



Fort Scott National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan





This painting shows the fort as it appears today. The buildings have been restored and reconstructed to represent the fort as it looked in 1848.

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**Fort Scott National Historic Site
Midwest Region**

**Harpers Ferry Center
Interpretive Planning**

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All photos by NPS unless otherwise noted.

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The Planning Process

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) outlines recommendations for future interpretive services, facilities, and media at Fort Scott National Historic Site (Fort Scott NHS). Park staff, partners, local residents, historians, and stakeholders worked together to develop this plan to promote the meanings and significance of Fort Scott National Historic Site's resources and stories through planned visitor experiences and excellence in interpretation.

This plan recommends actions that should occur over the next seven to ten years. It identifies park interpretive themes, describes visitor experience goals, and provides a set of specific actions, personal and non-personal interpretive services, and partnership efforts that will best communicate the park's purpose, significance, and interpretive themes (as identified in the park's Foundation Document, developed concurrently with this plan). The ultimate product of this work is a more cost-effective, tightly focused, high quality interpretive program that achieves management goals, provides appropriate visitor opportunities, and facilitates desired visitor experiences.

Barring legislative changes or major new revelations, the foundational elements expressed in this LRIP – purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals – will remain constant over the life of the plan. The purpose, significance, and themes were created by a larger planning group for the park's Foundation Document, which this plan will supplement.

The Implementation Strategy found in the last chapter of this document will be reviewed at least annually to chart progress towards achieving the desired goals. Each year the Implementation Strategy will be adjusted to include new or unfinished actions as necessary. The park may update or revise specific recommendations about interpretive media, programs, and services as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Additional planning and design documents will be needed to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

Opposite page: Two young re-enactors bring the 19th century to life during the fort's annual Candlelight Tour.



Background for Planning

Historical Background

The history of Fort Scott in the mid-19th century encompasses some of the most pivotal events in America's past. From Indian removal and westward expansion through "Bleeding Kansas," the Civil War and railroad development, the events at Fort Scott and the changing military mission there mirrored a sequence of national events that had profound effects upon the size and character of the nation, and on the diverse cultures and people who lived within its growing boundaries.

Since the country's earliest beginnings, the citizens of the United States have hungered for land. This seemingly insatiable desire for new lands led to the formation of a permanent Indian territory located in present day Kansas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska, and the relocation of tribes in the United States to this territory.

Fort Scott was established in 1842 as one of a chain of forts charged with policing the Permanent Indian Frontier. In addition to keeping peace among the various American Indian tribes, soldiers from the fort kept U.S. citizens and the American Indians out of one another's lands, attempted to control the illegal liquor trade, and distributed annuities to the tribes.

The designation of a permanent Indian Territory proved no obstacle to the flood of Americans seeking wealth and land in the west. In fact, the belief in Manifest Destiny – the notion that it was God's will that the nation stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific – swept the country shortly after construction began at Fort Scott.

Reacting to the growing tidal wave of trade and emigration, the U.S. Army assigned soldiers from the fort to protect emigrants and traders along the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails. Boundary disputes with Mexico contributed to the Mexican-American War, which depleted Fort Scott of its garrison. The addition of new territory wrested from Mexico as a result of the conflict reinforced U.S. confidence in the concept of Manifest Destiny.

The unstoppable push west facilitated by the annexation of land ceded by Mexico signaled the death knell for a permanent Indian Territory as envisioned in the 1830s and for the U.S. Army post of Fort Scott. A short eleven years after it opened, the fort closed. Its usefulness in protecting a permanent Indian Territory – a place where tribes could live away from American influence – ended almost before it began.

The acquisition of new territory from Mexico reignited another old conflict. From the founding of the United States, the debate over the legality and morality of slavery had raised passions among the populace. A shaky truce was forged by maintaining a balance of senatorial power between free and slave states. The possibility that slavery might now be introduced in an area in which it had previously been forbidden under the Missouri Compromise created a growing sense of discomfort. No longer would a state's location above or below a certain line on the map determine whether it would be a free or slave state. Instead, the voters would decide.

At first, concerns were muted, as most Americans felt that Nebraska would enter the Union as a free state and Kansas as a slave state. However, both sides laid claim to Kansas, which became a battleground between pro and anti-slavery forces. For several long years the nation's eyes were turned towards Kansas as the ensuing violence of the conflict captured the headlines of eastern newspapers that covered the events in "Bleeding Kansas."

Fort Scott was no stranger to the turmoil that rocked the territory. The U.S. Army had sold the buildings of the old fort in 1855 to private individuals who formed a community and adopted the name of the former post for their budding town. Pro-slavery factions controlled the town while free-staters inhabited the surrounding countryside. Incidents of violence, uncertainty, and fear gripped the city throughout Kansas' territorial years and prompted the return of the Army for short periods to defuse the tension.

By 1861, the slavery issue in the territory was settled and Kansas entered the Union as a free state. The calm was not to last. Less than three months later, the debate that divided Kansas in the 1850s fractured the nation, and the country exploded into civil war.

With the advent of war, the Union militarized the civilian town of Fort Scott to defend southeast Kansas. It served as a supply base for operations in Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory, and a recruitment and training center for Union troops. The First Kansas Colored Infantry (the first African American unit from a northern state to see battle in the war) several companies of Indian Home Guards, and several other Kansas regiments were among the

units organized and/or trained at Fort Scott.

Activity in the city boomed as hundreds of supply wagons came and went, often returning from the area of operations loaded with refugees left homeless by the ravages of war. A general hospital treated sick and wounded soldiers and if supplies allowed, attended to the needs of desperate civilians. The population swelled with soldiers, entrepreneurs, and refugees. Although Fort Scott eluded attack by Confederate forces, the possibility was never far away in the minds of the citizenry.

At war's end in 1865, the U.S. Army left the town of Fort Scott, but not for long. With the war over, attention turned to developing and solidifying the young continental nation. Development of a vast system of railroads was seen by most as the key to achieving this goal.

As railroad construction proceeded through southeast Kansas toward the Gulf of Mexico, conflict arose. Settlers living on lands south and west of Fort Scott squabbled with the railroad over land ownership. When the disputes turned to violence, the army was called in to protect the railroad. For four years beginning in 1869, Fort Scott served as the headquarters for troops stationed along the right-of-way to ensure the continuation of railroad expansion. By 1873 the railroads were completed and the U.S. Army left the town of Fort Scott for the last time.

From 1842 to 1873, the frontier garrison and later civilian town of Fort Scott played a part in a wide sweep of national events that shaped the country. During

these years the nation changed from a young divided republic into a trans-continental power. In the process lives were irrefutably changed; some for worse – some for better. Events and people at Fort Scott reflected the national experience during much of the 19th century. Preserving the resources and stories of Fort Scott National Historic Site provides an opportunity to consider how our country has historically responded to issues that still challenge us today.

Legislative History

The people of Fort Scott have always taken pride in the military origins and colorful past of their community. In the 1950s a group of history-minded citizens began efforts to preserve, interpret, and restore the “Old Fort.”

Their determined efforts began to bear fruit. In 1964, the “post on the Marmaton” was designated a National Historic Landmark. With the backing of Congressman Joe Skubitz, Congress established the Fort Scott Historical Area in 1965, to be preserved and operated by the city of Fort Scott through a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service. Shortly afterward restoration/reconstruction of the 1840s fort began in earnest as Skubitz was successful in obtaining small amounts of federal funding for the project.

Convinced of the national significance of the site, Skubitz and community leaders pushed to designate Fort Scott as a unit of the National Park System. Their dream was realized October 19, 1978, when Congress passed Public Law 95-484 establishing Fort Scott National Historic Site. The National Park Service assumed management in 1979.



Living History practitioners perform a tableau of scenes highlighting the meaning of freedom during Fourth of July weekend.

Purpose

Purpose statements describe why an area was set aside as a unit of the National Park System. Several factors contribute to the formation of purpose statements, including the specific language of the site’s enabling legislation; the history and context of additional and/or broader legislation; public participation; balance of preservation with enjoyment, etc.

The following purpose statement for Fort Scott National Historic Site is drawn from the park’s Foundation Document, which was developed concurrently with this plan.

The purpose of Fort Scott National Historic Site is to preserve, commemorate, and interpret for present and future generations Fort Scott and its role in a sequence of pivotal events that transformed the nation – the Permanent Indian Frontier, the opening of the West, Bleeding Kansas, and the Civil War.

Significance

Significance statements describe the distinctiveness of the combined resources of a park. The statements can reflect upon natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, inspirational, or other resources. The statements embody the power of the place through a factual representation of what makes this place special. Usually stated as facts placed in relevant context, these statements summarize the essence of the importance of this park’s resources to our natural and cultural heritage.

Significances may evolve over time as a result of discoveries, increased knowledge and understanding, and changes to national values.

The following significance statements for Fort Scott National Historic Site come from the park’s Foundation Document, which was developed concurrently with this plan.

1. Fort Scott National Historic Site is the most complete example of a U.S. Army fort from the Permanent Indian Frontier, featuring original and reconstructed buildings and structures, historic landscape features, archeological resources, and museum collections.



Students learn about a popular pastime for frontier officers’ wives—flower pressing,

2. The U.S. Army established Fort Scott to enforce national policy to keep the peace between relocated tribes, local tribes, and Missouri Settlers along the Permanent Indian frontier. Eleven years later the fort was closed as the nation expanded westward.
3. Changing national policies directed Fort Scott soldiers to engage in missions that promoted rapid westward expansion, making Fort Scott National Historic Site a unique place to interpret the U.S. Army's role in the opening of the west and the erosion of the Permanent Indian frontier.
4. In 1858 Fort Scott was the scene of violence and unrest that embodied the period known as Bleeding Kansas— the civil strife over slavery in the Kansas Territory that riveted the nation and helped ignite the Civil War.
5. During the Civil War, the small community of Fort Scott was transformed into a major military center that assisted in providing the necessary supplies, materials, and manpower critical to the survival and success of Union forces in Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory.

Fundamental Resources and Values

It is the responsibility of park managers, including those who manage interpretive programming, to ensure the conservation and public enjoyment of those qualities that are critical (fundamental) to achieving and maintaining the purpose

and significance of the park. These qualities are called fundamental resources and values (FRVs). Fundamental resources and values are closely related to legislative purpose and are more specific than significance statements.

