swept Away: Chronic Hardship and Fresh Promise on the Rural Great Plains," Executive Summary. See <http://www.cfra.org/resources/> Referenced 12/19/2003.

toric properties which provides an incentive for rehabilitation. It is equal to 25% of qualifying expenses on a qualified building. Qualified buildings are those that have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Register of Historic Kansas Places, or have been deemed contributors to a National or State Register Historic District. Kansas has made it easy for applicants because projects that are approved by the National Park Service for the 20% Federal Tax Credit also qualify for the Kansas State Tax Credit. Such incentives linked with an awareness of the contribution of individual structures to the heritage area should encourage the rehabilitation of architectural and cultural resources.

Any anticipated increase in economic activities is consistent with and supportive of existing economic activity in the region. The State of Kansas encourages heritage tourism because it has been demonstrated to be financially beneficial to the state's economy. Coordinated heritage tourism based on the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area theme is expected to contribute to the state's overall economic development.

While recent population growth in the study area has concentrated in the northeast corner of the state near Kansas City, Lawrence, and Topeka, outside the suburban and exurban fringe, the small towns in most counties need support to preserve existing resources and remain economically viable. As a recent report from the Center for Rural Affairs concluded, the rural communities of the Great Plains are "beset by poverty rates chronically higher than the metropolitan rates; incomes and earnings significantly less than those in metropolitan areas; and continued depopulation."³ To meet this challenge, the state of Kansas, along with its neighboring states on the plains, is developing a comprehensive development policy for rural and

agriculturally-based communities. This policy will include a paradigm shift toward greater regional collaboration and the development of greater community capacity through inter-local cooperation.

Communities participating in the BKNHA recognize that self-reliance and resilience will be the keys to their economic future. The proposed New Homestead Act was intended to attract new residents and businesses to rural areas suffering from high out-migration. The legislation would provide for repayment of college loans, tax credits for home purchases, and individual homestead accounts to help build savings to those who locate in high out-migration counties. The act would provide investment tax credits and micro-enterprise tax credits to encourage investment and small businesses in those counties. The act also provides for a homestead venture capital fund to invest in businesses in high out-migration counties. Four of the twenty-three counties in the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area are high out-migration counties.⁴

The Kansas rural development policy and the New Homestead Act will build on the recognized inherent strengths of small towns and rural communities—close-knit communities, strong local business networks, and a tradition of entrepreneurial creativity. The development of the Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area will conform to best practices recommended by the National Governors' Association. These include, for example, the adaptation of cluster-based strategies of interconnected rural businesses and the promotion of entrepreneurship outside the agricultural sector in rural regions.⁵

As a complementary strategy, the management of a Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area could improve the quality of

⁴ Center for Rural Affairs, "Update on the New Homestead Act," See <http://www.cfra.org/resources/> Referenced 12/19/2003.

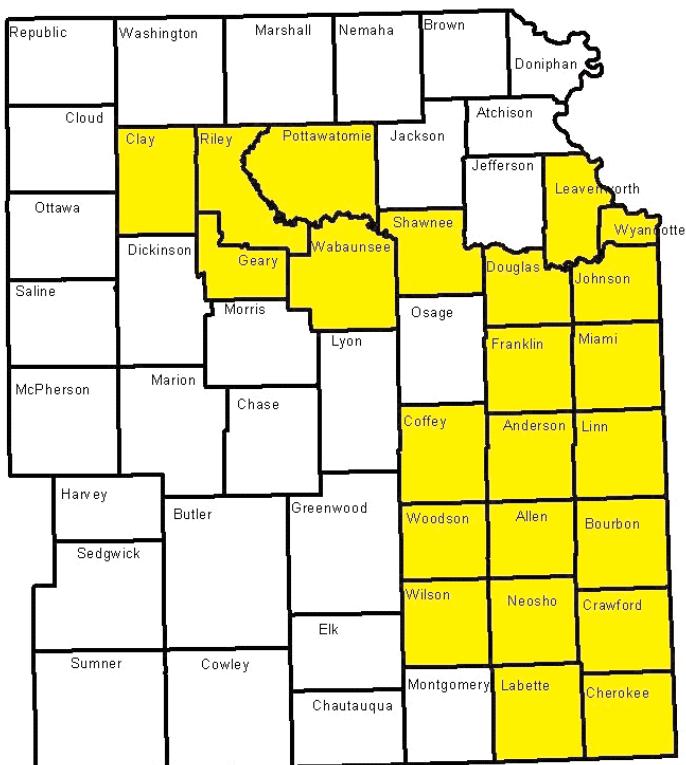
⁵ National Governors Association, "Innovative State Policy Options to Promote Rural Economic Development," Executive Summary. See <http://www.nga.org>. Referenced 12/19/2003

life of the region, while offering support for activities and services linked to heritage tourism and infrastructure development.

