

# HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT *of* AMERICA



## General Management Plan

1999

**FINAL**  
**GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
*for*  
**HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT of AMERICA**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Midwest Regional Office  
Omaha, Nebraska**

**RECOMMENDED:**

  
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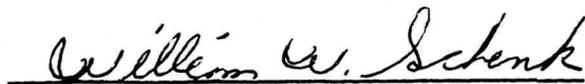
  
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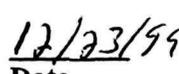
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1999



## Table of Contents

### Section I

#### *Purpose and Need for the General Management Plan*

<b>Purpose and Need for the <i>General Management Plan</i></b> .....	7
<b>General Description of Homestead National Monument of America</b> .....	9
The Homestead Story .....	10
The Freeman Story .....	13
<b>Mission, Purpose, and Significance of the Monument</b> .....	13
<b>Planning Considerations</b> .....	16
Applicable Legislative and Administrative Requirements.....	16
Planning Constraints and Considerations.....	17
Summary of Boundary Study Recommendations .....	18

### Section II

#### *General Management Plan*

<b>Introduction</b> .....	23
<b>General Management Plan</b> .....	24
Overview Description .....	24
<b>General Descriptions of Prescribed Development Concepts</b> .....	24
The “Homestead Heritage Center” .....	24
The “Education Center” .....	26
The “Homestead Heritage Parkway” .....	27
<b>Specific Management Prescriptions</b> .....	28
1. Location in the Floodplain .....	28
2. Prairie Restoration Purpose .....	28
3. Protection of the Cultural Landscape .....	29
4. Traffic on State Highway 4 .....	29
5. Relationship with Freeman School .....	29
6. Legislative Mandates for Collections.....	30
7. Interpretation of the Homestead Act .....	30
8. Accuracy and Effectiveness of Interpretive Media .....	31
9. Existing Facilities .....	31
10. Adequacy of Monument Boundaries.....	31
<b>Management Zones</b> .....	31

### Section III

#### Consultation and Coordination

<b>Consultation and Coordination</b> .....	35
Description of Consultation and Public Involvement .....	35
List of Agencies, Organizations, and Groups Consulted .....	35

### Section IV

#### Preparers and References

<b>Preparers and References</b> .....	39
<b>Planning Team</b> .....	39
Consultants .....	39
Past Team Members .....	40
Vintage Illustrations .....	40
Maps .....	40
<b>References</b> .....	41

#### Figures and Appendixes

##### **Figures**

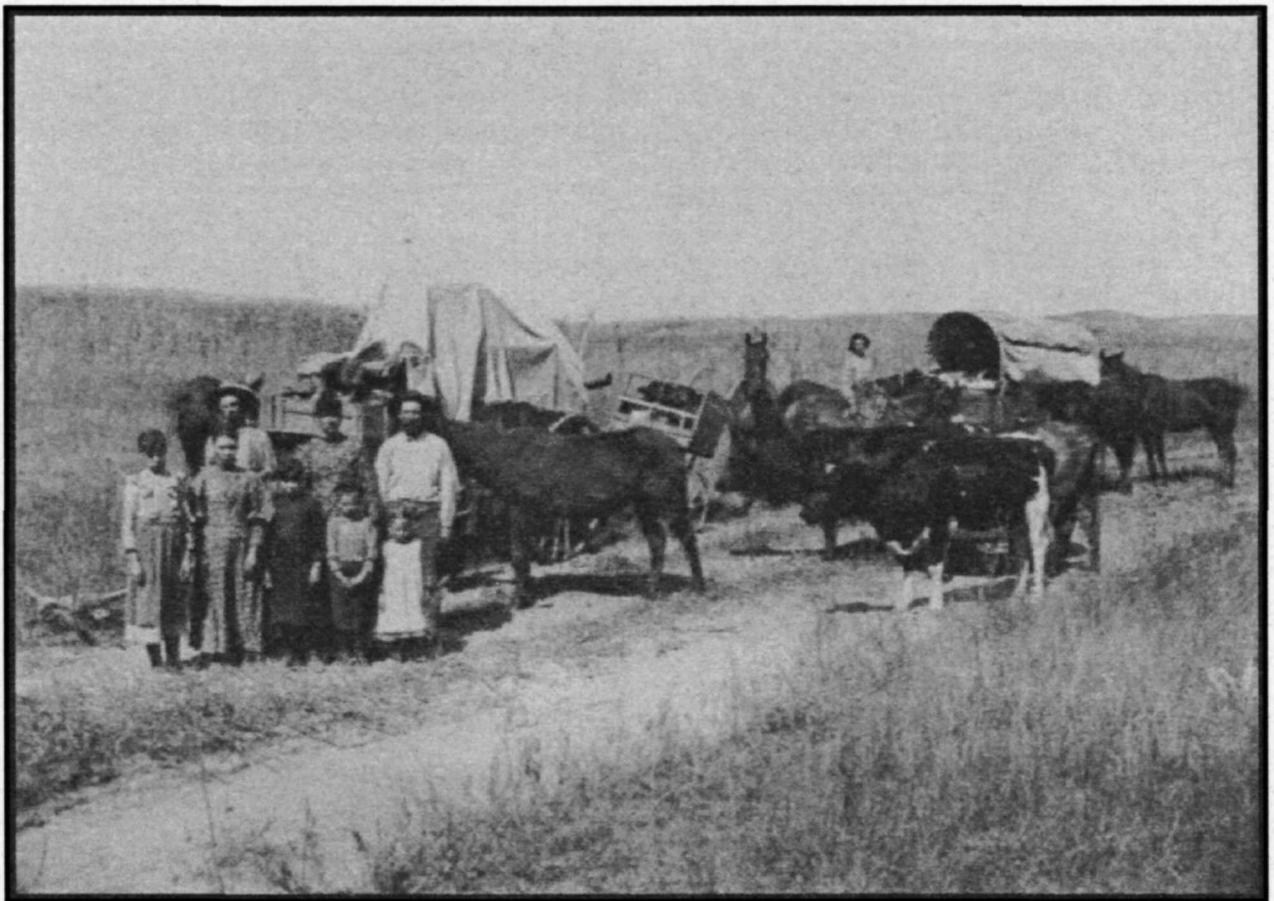
Figure 1: Map of 1999 Existing Conditions at Homestead National Monument of America ....	8
Figure 2: Designated 100-Year Floodplain at Homestead National Monument of America ...	11
Figure 3: Management Zones .....	25
Figure 4: Recommended Boundary Adjustments .....	62

##### **Appendixes** .....

Appendix A: Legislation for Homestead National Monument of America .....	45
Appendix B: Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America .....	49
Appendix C: Record of Decision .....	63
Appendix D: Farmland Conversion Impact Rating .....	69

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**SECTION I:**  
**Purpose and Need**  
**for the General Management Plan**





**FINAL**  
**GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
*for*  
**HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT of AMERICA**

**Section I**

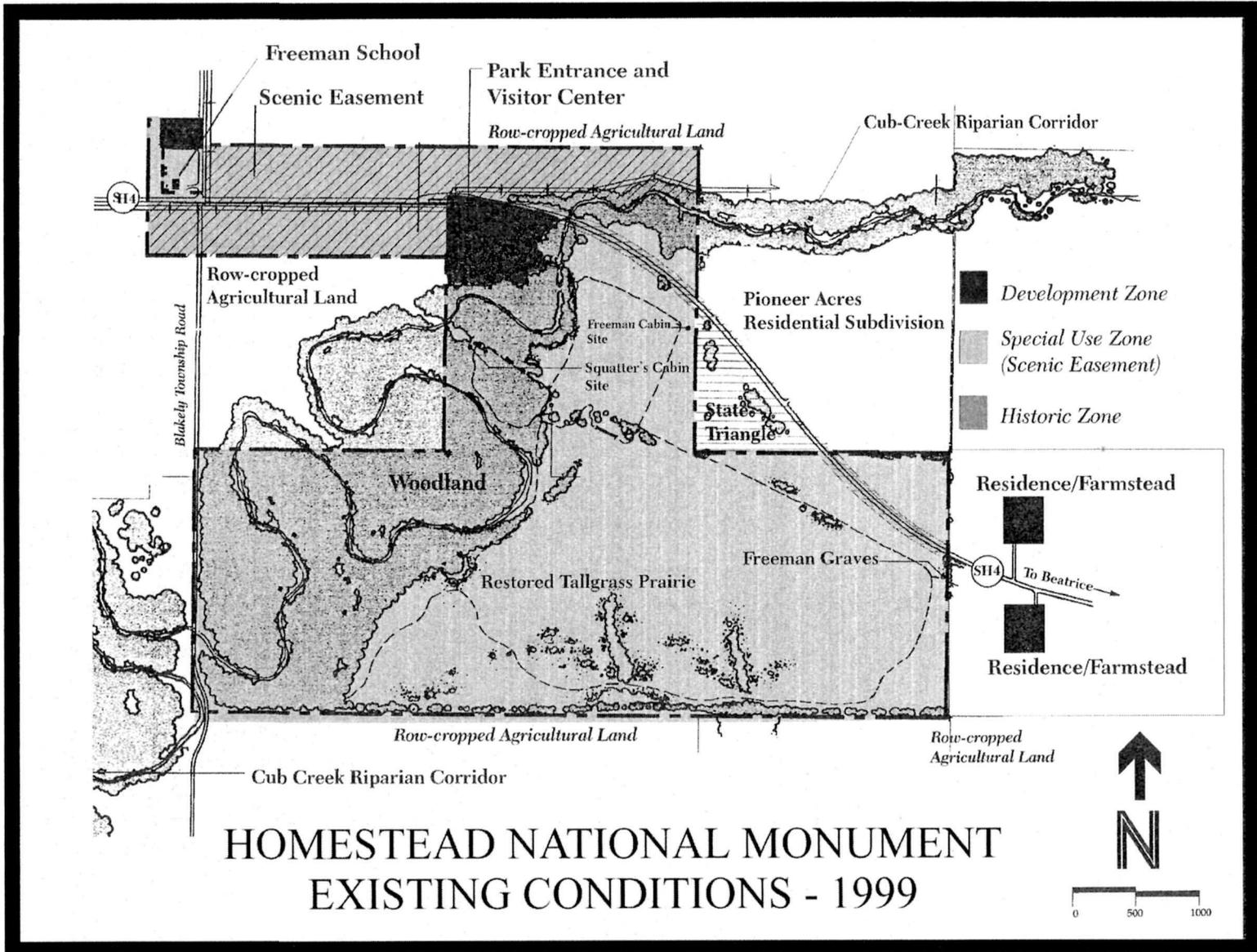
**Purpose and Need for the General Management Plan**

The purpose of this *Final General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America* (hereafter referred to as the “GMP”) is to provide the conceptual framework that will guide the management and stewardship of Homestead National Monument (hereafter referred to as the “Monument”) in meeting its legislative mandates for the next 10 to 20 years.

This *GMP* replaces the Monument’s existing outdated 1988 *GMP*. Since that *GMP* was developed, Monument functions have outgrown the available infrastructure. The Monument’s staff had come to experience significant limitations in the design of these facilities. For example, exhibits on the Homestead Act and homesteading are outdated; storage space for museum and archival collections is severely limited; and there is no facility solely dedicated for researchers to access the homestead collections and archives. Because of this situation, the Monument’s ability to fully carry out its legislated functions and mandates is significantly compromised. In addition, the present facilities lack adequate flexibility to address unforeseen future needs relative to the commemoration and interpretation of the Homestead Act and the mission of the Monument. As a result, most Monument facilities are inadequate for visitors and employees (Figure 1).

Moreover, the Monument’s existing visitor center complex is situated within the 100-year floodplain of nearby Cub Creek. The hydrologic characteristics of the creek’s watershed have been and probably will continue to change over time as the surrounding area undergoes greater human development. This could result in an increasing potential for possible flood damage to the Monument’s facilities. This represents a significant threat to the Monument’s primary visitor and employee facilities and to the artifacts and supporting materials contained within.

The Nebraska Department of Roads has informed the NPS that State Highway 4, which runs through the Monument, is scheduled for redesign and improvements by 2001 to bring it into compliance with current highway safety and design standards. Once completed, the volume and mix of traffic on State Highway 4 is likely to steadily increase over time. This development could affect the qualities of visitor safety and experience, and would also result in a greater physical intrusion into the Monument’s boundary.



The scope and direction provided by the 1988 *GMP* is being overwhelmed by these developments. By virtue of this inadequacy, further implementation of the existing *GMP* may restrict the Monument's ability to convey the stories of the Homestead Act, and its consequences for the "Great West", the nation, and the international community. Because of this situation, continued implementation of the 1988 *GMP* could also inadvertently result in adverse impacts to cultural and natural features within the Monument. Overall, this situation would jeopardize the National Park Service's (NPS) ability to fully carry out its mission at the Monument, as directed by the Monument's enabling legislation (see Appendix A).

This *GMP* addresses the Monument's problematic, planning-related issues. In particular, they address such problems as the location of resource, exhibit, and operational facilities within a 100-year floodplain and safety and resource concerns associated with the state highway crossing the Monument. Moreover, present interpretation and exhibits on the Homestead story are outdated and suffer from a basic disconnection between the telling of the national homestead story and the management of the principle cultural resources of the Monument: the original 160-acre homestead tract, the Freeman School, and the museum collections.

Public Law 95-625 requires every unit of the national park system to have an up-to-date *GMP*. In light of the inadequacy of the Monument's existing *GMP*, Congress in 1996 specifically directed the NPS to prepare a new *GMP* to resolve these shortcomings and address related issues.

## General Description of Homestead National Monument of America

In March 1936, Congress established the Homestead National Monument of America under the stewardship of the NPS to "*retain for posterity a proper memorial emblematical of the hardships and the pioneer life through which the early settlers passed in the settlement, cultivation and civilization of the Great West.*" On September 25, 1970, Congress added the Freeman School parcel to "*further the interpretation and commemoration of the pioneer life of early settlers of the West.*"

The Monument is located in Gage County, Nebraska, approximately 50 miles south of Lincoln, Nebraska. The Monument is situated 3.5 miles west of Beatrice, Nebraska with primary road access via State Highway 4. The Monument covers 194.57 acres.

The United States owns in fee the original 162.73-acre Freeman Homestead, which is the basis for the Monument, along with the adjacent 1.2-acre Freeman School parcel. The quitclaim deed, which conveyed the Freeman School to the United States, stipulates that if the school were to be removed from its original setting, land ownership would revert to Nebraska School District #21. The NPS visitor center and administrative complex occupy the northwestern corner of the Monument. The Freeman School occupies an area ¼ mile west along State Highway 4.

The Nebraska Department of Roads operates and maintains the right-of-way for State Highway 4, which passes along and through a portion of the Monument. Privately owned land currently used for row crop farming comprises the remaining 12.46 acres within the authorized boundary. The original homestead now consists of approximately 100 acres of reconstructed native tallgrass prairie; 60 acres of hardwood forest; this includes nearly 3 acres of buildings, roads, and trails.

