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BEATRICE, NEBRASKA



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

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NATIONAL MONUMENT OF AMERICA

BEATRICE, NEBRASKA

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

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June 2000

Prepared for
National Park Service
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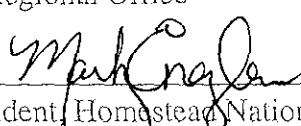
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HOMESTEAD

NATIONAL MONUMENT OF AMERICA

Cultural Landscape Report

Recommended  Date: 17 July 00
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Midwest Regional Office

Concurred  Date: 7/20/2000
Superintendent, Homestead National Monument of America

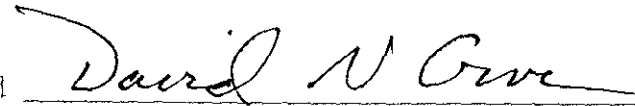
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ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Introduction

Homestead National Monument of America (HNMA) is located in Gage County, in southeastern Nebraska, approximately 40 miles south of Lincoln, Nebraska. The Monument is situated around the intersection of Nebraska State Highway 4 (SH4) and the Blakely Township Road, three and one half miles northwest of Beatrice. HNMA is composed of two discontinuous units: the primary acreage, containing the original 162.73 acre Daniel Freeman homestead and the Palmer-Epard Cabin, and the 1.5 acre Freeman Schoolhouse site. The HNMA park entrance is located off SH4, and the Freeman Schoolhouse entrance is off the Blakely Township road, 0.5 miles to the west of the primary unit on SH4 (*Exhibit 1*).

The Homestead National Monument of America was part of the land claimed by the Kansa, Otoe-Missouria, Pawnee and other Native American tribes until 1856 when the area became a focus of Euro-American settlement. Daniel Freeman, acting under the Homestead Act of 1862, established the first Nebraska homestead on January 1, 1863. Freeman's original homestead, currently included in the HNMA, consists of four plots of land, referred to as the *forties* (*Exhibit 2*).¹ Freeman directed farming and ranching activities on his property, which consisted of approximately 100 acres of grassland and 60 acres of woodland along the banks of Cub Creek, until his death in 1908. Following his death, his heirs continued to farm the property, until 1936 when HNMA was established by Congress "as an appropriate monument to retain for prosperity a proper

¹The original Daniel Freeman homestead is composed of 160 acres arranged in an inverted T shape that is divided into four, approximately 40-acre, square plots of land, referred to as the north, east, middle, and west *forties*.

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."²

The initial stages of NPS ownership of HNMA were characterized by the restoration of the Freeman farmlands to their original status as tallgrass prairie and the construction of a NPS headquarters area. The prairie restoration began in 1939, making it the second oldest restored prairie in the United States. Additional developments were made in the NPS Mission 66 period, including new roads and trails through the site and the expansion of the headquarters area. In 1970 the NPS acquired the Freeman Schoolhouse site to "further the interpretation and commemoration of the pioneer life of early settlers of the West."³

Scope of the CLR

Land and Community Associates (LCA) of Charlottesville, Virginia, commenced work on this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) in November, 1997. The scope of work called for field investigations to develop an inventory of existing conditions and structures, including identification of potentially historic features and general vegetation types; development of a historical narrative description of the physical evolution of the site in each major period of development, including "Historic Period Plans" for each period; a narrative description of the existing conditions of various landscape features, illustrated by documentary photographs and an existing conditions map; a summary of information about known archeological resources, accompanied by a map; a narrative describing and refining management issues and concerns; an analysis of the integrity and significance of features and the landscape; a proposal of detailed treatment recommendations; and a narrative of general recommendations for phasing and

²"A Plan for the Interpretation of Homestead National Monument of America," May 11, 1990. p. 3.

³"A Plan for the Interpretation of Homestead National Monument of America," pp. 3-4.

packaging recommended treatments, complete with cost estimates for the implementation of recommendations.

Methodology and Project Staff

The methodology used for this CLR has been based on a multidisciplinary approach that combined documentary, map and other research with field investigations. The LCA team has met with HNMA staff to gain insight regarding the site and to generate specific questions to direct subsequent research and fieldwork. Four narrative chapters have been drafted which address the site history, existing conditions, management issues, and analysis of these issues.

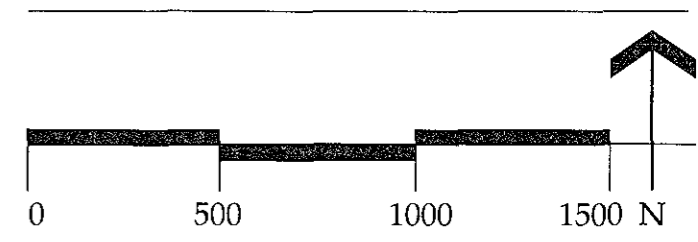
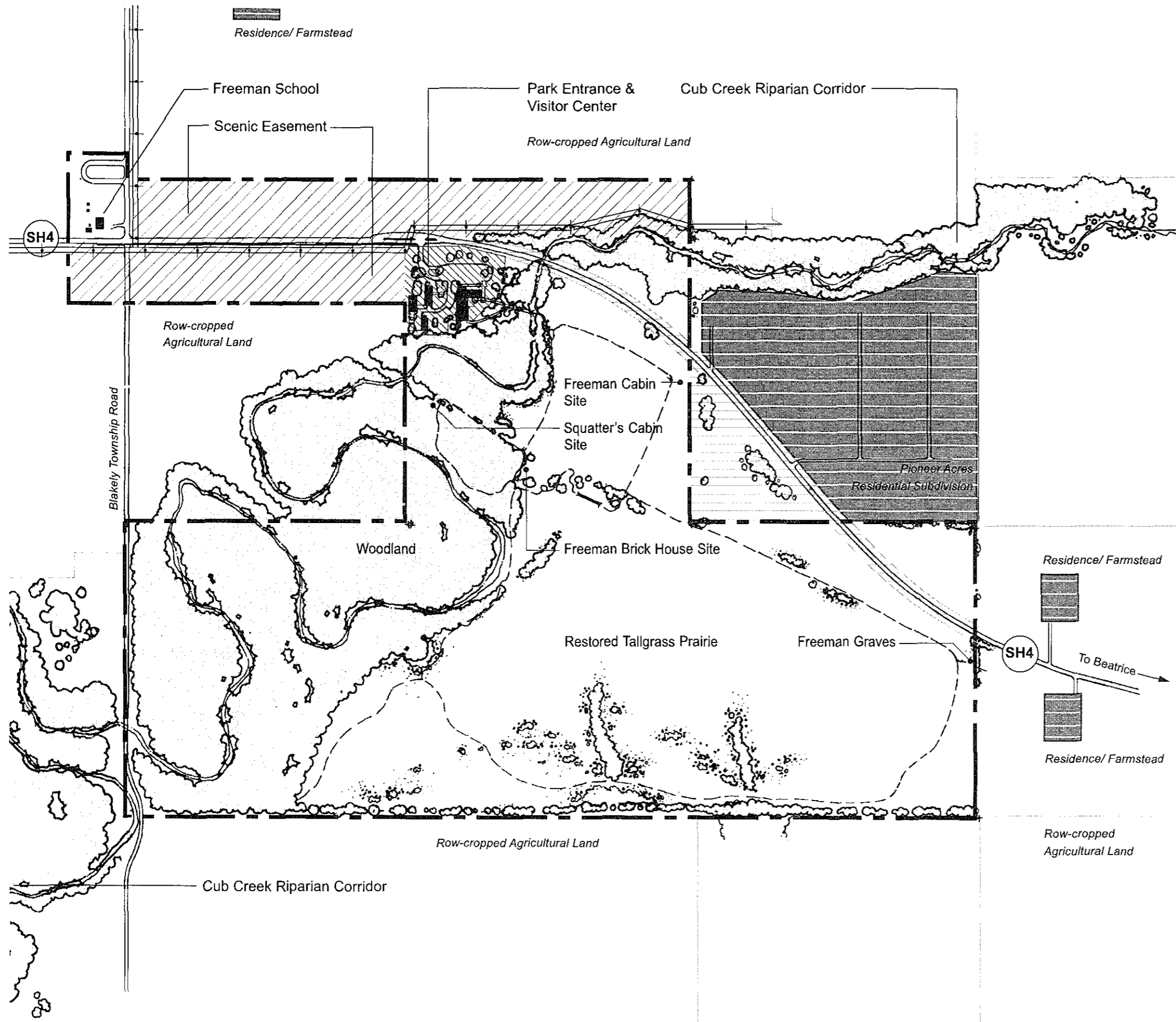
LCA project staff to date has included J. Timothy Keller, FASLA, historical landscape architect; Genevieve Keller, cultural landscape specialist and preservation planner; Matthew Tucker, cultural landscape specialist; Harold L. Reem, historian; and Ann Wanner, editor and research assistant. The team has developed an integrated approach for development of the CLR with the work of each individual discipline and project team member informing and complementing the work of the others.

