

THE POWER OF PLACE

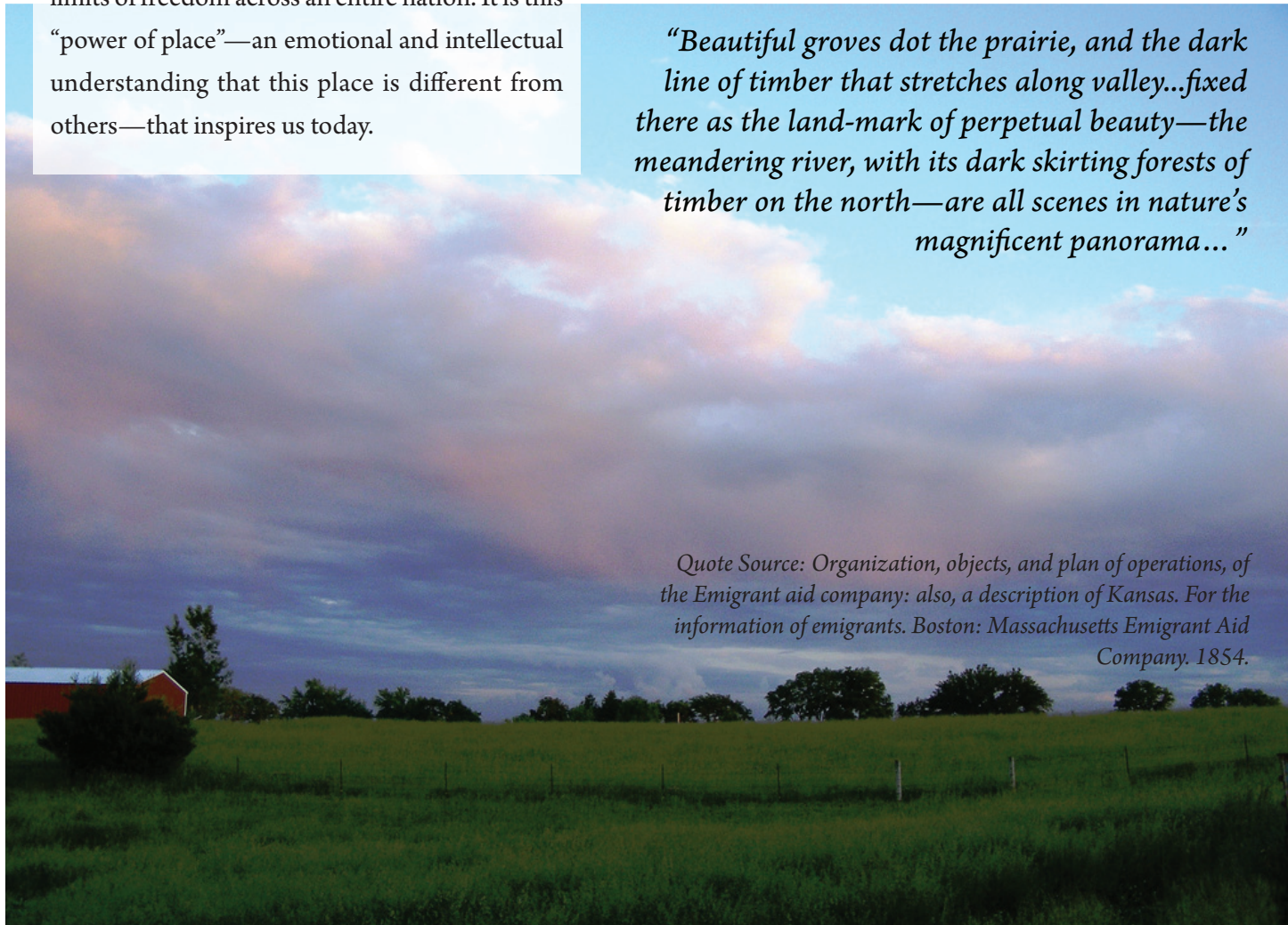
A LEGACY OF YESTERDAY, A HOME FOR TODAY,
A VISION FOR TOMORROW



Why are forty-one counties in the middle of the United States so closely bound that they should be celebrated as one National Heritage Area? What is it about the region that fostered these stories we celebrate today? A complete understanding of the nationally significant events in Freedom's Frontier is impossible without knowing the story of its landscape. The unique geography of the region directly influenced the stories found here. When this landscape blended with human activity, it fostered a political firestorm that tested the limits of freedom across an entire nation. It is this "power of place"—an emotional and intellectual understanding that this place is different from others—that inspires us today.

"Beautiful groves dot the prairie, and the dark line of timber that stretches along valley...fixed there as the land-mark of perpetual beauty—the meandering river, with its dark skirting forests of timber on the north—are all scenes in nature's magnificent panorama..."

Quote Source: Organization, objects, and plan of operations, of the Emigrant aid company: also, a description of Kansas. For the information of emigrants. Boston: Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Company. 1854.



Rural Jackson County, Missouri.

WEAVING PLACE INTO OUR STORIES

The Power of Place is framed by the Mission and Guiding Principles of Freedom's Frontier. For reference, these are included below with the pieces that tie directly to the Power of Place **highlighted in bold text**.

Mission

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA) is dedicated to building awareness of the struggles for freedom in western Missouri and eastern Kansas. **These diverse, interwoven, and nationally important stories grew from a unique physical and cultural landscape. FFNHA inspires respect for multiple perspectives and empowers residents to preserve and share these stories.** We achieve our goals through interpretation, **preservation, conservation,** and education for all residents and visitors.

Guiding Principles

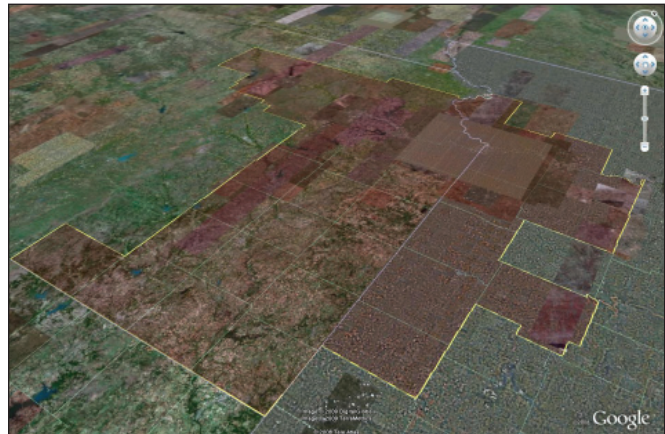
- 1. We will be tolerant and respectful of diverse stories from multiple perspectives.**
- 2. We will respect property rights.**
3. We will focus on authentic and engaging experiences.
- 4. We will honor the region's peoples, past and present.**
- 5. We will appreciate the unique cultural and historic assets within the nationally important landscape.**
6. We will invest in community engagement, education and empowerment.
- 7. We will sustain and grow sense of place.**
- 8. We will value and protect the natural environment.**
- 9. We will consider future generations in everything we do.**

Why did the people in our stories settle here?

The natural landscape has dictated settlement patterns for most of human history. For thousands of years, the heritage area's Indian peoples relied upon water and footpower for trade, migration, and subsistence. For the first two centuries of the Native American/African-American/Euro-American co-existence on the continent, the landscape was an equal constraint. Reliance on the land continued into the nineteenth century. Of the nation's families, 90 percent relied upon farming as their principal means of support and they often depended on rivers for transportation and quality cropland.



Source: Google Earth, Rumsey Maps Collection.

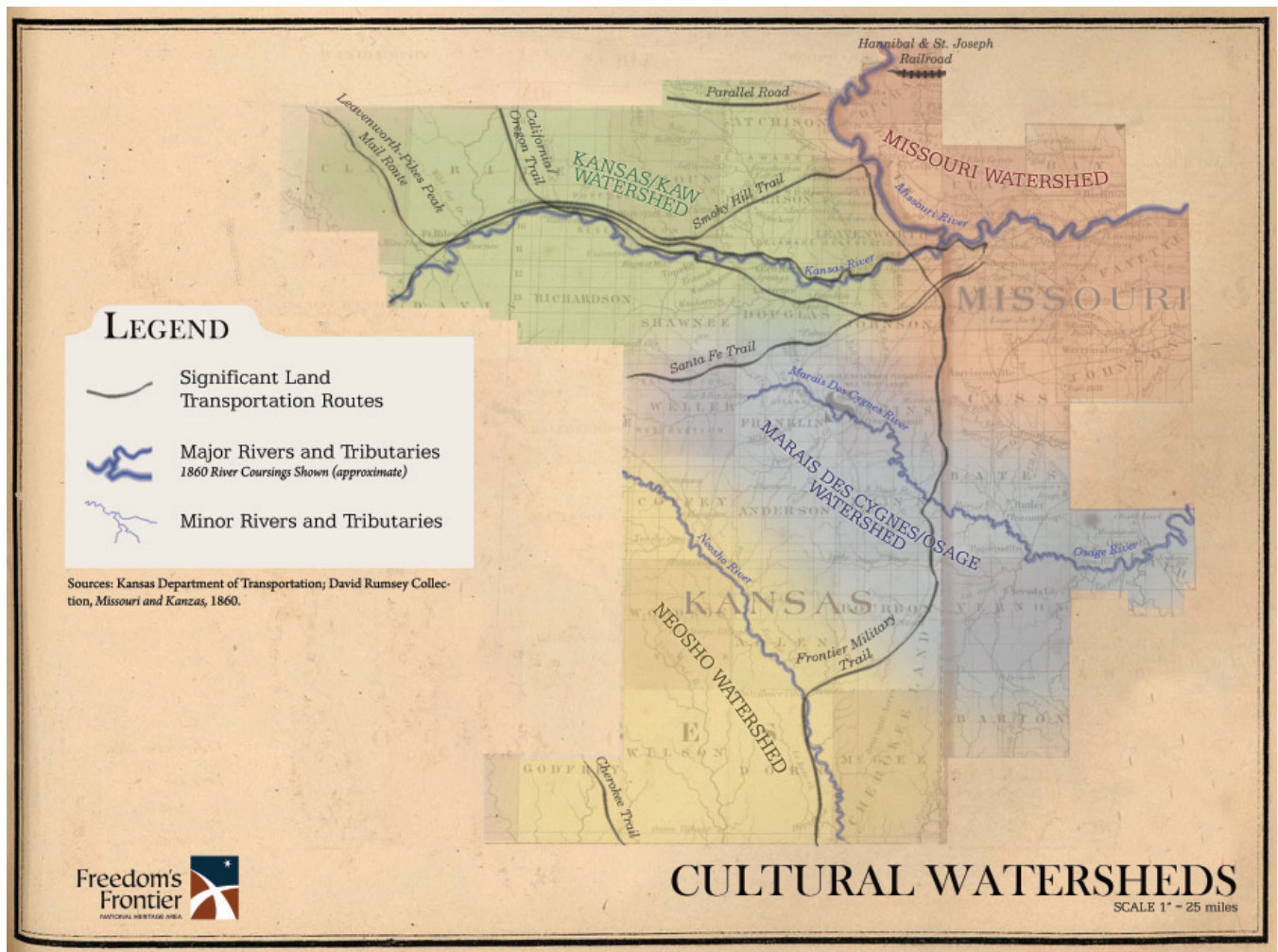


Source: Google Earth, Rumsey Maps Collection.

ABOVE: Views of Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area in 1786 (above) and 2008 (below). In 220 years, the heritage area has changed from a sparsely populated region of prairie to a home for millions - a network of farmland, cities, towns, lakes, and stories. This dramatic change is summarized in the Power of Place to explore the connections between stories over time and across the heritage area.

When farmers arrived in Freedom's Frontier, they settled on a landscape formed by unique prehistoric geological events. As non-native settlers began to pour into western Missouri and eastern Kansas, the country embraced the Industrial Revolution. For the first time in human history, people would use industrial machines to conquer the natural order. The new technology and infrastructure meant that settlers relied on a combination of machines and natural corridors for development. Frontier trails and rowboats gave way to railroads and steamboats.

Despite technological advances, non-native settlers remained subservient to the natural landscape. Principally, in this period of transition, proximity to navigable rivers and fertile soils was essential. The heritage area's four major watersheds—the Missouri, Kansas/Kaw, Marais des Cygnes/Osage and Neosho River Valleys—played a critical role in the political upheaval that came to be called the Missouri-Kansas Border War. This chapter summarizes the heritage area's natural history and its role in shaping stories.



ABOVE: The heritage area can be viewed as four overlapping regions defined by their watersheds, or drainage basins. Distinct events, stories, and periods of settlement occurred in each cultural watershed and provide a basis for exploring connections across the entire heritage area.

NATURAL HISTORY

THE BACKGROUND OF OUR STORIES

According to the perspective of natural historians, forces of nature—water, mountains, glaciers, fire and wind—have shaped the natural landscape of Freedom’s Frontier for millions of years.

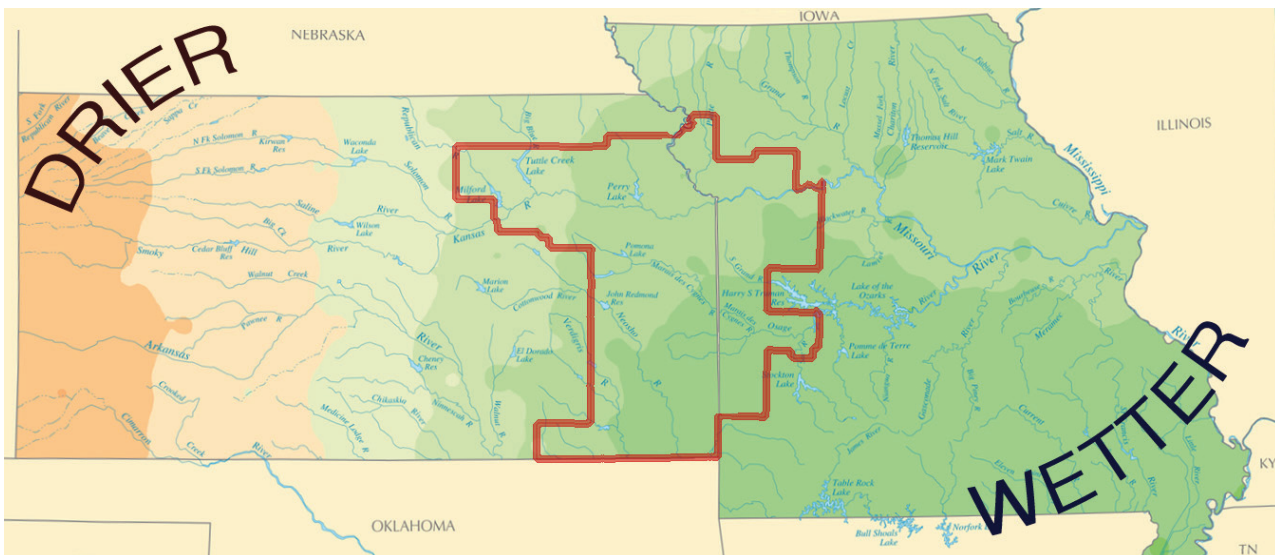
Exploring the geological events that created the heritage area’s natural landscape leads us to examine the region as a whole. The majority of the heritage area’s political boundaries—states and counties—are arbitrary, they have no bearing on its natural development or climate. For instance, the counties in northeast Kansas experience no less rainfall than the counties in northwest Missouri. The Heritage Area’s counties, on both sides of the border that separates Kansas and Missouri, have more in common with each other than with other counties in their respective states. This is because the region as a whole lies in an area of transition between the drier climates to the west and wetter climates to the east (see image below).

