



February March 27, 2009

Ms. Judy Billings
President and CEO
Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
Post Office Box 586
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Judy,

We are writing to express our strong interest in collaborating with you and others in the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area in a long-range project. We propose working with a variety of diverse contemporary artists from the region and around the world who would create works of art in response to different sites across the forty one counties in Kansas and Missouri that comprise this Heritage Area.

The sites would be places that are "hot" with history and stories, both living and buried. Sites could include, for example, the Abolitionist homesteads that were submerged by the construction of Clinton Lake in Lawrence in 1980. Artists would respond to the sites and their histories and bring a variety of perspectives, offering renewal and often poetic, intimate engagement for visitors. The art and ideas that this project would generate within the spaces, towns, and cities of the Freedom's Frontier Heritage Area will enliven debates and vivify historical research with new experiences for area citizens and others. The artists and these site-based works of art would also help to advance a dialogue about "borders" and this region, addressing both historical and contemporary issues.

Artists responding to historic sites is a vital contemporary activity that has engaged audiences around the world in the past several years. We believe that this project would expand the national profile of Freedom's Frontier and engage its citizens in a new level of reflection upon the issues that the Heritage Area raises. The artists would advance our knowledge and understanding while also urging us to experience new perspectives on the richness of this region and its place in history.

Many strong programs and several exhibitions are in the planning phases with the Biodiversity Research Institute, one of our collection and research partners. Projects and future directions that involve both of us may prove to be fruitful as Freedom's Frontier expresses the interactions of nature and culture.

We look forward to exploring these ideas and other possible collaborations with you.

We are eager to provide more details and continue this conversation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Saralyn Reece Hardy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Saralyn Reece Hardy, Director