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 1

EXISTING CONDITIONS: ENTIRE HNMA SITE



MAP KEY

	..... HNMA Building
	..... Residential Area
	..... Wooded Vegetation
	..... State Right-of Way
	..... Cub Creek
	..... Historic Use Zone
	..... Special Use Zone (Scenic Easement)
 Development Zone
 HNM Boundary Line

SOURCES

1979 Aerial Photograph, U.S.D.A., SCS. [HNMA]
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Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

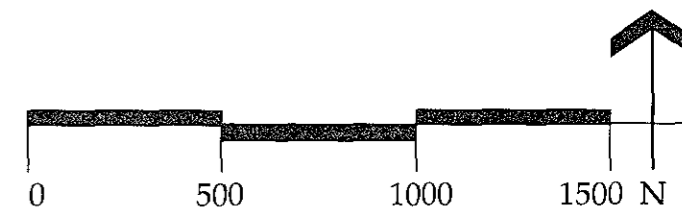
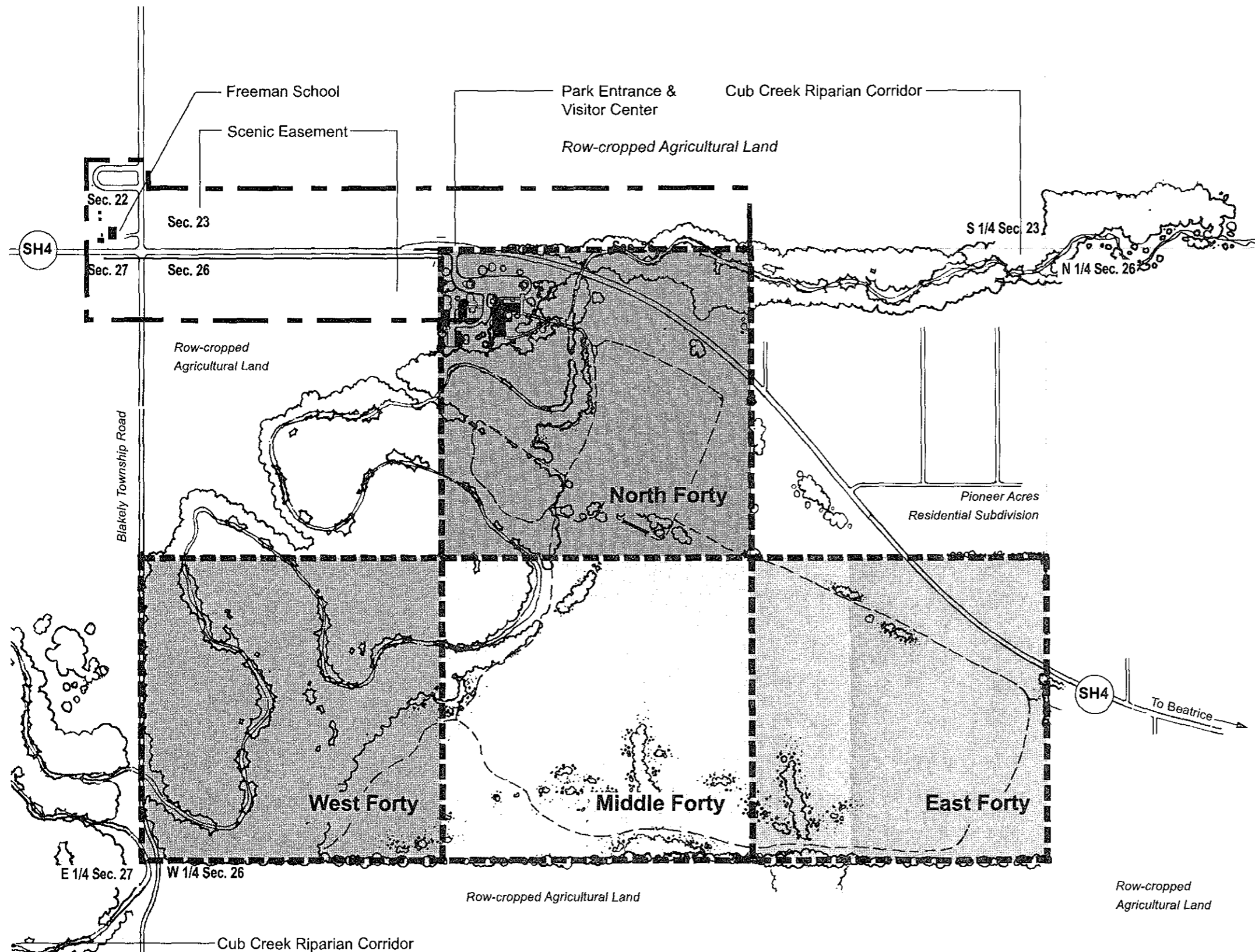
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HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 2

EXISTING CONDITIONS: HNMA "FORTIES" LAYOUT



MAP KEY

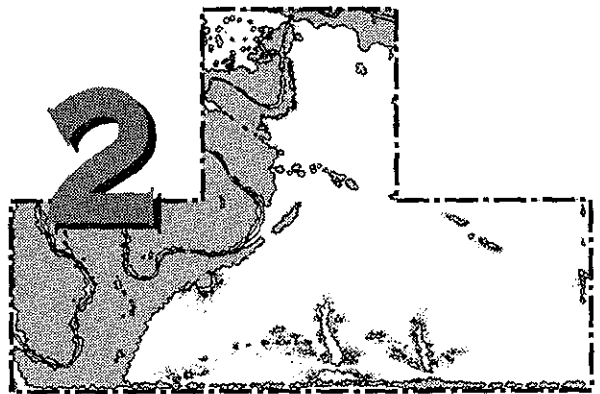
- Park Building
- Wooded Vegetation
- Shrubs
- Cub Creek
- Trail
- HNMA Boundary Line

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- The Changing Prairie: HNMA Trail Guide, Eastern National Park and Monument Association. 1995. [HNMA].

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SITE HISTORY

SITE HISTORY

Brief Historical Overview

The history of human use of present-day Gage County begins with periodic use approximately 2,000 years ago when Indian tribes engaged in simple agriculture and hunted in the vicinity. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries when Euro-Americans began to travel west, traders and trappers were active in the area, land was surveyed, and settlers began to claim land and settle it. In 1862 a squatter cleared a portion of tallgrass prairie and built a simple log cabin near Cub Creek in the northernmost section of the present HNMA. A few months later in 1862, Daniel Freeman bought the squatter's interest in the land, and filed a claim under the Homestead Act of 1863, becoming the first Homesteader in Nebraska. His 160 acre plot was arranged in an inverted T shape, which can be divided into four, approximately 40-acre, square plots of land, referred to as the north, east, middle, and west *forties* (*Exhibit 2*).

During his lifetime, Daniel Freeman built several structures on his property and exploited the entirety of the 160 acres. In 1867, he built a log cabin in the north *forty* of his homestead. The cabin was associated with a number of traditional farming outbuildings. He continued to clear the prairie for farming and also used the woodlands as a fuel source and for grazing livestock. Freeman prospered and was able to build a new two-story, brick house near Cub Creek and to develop a new barnyard, feeder barn, granary, corncrib, windmill, and well.

Following Daniel Freeman's death in 1908, his wife Agnes Suiter Freeman and their children continued to farm and develop the property. When the Freeman's brick house burned, it was replaced by a smaller house; at least two other small houses were built on the property for family members. Daniel Freeman's heirs continued to farm the land through the 1930s. However, in March, 1936, Congress passed an act authorizing the establishment of the Homestead National Monument of America. The site was purchased by the National Park Service (NPS) in 1938 and was officially designated in 1939. Since that time NPS has operated the HNMA as an interpreted site open for public visitation and has developed facilities, including buildings and structures, in support of its mission. NPS has also undertaken conservation and restoration projects to counteract the effects of decades of poor conservation practices during the years the site was being actively farmed.