Identifying and understanding the FRVs that are associated with the park's purpose and/or significance statements helps to focus interpretation on what is truly important about the park. FRVs maintain the park's purpose and significance, and if these resources and values are allowed to deteriorate, the park purpose and/or significance could be jeopardized. Indeed, the loss or major impact to the fundamental natural or cultural resources could constitute impairment, violating the 1916 NPS Organic Act.

FRVs are defined as those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to warrant primary consideration during planning and management. Furthermore, an FRV should be one that would not be questioned or easily questioned—it should be one to which everyone agrees.

The FRVs for Fort Scott National Historic Site come from the park's Foundation Document, which was developed concurrently with this plan. The planning team identified the following FRVs:

1. *The original and reconstructed historic buildings*
The park contains 11 original historic buildings and 9 reconstructed historic structures. All 20 are listed as contributing resources on the site's National Register documentation.

This collection of historic buildings is a primary reason the park is the most complete example of a historic fort from the Permanent Indian Frontier. Furthermore, certain buildings are especially valuable for interpretation of the Bleeding Kansas period and Fort Scott's role in the Civil War.

2. *The cultural landscape, including the Parade Ground*

The Parade Ground lies at the center of the park—it is the open space around which many of the park's historic structures were built, and it played a role in several of the park's historical periods. As a military parade ground from 1842 to 1853, it was the setting for regimental parades, Army band concerts, military ceremonies,

and other activities. After the fort's structures were sold at auction and employed for civilian use, the Parade Ground—then known as Carroll Plaza—functioned as a city park or green space. Buildings that fronted the Parade Ground played a role in the civil unrest that prevailed during the Bleeding Kansas period. During the Civil War this area once again served as a military parade ground, as originally intended.

Other cultural landscape features, including topography, views, and spatial organization, contribute to the park's significance and are important for management. For example, the site was originally selected for a



Onsite education programs bring students from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas to discover the people and events that shaped the fort's place in history.

military fort in part due to its defensible location at the top of a limestone bluff. The site also preserves historic spatial relationships, such as those between the historic buildings and the Parade Ground.

3. *Museum collections and related objects*

This resource group encompasses museum objects, artifacts, and archives on display and stored at the park, and those stored at the Midwest Archeological Center regional facility. The artifacts and other collections displayed at the park provide visitors with an opportunity to forge a connection to the place and an understanding of the role of Fort Scott in the Permanent Indian Frontier, the opening of the West, Bleeding Kansas, and the Civil War. Many of the displays also provide visitors with a sense of being transported into the daily lives of soldiers from 1840s and provide a platform for educational programs.



all reconstruction at the site and tie the current structures to the past through detailed physical evidence. Information exposed through the archeological record provides insight into fort construction, and can reveal important details of everyday use of the site before and during Euro-American settlement.



Above: A budding park ranger learns all about the methods of archeology during Trailblazers week.

Left: Students visit Fort Scott National Historic Site as part of the Ticket to Ride program and learn about the management of park resources.

4. *Archeological resources*

The archeological resources below the surface of the ground at Fort Scott may not be immediately visible to visitors, but they provide the basis for

Opposite page: A soldier stirs the company's grub over hot coals during the fort's annual Civil War Encampment weekend.



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are based on the park purpose and statements of significance. They differ from significance statements in that they attempt to tie the tangible resources (especially the FRVs) of the park to something in the mind or heart of the visitor – providing opportunities for visitors to form intellectual or emotional connections to the meanings they discover in park resources and stories. By including the most important stories and representing core concepts that every visitor should have the opportunity to experience, themes provide focus for interpretive efforts at the park.

While themes guide park programming, they are not necessarily take-home messages visitors should be able to repeat at the end of a visit. The themes do not include everything that the park might interpret, but they do address ideas critical to helping visitors find personal meaning and relevance within the park’s resources and stories.

The following seven interpretive themes were developed during the Foundation Document planning session on April 4th, 2014. The planning team created these themes based on the park purpose and significance and the interpretive themes from the existing 2009 Internal Draft



High school students become interpreters as they guide dozens of elementary school students through interactive stations that showcase Life on the Frontier.

Long-Range Interpretive Plan. Topics and issues that might be addressed under each of these themes can be found in the following pages.

The Permanent Indian Frontier

In the midst of the growing nation's quest for land, the U.S. Army established Fort Scott to protect Missouri settlers and enforce the promise of a homeland made to relocated Indian tribes, placing the soldiers on both sides of a clash of cultures seeking the security of home and the claim to abundant resources.

Life on the Frontier

Soldiers, settlers, and American Indians in and around Fort Scott each struggled to create a semblance of home and community while adapting to the challenges of the unfamiliar environment and life on the frontier.

Westward Expansion

Through a variety of military missions in the 1840s, soldiers from Fort Scott demonstrated the power of the United States as agents of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion, resulting in opportunities for some to the detriment of others.

Bleeding Kansas

In the 1850s, settlers along the Kansas-Missouri border became embroiled in a power struggle over slavery that led to intimidation, destruction, and bloodshed. This struggle foreshadowed a larger conflict that engulfed the entire nation and whose effects are still felt today.

Sanctuary in War Time

As with other places transformed by war, the militarized town of Fort Scott provided sanctuary to many during the Civil War, offering compassion and a safe haven for those who were displaced, destitute, diseased, or dying.

Steps toward Greater Equality

The frontier culture along the Kansas-Missouri border, the nature of the conflict, and the need for soldiers opened the door to African Americans and American Indians who enlisted, trained and served at Fort Scott during the Civil War; an important step towards greater opportunity and equality of races within the military and the nation.

America Growing Up

The story of the military garrison and the civilian town of Fort Scott, from frontier peacekeepers to agents of westward expansion, is the story of America growing up – a story of settlement and resettlement, promises made and broken, dreams shared and shattered, and the enduring struggle for the freedom of all people.

Fort Scott National Historic Site Interpretive Themes Matrix

Interpretive Theme # 1: The Permanent Indian Frontier

In the midst of the growing nation’s quest for land, the U.S. Army established Fort Scott to protect Missouri settlers and enforce the promise of a homeland made to relocated Indian tribes, placing the soldiers on both sides of a clash of cultures seeking the security of home and claim to abundant resources.

Concepts

These are examples of concepts that may be explored within each theme. They are written as objectives.

- Help visitors compare their feelings about land ownership with the feelings of those who lived in this region at the time of the Permanent Indian Frontier.
- Illustrate the complexity of defending the Indian Frontier from American settlers.
- Explore the meaning of treaties in American history and their relationship to terms like “permanent.”
- What does it mean to be a peacemaker? How does it feel to be in the middle of conflict?
- How did the prairie move from worthless land to something of value in the minds of Americans?
- What does the design/style of the fort and its buildings communicate?
- Help visitors discover the entire line of forts along the Permanent Indian Frontier and understand their function.

Topics and Stories

Examples of topics and stories that could be included in this theme.

- Land ownership
- Home
- Soldiers’ lives
- Discipline/desertion
- Treaties
- Promises made and broken
- Indian removal
- Indian homelessness
- Clash of cultures
- Peace keeping
- Enforcement of policy
- Fear
- Sickness; dying
- Boredom
- Manifest Destiny
- “Americanization”
- Opportunity
- Relationships
- Greed
- Eviction of white settlers
- Ownership wealth
- Mission (of the soldiers)

Interpretive Theme # 2: Life on the Frontier

Soldiers, settlers, and American Indians in and around Fort Scott each struggled to create a semblance of home and community while adapting to the challenges of the unfamiliar environment and life on the frontier.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrate the opportunities to learn trades that existed here and in few other places at this time. • What is a frontier? • Help visitors understand the relationship between trans-located American Indians and those who already lived in the area. What did relocated tribes have to start out with when they got to Kansas? • Explore the challenges faced when attempting to bring the culture of the East to the frontier from a variety of perspectives including military, settler, men, women, children. • Ask visitors: is this a story of acculturation or assimilation? What are the similarities/differences? • How is the prairie fundamentally different from the Eastern forests? • Describe the transition of Fort Scott from a frontier fort to a town – what was that like for military vs. civilians? How were the fort buildings reused? • In what ways were Euro-American settlers successful (or not) in bringing the familiarity of home to the frontier? (gardens, furnishings, social organizations) • Assist visitors in discovering the factors that affected the architecture of the town – how house types were constrained by locally available supplies, transportation of other supplies, and economic factors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work •Labor •Self-sufficiency •Frontier •Home •Homesteads •Indian Culture •Hiero Wilson •Military caste system •Agriculture • “Hostile land” •Reliance on shipped supplies •Web of relationships •Uneasy communication •Adaptation: plants, animals, culture •Transportation •Recreation •Religion and church •American Indian religions •Missionaries •Education •Familiar vs. strange •Hunting •Fishing •Economic factors

Interpretive Theme #3: Westward Expansion

Through a variety of military missions in the 1840s, soldiers from Fort Scott demonstrated the power of the United States as agents of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion, resulting in opportunities for some to the detriment of others.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the shift in mission from protecting the frontier to support of the Santa Fe-Oregon Trail movement and other westward expansion. • Help visitors discover the effects of the erosion of the Permanent Indian Frontier from multiple perspectives – Euro-American settler, military, American Indian • How did the loss/gain (depending on perspective) of lands in the Mexican War affect the mission at the fort? • What does it mean when a nation gives its word? Explore the nature of treaties made and broken. Was the United States right or wrong? • Illustrate the life of soldiers during this time period – both within the fort and while away on missions. What kinds of missions were they? How are they similar to situations in the world today? • What were the opportunities created by the actions of the military at Fort Scott? What were the detrimental effects? • What were the consequences of westward expansion on American Indian cultures? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration • Erosion of the Permanent Indian Frontier • “Showing the flag” • Mapping • Methods of transportation • Loss of land • Loss of culture • Display of power (cannon) • Might over right • Wealth, trade, power • 54 40 or fight • Slavery • Power vs. defenselessness • Inequality • Supply lines

