

Western Region Property Rights Coalition

Summary of Operations

February-October 2021



Rep. Tatum Lee addressing NHA Opposition Meeting, Wakeeney, Trego County, Kansas, April 14, 2021

Reference

Kansas Nebraska National Heritage Area

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Distribution:

Forty-Nine Boards of County Commissioners within proposed Kansas Nebraska NHA

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Kathy Wilmot Cover Letter

Angel Cushing Cover Letter

Rep. Tatum Lee Hahn Cover Letter

Mary Powell Cover Letter

Beth O'Dell Salmans Cover Letter

Governor Pete Ricketts Letter

Western Region Property Rights Coalition Summary of Operations

Freedom of Information Act documents

Kim Wilson to Christopher Stein, NPS, June 12, 2017

Christopher Stein, NPS, to Kim Wilson, November 22, 2017

Christopher Stein, NPS, to Rachel Franklin Weekley, NPS, November 6, 2018

KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, August 21, 2019

KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, August 21, 2019

Christopher Stein, NPS, to Kim Wilson, April 3, 2020

KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Thursday, January 21, 2021

KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Thursday, February 25, 2021

List of County Commissioner Resolutions Opposing Kansas-Nebraska NHA

49-County Kansas Nebraska NHA Bingo Map

Demand Notice Template

The Team

November 24, 2021

Dear County Commissioners,

To date 45 boards of county commissioners have passed resolutions opposing the 49 County Kansas Nebraska National Heritage Area (NHA) (23 of 26 in Kansas and 22 of 23 in Nebraska). Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts issued a letter of opposition as well. It was heartening to see such a remarkable response affirming local sovereignty and private property rights. By the end of April 2021, four Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) board members resigned while one retired and a National Park Service employee retired in September.


In spite of overwhelming opposition, Prof. Kim Wilson, Executive Director of KNHAP, continues to pursue this NHA, directly through Congress if necessary. This attitude reflects disrespect toward the residents and local jurisdictions who oppose this designation.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) documents received by Angel Cushing of Allen, Lyon County, Kansas were disseminated to 49 County Clerks in July 2021. From this FOIA, KNHAP was going to assign students to perform KNHAP work in a Fall 2021 class by Prof. Kristin Malek. Is a nonprofit allowed to use student assignments to perform its work? KNHAP was going to claim student assignments or student directed work as in-kind contributions to KNHAP nonprofit status. Was KNHAP operating as such under the 501c3 umbrella of the Willa Cather Foundation or another organization? Did Prof. Kim Wilson direct her students in the School of Landscape Architecture to undertake a study to implement a personal agenda of a NHA designation to be achieved by 2026? Has KNHAP provided inaccurate or misleading information to the National Park Service in connection with the NHA feasibility study?

These issues were directed to the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Board of Regents, Internal Audit and Advisory Services, Chancellor Green, Dean of Architecture, and Dean of Engineering through a September 2, 2021 mailing of FOIA documents and copies of the resolutions. County Attorneys may want to inquire into UNL's response to these issues.

For myself, I had a wonderful experience during public meetings getting acquainted with the hard-working folks of the Kansas Nebraska Heartland.

Respectfully



Norman Kincaide, Ph.D.

Western Region Property Rights Coalition

701 N. Main St., Rocky Ford, CO 81067

719-388-8844

norman.kincaide@yahoo.com

November 10, 2021
County Commissioners
Regarding Kansas - Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your service to the landowners in your communities. The Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership drew a federal boundary around 49 counties in the state of Nebraska and Kansas and began lobbying federal legislators for a National Heritage Area. They hoped that the federal government would be granted jurisdiction before any resident in the counties had an opportunity to question the need for this federal designation. Because of actions taken by 45 of the 49 counties, that NHA pursuit was interrupted and the Kansas Legislature took notice. The 45 resolutions passed by County Commissioners resulted in the call for a Special Committee Hearing at the Kansas State Capitol.

Unfortunately, the date of the Special Committee Hearing has not yet been set. Part of the reason is the many pressing issues that our state is facing. Those issues are keeping our legislators busy. Another reason is the extreme amount of lobbying being done by the organizations that profit off of converting private property into public lands. Those lobbying organizations have successfully convinced many of our state and federal legislators to delay our cries and ignore our concerns. Those lobbying efforts have encouraged the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership to continue their pursuit of a National Heritage Area.

Once again, I must call upon residents and their county governments to take action. Some of the additional steps that you can take are: to pass a resolution against 30 x 30 if you have not done so already. Your county can order the Kansas and Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership to cease and desist their pursuit of a National Heritage Area in your county. You may offer testimony, written or oral, to the Kansas legislature, even if you are in Nebraska. If you are in Nebraska, you may compel your state legislature to pursue laws that I am asking Kansas to adopt. Such as;

- Requiring a state legislative vote on any National Heritage Area or federal land expansion and/or creation. And to deny state funding to any acquisition or program that is instituted without that approving vote.
- Restrict the use of eminent domain for recreational purposes.

- Create laws similar to Nebraska's that allows County Commissioners to have a say in whether or not a perpetual conservation easement should be added to that county.
- Restrict Form-Based Zoning to development projects, discouraging administrative participation in regulatory takings.

There are likely additional laws or Amendments that our states should consider. If you have ideas, please share it with your state legislators and those appointed to the Special Committee. The Legislative Committee Assistant is Mr. Gary Deeter: Gary.Deeter@House.ks.gov
The Committee Chair is Representative Ken Rajhes: ken.rahjes@house.ks.gov

As with state legislation, there may be other actions that your county can take that I have not considered. I ask that you explore those options.

In preparing communication for my state legislators on the Kansas Special Committee, I pulled up three different maps of the United States. One was a map showing all of the federal and state lands in preservation and conservation. Another was a map of lands in Conservation Easements. And a third map was of lands enrolled in CRP. While each map is shocking, it does not compare to laying all three maps on top of each other. Only then, did I fully grasp the threats facing property rights and food production. It is important that we stop the growth of federal jurisdiction on our properties.