The Freeman Schoolhouse, located northwest of Freeman's homestead, was built in 1871. Daniel and Agnes Freeman's children attended the one-room school, which also served as a site for community functions. The schoolhouse and its associated service buildings became part of the HNMA in 1970, shortly after it closed in 1967 after 96 years as a rural school. *(The school site history is at the end of this chapter.)*

Methodology

Phase I began with a visit to HNMA headquarters by the Land and Community Associates' project team. The team reviewed archival research materials available for the project at headquarters with NPS cultural management personnel and conducted a physical reconnaissance of the site. NPS personnel provided the consultant team with

an orientation to in-house archival collections, identified areas of research and specific primary and secondary sources, and posed questions to specifically address during project research and analysis. A subsequent visit focused on identifying and duplicating selected historic images, primarily photographs.

Phase II consisted of research using primary and secondary materials identified in Phase I. Research was conducted at HNMA in-house archives, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Gage County, Nebraska, Courthouse. Materials examined include land office records, Daniel Freeman's letters and reminiscences, oral history transcripts, Gage County land and probate records, census records, historic and current maps, historic and current ground and aerial photographs of the monument, HNMA's administrative history files, and a wide range of published and unpublished secondary sources. Documentary research was supplemented by an interview at the HNMA headquarters with Mr. Robert Graff, a lifelong local resident whose property adjoins HNMA and by a telephone interview with Jim (Forrest) Marandille who knew the Freeman family and had farmed some of the land now contained within the HNMA boundaries. Phase III consisted of analysis of the Phase II research materials. Analysis focused on answering specific historic cultural landscape questions for each period of the site's development, including questions regarding the patterns of historic vegetation, the locations of historic roads, and the locations of historic structures and building clusters, fence lines, fields and orchards, and other cultural features. The land use and spatial patterns revealed in these features' locations, moreover, were assumed to be the products of a variety of factors, including but not necessarily limited to economics, technology, the natural environment, and cultural traditions. With the exception of minor changes associated with agricultural use, interpretation, naturally

occurring erosion, and the measures associated with erosion control, it was assumed that the site's topography had not changed significantly in the more than 140 years since it was initially surveyed and subsequently homesteaded by Daniel Freeman. Phase IV involved preparation of a final site history that incorporated NPS review comments as well as the results of continued research and analysis.

Pre-1856: Pre-Homestead Settlement (*Exhibit 3*)

Historic Context

Mid-western Indian tribes began extensive contact with Europeans in the mid-eighteenth century. French, Spanish, British, and Euro-American explorers and traders exchanged guns, cloth, metal kettles and implements, and other high demand trade goods in exchange for furs. By the late eighteenth century, most of the tribes had also improved their mobility and hunting abilities through acquisition of European horses, which were diffused from Santa Fe after 1600 via Indian trading and raiding. European contact, however, had other effects as well. Many Indian peoples, including the tribes in southeastern Nebraska, contracted smallpox and other fatal European epidemic diseases, suffered from the socially disruptive effects of alcohol, lost indigenous craft skills as they came to depend on European-produced goods, and were drawn into a web of European power wars and rivalries. Nevertheless, France and Spain, the initial European claimants to the tribes' lands, did not significantly threaten Indian independence. The United States, which acquired the site and the surrounding region

as part of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, did pose a threat as a result of rapid territorial expansion.¹

In an 1825 treaty with the Kansa, the United States purchased the area, which was initially proposed to form part of a permanent western haven for displaced Indian tribes (*Map 1*). Unrelenting Euro-American settlement and expansion had left many Indian tribes, originally located east of the Mississippi River, landless.² However, by the early 1850s, this area was coveted by Euro-American settlers, many of whom were squatters on the Indian land, and the region lay on one route of the proposed Pacific railroad. The United States government responded with the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act organizing these two territories for white settlement, signaling the government's abandonment of the idea of a permanent Indian frontier.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

For at least 8,000 years and possibly as many as 18,000 years before the beginning of initial Euro-American settlement in the 1850s, Indians periodically occupied the HNMA site and the surrounding region. The earliest waves of Indian inhabitants, who roamed the area until ca. 6500 B.C., probably included nomadic hunters from the Clovis, Folsom and other Paleo-Indian cultures who hunted mammoths, mastodons, giant bison, and other now-extinct large animals on the Nebraska plains. These initial inhabitants were

¹James C. Olson and Ronald C. Naugle, *History of Nebraska*, 3rd ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), pp. 26-27, 32-33; David J. Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness: The Dispossession of the Nebraska Indians* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), pp. 4-9, 39-55, 71-102.

²D. W. Meinig, *Continental America, 1800-1867*, Vol. 2 of *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 78-102; Olson and Naugle, pp. 67, 117-118; Wishart, pp. 55-69.

succeeded by hunting and foraging peoples who used fire, collected and processed vegetation, and hunted a wide range of large and small animal and bird species. Beginning in ca. A.D. 1, the Plains-Woodland people, who were less nomadic than their predecessors, occupied most of Nebraska. They hunted, possibly practiced simple horticulture, made pottery for food storage, and built simple houses—depressions in the ground most likely covered with skins or mats supported on a framework of light poles. In ca. A.D. 1000, more sedentary village farmers who occupied the area until the late fifteenth century replaced the Plains-Woodland people. These farmers, who possibly represented the most western extension of the eastern North American maize culture complex, raised corn and associated crops, foraged for wild fruits and berries, fished the region's streams, and conducted seasonal hunts, after which they returned to their home settlements. These small villages, which were unfortified, were comprised of square or rectangular houses with dugout floors protected by a mud and thatch covering supported on wooden posts. Reflecting their more advanced culture, these farmers produced more refined pottery and stone and bone tools and ornaments than their Plains-Woodland predecessors.³

Historic Indian tribes began occupying the region around the site in the 1500s or early 1600s. In the early nineteenth century (*Map 5*) these tribes included the Pawnee, whose ancestors migrated into the valleys of the Platte and Loup Rivers from the south by the mid-1600s, and the Kansa, Otoe, and Missouriia, who arrived in the mid-eighteenth century.⁴ Like their immediate predecessors on the Nebraska plains, these tribes were sedentary corn farmers who supplemented their agricultural, foraging, and continuous small-scale hunting pursuits with seasonal buffalo hunts. When occupying their permanent villages they resided in earth lodges, and when traveling or hunting they

³Olson and Naugle, pp. 13-18.

⁴Wishart, pp. 4, 15; Olson and Naugle, pp. 18-25.

lived in skin tipis. Tribal territorial boundaries were fluid and overlapping, and the region in the vicinity of the site was simultaneously part of several hunting territories surrounding individual village cores.⁵

The Otoe and Missouri, who had merged into a single group—the Otoe-Missouria—in the early nineteenth century following the Missouri's decimation by war and especially disease, had been using the region surrounding the HNMA site as part of their allotment under the Indian haven concept (*Map 2*). However, in 1855 they left the area under the terms of an 1854 treaty and were confined to a reservation—the so-called Otoe Reservation—in what was to become southern Gage and Jones counties, Nebraska (*Maps 3 and 4*).⁶ Shortly thereafter, in two 1876 and 1881 treaties, the tribes sold this remaining land to the United States, and in 1880-1881 permanently departed Nebraska for a new reservation in Oklahoma Indian Territory.⁷

Historic Vegetation Patterns

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries during the final phase of Indian habitation, the HNMA site was dominated by two vegetative patterns—tallgrass prairie and the wooded areas along the margins of Cub Creek. The tallgrass prairie ecosystem encompassed a broad belt of territory in the plains of the north central United States, including most of Illinois and Iowa, northern and western Missouri, southwestern Minnesota, and eastern Kansas and Nebraska (*Map 6*).⁸ Assuming that the site's prairie

⁵Janet Jeffries and Wilma Daddario, *Prairie Country Tourism Survey: Including the Counties of Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Saline, & Thayer* (Wilber, Nebraska: The Southeast Nebraska Travel Council, 1997), p. 6; Olson and Naugle, pp. 18-25; Wishart, pp. 1-16.

⁶Olson and Naugle, p. 25; Wishart, pp. 5-6, 103-117.

⁷Olson and Naugle, pp. 117-118; Wishart, pp. 221-225.