The heritage area’s fertile soil and pastoral landscape of water, trees, and grasses were the result of a process that continued over a period of time far longer than the core timeline of national significance. This section will show what processes occurred across the heritage area to form the landscape we know today.

The Scale of Time

The natural features unique to our region have been crafted over an extremely long period of time. A series of events stretching over millions of years formed the physical geography of the region.

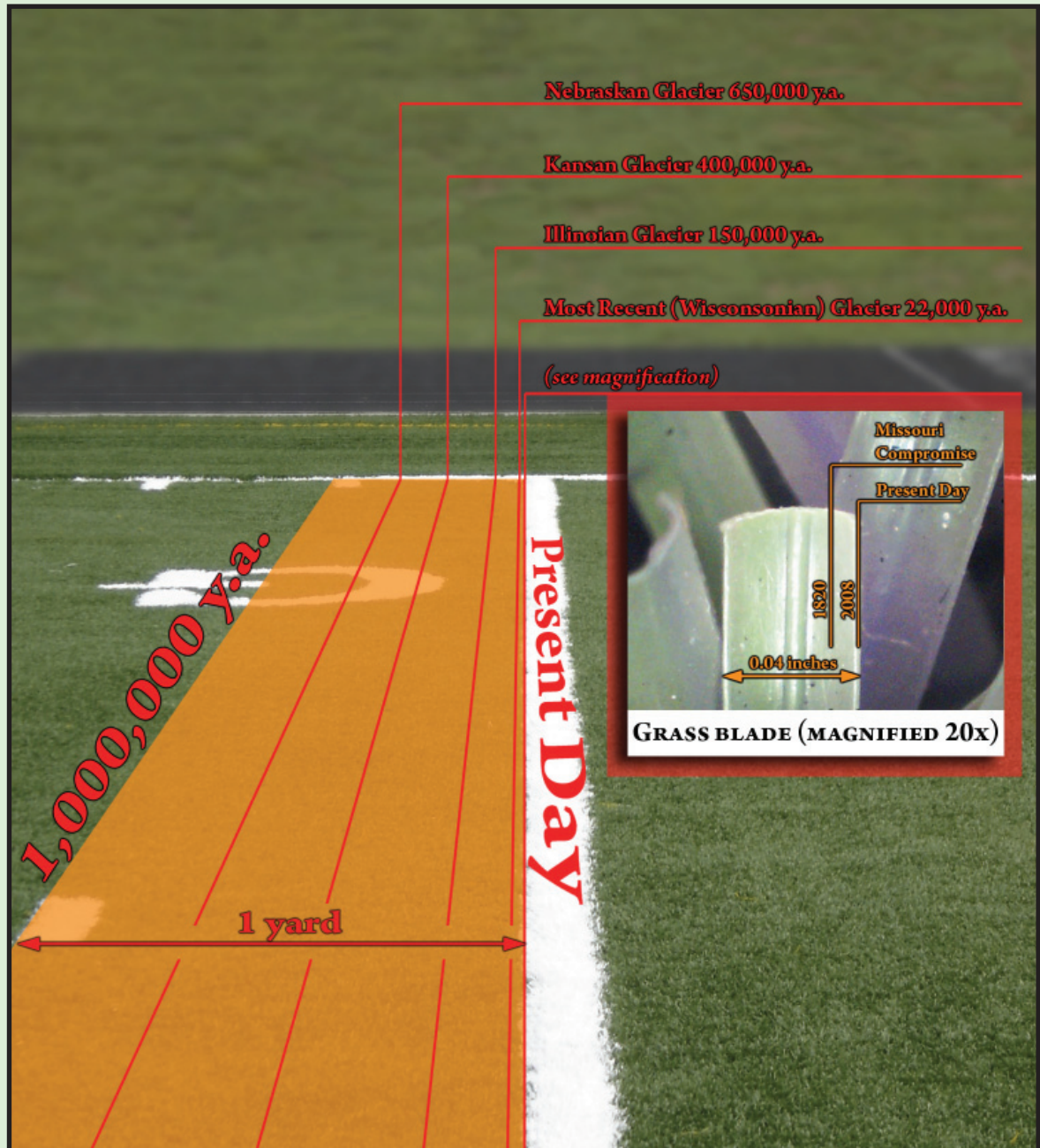
How can we understand the scale of natural processes in our story? One way to visualize this immense span of time is to apply it to a commonly understood reference of a 100-yard football field. If the past 100 million years were stretched out over a 100-yard-long football field, the distance between each yard line would equal 1 million years. Glaciers, the most important shapers of our region’s existing geography, occurred in the final one yard of the football field (see right). Zooming in, the period of significance for Freedom’s Frontier would be less than the width of a single blade of grass. When the natural landscape is altered, the features that required 100 million years to create—and that greatly influenced the heritage area’s human history—are lost.



ABOVE: Precipitation map of Kansas and Missouri. The areas that receive less rainfall and snow appear more orange (drier) than areas that receive higher amounts of precipitation. This is a result of natural history, and it is a major factor in the settlement of the region. People in the nineteenth century tended to settle in areas where precipitation was sufficient to support agriculture without deep drilling for water. This region was one of the farthest west

where there was enough water to support farming and ranching. Going west, it is not until settlers reach California and Oregon that they find plentiful water for settlement. As a result, one of the shortest, least dry ways of going to the Pacific coast was through Missouri and Kansas via trails. It is this connection between natural history and our stories that this chapter seeks to explore.

Legend: y.a. = years ago



ABOVE: The period of natural history reviewed in this document stretches over 100 million years. If the 100 million years were stretched out over a football field, each yard would equal one million years of time. Shown here is a single yard on a regulation football field. The most recent glacial event would be less than an inch from the goal line, while the entire period of significance for Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area would only be 0.008 inches from the endzone, less than the width of a blade of grass.



Source: Oceans of Kansas.

ABOVE: The North American Inland Sea covered the western portion of the heritage area 65 million to 100 million years ago. The sea gradually deposited organic matter and rock, which built up sedimentary layers of rock and soil.

BELOW: Murphy Open Pit mine in Cherokee County, Kansas, c. 1940-1970. The heritage area's coal deposits, oil deposits, shales, limestones, and sandstones are all sedimentary rocks shaped by this sea and its drainage over the course of several million years.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

The Blank Canvas: Seas and Mountains

One hundred million years ago, eastern Kansas and western Missouri lay at the center of an immense inland sea named the Western Interior Seaway. For millions of years, the Western Interior Seaway deposited the region's minerals, many of which later shaped mining, settlement, and economic development that are part of the Freedom's Frontier story.

The inland sea evaporated sixty-five million years ago, and left behind an exposed, flat sea floor. At the same time, a major event occurred to the west which affected the region—the formation of the Rocky Mountains. The Rocky Mountains had an enormous influence in the Midwestern climate, particularly on the precipitation of this heritage area.

This climatic influence continues to be felt today. As air passes over the Rocky Mountains, it condenses and most of the moisture is removed. On the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains a near desert-like condition exists, with very limited amounts of rainfall or snow. Certain native cultures called this weather pattern a “Chinook”—or snow eater. These winds come down and remove the moisture from the ground because of the low humidity in the air. Precipitation increases eastward from the Rockies to the Mississippi River as the air begins to pick up more moisture from the land and vegetation.

The availability of water, due to the effect of the Rockies on weather patterns, is the primary force in shaping the environment in this particular part of the world. Everything is dependent on water. Water rules; it is the essence of life. The distribution and the power of water creates our landscape.

The Picture is Shaped: Glaciers

Glaciation was the biggest agent of change in the heritage area. Glaciers, like big snowplows, pushed material south with a grinding action. The four most recent glacial periods significantly affected the creation of our region. The glaciers brought new material and the strength of water to carve the ravines, valleys, and river ways. They created much of our landscape: a legacy of rivers and tributaries that continue to drain the area. These glaciers left deposits at their edges which created very deep and agriculturally productive soil, and some of the most unique topographic features in the world.

Forming Our Rivers

The Mississippi River valley, one of the largest in the world, was greatly impacted by the combination of the glaciers and the flat sea floor. Of the major rivers in the region, almost all of them developed at the edge of a prehistoric glacier (see right). The first glacier redirected most of the heritage area's rivers and soils. The melt water from that glacier redirected prehistoric rivers and created the essence of the Missouri River. The third glacial advance created much of the Mississippi River along its eastern edge. Rivers are dynamic features which shift and flood across our landscape in broad valleys. It is these valleys where many of the first Indians and non-natives in the region settled.

Forming Our Soils

Water has multiple influences on the geography of Freedom's Frontier. Not only does it fall from weather patterns and flow through rivers, it also erodes the rocks into soils and transports soil from one place to another. This movement creates our landforms.

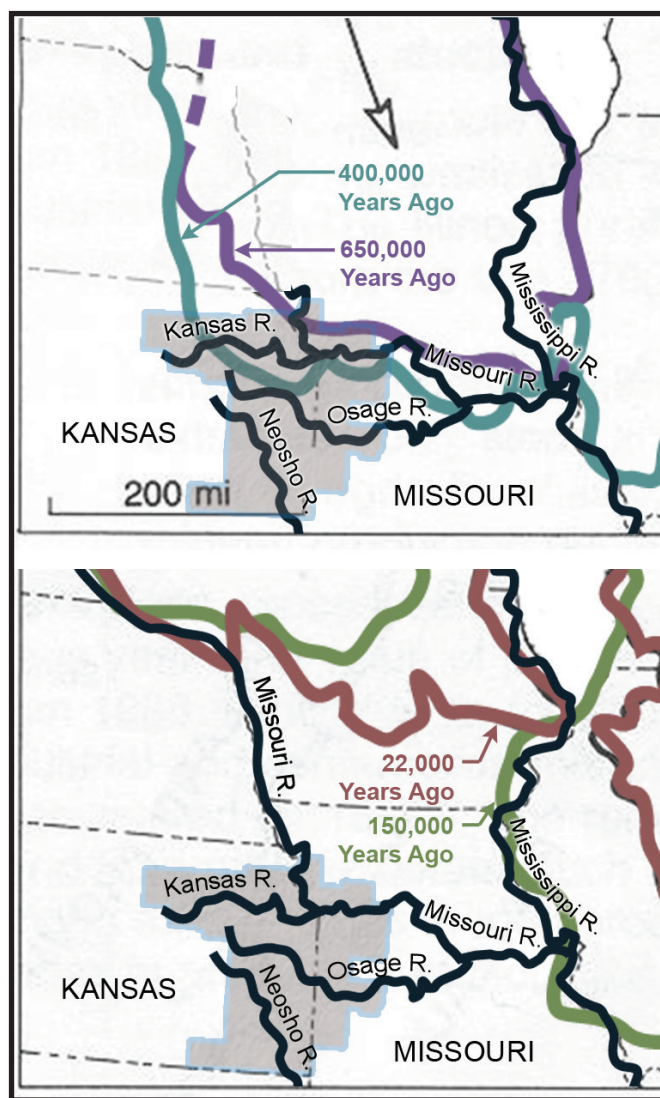
In the heritage area, the "good soils"—the most productive agricultural soils—are the newest, because these rocks contain minerals that are the basis for fertility and supporting plant life. As the soil ages, it erodes and is depleted of mineral content. As a result the soil mantle (layer of soil) becomes increasingly sterile and devoid of organic matter.

This aging can be turned back with glacial activity. Soil fertility gets renewed when it is overturned and when new materials are deposited on top. Glaciers act as massive tilling machines.

Quick Reference Definition

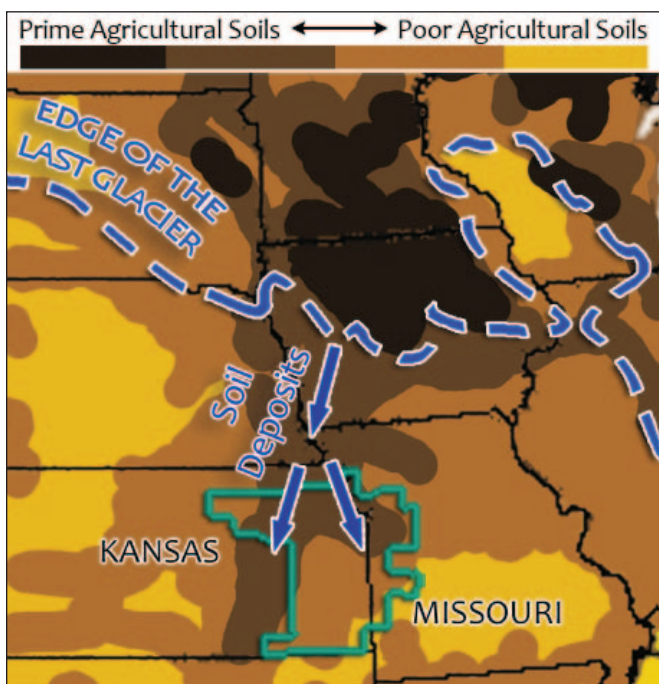
topography: the shape and configuration of the surface of the Earth. In Freedom's Frontier, the topography is a network of rivers, valleys, plains, hills, and bluffs.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the appendix.



Source: Reinertsen, D.L., 1992.

ABOVE: Forming our rivers. At top, the glaciers from 650,000 and 400,000 years ago stopped at the edge of the Missouri, Kansas, and Osage Rivers. Below, the glacier from 150,000 years ago stopped at the edge of the Mississippi River. The most recent glacier (22,000 years) stopped at the edge of the upper Missouri River.



Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ABOVE: Forming our soils. The most recent glacier plowed an immense amount of material to the south which was transformed into soils ideal for natural plant life and agriculture. Although the edge of the last glacier did not reach the region, a significant portion of this prime agricultural material was deposited hundreds of miles southward and directly into the heritage area. The agricultural bounty of the region over the past two hundred years has been significantly affected by these soil deposits.

Quick Reference Definition

ecosystem: the complex of a community of organisms and its environment functioning as an ecological unit.

loess soils (*alternatively pronounced 'lās or 'lō-əs*): loose deposits of silt that have been deposited by wind.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the appendix.

This can clearly be seen at the end of the last glacier. As the glacier retreated, the leftover materials created some of the best agricultural soils in the world. That fertility was carried down through the rivers and drainage channels into our heritage areas.

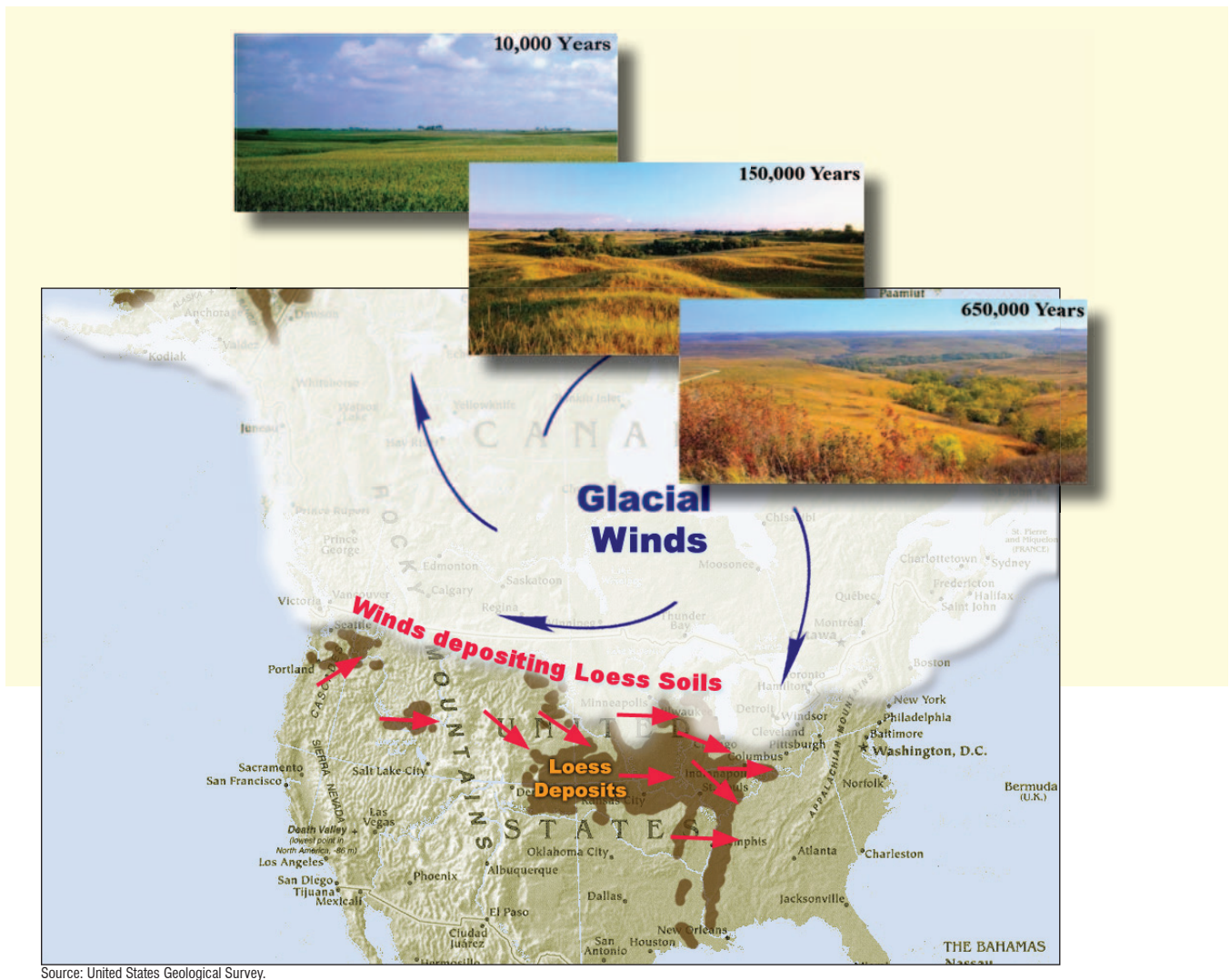
These soil deposits are the reason we have such abundance of fertile soil in this heritage area (see left). The expression of the soil is the ecosystem that sits on top.

Forming our Topography

If we look at the way water can move land and soil, we can see its influence on the land itself. Topography is, essentially, the erosion of the soil; and the underlying framework is the rock structure below (see right). The plains to the north of the heritage area were glaciated most recently, with only 10,000 years of soil development, erosion, and land development. Thus, the land is very flat. Freedom's Frontier, with 150,000 years of soil development, contains river patterns and low hills that are the result of erosion. Lacking the impact of the last two glaciations, the southern portions of the heritage area contains some of the more pronounced landforms of the heritage area, crafted in large part by erosion.

Another influence was the immense ice sheet that lay to the north of the heritage area. This massive sheet created cold, heavy air and cyclonic winds. It created weather patterns around the Midwest that influenced the development of soils. As these glaciers began to retreat, they created vast floodplains of sediment-laden water miles and miles wide. In the winter these floodplains dried up, and cyclonic winds whipped across the floodplains, picking up small pieces of silt and depositing it on the other side of the river. Over the course of thousands and thousands of years this cycle of river-deposited and wind-blown silt created what we call "loess soils." In Freedom's Frontier, loess soils cover thousands of square miles in the region due to ancient winds that came off ice age glaciers which blew dirt in the air that settled on the ground.

On the east side of the Missouri River, bluffs, created by wind-blown silt, rise up to 300 feet high. This wind-deposited landform occurs in only two places in the world, here in the Midwest and in China's Loess Plateau. It is a unique characteristic of our physiological development and our soil development.

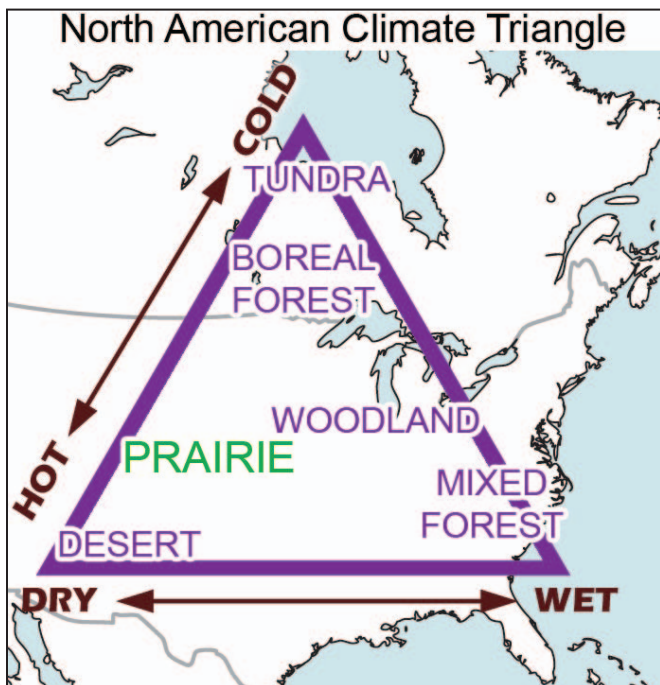


ABOVE: Forming our topography. Loess soil deposition. A glacial high-pressure system was locked over present-day Canada, creating winds that ran clockwise to the edge of the glacial sheet (blue arrows), then blew west to east (red arrows). The deposition of the loess soils (shown in brown) occurred throughout Freedom's Frontier, particularly on the east side of rivers.

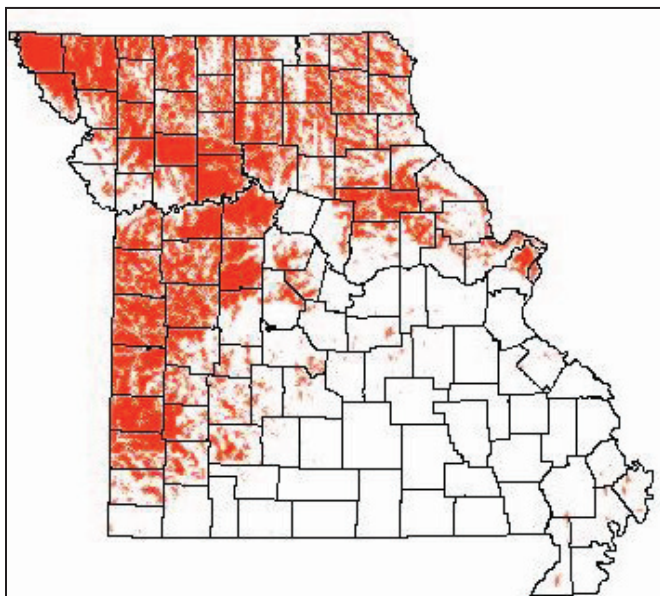
The glaciers left behind a flat landscape that slowly eroded over time. The photograph at the top left was covered by glaciers 10,000 to 22,000 years ago and is exceptionally flat. The photograph to the bottom right was covered by glaciers around 650,000 years ago but has missed more recent glaciers. The resulting landscape of rolling hills can be seen throughout the region.

"The streets of this religious city are huge furrows in the hills, and are sunk to the depth of fifty feet and over. The cliff-like walls rise frowningly above the street pedestrians."

Henry Morgan Stanley describing the bluffs of Kansas City, *My Early Travels and Adventures* (July 1867), 1895



ABOVE: This climate triangle shows how the heritage area prairie/ woodland ecosystem is a reflection of continental temperature and precipitation. The temperature gets cooler as you go north towards the poles. The precipitation increases as you move east, away from of the Rocky Mountains. The vegetation changes as the balance of temperature and precipitation shifts across North America. Freedom's Frontier is at the eastern boundary of the prairie, almost at the center of the climate triangle.



Courtesy Missouri Prairie Foundation. Map created by Walter Schroeder.

ABOVE: Areas of prairie in Missouri prior to non-native settlement.

Our Landscape: the Prairie

When European explorers first gazed on the tall grasslands of the Midwest, they had no word for “prairie.” There was nothing in Western or Central Europe that was comparable in terms of its scale. They originally used the Latin term *Terra Patria*, which meant “pasture land” because it reminded them of little pasture lands.

Vegetation is the function of temperature, altitude, and precipitation (see left). As we change those variables, we get different types of vegetation. The reason the plains are prairie is that the soils are shallow enough that they do not contain a lot of moisture and or support big forest trees. Moving east, increased precipitation allowed the great Eastern Forest to develop. The shallow soil mantle farther west and the lack of precipitation kept this particular area grassland or prairie.

The prairie is a unique feature, particularly in this part of the world where the Eastern forest meets the tall grass prairies. It is a common misconception that the prairie is a feature exclusive to Kansas. In fact, the pre-settlement prairie in Missouri covered most of the heritage area (see below left). Once settlers altered the vegetative patterns and the threat of fire was removed, forests grew.

The prairie is purely a vegetative expression shaped by water and fire. Rain sustains the prairie and fire burns across the prairie which renews it. The prairie is unique because it is a fire-sustained ecosystem. It has developed over thousands of years by natural burn-management.

The prairie is the third most biologically diverse ecosystem in the world, topped only by the rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef. A simple virgin prairie contains thousands of individual plants, all competing in a very complete and tight network, each finding a unique niche in which to compete in this grassland. Some prairie plants come up and flower early. Others will grow to greater height, but each of them has a unique strategy that relies on the symbiotic relationship of that setting in order to succeed in this diverse, biologically rich, and complex environment.

It is this biologically rich and abundant environment that gave us the ability to support habitat and animal life. It is the expression of that which allowed the large roaming animals to inhabit this area. It was the primary migratory stop for birds where part of the floodplain and swampland provided areas to rest and protect those species.

Another peculiarity of the prairie is, in places, its seeming horizontality, whereas it is never level: on an open plain, apparently flat as a man's palm, you cross a long ground-swell that was not perceptible before, and on its further incline you come upon a chasm wide and deep enough to contain a settlement...The silvery cirri and cumuli of the upper air flecked the surface of the earth with spots of dark cool shade, surrounded by a blaze of sunshine, and by their motion, and as they trooped and chased one another, gave a peculiar liveliness to the scene: while here and there a bit of hazy blue distance, a swell of the sea-like land upon the far horizon gladdened the sight—every view is fair from afar.

-Richard Burton, *The City of the Saints*, 1861



Our Landscape: The River Valleys

Freedom's Frontier is a collection of river valleys (see right). Each one is somewhat unique in its geography and its location, but it is this pattern of development that formed the basis of our heritage area. When we look at river valleys, they embody all those things that we have seen in the development of those natural resources: topography, moisture, and soils—the higher in elevation typically the less moisture in the soil and less organic matter. The greater the erosion, the narrower the soil mantle in the high ground. As we move down through the river valleys, the deposition of that erosion, the deepness of the soils, the higher amount of moisture availability changes the evolution of these ecosystems. In addition, the resources this vegetation provides attracted early settlers. It is largely the reason why people settled in or near river valleys first.

In the upland prairies sufficient moisture is not present to sustain trees. The soil mantle is shallow, the moisture is limited, and the hot summers bake moisture out of the ground. Moving farther down, with a little bit greater moisture content is the Oak Grassland. The Oak Grassland is where some of the sturdier Burr Oaks and White Oaks venture into niches where they can obtain water. They have developed so that they can sustain through some of the burns. Very little underbrush is found in the Oak Grassland because the burns of the prairie keep coming through and keep it clean.

Oak Grassland is the epitome of the landscape that American culture has tried to model: trees and grass. This landscape is simple, has great visual accessibility through it, is easy to read, and is monumental on the horizon. It is the formation of most of our early town developments. This is essentially the courthouse square, one or two great oaks sitting in a plain of grass.