Respectfully,



Angel Cushing
3458 Road H2, Allen, KS 66833
785-569-1461
ssgcushswife@hotmail.com

ref: [U.S. Geological Survey Map Viewer \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov)
[NCED Mapping Application \(conservationaleasement.us\)](https://www.conservationaleasement.us)
[Summary September 2021 CRPMonthly.pdf \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov)

November 17, 2021
Board of County Commissioners

Dear Board of County Commissioners,

Since writing to you early this year, I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Kincaide as we have traveled the 49 counties targeted by the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) to establish a National Heritage Area. An NHA would ultimately have a negative impact upon our private property rights and our freedom to enjoy our property. I have personally had the pleasure of visiting with a number of you in person during that time as well.

Thankfully, the majority of Boards saw through the empty promises that an NHA would make 49 targeted counties "tourism meccas" with tens of thousands of people paying to view the scenic landscape and to stay in hundreds of new hotels. And – they promised the money was just going to roll in. Nobody offers money without strings and compromise. All were cleverly crafted messages to disguise the "sleight of hand" maneuvers which would give others control over your private property.

Professor Kim Wilson, the National Park Service and other involved bureaucrats have not given up. It is critical that each of you remain vigilant. These individuals believe only Government can truly protect the environment and responsibly control property... and they will continue to work toward that end.

When Angel Cushing received the documents requested through her FOIA, I personally found it interesting that the University of Nebraska was planning to use students as "free labor" in completing much of the work and compiling the documents and surveys required to pursue approval of the NHA by the National Park Service and Congress. These same students pay tuition for an education, but instead they are paying to "work" for the University and professors working to secure grants from bureaucracies. Something smells rotten here. So, there is more information needed.

In the meantime, thank you for working to protect our freedoms by passing resolutions opposing the NHA designation and the 30x30 land grab by the current administration. As inscribed over the main entrance of the Nebraska Capitol, "*The salvation of the state is watchfulness in the citizen.*" Thank you for remaining watchful!

Since you are on the front lines, should you see something in the future that looks questionable or appears suspicious, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of us. We would be glad to assist with any research that might help you in your decision making.

Respectfully,



Kathy Wilmot

P.O. Box 165

Beaver City, NE 68926

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL, 176-W
300 S.W. TENTH AVENUE
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DISTRICT ADDRESS
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NESS CITY, KS 67560
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TatumForKansas@gmail.com

TATUM LEE
117TH DISTRICT

It is with great joy that I write this letter to address this last year of progress and exposure of the federal government working with private entities to steal our land and thwart our liberty.

When I was introduced to Angel Cushing last winter, I knew that the Lord had called me to this fight. I immediately knew that Dr. Kincaide was a resource that I needed to connect with Mrs. Cushing to aid in her efforts to help stop this land grab. I didn't fully understand the magnitude of how sinister this land grab was, and I still am not sure I understand all of the nuances concerning these NHAs and how they coordinate with the Biden 30x30 plan, but what I do know is that when any entity comes against our private property, they come against the very foundation of liberty.

The very essence of our liberty is rooted in our God given right to own property. It's incumbent on us as "we the people" to protect those rights even unto death. I imagine the original 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence and what they laid on the line to stand in a time of tyranny.

The question is, who was that man that was the 57th signer who didn't have the courage to stand that day and pledge his life, sacred honor and fortune? Who was asked to attend that meeting but due to fear, shirked the invitation and allowed his countrymen to stand in the gap where he was unwilling to?

We are living in that same day 245 years ago. And standing today will also cost us something. It might cost you friends or neighbors. It might cost you reputation. But the cost is worth the price of Liberty.

Today, we are being asked as elected officials to stand on the line. To have the courage to stand up and pledge our lives, fortunes and sacred honor to defend our counties, our states and our country. We are being challenged by the Marxists to defend what our forefathers fought for.

Today, we are being asked to show up and have the courage to be the 57th signer.

I applaud you for taking a stand to reign in the out of control federal government and their private cohorts. Local control of our communities is the most important control as we are the closest to the people.

Let's stay the course. Do not waiver. Defend our communities whatever the cost. It's time we expose any group, politician or government willing to come after our divine unalienable rights.

Its time we stand. It's the day to be the 57th signer.

In Liberty,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Representative Tatum Lee". The signature is written in a cursive style.

MARY P. POWELL 584 Road 29A Longton KS 67352
Office 785-531-0331 Cell 785-420-0472

November 15, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

It causes great concern that Professor Kim Wilson, Executive Director of Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) and the remaining board members continue to pursue an agenda to push a 49-county National Heritage Area (NHA) upon the people of South Central Nebraska and North Central Kansas when 45 of those counties (22 of 23 in Nebraska and 23 of 26 in Kansas) have passed opposition resolutions, stating the People do not want this designation!

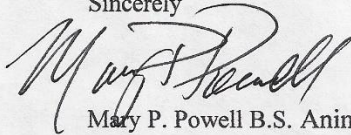
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) documents show that Professor Wilson used her position at the University of Nebraska to have work performed by students as in-kind contributions for the 501c3 nonprofit. These students are not representative of the People or of the board members of the proposed NHA. Isn't this similar to plagiarism, making claims that the students work as a product of KNHAP? Plagiarism is unethical and is grounds for expulsion from college. Shouldn't a nonprofit be called out for unethical behavior as well.

Professor Wilson has said publicly that she will continue to seek this designation despite the People's wishes! This nefarious behavior towards the People of this proposed NHA shows nothing less than total contempt for the Constitution and Private Property Rights. She has no regard for landowners or residents.

An NHA is supposed to be a grassroots action by local people, yet most people out in the counties were oblivious to this designation until a few individuals stumbled upon the KNHAP board Facebook page. According to the National Park Service, the PEOPLE are the ones who are to initiate a designation, not a select group of people who go behind the backs of landowners and residents of an area. Has Professor Wilson been deceptive in her actions, not only towards the people of the proposed NHA but also toward the National Park Service, who has strict guidelines as to how an NHA is to be pursued?