⁸Waters D. Herbert, "Field Notes Of the Subdivision Lines In Township No. 4 North of Range 5, East of the 6th Principal Meridian in the Territory of Nebraska," July 1857, pp. 321, 324 and 327-328 of a

(approximately 100 acres) was a typical tallgrass ecosystem, the predominant grass species probably would have been big bluestem and Indian grass, both of which grew more than six feet tall, and little bluestem, which grew approximately three feet tall. Other grass species—some of the more than 150 kinds typically found in a tallgrass prairie—would likely have included sloughgrass, switch grass, prairie dropseed, sideoats grama, Canada wild rye, June grass, porcupine grass, wheatgrasses, needle-and-thread, and needlegrasses.⁹

The site's belt of woods (approximately 60 acres) along the well-watered margins of Cub Creek apparently was typical of many of the forested areas that hugged the banks of the rivers and streams throughout the western edge of the tallgrass prairie. According to United States surveyors' field notes made in 1857, tree species observed and noted as present in the Cub Creek bottom included mature bur oaks, elms, walnuts, and box elders. The accompanying edge of undergrowth at the juncture of the woods and grass consisted of smaller wild "plum[s] & vines," possibly including sumac, hawthorn, dogwood, snowberry, and coralberry.¹⁰

These prairie and wooded areas were home to a wide range of wildlife species. Indeed, the site's rich habitat was part of what one writer has termed the United States' "great faunal crossroads—the eastern limit of some wildlife species, the western limit of others." To the east were the heavily forested areas of the eastern United States; to the west were the mixed prairie and the shortgrass prairie of the Great Plains. Eastern forest wildlife species possibly found on the site included the elk, white-tailed deer, black bear, bobcat, timber rattlesnake, ruffed grouse, and eastern wild turkey. Western

Typescript Copy in File 2636, Drawer 10, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; John Madson, *Where the Sky Began: Land of the Tallgrass Prairie* (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1995), pp. 19-21.

⁹Madson, pp. 51-71.

¹⁰Herbert, pp. 321, 327-328; Madson, pp. 21-27, 130-131.

prairie animal species would probably have encompassed the buffalo, gray “buffalo wolf” (the prairie form of the lobo wolf), coyote, badger, Franklin ground squirrel, pocket gopher, greater prairie chickens, and possibly the grizzly bear and pronghorn antelope. Common insects would have included bumblebees, honeybees, hundreds of species of flies, and prairie grasshoppers—the so-called “Rocky Mountain locust” that became the bane of early Euro-American settlers.¹¹

Historic Structures, Fields, and Circulation Networks

Although the numerous prehistoric and historic Indian peoples living in present-day eastern Nebraska almost certainly traversed the site and exploited its resources for thousands of years, only a few made it their home for an extended period of time. Between ca. A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1400 a group of prehistoric sedentary farmers from the Central Plains Tradition established a village or residential area east of the Cub Creek woods in the site’s north 40 *forty*. Although no remains of permanent domestic structures have been located, artifacts, including projectile points, hide scrapers, potsherds, and sandstone grinding stones found at the “functionally complex area,” indicate that the inhabitants probably hunted and practiced agriculture. If the site’s inhabitants did practice agriculture, their village was probably adjacent to or near cornfields and possibly was criss-crossed by several paths. These features have not been identified on the site’s landscape, however, and their existence is purely conjectural.¹²

¹¹Madson, pp. 125-165 (source of quotation “great faunal crossroads”).

¹²Olson and Naugle, pp. 17-18; Christopher M. Schoen and Peter A. Bleed, “An Archaeological Survey of the Homestead National Monument of America” (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Anthropology, University of Nebraska, February 1, 1986), pp. 1-2, 23, 35-49, 57-60.

1856 – 1908: Homesteading (*Exhibits 4 and 4A*)

Historic Context

Euro-American occupation of the site and neighboring region began almost immediately after the Otoe and Missouri tribes departed the area for their reservation in 1855. In 1857 United States government contract surveyors surveyed and subdivided the site and surrounding township in newly-established Gage County as part of their 1854-1857 surveys of eastern Nebraska Territory. Settlers began pouring in soon thereafter.¹³ Indeed, some settlers—squatters—staked out land in the newly-opened territory before the surveys were completed, and only later filed their claims in federal land offices and obtained formal government recognition of their interests. When Nebraska was admitted as a state in 1867, the total number of settlers was more than 50,000—an approximately twenty-fold increase from 1854. Colton's 1867 map of Nebraska (*Map 4*) depicts the influence of the new settlers in establishing communities, particularly in eastern Nebraska. These settlers were obtaining land via several means, including traditional cash purchase from the federal government, military land warrants, purchase of Nebraska state agricultural college scrip, and purchase of railroad grant land.¹⁴

Homesteading was yet another means of obtaining land. The Homestead Act, signed by President Lincoln on May 20, 1862, took effect on January 1, 1863. The act provided that "any person who is the head of a family, or who has arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and is a citizen of the United States, or who shall have filed his declaration of

¹³Herbert, pp. 321, 324, 327-328; "Yasuo Okuda, *Public Lands and Pioneer Farmers: Gage County, Nebraska, 1850-1900* (Tokyo, Japan: The Keio Economic Society, Keio University, 1971), p. 13; Olson and Naugle, p. 88.

¹⁴Okuda, pp. 14-20; Olson and Naugle, pp. 88-92, 156-158, 163-166.

intention to become such... and who has never borne arms against the United States government or given aid or comfort to its enemies" could claim up to 160 acres (a quarter section) of unappropriated public land upon payment of a ten-dollar fee. Having "resided upon or cultivated" the land for a period of "five years immediately succeeding the time of filing," the claimant, if a United States citizen, could receive a final land patent from the federal government.¹⁵ The Homestead Act was most successful in the period immediately following its creation, from 1863 to 1880, and in sufficiently irrigated areas, including Nebraska and Kansas. In these first years over 450,000 people filed homesteading claims, and, on average, more than half of these homesteaders gained ownership titles. In Nebraska alone, more than 131,000 persons seized the opportunity offered by the act's promise of free land and free farms and filed initial homestead entries. However, the Homesteading Act proved unsuccessful for settlers who moved to the more arid western regions of the country or who were unable to secure a well-watered site. Nevertheless, as several historians note, the act "held out hope for those who sought a chance to start over" and some homesteaders did succeed despite long odds. The act offered "legions of Americans inexpensive access to the land market and farm ownership."¹⁶

¹⁵Olson and Naugle, pp. 158, 461. The operation of the Homestead Act and other federal land laws is discussed in detail in a number of sources. See, for example: Everett R. Dick, *The Lure of the Land: Social History of the Public Lands from the Articles of Confederation to the New Deal* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1970); Paul Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968); Benjamin Horace Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965); and Addison E. Sheldon, *Land Systems and Land Policies in Nebraska* (1936)—the standard work on Nebraska's mid-nineteenth-century land history.

¹⁶Allan G. Bogue, "An Agricultural Empire," in Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss, eds., *The Oxford History of the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 288-290 (source of quotation "legions of Americans..."); Russell Gibbs, "Evaluation of the Homestead Movement," Homestead National Monument Research Program Project Number 7 (Homestead National Monument, June 26, 1944), pp. 68-73; Olson and Naugle, pp. 157, 159-163 (source of quotation "held out hope..."), 200-204, 245-249.

In addition to this means of acquisition, the late 1800s were marked by improvements in crop varieties, livestock strains, and agricultural technology. The presence of homesteaders such as Daniel Freeman with the capital available to take advantage of technological advances contributed to Nebraska's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century development as a prosperous Midwestern agricultural state.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

A squatter was the first known Euro-American to inhabit the HNMA site. He settled on the land in 1862, after it had been surveyed and opened to settlers, but he did not own it. During his time on the property he built a rudimentary dwelling and began clearing the prairie and planting crops. However, after a mere several months of living on the property, the squatter sold the land to Daniel Freeman (1826-1908) (*Figure 1*) for a cart and a team of oxen and moved back to Ohio with his homesick wife.¹⁷

Daniel Freeman's homestead entry was the first in Nebraska and one of the first in the United States. Shortly after midnight on January 1, 1863, he filed claim at the Brownville, Nebraska, land office to 160 acres of land located northwest of the town of Beatrice in Blakely Township in Gage County.¹⁸ Freeman's land straddled the overland

¹⁷Beverly S. Kaplan, *Daniel and Agnes Freeman: Homesteaders* (Lincoln, Nebraska: J. & L. Lee Co., 1992), pp. 4-8. According to Kaplan, the squatter's name was Job Harris. However, when Freeman filed his homestead claim on January 1, 1863, another settler, Robert Breese, was identified as having a previous interest in Freeman's homestead. Richard F. Barnet, the Register of the Land Office at Brownville, Nebraska, stated that Breese had "filed his declaratory statement" on the same tract as Freeman, but that Freeman was allowed to file his claim because he "brought forth abundant proof that Breese had abandoned the Land some months ago by leaving the territory." Breese and Harris may be the same person, or their previous interests in Freeman's homestead may be completely unrelated. See Richard F. Barnet to J. M. Edmund, January 1, 1863, File 2668, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives.