Interpretive Theme # 4: Bleeding Kansas

In the 1850s, settlers along the Kansas-Missouri border became embroiled in a power struggle over slavery that led to intimidation, destruction, and bloodshed. This struggle foreshadowed a larger conflict that engulfed the entire nation and whose effects are still felt today.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow visitors to discover the pattern of conflict leading up to and including Bleeding Kansas. Was this activism? Terrorism? How is it similar/different from world events today? Could it happen in the U.S. today? • Illustrate the historical continuum of which this pattern of conflict was a part. How did Bleeding Kansas fuel the debate that led to the Civil War and the eventual resolution of the longstanding issue of slavery? • Help visitors understand the history of slavery in the U.S. – how it began and how it ended. • What were the varied roles played by local officials, politicians, and the army in the growing conflict? • What was it like to be caught in the middle? • What is it like to live in a landscape of terror? • What issues would make visitors feel strongly enough to take action in this way? • How should passionate disputes be settled when both sides feel that the government and the Constitution are against them? • Describe popular sovereignty and why it was such a contentious issue for Kansas and Nebraska – and why it was so important to the rest of the nation - as they moved from territories to statehood. • Explore extremism versus moderation. Is it true that at many points in history it was extremists on both sides that fueled most of the conflict? • Is violence ever justified? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence; conflict • Murder • Robbery /stealing • Extremists / terrorists / radicals • Sene Campbell • Elizabeth Wilson • Role of individuals: John Brown, Little, Montgomery, Clarke, Crawford • Competing ideas of freedom • Slavery vs. legal property • National attention/news coverage • Fear • Politics • Failure to compromise • Law enforcement; posses • Unrest • Differing political opinions • Riots • Intimidation • Claim jumping • Voting fraud • Burning houses and buildings • Impacts on women and children • Hope • Progress • Precipitating events

Interpretive Theme # 5: Sanctuary in War Time

As with other places transformed by war, the militarized town of Fort Scott provided sanctuary to many during the Civil War, offering compassion and a safe haven for those who were displaced, destitute, diseased and dying.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be the role of our nation in modern-day wars around the world? What is our obligation, if any? • Illustrate the various ways the people of Fort Scott attempted to maintain normalcy amidst the chaos (civilian, military and American Indian perspectives) • Help visitors discover the point of view of people in the midst of violent transition – how do they know what they are changing from? What they are changing to? How would we navigate this kind of uncertainty today? • Why were American Indians among the refugees at Fort Scott? How did Indian culture fit into town culture? • Illustrate the horrors of war in a refugee town. How are these different from battleground violence? How were those horrors felt by townspeople? By refugees? • What was the town of Fort Scott’s reaction to the plight of refugees? What should be our reaction in modern times? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion • Relief agencies • Prejudice / bias • Segregation • Starvation • Profit and loss • Transportation challenges • Military road • Sacrifice • Loss of resources • Border town • Lack of resources – “squeezing water from a rock” • Threats to refugees • Emotional and physical suffering • Generosity; fundraising • Anger • Hope • Supply center • Hospital • Healing • Death • “Liberators” • Sickness • Economic development

Interpretive Theme # 6: Steps toward Greater Equality

The frontier culture along the Kansas- Missouri border, the nature of the conflict, and the need for soldiers opened the door to African Americans and American Indians who enlisted, trained and served at Fort Scott during the Civil War: an important step towards greater opportunity and equality of races within the military and the nation.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the conditions that made Fort Scott a place of greater opportunity for people of color who wished to join the military – flexing of social norms, pragmatism, and expediency having progressive consequences. • Were the colored soldiers here offered opportunity or exploited for the good of the mission? • Illustrate the increase in Fort Scott’s post-war African American population and how opportunity during the war increased community and interaction both within and beyond the boundaries of race. • How were opportunities advanced for African Americans and American Indians? In what ways were they still limited? • What justification was used for discrimination at that time? Are there groups today for which similar justifications are used? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality • Opportunity • Diversity • Interdependence • Cooperation • Courage; perseverance • Pragmatism and expediency • Self-emancipation • Names and stories of individuals (infantry, battery and guard) • “Frontier Mentality” • Comradery • Opportunity vs. exploitation • Bias; prejudice • Patriotism • Independence • Pride • New home • Family • Sacrifice • Heroism • Hatred • Having to prove worth

Interpretive Theme # 7: America Growing Up

The story of the military garrison and the civilian town of Fort Scott, from frontier peacekeepers to agents of westward expansion, is the story of America growing up—a story of settlement and resettlement, promises made and broken, dreams shared and shattered, and the enduring struggle for the freedom of all people.

Concepts	Topics and Stories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the concept of land as a commodity – what it means to different cultures and at different times in American history. How do we view land differently today? • What does it mean to make a treaty – a promise to another sovereign nation? To the people you govern? • What is development? How was it viewed at various points in Fort Scott’s history? Do we view it the same way now? • Help visitors discover and understand the 180-degree change in military mission at Fort Scott and how it is representative of larger societal changes. • What are the differences between a frontier and a civilization? How is this illustrated at Fort Scott? • What does growing up mean? How would visitors tell the story of the nation’s maturation? In what areas do we still need to grow up? • Look at “growing up” from multiple perspectives – townspeople, the military, American Indians who were again removed – and at various times, from reconstruction to the present. • In what ways are people in the U.S. and the world still engaged in the enduring struggle for freedom? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust • Land disputes (between settlers and railroad, settlers and settlers, settlers and American Indians) • Survey and mapping • Slavery and reconstruction • Settlement and resettlement • The site of missing schools (sequence of development) • Competing ideas of freedom • Growing pains • Transformation of America • Employment • Education • Segregation (schools, towns) • Churches • Family and community • Right to assemble (Black GAR post) • Political process • Disappointment • Hope • War profiteering • Breaking barriers • Loss of home

Opposite page: Living history practitioners and reenactors enliven visitors' experiences at the Fort.



Program Goals

Program Goals

Goals for interpretation and education at Fort Scott National Historic Site have been developed within larger frameworks of NPS goals. Three layers of visitor experience goals are presented in this section. Mission Goals were established in 1993 as part of the Fort Scott NHS General Management Plan; Call to Action Goals were updated in 2014 as a guide for NPS interpretation and education; and Goals Specific to Interpretation and Education were developed as part of this 2016 Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

Mission Goals

- Fort Scott's natural and cultural resources and associated values are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed with their broader ecosystems and cultural contexts.
- Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities. Visitors and the general public understand and appreciate efforts to preserve the park and its resources.
- Cultural and natural resources are conserved through formal partnership programs.
- To better preserve park resources and to better provide for public enjoyment and visitor experience of the park, Fort Scott NHS uses

current management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.

In accordance with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, Fort Scott National Historic Site developed a strategic plan and management goals through 2012. The following goals address recreation, interpretation, and visitor experiences.

The outcomes or how well the park is achieving its visitor-related goals are measured annually at every unit of the National Park System through survey forms that are distributed to visitors at each NPS unit. Visitors send their completed survey forms to the Pacific Consulting Group, where the data is compiled for each NPS unit. The survey results reflect visitor opinion about each park's facilities, services and recreational opportunities, as well as measure visitor understanding and appreciation of each NPS unit's significance.

Mission Goal IIa1:

By September 30, 2012, 96% of visitors to Fort Scott National Historic Site are satisfied with appropriate park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.

Mission Goal IIb1:

By September 30, 2012, 75% of Fort Scott National Historic Site visitors understand the significance of the park.

Over the past three years the park has exceeded the visitor satisfaction goal by an average of 4%. An average of 83% of visitors understands the significance of the site. This exceeded the park goal by approximately 8%.

Call to Action Goals

The NPS document *A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement* (2014 edition) identifies a framework for management goals

- *Connecting People to Parks:* Helping communities protect what is special to them, highlighting their history, and retaining or rebuilding their economic and environmental sustainability.
- *Advancing the Education Mission:* Strengthening the NPS role as an educational force based on core American values, historical and scientific scholarship, and unbiased translation of the

complexities of the American experience.

- *Preserving America's Special Places:* Act as a leader in extending the benefits of conservation across physical, social, political, and international boundaries in partnership with others.
- *Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence:* Adapting to the changing needs of visitors, communities, and partners; encouraging organizational innovation; and giving employees the chance to reach their full potential.



Local students and volunteers place hundreds of US flags for the annual Symbols of Sacrifice commemoration.

Goals Specific to Interpretation and Education

Specific goals for the future of Interpretation and Education at Fort Scott NHS reflect the broader frameworks of Mission Goals and Call to Action Goals.

Core Interpretive Program

- Improve arrival and orientation experience
- Strengthen curriculum-based education programs
 - Offer a variety of distance learning programs
- Assure the diversity of delivery methods/media
 - Offer a suite of Interpretive Media Services
 - Free publications
 - Digital Media
 - Social media
 - Indoor/outdoor exhibits (including historically furnished rooms)
 - Waysides
 - Audio tour
 - Offer a broad-based Personal Services program
- Strengthen interpretive and educational partnerships
- Welcome all audiences
 - Accessibility
 - Diversity
- Expand volunteer opportunities
- Effectively reach and engage youth
- Conduct planning

Specific Issues

At the program level, the interpretive program staff is looking for ways to:

- Improve the arrival experience
- Increase accessibility of programs, buildings, and exhibits
- Include the role of archeology in telling the Fort Scott stories
- Work more closely with the citizens and the City of Fort Scott
- Respond to media trends
- Involve students/teachers/schools/districts in all park programs
- Improve the park website
- Work across boundaries (with other entities with thematically related stories, shared goals or other commonalities)
- Best use the resources of the park, especially structures, for interpretation

Opposite page: Youngsters experience the chores and daily life of Fort soldiers firsthand when they visit the park.



Visitor Experience

Visitor Experience

Desired visitor experiences describe the physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences that should be available to visitors to Fort Scott NHS. These experiences are based on the purpose, significance, and fundamental resources of the park. These experiences will be available to visitors of all abilities, including those with auditory, visual, mobility, or cognitive impairments – even if the experience must be offered in a variety of ways to reach all audiences. The planning team established the following visitor experience goals for Fort Scott National Historic Site:

Pre-visit Experience

Before making a visit, visitors should be able to access the park website to learn the compelling stories embodied at Fort Scott NHS and to plan what they will do during their visit. Gaining basic knowledge of the site and what occurred here in the past will allow visitors to arrive on site ready to delve more deeply into the story, enhancing their experience. Visitors should be able to navigate the website to find information quickly and get an overview of what their visit could/should be, including

- See what services are offered
- Get clear directions to the park
- Figure out how much time they want to spend on site, and what activities will be going on during the time they choose to visit
- Find timely information about park activities and schedules

- Easily locate the sites of activities in which they want to take part
- View the park movie online
- Read site bulletins and other free publications

In addition, visitors should be able to access the official park presence on social media sources like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube (linked to content on the park website) to learn from other visitors, be aware of changing conditions on site, and engage with park staff. Through sites like TripAdvisor and others, visitors should be able to share with and learn from other visitors.