With all the questionable actions of Professor Kim Wilson and the remaining board members of KNHAP, it is time for them to end this pursuit of an NHA and let the People's Voices be the final word. We do not wish to have 49 counties designated as an NHA. It would be in the best interest if all counties in this proposed area are to file cease and desist orders against this nonprofit to protect landowners of this targeted area. To further protect these counties, it may also be necessary to pass a resolution opposing the 30X30 Executive order which could further infringe upon areas under consideration for NHA designation.

Sincerely



Mary P. Powell B.S. Animal Science/Livestock Production Management CEO/Owner
Barnyard Weed Warriors

November 22, 2021
Dear Commissioners

My greatest concern about the National Heritage Areas (NHA) is the National Environmental Protection Act manual for the National Heritage Areas. On Forward page ii the manual states that "they" are **pleased** to release this policy guide formulated specifically for the NHA's by National Park Service (NPS) environmental coordinators and NHA program coordinators. Not one agricultural representative is mentioned even though when created, the NHA program applies to every inch of the boundary they have drawn. Once this draft planning framework is drawn it is submitted to the NPS who then determines which NEPA pathway to follow for the specific NHA that is being created.

On page 1, paragraph 1.2 the manual states: "Since NHA management plans are approved by the Sec. of the Interior, the approval is considered a Federal action and, therefore, federal environmental laws including NEPA and other laws, such as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), **must** be followed." The new Waters of The U.S. Act (WOTUS) may be pulled in as well.

The EPA already runs roughshod over the farmers and ranchers without a federal boundary created around them. They have EPA rules and regulations governing the way they take care of livestock, farming methods, chemical applications and just about everything else they do on their private property. I thought that was what the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Services was supposed to do. Creating an NHA on top of the farmers just doubles up on the same type of regulations already governed in farm programs.

The administrators for the NHA's do not include any agricultural involvement in creating the boundaries, rather they try to hide what they are doing. The requirements for submitting the application to the Sec. of Interior for creation of an NHA are supposed to include local grassroots involvement however, as we had meetings throughout these 3 states only a handful of people even knew they were included in an NHA.

Governor Pete Ricketts has been our champion in the state of Nebraska on fighting the creation of the Kansas Nebraska NHA because of the NEPA regulations that come with that designation. I have included a copy of his letter stating that fact.

County Commissioners should be able to vote whether to become part of an NHA, as the state legislature should. If we do nothing, I fear the federal government may at one point decide to declare the whole state of Kansas an NHA as has been done to the state of Tennessee. If you combine the Freedom's Frontier NHA with the proposed Kansas Nebraska NHA, over half of the state of Kansas will be an NHA.

We are asking for County Commissioners to pass a resolution to state that you do not accept inclusion in a National Heritage Area to protect land owners private property rights. We have 45 out of 49 Counties in the Kansas Nebraska NHA who have passed a resolution to opt out to protect the farmers and ranchers in their counties.

Sincerely,



Beth Salmans
1190 11th Rd., Marysville, KS 66508
785-562-9916 Home; 785-556-5700 Cell



Governor Pete Ricketts
Growing Nebraska for the Next Generation

April 6, 2021

Ashley Olson, Executive Director
Willa Cather Foundation
413 North Webster
Red Cloud, NE 68970

Dear Ms. Olson:

We write to follow up on the recent briefings provided to the Governor's Office and state agencies, and to express opposition to the Willa Cather Foundation's plans to seek a National Heritage Area designation for portions of South Central and Southwestern Nebraska.

While we appreciate the important contributions of Willa Cather and her writings to that area and the State of Nebraska as a whole, this designation poses the risk of federal overreach in our communities. The designation of a National Heritage Area in our state requires federal approvals from the National Park Service and the U.S. Congress. Federal designations come with unquantifiable and unknowable risks for the future. Conditions and requirements for federal management can change at any time without vital input from the states, eroding state and local control of decision-making regarding our land and communities. A federal agency and new administration can unilaterally issue new regulations or orders governing areas with a federal designation.

Furthermore, a designation such as this would require a National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) plan. NEPA is one of the most significant bureaucratic barriers to infrastructure and other important projects in our country. Extending NEPA's reach in our state could hinder growth and development in the communities and surrounding areas.

It is also worth noting that over the past few months the State has been contacted by Nebraskans voicing their opposition to this designation. Those constituents feel as though our state can adequately promote our own regional tourism without any federal intervention, a sentiment that we share.

We appreciate the efforts of the Willa Cather Foundation to further Nebraska tourism and local development but strongly oppose this designation given the unintended consequences that are associated with it. We will continue to look for ways to promote Nebraska heritage and tourism while also keeping authority and control where it belongs – at the state and local level with Nebraskans.

Sincerely,

Pete Ricketts, Governor
State of Nebraska

Anthony Goins, Director
NE Dept. of Economic Development

Steve Wellman, Director
NE Dept. of Agriculture

Western Region Property Rights Coalition

Summary of Operations

February-October 2021

Operation Blindside

Operation Blindside was developed in January 2021 by Kathy Wilmot, Beaver City, NE and Norman Kincaide, Rocky Ford, CO, initiated February 26, 2021, by mailing National Heritage Area (NHA) Information Packets and copies of *SCAMMED? Canyons & Plains National Heritage Area Initiative for Southeastern Colorado* to Boards of County Commissioners in the Kansas Nebraska NHA targeted region. The purpose was to expose Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) to public scrutiny and notify the counties of this NHA initiative.

Indicia of Success: Forced KNHAP to explain their activities to County Commissioners. Altered KNHAP behavior from lock step procedure towards a feasibility study into damage control on their Facebook page and exposure of the NHA scheme in print and other media.