The entire Monument is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Management emphasis in the Historic Zone preserves, protects, and interprets cultural resources and their settings. Developments at the Monument occur in a sub-zone of the historic zone. Non-zoned parklands fall in a special use sub-zone.

Approximately 60% of the Monument is situated within the 100-year floodplain of Cub Creek, which flows through the Monument, and of the nearby Big Blue River. In 1998, the NPS requested an updated 100-year floodplain identification study from the Big Blue Natural Resources District and the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. The results of this study confirmed the extent of the 100-year floodplain in this area (Figure 2).

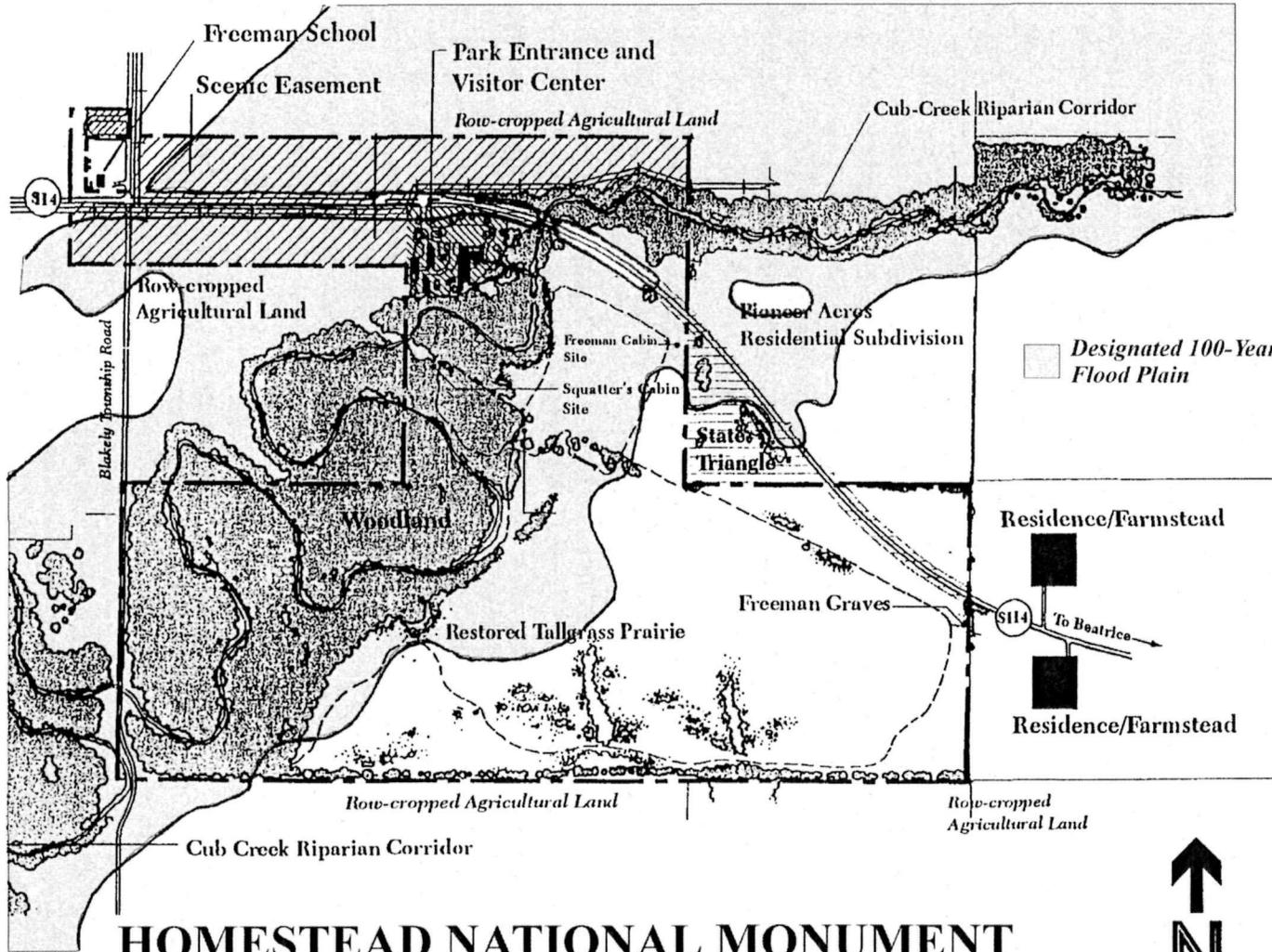
The Monument has averaged about 35,000-40,000 visitors per year over the last ten years. Visitation has declined over the years as the Monument's visibility as a center for homesteading culture and history has eroded due to the development of commercial historical ventures. Due to budget constraints, the Monument has found it difficult to upgrade facilities or keep pace with education and exhibit trends, resulting in an outdated appearance and static educational experience. Visitation is primarily during the summer months with dramatic increases during special programs.

### ***The Homestead Story***

The Homestead Act of 1862 accelerated the settlement of the American West beyond the Mississippi River. In the decades that followed, farmers and prospective farmers, United States citizens and foreign immigrants, by the tens of thousands, hurried westward to claim and develop farmsteads. Others, such as ranchers and miners, used the homestead laws to their benefit. For most Americans, homesteading quickly became a symbol of the growth and progress of the United States. Yet the consequences of the public land policies evolving from the Homestead Act resulted in failures as well as successes. Federal offerings of land in the more arid parts of the West led to economic bankruptcy for many families and widespread harm to the environment. Moreover, dividing and transferring the land into private property undermined the foundation of American Indian subsistence in the West. Plowshares proved more effective than guns in defeating American Indians, many of whom remained unvanquished in battle.

Passage of the Homestead Act of 1862 reflected the goals of land reformers who, for decades, supported the transfer of the public domain into small private farmsteads of independent farmers. Before the 1850s, the terms of purchasing land from the federal government were too expensive for most settlers. Farmers frequently squatted on unsurveyed land or bought land from private realtors, who often purchased large areas at a discount price or through trade in military scrips. The Graduation Act of 1854 offered reduced prices for public land on the market for ten years or more. The lower prices benefited farmers but also generated rabid speculation. The Homestead Law replaced the Graduation Act and offered citizens and non-citizens a land grant of 160 acres for the price of a filing fee and on condition that they develop a farm within five years (Robbins 1976; White 1991).

The Homestead Act did not replace all previous land laws. It became one of many methods the federal government enacted for transforming public land into private property. As provided in the original federal land legislation, buyers could still acquire newly offered land through public auction. The Preemption Act of 1841 remained in force and favored squatters who farmed land ahead of the public survey. It allowed squatters/farmers to purchase 160 acres, at the minimum \$1.25 per acre price, prior to public auction (White 1991; Opie 1987). The federal government also granted millions of acres to states, for public education and various internal improvements, and to railroads. The state and railroads, in turn, sold much of this land.



**HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT  
DESIGNATED 100-YEAR FLOOD PLAIN**

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In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln and the Republicans in Congress sponsored the Homestead Act as the foundation of their land program for developing and integrating the West into the nation. That same year they passed the Pacific Railroad Act and the Morrill Act. The railroad legislation chartered private corporations and gave them land grants to build the first transcontinental railroad. The Republicans wanted the rails to link the Pacific Coast to the Union and to provide homesteaders access to markets. The Morrill Act authorized land grants to states of 30,000 acres for each senator and representative for the development of public universities. The states could sell the land to build land grant colleges. These institutions were to insure the rise of an educated citizenry and the application of knowledge to inspire agricultural and economic growth. As historian Richard White wrote, "A common vision of a prosperous, progressive, economically expansive, and harmonious West inspired all three acts" (White 1991).

Homesteading proved most successful in establishing viable 160-acre farms between 1863 and 1880 when settlement concentrated around the Great Lakes and west of the Mississippi River to the eastern Great Plains. Average rainfall was sufficient to nourish farming in these areas. During these years homesteaders entered 469,000 claims and, by 1885, 55 percent of the claims either had or were in the process of gaining their titles (Gates 1979). The railroad grants, in some cases, however, conflicted with the intent of homesteading. In total, Congress gave more than 131 million acres of land to the railroads. The politicians expected the companies to quickly sell their land to settlers as a means of creating business and in many places this happened. Yet some railroads were slow to identify their routes and slow to build. This delayed settlement at different times across about 30 percent of the public domain (Opie 1987; White 1991).

After 1880 and into the next century, the limitations of the act became more apparent as settlers failed in increasing numbers to replicate the homestead model in the more arid High Plains and the desert West (Gates 1979). The federal government responded with the Timber Culture Act of 1873 and the Desert Land Act of 1877. The timber law offered 160 acres to the head of a family with the stipulation that they plant and sustain 40 acres of trees for ten years. Congress based the law on the misguided popular scientific theory that trees stimulated rain. The law primarily benefited ranchers, who used their cowboys to file multiple claims along watercourses to block the immigration of settlers. Congress quickly saw the error of their reasoning and passed the Desert Land Act to adapt farming to the land. This allowed anyone to purchase 640 acres for \$1.25 per acre if they reclaimed an eighth of the tract by irrigation. Speculators took advantage of it and, throughout the West, large ranchers, lumber, and mining corporations accumulated large holdings with the legislation intended for small farmers (White 1991; Merk 1978; Gates 1979). Although such activities circumvented the intent of the law, they underscored a weakness in the federal land policy. Congress had not provided specific legislation for the sale of land for grazing, lumbering, or mining (Opie 1987).

A trend to remove federal land from public sale also emerged. Primary support for this came from persons wanting to stop the abuses of the laws and from reformers concerned about the depletion of the nation's natural resources. The establishment of Yellowstone in 1872 hinted at this. Yet the passage of the General Revision Act of 1891 had more immediate significance. It repealed the Preemption and the Timber Culture Acts, amended the Desert Land and Homestead Acts, and eliminated public auctions of land. One section also authorized the president to set aside forest reserves. Between 1872 and 1909, the federal government established 235 million acres of the public domain as national forests and parks (Robbins 1976; Opie 1987).\*

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\* By 1956, the number of acres in reserves declined to 180 million.

During the early twentieth century, a series of laws tried to adjust the homestead idea to benefit individual farmers in the arid West. In 1904, Congress passed the Kinkaid Act as an experiment in applying an expanded homestead to the dry lands of western Nebraska. It basically enlarged the homestead land grant to 640 acres. Five years later the legislation authorized the enlarged homestead program, at a reduced grant of 320 acres, for the rest of the public domain. It stated specifically that no irrigable, timber, or mineral land should be entered and required that a quarter of the grant be farmed (Robbins 1976; Opie 1987).

The Great Depression and drought devastated farming in the arid West and hastened an end to agricultural homesteading. In 1934, the Taylor Grazing Act placed the remaining public lands into federal management. Since 1862, American farmers homesteaded 147 million acres (Robbins 1976; Opie 1987). Even as lawmakers finally came to realize their error in applying the law to dry lands of the High Plains and West, the Homestead Act remained a strong national symbol of the establishment of a free, independent citizenry and the advance of United States capitalism and democracy. In 1936, progressive Republican Senator George Norris of Nebraska sponsored legislation establishing the Homestead National Monument of America in his home state where, along with the railroads and land grant college, homesteading contributed significantly to settlement.

### ***The Freeman Story***

Congress chose for the national monument the homestead of the late Daniel Freeman, a colorful, self-promoter, who for decades courted public recognition of himself as the first homesteader. Freeman's story of the selection of his land near Beatrice, Nebraska, was full of mystery. Family accounts indicate he served in the Union Army in 1862 and apparently spotted the land he claimed along Cub Creek while gathering information on Indian raids in Nebraska Territory. Regardless of how Freeman selected his tract, public land records show that he entered the first homestead claim in the land office at Brownville, Nebraska. On January 1, 1863, the day the law went into effect, he signed the claim shortly after midnight.\* On September 1, 1869, Freeman also became the first Nebraskan to prove up or patent his homestead. National politicians saw the obvious symbolism in a person named Freeman being the first homesteader and, through the decades, added credence to his title at political rallies and celebrations (Mattison 1962; Gibbs 1944; Arbogast 1975; Kaplan 1992).

### **Mission, Purpose, and Significance of the Monument**

The following mission statement for Homestead National Monument of America is quoted from the Monument's *Strategic Plan* (1997c). The *Strategic Plan* also defined the purpose, significance, and mission goals (to the extent appropriate) of the Monument, in compliance with the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993*. While some minor revisions to the Monument's *Strategic Plan* will probably be required as a result of this new *GMP*, the statements in the current *Strategic Plan*, quoted below, have helped to guide the overall development of this *GMP* and figured significantly during the formulation of the *GMP* planning alternatives.

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\* Thirty homesteads were entered across the country on January 1, 1863. Mahlon Core of Vermilion, South Dakota, also claimed to have entered the first claim around midnight.

The Monument's mission goals are inclusive of what this unit of the NPS achieves for the protection of resources and public enjoyment. They reflect and complement the service-wide mission goals of the NPS. The major goal categories I, II, and IV tier down from NPS agency-level goals to the specific areas that would be implemented and achieved at the Monument. Numbering of the Monument's goals is non-consecutive due to the selection of agency goals that directly relate to this site, its mission statement (desired future conditions for the Monument), purpose, and significance.

### **Mission of the Monument**

*The mission of Homestead National Monument of America is to maintain a memorial that commemorates and interprets the Homestead Act and its influence upon the country. The mission is to maintain the 160-acre original homestead and the Freeman School addition in a manner that provides visitors an appropriate perspective of the influences and impacts upon the land in its transition from its natural state to cultivation and agriculture.*

### **Purpose of the Monument**

The purpose of Homestead National Monument of America is to:

- Interpret the history of the country resulting in and from the Homestead Act.
- Preserve literature; preserve agricultural implements; and construct a suitable museum to interpret settlement, cultivation, and development of the "Great West".
- Commemorate the people whose lives were forever altered by the Homestead Act and settlement of the West.
- Protect the setting, provide access to the Freeman School, and maintain a visual relationship between the Freeman School and the rest of the Monument.

### **Significance of the Monument**

Homestead National Monument of America is significant because:

- The Monument encompasses a 160-acre homestead claim established on the first day of the Homestead Act's implementation that is commemorative of all homesteads.
- The Freeman School is an original structure that represents the role of one-room schools through the Homestead Era.
- The Homestead Act had a profound influence on American migration, immigration, agricultural development, industrial development, federal land policy, native cultures, and the landscape of the West.
- Portions of the reconstructed tallgrass prairie offer historic and scientific research value.

## Mission Goals

The following statements are taken from the Monument's *Strategic Plan* (1997c), as required under GPRA.

### ***GOAL CATEGORY I: PRESERVE PARK RESOURCES***

**Mission Goal Ia:** Natural, historic, and cultural resources and associated values at Homestead National Monument of America are protected, reconstructed, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader historic and cultural context.

**Mission Goal Ib:** Homestead National Monument of America contributes to knowledge about natural and cultural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitors are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.