¹⁸Charles Plante and Ray H. Mattison, "The 'First' Homestead," reprinted from *Agricultural History* 36 (No. 4), pp. 1-9; Application No. 1, Homestead Land Office, Brownville, Nebraska Territory, January 1, 1863, Copy in File 2673, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Daniel Freeman Affidavit, Homestead Land Office, Brownville, Nebraska Territory, January 1, 1863, Copy in File 2665, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Richard F. Barret to J. M. Edmund, January 1, 1863, File 2668, Drawer 5,

freight road between Brownville to the east and Fort Kearny to the west.¹⁹ His T-shaped claim consisted of some 100 acres of grassland and approximately 60 acres of woodland located along the margins of Cub Creek.²⁰ This configuration, which was in response to the site's natural features, provided the optimum combination of water, timber, and prairie resources required for a successful homestead.²¹ Freeman resided on and cultivated the land for the requisite five years, and received a final federal patent for the tract in 1869.²² With the exception of several years when he lived in the nearby town of Beatrice, Freeman lived on the homestead with his wife, Agnes Suiter Freeman (1843-1931) (*Figure 2*), and family (*Figure 3*) until his death in 1908.

In his later years, Freeman advanced his claim and image as the nation's first homesteader. He maintained a guestbook with the names of visitors to the farmstead. His homestead cabin rather than his later substantial brick house was featured in the 1888 *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*. Freeman used stationary

Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Thomas Clyne Affidavit, Homestead Land Office, Nebraska Territory, January 1, 1863, File 2665, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Register of Homestead Entries made at the Land Office at Brownville, Nebraska Territory, January 1863, copy provided by Mr. Robert Graff, Gage County, Nebraska. The details of Daniel Freeman's colorful and often controversial life have been told and retold in numerous books and articles. The most comprehensive study is Beverly S. Kaplan's *Daniel and Agnes Freeman: Homesteaders* (Lincoln, Nebraska: J. & L. Lee Co., 1992), a detailed and yet somewhat fictionalized account written by Freeman's great granddaughter. Other accounts include: Russell A. Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," Homestead National Monument Research Program Project Number 6 (Homestead National Monument, May 4, 1944); the biographical sketch of Freeman included in the 1888 *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska* (Chicago, Illinois: Chapman Brothers, 1888), pp. 521- 523; and Charles Stout's "Daniel Freeman," an unpublished 1939 paper filed in the Freeman Family History and Genealogy Notebook in the HNMA Library.

¹⁹ William Lass, *From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake: An Account of Overland Freighting* (Nebraska: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1972), map between pp. 74 and 75.

²⁰The original Daniel Freeman 160-acre homestead is arranged in an inverted T shape that is divided into four, approximately 40-acre, square plots of land, referred to as the north, east, middle, and west *forties*.

²¹Kaplan, p. 8; Lass, pp. 138-139; Madson, pp. 204-206; Geo. A. Ogle & Co., *Standard Atlas of Gage County, Nebraska Including a Plat Book* (Chicago, Illinois: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1906), p. 41; Schoen and Bleed, p. 53.

²²Daniel Freeman Final Homestead Patent, September 1, 1869, Copy in File 2675, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives.

emblazoned with an engraving of his first cabin and the inscription "First Homestead in the United States," and he successfully advertised his claim to Congressman Galusha Grow, the author of the Homestead Act.²³

In many respects Freeman was the ideal small-scale homesteader. By the mid-1880s Blakely Township and Gage County contained a higher than average percentage of highly successful homesteaders like Daniel Freeman. These homesteaders had arrived early and acquired relatively rare and highly desirable mixed tracts of prairie and woodland located along rivers and streams. Later homesteaders, including most of those who settled in the more arid and unwooded sections of western Nebraska, had to settle for less desirable tracts.²⁴ These homesteaders had a much more difficult time working their land and consequently were not as successful as their more eastern counterparts. The difficulties in western Nebraska foreshadowed the failures of the Homesteading Act as later settlers attempted to expand into the more arid western regions of the country.

Due to his land's ideal combination of water, woodlands, and rich prairie soil, Daniel Freeman was able to be highly successful. He expanded beyond his original 160-acre homestead to become a wealthy farmer who owned more than 1,000 acres of land by 1880. In 1885 his somewhat smaller 545-acre holdings were valued at \$30,000. He also actively pursued other interests, including medicine, politics, law, and public service. He served as Gage County Sheriff, Coroner, and Justice of the Peace, and gained regional notoriety in an 1899 Nebraska State Supreme Court Case when he successfully objected

²³Freeman Homestead Visitor's Book, 1890-1920, File 474, Shelf 3, Cabinet 17, HNMA Archives; Plante and Mattison, p. 2; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*, p. 529; Letter by unidentified author written on Daniel Freeman homestead letterhead stationary, January 25, 1909, Daniel and Agnes Suiter Freeman Notebook, HNMA Library.

²⁴Okuda, pp. 44-65, 160-166; Olson and Naugle, pp. 159-163.

to religious instruction in the public schools. Freeman was able to pursue such a wide range of interests by relying heavily on tenants and other hired farm laborers to work his land holdings. Indeed, with the exception of horse breeding, Freeman appears to have taken little direct interest in agriculture after obtaining his homestead, and he normally rented his land to tenants in return for a share of the crop.²⁵

Freeman's late nineteenth and early twentieth-century neighbors included the Graff and Scheve families, whose large holdings are depicted adjacent to Freeman's "First Homestead Farm in the Country" on the 1906 *Map of Blakely Township (Map 7)*. The Graff family was founded by Joseph Graff, an immigrant from Baden, Germany who filed an early 1863 homestead claim near Freeman's in Section 25 of Blakely township, and later witnessed Freeman's January 1868 affidavit enumerating his homestead improvements. John Scheve, the founder of the Scheve family, was another German immigrant homesteader. He arrived in the township and settled near Freeman in ca. 1868.²⁶

Three groups of buildings and structures were located successively on the homestead's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century landscape—the squatter's cabin and its stable, the Freeman homestead cabin and its associated outbuildings, and the Freeman brick house and its outbuildings. Each of these building clusters was associated with a

²⁵Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," pp. 16-26; Okuda, p. 48; Stout, pp. 3-4; 1870 United States Agricultural Census, Beatrice Precinct, Gage County, Nebraska, p. 9, National Archives Microfilm T-1128, Roll 3; 1880 United States Agricultural Census, Blakely Township, Gage County, Nebraska, p. 11, National Archives Microfilm T-1128, Roll 7; 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, Blakely Township, Gage County, Nebraska, p. 7, National Archives Microfilm M-352, Roll 21.

²⁶1880 United States Population Census, Blakely Precinct, Gage County, Nebraska, p. 13, National Archives Microfilm T-9, *1880 United States Population Census*, Roll 749; Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts of May 20, 1862 and June 21, 1866," January 20, 1868, Copy in File 2669, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Genevieve P. Keller and Harold L. Reem, Interview with Mr. Robert Graff, Gage County, Nebraska, at HNMA Headquarters, March 16, 1998; Okuda, p. 121; Register of Homestead Entries made at the Land Office at Brownville, Nebraska, January 1863, copy provided by Mr. Robert Graff, Gage County, Nebraska.

distinct phase of the homestead's physical development and evolution. The various phases of construction activity on the site affected the evolution of vegetative patterns, circulation patterns, and small-scale features also present on the site.

The Squatter's Cabin, 1862-1866

Historic Buildings and Associated Features

The squatter's cabin (*Exhibit 4A-1*) was almost certainly the first structure built on the site during the Euro-American settlement and homesteading period. The ca. 1862 cabin was built and inhabited by the squatter and his wife who lived on the property prior to Daniel Freeman. It was probably linked to the unimproved, dirt, freight road by a short dirt road or path (*Exhibit 4A-2*). Brownville freighters had been built the freight road in 1858-1859. This road was the first road to traverse the site. It ran diagonally across the farm's east and north forties (*Exhibits 4-26 and 4A-26*).²⁷

Daniel Freeman occupied the squatter's cabin during the first several years he lived on the site. It probably remained standing through the middle or late 1870s because Samuel Freeman, Daniel Freeman's son, recalled that workers who made the bricks for Daniel Freeman's brick house used it.²⁸ The exact location of the house has not been identified, and its remains have probably been washed away by the periodic flooding of Cub Creek.

According to Samuel Freeman and Eliza F. Carre, Freeman's eldest daughter, the cabin was located in a low area just south of the freight road approximately 100 yards east of

²⁷Lass, p. 138.