Arrival Experience

When visitors arrive at the park they should have easy access to information that allows them to know what kinds of interpretive services are available to them on site and to prioritize their activities and structure their visit based on experiences that interest them personally. Interpretive opportunities should include a spectrum of offerings, ranging from options for visitors whose time is short, to more in-depth activities for those who have planned to spend the day on site. All park visitors should have access to a meaningful experience within the first 10-15 minutes.

While On Site

When touring the fort, visitors should be able to experience the lives of the people in the fort community and the fledging town of Fort Scott, following the stories of individuals from the fort's history, as they learn why the fort is here. They

should learn how national events influenced the evolution of the post and the town and how the buildings' uses, purposes, and residents changed through time. As they safely travel from building to building, they should see faces that reflect their own gender and ethnicity among the costumed and uniformed volunteers and rangers throughout the site.

Visitors should have a chance to hear the sounds of the prairie (natural quiet, insects and birds, and the wind through the prairie grasses), as well as the sounds of a 19th-century working fort (bugle calls on specific hours, officers barking orders, voices from the past, horses neighing). As they hear these sounds they should have the opportunity to investigate further about what the sounds are and what they mean.

Through signage, visitors should be able to find key features of the park (exhibits, visitor center, restrooms, water fountains)



Two re-enactors from Fort Riley showcase 19th-century transportation at Fort Scott's Good Ol' Days festival.

and locate places where events and activities are taking place. Signage should highlight park significance and should allow visitors the opportunity to follow a coherent narrative or narratives as they move around the site, while subtly indicating which buildings are open to them and contain exhibits.

Park exhibits should allow visitors to scan, skim or read the level of information they are looking for. When something is displayed, visitors should be able to understand what they are seeing. Exhibits should convey the stories key to the significance and purpose of the park and help visitors understand how the events at Fort Scott shaped the world in which we live today.

Exhibits should present the many different perspectives and the variety of experiences of the people who lived and worked in and around the fort. Finally, exhibits in living spaces should evoke not only a sense of "walking into the past" but of walking into a moment in a human life.

As visitors move through the park, they should be able to smell a range of things that trigger responses (such as recognition and connection, or curiosity). At any one time, those olfactory experiences might include:

- Horses and stable smells
- Baking bread
- Flowers in the garden
- Native plants or herbs (as they learn what they were used for)
- Black powder smoke
- Campfires

Sensory encounters should be affirmed and heightened through information presented via other platforms, including personal services and media.

Visitors should have an opportunity to have a tactile experience as part of their visit. Visitors could be encouraged to touch clothing (uniforms, dresses, laundry), historic tools or replicas (washboard and other laundry implements, pitchforks), and livestock (especially horses). Visitors should have the opportunity to learn through recreational items (such as checkers and other games) and personal or trade items that the sutler store carried (such as pipes, dishes, tobacco twists or furs). If possible, visitors should be able to touch examples of small arms and cannon balls in addition to the cannon, which are part of the current tactile experience at Fort Scott NHS.

The planning team felt that there were opportunities for people to experience the story of the fort through the sense of taste. These could be provided through partnerships or paid workshops. Visitors should be able to immerse themselves in fort life by tasting soldier meals, garden produce, baked goods, or herbs from the garden. As possible, these might be offered as sales items at the park store.

When school groups visit the park they should be offered a fun, positive, and memorable experience that offers a connection both to Fort Scott NHS and to the National Park Service as a whole. Their visit should be intentionally linked to curriculum and to park stories. As is age-appropriate, interactive experiences in which students make active choices and are immediately engaged in issues and events of the past are preferred.

Core to the visitor experience at Fort Scott NHS is the belief that all visitors should be able to interact with a person

(park staff or volunteer) who can answer their questions and orient them to the site. Important goals to be met through the use of personal services on site include making sure visitors feel welcomed and have their needs met; have something active to do if they desire, by participating in a demonstration or other activity; and have opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue/conversations with other visitors about the site and relevant issues with a ranger as facilitator. Important as well are the many costumed or first-person interpretive opportunities for visitors and for reenactors.

In the future, the planning team would like to see more events that blur the boundaries between the park and the City of Fort Scott—linking the two in interpretive enterprises that benefit visitors, as well as the park and the town.



Dry goods and durable dishes line the post sutler's shelves—a general store of sorts in the Frontier era.

Post-Visit Experience

The impact of a visit does not end when a visitor leaves the park. After a visit to Fort Scott NHS, visitors should have memorable stories to share with friends and relatives about what they saw and heard at the fort because there is something in these stories that is relevant to them. If they choose, they should be able to extend their park experience by sharing or discussing their experiences and connecting to other visitors or other sites through park social media channels.

Visitors should have the opportunity to purchase or access materials that extend their visit – books or other mementos of their visit as sources of more in-depth information or touchstones for memory. Visitors should leave with the sense that there is more to learn, rather than feeling that they have “been there, done that.”

Visitors, whether on site or on line, should have the opportunity to contribute time, talent, or funds to support the care of the park and its resources – transforming their appreciation of the site into active stewardship.

Park Website

The park website will be the only experience of Fort Scott that most citizens are able to enjoy. Therefore, it serves multiple purposes – a trip planning guide for those who can visit, an experience in itself for those who cannot, and a student/scholar’s source of information. To that end, the park website should be easy to navigate; accurate and up to date; and include at least the following information:

- Basic park story, significance and purpose
- Detailed information related to park stories
- Photos of the site in all seasons and highlighting all major features
- A chance for visitors to preview their visit; to see what there is to see before they visit
- Accurate and user-friendly contact information
- Calendar of events
- Tour and activity information
- School/education information
- Chat with a ranger
- Accurate directions to the site
- Links the park’s social media pages

The minstrels of the Holmes Brigade bring the sounds and camaraderie of a Civil War camp to modern visitors.



Visitor Profile

Park visitation figures reveal an average of about 25,000 visitors per year to Fort Scott NHS. Visitation to the park is heaviest in the summer (42% in June, July, and August), followed by the spring (32% in March, April, and May) and fall (19% in September, October, and November). Visitation on the shoulder seasons, spring and fall, constitute around half of the park's visitation.

Visits by school groups make up around 12% of the park's total visitation. Another important segment of visitors is those who come to the park for special events.

Visitors who attend the Civil War Encampment, Good Ol' Days, and the Candlelight tour (and in the past, Frontier Days) make up approximately 18% of the total visitation.

In July and August of 2011, a formal visitor survey was conducted at the park by the University of Idaho Visitor Services Project. Between July 15 and August 23, 2011, a total of 341 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups at Fort Scott NHS. Of those, 248 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 72.7% response rate. The Executive Summary of this visitor study follows.



The smell of baking bread fills the air as an interpreter shows visitors how the Frontier army was fed.

Executive Summary of the 2011 Visitor Services Project Survey

A copy of the full report is available at:

http://psu.uidaho.edu/files/vsp/reports/245_FOSC_rept.pdf.

This visitor study report profiles a systematic, random sample of Fort Scott National Historic Site visitors during July 15 – August 23, 2011. A total of 341 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 248 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 72.7% response rate.

Group size and type

Forty-six percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while 30% consisted of four or more people. Seventy-four percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.

State or country of residence

United States visitors were from 33 states and comprised 99% of total visitation during the survey period, with 34% from Kansas. International visitors were too few in number to provide reliable information.

Frequency of visits

Seventy-five percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time, while 17% had visited two or three times.

Age, gender, ethnicity, and race

Forty percent of visitors were ages 55 to 70 years old, 21% were 15 years or younger, 18% were 36 to 50 years old, and 9% were 71 years or older. Fifty-one percent of respondents were male; 49% were female. Two percent of visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Most visitors (95%) were White.

Educational level and income level

Thirty percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 28% had a bachelor's degree. Twenty-seven percent of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000 to \$74,000.

Physical conditions

Nine percent of visitor groups had members with physical conditions affecting their ability to access or participate in activities or services.

Awareness of park management

Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups were aware that Fort Scott NHS is a unit of the National Park System.

Information sources

Most visitor groups (77%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%), maps/brochures (35%), and the park website (34%). Most visitor groups (95%) received the information they needed. Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups preferred to use the park website to obtain information for a future visit.

Park as destination

For 41% of visitor groups, the park was not a planned destination, while for 30%, the park was the primary destination.

Primary reason for visiting the area

Three percent of visitor groups were residents of Fort Scott, KS. The most common primary reasons for visiting the park area among non-resident visitor groups were to visit the park (42%) and traveling through - unplanned visit (31%).

Services used in nearby communities

Fifty-four percent of visitor groups obtained support services in nearby communities. The communities most often used included Fort Scott, KS (66%), Pittsburg, KS (19%), and Nevada, MO (16%). Ninety-six percent of visitor groups were able to obtain needed support services in nearby communities.

Overnight stays

Eighteen percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in Fort Scott, KS, of which 60% stayed one night, while 24% stayed two nights. Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups stayed in lodges, hotels, motels, vacation rentals, B&Bs, etc.

Length of stay

The average length of stay for visitor groups was 1.6 hours. Two percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.

Local and regional attractions

Sixty-three percent of visitor groups visited local and regional attractions. The most commonly visited attractions were downtown Fort Scott (63%), Fort Scott National Cemetery (26%), and Mine Creek Battlefield (19%).

Activities on this visit

The most common activities of visitor groups were general sightseeing (85%), viewing indoor exhibits and furnished rooms (83%), and viewing outdoor exhibits and buildings (82%).

Talks, programs, and tours

Eighty-two percent of visitor groups took the self-guided brochure tour and 8% took the cell phone tour. Twenty-six percent of visitor groups attended a ranger or volunteer-led talk, program, or tour on this visit. Of those, 43% took a guided tour

and 39% attended a talk. Fifty-six percent of visitor groups preferred a program length of 1/2 to 1 hour.

Information services and facilities

The information services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the indoor exhibits (86%), park brochure/map (79%), restrooms (78%), and visitor center – Post Hospital (75%).

Quality of interaction with park staff

Most visitor groups (94%) had personal interactions with park staff on this visit. The combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of the quality of interaction with park staff were courteousness (98%), quality of information provided (98%), and helpfulness (97%).

Expenditures

The average visitor group expenditure (inside the park and in Fort Scott, KS) was \$75. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$25, and the average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$35.