### ***GOAL CATEGORY II: PROVIDE FOR THE PUBLIC ENJOYMENT AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE OF PARKS***

**Mission Goal IIa:** Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and appropriate recreational opportunities.

**Mission Goal IIb:** Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of Homestead National Monument of America and the National Park Service for this and future generations.

### ***GOAL CATEGORY IV: ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS***

**Mission Goal IVa:** To become more responsive, efficient, and accountable, the Monument must integrate its planning, management, accounting, reporting, and other informational resource systems. Integrating or interfacing these systems would provide better cross-communication during daily operations and help the Monument develop required annual performance plans in compliance with the *Government Performance and Results Act*. Modern electronic technology makes it possible to integrate or interface these systems among park units, central offices, and program centers. Improvements in the areas of workforce diversity, employee safety, employee housing, and employee performance standards would help the Monument accomplish its mission. Long-term goals pertaining to organizational responsiveness, efficiency, and accountability are related to this mission goal.

## Planning Considerations

### Applicable Legislative and Administrative Requirements

P.L. 95-625 identified four elements that must be included in a new *GMP* for the Monument:

1. Measures for the preservation of the area's resources.
2. Measures and facilities to accommodate visitor use.
3. Strategies for managing visitor use within carrying capacities.
4. Evaluation of the need for boundary changes.

In addition to these requirements above, the Monument is required to meet certain legislative requirements and administrative considerations. These requirements and considerations directly affect the Monument's planning and operations.

- The Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, mandates consideration of the effects of federal undertakings on cultural resources that are listed or may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It also directs federal agencies to identify and to provide for the protection of historic properties under their ownership or control.
- The cultural resources of the area are subject to the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.
- The National Environmental Protection Act [NEPA] of 1969 (P.L. 91-190, 42 USC 4321 *et seq.*; 83 Stat. 852, 42 USC 4332, as amended), is the basic national charter for environmental protection.
- According to the National Park Service's *Management Policies* (NPS, 1988b), "Facilities will not be located in areas where natural processes pose a threat unless no practicable alternative site exists and unless all safety and hazard probability factors have been considered. Hazardous areas include sites with unstable soils and geologic conditions, fault zones, thermal areas, floodplains, flash-flood zones, and coastal high-hazard areas. Where facilities must be located in such areas, their design and siting will consider the nature of the hazard and include appropriate mitigating measures to minimize risks to human life and property. Requirements for development in floodplains and wetlands are contained in Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management" (42 USC 4321), and Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands" (42 USC 4321), and their guidelines."
- Executive Order 11593, "*Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment*," May 13, 1971, was codified as part of the 1980 amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P.L. 96-515; 94 Stat. 2997).
- The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-60; 104 Stat. 3049), in part, assigns ownership or control of American Indian human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony that are excavated or discovered on federal land or tribal land after passage of the act to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated American Indian groups. Federal agencies and museums that receive federal funding must inventory American Indian human remains and associated funerary objects in their possession or control and identify their cultural and geographic affiliations.

## Planning Constraints and Considerations

The *GMP* planning team had to operate under the following constraints or considerations during the development of this document.

- Approximately 60% of the Monument is situated within a designated 100-year floodplain. Federal policy prohibits federal development within designated floodplains unless there is no practicable alternative location for that development.
- According to the Nebraska Department of Roads, State Highway 4, which includes the portion that runs through the Monument, presently does not meet current standards for highway safety design. The Department is scheduled to implement safety design improvements to State Highway 4, including changes in the road's geometry and width to bring this highway up to modern standards and facilitate greater safety, in the near future. In addition, the segment of State Highway 4 that extends through the Monument and its related high-speed vehicular activity present significant safety concerns for Monument visitors who may wish to walk from the present visitor center to the Freeman School along an easement strip bordering the highway. Regular traffic through the Monument includes trucks loaded with liquid anhydrous ammonia and dry granules of ammonium nitrate. The highway also represents a significant intrusion on and disruption to the historic setting of the Monument, as well as to Monument visitors. The proposed improvements would further impact the existing Monument.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads owns 8.3 acres of land along State Highway 4 adjacent to the Monument. This parcel is referred to as the "State Triangle" in this *GMP*.
- The Monument's approximately 100 acres of reconstructed tallgrass prairie represents the second oldest prairie reconstruction project in the nation and the oldest within the national park system. This project, which began in 1939, has now achieved its own professionally recognized scientific value. Because of this, unnecessary disruption of this reconstruction is discouraged by both the scientific community and by NPS natural resources professionals.
- The United States owns in fee the original 162.73-acre Freeman Homestead, which is the basis for the Monument, along with the adjacent 1.2-acre Freeman School parcel. The original homestead parcel retains several features, such as archeological areas, the graves of the Freemans, and the living remnant of an Osage orange hedgerow that was planted by the Freemans, that are irreplaceable in the cultural context of the site. These cannot be disrupted or destroyed. The quitclaim deed, which conveyed the Freeman School to the United States, stipulates that if the school were to be removed from its original setting, land ownership would revert to Nebraska School District #21. The Freeman School also has associated with it an approximately one-acre remnant of native "virgin" (never broken) tallgrass prairie. Remnants of unbroken native tallgrass prairie are extremely rare; therefore this remnant cannot be destroyed.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads operates and maintains the right-of-way for State Highway 4, which passes along and through a portion of the Monument. This activity is authorized through a renewable federal special use permit that expires in July 31, 2001. This permitted right-of-way and its related vehicular activity on this segment of State Highway 4 represent a significant intrusion on and disruption to the historic setting of the Monument as well as to Monument visitors.

- Several neighbors to the Monument possess lands that have been in their families either before the Homestead Act facilitated the establishment of the Monument's Freeman Homestead, or have been established under the auspices of that act and are contemporary with the Freeman Homestead.
- The entire Monument is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The NPS is constrained by jurisdictional limitations that affect the extent to which it can directly influence the character and density of adjacent urban developments, either existing or future, affecting the visual quality of the historic setting.

### Summary of *Boundary Study* Recommendations

The *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* was initiated in conjunction with the development of a new *General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America*. Its purpose is to determine if there are any other sites, lands, or features surrounding the Monument that require formal long-term protection so that they can continue to support the preservation and interpretation of the homesteading story as it exists at the Monument. The study's recommendations would be incorporated into the design and features of this new *GMP*. The resulting new *GMP* will provide the conceptual framework that will guide the management and stewardship of the Monument in meeting its legislative mandates for the next 10 to 20 years. It replaces the Monument's outdated 1988 *GMP*.

Congressional authorization is required in order to implement the acquisitions and boundary adjustments that are recommended in this study.

This *Boundary Study* concludes that the NPS should pursue a congressionally-authorized adjustment of the Monument's existing boundaries to include the identified lands comprising (1) a 15.98-acre tract located on the Monument's eastern boundary, (2) a 0.4-mile segment of State Highway 4 adjacent to the Monument, (3) a three-acre tract comprised of an undeveloped "green" area within the adjacent Pioneer Acres residential subdivision, and (4) an 8.3-acre tract immediately adjacent to the Monument's northeast boundary and known in this study as the "State Triangle". The purpose of these actions is to provide for the ongoing preservation and protection of the cultural and natural resources of Homestead National Monument of America, and to preserve and protect the historic setting of the Monument. Implementation of these recommendations, along with the attendant changes to the Monument's operations resulting from these actions, is intended to significantly improve the Monument's ability to fulfill its legislated purpose to convey the story of homesteading, as directed by Congress. By fulfilling this legislated purpose, the Monument can then excel in meeting its mission to preserve and interpret the nationally significant story and legacy of the Homestead Act and homesteading for the American people.

According to *NPS Management Policies* (1988b), "The Secretary of the Interior may acquire these lands and interests through donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange: Provided that such lands or interests therein may only be acquired with the consent of the owner, unless proposed changes to the use or condition of these lands by the owner poses an eminent threat to the preservation of the natural, cultural, or scenic resources and qualities of the Monument, as described in its enabling legislation and subsequent addenda." This *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* provides a prioritization of lands for acquisition and inclusion within the Monument, or the acquisition of permanent scenic easements.

## **General Management Plan**

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It is also recommended that the Superintendent of Homestead National Monument of America establish an ongoing relationship with the Gage County Zoning Board, as well as with Monument neighbors to secure the future and permanent protection of any surrounding tracts the Monument would deem critical to the permanent long-term preservation and protection of the Monument, its resources, and its legacy for future generations.



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**SECTION II:  
General Management Plan**





## Section II

### General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America

#### Introduction

Having completed an Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement (*AFEIS*) to determine its impacts to the human environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and having completed thorough public and agency review, this *Final General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America (FGMP)* has been developed to provide the conceptual framework that will guide the management of the Monument for the next 10 to 20 years. The *AFEIS* can be obtained by contacting the Monument. The *Record of Decision (ROD)* for the *FGMP/AFEIS* can be found in Appendix C.

This *Final General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America* presents practical and cost-effective *management prescriptions* for the future stewardship of the Monument. These prescriptions, which are presented in bold italic sentences, are simply broadly stated directions that qualitatively describe desired resource conditions, appropriate kinds of visitor experiences and levels of use, management activities, and development actions that are needed for achieving the Monument's legislated purpose. They meet the needs of the Monument, its resources, and its visitors, and fully support (1) the purpose and mission of the Monument, as defined by the legislation that established the Monument; (2) the larger mission of the National Park Service, as defined in that agency's 1916 Organic Act; and (3) the established laws and policies of the United States. In addition, this *GMP* embraces and promotes the concept of *sustainable design*, which is the philosophy that human development should exemplify the principles of conservation and encourage the application of those principles in our daily lives – that is, to enhance the capability of natural and cultural systems to maintain themselves over time.

This *GMP* presents stewardship directives that offer significant changes to the physical arrangement and operational functions of the Monument. It calls for significant changes in the location of key Monument functions to a location outside of the existing flood hazard zone as well as outside of the current Monument boundaries, along with other revised management prescriptions for the Monument. The *GMP* was also designed to address and be compatible with the three major components of the NPS mission as outlined in that agency's *Strategic Plan (1997c)*. Those components include the *preservation of park resources*, the *provision for public enjoyment and visitor experience*, and *ensurance of organizational effectiveness*.

## General Management Plan

### Overview Description

This *GMP* recommends significant changes to the physical arrangement and operational functions of the Monument. These prescriptions represent a comprehensive alteration to the Monument's current operational form and to visitor orientation in order to fulfill the legislative requirements of the Monument.

The *GMP* calls for the creation of a new "Homestead Heritage Center" to house the Monument's collections, interpretive exhibits, public research facilities, and administrative offices. This new "Homestead Heritage Center" will be located on the eastern side of the Monument. After experiencing the new interpretive story and exhibits in the heritage center, the visitor would be invited to enter the historic 160-acre homestead tract, moving east to west, with an expansive view of the reconstructed prairie and agrarian countryside before them. In contrast to the present entrance into the historic site, this new orientation will facilitate the interpretation of the prairie as resembling the homestead landscape encountered and cultivated by pioneer farmers. The juxtaposition of viewing the reconstructed prairie, the farms, and the single family homes surrounding the site enables the integration of interpretation of the pioneering homestead era to subsequent and related agrarian developments.

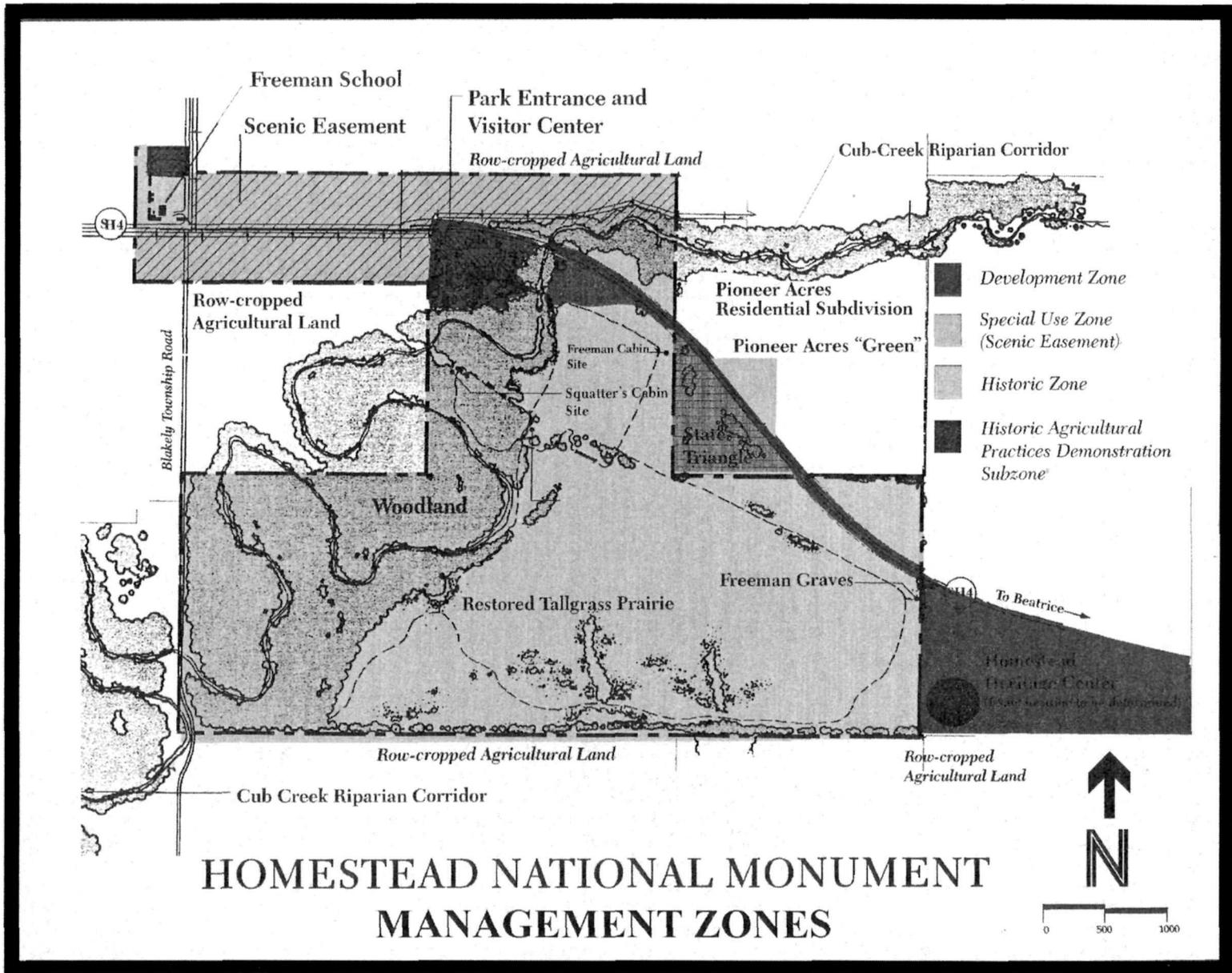
This plan also calls for the existing visitor center to be adaptively reused as an "Education Center". In addition to a range of educational activities, such as a "School of Traditional Homesteading Folk Arts," that will take place in this center, special events and interpretive programs will also be conducted.