Operation Broadside

Operation Broadside was developed in March 2021 by Kathy Wilmot, Angel Cushing, Allen, Lyon County, KS, Beth O'Dell Salmans, Mary Powell, ShurrieDenah Jensen, Lisa Arnoldy, Trent Loos, and many others. The first presentation was in Mankato, Jewell County, Kansas, March 27, 2021, followed by presentations in nine meetings from April 7-15, 2021. Trent Loos emceed two of these, namely, in Red Cloud and Hebron, Nebraska.

Acknowledgement of venues: Red Cloud Community Center, Red Cloud, NE; Stastny Community Center, Hebron, NE; Frontier Stage, Hill City, KS; Midtown Ramada Inn, for the Eagle Forum, Grand Island, NE; Vesper Community Center, Lincoln, KS; The Hitching Post, Abilene, KS; St. Peters & Paul Catholic Church, Clay Center, KS; Fair Grounds Commercial Building, WaKeeney, KS; Bullseye Event Center, Norton, KS.

Indicia of Success: All venues were well attended as a result of excellent advertising through print flyers, newspaper ads and social media postings more than 2500 people attending, with more than 500 at the meeting in WaKeeney, Trego County, Kansas on April 14, 2021. Radio, television and live streaming on social media reached far more. As a result of the growing opposition to this designation, KNHAP to suspended operations on their

Facebook page as of April 24, 2021, stating they had a prescheduled break for the summer and would return in the fall. As of October 20, 2021, there have been only two posts.

Executive director of KNHAP, Kim Wilson, stated their board members were worn out and KNHAP lacked capacity to address growing opposition head-on. As a result of this growing opposition to the Kansas Nebraska NHA, four KNHAP board members resigned and one retired by April 26, 2021.

Boards of County Commissioners and private organizations were encouraged to pass resolutions opposing the NHA initiative. Governor Pete Ricketts declared his opposition to this designation in a published letter.

Operation Echo

Operation Echo was developed toward the end of April 2021, implemented on May 12, 2021 and concluded on May 19, 2021, six public meetings with more than 500 attending. Acknowledgements for this include Larry LeDuc of Cloud County, Debra & Richard Hubert, of Cloud County, KS, Clark Nelson for the Holdrege venue. Venues: Cloud County Fairgrounds 4H Commercial Building, Concordia, KS; Marshal County Fairgrounds 4H Commercial Building, Blue Rapids, KS; Senior Center, Talmage, Dickinson County, KS; Tumbleweed, Salina, KS; Saint Aloysuis Parish Hall, Osborne, KS; AG Building Fairgrounds, Holdrege, NE.

Operation American Patrol

Operation American Patrol was undertaken by Kathy Wilmot of Beaver City, NE, Angel Cushing of Allen, KS, and Beth O'Dell Salmans of Marysville, KS, initiated in June 2021 to follow up with Boards of County Commissioners that had yet to pass resolutions opposing the 49 County Kansas Nebraska NHA and continued well into September 2021.

Operation Notify

Operation Notify was developed in July 2021 and initiated on July 23, 2021. Angel Cushing of Allen, Lyon County, Kansas sent a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the National Park Service Midwest Region in April 2021 with a document cut-off date of April 28, 2021. Angel Cushing received the FOIA document dump, totaling more than 400 pages in Pdf. form on July 14, 2021. This Pdf was delivered via email on July 23, 2021 to all County Clerks of the 49 Kansas Nebraska Counties targeted for the NHA, to be disseminated to the respective Boards of County Commissioners.

Operation Thresher

Through Operation Thresher, Freedom of Information Act documents were posted to the Western Region Property Rights Coalition Facebook page between July 27 and August 2, 2021, for perusal by the general public.

Operation Upper Echelon

Operation Upper Echelon was initiated on Thursday, September 2, 2021, when five NHA Information Packets were sent to five different addresses on the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL) campus: Board of Regents; Chancellor Green; Dean of Architecture; Dean of Engineering; and Internal Audit and Advisory Services to notify UNL of possible irregularities in the use of University time, resources and student assignments for the benefit of a nonprofit. These packets were delivered via USPS on or before September 8, 2021.

Operation Bookend

Operation Bookend was initiated on November 29, 2021, when National Heritage Area Information Packets were mailed to 49 Boards of County Commissioners in the Kansas Nebraska National Heritage Area targeted region. The information in these packets is the same captured in this PDF.

Summary

In the Spring of 2017 four people, Ashley Olson, Executive Director, The Willa Cather Foundation, Joe Black, Executive Director, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Kim Wilson, Professor, UNL, Landscape Architecture Program, and Mark Engler, Superintendent, Homestead National Monument, formed a steering committee to pursue NHA designation covering 49 counties where they don't live, work, own property, pay taxes, or represent any significant constituency. This steering committee was going to use all property in the targeted region for the benefit of a nonprofit in partnership with National Park Service.

KNHAP couldn't handle the adversity of opposition. If they couldn't handle this, how was this partnership to manage a 49 county, 2 state NHA with attendant management plan developed and approved by the NPS and the Department of Interior? Furthermore, the funding is so little when spread over 49 counties, who was to receive immediate tangible benefit from this designation?

KNHAP insists on pursuing this designation, in the face of 45 resolutions opposing. Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership covet the use of something that doesn't belong to them, 49 sovereign counties in the Heartland of the United States.

Angel Cushing of Allen, Lyon County, Kansas sent a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the National Park Service Midwest Region in April 2021 with a document cut-off date of April 28, 2021 (no documents after that date would be captured in the FOIA). Angel Cushing received the FOIA document dump in Pdf. form on July 14, 2021, containing more than 400 pages relating to the activities of the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) in relation to the National Park Service.

On July 23, 2021 this Pdf. was distributed via email to 49 county clerks within the targeted Kansas Nebraska National Heritage Area region to be further distributed to the respective boards of county commissioners. In the public interest, these documents were posted on the Western Region Property Rights Coalition Facebook page between July 23 - August 2, 2021.

One of the most telling statement made in Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Meeting Minutes was on February 25, 2021: "Not worth our while to have public meetings until FS [Feasibility Study] is in motion because they will have to be part of that process."