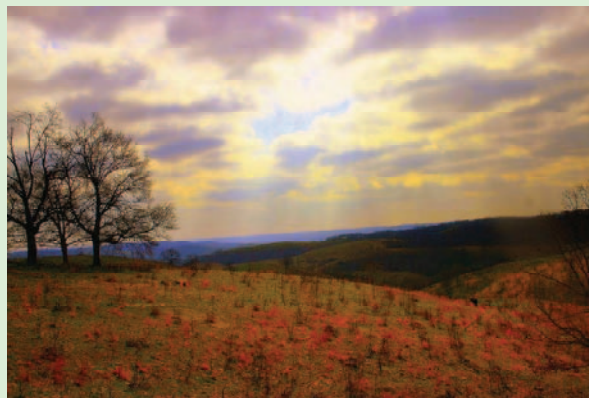
Moving farther down, moisture and the amount of vegetation increases. In Pine-Fir-Birch forests, fire still cleans out some underbrush, but not at quite an integrated level so that the density of the plant material increases, along with shade and cover. It still is not very difficult to traverse these types of forests.

Moving farther down to the Maple-Linden forests in the bottom areas of river valleys, one finds a more layered canopy of maples, lindens, underbrush, and growth.

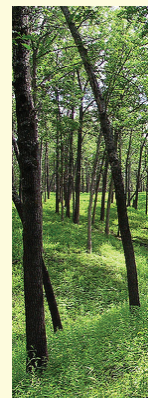
Ultimately in the bottom of the rivers, is the river margin edge, which contains plant material that has adapted to inundation and flooding over long periods of time. These areas are more fertile as flood waters bring sediments that renew and help break down the organic matter and make them very fertile and rich.

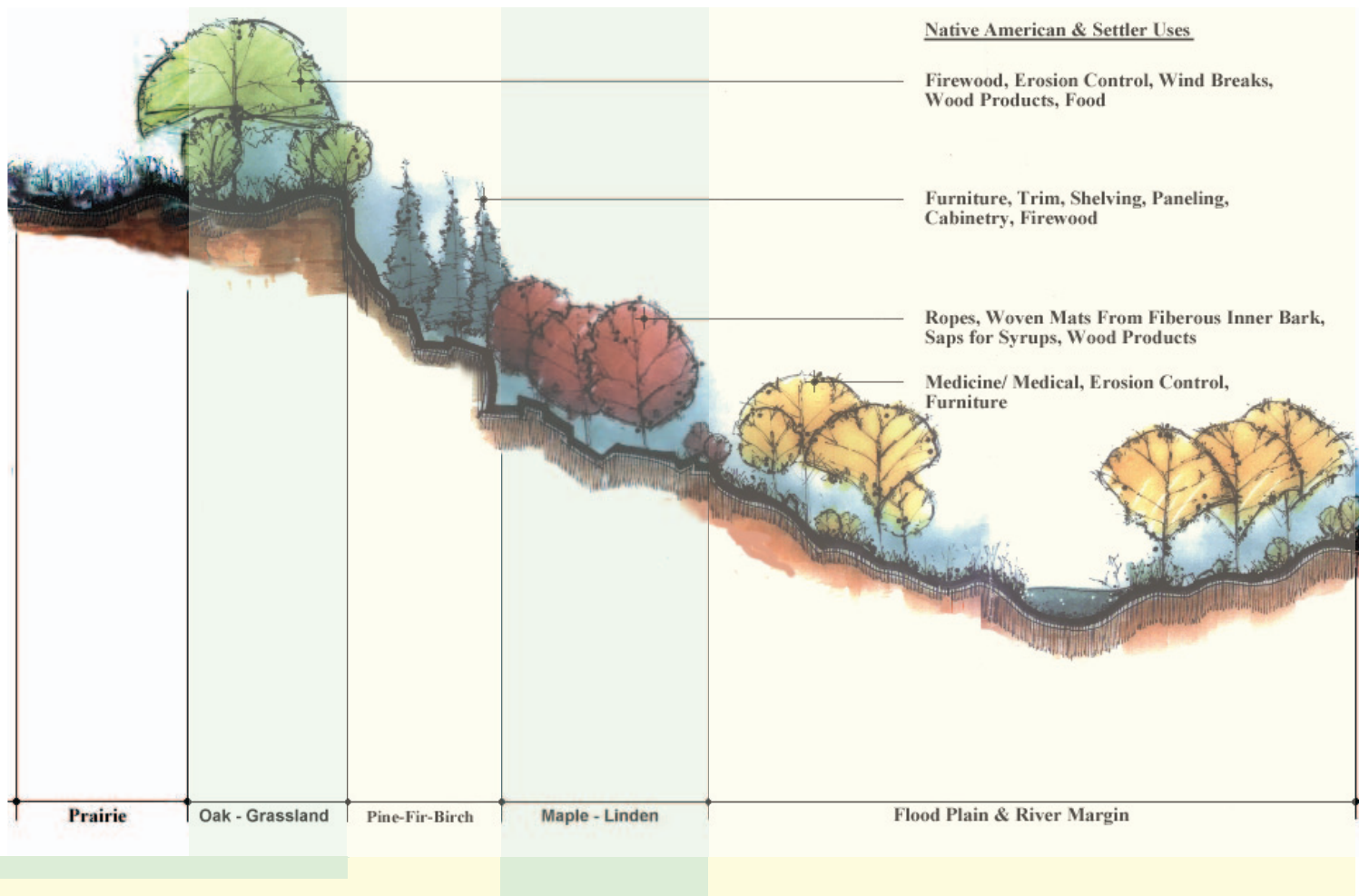
An Elemental Picture: Water, Fire, Wind, and Life

Millions of years of sedimentation, glaciation, and vegetative growth created a place like no where else—a place that not only provided a unique backdrop for the historical events that followed, but also helped shape nationally significant events in Freedom's Frontier.

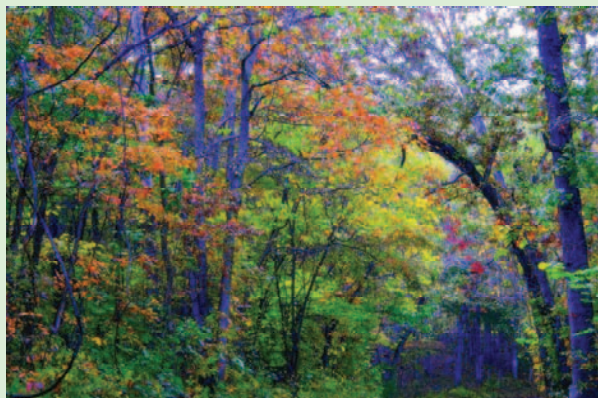


OAK GRASSLAND: Because they are sturdy, certain types of oaks, like Burr Oaks and White Oaks, can survive some of the prairie burns. At the top of the Oak Grassland, fires eliminate the underbrush. Farther down the valley, plant material is denser.





PINE-FIR-BIRCH:
Transition system of
birch and undergrowth.



MAPLE-LINDEN: This system supports maple and linden trees, as well as underbrush. Together, the layers of trees form a canopy.



FLOOD PLAIN & RIVER MARGIN: In this system, the plant material has adapted to inundation and flooding over long periods of time.

HOW WE SETTLED

LANDSCAPE, POLITICS, AND HUMAN PATTERNS

Across the vast expanse of Freedom's Frontier, natural history has shaped human events. Visitors can discover connections between topography and the location of a trail, between the four major river valleys of the Freedom's Frontier and the siting of towns. We can begin to understand why some Border War conflicts may have happened in areas where opposing sides were brought together and how different types of agriculture in both Missouri and Kansas were dispersed (see below).

The federal enabling legislation for Freedom's Frontier speaks of recreation and the conservation of natural resources. By understanding the connections between towns and rivers, American settler trails and Indian routes, we can also begin to understand better ways to bring visitors to these areas today. We can envision scenic and historic roads, trails and bike paths between them that can become priorities for conservation. We can also begin to find connections between an historic site's stories with other sites that at first glance may seem to have little in common.

Mapping is a fundamental component of human thought. By taking maps into account we can fully appreciate our stories, how they are geographically connected, and why they occurred where they did.

Human Patterns

Over the next series of pages, we explore the historic human settlement patterns in Freedom's Frontier that occurred from 1803 to the present day.

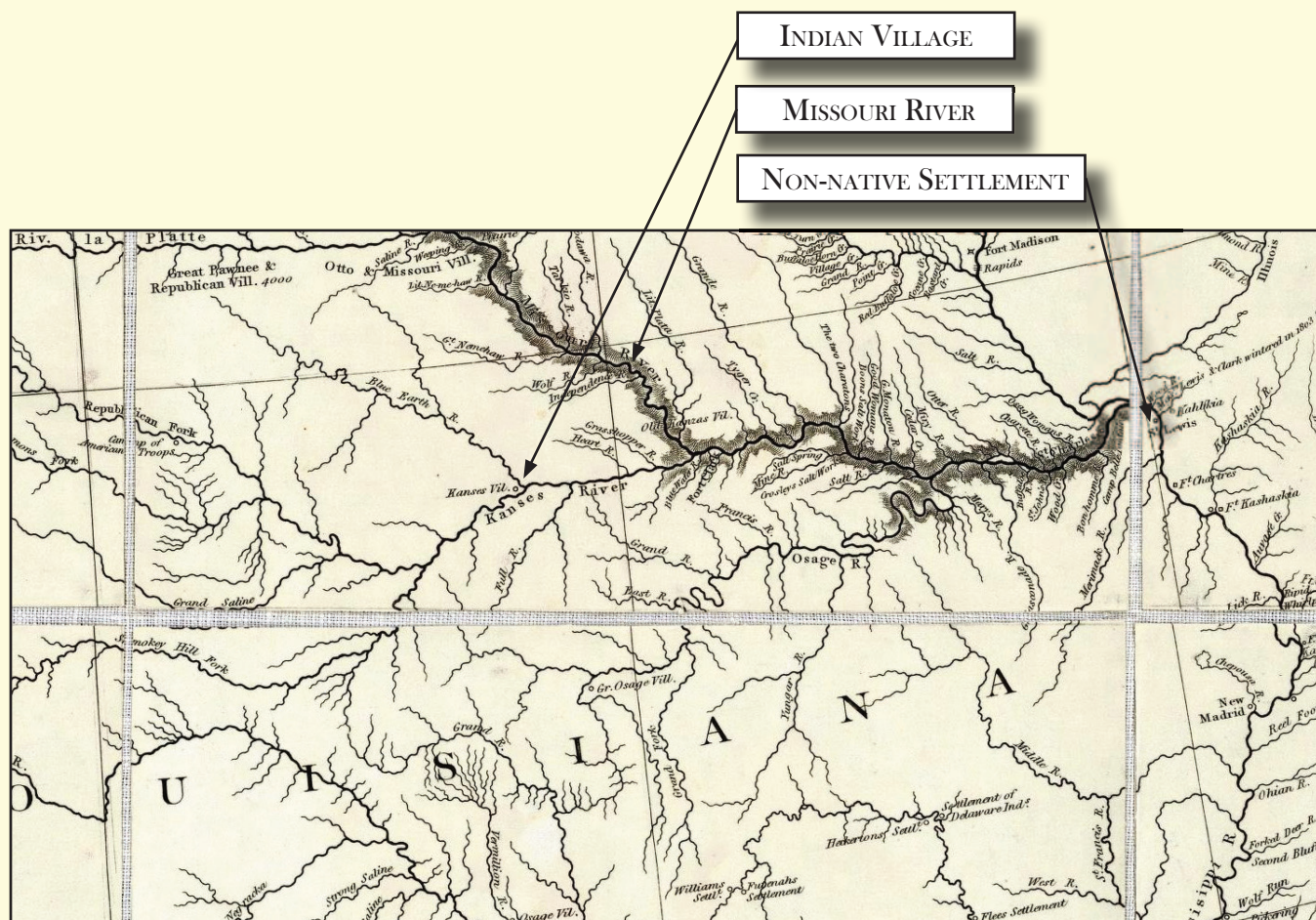
Partners in Freedom's Frontier took part in a participatory mapping workshop during the partnership meeting in September 2008. The purpose of this exercise was to recreate the challenges and decisions that newcomers faced in establishing a settlement on unclaimed lands within the region during the early nineteenth century.

The settler groups reflected the range of people who came to Kansas and Missouri including planters, subsistence farmers, outfitters and merchants, and city builders. The exercise found that the decisions made by those in the workshop reflected the decisions made by settlers in the past (refer to the "Utopia" exercise in the appendix).



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

ABOVE: Detail of the "Agricultural Economy" map provided in the Power of Story document. The connections between landscape, politics, and human patterns affected how people settled in the region, what they grew, where they grew, and who their neighbors were. This will be explored in this portion of the Power of Place.



Arrowsmith, Aaron (1814). New Discoveries in the Interior Parts of North America (detail). Courtesy of David Rumsey Collection.

ABOVE: Settlement is shown mostly as native villages and trading posts. Non-native settlement clustered to the east of the heritage area around St. Louis. The settlement patterns moved upstream from St. Louis as the decade progressed. As a consequence, Native American displacement moved farther westward and into the heritage area.