In addition, the prescriptions contained within this *GMP* will form a linkage between the Monument and the surrounding rural countryside and communities through the establishment of a "Homestead Heritage Parkway" to highlight today's visible and tangible results of implementation of the Homestead Act.

### General Descriptions of Prescribed Development Concepts

#### The "Homestead Heritage Center"

The "Homestead Heritage Center" will be a 28,000 square-foot state-of-the-art energy-efficient, multi-level building constructed using sustainable materials and designed to reflect its setting on a site that was once prairie at the time of the Homestead Act. The entrance to this building will be set opposite of the view of the Freeman Homestead; that is, on the east. The entrance area will also incorporate a large brick mural showing scenes relating to the homesteading experience. The "Homestead Heritage Center" will also be designed in such a way to give the feeling of the prairie's wide-open spaces. It will need to be sited in a location that can integrate both the human elements of living within this vast region together with its rich natural resource legacy. One could capture the feeling of the tallgrass prairie along with the size and scope of an original 160-acre homestead from a designed viewing area associated with the building. From there one will be able to access the Monument's trail system. This building will need to be constructed in such a way to ensure the safety of visitors and resources in the event of severe storms, in particular from tornadoes. In its history, the Monument has had two tornadoes cause significant damage to structures or resources.



The focal point of the "Homestead Heritage Center" will be the Palmer-Epard Cabin. The cabin will have a realistic setting where, with the help of exhibits, visitors can learn what life was like in and around a homesteader's cabin. These exhibits will use both visual and audio components as part of the media. A sod house exhibit could also be presented to show what living conditions and daily challenges were like farther "west" for the many people who lived in one of these structures. Other state-of-the-art interpretive exhibits will move beyond the actual homesteading experience to include the national and international impacts of the Homestead Act upon American Indians, immigrants to America, ranching, the industrial revolution, immigration, literature, and agriculture. These exhibits will be balanced in size and context with the dwelling exhibits. To accomplish this, large farming tools will be incorporated into the exhibits along with high technology exhibit components, *i.e.*, exhibits that will help to bring historic figures associated with the homesteading experience to life, one example being Willa Cather, a famous writer of the pioneer homestead experience. A film describing homesteading will be shown in the "Homestead Heritage Center Theater". This theatre will be designed as a flexible and highly functional space with potential for seating not only 100 visitors, but suitable for temporary exhibitions and other indoor activities, such as performing arts presentations, and so forth.

The "Homestead Heritage Center" will require a separate research facility within the building to act as a repository for the Monument's records and other items of homesteading literature, as required by the Monument's enabling legislation. To ensure the protection of the Monument's museum collection, a storage area for artifacts will be incorporated, along with office and general storage space, within this facility as well. In order to enhance the interpretive and public education program of the Monument, an area off the lobby will be needed to sell interpretive publications and materials. A parking lot will be designed to accommodate 50 cars and 10 buses or campers.

### **The "Education Center"**

With the establishment of the new "Homestead Heritage Center", the building presently used as the visitor center/museum will be modified to serve as an education center/maintenance facility. This center will serve as a location where students of all ages could engage in learning more about the homestead story. A "School of Traditional Homesteading Folk Arts" program will be established to give the public an opportunity to learn old homesteading folk crafts. Secondary school age students will engage in curriculum- guided programs. Distance learning technology will connect the center to schools near and far. This facility will continue to serve as an important part to the Monument's interpretive program and will require the addition of at least one NPS interpretive specialist to the Monument's staff. Special events will continue to be held from this location. The entrance area will incorporate a large brick mural showing scenes relating to the homesteading experience. The areas to the back of the present facility will be used to house maintenance functions. The remaining offices will be used by visiting instructors or modified to serve as classrooms. The exhibits presently in use will be removed and that area converted to classrooms. The present parking lot appears to be suitable to meet the foreseeable needs of this facility.

## The “Homestead Heritage Parkway”

*The “Homestead Heritage Parkway” proposes to form an interpretive linkage, on a voluntary basis, between the Monument, including the Freeman School, and the surrounding rural countryside and communities to highlight today’s visible and tangible results of implementation of the Homestead Act.* It is important to note that the NPS is not recommending a formal federal designation for this parkway. Rather, the NPS views this as a voluntary interpretive tool. The concept of the “Homestead Heritage Parkway” presumes the rerouting of a segment of State Highway 4 outside the Monument’s boundary.

After this realignment has occurred, the abandoned segment of State Highway 4 will become an access road for the Monument and for local residents. The “Homestead Heritage Parkway” will begin where the access road (the abandoned segment of State Highway 4) enters the eastern boundary of the Monument and extend to the Freeman School. The NPS envisions the eventual and voluntary extension of the “Homestead Heritage Parkway” concept from the Freeman School west along the access road to where it rejoins State Highway 4. On the access road, the NPS recommends that the current speed limit be eliminated in favor of a lower speed limit conducive to a parkway function for local traffic and Monument visitors. The NPS also endorses the parkway’s extension to the east from the Monument to the City of Beatrice (meeting at the junction of State Highways 136 and 4 in West Beatrice), however the NPS is not recommending any change to the currently designated speed limit for that segment. With the eventual complete establishment of this 6.4-mile parkway, it is possible that a public biking and/or hiking path could be integrated into the redesign of State Highway 4.

The principal interpretive and educational theme of the parkway will be agriculture, including topics that will range from the family farm and uses of crop varieties to information on the tools and types of equipment that are used in farming operations. The modern farm operation will be compared to practices utilized at the time of the homesteaders through comparisons of such topics as crop yields and time devoted to ensure a successful harvest. These stories will be communicated through the use of signs and traveler information radio broadcasts.

The “Homestead Heritage Parkway” will depend on voluntary partnerships with the local governments and landowners along the proposed highway segment. Elements of this parkway concept could be facilitated through the establishment of partnerships, through TEA-21 (1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) funding, National Recreation Trail (Syms Bill) funds, or with NPS challenge cost share initiatives, to name only a few possible sources of funding. The truck and commuter traffic will be rerouted on a comparable replacement segment of State Highway 4 nearby. In spite of these changes, access from both the western and eastern end of this old highway segment will still be required. This will ensure that no one would be isolated or cut off.

## Specific Management Prescriptions

This *GMP* significantly changes the location of key Monument functions to a location outside of the existing flood hazard zone and outside of the current (1999) Monument boundaries, along with other revised management prescriptions (see italics below) for the Monument.

### 1. Location in the Floodplain

*The Monument's historic and prehistoric collections, archives, and the museum galleries are protected from the threat of damage and loss from 100-year frequency flood events by their incorporation within a new "Homestead Heritage Center" located outside of the designated 100-year floodway and outside of current Monument boundaries.* This new heritage center will contain the Monument's administrative offices, historic collections, homestead records, educational exhibits, media, museum, and the Palmer-Epard Cabin. It will be constructed outside of the 100-year floodplain in a location to the east of the Freeman graves, outside of the Monument's existing eastern boundary, and south of State Highway 4. The 15.98-acre size of this tract, which is based on the result of negotiations with the current landowner, should provide a significant amount of flexibility for accommodation of this proposed development. This development will require the construction of new access roads and parking areas. Because this center would be sited completely outside of the Monument's existing boundary, a congressionally authorized expansion of the Monument's boundary will be necessary with federal acquisition of this land in fee-simple title. The building that contained the old visitor center will be adaptively reused as an education center for demonstrations, formal educational activities, special events, storage of large, easily movable items within the Monument's collection, maintenance offices and facilities. The two existing staff houses and maintenance facility will remain in their present locations within the designated 100-year floodplain. Potentially hazardous materials commonly associated with maintenance functions (*e.g.*, solvents, fuels, oil, paint, *etc.*) will be stored appropriately to protect them from direct exposure to floodwaters. The existing sewage system at the old visitor center complex will undergo routine monitoring and pumping, and would be capped to ensure its protection during floods. When replacement is necessary, the system could be relocated within the current developed area to maintain the system's functional integrity.

### 2. Prairie Restoration Purpose

*The reconstructed tallgrass prairie is recognized as one valuable tool for interpreting the homesteading story. Resource management practices work to support the Monument's legislated purpose while protecting and preserving the reconstructed tallgrass prairie's significant scientific and historic values.* In concert with its approved *Resource Management Plan*, the Monument will complete the resource inventory databases on its flora and fauna. It will also work to complete a comprehensive study of the prairie reconstruction at the Monument to determine the relative scientific and historic values of various reconstruction efforts. This information will be used to effectively manage these resources and facilitate public understanding of the natural resources encountered by the homesteaders. The Monument will continue to actively manage its native and reconstructed tallgrass prairie areas and will integrate new natural resource information into its management practices as it becomes available. The Monument will adjust its interpretation of the reconstructed prairie to emphasize the prairie as landscape encountered and cultivated by pioneer farmers during the homesteading era. The Monument's staff will work closely with natural resource specialists to determine which areas of the reconstructed prairie could support demonstrations of period farm implements in the future. The Monument's trail system will be expanded into the south-southwest corner of the prairie. This trail system will connect with the new "Homestead Heritage Center". An "*Historic Agricultural Practices Demonstration Subzone*" of 3.5 acres in size (11.8 acres with federal acquisition of the "State Triangle" tract) will be identified. No other developmental inroads to or alterations of these prairie resources will be allowed.

### **3. Protection of the Cultural Landscape**

*The Monument's cultural landscape and historic integrity are protected, to the greatest extent practicable, from external encroachment and its historic features are accurately represented to the public.* The Monument staff will implement recommendations from the *Cultural Landscape Report*. The Monument will also revise its existing *Furnishings Study* for the Palmer-Epard Cabin and the *Furnishings Plan* for the Freeman School to meet current NPS standards. The Palmer-Epard Cabin will be moved out of the 100-year floodplain and incorporated within the new "Homestead Heritage Center." The Monument's *Scope of Collection Statement* will be revised, and the *Collection Management Plan* recommendations would be implemented.

### **4. Traffic on State Highway 4**

*State Highway 4 is no longer a threat to visitor safety and its impact to the Monument's natural and cultural landscapes, as well as to the overall visitor experience, is minimized to the greatest extent practicable.* The Monument will work in partnership with Nebraska Department of Roads to relocate a three-mile segment of State Highway 4 to a location away from its existing alignment in order to reduce its impacts on the Monument and the visiting public. The remaining abandoned segment of State Highway 4 will function as a local access road through the Monument, to Pioneer Acres, and to other local residences. The NPS will work with the state and other local jurisdictions to establish maintenance responsibilities for the remaining abandoned segment of State Highway 4. This segment will then be adapted by the NPS to serve as the core segment of an eventual 6.4-mile "Homestead Heritage Parkway". This concept will function to enhance public awareness and understanding of the homesteading legacy. It will include interpretive media and link the historic agricultural scene to the region's modern, agrarian practices. The Monument will establish partnerships with its neighbors and other levels of governmental offices to promote the **voluntary** overall management of these segments of State Highway 4 to complement the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" concept. Special legislation may be required to authorize the Monument to assist with educational, maintenance, and operational costs to establish the complete "Homestead Heritage Parkway". In addition, the Monument will work with local governments to locate a bicycle/pedestrian path within this parkway. Its purpose will be to connect the community of Beatrice with the Monument and to add additional recreational and educational qualities to the parkway and Monument.

### **5. Relationship with Freeman School**

*The Freeman School is safely accessible for visitors and has a clear visual connection and a well-defined interpretive relationship with the rest of the Monument.* Monument staff will facilitate the development of a well-defined interpretive relationship between the Freeman School and the rest of the Monument, including the school's role in community development and the basic elements of western settlement. The Freeman School will be incorporated into the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" concept, thus improving its connection to the Monument. It will also have a more interactive role within the Monument's curricula-based education program. Visitor access will remain at an "on demand" basis until higher visitation necessitates a change in policy. Staffing of the Freeman School will be reevaluated commensurate with visitation demand. Establishment of the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" and the proposed diversion of heavy vehicular and industrial truck traffic from the school's intersection (as proposed under Item 4 above) will reduce safety concerns related to the public's ability to visit the school and would redefine the Monument's approach to interpreting the site.

## **6. Legislative Mandates for Collections**

*The Monument fulfills its legislative mandate of becoming a repository for “. . . literature applying to settlement and agricultural implements.”* The Monument will work with agencies such as the National Archives and the Bureau of Land Management to establish an electronic database of land records relating to homesteading that will be made available to the general public via computer workstations located within the proposed “Homestead Heritage Center”. The Monument will also integrate its museum collections into its interpretive, education, and research programs. In addition, an oral history program will be developed to preserve homesteading stories along with a network of national oral history programs to be incorporated into the “Homestead Heritage Center’s” research and archival facility for public education. The Monument’s collection of agricultural implements relating to settlement and the homestead era will be expanded beyond its existing mostly 1880s-vintage. The Monument will actively collaborate with other organizations that possess agricultural collections for opportunities to establish exhibits and interpretive demonstrations. Additional items from the Monument’s museum collection will also be placed on exhibit.

## **7. Interpretation of the Homestead Act**

*The Monument’s interpretive program fully and cohesively represents the national context of the Homestead Act, along with its historic intentions and results, regarding the “settlement, cultivation, and civilization of the Great West.”* The Monument will expand the interpretive story that it tells from its current focus on the Freeman family to feature the impact of the Homestead Act on the “Great West”, both ecologically and culturally. This redirection of interpretive emphasis will promote knowledge of the epic proportions of the Homestead Act. The existing homestead and the Freeman story will be used as reference points to interpret the national experience that resulted from implementation of the Act. The Monument will use expanded interpretive media, such as exhibits, interactive media, and waysides, to interrelate the story of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem with the historical human perspective of “taming” this natural resource. The Monument will go on to redefine the Palmer-Epard Cabin’s role in the interpretive story as an exhibit of a genuine homestead structure and as an example of the use of natural resources in a regional context. The Monument will also work to present an improved balance of human perspectives regarding the general homesteading story. Various interpretive media will be utilized throughout the “Homestead Heritage Center” and the “Homestead Heritage Parkway”. A link with local educational institutions in the region will be established to allow the Monument’s interpretive staff to participate in distance learning, such as expanded teacher workshops, to further enhance the Monument’s interpretive message. The existing visitor center will be adaptively reused primarily as an educational center.

## **8. Accuracy and Effectiveness of Interpretive Media**

*The Monument's interpretive media and exhibits are complete, up-to-date, and make full use of current thinking and technology in their presentation of the homesteading story. The interpretive media and the information presented by them fully engage the Monument's visitors, especially children.* New interpretive media will be developed for placement in the new "Homestead Heritage Center". This media will be used to present an expanded interpretive story that goes beyond the Monument's current focus on the Freeman family to feature the impact of the Homestead Act on the "Great West", both ecologically and culturally. This redirection of interpretive emphasis will promote knowledge of the epic proportions of the Homestead Act. The existing homestead and the Freeman story will be used as reference points to interpret the national and international experiences that resulted from implementation of the Act. In addition, the Monument will use some of the expanded interpretive media, such as exhibits, interactive media, films, and waysides, to interrelate the story of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem with the historical human perspective of "taming" this natural resource. These media will be designed to be engaging for visitors of all ages, especially children. The Monument will go on to redefine the Palmer-Epard Cabin's role in the interpretive story as an exhibit of a genuine homestead structure and as an example of the use of natural resources in a regional context. The Monument will also work to present an improved balance of human perspectives and interrelationships regarding the general homesteading story.