Future visits to the park

Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups indicated they would likely visit the park in the future, while 21% were not sure if they would. Ninety-five percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park’s cultural and natural history/features on a future visit through a self-guided tour with brochure (67%), indoor exhibits (61%), and outdoor exhibits (60%).

Overall quality

Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Fort Scott NHS as “very good” or “good”. No visitor groups rated the quality as “poor,” while 1% rated the quality as “very poor.”

Staff on the planning team confirmed these general visitor statistics, noting that family groups, history and military buffs, and reenactors and special event attendees were some of the most common visitors to the site today. In addition, school groups, scouts and tour groups, people seeking National Park Passport stamps, those seeking genealogical information or doing other research, college students, and recreational walkers were also common visitors to the fort.

Through the implementation of this plan, the park hopes to attract a more diverse audience, which would include higher percentages of:

- Young people (25 and younger), including underserved and/or economically disadvantaged youth

- A broader diversity of minorities
- Women
- Local visitors and people on “staycations”
- Volunteers and park stewards
- Educators and young scholars
- People recreating for health (walkers, runners)
- Virtual visitors
- African American history enthusiasts
- Visitors on organized bus tours
- Veterans and military personnel



Immigrants to this country realize a long-held dream as they take the oath of citizenship at a naturalization ceremony held at the fort.

Opposite page: Infantry re-enactors showcase the muzzle-loading small arms used at the Fort in the mid-1800s.



Issues and Influences Affecting Interpretation

Issues and Influences Affecting Interpretation

Since the repeal of laws limiting business on weekends, and the move to a societal model that demands that stores, malls and entertainment opportunities be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, more recreational and educational options are available to potential visitors than ever before. Evenings and weekends that in the recent past offered few entertainment options are now filled to overflowing, and parks are feeling the competition. In addition, many American youth and their families stay busy even during their free time, with afterschool programs, organized teams, and commitments.

The two primary audiences who currently visit Fort Scott are 1) history buffs, and 2) people who are traveling along with the history buffs. At present, the residents of the town of Fort Scott have limited engagement with the park. Interpretation can strengthen community awareness of the park's local and national significance; its value and relevance to all residents; and shared opportunities for identity-building and stewardship.

The City of Fort Scott, Kansas

The City of Fort Scott, which rose up from the fort and now surrounds it on three sides, is an important audience and major influence on interpretive programming. As part of the planning process, park staff identified an

opportunity to more actively help local residents establish a “National Park Habit” – a habit that draws locals to the park on a more regular basis. *Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site* has used some of their space for community gardens, family space, and other activities that draw residents to the park again and again. Although an identical project is not possible here, an adaptation is worth exploring.

To some degree, the park has already been taking advantage of opportunities to interact with the town of Fort Scott and local residents by:

- Maintaining well-kept open green spaces
- Providing support to the farmer's market
- Exploring uses of the newly refinished large hall for public events
- Serving as a popular photo location for proms and weddings
- Participating in planning for the Riverfront Walk

Large special events such as Symbols of Sacrifice are also an opportunity to challenge locals to replace their apathy with engagement and with pride in the connections between their city, the fort, and peacekeeping efforts in the rest of the world today.

The National Park Service can support the restoration of downtown through partnerships and by offering technical assistance. The park and the city can use the Fort/town connection as a focal point for solutions to many of the challenges facing both downtown and the park.

Educational Programs

There are also opportunities for the park to increase involvement in the schools, both as part of creating a park habit in young residents and as a way of enriching history education. With the advent of the Common Core Standards, the way history is being taught has changed. There is a greater emphasis on primary sources and analysis, which puts national parks in a very powerful position to provide curriculum links for schools across the country. Whether or not the Common Core Standards continue to be used, this change in focus for students will serve Fort Scott NHS well.

The park is working to embed the stories of Fort Scott in the local schools and to develop formal curriculum links that make it easier and more advantageous for teachers to use park materials as part of their programming. Park staff identified a more specific challenge, in that the stories of Fort Scott deal with things that are outside the experience of modern youth, for whom “war happens someplace else.” Interpretation and education efforts at FOSC strive to help this audience to identify with the intangible concepts associated with the Fort Scott story.

Finally, the park staff is interested in making further connections with schools outside the area using distance learning technology. The park is currently seeking partners from other parks to assist with developing a strong distance learning program for FOSC.

Staffing

Many of the interpretive rangers at Fort Scott have been at the site for a long time. This gives them a depth of resource knowledge and institutional wisdom that broadens and deepens their ability to guide visitors in making emotional or intellectual connection to the meanings and significance of the site.

As is the case in many national park units, the park is not able to fill all the positions in the staffing plan, and that means that the functions of those positions must be spread throughout the remaining staff. It is hard for interpreters to incorporate time for research, and hence harder to find the little-known or new stories that refresh and enhance park programming. This is true even though the interpretive program at Fort Scott is actively supported by other park divisions – the program is much more than the visible ranger staff at the site.

The park is exploring opportunities that might address staffing challenges, including establishing an artist in residence program at the park to engage the local art community and encourage locals to “see” the park in a new way.

Budget

Budget challenges are omnipresent. It is difficult, but not impossible, to plan with limited resources that arrive late and receive funding for projects that do not correspond to current park priorities. There are always “possible” funding cuts and closures. However, the staff and management at Fort Scott NHS are resourceful and are making the best of opportunities to leverage the funds they receive through partnership.

Partnerships

As the park moves into the next five to seven years, there are new opportunities to cooperate and collaborate. Partners are also operating in an environment of few resources, which makes cooperative effort to achieve mutual goals more advantageous for both parties. In addition to existing partnerships, the planning team identified the following as opportunities worth investigating.

There is interpretive potential in partnering with the other forts along the Permanent Indian Frontier, and other parks in Kansas (national, state, county and others). These connections may reveal compelling stories that boost interest and engagement of visitors in all of the park areas.

Closer to home, investigating new ways for the park friends group to be involved in interpretive programming may be important. There is new momentum in the local Historic Preservation Association, which could also provide opportunities for mutual benefit in the preservation of the Fort Scott (city and fort) stories and resources. The Lowell

Milken Center also uses the park, and the park staff would like to explore ways in which the center could become a more engaged partner. The Gordon Park Center at Fort Scott Community College is another organization with whom partnership opportunities may be developed.

New partnerships with military or military interest organizations (expanding the themes that tie the history at Fort Scott to the modern military) may also prove to be powerful in increased visitation, visibility and stewardship.

Stronger partnerships with high schools, colleges and universities to produce the types of programming that are popular with park visitors – history-based plays and music events – will take some of the burden for planning these types of events off park staff and provide quality experiences for students and faculty, while engaging large numbers of visitors in stories and music related to Fort Scott NHS.

Opposite page: A chamber orchestra performs in the Grand Hall at Fort Scott National Historic Site.



Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

The majority of visitors to Fort Scott NHS experience interpretation through non- personal services such as self-guided tours, wayside exhibits, museum exhibits, a film, and publications. Signs encourage the public to begin their visit at the visitor center. A park ranger or volunteer provides an orientation to the site and distributes the park folder; afterwards visitors are on their own to explore the site. The park offers a variety of ranger- or volunteer-led interpretive programs including guided tours, education and youth programs, interpretive talks and demonstrations, roving, living history, and special events. The majority of interpretive programming is offered April through September.

Historic Structures/Furnished Rooms

Eleven restored and nine reconstructed historic structures are the major cultural resources at the site. Eleven are open to the public. The building exteriors and thirty furnished rooms are restored to the appearance, design, and function of the 1840s. One building, the Wilson-Goodlander Home (HS-2), is not restored inside but has been stabilized. Interior waysides and a self-guiding leaflet describe the history and evolution of the home by pointing out exposed interior features. Construction methods and materials are also described using interior waysides in HS-4. The carriage house (HS-31) is used to display a Civil War ambulance, a U.S. Army freight wagon, and an original 19th-century runabout similar to those used by U.S. army officers. The park is planning to

develop a wayside exhibit outside the carriage house to interpret Civil War transportation.

Wayside Exhibits

The interior and exterior wayside exhibits were developed over a period of time without the benefit of a comprehensive plan. As a result, design and materials vary throughout the park.

The original wayside exhibits consisted of small metal plaques on a wooden posts or stanchions. Thirty-four of these were used to identify structures, rooms, features, original functions, and in some cases, later uses. These were located both inside and outside. Six of these remain to interpret inside areas.

One of the first projects following the drafting of the park's first Long-Range Interpretive Plan in the 1990s was a wayside exhibit project. Seventeen porcelain enamel signs with historic photos and/or original color art replaced the exterior metal plaques in the late 1990s. These have stood the test of time and remain in good condition.

Interior Interpretive Panels

In the mid-1980s, interpretive wall panels and standing exhibits were installed in the park. At present, 25 of these interpretive wall panels provide information on frontier garrison life. Many still contain relevant and interesting interpretive content but are starting to show their age and were not designed for accessibility. Four standing exhibits and several interpretive panels are located in the Wilson-Goodlander Home. These describe construction

techniques and the history of the house. The largest panel tells the history of the house. While the information is interesting, it contains a lot of text, resulting in a book-on-a-wall appearance.

Museum Exhibits

Two areas in the park contain museum exhibits. The infantry barracks (HS-7) exhibits interpret the frontier fort years, Bleeding Kansas, the Civil War, the railroad years, and the restoration of the site. Currently being renovated, these areas will have improvements including new Bleeding Kansas/Civil War exhibits, an elevator for accessibility, and a theatre area with storage for distance learning equipment. To complete the renovation, new exhibits covering the establishment of the fort are needed for the lower floor. When finished, the renovations will provide a fully accessible space in which visitors can discover the park's primary interpretive themes.

A second display area is located in the dragoon barracks (HS-5). These exhibits interpret garrison life, explain the role of the infantry and dragoons, and detail various assignments that took soldiers from their mission at Fort Scott. Installed in 1979, these displays were designed and constructed locally before the National Park Service acquired the site. Ease of maintenance, artifact conservation, accessibility, and safety were not considerations in the original design. Open panels allow visitors to touch paintings, lettering, and photos that have become increasingly damaged over the years. Text color and font size along with exhibit placement do not meet current accessibility standards.

The exhibit case materials and design make maintenance of the exhibits difficult. One exhibit requires the removal of over 100 screws to clean the inside of the cases. Additionally, the use of non-tempered glass in these cases is a potential hazard to visitors and employees. The current design of the exhibits is static and dated, as is the interpretation. As a result, visitors leave with limited understanding and appreciation of the park's significance.