1803–1829

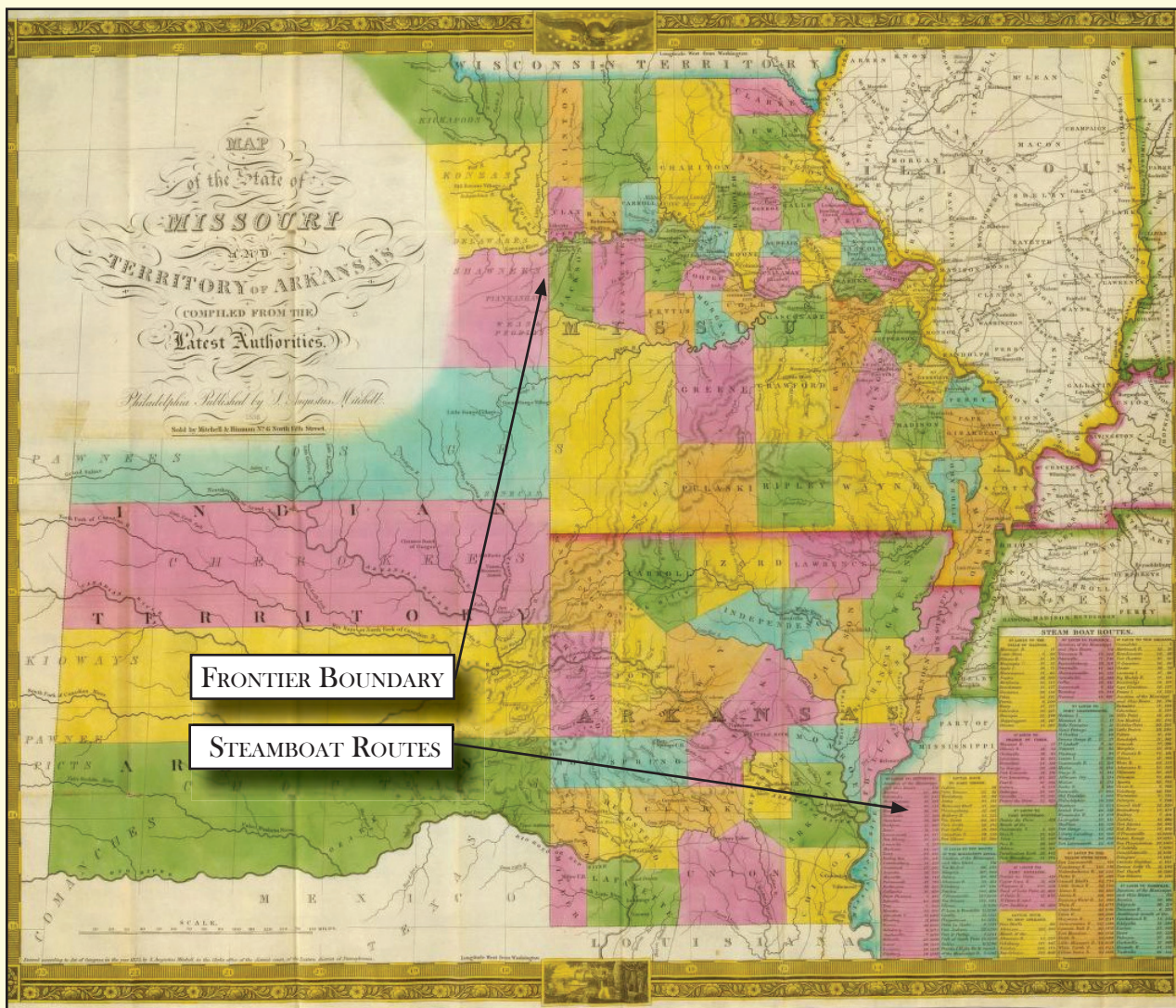
This detail of a non-native settlement map of the heritage area shows the early mapping and settlement patterns in the region. The area was still one of exploration and early economic development. The major geographic feature in the map is the Missouri River and tributaries feeding into the river. This indicates both the extents of surveying and exploration in the region at the time.

What are “Influences on Settlement and Freedom?”

These are economic, political, and social events that affected settlement and the story of freedom in the heritage area during that period in history. It is not a comprehensive list of stories or story themes. These influences are only intended as a point of reference for the reader. Further exploration and review of many of these influences can be found in the Power of Story section.

Influences on Settlement and Freedom: 1803–1829

Louisiana Purchase	1803
Osage Treaty	1808
Opening of Missouri	1818
Missouri Compromise	1820
Opening of Santa Fe Trail	1821



Mitchell, Samuel Augustus, Philadelphia (1836), Map of the State of Missouri And Territory of Arkansas, Courtesy of David Rumsey Collection.

1830–1849

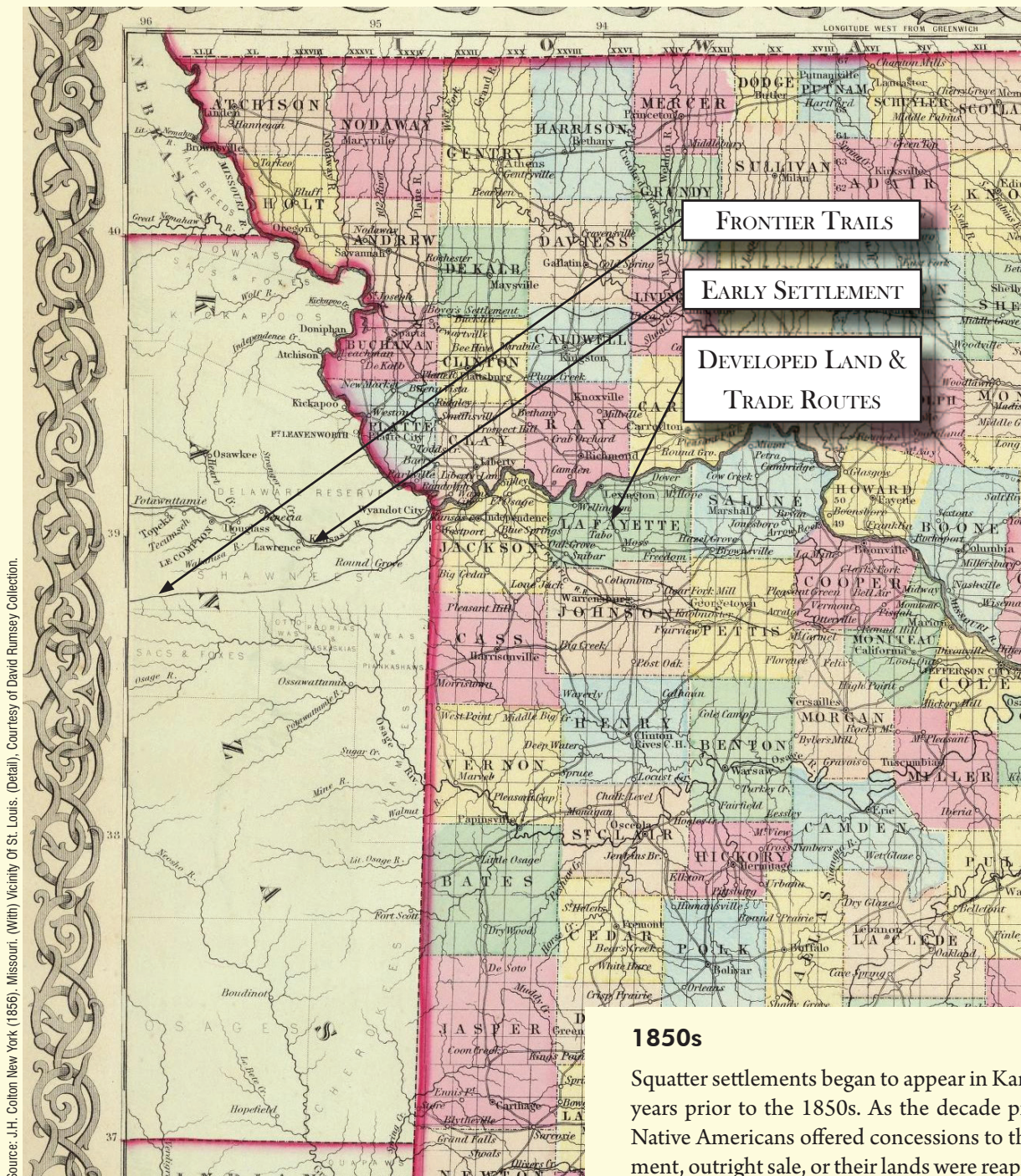
By the 1830s, settlement reached to the river valley at the western boundary of the new state of Missouri. Maps began to show county delineations in the heritage area. Native settlement was pushed to the west side of the border, delineated as the edge of the frontier. In the frontier, lands were assigned to various native tribes. This appropriation would continue into the 1840s. The western reaches of today's heritage area (now central Kansas) were sparsely populated and not mapped.

Development was still primarily in the Missouri River valley east of the point of confluence with the Kansas River. The Kansas, Osage, and Neosho river valleys are shown as broad regions without detailed political delineations.

ABOVE: Smaller, shallower, non-navigable rivers had not been settled. Steamboat routes are listed at the bottom right of the map—an indication of the steamboats' preeminence in economic vitality and transportation.

Influences on Settlement and Freedom: 1830–1849

Indian Removal Act	1830
Platte Purchase	1836
Mormon War	1838
Opening of California/Oregon Trail	1839–1841
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo	1848



ABOVE: Map of Missouri that also shows early settlement in Kansas. Settlement in Missouri had largely filled along the major rivers and prime agricultural lands by the 1850s. Vernon and Bates counties were erroneously switched on this map when it was drawn.

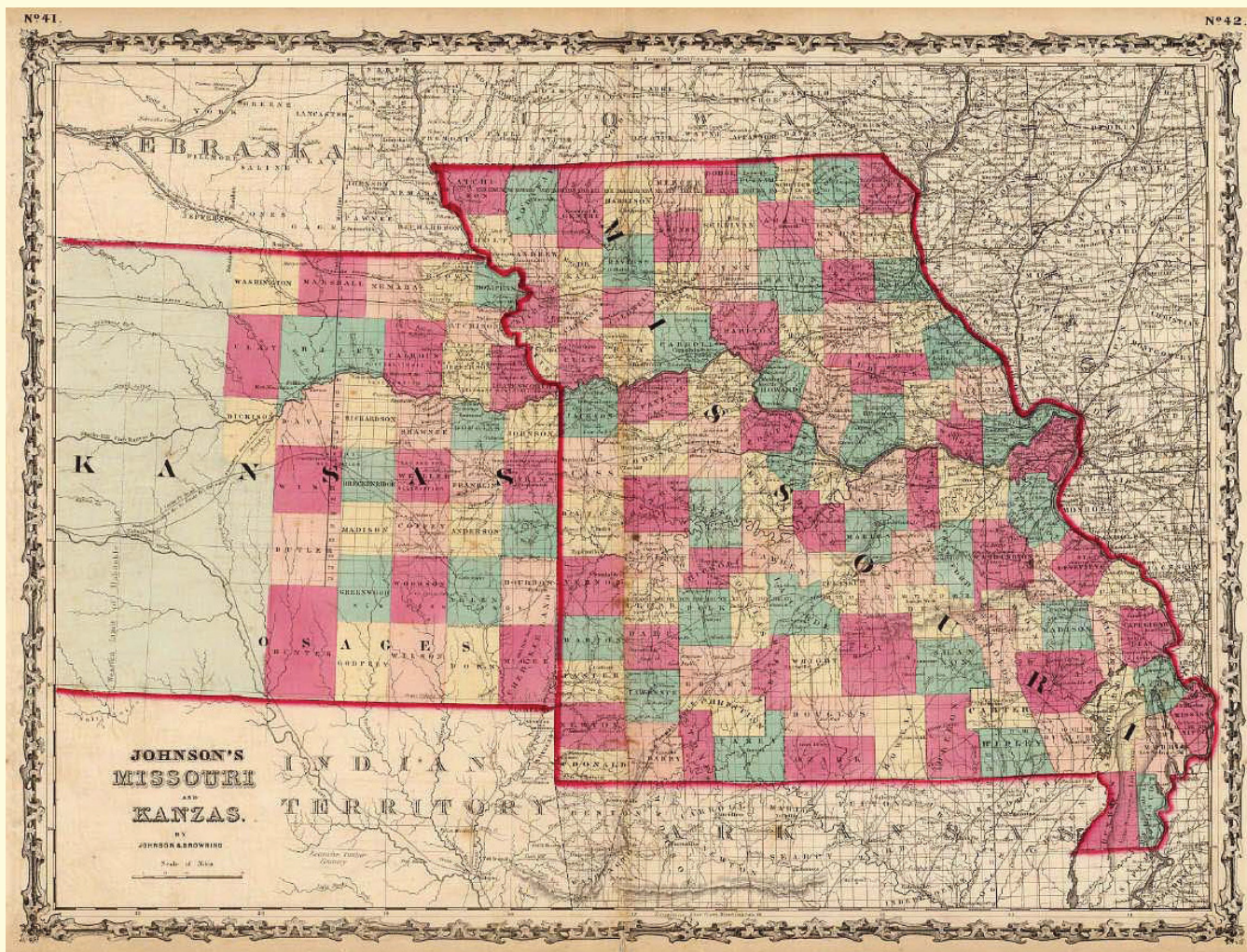
Influences on Settlement and Freedom in the 1850s

Kansas-Nebraska Act	1854
Onset of the Border War	1854

1850s

Squatter settlements began to appear in Kansas in the years prior to the 1850s. As the decade progressed, Native Americans offered concessions to the government, outright sale, or their lands were reapportioned into lots. Non-natives were still sparse in Kansas, but the economically viable land spurred settlement and the prospect of statehood began at this time. This limited settlement along with the charged atmosphere of national politics would foster the conflicts that occurred at this time.

The end of the Mexican War led to settlement of the region by veterans who received grants from the federal government. Continued settlement of California, Oregon, and Salt Lake Valley began in earnest as well. Trails to these and other locations began to emanate from the Kansas-Missouri border and through Kansas.



Johnson and Browning New York (1860), Missouri And Kansas, Courtesy of David Rumsey Collection.

ABOVE: Development of the region in the 1860s.

