



## **Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area Questions and Answers**

### **1. What is a federal heritage area?**

The United States Congress designates a select few regions in the nation where significant national stories have taken place. A heritage area links historic and cultural sites within that region by telling a unified story that attracts visitors, educates citizens, stimulates economic opportunities, and preserves the important themes of the locale. These heritage areas begin as local initiatives, which are ultimately authorized by Congress and administered by the National Park Service.

### **2. What is Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area?**

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area comprises forty-one counties along the Kansas-Missouri border. Designated by Congress in October 2006, this heritage area will link historic and cultural sites where debates erupted about slavery, land ownership, western expansion, and freedom itself. The heritage area will tell the powerful stories of that Civil War period in ways that compel visitors to consider the complexity of the ideal of freedom. From slaves seeking freedom from shackles and being bought and sold, to homesteaders seeking freedom to own land, to prospectors and hunters seeking freedom to enjoy the bounty of the western lands, to schoolchildren seeking free and equal public education, this region has been the backdrop for a riveting nation dialogue on the meaning of freedom. America and the world continue to engage in this dialogue. Wars are fought, policy debates rage, and lawsuits are filed in the name of freedom, but the definition of that freedom varies according to the perspective of each individual, institution, or nation. Through the historic stories that played out on the Kansas-Missouri border prior to the Civil War, Freedom's Frontier will challenge all who experience it to examine contemporary understandings and the ever-evolving ideal of freedom.

3. How will a visitor experience Freedom's Frontier?

Although the plans for this new heritage area are still in progress, the goal is to provide visitors with actual and virtual experiences that place them "in the moment" of the stories so that they understand the different perspectives on events and issues of the time. The human tendency is to view an issue from one's own vantage point, but events and issues can only be fully understood by viewing them from many angles. Thus, this heritage area will present the stories of the struggles for freedom in this region from many viewpoints. Sites will be connected by common themes such as the slavery question, the role of the rivers and trails, the quest for land and natural resources, and the ongoing effort to define freedom in a twenty-first century world. Visitors will tour individual sites, experience the geography, and be immersed in the stories with the goal of fostering increased understanding of this important part of our nation's history.

4. What is the benefit of a heritage area to the region?

Every study suggests that cultural tourism is the fastest growing sector of the travel industry. Particularly in difficult economic times, visitors tend to seek accessible destinations where they can combine fun, education, and a variety of cultural experiences. This area already provides significant athletic, cultural, and entertainment opportunities, and Freedom's Frontier will be a valuable complement to the effort to attract tourism. Freedom's Frontier will also pull together regional assets where examination of the definitions of freedom are ongoing inquiries. Fort Leavenworth, Liberty Memorial, the Dole Institute, the Truman Home, the *Brown v. Board* site, and the universities in the region – all will make important contributions to the development of the themes. Thus, another benefit is increased scholarly and policy consideration of the themes of Freedom's Frontier.

5. Who funds Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area?

Federal heritage areas are public-private partnerships. Each heritage area is a 501(c)(3) organization, so private donations are tax-deductible charitable contributions. The federal government, through the Department of the Interior, funds a line item appropriation that is split among heritage areas. The states of Missouri and Kansas have made important financial contributions to help start-up funding. Douglas County and the City of Lawrence, along with other state and local governments, have provided seed money. Many individuals and private foundations are among the private donors. Fundraising efforts are ongoing. Thus far, almost all of the work has been done by volunteers and through the Lawrence Convention and Visitors Bureau.

6. How is the heritage area governed?

A volunteer Board of Trustees, drawn from residents of both Kansas and Missouri, oversees the policy and fiscal development of the heritage area. The Governors of Kansas and Missouri are honorary co-chairs. A Partnership Team, composed of more than one hundred representatives of sites, interested entities, and individuals, is responsible for the substantive stories told by the heritage area. The Partnership Team will be the “on-the-ground” developers of the heritage area.