Trails

A short mowed trail (approximately 1/10 of a mile) winds through a small section of prairie located behind officer's row. A wayside exhibit at the beginning of the trail provides interpretation. It is hoped that when the Riverside Walk (located outside the park along the river) is complete, it will connect to this park trail to create a link between the city and the river, increasing recreational walking and jogging through the park.

Publications

The original park brochure was a mini-folder developed by the NPS for the city of Fort Scott in 1975. It was followed by six-panel unigrid folder developed in 1981 by Harpers Ferry Center. A major overhaul of the unigrid folder began in 2008, resulting in the current eight-panel unigrid folder that provides a more balanced approach to the site's history.

In addition to the site's unigrid brochure, a number of site bulletins have been completed to enhance visitor understanding of the site's stories. The

site bulletins currently being offered to the public include the following:

- Tallgrass Prairie
- The Osage
- Permanent Indian Frontier
- Manifest Destiny: The Dragoon Expeditions
- A Hearty Grip: Fort Scott Soldiers in the Mexican-American War
- Bleeding Kansas
- War, War, War: Fort Scott in the Civil War
- First to Serve: African American Soldiers in the Civil War
- Forgotten Warriors: American Indian Soldiers in the Civil War
- Soldier vs. Settler: Railroad Expansion
- Free to Learn: African American Schools

Other publications include a guide to the Wilson Goodlander home and four rack cards (promoting Fort Scott NHS, park educational programs, the cell phone tour, and the candlelight tour).

The park produced Spanish and French language brochures with the assistance of a local High School teacher.

Audiovisual Programs

The site's 23-minute orientation film was completed in 2009. Focusing on the theme "Dreams and Dilemmas," the film addresses the site's history from multiple perspectives. The film covers all major time periods of the site's history through reenactments, historic photos, paintings, and illustrations.

In addition to the film, an mp3 player plays various bugle calls. These bugle

calls are controlled by a timer and are played through a public address system located in Officers' Quarters #4 (HS-4). The bugle calls are set to play so as to represent a typical day of activities at the fort in the 1840s.

Audio Tour

To take advantage of the integration of technology into virtually every part of our lives, Fort Scott NHS developed a cell phone tour of the fort. The tour consists of 12 audio recordings that explore the stories of the historic site, as well as provide visitors with a series of sensory experiences as they walk the grounds of Fort Scott. A story or voice from the past is featured at each stop and allows visitors to experience Fort Scott in a different way, beyond what they can read on waysides or exhibit panels.

At each major building, visitors are able to access a recording that reveals the primary significance of that building and how it contributed to making Fort Scott the "Crack Post of the Frontier." Sound effects (horses whinnying, bugle calls, sounds of construction) help to provide an audio depiction of the activity that took place at Fort Scott in the 1840s. Visitors can also access a transcript of the recordings from a link on their phones.

Website

Fort Scott NHS first launched its presence on NPS.gov in 1996. Since that time the park website has changed dramatically. What started out as one page with a 17-point template evolved into an expanded website designed by the site webmaster to a system called Park



The park's website reaches virtual visitors around the world with stories and images of the fort.

Profiles. In 2005, the National Park Service replaced Park Profiles with a newer content management system called Common Spot, which is now used by all national park sites.

The park home page and “Plan Your Visit” section is a source for basic park information, hours of operation, driving directions, and other necessary information for those planning a visit. The home page includes a schedule of events and links to press releases for upcoming events. A news section provides access to other press releases and volunteer newsletters. Management documents to be shared with the public can also be accessed through a link on this page.

The History and Culture section of the website provides the text from the Fort Scott NHS unigrid brochure, along with the site's information and orientation film (broken into historical segments for faster downloads). Visitors can follow linked stories about the Osage, the Permanent Indian Frontier, dragoon patrols of the overland trails, the Mexican American War, Bleeding Kansas, the Civil War,

African American and American Indian Soldiers in the Civil War, railroad expansion after the Civil War, and African American schools in Fort Scott.

Short videos are included on the *First to Serve* page (a 4.5-minute video about African American soldiers produced by Brian Mayhew, a former Teacher-Ranger-Teacher), and on the *Forgotten Warrior* page (a 13-minute video about American Indian soldiers in the Civil War produced by Roger Leaming, another former Teacher-Ranger-Teacher.).

The Nature and Science section has basic information about the tallgrass prairie and some of the landscape features, including the bluff upon which Fort Scott was built.

The most well-developed portion of the website is the For Teachers section. Teachers can plan a field trip and find information about educational offerings, thanks in part to the launch of a new education portal. The portal has information about onsite programs, lesson plans, distance learning opportunities, and the Fort Scott NHS

traveling trunk. It also has a feature that allows teachers to book a field trip online.

An adjunct to the education portal is the virtual resource center, developed in 2000, to help high school students conduct research for programs that they, in turn, present to students in grades K-4. The virtual resource center has information about 16 different living history stations. Each station has a program outline, a list of props available, pages with historical information, an image map showing how to dress for the station (if applicable), and a video example of the station being presented to a past school group.

The For Kids section has links to the park's Junior Ranger program booklet as well as descriptions of other programming for children.

Park staff is currently working on a series of podcasts that accompany the park cell phone tour, which will also be posted on the website.

Western National Parks Association (WNPA)

Western National Parks Association operates the cooperating association outlet at Fort Scott. Current sales total between \$35,000 and \$40,000 per year. There are approximately 225 book titles sold at the site as well as a selection of souvenirs, postcards, posters, CDs, and DVDs.

The primary purpose of the park's partnership with WNPA is to provide site-specific interpretive sales items, but the union has historically been much

more. WNPA provides a part-time clerk to staff the sales and information desk. They have printed much of the park's free literature and produced the Fort Scott GIP (General Interpretive Publication). Other publications and products WNPA has produced for the site include a Fort Scott poster, a map of Fort Scott during the Civil War, a map of the frontier forts along the Permanent Indian Frontier, and an issue of the Fort Scott Democrat that tells the story of a violent episode during the Bleeding Kansas era.

Souvenir reproductions of historic items that are sold by the WNPA outlet at Fort Scott include period toys, hardtack, cannons, tin cups, wooden guns, Civil War kepis, bonnets, and bullets. Some items sold that are more questionable as to authenticity include plastic Civil War soldiers and wooden fans, but both are very good sellers. WNPA has also produced logo merchandise that falls more into the lines of modern souvenirs. Logo merchandise includes patches, pins, magnets, decals, T shirts, ball caps, tote bags, water bottles, and hiking medallions. Plans are currently underway to redesign the park's sales area to create a more historic appearance to the store, include more theme-based sales items, and trim down the quantity of book titles sold.

Through WNPA's generous donations and competitive grant funding, the park has been able to purchase or produce living history clothing, program props, school supplies, and equipment. WNPA research grant monies have been used to fund primary research. The association sponsors the annual "Frontier Candlelight Tour." Funds collected from

ticket sales are deposited in an account used to buy supplies for future programs. In turn, the park actively seeks to improve sales selections and operates the association outlet. This partnership can be used in creative ways to help the park. WNPA donations can be used as a match for grant requests.

Social Media

In 2014 park staff created a park Facebook page, which currently has over 1000 followers. This account is used to communicate information about programming and services, and also serves as a platform to involve audiences with timely interpretation.

Personal Services

The park currently has two permanent full-time Park Rangers, a permanent full-time Park Guide, a permanent full-time Historian, and a seasonal full-time Museum Technician who occasionally assists with interpretive duties. Park base funding currently supports the equivalent of one seasonal Park Ranger for six months. Additional seasonal staffing is mostly dependent upon project funding.

For over 20 years, Fort Scott NHS has partnered with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to supplement the seasonal staff in interpretive programming and museum collection care with two to four interns per year.

A uniformed employee, volunteer, or Western National Park Association employee is on duty daily in the visitor center year round to greet and orient visitors, answer questions, and operate the bookstore; the visitor center and bookstore close only on Thanksgiving,

Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours during the peak visitor season (April through October) are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; from November through March, hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Extended hours of 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day were eliminated in the mid-1990s due to budget shortfalls). One or more additional staff is scheduled to work the visitor center during special events and busy holiday weekends.

Ranger-guided tours of the site are given year round upon request (scheduled in advance) and daily in the summer (Memorial Day to Labor Day). If staffing permits, scheduled tours are increased to two per day in summer and/or extended to weekends throughout the fall. The guided tour lasts approximately one hour; each interpreter determines the theme and emphasis of the tour.

Volunteers and staff interpret 1840s garrison life using living history on Memorial Day weekend, Labor Day weekend, and on the weekend closest to Independence Day. Special programming is often developed around a specific theme or topic. Black powder weapons, cooking, and bake house demonstrations are often scheduled on these weekends.

When staffing permits, weekend living history programming is offered. This includes costumed interpretation at stations around the site, informal roving in uniform and reproduction period clothing, and occasional black powder weapons demonstrations. Recently, the park has used stationed living history to interpret the stories of a variety of eras in Fort Scott's history and has offered

evening tours once a month during the summer months. The guided tours include living history scenes depicting episodes in Fort Scott's history that revolve around an identified theme.

Offsite programs are provided to school and civic organizations upon request when staffing is available.

Special Events

Special events have been an integral part of interpretive programming since the establishment of the park in 1978. Originally conceived as a draw to the newly established park, annual special events continue to generate approximately 20% of total park visitation. The type and number of special events has changed throughout the park's history. There are currently five events: Civil War Encampment (April); Good Ol' Days (June); Symbols of Sacrifice (September);

Citizenship Ceremony (September); and Candlelight Tour (December). These special events are interpretive efforts involving volunteers and partners such as reenactor groups, interpreters from other parks, and the Friends of Fort Scott, Inc. Special events require a tremendous amount of time, careful coordination, and good communication in order to achieve favorable results. The park has also hosted many other one-time events such as the Kansas Chautauqua and the sesquicentennials of the establishment of the fort and the State of Kansas.

Education/ Youth Programs

The site currently features three different curriculum-based education programs: Life on the Frontier (K-4), A Sweep Through History (5-6) and Conflict on the Border (7-8).