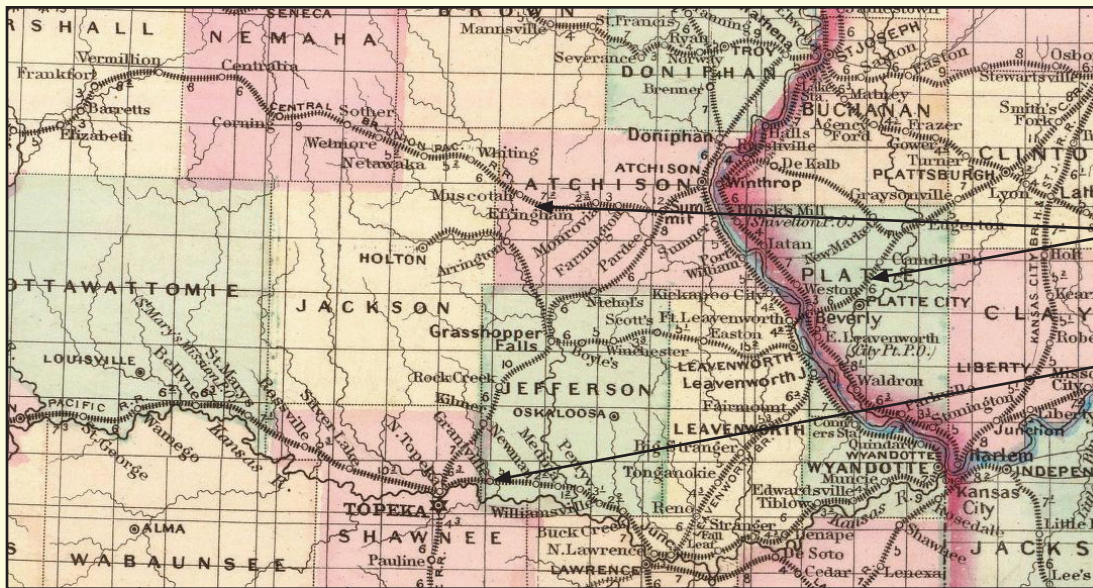
Influences on Settlement and Freedom in the 1860s

American Civil War	1861–1865
Kansas Statehood	1861
General Order #11	1863
Drake Constitution	1865–1870
Civil War Amendments	1865–1870

1860s

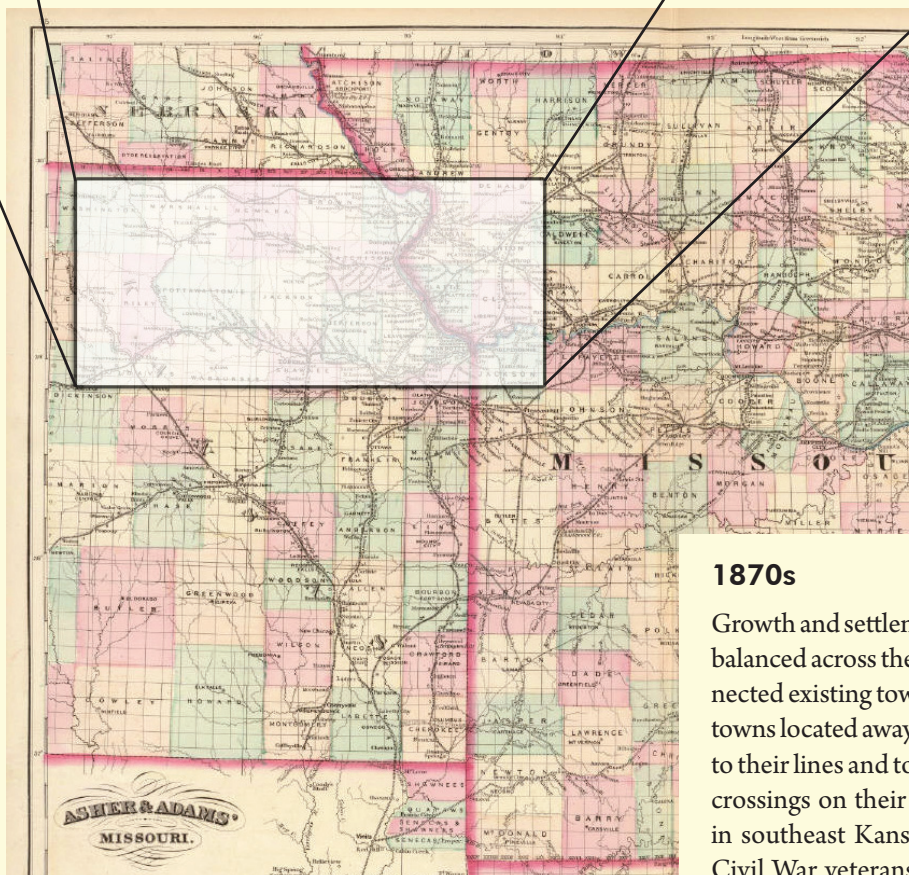
Settlement of the Heritage Area in the 1860s was greatly affected by the onset of the American Civil War. Populations shifted across the region—sometimes involuntarily—as the fortunes of competing sides shifted over time. The greatest impact on the landscape was the destruction of farmsteads, towns, and districts in a circle of vengeance and retribution.

Resettlement and reconstruction typified the settlement patterns of the latter 1860s. Railroads and telegraph lines began to connect cities and resources in the East, while the construction included land speculation and concessions.



RAILROADS &
RAILROAD TOWNS

RAILS FOLLOWING
RIVERS & TRAILS



Asher and Adams New York (1874), Missouri, Courtesy of David Rumsey Collection. Inset added.
ABOVE: Development of the region in the 1870s.

1870s

Growth and settlement in Freedom's Frontier became more balanced across the border in the 1870s. Railroads first connected existing towns along rivers, then connected existing towns located away from tributaries both to attract business to their lines and to reduce the number of expensive bridge crossings on their routes. New towns were "popping" up in southeast Kansas away from major tributaries, where Civil War veterans settled after Indians were removed to Indian Territory. Hundreds of African Americans came to settle in various parts of Kansas as part of the "Exoduster Movement." River and trail towns began to decline relative to railroad towns. This transportation shift would be seen again in the twentieth century as railroad towns declined relative to towns along interstate highways.

Another significant shift to the landscape occurred as minerals began to be extracted on an industrial scale.

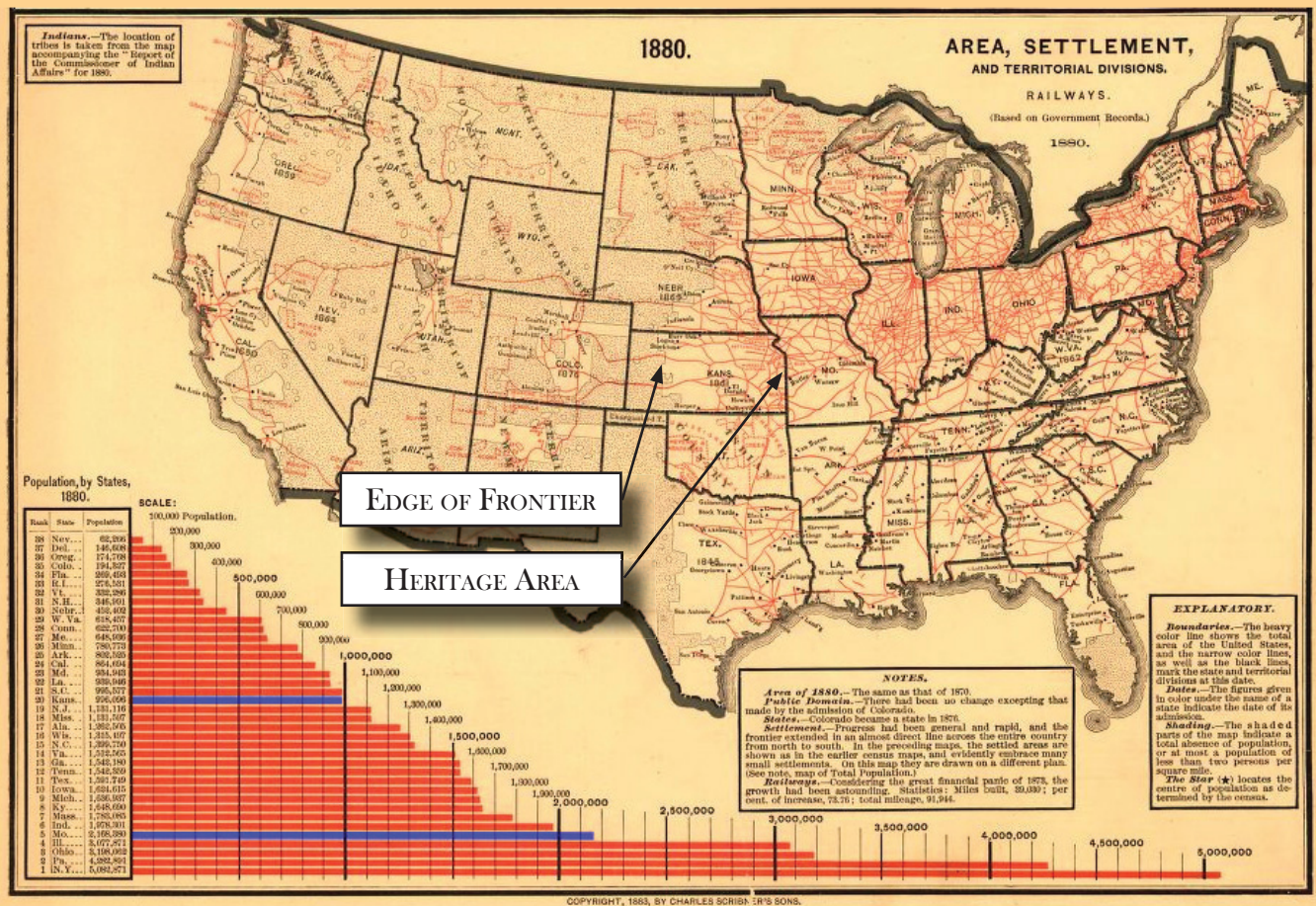
Influences on Settlement and Freedom in the 1870s

Long Depression

1873–1879

Jim Crow Laws

1876



New York, C. Scribner's sons [c1883], Statistical Atlas of the United States – Area, Settlement, and Territorial Divisions. Railways. 1880. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C.

ABOVE: By 1880, the frontier regions of the United States had moved to the west of the heritage area. The 1890 census famously declared that frontier regions of the United States no longer existed and “the frontier was closed.” Highlighted on the map are the populations of Kansas and Missouri. The 1880 census found Missouri to be the fifth-most populous state in the country, and Kansas to be slightly larger in population than California.

1880–1945

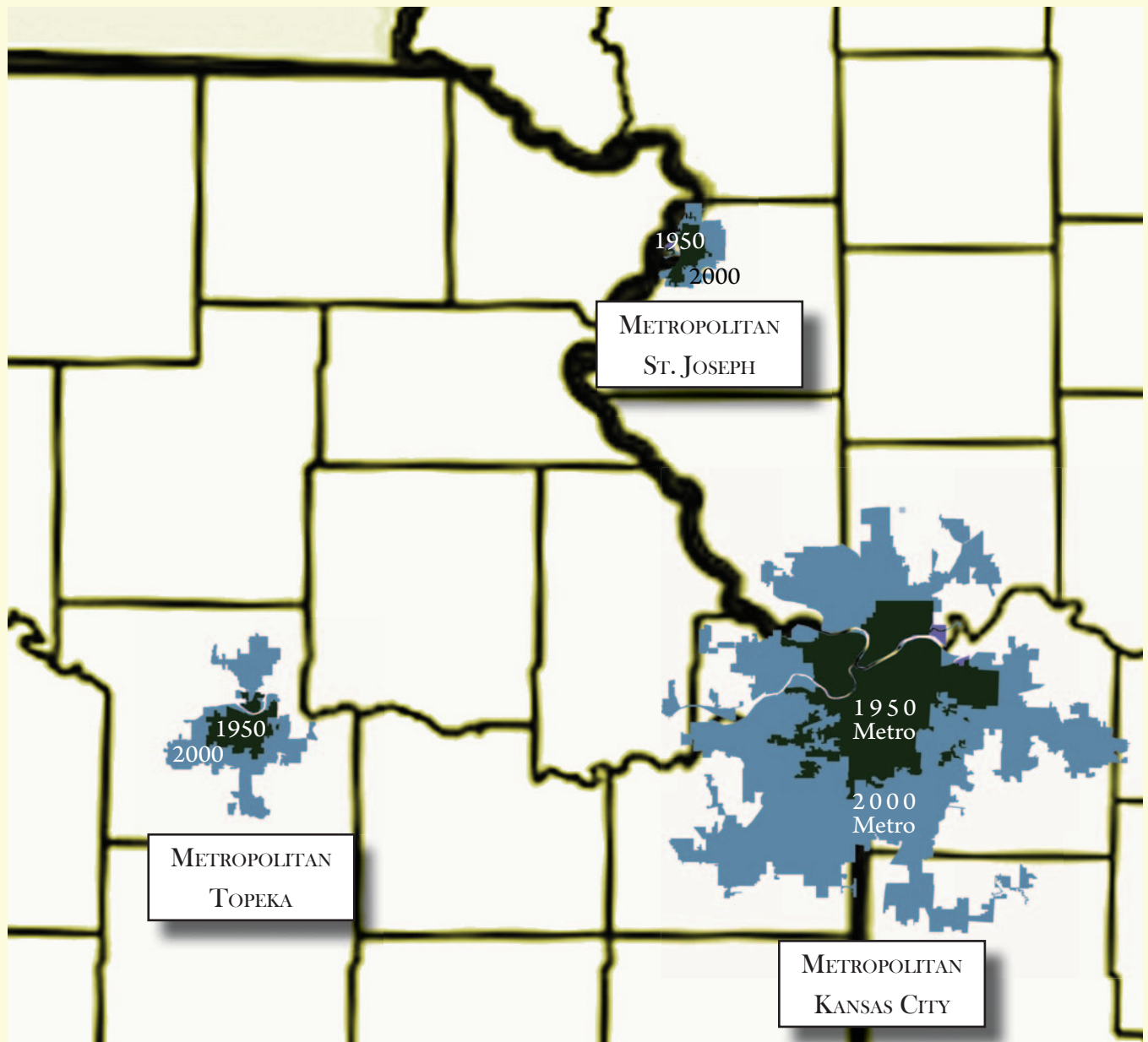
The stories of social reform and change that typified this era often occurred in lands that had already been settled. Industrial growth, real estate speculation, and immigration spurred growth in the heritage area from 1880. Development on both sides of the border was more balanced than in previous decades.

Growth and settlement continued into the twentieth century, but the changes to the built environment on a regional scale were not as dramatic as earlier periods. The boom and bust cycle of railroad speculation and towns began to recede, while immigrants and industry settled in emerging urban areas. The number of railroad lines in the region began to decline after the 1920s.

Although the Dust Bowl—the major environmental disaster of this period—had more significant impact to the west of the heritage area, the rural population in most of the region steeply declined in the 1930s and 1940s.

Influences on Settlement and Freedom: 1880–1945

Kansas Prohibition	1881
Progressive Era	1890-1920
World War One	1914-1918
Great Depression	1929-1941
World War Two	1941-1945



Adapted from United States Census Bureau. 1950 and 2000.

ABOVE: In 1950, the census bureau defined three cities in Freedom's Frontier as metropolitan areas: Kansas City, Missouri, St. Joseph, Missouri, and Topeka, Kansas. These metro areas grew into the countryside as their population increased and as suburbs were developed. A comparison is shown between their land size in 1950 (dark green) and 2000 (blue). Since 1950, Lawrence, Kansas, and Manhattan, Kansas, have grown to become metropolitan areas.

Influences on Settlement and Freedom after 1945

G.I. Bill	1944
Civil Rights Reform	1948-1968
Federal Highway Act	1956
Immigration & Nationality Act	1965

Post-1945

The enduring struggles for freedom were intertwined with social reform after the Second World War. These stories occurred in settled spaces, but the nature of settlement changed drastically during this period. The creation of interstate highways and suburban development began to alter the landscape with explosive growth in metropolitan areas.

Much of this growth was at the expense of smaller towns and farming communities. The steep declines in rural population in the heritage area continued into the 1970s. Many rural counties in the heritage area saw a decline of population over the course of the twentieth century. This growth affected the landscapes and sites in these areas.

21ST CENTURY PRESERVATION AND GROWTH



Courtesy Jim Wells. Photograph taken in 2008.