²⁸Chilen Interview with Samuel Freeman; Preface to Freeman Homestead Visitor's Book, 1890-1920; Stout, p. 3.

Cub Creek.²⁹ Although no photographs or drawings of the structure exist, relatively detailed descriptions of the cabin's architecture and construction have survived.

Freeman repeatedly stated that it was a log cabin, and in one document—a January 1, 1863 sworn affidavit by Thomas Clyne attesting that Freeman was a bona fide homesteader—it was specifically described as a "house built of logs 14 feet long by 16 feet wide."³⁰ According to Eliza F. Carre, the rat-infested one-room house had a sod roof and a chimney consisting of a stovepipe extending through the roof.³¹ A log stable may have stood near the cabin on the same site.³²

Historic Land Use and Site Arrangement

The site's general pattern of open and wooded areas probably did not change significantly after Freeman established his homestead and began farming. With the possible exception of minor changes to the edges of their boundaries, areas that were open prior to the 1850s remained open in the late nineteenth century. Changes in land use patterns and types of vegetation, however, were revolutionary. Except for a small area around the Freeman School and perhaps a few other small patches on other farms, the tallgrass prairie in this vicinity was eventually completely transformed into fields, orchards, and pastures. The general pattern of the 60-acre oak, elm, walnut, and box elder woodland may have remained similar, but the character of this area changed considerably because it was used as a source for building lumber, firewood, and as

²⁹J. Joseph Bauxar, "Report of Excavations at the Daniel Freeman Homestead, Homestead National Monument of America" (Omaha, Nebraska: June 1948), pp. 18-23; Stout, p. 3.

³⁰Thomas Clyne Affidavit; Preface to Freeman Homestead Visitors' Book, 1890-1920. Although Clyne's sworn affidavit provides a plausible description of the squatter's cabin, it also includes other information that is almost certainly incorrect. For example, Clyne notes that Freeman, whose first wife was dead and who did not remarry until 1865, was "living" in the cabin with "his family consisting of a wife and three children;" and that Freeman had "sixty acres broke and in cultivation." This was a significantly larger cultivated area than the 35 acres Freeman claimed in his "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts of May 20, 1862 and June 21, 1866."

³¹Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," pp. 8-9, 14-15.

³²*Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*, p. 522.

grazing land for farm animals.³³ An additional use for the timber was as fencing material.

The transformation of the site's original grasslands began with the squatter's farming practices. Freeman wrote in the preface to his visitor's book that when he purchased the squatter's right to his claim in the summer or fall of 1862 the site already encompassed a "small amount of broken prairie" and some fencing.³⁴

Work begun by the squatter continued during Freeman's ownership. The first known crops, grown on a small amount of ploughed and cultivated land in 1863 and 1864, included corn and a "large yield of wheat and oats." These crops were probably produced by tenants, since he noted in an August, 1864, letter to Agnes Suiter, his future wife, "I hav my farm rented and I furnish the team and get one half the grane."

³⁵ In addition to these crops, "40 apple and about 400 peach trees" were planted as part of the initial work to improve his property in fulfillment of homesteading requirements.³⁶ Freeman's first orchards may have been planted in a line between the eastern boundary of his property and the edge of the Cub Creek woods.³⁷ Freeman complemented the output of grain and orchard crops with livestock breeding and production. In August, 1864, he wrote in a letter to Agnes Suiter that "this is a good place to rase stock and make money," and in subsequent years he avidly pursued this

³³Herbert, pp. 324, 326-327; Memorandum "Appraisal of the Homestead National Monument of America in Gage County, Nebraska," October 6, 1937, HNMA Administrative Files.

³⁴Preface to Freeman Homestead Visitor's Book, 1890-1920, File 474, Shelf 3, Cabinet 17, HNMA Archives; Kaplan, p. 7.

³⁵Letter from Daniel Freeman to Agnes Suiter, August 7, 1864, File 6922a-b, Shelf 4, Cabinet 1, HNMA Archives.

³⁶Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts."

³⁷Kaplan, p. 33.

goal.³⁸ His homestead improvement affidavit described a sheep shed but its location and areas used for sheep pasture are not known.

According to Freeman, a small amount of fencing—"heavy rails fitted into mortised posts"—already stood on the property at the time of his purchase from the squatter. This type of wood post-and-rail fence was apparently common in eastern Nebraska fence in the late 1850s and 1860s. Presumably the squatter had constructed the fencing of logs harvested from the timber along Cub Creek. Freeman may have built additional fencing using the same source of wood. Fences were a necessity of early Nebraska farmsteads. They were essential, not only as boundary demarcations, but also to protect cultivated fields from wildlife and other settler's livestock, to enclose the farm's livestock, and to separate fields from the traffic of public rights of way. It is likely that fencing during the squatter's period and Freeman's early tenure was crude fencing intended to meet these needs. This fencing may have enclosed portions of the house yard and crop fields, and later Freeman's orchards and livestock areas.³⁹

Freeman's Homestead Cabin, 1867-1875

Historic Buildings and Associated Features

Daniel Freeman's homestead cabin (*the building on the far right in Figures 4, 4a and 5*), which was located just inside the center of the north *forty's* east property line (*Exhibit 4A-7*), was the centerpiece of the second group of buildings on the site. Freeman built the cabin in 1867 and lived in it with his wife and family until his more substantial and

³⁸Letter from Daniel Freeman to Agnes Suiter, August 7, 1864.

³⁹Preface to Freeman Homestead Visitors' Book, 1890-1920; Leslie Hewse, "Early Fencing on the Western Margin of the Prairie," Nebraska History 63, No. 3 (Fall 1982), pp. 304-307.

spacious brick house was completed in 1876.⁴⁰ Like the squatter's cabin that preceded it, the homestead cabin was a vernacular log structure of a type commonly built by Euro-American settlers in the forested eastern portion of the United States.

The Freeman house, however, differed from the dwellings built by later homesteaders, particularly those who settled in the more arid western portions of the Nebraska plains. These settlers staked less desirable claims that did not contain well-watered woodlands. As a result, they generally built sod houses (*Figure 6*) because of the scarcity of other building materials.⁴¹

Freeman's log cabin was a rectangular, gable-roofed, single-room, peeled-log structure. The cabin's long walls faced north and south, and its short walls faced east and west. In his January, 1868, affidavit listing homestead improvements, Freeman described his dwelling as "part log & part frame 14 by 20 feet one story." He stated that the house had "two doors two windows shingle roof board floors and is a comfortable home to live in." However, one source, probably Eliza Carre, partially contradicted Daniel Freeman's description by describing a single door on the west elevation and a single window piercing the south elevation. Photographs of the cabin (*Figures 4 and 5*) also contradict Daniel Freeman's description since the cabin appears to have a sod roof rather than a shingle roof. Samuel Freeman noted that the cabin had a chimney but no fireplace. This chimney, however, does not appear in the photographs, perhaps

⁴⁰Narrative accompanying Negative No. 148, Historic Freeman Land & Buildings/Freeman Homestead Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*, pp. 521-523, 529; Bauxar, pp. 5-17, 27; Chilen Interview with Samuel Freeman; Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," p. 15; Schoen and Bleed, p. 6; Stout, p. 3; Wilson Letter.

⁴¹Madson, pp. 210-213; Richard K. Sutton, "Relict Rural Plantings in Eastern Nebraska," undated paper probably prepared at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, p. 2. For a comprehensive discussion of the vernacular sod houses built by Nebraska farmers and homesteaders see Roger Welsch, *Sod Walls: The Story of the Nebraska Sod House* (Lincoln, Nebraska: J. & L. Lee Co., 1991).

indicating that it was added sometime after 1867.⁴² Small-scale features found in the cabin's yard, which would have been the focus of many of the homestead's daily activities, included a grindstone, a wooden trough, a butter churn, and wooden barrels.

The Freeman homestead cabin stood for approximately twenty-five or more years until ca. 1895 and became a symbol of Freeman, the Homesteader. Freeman exploited the ideal the cabin represented. He seems to have preferred his image as a small pioneer homesteader instead of a wealthy farmer. In the *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska* and other public representations, Freeman, in marked contrast to most of his neighbors who portrayed themselves as prosperous farmers with up-to-date, improved farmsteads, is seen as the pioneer settler well after he was an established property owner (*Figure 4a*).⁴³ The engraving used in the album is clearly based on the photograph described above (*Figure 4*) and varies little from the photographic image.