The original Life on the Frontier program consisted of several living history stations,



American Indian Heritage weekend provides an opportunity for visitors to learn more about traditions of the native tribes of the area.

at which park interpreters dressed in period costume portrayed a range of people who would have lived at the fort in the 1840s. Each interpreter gave a presentation that helped the students discover what life was like at Fort Scott. The program has evolved to include students in the presentation through role playing and hands-on demonstrations. For more than a decade, students from Nevada High School's Advanced American History class (from Nevada, MO) have presented this program to elementary school students. The Nevada HS students begin research for the programs in early March. Under the guidance of mentors (park rangers at Fort Scott NHS), the students outline and prepare their programs. About a week before the presentation, the students come to Fort Scott for clothing checkout and a dress rehearsal, where they receive final coaching prior to their presentations. In recent years, Erie High School has also participated in presenting this program, and plans are currently underway to include Fort Scott High School.

The fifth and sixth grade program is titled "A Sweep Through History." Students participate in three different programs, one from each of the primary eras of Fort Scott NHS history: Westward Expansion, Bleeding Kansas, and Civil War. Each of these programs has an interactive component, with students determining guilt or innocence during a mock trial, reenacting dramatic events of the Trail of Tears or the Bleeding Kansas era, or being sworn into the Union Army as African American and American Indian soldiers.

Conflict on the Border, a program for middle school students, covers the same

topics as A Sweep Through History, but is generally more in-depth with higher-level activities. One of the activities developed for the middle school program is a Civil War medicine activity where students form diagnostic teams to determine the symptoms, diseases, and treatments for ill patients. Teachers with classes attending Conflict on the Border can choose which activities best suit their curriculum needs.

The Trailblazer Program is a week-long workshop for youth ages 9-12, held the first week of August. The workshop is generally limited to twelve participants, but sometimes demand is greater (there have been occasions in the past few years when the workshop has been offered twice). Many participants attend the program more than once.

The Trailblazer Program engages young people in the mission of the National Park Service. Participants raise the garrison flag each morning, take part in an archaeological dig, work to conserve the prairie, and gain knowledge of methods used to preserve the buildings and artifacts of the fort. They also learn about living history and interpretation and work on a skit or play that they present, along with a flag ceremony, for their families and friends at the end of the week. Since it was first offered in the summer of 2000, more than 150 kids have participated in the Trailblazer Program.

In past years, the site has developed and presented a Civil War baseball game. Teams were recruited from area youth who might not have had an interest in the site otherwise. The game was played according to Civil War rules, using period equipment. Participants wore period

shirts; one team wore Union caps and the other wore Confederate caps. While the program was worthwhile, it is currently difficult to get the level of participation needed to make it happen. It remains an option in the park's tool kit for engaging youth.

Fort Scott NHS has programs for both Girl Scout and Boy Scout groups. Scouts assist with service projects on Public Lands Day and perform service projects at the site during the year. In the past, service projects have included assistance with cleanup and setup of special events, prairie restoration, and cultural resource preservation. In 2012-13, a Boy Scout worked with Fort Scott NHS to build new props for cavalry/dragoon demonstrations as his Eagle Scout service project. The potential exists for more of these types of projects.

Junior Ranger Program

Fort Scott NHS has a junior ranger program, with two different booklets and a haversack of items for use on site that is issued at the visitor center. Junior Ranger program participants can choose the booklet they want to use. The first booklet is appropriate for children ages five to seven, while the other has advanced activities and is structured for children ages eight and older. Each booklet has activities that participants complete as they visit the site. The haversack contains items intended to make a child's visit to the site more interactive – a comb to groom a horse's tail and a shirt to scrub on a washboard. Recently, participation in the program has averaged about 800 children per year.

Distance Learning Programs

In 2010, Fort Scott NHS purchased a videoconferencing system for the purpose of outreach to schools. In 2012, the site also acquired a backpack system that includes a laptop, video camera, headphones, and microphone. This system is designed to be set up in the field and can broadcast from anywhere there is a means to connect to the internet.

Since acquiring the equipment, the park has used it to connect to a guest speaker for a teacher workshop in fall of 2012, to participate in holiday storytelling to students in Texas and New York in December of 2012, and to connect to a series of other national parks during the park's Trailblazer Workshop in the summer of 2013.

With the launch of the education portal, Fort Scott NHS began to receive requests for distance learning programs. In the fall of 2014, the site began advertising through the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration. Currently the site offers three programs via distance learning, all of which are Civil War programs, averaging about one program per month. There are plans to develop more programs in the near future.

Opposite page: A bird's-eye view captures the hustle and bustle of a soldiers' camp during Civil War weekend.



Recommendations

Recommendations

This section describes the specific, targeted actions that park staff, volunteers, and partners will take over the next seven to ten years to modify existing park programs and develop new interpretive opportunities for visitors in the future.

The measure of success of any plan is the degree to which it is implemented. The staff at Fort Scott NHS, together with volunteers and partners, will revisit these recommendations on an annual basis. These recommendations were developed with the full commitment of Fort Scott staff and partners to sustain each recommended task, whether product, program, or service, until it is deemed that it

- is no longer feasible within park and partner resources and capacities,
- is no longer serving the needs of the visitor or the Foundation goals of the park,
- can no longer be maintained in high quality condition, or
- no longer reflects the most recent and accurate scholarship.

Viable plans must be nimble and responsive to changing conditions, while providing a structure in which new ideas and opportunities can be evaluated. The recommendations made here should be formally revisited by the park staff on an annual basis. The Foundations section of this document is a gauge against which new ideas should be measured.

The planning team identified the following areas for action:

1. Offer a suite of interpretive media services including publications, digital media, indoor and outdoor exhibits, a robust website, and accompanying social media.
2. Update the bookstore area of the visitor center as well as the selection of sales items.
3. Offer a broad-based personal services program.
4. Continue and expand curriculum- based educational opportunities.
5. Work closely with the City of Fort Scott and the Riverfront Trail.
6. Improve orientation and trip planning resources.
7. Strengthen interpretation and education partnerships.
8. Welcome all visitors.
9. Expand volunteer opportunities.
10. Effectively reach and engage youth.
11. Conduct planning.

Specific recommendations for implementation were created to address each of these areas. A detailed implementation matrix on the following pages provides year-by-year guidance on implementing the recommendations.

Interpretive Recommendations: Implementation Plan

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Offer a Suite of Interpretive Media Services				
<u>Social Media</u>				
Explore use of Instagram		X		
Develop a strategy to encourage visitors on site to connect with social media during their visit: post to social media sites, highlight creativity (best jail photo, Fort photo 'booth')		X	X	
Provide museum object/document of the week via Facebook		X		
<u>Free Publications</u>				
Update First to be more interpretive		X		
Update scavenger hunt to reflect new exhibits		X		
Update the Junior Ranger Program activities to include younger children (ages 4-5)		X		
Develop a guide to FOOSC characters at local cemeteries		X		
Produce a site bulletin about the archeology of the Fort			X	
<u>Digital Media</u>				
Develop an ADA-compliant virtual tour that showcases views of second-floor rooms and behind-the-scenes material. Make this virtual tour available through hand-held devices, the park website, and on-site equipment.		X		
Improve and update cell phone tour to include video, additional stops, alternative themes, and audio description		X		
Reshoot training videos for education program			X	
Use archeological data to inform Anatomy of a Fort infographic about basic needs - poster and website			X	

Recommendations	On-Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
<u>Website</u>				
Link to youth oriented videos recommended by Ken Davis from park website		X		
Develop junior ranger activities on line - interactive junior ranger program or WebRanger module			X	
Update the virtual resources center, especially the guardhouse activity		X		
Implement Centennial initiative changes		X		
<u>Indoor and Outdoor Exhibits</u>				
Open up some of the furnished rooms to visitors			X	
Add soundscapes to exhibit spaces, and possibly smellscapes?				X
Complete work on new exhibits upstairs in HS-7	X			
Develop a tactile map of the fort (possibly downstairs in HS-7 or outside in a wayside)				X
Develop interpretation of the Officer of the Day quarters			X	
Review furnishings plan for furnished rooms and establish seasonal pattern for changing furnished rooms to reflect the seasons				X
Investigate current hologram technology and evaluate the purchase cost, maintenance, and quality			X	
Adjust tool display in the stables to be more accessible and tactile and ensure that existing interactive activities remain	X			
Revamp the Bookstore				
Re-envision the bookstore on a sutler theme	X			
Provide fewer book titles. Feature items which are linked to exhibits	X			

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Offer a Broad-based Personal Services Program				
Offer off-site programs in local cemeteries using volunteers				X
Continue to give guided tours of the Fort	X			
Continue and expand stationed and roving living history	X			
Continue to conduct one naturalization ceremony each year	X			
Continue to provide the Candlelight Tour, Symbols of Sacrifice, Civil War Encampment, Good Ol' Days, and holiday weekend programming during the summer	X			
Increase presence of costumed interpretation		X		
Experiment with facilitated dialogue in regular programs, with school groups and in a variety of other settings	X			
Re-establish monthly evening programs taking care to provide variety for locals, promote with youth and present in partnership with youth/community	X			
Host a Native Neighbors American Indian event		X		
Host a Dragoon roundup				X
Develop a ghosting archeology tour				X
Continue Existing and Expand Curriculum-based Educational Opportunities				
High school debate re: Bleeding Kansas or other FOSC topic streamed live			X	
Kansas Park Issues Debate Throwdown (multiple topics, possibly distance learning, possible travel to finals)			X	

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Explore possibility of overnight programs. These may include living history camps, scout badge programs, or educational camps		X		
Expand distance learning efforts to reach a wider audience by creating a broad network of partner schools across the US	X			
Continue supporting a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher	X			
Contract or work with partners to produce four graphic novels about FOOSC eras or people for sale in the bookstore or use in schools				X
Host symposia and teacher workshops to build awareness of FOOSC stories and themes and give teachers a skill they can use (or credit hours)	X			
Continue Sweep Through History	X			
Continue Life on the Frontier (high school and K-4)	X			
Explore options for project-based learning: research and other specific projects	X			
Work with City of Fort Scott and Riverfront Trail				
Partner with the City to develop a plan for waysides throughout town and along the riverfront	X			
Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a Civil War trolley tour				X
Assist local partners to develop a cell phone tour that incorporates appropriate historical features of the town of Fort Scott and other locations	X			
Work with City on a natural playground at the riverfront	X			
Partner with the Arts Council to recruit artists to work with students to develop products that explore themes of opportunity/American experience		X	X	X