ABOVE: Manhattan, Kansas, was designated a metropolitan area in 2008 and is expected to experience rapid growth over the next twenty years. Economic development and advocacy are critical to the success of the region, but careful planning can provide a wealth of needed benefits while retaining the unique character of the region.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

ABOVE: Yates Center, Kansas, c. 1910-1919. Like many counties in the heritage area, Woodson County in Kansas has experienced a dramatic decrease in population in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is now the most sparsely populated county in the heritage area. The vitality of rural communities is threatened due to economic strain and aging demographics.

"Environmental change is humanity's constant companion and is a key to understanding the geography of culture."

H.J. de Blij and Alexander B. Murphy, *Human Geography: Culture, Society and Space*

Freedom's Frontier encourages its partners to preserve its cultural watersheds and natural resources. This Management Plan seeks to steward and understand the "power of place" not only through historic structures, but also through the streams, landforms, and animals that cross this region.

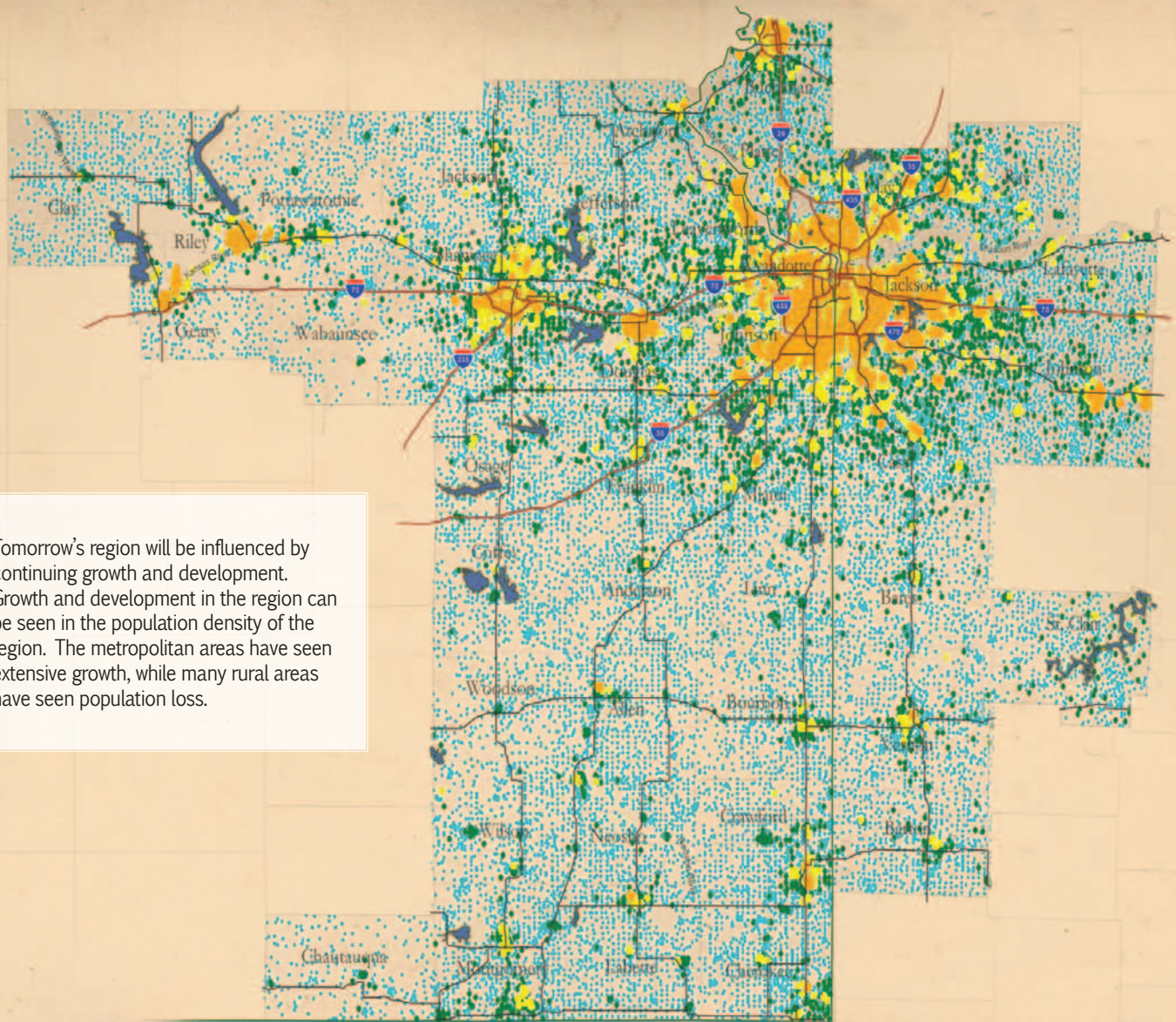
According to the American Farmland Trust, Americans paved six million acres of farmland between 1992 and 1997. Only half of the nation's urban expansion is related to population growth, the other half is tied to land-use choices. Economic development is needed in the region, but without careful planning, unsustainable development can destroy the natural and cultural resources that make our place unique.

While careful planning can improve the economic climate of the region's metropolitan areas, the region's rural communities are facing their own brand of unique challenges. According to studies by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, a vast majority of the non-metropolitan counties in the Great Plains witnessed a population decline in the years between 2000 and 2005. In these years, rural Kansas lost over 28,000 people—more than any other state. These challenges also threaten the economic well-being of farmers in Missouri, which has the second-largest number of farms in the nation. The people that live in the rural areas of Freedom's Frontier, many of whom live in farm-based economies, are facing financial challenges related to rising health care and transportation costs.

The political competition for land and economic resources is not a relic of the nineteenth century. Rural and urban interests today often compete with each other as they seek the same limited funds for the development of their communities. This competition has fostered distrust between rural and urban areas. The voluntary collaboration of all citizens to build diverse economies is an important part of the heritage area's vision. By working together, the stories of Freedom's Frontier can be told much more effectively.

Many potential solutions exist for partners and organizations. They are further explored in the Power of Partnership and Power of Action section in this plan.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT




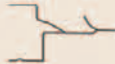
Tomorrow's region will be influenced by continuing growth and development. Growth and development in the region can be seen in the population density of the region. The metropolitan areas have seen extensive growth, while many rural areas have seen population loss.


LEGEND

Population Density

- 300+ people per square mile
- 100-300 people per square mile
- 30-100 people per square mile
- 2-30 people per square mile

 Interstate Highways

 Other Major Highways

 Lakes and Reservoirs

SCALE 1" = 25 miles

Source: 2000 United States Census

Freedom's
Frontier
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



FROM REGION TO PLACE

MANY VERSIONS OF THE SAME LANDSCAPE

This management plan encourages residents to ask new questions about their heritage area and homes. One way to begin is by looking at the landscape. In the late 1970s, the cultural geographer D.W. Meinig wrote an essay entitled: “The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene.” His article lays out ten lenses by which we can understand, remember, and interact with a landscape whether it is a farm or an urban neighborhood. Each leads to different questions. The following are ten versions of the same scene.

1) **Landscape as Nature:** an area that is removed from human influences and offers a sensory experience that changes with the seasons and climate.

2) **Landscape as Habitat:** a site or group of sites that are a permanent or migratory home for humans and other species. Habitat can imply more than one species and their mutual reliance.

3) **Landscape as Artifact:** a place to be preserved, a place that is static or known for a great monument such as a fort or a natural feature such as a butte.

4) **Landscape as System:** an approach to beholding the land as a collection of inter-related parts such as the rainfall cycle. Precipitation adds water that percolates through soil and limestone into deep aquifers. These underground bodies in turn feed streams and wetlands that evaporate into the air.

5) **Landscape as Problem:** an area to be studied and a question to be answered. Whether a polluted pond or changing rural character, the “landscape as problem” invites rigorous data collection, analysis, and new insights.

6) **Landscape as Wealth:** can imply monetary, social, or historical resources. Usually, “wealth” implies monetary measures of resource value and real estate value, both current and future.

7) **Landscape as Ideology:** a political statement of assertion of a belief system. The expressions can be overt such as a Soviet-era memorial to Stalin or more subtle such as the line of American frontier forts and

posts that asserted federal power and intentions to settle the west.

8) **Landscape as History:** an outlook that focuses on stories or specific events that may have happened at a site. They can represent broad social themes such as “the settlement of Free-State towns” or specific events such as a battle or raid.

9) **Landscape as Place:** an approach to landscape that focuses not on wealth or visual qualities, but on human attachments including memories, prior associations, on-going festivals and events, and a sense of how “this place” is different from any other place.

10) **Landscape as Aesthetic:** emphasizes the sensory perception of beauty through any of the five senses and the effect that it has on emotion. Rather than being based in past stories, aesthetic experiences in landscape happen in a moment and can create a sense of calm and refreshment.



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

ABOVE: Urban scene in Topeka, , Shawnee County, Kansas during a 1935 dust bowl storm. This landscape can be viewed many different ways using the Ten Versions exercise. From this, new questions and connections to stories can be developed.

Many Versions of the Same Landscape

These ten approaches all apply to Freedom's Frontier; and we will find these perspectives in various sections of the Management Plan. They all have a role in planning for recreation, conservation, education, interpretation, historic preservation, and economic growth.

In this section of the plan, we explore many of these ten viewpoints with examples from FFNHA. Indeed, many of these versions of beholding the same scene can apply to a single FFNHA site. For example, the Black Jack Battlefield located in Douglas County, Kansas, is rich in possible perspectives. Black Jack can be interpreted as a Problem to be studied, as Wealth surrounded by encroaching urban development and rising land values, as Ideology and History where a skirmish between northern and southern sympathizers took place, and as a Place of unusual beauty and calm.

Sometimes differing versions of the same scene conflict with one another such as the fact that Black Jack is a very historic piece of land that is also economically very valuable. It has both historic and monetary wealth. As such, many of its outward viewsheds are threatened with development that could change the experience of being there and its historic character.

As happened in the Border War period, when the same region or piece of land is contested and interpreted differently, it can become a site of conflict. Yet, conflict can sometimes lead to new insights, innovations, compromise, and reconciliation. Just as looking at the ecosystems of the heritage area as a whole can yield new insights about the location of historic events, looking at historic sites and landscapes through many metaphors or perspectives can reveal the many layers of their value. Though it would be simpler to directly map known historic sites, this Management Plan seeks to create a new model of multi-disciplinary questions and new pathways to interpretation found by residents themselves.



New Metaphors for Freedom's Frontier

In the spirit of posing new questions, consider some additional metaphors for Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area including: Ecosystem, Fabric, Quilt, and Jigsaw. Each of these ideas implies a whole that is greater than its sum of parts such as individual historic sites, recreational opportunities, and attractions.

An "Ecosystem" viewpoint implies strength of diversity yet also a fragility in which all pieces are interrelated and that changes to one can affect all.

Thinking of the region's locales as a "Fabric" opens questions about the threads that bind them and the strength of many small strands when woven together.

If we consider Freedom's Frontier as a "Jigsaw," we can think about how it would look from an airplane. But, if we introduce the metaphor of a Quilt (which is also visible from the air), we can discuss the 41 counties as a region made by many people with scraps and pieces from many sources and eras brought together over time in the image of a whole.

In the end, having many metaphors for discussing landscape and the heritage area can make residents better citizens with richer "mental maps" that they can share with visitors. A "sense of place" and a "sense of region" means citizens are being consciously aware of the landscape—and how it is different from other regions. Such as regional self-understanding can vary person by person, but it has to come from within; and throughout the planning process, many residents have shared stories that show how powerfully this discovery can happen.

KANSAS AND MISSOURI IN THE AMERICAN MIND

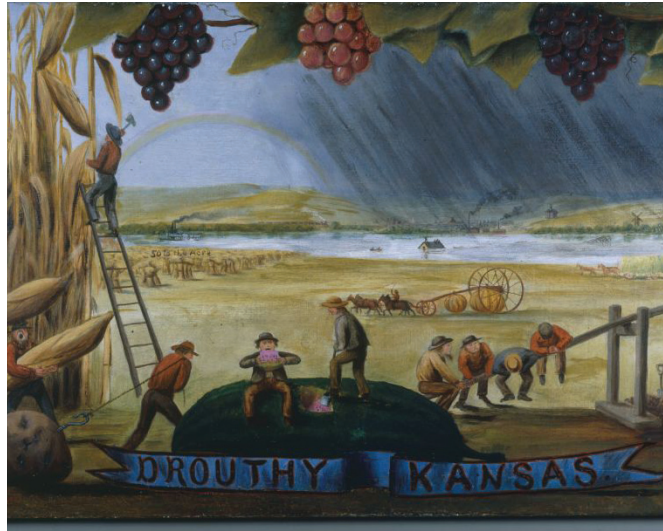
Landscape as Political Tool

In this chapter, we have seen the landscape as an ecosystem and as a backdrop for settlement patterns. We can also study the popular descriptions of landscapes and their use as a political tool. We can ask: *how was the beauty of the land packaged and marketed to draw settlers? How can we interpret this beauty in the region's scenic byways, rivers, and nature preserves today?*

Part of understanding the Power of Place today is to understand its influence on the national imagination in the 1850s. We can learn much from these emigrant prospectuses. Their writers, closely woven into the literary world of the eastern seaboard, can serve as an inspiration for new writers from the region today. Original descriptions, exaggerated though they may be, should be included in the interpretation of sites throughout Freedom's Frontier.

Many speculative guidebooks before the Civil War were written to support strategic settlement. These accounts provide a fascinating window into the optimism, hype, and boosterism of the era. Written in 1857 with an introduction by the abolitionist and landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Englishman in Kansas: or, Squatter life and border warfare*, celebrates the Kansas landscape through English eyes. This promotional guide for free-state settlers touts the vastness of the plains, a sense only expanded by the arching and open sky. Olmsted verbally paints an immense visual canvas for readers thousands of miles away. His lofty sentences encourage readers to imagine possibilities for agriculture, community building and their own futures.

Near these rivers, and especially on the borders of the Kansas and Missouri, are fine bottom-lands covered with a rich and most fertile soil, needing nothing but the plough to convert them into fruitful fields. Then follows prairie—beautiful, undulating prairie—here and there a grove of walnut, hickory, oak, or sugar-maple....