9. A conceptual boundary is supported by the public.

The feasibility study has developed two heritage area boundary alternatives after discussing a number of concepts with the BKNHA alliance.

Map 6.1



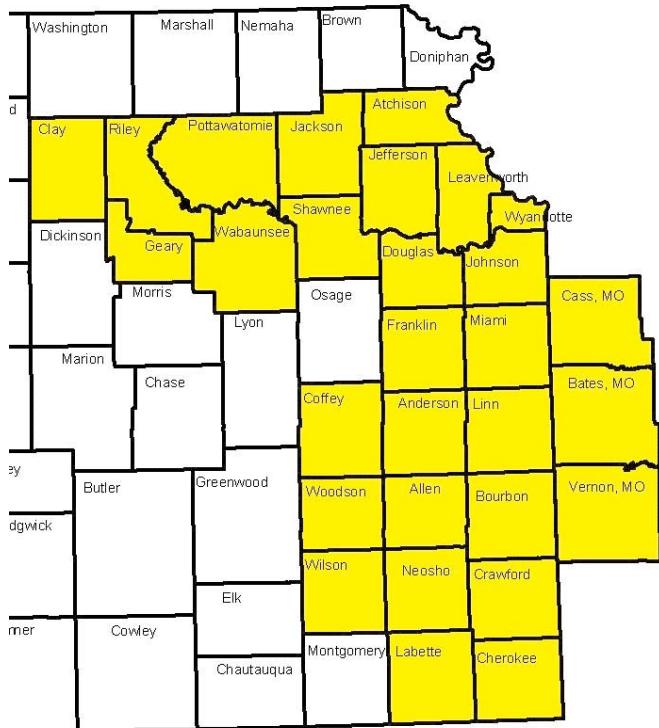
The basic boundary (See Map 6.1) includes a minimum number and range of resources which will provide a representative visitor experience and enhance the protection of primary resource examples related to the proposed themes. This boundary is based on

current participation and financial contributions to the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Alliance. Chapter 4 described the thirty-two essential resources included in the basic heritage area, all of which have a high degree of integrity and are capable of interpretation using the theme and sub-themes described in Chapter 3.

The expanded boundary is the preferred alternative for the long-term (See Map 6.2.) This area is larger and includes substantial numbers of theme-related natural and cultural resources with integrity and varying degrees of public accessibility. The expanded heritage includes the most closely related and thematically important sites in eastern and southern Kansas and tells a more comprehensive history of Bleeding Kansas. There is public interest in supporting the possibility that the heritage area boundary could be expanded into Missouri to include historic sites which were involved in the border war history. This is potentially significant because much of Missouri supported the Confederacy and such inclusion could provide a more complete understanding of the complex political rivalries of the territorial Kansas and Civil War periods. The expanded boundary increases the potential for future partnerships with Missouri organizations to assist with natural and cultural resources interpretation and protection of historic sites. Also, an expanded heritage area would provide a continuous landscape across state boundaries and a much broader interpretation of regional history. Visitors would have a unique opportunity to visit a greater variety of sites.

Finally, unique sites such as Nicodemus in western Kansas should be considered for inclusion in the expanded heritage area when final boundaries are determined. This NPS historic site is highly significant in the histo-

Map 6.2



ry of the African American struggle for freedom. Located in the geographic expanse of the High Plains, Nicodemus is integral to the story of a struggle for freedom since the settlers who left oppressive conditions in the South during the 1870s believed that Kansas would be their “promised land.” This successful African American community is evidence of the consequences of the free-state heritage after “Bleeding Kansas.”