7. What is the current status of the heritage area?

Freedom’s Frontier Heritage Area was designated by Congress in October 2006. By October of 2009, a management plan must be submitted to the National Park Service and Department of the Interior for approval. The management plan is nearing completion and will be submitted on schedule in the fall. The heritage area will then be ready to launch publicly.

For more information, go to [www.freedomsfrontier.org](http://www.freedomsfrontier.org).

**List of NHAs (with web links)**  
**Selected Descriptions, Missions, etc on p 3-end**

**1984**

**Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor**

**1986**

**John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor**

**1988**

**Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor**

**1994**

**Cane River National Heritage Area**

**Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor**

**1996**

**Augusta Canal National Heritage Area.**

**Cache La Poudre River Corridor**

**Essex National Heritage Area**

**Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.**

**National Coal Heritage Area**

**Ohio and Erie Canal National heritage Corridor.**

**Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area**

**Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District**

**Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area**

**South Carolina National Heritage Corridor**

**Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area**

**1998**

**MotorCities-Automobile National Heritage Area**

**2000**

**Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor**

**Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area**

**Schuykill River Valley National Heritage Area**

**Wheeling National Heritage Area**

**Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area**

**2003**

**Blue Ridge National Heritage Area**

**2004**

**Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area**

**National Aviation Heritage Area**

**Oil Region National Heritage Area**

**2006**

**Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area**

**Atchafalaya National Heritage Area**

**Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership**

**Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area**

**Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area**

**Great Basin National Heritage Route**

**Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor**

**Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area**

**Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area**

**Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area**

**2008**

**Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area**

**Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area**

**Niagara Falls National Heritage Area**

### **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District**

Size and Location: 8 counties, Virginia

**Mission:**

Fierce battles were fought across much of the nation during the Civil War. The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, in particular, saw some of the most significant action. Over 325 armed conflicts took place here—the city of Winchester alone changed hands over 70 times between 1861 and 1865.

Today, this historic landscape is increasingly threatened. To protect this national resource, the United States Congress created the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in 1996 to ensure that future generations would be able to explore the Valley's Civil War heritage and more fully understand the impact of the Civil War on the American experience.

**Programs:**

- Battlefield/historic preservation through voluntary easements
- Assists local governments with their planning and preservation
- Develops interpretation and education programs
- Promotes area as a Civil War travel destination.

### **Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area**

Size and Location: 37 counties, Iowa

**Mission:**

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area preserves and tells the story of American agriculture and its global significance through partnerships and activities that celebrate the land, people, and communities of the area.

**Programs:**

- Grants program, general grants for site improvement, internships and bus grants
- Workshops for partners
- Promote area to tourism
- Clearinghouse for resources for partners

### **Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area**

Size and Location: Entire state of Tennessee

**Mission:**

The Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA) tells the whole story of America's greatest challenge, 1860–1875, through sites and resources across the state. Encompassing the entire state of Tennessee, the Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 1996 and is partnership unit of the National Park Service. The TCWNHA is administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University and represents a partnership-based effort to preserve, enhance, and interpret the legacy of the Civil War and its aftermath across the state.

**Programs:**

- General grants for site improvement

Professional Services Partnership Program: professional assistance with historic site studies, heritage tourism brochures, program and exhibition development, and National Register nominations of Civil War and Reconstruction-era properties, among other projects.

Partner with area groups for heritage tourism-based economic development projects, such as driving tours and visitor centers.

### **Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor**

Size and Location: 165 mile corridor, Pennsylvania

Mission:

The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is a joint effort of private groups and interested citizens, county and municipal governments, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government to conserve cultural and natural resources in the five-county region of Pennsylvania that traverses the historic Delaware and Lehigh Canals. Since the Delaware & Lehigh's designation by Congress in 1988, it has been our mission to restore historic places, conserve green space for public use and preserve and interpret our heritage to enhance life for generations to come.

Programs:

Operates volunteer "D&L Trail Tenders" organization

Coordinates "Market Towns Initiative" to revitalize small towns through conservation, economic development based on their heritage

"Landmark Towns Project" economic revitalization program similar to the Main Street initiative

Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative to preserve greenspace and make it accessible to the public

Various Education and Interpretation programs