## **9. Existing Facilities**

*The Monument's facilities establish a strong linkage between the interpretive media and the 160-acre historic homestead site. They also improve the Monument's ability to effectively manage its resources and confront its operational needs.* The building that contained the old visitor center will be adaptively reused as an education center for demonstrations, special events, formal educational opportunities, and maintenance offices and facilities. The two existing staff houses will remain in their present locations within the designated 100-year floodway.

## **10. Adequacy of Monument Boundaries**

*Congress adjusts the Monument's boundaries beyond the original 160-acre Freeman homestead and its associated cultural features to fully and adequately meet the mission and goals of Homestead National Monument of America.* These adjustments will include implementation of Priorities I, II, III and IV as recommended in the *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* (Appendix B). These include the acquisition of a 15.98-acre tract adjacent to the Monument's eastern boundary as the location for the proposed new "Homestead Heritage Center", the acquisition of a 0.4-mile segment of State Highway 4, acquisition of a permanent scenic easement for the Pioneer Acres "Green", and the acquisition of the "State Triangle".

## **Management Zones**

Under this *GMP*, there will be four management zones at the Monument. The Historic, Development, and Special Use zones presently occur within the Monument. The Agricultural Historic Demonstration Subzone is a new zone.

**Historic Zone:** This zone consists of approximately 150 acres on the original Freeman homestead, the Freeman School, and the school grounds. Nearly 100 acres of the original homestead are reconstructed tallgrass prairie. The remaining acres are in riparian woodland.

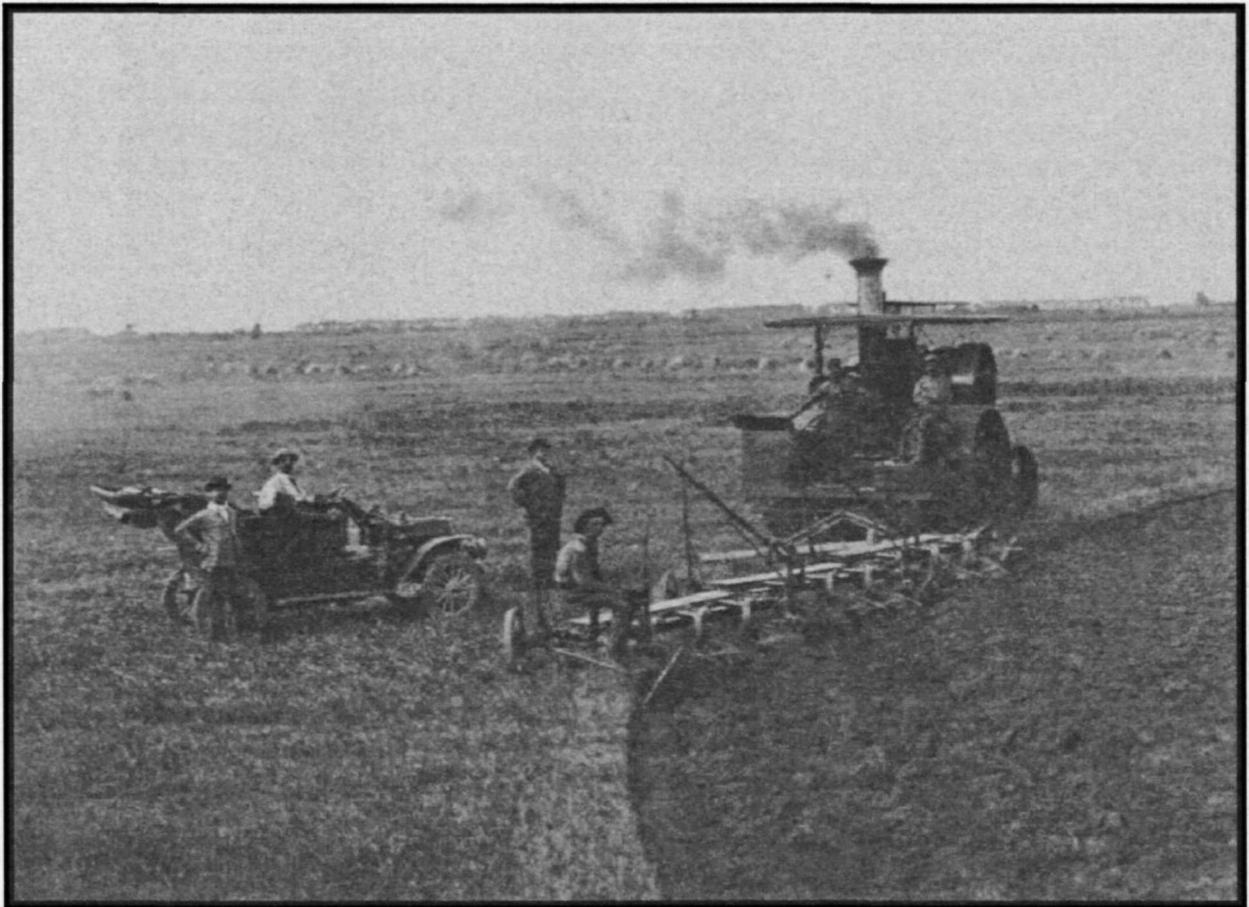
**Historic Agricultural Practices Demonstration Subzone:** This subzone encompasses approximately 3.5 acres of land (11.8 acres with federal acquisition of the "State Triangle" tract) within the Monument's Historic Zone. The location of this zone is indicated on the map for this alternative, and could include the "State Triangle" tract if it becomes part of the Monument (see recommendation within *Boundary Study*, Appendix B). It is intended as an area in which demonstrations of historic agricultural practices (such as farming and haying), tools and equipment relating to the homesteading era can take place as an extension of the Monument's interpretive exhibits and educational programs. The potential significance of archeological resources within the project area will be evaluated in advance of implementation of historic demonstration activities. The need for additional studies will depend upon the results of this investigation. In addition, this area represents a significantly lower quality and value of reconstructed prairie.

**Development Zone:** This zone consists of approximately six acres. Within this zone are: the current visitor center/administration complex; two residences; a maintenance building; storage yard; a small picnic area; the access road; and a 50-car parking lot. The Monument's physical developments are located in close proximity to one another.

**Special Use Zone:** This area encompasses approximately 30 acres protected by scenic easements along the Monument's north boundary and along the north and south side of State Highway 4. These lands are currently in agricultural use.

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## **SECTION III: Consultation and Coordination**





## Section III

### Consultation and Coordination

#### **Description of Consultation and Public Involvement**

The NPS has taken a comprehensive approach to public involvement during the development of this *GMP*. To date, the NPS has issued two newsletters for the general public and conducted a series of public meetings. The NPS has consulted with state and local government officials, including the State Historic Preservation Office. American Indian groups with affiliations to the Monument have received the newsletters and a copy of the draft plan for comment.

Newsletter No. 1 was mailed in December 1997, while Newsletter No.2 was distributed in March 1998. Nearly 600 newsletters were in each mailing. The series of public meetings were conducted in January 1998. Two meetings were held in Beatrice, Nebraska, near the Monument and one in Lincoln, Nebraska, 40 miles away. Over 20 people attended the three meetings. In April 1998, an "open house," was held at the Monument. Twenty-five individuals, park neighbors, government officials, and community members attended this "open house". All public meetings received coverage by local and regional media sources. Monument neighbors have been involved throughout the process.

The *GMP* planning team contacted the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma in an attempt to identify tribal concerns relative to this *GMP/EIS*. In addition, comments were sought through extensive mailings of newsletters and media coverage. No response was received from the tribe. Because of the Pawnee's long-standing cultural affiliation with this area of Nebraska, the NPS would continue to keep the tribe informed of important stages of this planning process and of plans to implement the preferred alternative throughout the *GMP* planning process.

#### **List of Agencies, Organizations, and Groups Consulted**

Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.  
Beatrice Chamber of Commerce, Beatrice, Nebraska  
City of Beatrice, Offices of the Mayor and City Manager  
Gage County Board of Supervisors  
Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District, Beatrice, Nebraska  
Nebraska Department of Roads, Lincoln, Nebraska  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, Lincoln, Nebraska  
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer, Lincoln, Nebraska  
Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma



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**SECTION IV:  
Preparers and References**





## Section IV

### Preparers and References

The team responsible for developing this *General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* for Homestead National Monument was established in October 1997.

#### Planning Team

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John H. Sowl, Landscape Architect-Park Planner; Midwest Regional Office; BS Environmental Science, MSLA Landscape Architecture; 11 years with the NPS; *GMP* Team Captain, Functioned as general writer/editor, wrote Section I, Section II, and V, Boundary Study, and *Record of Decision (ROD)*, contributed to Draft *GMP's* Section IV (Impacts), directed development of graphics

Donald L. Stevens, Jr., Senior Historian; Midwest Regional Office; BA and MA History, PhD Applied History; Prepared the "Homestead Story" and the "Freeman Story" in the General Description, cultural resources Section III and Draft *GMP's* Section IV (Impacts), and editorial assistance.

Julie A. Stumpf, Ecologist, Midwest Regional Office; BS Natural Resources, MS Range Ecology; 8 years with the NPS; Prepared Sections III and Draft *GMP's* IV (Impacts)

Don Wollenhaupt, Chief of Interpretation; Chickasaw National Recreation Area; BS Education; 21 years with the NPS; Prepared sections on interpretation.

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## Vintage Illustrations

Vintage illustrations for the *GMP*'s front cover and for the section separators of the document were photographed by Solomon D. Butcher. These photographs are used courtesy of the Nebraska State Historical Society. All other photographs are from the collection of Homestead National Monument of America.

## Maps

Base maps used in this *GMP* were produced by Land & Community Associates, Charlottesville, Virginia, and Ames, Iowa, through contract 1443CX600094014 (Quinn Evans/Architects), draft February, 1999.

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## Appendix A

### LEGISLATION FOR HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT OF AMERICA

BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

74<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS - SESS. II

[CHS. 157, 159. MARCH 19, 20, 1936]

#### CHAPTER 157

#### AN ACT

To establish the Homestead National Monument of America in Gage County, Nebraska.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized and directed to acquire, on behalf of the United States, by gift, purchase, or condemnation, the south half of the northwest quarter, the northeast quarter of the northwest quarter, and the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter section 26, township 4 north, range 5 east, of the sixth principal meridian, Gage County, Nebraska, the same being the first homestead entered upon under the General Homestead Act of May 20, 1862, by Daniel Freeman, and that when so acquired, the said area be designated "The Homestead National Monument of America."

SEC. 2. That there is authorized to be appropriated a sum not to exceed \$24,000, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of acquiring said tract.

SEC. 3. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Interior to lay out said land in a suitable and enduring manner so that the same may be maintained as an appropriate monument to retain for posterity a proper memorial emblematical of the hardships and the pioneer life through which the early settlers passed the settlement, cultivation, and civilization of the Great West. It shall be his duty to erect suitable buildings to be used as a museum in which shall be preserved literature applying to such settlement and agricultural implements used in bringing the western plains to its present high state of civilization, and to use the said tract of land for such other objects and purposes as in his judgment may perpetuate the history of the country mainly developed by the homestead law.

SEC. 4. For the purpose of carrying out the suggestions and recommendations of the Secretary of the Interior, the necessary annual appropriations therefor are hereby authorized.

*Approved, March 19, 1936.*

BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC LAW

[91-411—Sept. 25, 1970]

Public Law

AN ACT

Providing for the addition of the Freeman School to the Homestead National Monument of America in the State of Nebraska, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.* That, in order to further the interpretation and commemoration of the pioneer life of early settlers of the West, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to acquire by donation or purchase with donated or appropriated funds the following described lands and interests therein, on which is situated the old school building known as Freeman School:

Beginning at the southeast corner of the southeast quarter of section 22, township 4 north, range 5 east, sixth principal meridian, Gage County, Nebraska, thence running north on the east line of the said quarter section 297 feet, thence west 214.5 feet, thence south 297 feet, thence east 214.5 feet to the point of beginning.

The Secretary is further authorized, in order to protect the setting of the Freeman School, preserve an adequate visual relationship with the existing Homestead National Monument of America, and provide access to the school from the national monument, to acquire by any of the above methods such lands and interests therein, as he deems necessary within the areas in certain sections of township 4 north, range 5 east, sixth principal meridian, Gage County, Nebraska, which are described as follows:

Section 22, beginning at a point 297 feet north of the southeast corner of the southeast quarter on the east line of the said quarter section, thence north along the east line of the said quarter section 103 feet, thence west 300 feet, thence south 400 feet to the south line of said quarter section, thence east along the south line of said quarter section 85.5 feet to the boundary of the Freeman School property, thence north along the boundary of the school property 297 feet, thence east along the boundary of the school property 214.5 feet to the point of beginning;

Section 23, the south 300 feet of the southwest quarter thereof;

Section 26, the north 300 feet of the northwest quarter northwest quarter thereof;

Section 27, beginning at the northeast corner of the northeast quarter, thence south along the east line of the said quarter section 300 feet, thence west 300 feet, thence north 300 feet to the north line of said quarter section, thence east along the north line of said quarter section 300 feet to the point of beginning; all containing about 31 acres.

**General Management Plan**

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SEC. 2. The property acquired pursuant to this Act shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as part of the Homestead National Monument of America, in accordance with the Act of March 19, 1936 (49 Stat. 1184), and the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), as amended and supplemented (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.).

SEC. 3. For the purposes of this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated not more than \$50,000, of which not more than \$45,000 (April 1970 prices), plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reasons of ordinary fluctuations in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the types of construction involved herein shall be appropriated for the rehabilitation and development of the Freeman School.

Approved September 25, 1970.



## APPENDIX B

### BOUNDARY STUDY for HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT OF AMERICA

#### Purpose and Need for this Boundary Study

This *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* was initiated in conjunction with the development of a new *General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America (GMP)*. Its purpose is to determine if there are any other sites, lands, or features surrounding the Monument that require formal long-term protection so that they can continue to support the preservation and interpretation of the homesteading story as it exists at the Monument. The study's recommendations would be incorporated into the design and features of this new *GMP*. The resulting new *GMP* would provide the conceptual framework that will guide the management and stewardship of the Monument in meeting its legislative mandates for the next 10 to 20 years. It replaces the Monument's outdated 1988 *GMP*, which insufficiently addressed issues critical to the management of the Monument.