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Improve Orientation/Trip Planning Resources				
Create a short video, to play on the local cable channel, hotel channels, public service channels, and in businesses that play ads				X
Strengthen Interpretation and Education Partnerships				
Explore partnership with UMKC internship program	X			
Develop a field trip series with Freedom's Frontier	X			
Explore partnership opportunities with Lowell Milken Center	X			
Explore partnership with American Indian tribal groups (Osage, Cherokee and Potawatomie) to increase the presence of the American Indian story at the Fort	X			
Explore new partnership opportunities with the Eisenhower Library and the Truman Library	X			
Build a network of Permanent Indian Frontier and/or Historical/Active Forts (Leavenworth, Riley)	X			
Investigate feasibility of establishing a FSCC building trades program	X			
Develop off-site programs in partnership with the National Cemetery and Evergreen Cemetery	X			
Identify opportunities for PSU Internships	X			
Create formal partnerships with the Bourbon County Riverfront Authority to link the park with the Riverfront	X			
Investigate opportunities to participate in shows or host an art show with the Bourbon County Arts Council	X			

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Welcome All Audiences - Accessibility				
Continue annual training for staff and volunteers in the use of assistive listening devices	X			
Provide general, regular accessibility training - partner with other organizations	X			
Develop a large print unigrid brochure				X
Re-design text panels in all exhibits to meet minimum text size for accessibility				X
Expand Volunteer Opportunities				
Explore relationships with rodeo programs or horse clubs			X	
Informally survey volunteers about the FOSC program and others they participate in; talk to other volunteer coordinators about ways to recruit and retain local volunteers	X			
Explore restore/rebuild HS-4 in partnership with FSCC and other trade/construction schools and restoration experts				X
Involve volunteers in debriefing or chances to provide input	X			
Revisit the way volunteers are recruited - be specific about opportunities available and advertise in creative ways	X			
Recruit youth to "direct" scenes for special events programs	X			
Revisit the volunteer recognition program and get the word out about incentives	X			
Maintain a cadre of frequently available volunteers who are interested in living history	X			

Recommendations	On- Going	FY 16-17	FY 18-19	FY 20-21
Effectively Reach and Engage Youth				
Work with theatre students or partner with theatre camp to develop/present plays, programs, or other special	X			
Continue Trailblazer program	X			
Develop popup exhibits taking FOSC stories to population centers - in places with lots of ambient people - could be chalk art or something artsy and ephemeral			X	X
Identify youth leaders who will lead in the production of student-produced media and share via social media	X			
Conduct Planning				
Develop an exhibit plan to replace exhibits and panels that are faded or inconsistent in style, in order to create a more uniform and cohesive visitor experience		X		
Plan for new exhibits in HS-5 museum room & HS-7 lower level			X	

Appendix A: Servicewide Interpretive Report, 2015

Form 10-769
(Rev 8/98)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SERVICEWIDE Interpretive REPORT

Park Org. Code:
FOSC

Unit Name:
Fort Scott National Historic Site

Fiscal Year:
2015

◆ Funding Sources

Fiscal Year Interpretive Expenditures

■ Park Interpretive Funds Spent (ONPS Base only)	\$377,869
■ Servicewide Fee Funds Spent	\$283,888
■ Reimbursable Fee Funds Spent (16USC 1a-2g)	\$0

Interpretive Staffing for Fiscal Year

■ Permanent FTE	3.5	No. of Perm Positions	4.0
■ Temporary FTE	1.5	No. of Temp Positions	3.0
● Total FTE	5.0	Total Positions	7.0

◆ Personal Services

	Number of Times Service Provided	Number of Different Facilities	Number of Different Services	Total Work Years	Total Number of Visitor Contacts	Number Distributed	Total ONPS Salary & Benefits Only	Total All Other Funding Costs
■ Visitor Centers/Contact Stations		1		1.60	19665		\$49,643	\$6,011
■ Informal Interpretation				0.70	1806		\$6,221	\$1,378
■ Formal Interpretation	19			0.20	503		\$8,465	\$1,843
■ Demonstrations & Performing Arts	39			0.30	1158		\$3,457	\$891
■ Junior Ranger Programs				0.10	1016		\$2,104	\$580
■ Special Events	5			2.50	3911		\$31,578	\$8,436
■ Education Programs	183			1.20	3020		\$17,002	\$17,442
● Subtotal Personal Services	246	1		6.6	31079		\$118,470	\$36,581

◆ Non-Personal Services

	Number of Times Service Provided	Number of Different Facilities	Number of Different Services	Total Work Years	Total Number of Visitor Contacts	Number Distributed	Total ONPS Salary & Benefits Only	Total All Other Funding Costs
■ Park-Produced Publications			23	0.10		12307	\$1,322	\$0
■ Audio-Visual/Electronic Media			3	0.10	36600		\$1,322	\$0
● Subtotal Non-Personal Services			26	0.2	36600	12307	\$2,644	\$0

◆ Outreach Services

	Number of Times Service Provided	Number of Different Facilities	Number of Different Services	Total Work Years	Total Number of Visitor Contacts	Number Distributed	Total ONPS Salary & Benefits Only	Total All Other Funding Costs
■ Community Programs	18			0.10	208		\$1,493	\$0
■ Loan Materials	0			0.00	0		\$0	\$0
■ Park Web Site				0.20		0	\$2,986	\$0
● Subtotal Outreach Services	18			0.3	208	0	\$4,479	\$0

● Column Totals	264	1	26	7.1	67887	12307	\$125,593	\$36,581
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◆ Program Highlight

The park completed and installed its much-anticipated Bleeding Kansas-Civil War interactive exhibits. These exhibits, completed in conjunction with HFC and park stakeholders take visitors through the fascinating history of this area when pro and anti slavery factions were fighting bitterly over the territory. The interactive exhibits uses the voices and perspectives of six different characters to tell the story from a diversity of viewpoints. The opening of these exhibits was featured on the local TV news and in both town newspaper outlets. FOSC FY2015 website pageviews were 142,065.

Appendix B:

Visitor Use Statistics, 2011

The following data was compiled from a visitor survey conducted at the park in the summer of 2011 by the University of Idaho Visitor Services Project. The park's annual visitation averages about 25,000 people a year.

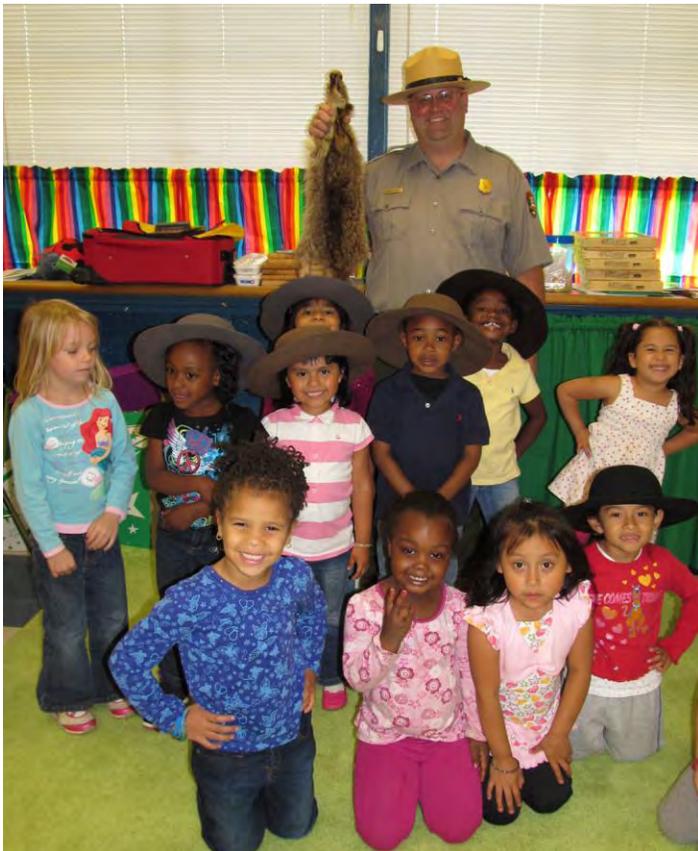
Of the visitor groups responding to the survey:

- 46% of visitor groups consisted of two people, while 30% consisted of four or more people. Seventy-four percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
- 99% of the visitors during the survey period were from the United States (33 states represented, including 34% from Kansas; 3% of visitor groups were residents of Fort Scott). International visitors were too few in number to provide reliable information.
- 40% of visitors were ages 55 to 70 years old, 21% were 15 years or younger, 18% were 36 to 50 years old, and 9% were 71 years or older.
- 51% of the survey respondents were male; 49% were female.
- Most visitors (95%) were White; 2% of visitors were Hispanic or Latino.
- 30% of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 28% had a bachelor's degree.
- 27% of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$74,000.
- 9% of visitor groups had members with physical conditions affecting their ability to access or participate in activities or services.
- The most common primary reasons for visiting the park area among non-resident visitor groups were to visit the park (42%) and traveling through – unplanned visit (31%).
- 63% of visitor groups also visited local and regional attractions. The most commonly visited attractions were downtown Fort Scott (63%), Fort Scott National Cemetery (26%), and Mine Creek Battlefield (19%).
- The average length of stay for visitor groups at Fort Scott NHS was 1.6 hours.
- 2% of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
- The most common activities of visitor groups were general sightseeing (85%), viewing indoor

exhibits and furnished rooms (83%), and viewing outdoor exhibits and buildings (82%).

- 82% of visitor groups took the self-guided brochure tour and (8%) took the cell phone tour. 26% of visitor groups attended a ranger or volunteer-led talk, program, or tour on this visit. Of those, 43% took a guided tour and 39% attended a talk. 56% of visitor groups preferred a program length of ½ to 1 hour.
- The information services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the indoor exhibits (86%), park brochure/map (79%), restrooms (78%), and visitor center – Post Hospital (75%).

- 67% of visitor groups indicated they would likely visit the park in the future, while 21% were not sure if they would. 95% of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park's cultural and natural history/features on a future visit through a self-guided tour with brochure (67%), indoor exhibits (61%), and outdoor exhibits (60%).



One of Fort Scott's Teacher-Ranger-Teachers shares his experiences with his home classroom during National Park Week.



A reenactor contemplates the beauty of the Fort lit by countless lanterns during the annual Candlelight Tour.

All photos by NPS unless otherwise noted.

Fort Scott National Historic Site

U.S. Department of the Interior



Fort Scott, KS 66701
Website: www.nps.gov/fosc
Phone: 660-223-0310