10. The management entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.

In any heritage area, the management entity acts as a catalyst to focus attention on the area’s distinctive natural and cultural resources and promotes the partnerships necessary for success. The feasibility study has

identified the following characteristics of a management organization which can focus attention and resources necessary for success. They feasibility study finds that a management organization should be identified by the following:

A level of organizational commitment to focus on the heritage area as the singular role of the organization;

A willingness of the management entity to include on its board individuals reflecting a wide variety of interests in the heritage area;

A capability of the management entity to assemble necessary financial resources to match federal contributions;

Experience in and commitment to natural and cultural resources protection and heritage programming; and

Support of the public and organizations that wish to participate in heritage area planning and implementation.

Presently, the BKNHA directs the effort for designation of the National Heritage Area, and this organization could be incorporated with a more formal administrative and financial structure to serve in the role of management entity. The process of developing a Management Plan must evaluate the appropriate roles of the BKNHA and other entities in long-term management. Whatever organizational structure is chosen, it must have the capacity to accept, disburse and account for federal funds and other funding.

National Importance of Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area

This study has documented the rich history

of the Bleeding Kansas period, and concluded that the regional history is unique in American history and occurred during one of the most conflicted periods of national history. This history is evident in landscapes and historic sites which survive from this very difficult period. The story of Bleeding Kansas is a story about freedom – whether the new state of Kansas would allow slavery within its boundaries or not. This story is particularly significant because Bleeding Kansas became for the nation a symbol of the struggle over slavery which was caught up not only in politics, but also in Kansas action that turned into violence. Caught in the turmoil were Native Americans who were pushed from the state after settlement, and African Americans, mostly from Missouri, who fled to Kansas seeking liberty from bondage. Ideologues from both perspectives moved into to Kansas to influence however they could. The nation's attention was riveted on Kansas as John Brown led raids and engaged in battles to promote the abolitionist cause. Poet John Greenleaf Whittier wrote poems about the state's troubles stirring the emotions of the nation. The conflict in Kansas became a testing ground to see if the Northern and Southern states could peacefully resolve their differences over slavery. The conditions of the contest were set in Kansas, and in the end, the differences could not be resolved.

Kansas symbolized the struggle for freedom for many people, and was embraced by immigrant groups, women, Native, African and Mexican Americans as a place where they could make a safe home. For this reason, the history of "Bleeding Kansas" is a nationally distinctive history based on cultural resources that are representative of nationally important events and social movements which have had a significant impact on the formation of our national story.

Today the struggle for freedom is as vital and pressing a challenge associated with democratic nation-building as it was during the period of "Bleeding Kansas." The historic and cultural resources in the Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area retain a high degree of integrity and many sites have exhibits and educational events that interpret the Bleeding Kansas period. With locally initiated protection and interpretation of these natural, cultural, scenic and historic resources, the BKHNA is in a unique position to administer a successful National Heritage Area.

CONCLUSION

The Bleeding Kansas Heritage Area complies with the stated criteria for designation of the National Park Service, is strongly supported by local, state, and national legislators, has widespread public support, and should be submitted for National Heritage Area designation by the U.S. Congress at the earliest possible date.

The Next Steps

Following Congressional designation, a detailed Management Plan will be prepared, as required for other designated heritage areas. Key topics that should be studied in further detail in this Management Plan would include, but not be limited to:

- **Confirm and/or adjust the final boundary of the Heritage Area**, including consideration of an expanded area for programmatic coordination that might facilitate involvement of key area institutions such as the Kansas State Historical Society and local historical organizations in interpretive and educational efforts in and beyond the proposed core resource area. Additionally, an expanded area could include important

resources linked to the basic heritage area, including sites in western Missouri.

- **Recommend the most effective management responsibilities for the proposed National Heritage Area**, taking account of the potential for expanded cooperative efforts in resource protection among county governments, state government, and non-profit organizations. The BKNHA may continue to serve as the overall management entity during the management plan development.
- **Recommend a coordinated program of interpretation** that communicates the story of this area, takes advantage of key extant resources, and proposes specific interpretive improvements and associated responsibilities. This effort should include additional ethnographic research into the African American and Native American communities of the study area and the association of these groups with the post-Civil War legacy of the Bleeding Kansas era. While there is enough information on these sub-themes to establish their importance, more research is needed to identify additional heritage resources and to develop interpretation.