

◆ MEDIA ALERT ◆

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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RESIDENTS INVITED TO COMPLETE VISIONING SURVEY

LAWRENCE, Kansas – To set a regional vision for 2028, an electronic survey is now available for residents in the 41-county region designated as Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA) to complete on-line at:

www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Joh4WEWjhvwkPzk%2fCxwfPw%3d%3d

FFNHA includes the Eastern Kansas counties of Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Bourbon, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Clay, Coffey, Crawford, Douglas, Franklin, Geary, Jackson, Johnson, Labette, Leavenworth, Linn, Miami, Neosho, Pottawattomie, Riley, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Wilson, Woodson, Jefferson, Montgomery, Osage, Wyandotte Counties; and Western Missouri counties of Buchanan, Platte, Clay, Ray, Lafayette, Jackson, Cass, Johnson, Bates, Vernon, Barton, and St. Clair.

As part of the public visioning process designed to create a foundation of regional goals and objectives, and a roadmap for the FFNHA general management plan, surveys must be completed by **Friday, March 28**. The survey questions build on the original vision outlined in the FFNHA feasibility study submitted to the National Park Service and U.S. Congress as part of the heritage area eligibility requirement.

The survey results will be used at a visioning session held on Monday, March 31 at The Eldridge Hotel in Lawrence, Kansas from 2:00 – 5:00 pm to outline key goals, objectives and define principles to guide the region's growth and sustainability. This visioning session will be open to any person that participated in the monthly Partnership Team meeting on Thursday, March 13 in Olathe or completed the on-line survey. Reservations are required; contact the FFNHA office at 785-865-4499 to confirm attendance. The findings will be presented to the FFNHA Steering Committee and Board of Directors on Tuesday, April 1.

Following acceptance of the 20-year vision, the statement – along with a set of defining principles, outline of major goals, and list of management challenges – will be posted on Freedom's Frontier Heritage Area website, www.freedomfrontier.org, for reference. The vision statement will be revisited during the final phase of the planning process (October 2008 – February 2009) to help set performance benchmarks for the Heritage Area. The final plan is scheduled for submission to the National Park Service in February 2009.

The President signed the enabling legislation designating FFNHA on October 12, 2006 as one of 10 new National Heritage Areas; there are currently 37 designated regions across the nation. FFNHA is recognized for its distinctive history, culture, and landscape that tell the stories about the quest for national and individual freedoms. National Heritage Areas are living landscapes recognized through a partnership with the National Park Service.

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