Congress has specifically directed the NPS to consider, as part of the planning process, what modifications of external boundaries might be necessary to carry out park purposes (16 USC 1a-7(b)(4)). Where a boundary adjustment appears to be appropriate, the NPS will recommend it to the Secretary of the Interior for legislative or administrative action. Congressional action is required for boundary adjustments; however, in some cases the Secretary may make minor boundary adjustments where authorized by existing law without additional congressional action.

Since the 1988 *GMP* was developed, Monument functions have outgrown the available infrastructure and additional developments have occurred relative to the Monument's resources. As a result, most Monument facilities are now inadequate for visitors and employees. The scope and direction provided by the 1988 *GMP* is being overwhelmed by these internal and external developments. By virtue of this inadequacy, the further implementation of the existing *GMP* may inadvertently cause adverse impacts to cultural and natural features within the Monument. This situation would jeopardize the National Park Service's (NPS) ability to carry out its mission at the Monument, as directed by the Monument's enabling legislation.

## **Purpose and Significance of the Monument**

Homestead National Monument of America was established by Congress near the city of Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1936. The Monument's enabling legislation states that the purpose of Homestead National Monument of America is to "...lay out said land in a suitable and enduring manner so that the same may be maintained as an appropriate monument to retain for posterity a proper memorial emblematical of the hardships and the pioneer life through which the early settlers passed in the settlement, cultivation, and civilization of the Great West...." The legislation also specified that the Secretary of the Interior will "...erect suitable buildings to be used as a specific museum in which shall be preserved literature applying to such settlement and agricultural implements used in bringing the western plains to its present state of high civilization, and to use the said tract of land for such other objects and purposes as in his judgement may perpetuate the history of this country mainly developed by the homestead law." In consideration of these charges, the purpose and significance of the Monument are summarized below.

### **Purpose of the Monument**

The purpose of Homestead National Monument of America is to:

- Interpret the history of the country resulting in and from the Homestead Act.
- Preserve literature; preserve agricultural implements; and construct a suitable museum to interpret settlement, cultivation, and development of the "Great West".
- Commemorate the people whose lives were forever altered by the Homestead Act and settlement of the West.
- Protect the setting, provide access to the Freeman School and maintain a visual relationship between the Freeman School, and the rest of the Monument.

### **Significance of the Monument**

Homestead National Monument of America is significant because:

- The Monument encompasses a 160-acre homestead claim established on the first day of the Homestead Act's implementation that is commemorative of all homesteads.
- The Freeman School is an original structure that represents the role of one-room schools through the Homestead Era.
- The Homestead Act had a profound influence on American migration, immigration, agricultural development, federal land policy, native cultures, and the landscape of the West.
- Portions of the reconstructed tallgrass prairie offer historic and scientific research value.

From the identification of the Monument's legislated purpose and significance, a determination must now be made as to whether or not the Monument would be able to achieve this legislated mission with its present operations, infrastructure, and resources.

## Adequacy of the Monument's Current Boundaries

There are several problems and concerns that have bearing on the adequacy of the Monument's current boundaries as they relate to supporting the Monument's ability to achieve its legislated mission. Some of these problems are internally related to the Monument and its infrastructure. The rest are externally related to the Monument.

- **From an internal perspective**, perhaps the Monument's principal problem is that most of its structures, including the current visitor center/museum, administration, historic collections related to the homesteading story, the historic Palmer-Epard cabin (an original homestead cabin), and maintenance complex are threatened by their location within the designated 100-year floodplain of Cub Creek, which flows through the Monument, and of the nearby Big Blue River. According to the NPS's *Management Policies* (NPS, 1988b), "Facilities will not be located in areas where natural processes pose a threat unless no practicable alternative site exists and unless all safety and hazard probability factors have been considered. Hazardous areas include sites with unstable soils and geologic conditions, fault zones, thermal areas, floodplains, flash-flood zones, and coastal high-hazard areas. Where facilities must be located in such areas, their design and siting will consider the nature of the hazard and include appropriate mitigating measures to minimize risks to human life and property. Requirements for development in floodplains and wetlands are contained in Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management" (42 USC 4321), and Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands" (42 USC 4321), and their guidelines."
- The Monument's sanitation facilities are also in the designated floodplain. The potential for this complex to experience flooding threatens the museum collection and historic buildings as well as the Monument's operations.
- The layout and size of the Monument's existing facilities (visitor, maintenance, administrative, *etc.*) limit the visitor in experiencing the story of Homestead National Monument of America. The present configuration of these facilities also restricts the NPS in its ability to effectively manage resources and confront operational needs.
- The existing Monument boundaries, which encompass the original 160-acre homestead and its associated cultural features, may limit opportunities for effectively meeting the mission and goals of Homestead National Monument of America.
- **From an external perspective**, the Monument's historic setting has been altered by external encroachment. At the time of the Monument's establishment, there was significantly less development of the agricultural lands surrounding the Monument than there is today. In recent years, however, that open space has been subjected to a growing trend toward greater development. Open space that once flanked State Highway 4 from Beatrice to the Monument is slowly but steadily being lost because of undirected or piece-meal suburban sprawl and dispersed industrial developments. For example, two anhydrous ammonia fertilizer plants operate north of the Freeman School and the Monument is bounded on the northeast by a 24-home, one four-unit apartment building, residential subdivision. In addition, after the *GMP* was initiated, the Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District introduced a proposal to extend the Beatrice municipal water system to serve a rural area of about five square miles west of Beatrice. Scheduled for construction in 1999, the implementation of this new rural water system could facilitate a more rapid urbanization of the rural countryside, including the area surrounding the Monument, with a significant increase in new suburban and isolated single-family housing development. Significant development occurring over the next 10 to 20 years could

prove to result in potentially adverse impacts to the Monument's historic setting as well as to the existing character of the rural environment in which it is situated.

- As this general area continues to develop, it is becoming more important to protect undeveloped land adjacent to and surrounding the Monument in order to preserve uncluttered views of this historic landmark. Fortunately, some of the most critical parcels directly adjacent to the Monument's boundary are still undeveloped and remain in agricultural production. Protection of these tracts of land is vital to maintaining the historic appearance of this nationally significant site.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads owns 8.3 acres of undeveloped land along State Highway 4 in the northeast quadrant of the Monument. While this situation does not, in itself, adversely affect the Monument, the triangle-shaped parcel (known by the Monument as the "State Triangle") is bounded on two sides by the Monument and on its third side by State Highway 4. In this context, its practical utility to the state appears to be quite limited, and in some ways the parcel is like an "island". While this parcel is not planted to reconstructed native prairie as is the adjacent homestead land, Monument staff have conducted periodic controlled burns on the triangle to help control potentially invasive non-native species.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads operates and maintains the right-of-way for State Highway 4, which passes along and through a portion of the Monument. This activity is authorized through a renewable federal special use permit that expires in July 31, 2001. The segment of State Highway 4 that extends through the Monument and its related vehicular activity represent a significant intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads is scheduled to implement safety design improvements to the existing State Highway 4, which runs along and through a portion of the Monument, in the near future. The segment of State Highway 4 that extends through the Monument and its related vehicular activity represent a significant intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument. These improvements, including changes in the road's geometry and width to bring this highway up to modern standards and facilitate greater safety, would further impact the existing Monument.
- The Pioneer Acres subdivision, which is located across State Highway 4 and adjacent to the Monument's northeast boundary, contains an undeveloped, approximately three-acre "green" area just inside the main entrance to the community. The NPS is concerned that this heretofore undeveloped parcel could be developed in the future in some way other than as additional subdivision housing. For example, this could take the form of commercial development, such as a convenience shop or fueling facility. If further development occurs on the Pioneer Acres "green", this action would potentially result in an even greater adverse intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument.

It is apparent from the statements of the Monument above that there are significant threats to the Monument from its inadequate infrastructure, compromised cultural, historical, and natural resources, potential for flood damage, antiquated facilities, and threats from an ongoing pattern of suburban sprawl and potential development that could adversely impact the Monument's historic setting. In short, if these conditions and trends continue, the National Park Service's ability to effectively act as the nation's steward in managing, interpreting, and maintaining the Monument, its resources, and the homesteading legacy as Congress had originally intended is likely to be severely compromised.

## Planning Constraints and Considerations

In order to determine an appropriate course of action to address and rectify these problems, the NPS and the *GMP* planning team had to operate under the following constraints or considerations during the development of the new *GMP*.

- The Monument's approximately 100 acres of reconstructed tallgrass prairie represents the second oldest prairie reconstruction project in the nation. This project, which began in 1939, has now achieved its own professionally recognized scientific value as an ecological reconstruction. Because of this, unnecessary disruption of this reconstruction is discouraged by both the scientific community and by NPS natural resources professionals.
- The United States owns in fee the original 162.73-acre Freeman Homestead, which is the basis for the Monument, along with the adjacent 1.2-acre Freeman School parcel. The original homestead parcel retains several features, such as archeological areas, the graves of the Freemans, and the living remnant of an Osage orange hedgerow that was planted by the Freemans, that are irreplaceable in the cultural context of the site. These cannot be disrupted or destroyed. The quitclaim deed, which conveyed the Freeman School to the United States, stipulates that if the school were to be removed from its original setting, land ownership would revert to Nebraska School District #21. The Freeman School also has associated with it an approximately one-acre remnant of native "virgin" (never broken) tallgrass prairie. Remnants of unbroken native tallgrass prairie are extremely rare; therefore this remnant cannot be destroyed.
- The Nebraska Department of Roads operates and maintains the right-of-way for State Highway 4, which passes along and through a portion of the Monument. This activity is authorized through a renewable federal special use permit that expires on July 31, 2001.
- Several neighbors to the Monument possess lands that have been in their families either before the Homestead Act facilitated the establishment of the Monument's Freeman Homestead, or have been established under the auspices of that act and are contemporary with the Freeman Homestead.
- The entire Monument is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The NPS is constrained by jurisdictional limitations that affect the extent to which it can directly influence the character and density of adjacent urban developments, either existing or future, affecting the quality of the visual and historic landscapes.

## Land Ownership Adjacent to and Within the Monument

Within the Monument's authorized boundary, 165.13 acres are in fee-simple ownership by the United States and 29.98 are privately owned with scenic easements. On September 25, 1970, Congress added the Freeman School parcel to "further the interpretation and commemoration of the pioneer life of early settlers of the West...". The United States has a less-than-fee interest in 18.18 of these acres. Parcel 01-111, the Freeman School property, was acquired from the Homestead Historical Association in 1972. Scenic easements on the north of State Highway 4 (parcels 01-106 and 01-107), acquired to protect the visual connection between the Freeman School and the visitor center, perpetuate agricultural uses.

A triangular 8.3-acre, state-owned parcel east of the Monument, between State Highway 4 and the Monument's prairie reconstruction does not lie within the Monument's authorized boundary.

## Criteria for Boundary Adjustments

In accordance with NPS *Management Policies*, P.L. 101-628, sections 1216 and 1217, the criteria necessary for the boundary adjustment areas listed below. The NPS will conduct studies of potential boundary adjustments and may recommend boundary revisions:

1. To include significant resources or opportunities for public enjoyment related to purposes of the park;
2. To address operational and management issues such as access and boundary identification by topographic or other natural features or roads;
3. To protect park resources critical to fulfilling the park's purpose.

Recommendations to expand park boundaries will be preceded by determinations that:

1. The added lands will be feasible to administer in terms of size, configuration, ownership, costs, and other factors; and
2. Other alternatives for management and resource protection are not adequate.

## Potential Boundary Changes

The information presented above defines various constraints and considerations that were used by the *GMP* team in determining an appropriate course of action to address and rectify the problems associated with the Monument as they relate to its current boundaries. Based on this information, several recommendations have been developed that call for modifications to these boundaries to assist the Monument in fully achieving its legislated purpose and mission, as intended by Congress.

### **PRIORITY I:**

#### **Site of Proposed New "Homestead Heritage Center", (Approximately 15.98 acres)**

##### **Significance of the Property:**

The NPS would construct a new "Homestead Heritage Center" outside of the 100-year floodplain in a location to the east of the Freeman graves, outside and to the east from of the Monument's existing eastern boundary, and south of State Highway 4. This parcel is geographically and historically associated with the historic setting of the original Freeman homestead. It is part of a farm that predates the Homestead Act and is still owned by the original family. The current landowners are willing to consider selling this 15.98-acre parcel to the Federal Government for the purpose of establishing the Monument's proposed new "Homestead Heritage Center". The landowners would retain ownership of the remaining portion of their farm. This new heritage center would contain the Monument's administrative offices, historic collections, educational exhibits, media, theatre and museum, and the Palmer-Epard Cabin. The building that contained the old visitor center would be adaptively reused as an education center for demonstrations, formal educational activities, special events, maintenance offices, and facilities for the Monument.

### Justification for Inclusion of this Parcel within the Monument Boundary

By siting the proposed new “Homestead Heritage Center” at this location on top of a ridge, the building and its contents would be totally removed from the threat of flood damage. By comparison, the future potential for the site of the *existing* visitor center to experience damage from flood events should steadily increase with time as the watershed of Cub Creek experiences an ongoing trend toward greater development, along with the related degradation of its natural runoff-absorbing characteristics. The relocation of the Monument’s primary visitor services, museum, collections, homestead archives, administrative and interpretive functions to a new “Homestead Heritage Center”, along with the attendant changes to the Monument’s operations resulting from this action, are intended to significantly improve the Monument’s ability to fulfill its legislated purpose, as directed by Congress. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, this proposed action would be implemented to protect Monument resources critical to the Monument’s purpose. By fulfilling this legislated purpose, the Monument can then excel in meeting its mission to preserve and interpret the nationally significant story and legacy of the Homestead Act and homesteading for the American people. **Note:** If, for some reason, this tract would not be available for the establishment of the proposed new “Homestead Heritage Center” in this location, then the NPS would seek to acquire scenic easements instead (see “*Priority 4: Protection of the Monument’s Historic Setting*”).

### Management Options

The NPS would seek a congressionally-authorized boundary adjustment to the Monument to include this 15.98-acre parcel. The NPS would then seek to acquire this parcel through federal acquisition in fee-simple title. Once Congress authorizes this boundary adjustment, the Secretary of the Interior may acquire these lands and interests through donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange: Provided that such lands or interests therein may only be acquired with the consent of the owner, unless proposed changes to the use or condition of these lands by the owner poses an eminent threat to the preservation of the natural, cultural, or scenic resources and qualities of the Monument, as described in its enabling legislation and subsequent addenda.

This parcel would be managed as the Monument’s primary visitor services, museum, research center, collections, homestead archives, administrative, and interpretive facility. The grounds of the facility would be appropriately landscaped using native prairie species, and would be linked by trails to the reconstructed prairie located within the original Freeman homestead. This location would allow the Monument to totally remove its primary interpretive and visitor service facility from its former location inside the original Freeman homestead, thus providing greater protection for this important resource. The selection of this location is also intended to minimize any visual impacts this development could have on the Monument neighbors while maximizing both the visitor’s ability to view the historic setting of the homestead and interpretive opportunities. In addition, it should offer new and unprecedented interpretive opportunities to not only significantly fulfill the Monument’s legislated purpose and to better manage and accommodate Monument visitors, but to also more effectively present the story of the Homestead Act and homesteading to the American public.