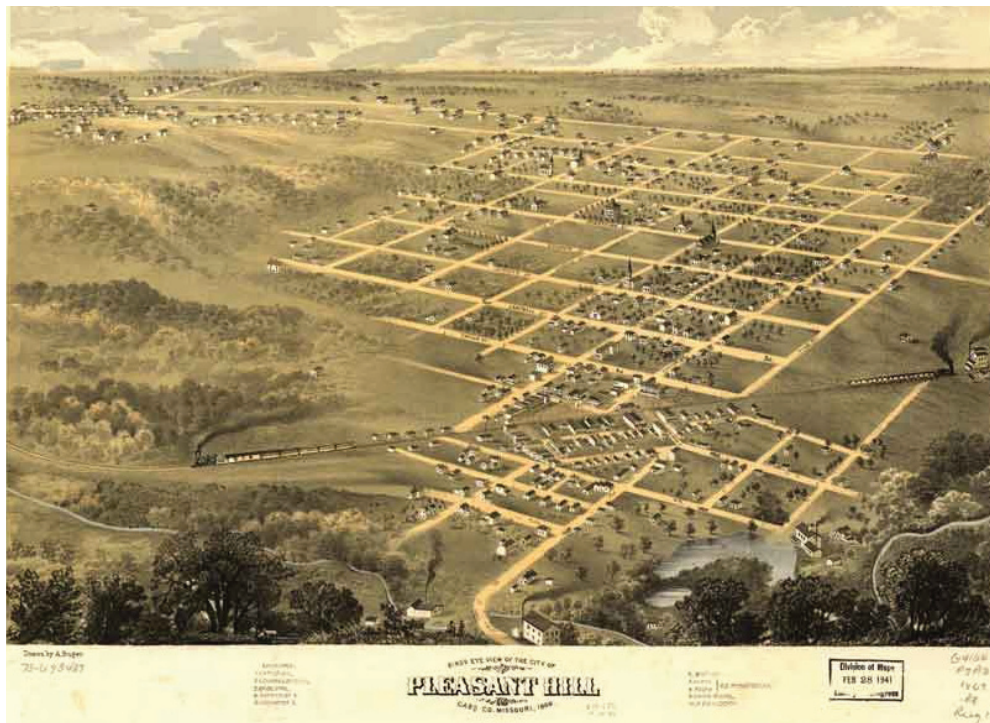


Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

ABOVE: Detail of the "Drouthy [sic] Kansas" sketch by Henry Worrall, c. 1869. Worrall sought to combat the negative portrayal of his adopted state as being "droughty" by producing an idealized, exaggerated portrait of Kansas as a land of immense agricultural bounty.

To this day, the ideals of the pastoral landscape that Olmsted found in Kansas underlie Americans' sense of style in landscape design and the promotion of new neighborhoods for prospective buyers. In the summer of 1854, George S. Park recounted in the *New York Times*, his journey on the steamer, *Excel*. This travel account also appeared in the prospectus of the New England Emigrant Aid Society of that year. These passages from a writer who claimed to have visited Kansas over fifteen years, were likely among the most broadly circulated (and influential) accounts of Kansas for an eastern seaboard audience of that time. He saw as it a kind of Promised Land, a pastoral ideal at the center of the continent.

"The country abounds with the most luscious grapes. Stock of all kinds are remarkably healthy; and these rolling prairies will make the finest sheepwalks in the world. In fact, this may be designated the pastoral region of America." Notes of a Trip up Kansas River, by Geo. S. Park, NYT August 16, 1854



Courtesy libraryimages.net.

ABOVE: Ruger & Stoner map of Pleasant Hill, Cass County, Missouri, 1869. Panoramic maps such as this one were commonly used to showcase towns throughout the heritage area. These maps tended to blend cartographic accuracy with idealistic propaganda. This map highlights the rail connectivity, access to water, and forested hills around the city.

Promotion of the Landscape at War's End

As the Civil War neared its end, the landscape continued to play an important role in the promotion of the heritage area for a national audience. On January 11, 1865, Missouri voted to abolish slavery. Written at the close of the Civil War as a call for “Capitalists and Immigrants,” Nathan H. Parker’s *Missouri Hand-Book* spoke with a sense of boosterish optimism for post-conflict prosperity. Despite its clear Unionist orientation, there are useful glimpses into the mineral, timber, and water resources on the land that likely lured settlers throughout the 1850s and earlier. For example, Parker notes that the southeastern outcrop of coal extended “from the mouth of the Des Moines River” through several counties in Freedom’s Frontier today including St. Clair, Bates, and Vernon “into the Indian Territory....” Sulfur and zinc were noted in all of the mining areas of the southeastern portion of the state.

Beyond broad descriptions of opportunities in agriculture and mining, the *Hand-Book* offers regional and county-specific descriptions of the landscape during and near the end of the Civil War. For example, Parker describes Johnson County, Missouri, (denoting its population in 1860 at 13,080) as rich in “fertile prairie land, level or slightly undulated, interspersed here and there with forest trees and small groves of thrifty young timber. He also notes the numerous springs and the

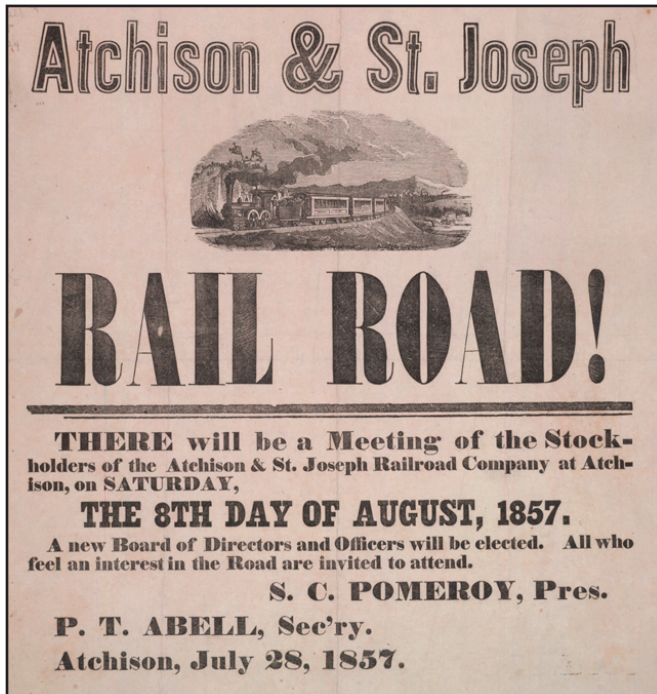
presence of “black oxide of manganese” found in Township 44—“a material leaving a clear black mark used for pencils.”

Lafayette County is described as fertile for tobacco, corn, and fruit. “As high as 2200 pounds of hemp have been produced per acre. On the 18th of February, 45 bales of choice hemp were sold in St. Louis, for the handsome price of \$190 per ton.”

While such development prospectuses were not unusual during the nineteenth century, Pinckard’s *Handbook* is written with the end of the Civil War in sight and an Emancipation Ordinance already passed in Missouri. For the western Missouri counties that were home to raids and forced evacuation, he documents a rich array of resources that had already drawn many settlers. He also sketches the post-slavery economy that will arise after the Civil War. In the case of Lafayette County, Pinckard writes:

“Farmers will see at a glance that this county is very well adapted to all the purposes of agriculture. The class of people most needed are qualified school teachers, practical farmers and mechanics, who have capital to improve the land or establish manufactories: also carpenters, plasterers and masons.”

REVEALING CULTURAL WATERSHEDS



Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society.

ABOVE: Advertisement promoting a meeting of the Atchison & St. Joseph Railroad. Railway advertising and investment lured settlers into Freedom's Frontier beginning the middle of the nineteenth century.



ABOVE: Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm, Olathe, Johnson County, Kansas. Mahaffie's culturally rich setting is unique in the heritage area and provides a "sense of place." The preservation and interpretation at the farmstead shapes the heritage of the local region even as growth and development continues around it.

From Strategic Settlement to a "Sense of Place"

The landscape of Freedom's Frontier is valued for many reasons: for its natural history, social activism and debate, open sky, and a long-term tradition of community involvement. How do people remember and value this heritage area's *places*? The most powerful places in Freedom's Frontier are valued for many reasons: for their natural history, how they shaped human history, their scenic beauty today, and the vitality of their social life.

The Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area "Power of Place" cannot be easily measured. Unlike "property," it is not an asset with value that can be easily determined based on market comparables. Rather, "places" exist in our thoughts and memories. As the geographer Yi-fu Tuan has argued, place is not designed but *achieved* through cultural acts such as naming, the creation of boundaries, and important events. "Sense of place" implies a self-conscious awareness that makes a place different from others.

Mid-nineteenth century promoters of Kansas and Missouri tried to invent a sense of the land in their advertising for potential settlers from the east. Over a century later, cultural geographers and landscape architects continue to speak of having a "sense of place" in beautiful, historic, or culturally rich settings. There is little agreement over the meaning of "sense of place," what causes it, or the role of historic places and events in shaping it. Yet, when we have a "sense of place"—a gut understanding that our home region is different from others—we know it.

Quick Reference Definitions

sense of place: the conscious awareness of how a region is distinct from other areas.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the appendix.

The Power of “the Frontier”

Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area lies at the heart of the country, in the “Midwest”—and somewhere near the imaginary point “where the West begins.” The frontier is a mythical force in American culture; and the word is used both in a physical sense of *the edge of a nation* and in the intellectual sense of *the boundary for new ideas, debates and questions*. Both of these senses are implied in the name of this National Heritage Area: Freedom’s Frontier. The heritage area is set at the edge of one part of the country and remains a testing ground for new ideas.

Because of its power as a myth, the idea of the “frontier” can become distorted when applied to the histories of a heritage area such as our own. James R. Grossman writes in *The Frontier in American Culture*:

“Cowboys, Indians, log cabins, wagon trains. These and other images associated with stories about the frontier maintain a constant presence in our lives. Innumerable products are marketed according to assumptions that symbols of the frontier are deeply embedded Americans’ notions of who we are and what we want to be.”

One of the reasons that the Freedom’s Frontier partners and other citizens are asking new questions about the Power of Place and the Power of Story is to find their own place in natural and human history—and to correct stereotypes about the past. Like the exact location of “the frontier,” it’s also difficult to define the part of the country where Freedom’s Frontier exists. We would think it is in the Midwest, yet as James Shortridge maintains in *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture*, the exact location of the “Midwest” has continued to shift since the mid-nineteenth century. Interestingly for Freedom’s Frontier, the first popular application of “Midwest” in the national media applied to Kansas and Missouri in the 1850s when they lay at the center of national debate over slavery and states’ rights.

Should we be uncomfortable with such geographic uncertainty? Like cultural geography, “history” is not about finding concrete answers and universal consensus.



Woolbaskets and view of the surrounding landscape at Watkins Mill, Clay County, Missouri. The industrial economy of the heritage area has often been glossed over by the myth of the frontier.

Rather, as many historians agree, it takes a certain humility. “The best you can do,” argues John Lewis Gaddis in *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past*, “is to represent reality: to smooth over the details, to look for larger patterns, to consider how you can use what you see for your own purposes.” Like working as a map-maker, Gaddis argues that the historian can feel very large and powerful.

Looking at the 100 million years of known natural history in the Freedom’s Frontier region and the relatively miniscule sliver of the last three centuries of American settlement, human beings *can also feel very small*. “Historical consciousness therefore leaves you, as does maturity itself, with a simultaneous sense of your own significance and insignificance,” Gaddis says. This heritage area and its stories are so vast and varied that we may never fully know them all, but the very conversation itself will make us wiser. They will also help to strengthen our “sense of place”—our sense of this region—as something to care about.

Relevant Questions

Many of the most relevant questions for this management plan start from our “sense of place”. They begin with what we know matters and endures here. As we will explore in the Power of Action and the Power of Partnership sections of this plan, strategies for conservation, education, interpretation, preservation, recreation, and economic development are all informed with a discussion of the Power of Place.

Reconnecting with the Land

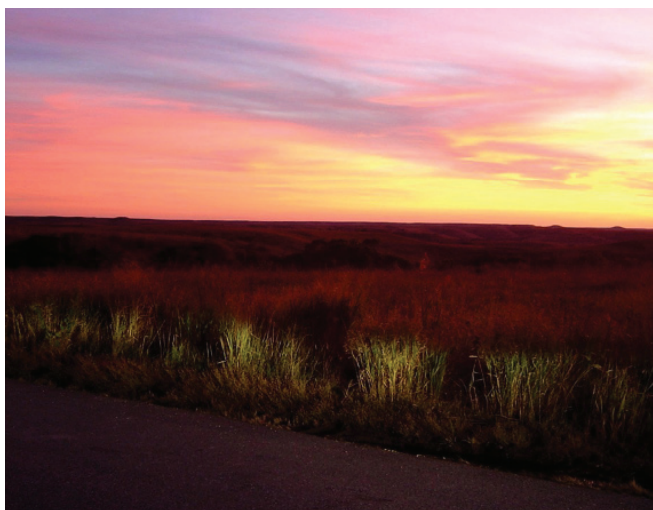
In considering “sense of place” in Freedom’s Frontier, we should ask hard questions, such as: *are we losing our “direct contact with the earth”?* *Are we losing connection with our stories?* *Can we learn from the experience of those from the past?* As we will discuss in the Recreation and Natural Resources Conservation section, children are increasingly cut off from the sights, smells, sounds, and chance encounters of playing in the woods or running in a field. Their time is structured in classes and organized events. Freedom’s Frontier can help to rebuild this connection for future generations. Can programs and activities help future generations reconnect with the sources of our food? Can reconnection with land and place help to teach a conservation ethic? These are all questions that we will explore.

Reconnecting with nature and the stories of the land mean understanding them on their own terms ... not as the English pastorate promoted in the past or through myths of the “Wild West.” The power of this landscape is that it was built up over millennia by the forces of nature, and more recently, by the individual and collective acts of people. Most of these residents were not architects, professional engineers, or historians. And, as such, the Main Streets, farms, trails, churches, schools, fences, and irrigation systems that they built are vernacular—they are built by lay people using what they had.

The cultural geographer J.B. Jackson spent much of his life studying the beauties of the ordinary American landscape and the fascinating stories of aspiration and struggle that lie beneath the surface. His introduction to *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* encourages us to think of Freedom’s Frontier’s Power of Place without preconceptions about what is “historic” or “significant.” He encourages us to start with its testimony to our common hope for a better future, to human striving to find answers to important questions.

For too long we have told ourselves that the beauty of a landscape was the expression of some transcendent law: the conformity to certain universal esthetic principles or the conformity to certain biological or ecological laws. But this is true only of formal or planned political landscapes. The beauty that we see in the vernacular landscape is the image of our common humanity: hard work, stubborn hope, and mutual forbearance striving to be love. I believe that a landscape which makes these qualities manifest is one that can be called beautiful.

J. B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*



ABOVE: Prairie landscape at dusk. Wabaunsee County, Kansas.