Is this how the Partnership board perceives the residents in the 49 counties? These residents and jurisdictions are not worth KNHAP's while until they are ready to use them for their own purposes, like a roll of paper towels, toilet paper or paper cups, to be used when desired, then tossed away. But the last to know about the 49 county Kansas Nebraska National Heritage Area initiative that covets the use of their counties for the benefit of an unelected nonprofit organization.

Professor Wilson and a small group of individuals have been pursuing this designation for more than 5 years and have yet to come up with a theme for the 49 County Kansas Nebraska region. How long does it take to become a 501c3? This is what they have produced from all this administrative work: meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, a logo and a map. Four board members resigned and one retired in April 2021 as a result of public opposition. One National Park Service employee has also retired. If KNHAP couldn't manage adversity in 2021, how were they to manage a 49 county NHA coupled with a cumbersome management plan?

Freedom of Information Act documents

Kim Wilson to Christopher Stein, NPS, June 12, 2017

Christopher Stein, NPS, to Kim Wilson, November 22, 2017
Christopher Stein, NPS, to Rachel Franklin Weekley, NPS, November 6, 2018
KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, August 21, 2019
KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, August 21, 2019
Christopher Stein, NPS, to Kim Wilson, April 3, 2020
KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Thursday, January 21, 2021
KNHAP, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, Thursday, February 25, 2021

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From: [Stein, Christopher E](#)
To: [Morgan, Jason R](#)
Subject: Fw: Nebraska - National Heritage Area
Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 11:05:19 AM
Attachments: [UNL RTCA MOU. NPS Signed.pdf](#)

From: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2017 1:16 PM
To: Stein, Christopher E <Chris_Stein@nps.gov>
Cc: Engler, Mark A. <Mark_Engler@nps.gov>
Subject: Re: Nebraska - National Heritage Area

Chris,

Thanks for taking my call today! I enjoyed our conversation and look forward to meeting you on Thursday, August 31st.

I talked with Mark Engler and we agreed on the meeting beginning at 10:00 at the Homestead National Monument. I will reach out to invite key stakeholders. There will probably be a handful of participants.

Attached is the MOU with the RTCA. I expect this to be signed by UNL folks by next week.

The following link will take you to a PDF with the work the students produced last semester. This has been a discovery process, as you will see as you flip through the posters.
<https://unl.box.com/s/tzd4c9h5egluc8lej0yrs1c2j08yc7x>

I will follow up with another conversation in July or early August when we know who will be attending.

Best always,
Kim

Kim L. Wilson ASLA
Professor of Landscape Architecture
Director, Landscape Architecture Program

College of Architecture
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
302 Architecture Hall
P.O. Box 880106
Lincoln, NE 68588

(402) 472-9230 (O)

2456

Cc: "Engler, Mark" <mark_engler@nps.gov>, "rachel franklin-weekley@nps.gov" <rachel_franklin-weekley@nps.gov>

Subject: Re: National Heritage Area

Kim:

1st - thanks for the elevation of status! :-)
2nd - Interesting. Thanks for the info. Ambitious but seems very doable if your Feasibility Study passes muster and the political winds are in your favor. In the end, it is all about politics (and an appropriate area of course).

Chris

On Wed, Nov 22, 2017 at 1:05 PM, Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu> wrote:

Christ,

A small working group is meeting in December to begin to develop a 'strategic plan' focused on having this NHA established by 2026, the 250 anniversary of American Independence. Ambitious but we believe doable.

Kim

Kim L. Wilson ASLA
Professor of Landscape Architecture
Director, Landscape Architecture Program

College of Architecture
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
302 Architecture Hall
P.O. Box 880106
Lincoln, NE 68588

(402) 472-9230 (O)
(765) 427-9643 (C)

From: Christopher Stein <chris_stein@nps.gov>

Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 at 12:58 PM

To: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>

Cc: "Engler, Mark" <mark_engler@nps.gov>, "rachel franklin-weekley@nps.gov" <rachel_franklin-weekley@nps.gov>

Subject: Re: National Heritage Area

Thank you Kim! Do you think your great project will take flight? Do you want me to place this boundary on an NHA map I'm developing that shows already established NHAs

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From: [Stein, Christopher E](#)
To: [Morgan, Jason R](#)
Subject: Fw: Nebraska NHA meeting
Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 12:32:10 PM

From: Stein, Christopher E <Chris_Stein@nps.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, November 6, 2018 2:42 PM
To: Franklin Weekley, Rachel <Rachel_Franklin-Weekley@nps.gov>
Subject: Re: Nebraska NHA meeting

Thanks for the info Rachel. They could actually use someone like you to help them, but I understand. Thanks for letting Kim know.

Chris

PS. I have always found these meetings interesting. If I lived closer and was feeling well enough to travel, I'd go myself.

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 6, 2018, at 2:03 PM, Franklin Weekley, Rachel <rachel_franklin-weekley@nps.gov> wrote:

- (Thanks for copying me on your message to Kim. I don't plan to go to that meeting next week and I will contact Kim to let her know.)
- (They keep having the same meeting over and over again. You said in your message to her that she needs to identify exactly what is nationally significant and that's what they keep avoiding.)
- (That seems to be the focus of the lunch session, but just having people talk about what **story** they think is nationally important won't cut it.)

The afternoon might be important to do some networking for support, but she keeps talking to the same people about what other heritage areas are about.

Rachel.

402-661-1928

**Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership, Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes, Wednesday, August 21, 2019**

211

Our next board meeting will be in McCook on September 24th, 10:30 – 2:30. Agenda and meeting location will follow.