Freeman's homestead cabin was adjoined by a cluster of several additional structures, all of which were probably razed or destroyed by the end of the nineteenth century. One of these structures was the log cabin (*Exhibit 4A-4*) (*the building to the left of Freeman's log cabin in Figures 4, 4a and 5*) occupied by John Suiter, Daniel Freeman's brother-in-law. This rectangular vernacular structure was located immediately northwest of Freeman's cabin, separated only by a narrow walkway (*Figure 5*).⁴⁴ Like Freeman's homestead cabin, the main part of John Suiter's cabin was built of logs and

⁴²Chilen Interview with Samuel Freeman; Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts;" Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," p. 19.

⁴³*Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*, pp. 521-523, 529; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument, Beatrice Nebraska," ca. 1949, File 7003c, Drawer 2, Cabinet 38, HNMA Archives.

⁴⁴Bauxar, pp. 5-17, 27; Gibbs, "History of Freeman and the First Homestead," p. 15; Schoen and Bleed, p. 6; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

covered with what appears to have been a sod roof. However, the lean-to entrance, which also may have had a sod roof, was constructed of wide, rough-hewn boards. The cabin does not appear to have had a chimney and probably had no fireplace.

According to Daniel Freeman's homestead improvement affidavit, additional outbuildings and structures associated with the homestead cabin in the late 1860s included "a stable, a sheep shed 100 feet long [and a] corn crib." Samuel Freeman also stated that a "small chicken shed" (*Exhibit 4A-6*) which was "built close to the house for protection," stood northeast of the homestead cabin, and that a "small dug well [*Exhibit 4A-5*] stood about 20 ft. southwest" of John Suiter's cabin.⁴⁵ Also according to Samuel Freeman, Daniel Freeman built a "long rectangular corral" constructed of "poles" during the late 1860s (*Exhibit 4A-3*) (*in the background of Figures 4 and 4a*). This description implies that the corral enclosure was a crude type of post-and-rail fence known as "rough and ready" that consisted of fence rails nailed to posts. The corral was located "north of the living quarters"—the homestead cabin and John Suiter's cabin—and ran "east to west." Samuel Freeman states that there were no "buildings or protection for live stock" at the site of the corral.⁴⁶ All of these structures and outbuildings are building types that would normally be found on a farm or homestead and quite likely existed on Freeman's property. Only the locations of the John Suiter cabin, the chicken shed, the well, and the corral, however, can be identified.

Freeman's homestead cabin and its associated agricultural buildings were linked to the freight road by a dirt road (*Exhibit 4A-8*). According to Samuel Freeman, the road, which was probably built in the mid-1860s, ran southwest from the cabin and joined the

⁴⁵Chilen Interview with Samuel Freeman; Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts."

⁴⁶Bauxar, pp. 12, 17-18; Chilen Interview with Samuel Freeman.

freight road approximately 150 yards east of the point where it crossed Cub Creek.⁴⁷

The trace of this road has not been identified. Although the freight road running through the north and east of Freeman's land was generally in poor condition, it added value to Freeman's claim, particularly during the early years of Euro-American settlement. It provided access to transport farm produce to markets and bring in supplies and construction materials needed for the homestead.⁴⁸

Historic Land Use and Site Arrangement

Freeman continued to expand the fields previously cultivated by the squatter. By January, 1868, when he filed an affidavit listing his property improvements to obtain final title to the homestead, he claimed to have "ploughed, fenced, and cultivated about 35 acres of said land"—about one-third of the site's approximately 100 acres of prairie.⁴⁹ The remaining 65 acres of tallgrass prairie on the homestead also soon fell to the plow and cultivation, probably during the late 1860s and early 1870s, but almost certainly by the end of the century.⁵⁰

This transformation involved an almost wholesale replacement of the plant and animal species comprising the site's traditional tallgrass prairie ecosystem. Big bluestem, little bluestem, and Indian grasses were succeeded by field, orchard, and garden crops.

⁴⁷Memorandum of H. D. Chilen (Acting Homestead Project Superintendent) Interview with Samuel Freeman, August 16, 1939, HNMA Administrative Files.

⁴⁸Kaplan, p. 75; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 19, 21, 53.

⁴⁹Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts of May 20, 1862 and June 21, 1866," January 20, 1868, Copy in File 2669, Drawer 5, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives.

⁵⁰Letter from Jos. S. Wilson, U.S. Department of the Interior, to Register & Receiver, Brownville, Nebraska, Land Office, June 29, 1868 (part of documentation regarding Agnes Suiter Freeman's homestead claim), Division C, Letters Sent to Registers & Receivers, 1829-1927, Record Group 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Copy of letter provided by Mr. Robert Graff; Memorandum "Appraisal of the Homestead National Monument of America in Gage County, Nebraska," October 6, 1937, HNMA Administrative Files.

Sheep and other domestic animals and fowls supplanted the buffalo, white-tailed deer, black bear, and greater prairie chicken.⁵¹

Freeman's Brick House, 1876-1908

Historic Buildings and Associated Features

The centerpiece of the third cluster of buildings standing on the Freeman homestead in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Freeman's brick house, which was built between 1874 and 1876 (*Exhibit 4A-11*) (*Figures 7-11*). The substantial, two-story, four-room, 19- by 26-foot, vernacular structure was located just south of the freight road near the edge of the Cub Creek woods. The house was a full two stories on the north elevation (*Figure 7*) but the first story was partially underground on the south elevation (*Figures 8 and 11*). The house reflected Freeman's rising social status as a prosperous and wealthy farmer and landowner, and he lived in it with his family from 1876 until his death in 1908.⁵²

The brick house was described as a "comfortable mansion" in the *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*. Despite this description, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century photographs suggest that the house may have never been completed. It is shown during the early twentieth century to have merely a crude ramp leading to the second story door on the south elevation, and on the north elevation there is neither a porch nor any access to the second story door (*Figures 7 and 8*).⁵³

Bricks for the house were produced at the homestead in a kiln (*Exhibit 4A-13*) that was

⁵¹Madson, pp. 125-165.

⁵²John F. Batzer and Rebecca Dahle Lacombe, *Into the 21st Century: Homestead National Monument of America Prairie Management Action Plan, 1993-2002* (1993), pp. 14-15; Bauxar, p. 5; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁵³It is possible that a porch or stairs once stood on the north elevation of the house. What appear to be attachments for a porch framework are visible on one photo of the house taken in the early 20th century. The porch could have been severely damaged or wrecked in the 1896 flooding that destroyed the brick house's first well or during a similar event.

probably located on a level terrace of land north of the squatter's cabin site (*Exhibit 4A-1*) between the freight road and Cub Creek.⁵⁴

Other domestic structures were located in the immediate vicinity of the brick house. A small, detached, gable-roofed, wood-frame summer kitchen (*Exhibit 4A-12*) (*Figures 8, 9, and 11*) stood approximately 25 feet to the rear of the brick house.⁵⁵ A shed (*Exhibit 4A-28*) and privy (*Exhibit 4A-29*) were located south of the summer kitchen (*the structures in the background of Figure 7*). It appears that a wooden walkway led to the door of the summer kitchen (*Figure 8*). A well (*Exhibit 4A-9*) was located approximately 25 feet in front of the house, but it was replaced by a pump and well on a wooden platform at the northwest corner of the house (*Figure 7*) (*Exhibit 4A-9a*) after a flood in 1896 rendered the old well useless.⁵⁶ There was a crude structure east of the brick house, consisting of wooden supports and a doorframe that covered an excavated area used for vegetable storage (*the structure to the far left in Figure 10*) (*Exhibit 4A-27*).⁵⁷ There were also wooden walkways around the east side of the house (*Figure 8*), and a dirt path led south from the freight road to the house (*Figure 10*) (*Exhibit 4A-10*). Small-scale features in the house environ during the early twentieth century included clotheslines west of the house, a plot of unidentified vegetation planted in rows northwest of the house, piles of chopped wood south of the summer kitchen, and various tools and implements scattered throughout the yard (*Figures 7-11*).

⁵⁴Bauxar, pp. 5, 23-25; Kaplan, pp. 61, 76; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*, p. 523; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55.

⁵⁵Allen G. Noble and Richard K. Cleek, *The Old Barn Book: A Field Guide to North American Barns and Other Farm Structures* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1995), pp. 146-147; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁵⁶"Narrative with Negative Nos. 151 and 152, Freeman Homestead Buildings Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁵⁷ Narrative with Negative No. 157, Freeman Homestead Buildings Classification, HNMA Photograph Files.