### **Feasibility of Administration**

The management of Homestead National Monument anticipates no difficulties in managing the additional acreage associated with this proposed site for the new "Homestead Heritage Center" along with the rest of the Monument. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, the tract of land included in this proposed action would be feasible to administer in terms of size, configuration, ownership, and costs. If Congress approves this boundary expansion, the site would be contiguous to the Monument's existing eastern boundary. Public access to this area would be commensurate with the rest of the Monument. Costs associated with operation of this parcel would include the purchase costs for the land, construction, furnishing and maintenance of the new "Homestead Heritage Center", its systems and components, along with construction of a parking lot, and installation of appropriate landscaping. Additional trails leading to the original Freeman homestead and interpretive signing would also be required.

### **Land Owners**

This parcel is privately owned.

### **PRIORITY II:**

#### **Segment of State Highway 4 at the Monument, (Approximately 0.4 miles)**

#### **Significance of the Property:**

State Highway 4 extends through the Monument's boundary from the east to the west. It runs through and adjacent to the Monument for approximately 0.4 miles. There has been a public road through this general area since before the establishment of the original Freeman homestead. Because of this, there is a precedent, from the cultural landscape perspective, for maintaining a road here. The present Highway 4 is a heavily used transportation corridor, especially for local and truck traffic. The Nebraska Department of Roads operates and maintains the right-of-way for State Highway 4, including the segment that passes along and through a portion of the Monument. This activity is authorized through a renewable federal special use permit that expires in July 31, 2001.

### **Justification for Inclusion of this Parcel within the Monument Boundary**

The segment of State Highway 4 that extends through the Monument and its related vehicular activity represent a significant intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, this proposed action would be implemented to address operational and management-related access and boundary identification by virtue of the existing highway. It would also be implemented to protect Monument resources critical to fulfilling the Monument's purpose. Open space that once flanked State Highway 4 from Beatrice to the Monument is slowly but steadily being lost because of undirected or piece-meal suburban sprawl and dispersed industrial developments. For example, two anhydrous ammonia fertilizer plants operate north of the Freeman School and the Monument is bounded on the northeast by the Pioneer Acres residential subdivision. Potentially hazardous materials from these plants are transported through the Monument by large trucks on a regular basis. During the Monument's peak visitation season there can be as many as 400 truckloads per day along this route. As this general area continues to develop, it is becoming more important to protect undeveloped land adjacent to and surrounding the Monument in order to preserve uncluttered views of this historic landmark. In addition, the Nebraska Department of Roads is scheduled to implement safety design improvements to the existing State Highway 4, especially for the segment that runs along and through a portion of the Monument, in the near future. This segment and its related vehicular activity represent a significant intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument. These improvements, including changes in the road's geometry and width to bring this highway up to modern standards and facilitate greater safety, would further impact the existing Monument, especially as they relate to the highways greater potential for increased traffic due to these improvements.

### **Management Options**

The NPS would seek a congressionally-authorized boundary adjustment to the Monument to include a 0.4-mile segment of State Highway 4 within the Monument's boundary. The NPS would then seek to acquire right-of-way from the centerline of this highway to the outer extent of the right-of-way in those segments that parallel the Pioneer Acres subdivision and the site of the proposed "Homestead Heritage Center" through donation or other appropriate means in fee-simple title from the State of Nebraska. The NPS would work with the Nebraska Department of Roads and other appropriate offices or parties to efficiently redirect State Highway 4 around the Monument. The old segment of the highway would remain in place for Monument visitors and would be fully accessible by local traffic (*e.g.*, from Pioneer Acres) as the "Homestead Heritage Parkway". Major regional traffic, including trucks, would be redirected to use the new State Highway 4 diversion. The NPS would enhance this segment with appropriate (for safety maintenance) landscaping and interpretive signs or pull-outs as part of its broader proposed "Homestead Heritage Parkway" concept. The speed limit for the NPS segment of the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" would be reduced from its current 55 miles per hour to a speed limit conducive to a parkway function. In this way, visitors would enjoy an added dimension to the interpretation and their understanding and enjoyment of the Monument, its resources, the surrounding countryside, and the agricultural story as it's developed as a result of the Homestead Act.

## Feasibility of Administration

The management of the Monument would work with Gage County to establish an agreement for managing and maintaining this 0.4-mile segment of State Highway 4. This would include regular snow removal services and other maintenance, as necessary. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, this proposed action would be feasible to administer in terms of size, configuration, ownership, and costs. Costs associated with operation of this parcel would probably be limited to the probable additions of appropriate landscaping and interpretive and regulatory signs (e.g., Monument boundary, speed limit, and directional signs).

## Land Owners

State Highway 4 is owned by the State of Nebraska.

## **PRIORITY III:**

### **Pioneer Acres “Green”, (Approximately three acres)**

#### **Significance of the Property:**

The Pioneer Acres subdivision is situated north of State Highway 4 and adjacent to the Monument’s northeastern quarter and the area known as the “State Triangle”. When compared to other private residential subdivisions that surround larger metropolitan areas, Pioneer Acres is small, consisting of 24 houses and one four-unit apartment building. Near its main entrance road there is an undeveloped parcel of approximately three acres. The *GMP* planning team has named this area the Pioneer Acres “Green”.

#### **Justification for Inclusion of this Parcel within the Monument Boundary**

It is uncertain as to exactly why this relatively flat, grass-covered area has not been developed for housing or other purposes to date. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, this proposed action would be implemented protect Monument resources critical to fulfilling the Monument’s purpose. The NPS is concerned that this undeveloped parcel could be developed in the future in some way other than as additional subdivision housing. For example, this could take the form of commercial development, such as a convenience shop or fueling facility. A major impetus for such development could be the proposed future construction of a new “Homestead Heritage Center” to the southeast of Pioneer Acres and east of the present Monument boundary. If commercial development occurs on the Pioneer Acres “Green”, this action would potentially result in an even greater adverse intrusion on and disruption of the historic setting of the Monument. Potential development may not be compatible with the Monument’s goals of protecting and preserving the historic setting of the original homestead and its rural context. It may also conflict with the Monument’s attempts to provide a high quality experience for visitors to the homestead.

#### **Management Options**

The NPS would seek a congressionally-authorized boundary adjustment to the Monument to include the approximately three-acre Pioneer Acres “Green” area. Once Congress authorizes this boundary adjustment, the NPS can work to acquire a permanent scenic easement on the approximately three-acre Pioneer Acres “Green” area from the Pioneer Acres community. With this easement, the Pioneer Acres community would continue to own this parcel, but would be permanently restricted from developing it.

### **Feasibility of Administration**

There would be no additional management requirements of the Monument's staff if the Pioneer Acres "Green" area was voluntarily protected in its present condition by the Pioneer Acres community. Aside from the possible cost of purchasing a permanent scenic easement for this parcel, the Monument would incur no new management responsibilities if the Federal Government obtained a permanent scenic easement on this parcel.

### **Land Owners**

This parcel is privately owned.

### **PRIORITY IV:**

#### **"State Triangle", (Approximately 8.3 acres)**

#### **Significance of the Property:**

The Nebraska Department of Roads owns approximately 8.3 acres of undeveloped land along State Highway 4 in the northeast quadrant of the Monument bounded on the north-northeast by State Highway 4 and on the west and south by the Monument. While this situation does not, in itself, adversely affect the Monument, the triangle-shaped parcel is bounded on two sides by the Monument and on its third side by State Highway 4. The "significance" of this parcel is that it is outside of, but immediately adjacent to, the site of the Freeman family's original homestead cabin. This cabin was used by the family from 1865-1890. A portion of this parcel is also part of an archeologically sensitive zone. A significant portion of the triangle was used as a borrow pit during construction of the present state highway.

#### **Justification for Inclusion of this Parcel within the Monument Boundary**

Ownership of this parcel by the Nebraska Department of Roads does not, in itself, adversely affect the Monument since relations between the NPS and the Department have been good. The primary issue that justifies the inclusion of this parcel within the Monument is the fact that this triangle-shaped parcel is bounded on two sides by the Monument and on its third side by State Highway 4. In this context, its practical utility to the state appears to be quite limited, and in this sense the parcel is like an "island". Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, this proposed action would be implemented to address operational and management-related concerns regarding access and boundary identification by this topographic feature and its adjacent segment of State Highway 4. This parcel is not planted to reconstructed native prairie as is the adjacent homestead land, but consists largely of planted non-native smooth brome grass (*Bromus inermis* Lyess), assorted non-native and invasive weed species, and voluntary stands of cottonwood (*Populus deltoides* Marsh) and non-native Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila* L.). The Monument's staff currently invests time and money into the parcel by conducting periodic controlled burns on the triangle (in agreement with the Nebraska Department of Roads). This management practice helps control potentially non-native species from invading the Monument's reconstructed prairie. It is feasible that the state could make use of this area during construction in conjunction with a future scheduled upgrade of the adjacent State Highway 4. This upgrade would require use of this area for a relatively short period of time with an assumed return to its present "mothballed" status after highway upgrades have been completed. When this situation is considered from a comprehensive perspective, the NPS believes that there would be greater benefit to the Monument through federal acquisition of this parcel than there is for the state to continue its ownership of the parcel. Because this parcel is sited completely outside of the Monument's existing boundary, a congressionally-

authorized expansion of the Monument's boundary would be necessary with federal acquisition of this land in fee-simple title.

### **Management Options**

The NPS would seek a congressionally-authorized boundary adjustment to the Monument to include this 8.3-acre parcel. The NPS would then seek to acquire this parcel through donation or through other appropriate means in fee-simple title from the State of Nebraska. Once Congress authorizes this boundary adjustment, the Secretary of the Interior may acquire these lands and interests through donation or other appropriate means. This parcel would be managed as part of the native prairie reconstruction, but would be separated from the reconstructed prairie located within the original Freeman homestead with a boundary fence. In this way, visitors would continue to see the boundary delineation of the original homestead. More specifically, this area would first have its non-native vegetation removed. Then species native to the area's original tallgrass prairie would be reintroduced. These species would then be subjected to the same natural resource management practices that are used for similar resources at the Monument.

### **Feasibility of Administration**

The management of Homestead National Monument anticipates no difficulties in managing the additional acres of the "State Triangle" along with the rest of the Monument. Under the *Criteria for Boundary Adjustments* listed above, the addition of this tract would be feasible to administer in terms of size, configuration, ownership, and cost. Potential development of the area is not anticipated. Public access to this area would be commensurate with the rest of the Monument. Costs associated with operation of this parcel would probably be limited to management of the tallgrass prairie reconstruction, with the possible addition of a trail spur and interpretive signing.

### **Land Owners**

This parcel is owned by the State of Nebraska and is currently maintained by the Nebraska Department of Roads.

## Conclusions

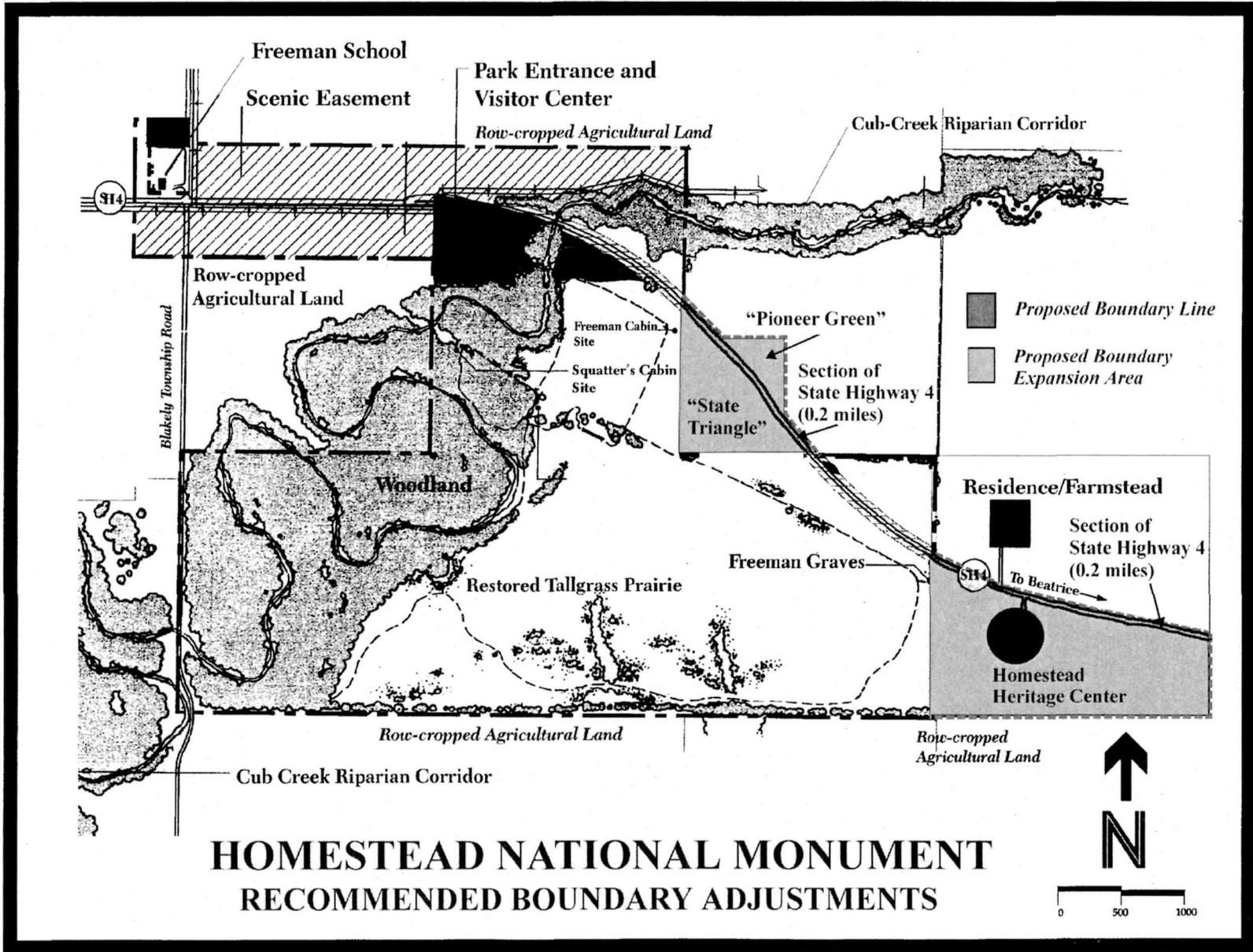
The *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* was initiated in conjunction with the development of a new *General Management Plan for Homestead National Monument of America (GMP)*. Its purpose is to determine if there are any other sites, lands, or features surrounding the Monument that require formal long-term protection so that they can continue to support the preservation and interpretation of the homesteading story as it exists at the Monument. The study's recommendations would be incorporated into the design and features of this new *GMP* in accordance with and as appropriate to the final selected alternative. The resulting new *GMP* will provide the conceptual framework that will guide the management and stewardship of the Monument in meeting its legislative mandates for the next 10 to 20 years. It replaces the Monument's outdated 1988 *GMP*.