So we can continue to make strides forward, the following action items have been identified for our next meeting:

- Review asset inventory with NPS (Rachel) to get input on theme development – Kim
- NHA Feasibility Study (FS) Task Force (Joe, Kim, Ashley and Kyle) to:
 - Analyze existing data/asset catalogue and determine what additional information is needed to complete FS
 - Develop an approach/framework/alternatives to complete
 - Produce a scope of work and RFP
 - Explore potential consultants
- Funding Task Force (Luke, Kelly, Shaley, Jarrod/Ashley) - Analyze potential economic impact - project potential ROI vs initial investment in NHA – Jarrod to explore funding thru Willa Cather's existing contracts. KS folks meet with Betsy to introduce NHA to Dane Hansen, explore additional sources – Community Foundation, Cloud County.
- Compile a list of in-kind contributions to the KS NE HA effort, including UNL student work, steering committee meetings and current board activities – Kim
- White paper draft – Carol
- Logo – polish draft and develop applications for letter head and facebook – Kim
- Facebook – develop outline – Jenna and Kim
- Finalize by-laws, roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest docs. – Joe
- Board meeting agenda for 09_24_19 – initiated by Kim and finalized by executive committee

Please email me with questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing you all in McCook!

Thank you,
Kim

From: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>

Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2019 at 1:48 PM

To: "Bartja, Jenna" <Jenna.Bartja@nebraska.gov>, Luke Mahin <rcecd@nckcn.com>, Jarrod McCartney <jmccartney@redcloudnebraska.com>, Ashley Olson <aolson@willacather.org>, "Engler, Mark" <mark_engler@nps.gov>, Joe Black <jblack@stuhmuseum.org>, "lcedfdirector@outlook.com" <lcedfdirector@outlook.com>, "info@orphantraindepot.org" <info@orphantraindepot.org>, "mchistorical@yahoo.com" <mchistorical@yahoo.com>, "carol@visitmccook.com"

Official Meeting Minutes
 Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership
Board of Directors Meeting
The National Willa Cather Center
Red Cloud Opera House, 411 North Webster Street, Red Cloud, NE
Wednesday, August 21st, 9:00 – 2:00 2019

Attendees: Joe Black, Shaley George, Jarrod McCartney, Ashley Olson, Dena Beck, Kyle Peterson, Carol Schlegel, Kelly Larson, Jenna Bartja, Luke Mahin, & Kim Wilson

9:00 – 9:10 **Welcome and Changes to the Agenda – Joe**
 Meeting opens with introductions
 Joe gives overview of changes that were made to the BOD documents
 Action item: add whistle blower doc

9:10 - 9:15 **Review and Move to Approve** 19_07_15 Meeting Minutes

 Kim gives overview of agenda

 Meeting minutes from July 15 approved – all in favor, one abstention (Joe)

9:15 - 10:10 **First Step: Feasibility Study – Kim**
 1. Feasibility Study Approach and Cost

(Do we include Lancaster, Otoe, and Lincoln counties in the feasibility study area or do we add them to the NHA at a later date?)

 Continue to recruit partners and encourage public involvement and buy-in and see what materializes

2. Asset Documentation

(Nearly 300 assets within the proposed study area have been catalogued by one of Kim's students)

 Action item: review and input additional, geographically appropriate assets

Action item: extrapolate emerging themes and share asset inventory with NPS to get input on theme development

3. Review Ex. National Heritage Area Request for Proposals

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From: [Stein, Christopher E](#)
To: [Morgan, Jason R](#)
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] Announcing the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership
Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 10:50:33 AM

From: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 3, 2020 12:54 PM
To: Stein, Christopher E <Chris_Stein@nps.gov>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Announcing the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership

Thank Chris for your input. We know we need to work on our themes and will do so. And we will make sure that in our correspondence will will make sure that people understand that the US Congress designates NHAs, not the NPS. Kim

From: "Stein, Christopher E" <Chris_Stein@nps.gov>
Date: Friday, April 3, 2020 at 11:38 AM
To: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Announcing the Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership

Kim:

Also...in reading your materials, here is some professional feedback...

1) It is my professional opinion that your themes will not "fly" with NPS DC office as your nationally important story (whatever that is?). Please know that I can not professionally support them either. Broad themes like Nature, Land, Settlement, etc. apply to everywhere in the USA and do not make your area nationally distinct. Do you catch what I'm saying? I do not mean to be "water" on good ideas. I mean to be helpful to you.

2) Please in your correspondence, make sure that people understand that the US Congress designates NHAs, not the NPS. While we firmly believe that it is very important to have NPS's stamp of approval on your feasibility study, NPS can not creat an NHA...no matter how much we might support your nationally important story. That is totally up to our legislators. Do you have legislative support for your effort?

Conversations like this are better by phone, I think.

Chris
(402) 881-1387

From: Kim Wilson <kwilson4@unl.edu>

**Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership, Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes, Thursday, January 21, 2021**

2. Review the potential funders list on Google Drive and see who we might have a connection with and to add additional names to the list.

Need to begin creating application outlines and/or drafts for the different grants we will apply for. Kim and Ashley will plan a meeting with Peter Kewitt Foundation to better position KNHAP to pursue a grant through them.

Sue encouraged the committee to look into the Attraction Development grant which is being offered through Kansas Tourism. Deadline for submitting an application is April 30th.

3. Secure a mailing list for year-end ask letters, etc.
4. Probably need to reintroduce ourselves. We are thinking that it might be a good idea to simply invite potential stakeholders to a webinar that you and Kristin host explaining who we are and what we want to accomplish.

Grassroots support will take the most time. We need buy-in from smaller orgs throughout the study area, so beginning to lay the ground work for that now is important. The Rural Tourism Series webinars are helping us to do that currently. We need to continue to share the KNHAP Newsletter out among potential partners and existing assets to remain visible.

In-person community events may begin in September? Community outreach events can possibly be assigned as projects to Kristin's advanced event planning class. Timeframe for this would be fall, when school is back in session.

5. Another press release will make it easier to raise some initial funding from organizations rather than cold calling them.
6. Each subcommittees put together a budget request--or basically just an estimate of what their costs will be in 2021-22. Obviously the Feasibility Study will be the biggest component of the budget/fundraising.

11:00 - 11:30

Communication and Marketing Committee - Chair, Kristin Malek

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1gQ4ygOLgSVbpSgRKZSjSoaN8uLokgu>

1. Logo options

The 2 final KNHAP logo options were shared to FB to gage the public's reaction. People were overwhelmingly drawn to the simpler logo but felt that the more colorful one would be appropriate for stickers and other merchandise in future. Kristin developed the simpler logo further with her intern, changing the font to make it more legible and bringing back the county lines. We will keep both logo templates so we can use them for different applications.

2. Review of the Newsletter

We need more photos for the Newsletter. Send Kim 20 contacts to receive the Newsletter if you haven't already and continue to share as you think of more.

3. Review of first webinar and determine next speakers

40 people logged on to our first webinar last Friday, along with some viewers on FB live. So the response was great and generated a lot of interest. The format was fairly informal and included lots of good discussion.

4. Webinar schedule

Looking for someone to be on our next panel Jan 29. Planning an Agritourism & Outdoor Recreation segment featuring Sue, Jenna, and a Nebraska Game & Parks representative TBD.

Main Street: invite director of the Main St program in KS or NE – Elizabeth Chase. Jarrod will reach out to SHIPPO (?), as they have more info on tax credit programs. Kelly was a Main St manager in Michigan, so she's can also be a panelist.

Place-making: how physical design helps create and promote an image/brand for communities. Instead of place-making, Kim recommends the panel talk about NHAs and why themes are important. Kim will provide context. Jim Ogle to join? Kim & KS professor LaBarbara James Wigfall could both be panelists. Nadine Single (KS) can speak to first impression surveys.

**Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership, Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes, Thursday, February 25, 2021**

10:30 - **Governance Committee - Chair, Carol Schlegel**

1. Potential Board Members - Board members term that ends in 2023 (4).

Kelly: subcommittee was not able to meet but I started a list of potential board members and shared with the committee. In Google drive in Governance. Contact me with other people you have in mind. Good to be prepared for the unexpected by keeping a solid running list of potential replacements for when board memberships expire.

Finance Committee - Chair, Kyle Peterson

Shayley put together a list of Dane G Hansen affiliates that have upcoming grant deadlines. Grant narrative will be the same for all the Dane G Hansen asks. Need an itemized list of what the FS will be comprised of with associated costs. Also need to know what amount we will be requesting from each grant; preferably the same ask will be made for each to help make it feel cohesive and fair. Shayley's grant list is comprised of all Kansas organizations; Jarrod is working on the NE list. Recommends we use the regional planning office's 501(3)© if we don't have our status approved before the grant deadlines.

Kim: needs another Adhoc committee to look at Big Sky's FS and adapt it for our needs. Kim will take the lead but would like to have someone from KS to bounce ideas off. Sue can help. RFP will be released through our org – not through a state government agency – to avoid conflict of interest, red tape, etc.

Kim's students have done a lot of work with regards to asset compilation, so the RFP will need to request what we need, not what we already have.

Not worth our while to have public meetings until FS is in motion because they will have to be part of that process.

- 11:00 **Fundraising Committee - Chair, Jarrod McCartney**

KNHAP received \$3K from a regional partnership org in Nebraska. The funds are currently being held by Willa Cather Foundation, earmarked for KNHAP.

Estimate needed for student work hours to include as in-kind for grant applications. Finance committee can/will organize all in-kind contributions from students and board members.

Shayley will create the excel sheet listing grants. Fundraising and/or finance will need to create a new doc for budgetary items/in-kind contributions so we can calculate our in-kind match amount. Are we asking for FS funding alone, or marketing as well, etc? Ashley can share details with Shayley. Kim will include her write offs/donations in the doc.

11:00 - 11:30 **Communication and Marketing Committee - Chair, Kristin Malek**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1gQ4vgOLgSVbpSgRKZSjSoaN8uLokgut>

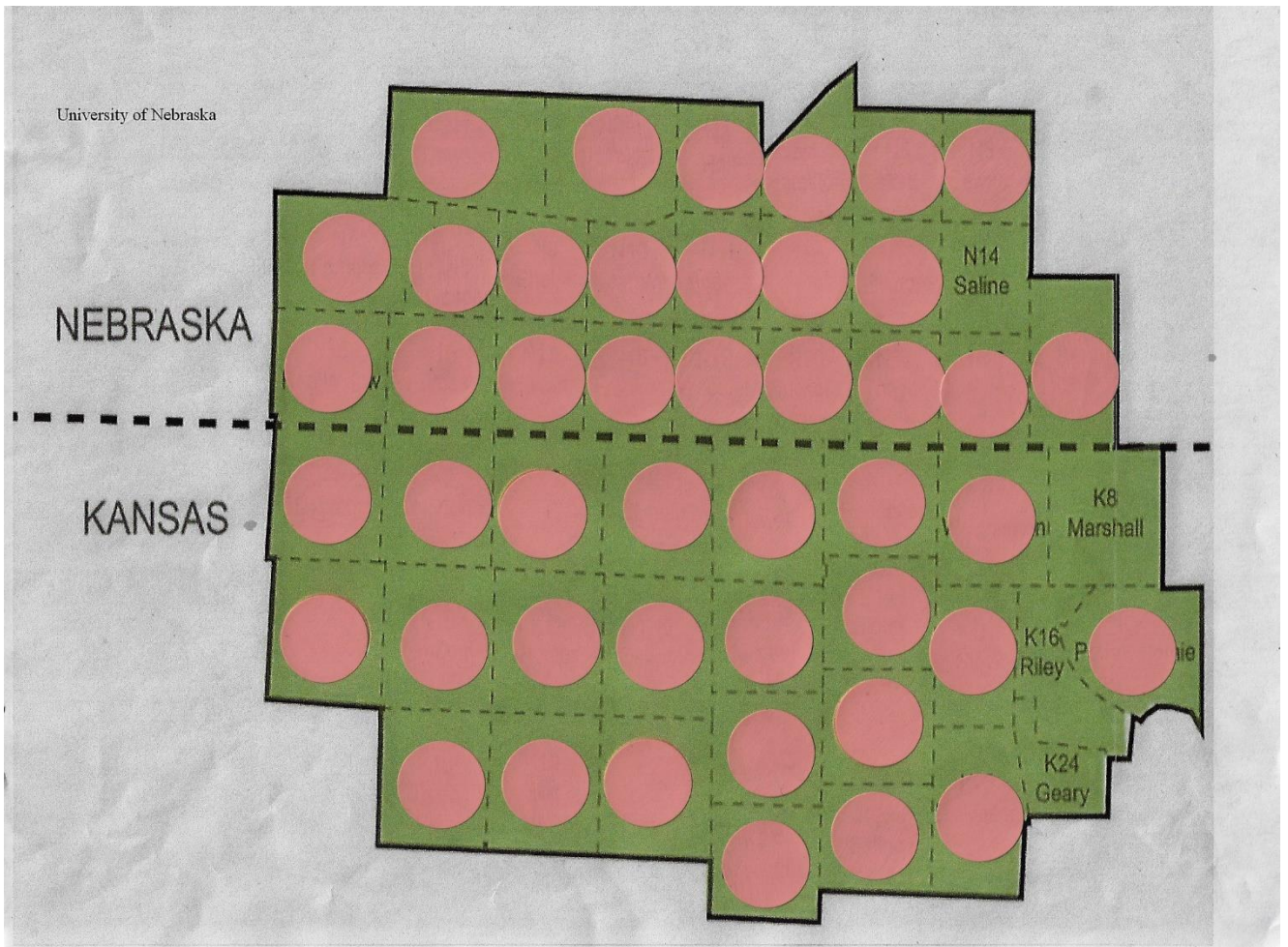
1. Logo Discussion
2. Social Media
3. Review Webinar and Schedule