Congressional authorization is required in order to implement the acquisitions and boundary adjustments that are recommended in this study.

This *Boundary Study* concludes that the NPS should pursue a congressionally-authorized adjustment of the Monument's existing boundaries to include the identified lands comprising (1) a 15.98-acre tract located on the Monument's eastern boundary, (2) a 0.4-mile segment of State Highway 4 adjacent to the Monument, (3) a three-acre tract comprised of an undeveloped "green" area within the adjacent Pioneer Acres residential subdivision, and (4) an 8.3-acre tract immediately adjacent to the Monument's northeast boundary and known in this study as the "State Triangle". The purpose of these actions is to provide for the ongoing preservation and protection of the cultural and natural resources of Homestead National Monument of America, and to preserve and protect the historic setting of the Monument. Implementation of these recommendations, along with the attendant changes to the Monument's operations resulting from these actions, is intended to significantly improve the Monument's ability to fulfill its legislated purpose to convey the story of homesteading, as directed by Congress. By fulfilling this legislated purpose, the Monument can then excel in meeting its mission to preserve and interpret the nationally significant story and legacy of the Homestead Act and homesteading for the American people.

According to *NPS Management Policies* (1988b), "The Secretary of the Interior may acquire these lands and interests through donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange: Provided that such lands or interests therein may only be acquired with the consent of the owner, unless proposed changes to the use or condition of these lands by the owner poses an eminent threat to the preservation of the natural, cultural, or scenic resources and qualities of the Monument, as described in its enabling legislation and subsequent addenda." This *Boundary Study for Homestead National Monument of America* provides a prioritization of lands for acquisition and inclusion within the Monument, or the acquisition of permanent scenic easements.

It is also recommended that the Superintendent of Homestead National Monument of America establish an ongoing relationship with the Gage County Zoning Board, as well as with Monument neighbors, to secure the future and permanent protection of any surrounding tracts the Monument would deem critical to the permanent long-term preservation and protection of the Monument, its resources, and its legacy for future generations.



## APPENDIX C

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### RECORD OF DECISION

#### FINAL GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Homestead National Monument of America, Nebraska

#### INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service has prepared the Final General Management Plan/Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement (FGMP/AFEIS) for Homestead National Monument of America, Nebraska. The FGMP/AFEIS proposes management direction for the park for the next 10-20 years and documents the anticipated effects of the selected action and other alternatives on the human environment, including natural and cultural resources. This Record of Decision is a concise statement of the decisions made, other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, the environmentally preferable alternative, and the mitigating measures developed to avoid or minimize environmental harm.

#### DECISION

After careful consideration of environmental impacts, costs, comments from the public, agencies, and technical evaluations, the National Park Service recommends for implementation the selected action evaluated in the Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

#### SUMMARY OF THE SELECTED ACTION

The goal of the selected alternative, which was identified as **Alternative C, Option 1** in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, is to significantly change the physical arrangement of facilities and operational functions of the Monument. The alternative represents a comprehensive alteration to the Monument's current operational form and to visitor orientation in order to fulfill the legislative requirements of the Monument. With this selected action, the key Monument facilities will be relocated to a location outside of the existing 100-year frequency flood hazard zone. A minor boundary expansion will be pursued to acquire land outside existing boundaries that would be necessary for the facilities. Management zones will provide guidance for managing specific areas for desired visitor experience and resource conditions (see p. 32 of the FGMP).

The selected action calls for the creation of a new "Homestead Heritage Center" to house the Monument's collections, interpretive exhibits, theatre, public research facilities, and administrative offices. This new "Homestead Heritage Center" will be located on the eastern side of the Monument.

The "Homestead Heritage Center" will require a separate research facility within the building to act as a repository for the Monument's homestead records and other items of homesteading literature, as required by the Monument's enabling legislation. In addition, the center will have a parking lot designed to accommodate 50 cars and 10 buses or campers.

The selected action also calls for the existing visitor center/museum to be modified and adaptively reused as an "Education Center". This center will serve as a location where students of all ages could engage in learning more about the homestead story. A "School of Traditional Homesteading Folk Arts" program will be established to give the public an opportunity to learn old homesteading folk crafts. In addition to a range of educational activities that will take place in this center, special events and interpretive programs will also be conducted here. Distance learning technology will also connect the center to schools near and far. The areas to the back of the present facility will be used to house maintenance functions. The remaining offices will be used by visiting instructors or modified to serve as classrooms. The exhibits presently in use will be removed and that area converted to classrooms. The existing parking lot appears to be suitable to meet the foreseeable needs of this facility.

In addition, the management prescriptions contained within the selected action will seek to promote the establishment of a "Homestead Heritage Parkway". This parkway concept is proposed to form an interpretive linkage between the Monument, including the Freeman School, and the surrounding rural countryside and communities to highlight today's visible and tangible results of implementation of the Homestead Act. The principal interpretive and educational theme of the parkway will be agriculture. With comparisons made to modern farm operations. These stories will be communicated through the use of signs and traveler information radio broadcasts.

The creation of this parkway as one of the Monument's interpretive tools will depend on voluntary partnerships with the local governments and landowners along the identified highway segment. It is important to note that the NPS is not recommending a formal federal designation for this parkway. The concept of the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" presumes the rerouting of a segment of State Highway 4 outside the Monument's boundary. After this realignment has occurred, the abandoned segment of State Highway 4 will become an access road for the Monument and for local residents. Existing truck and commuter traffic will be rerouted on a comparable replacement segment of State Highway 4 nearby. The "Homestead Heritage Parkway" will begin where the access road (the abandoned segment of State Highway 4) enters the eastern boundary of the Monument and extend to the Freeman School. The NPS envisions the eventual and voluntary extension of the "Homestead Heritage Parkway" concept from the Freeman School west along the access road to where it rejoins State Highway 4. The NPS also endorses the parkway's extension to the east from the Monument to the City of Beatrice (meeting at the junction of State Highways 136 and 4 in West Beatrice), however the NPS is not recommending any change to the currently designated speed limit for that segment. It is possible that a public biking and/or hiking path could be connected to the Monument.

## OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

**Alternative A** is the no-action, or *status quo*, alternative. This alternative would have restricted the Monument in achieving its mission; however, it does provide a baseline for comparison of the other alternatives. This alternative called for the continuation of current levels and patterns of National Park Service stewardship and management with regard to natural, historic, and cultural resources at the Monument.

Each of the following action alternatives were designed to achieve all desired futures for the Monument, including those related to natural, historic, and cultural resources enhancement and protection, and visitor experiences. The principle difference between alternatives is the location of the primary Monument facilities.

**Alternative B** prescribed certain alterations to the existing pattern of facilities, stewardship, and management. The Monument's natural, historic, and cultural resources would have remained generally as they are now. The existing Monument facilities would have remained in their present locations but would have been flood-proofed to withstand a 100-year flood event.

Like the selected action Alternative C, Option 1, **Alternative C, Option 2** proposed significant changes to the physical arrangement and operational functions of the Monument. This alternative also represented comprehensive alterations to the homestead resources. The alternative also would have fulfilled the legislative requirements of the Monument. Alternative C, Option 2 would have significantly changed the location of key Monument facilities to a location outside the existing 100-year frequency flood hazard zone but within the existing Monument boundary. It also proposed the creation of a new "Homestead Heritage Center" to house the Monument's collections, interpretive displays, public research facilities, and administrative offices. The existing visitor center would have been adaptively reused as an "Education Center" for special events, programs, and educational opportunities. In addition, it proposed to form a linkage between the Monument and the surrounding countryside and communities through the establishment of an approximately six mile "Homestead Heritage Parkway" which would highlight today's visible results of implementation of the Homestead Act.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE ALTERNATIVE**

The environmentally preferable alternative is defined as "the alternative or alternatives that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act. Ordinarily, this means the alternative that causes least damage to the biological and physical environment; it also means the alternative that best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources" ("Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) National Environmental Policy Act Regulations," 1981).

The environmentally preferable alternative is the selected action, Alternative C, Option 1. This alternative best meets the full range of national environmental policy goals as stated in NEPA's Section 101. The selected action 1) maximizes protection of natural and cultural resources while maintaining a wide range of neutral and beneficial uses of the environment without degradation; 2) maintains an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice; 3) achieves a balance between human population and resource use; and 4) improves resource sustainability.

The selected action removes the Monument's threatened existing visitor center complex, with its associated resources, exhibits, and operational facilities, from its location within the 100-year floodplain of nearby Cub Creek. The removal of these resources and functions to a different yet nearby location also minimize existing safety and resource concerns associated with the state highway crossing the Monument. In addition, the selected action best minimizes impacts to and developmental incursions into the Monument's natural resources (principally, its reconstructed tallgrass prairie) and minimizes impacts to and developmental incursions into the Monument's cultural resources in the form of its historic original 1862 homestead tract. It also maximizes public and visitor safety by prescribing the relocation of a segment of the existing state highway to an alignment outside monument boundaries. This action will significantly reduce the volume and mix of traffic on State Highway 4, will improve the qualities of

visitor safety and experience, and will result in a reduced physical intrusion into the Monument's boundary.

## **MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM**

All practicable measures to avoid or minimize environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the selected action have been identified and incorporated into the selected action. They are presented in detail in the FGMP/AFEIS. However, due to the programmatic nature of the general management plan, specific implementation projects will be reviewed as necessary for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations prior to project clearance and implementation. Specific measures to minimize environmental harm also will be included in implementation plans called for by the FGMP/AFEIS. These plans include, but are not limited to, resource management plans, land protection plans, historic structure reports, and schematic design documents.

## **BASIS FOR DECISION**

The selected alternative best supports the park's purpose and significance, and accomplishes the statutory mission of the National Park Service to provide long-term protection of park resources while allowing for appropriate levels of visitor use and means of visitor enjoyment. The selected alternative also does the best job of addressing issues identified during public scoping while minimizing environmental harm. Other factors considered in the decision were public and resource benefits gained for the cost incurred, and extensive public comment.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The NPS has taken a comprehensive approach to public involvement during the development of this *GMP*. To date, the NPS has issued two newsletters for the general public and conducted a series of public meetings. The NPS has consulted with state and local government officials, including the State Historic Preservation Office. American Indian groups with affiliations to the Monument have received the newsletters and a copy of the draft plan for comment.

Newsletter No. 1 was mailed in December 1997. Newsletter No.2 was distributed in March 1998. Nearly 600 newsletters were in each mailing. The series of public meetings were conducted in January 1998. Two meetings were held in Beatrice, Nebraska, near the Monument and one in Lincoln, Nebraska, 40 miles away. Over 20 people attended the three meetings. In April, 1998, an "open house," was held at the Monument. Twenty-five individuals, park neighbors, government officials, and community members attended this "open house". All public meetings received coverage by local and regional media sources. Monument neighbors have been involved throughout the process.

The *GMP* planning team contacted the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma in an attempt to identify tribal concerns relative to this *GMP/EIS*. In addition, comments were sought through extensive mailings of newsletters and media coverage. No response was received from the tribe. Because of the Pawnee's long-standing cultural affiliation with this area of Nebraska, the NPS will continue to keep the tribe informed of important stages of this planning process and of plans to implement the preferred alternative throughout the *GMP* planning process.

## General Management Plan

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Over 600 news letters announcing the *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Homestead National Monument of America* were mailed May 4, 1999. More than 200 copies of the full draft document were distributed to agencies, organizations and individuals. The document was also made available to the general public at the Beatrice Public Library and at Homestead National Monument of America. The National Park Service conducted two public meetings in May 1999, one meeting was held at the Beatrice Public Library May 25 while the second meeting was held at the Charles H. Gere Library in Lincoln, Nebraska May 26. An additional public open house was held June 29, 1999 at Homestead National Monument of America to discuss the *Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement*.

The Beatrice public meeting had 43 people in attendance; 14 people attended the Lincoln public meeting. One person attended the meeting held in June, at Homestead National Monument of America.

A 60-day review period (May 4, 1999 through July 10, 1999) was designated for receiving comments on the draft plan and *EIS*. Fifteen written comments were received. At the end of the review period, the comments were reviewed and substantive comments were identified.

The Final General Management Plan (FGMP) and an Abbreviated Final Environmental Impact Statement (AFEIS) were made available to the public on November 21, 1999. The 30-day no action period required by NEPA regulations commenced on that date. Approximately 39 copies of the FGMP/AFEIS were distributed to agencies, local governments, organizations, persons who commented on the draft GMP, and others who requested the document. The FGMP/AFEIS contains a complete summary of the public involvement process and substantive comments received.

## CONCLUSION

A notice of availability for the FGMP/AFEIS was published by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register on November 6, 1998. The 30-day no-action period ended on December 20, 1999. No public comments were received during the no action period.

The above factors and considerations justify the selection of the final plan, as described as Alternative C, Option 1, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Final General Management Plan is hereby approved.

Approved: Catherine C. Damon  
Regional Director, Midwest Region

Date: 12/22/99



APPENDIX D

Farmland Conversion Impact Rating

U.S. Department of Agriculture

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Date Of Land Evaluation Request		April 27, 1999	
Name Of Project Homestead Nat'l Monument Heritage Center		Federal Agency Involved		National Park Service	
Proposed Land Use Public Park Land		County And State		Blakely Twp., Gage Co., Nebraska	
PART II (To be completed by SCS)		Date Request Received By SCS		April 30, 1999	
Does the site contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form).			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Average Farm Size
					446
Major Crop(s) Grain Sorghum		Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: 490,450 % 89		Acres Irrigated 58,000	
Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA - NRCS		Name Of Local Site Assessment System None		Date Land Evaluation Returned By SCS May 11, 1999	
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Site Rating			
		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly		14.5			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly		0			
C. Total Acres In Site		14.5			
PART IV (To be completed by SCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland		10			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland		0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted		0.003			
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value		65			
PART V (To be completed by SCS) Land Evaluation Criterion					
Relative Value Of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)		75			
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Site Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(b))		Maximum Points			
1. Area In Nonurban Use		15	15		
2. Perimeter In Nonurban Use		10	10		
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed		20	18		
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government		20	20		
5. Distance From Urban Builtup Area		15	15		
6. Distance To Urban Support Services		15	4		
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		10	0		
8. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland		10	0		
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services		5	5		
10. On-Farm Investments		20	17		
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		25	0		
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		10	2		
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS		160	97		
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)		100	75		
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)		160	97		
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)		260	172		
Site Selected:		Date Of Selection		Was A Local Site Assessment Used? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reason For Selection:					

The selected alternative best supports the park's purpose and significance, and accomplishes the statutory mission of the National Park Service to provide long-term protection of park resources while allowing for appropriate levels of visitor use and means of visitor enjoyment. The selected alternative also does the best job of addressing issues identified during public scoping while minimizing environmental harm. Other factors considered in the decision were public and resource benefits gained for the cost incurred, and extensive public comment.

(See Instructions on reverse side)

Form AD-1006 (10-83)