Luke: Kristin made further edits to the logo based on input. State lines could be heavier, colors can be swapped out. Keep working on text.

Kim: Gray is dull, 'KS' and 'NE' are too bold, 'Heritage Area Partnership' is too thin. Name is more important than the area.

Maybe adjust the region to be more centered in the logo, even though it is currently based on real location of study area?

1. Decatur County, KS, April 6, 2021
2. Clay County, NE, April 20, 2021
3. Ottawa County, KS, April 19, 2021
4. Russell County, KS, April 19, 2021
5. Sheridan County, KS, April 20, 2021
6. Phillips County, KS, April 19, 2021
7. Thayer County, NE, April 21, 2021
8. Republic County, KS, April 26, 2021
9. Smith County, KS, April 26, 2021
10. Filmore County, NE, April 27, 2021
11. Trego County, KS, April 30, 2021
12. Ellsworth County, KS, May 3, 2021
13. Ellis County, KS, May 3, 2021
14. Graham County, KS, May 4, 2021
15. Harlan County, NE, May 4, 2021
16. Lincoln County, KS, May 10, 2021
17. Rooks County, KS, May 11, 2021
18. Osborne County, KS, May 14, 2021
19. Cloud County, KS, May 17, 2021
20. Nuckolls County, NE, May 17, 2021
21. Norton County, KS, May 17, 2021
22. Pottawatomie County, KS, May 24, 2021
23. Jefferson County, NE, May 25, 2021
24. Dickinson County, KS, May 27, 2021
25. Jewell County, KS, June 1, 2021
26. Franklin County, NE, June 1, 2021
27. Mitchell County, KS, June 7, 2021
28. Phelps County, NE, June 8, 2021
29. Furnas County, NE, June 8, 2021
30. Washington County, KS, June 14, 2021
31. Red Willow County, NE, June 14, 2021
32. Clay County, KS, June 21, 2021
33. Hall County, NE, June 22, 2021
34. Dawson County, NE, June 23, 2021
35. Gage County, NE, June 30, 2021
36. Frontier County, NE, June 30, 2021
37. Adams County, NE, July 6, 2021
38. Kearney County, NE, July 6, 2021
39. Buffalo County, NE, July 13, 2021
40. Seward County, NE, July 13, 2021
41. Webster County, NE, July 20, 2021
42. Gosper County, NE, July 21, 2021
43. Saline County, KS, August 10, 2021
44. York County, NE, August 24, 2021
45. Hamilton County, NE, August 25, 2021



Demand Notice to Remove County References

Attention: Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership

Prof. Kim Wilson
Othmer Hall 137A
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68688-0642

Dr. Krisin Malek

Ms. Caryl Hale

Ms. Shaley George

Mr. Roger Jasnoch

Ms. Carol Schlegel

Ms. Kelly Larson

Ms. Ashley Olson

Whereas Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership (KNHAP) did not notify nor gain permission from _____ County, KS/NE to include said County in a 49-County Conceptual National Heritage Area Map. Nor did Kansas Nebraska Heritage Area Partnership notify said County of the Regional Cultural Heritage Tourism Study undertaken in 2016 and presented in 2017.

The Board of County Commissioners demands the amendment of the 49-County National Heritage Area Map to exclude _____ County, KS/NE and removal of all references to Said County from the Regional Cultural Heritage Tourism Study.

This Demand Notice serves as the Board of County Commissioners formal demand for KNHAP to exclude the above County from the conceptual NHA map and removal of any and all references to Said County from the Regional Cultural Heritage Tourism Study, prepared, generated or utilized by KNHAP and or its partners by **September 15, 2021**.

Should KNHAP choose not to comply with this Demand Notice, the Board of County Commissioners of _____ County, KS/NE reserves the right to pursue other remedies, including instituting legal proceedings against KNHAP.

Signature

Date

The Team



Angel Cushing & Rep. Tatum Lee Hahn, WaKeeney, KS, April 14, 2021



Governor Pete Ricketts & Angel Cushing, McCook, NE, May 19, 2021



Angel Cushing of Allen, KS, Kathy & Wes Wilcot of Beaver City, NE, McCook, NE,
May 19, 2021



Beth O'Dell Salmans of Marysville, KS, Angel Cushing, Norman Kincaide. Celebrating
conclusion of Operation Echo, Coppermill Steakhouse, McCook, NE, May 19, 2021