Post and board fences also surrounded the brick house yard (*Figure 10*). By the late nineteenth century Freeman was building a type of then-popular wooden fence on the homestead—board fences constructed of what were probably standard lengths of milled lumber nailed to wooden fence posts. Fences of this type (*Exhibit 4A-24*) were quite common in the wooded valleys of eastern Nebraska, but were relatively expensive to construct. Osage orange hedgerows were also used to subdivide fields and delineate boundaries in southeastern Nebraska. Hedgerows were an economical alternative to expensive wooden fencing and conserved the homestead's timber resources. However, by the early twentieth century, many farmers were replacing board fences and hedgerows with barbed wire fencing (*Exhibit 4A-25*). Inexpensive barbed wire, which first became widely available in the 1880s, rapidly became Nebraska and American farmers' favorite fencing material. Fences of other materials were not destroyed, but no new ones were installed, and when deteriorated older fences were replaced, they generally were supplanted by barbed wire enclosures.⁵⁸ Freeman initially attached single strands of barbed wire (*Figure 10*) to the tops of some of the board fences enclosing his house yard, and apparently later replaced all or parts of these enclosures with barbed wire fences (*Figure 7*).

The yard around Freeman's brick house appears to have been a well-used and heavily traversed area; photographs depict the house environs as fairly sparse in vegetation. A large cottonwood stood in the southeast yard and several deciduous trees, however, stood in the front and side yards (*Figures 7 and 11*). An earthen yard with worn paths as well as wooden boardwalks are apparent in historic photographs (*Figures 7–11*). A small, cultivated area—planted in rows—is apparent in one historic photograph (*Figure*

⁵⁸Noble and Cleek, pp. 174, 176; Sutton, p. 9.

10). The photograph probably was taken following harvest since a goose appears to be moving freely through the rows.

The Freeman homestead's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century agricultural buildings and structures (*Figures 8, 11, and 12*) were clustered in a barnyard (*Exhibit 4A-18*) immediately opposite the brick house on the north side of the wagon road. With the exception of the windmill (*Exhibit 4A-21*), they were all built in 1890.⁵⁹ Like the brick house, these substantial structures, which may have replaced some or all of the agricultural buildings associated with Freeman's homestead cabin, reflected Freeman's wealth and status as a prosperous Gage County grain and livestock farmer. Their design and layout did not reflect any specific ethnic or cultural tradition. However, the buildings' location away from the homestead's farmhouse illustrate the general Euro-American practice of siting farm work activities—livestock care, milking and butchering, crop storage and processing, and machinery repair and storage—at some distance from the main farm residence.⁶⁰

The large, 32- by 48-foot, gable-roofed barn (*Exhibit 4A-17*) appears to be a feeder barn—a common late nineteenth-century, light-framed, Midwestern, hay and cattle barn developed to maximize the efficient use of lumber on the prairie. This barn would have provided shelter for a number of the more than 125 cattle Freeman owned in the mid-1880s.⁶¹ On its exterior, Freeman's 16- by 29-foot, two-story granary (*Exhibit 4A-20*), which was located south of the feeder barn, resembles a three-bay threshing barn,

⁵⁹Bauxar, p. 5; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁶⁰Schoen and Bleed, p. 55.

⁶¹1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, p. 7; Noble and Cleek, pp. 116-117; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument;" Lowell J. Soike, "Affordable Barns for the Midwest: Beginnings," in Allen G. Noble and Hubert G. H. Wilhelm, *Barns of the Midwest* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1995), pp. 91-94.

although it is doubtful that it was used for threshing. Even prior to the date the barn was built, Freeman reportedly hired a team of threshers who used a portable ox-powered rig to thresh his grain at a central location in his fields.⁶² The granary's outside staircase is apparent on its south side in ca. 1905 (*Figures 8 and 11*) but it was removed prior to 1911 (*Figure 12*).⁶³ The farm's 16- by 40-foot shed, which was located northeast of the feeder barn, apparently had a shed-roof (*Exhibit 4A-19*). The shed could have been used to store farm machinery, but it closely resembles a common late nineteenth-century midwestern shed-roofed corncrib and quite likely may have been used for grain storage.⁶⁴ A large straw pile was located to the east of the shed in 1911 (*Figure 12*). Windmills were widespread and used to pump water for livestock on the midwestern and western plains from the earliest years of settlement. Freeman, however, did not install a windmill (*Exhibit 4A-21*) until 1901-1902, a relatively late date, perhaps indicating that his well-watered homestead readily provided all the water he required prior to that time.⁶⁵ The well in Freeman's barnyard was situated immediately south of the granary (*Exhibit 4A-22*).⁶⁶ Board fences similar to those in his house yard initially surrounded his barnyard (*Figure 8*), but were later replaced by barbed wire fences (*Figure 12*).

Based on the selection of photographs of Freeman's brick house, yard, agricultural buildings, and barnyard, it is apparent that much of the farm's work occurred in the open and uncovered spaces of the yards. It is also clear for the photographs that

⁶²Charles Calkins and Martin Perkins, "The Three-Bay Threshing Barn," in Noble and Wilhelm, pp. 40-45; Kaplan, pp. 74-75; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁶³Narrative with Negative No. 159a, Historic Freeman Land and Building/Freeman Homestead Classification, HNMA Photograph Files.

⁶⁴Noble and Cleek, pp. 156-157; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

⁶⁵Noble and Cleek, p. 141.

⁶⁶"Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument." The casing of the well was unearthed during plowing in September, 1968, verifying its exact location in the barnyard, south of the granary.

maintaining a tidy homestead was not one of Freeman's priorities. The photographs show a large a wood pile rather than neat, orderly stacks of wood; in addition, a large heap of wood, scraps, and other rubble is visible in the southeast section of the yard of the brick house (*Figure 11*). The landscape appears to have been treated as a utilitarian place of work with a large amount of outdoor storage. It does not appear as though aesthetic embellishments were part of the nineteenth-century Freeman homestead. Although there may have been small flower gardens or other ornamental plantings on the homestead apart from shade trees, none is apparent in available historic photographs. Nor do any photographs depict ornamental fencing or even a painted picket fence in the house environs.

Although he was a prosperous and prominent landowner in the area, Freeman differed from the majority of his peers who were represented through illustrations of neat and organized homesteads in *Portrait and Biographical Album of Gage County, Nebraska*. Freeman, however, represented himself with a photograph of his original log homesteader's cabin (*Figure 4a*). There was no depiction of the brick house, agricultural buildings, or of the farmstead layout.

New construction on Freeman's homestead necessitated the development of additional roads and paths. The freight road remained important as a method for the transport of goods. Because its alignment bisected the Freeman homestead it served as the central spine off of which other interior homestead roads and paths developed. However, like virtually all rural Nebraska roads, the freight road was probably only marginally improved by the time of Freeman's death in 1908, and received only minimal maintenance from Blakely Township road crews. Furthermore, with the exception of a temporary pontoon bridge reportedly built by the local Mennonite community during

the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, there was no bridge across Cub Creek.⁶⁷ Indeed, the only major permanent improvements during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century may have been the planting of a cottonwood allee along the road's eastern portion (*Exhibits 4-30 and 4A-30*) (*Figure 13*) (*Map 11*). Post and board fences were built along the sides of the road (*Exhibits 4-24 and 4A-24*).⁶⁸ Board fences, much like the ones found in the house and barnyards, commonly lined wagon roads and railways in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Post and board fences probably consisting of standard lengths of milled timber nailed to wooden fence posts were built along both sides of the road. Board fences of this type, which were similar to the ones found in the house and barn yards, commonly lined wagon roads and railways in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the Freeman homestead these fences were found on both sides of the freight road throughout all or most of its length in the homestead's north *forty* (*Figure 12*); fences probably also flanked the road on the property's east *forty*.⁶⁹

The site's nineteenth- and early twentieth-century farm roads and paths all connected to the freight road. Paths (*Exhibits 4A-10 and 4A-23*) extended from the freight road south to Freeman's brick house and north to the vicinity of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century barnyard. The barnyard road does not appear on the 1937 or 1940 aerial imagery of the site (*Map 11*), although its entrance does appear on a 1939 NPS

⁶⁷Russell A. Gibbs, "Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region 2," June 26, 1944, p. 1, HNMA Administrative Files; Olson and Naugle, pp. 298-299; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 19, 21. According to Gibbs, the local Mennonite community built the pontoon bridge so that they "could get from their cheese factory on the Big Blue River to the Mennonite settlement west of the river." This bridge is apparently the structure that appears on the 1879 "Map of Gage County, Nebraska Showing B & M Railroad Lands, Locations of Schoolhouses, Water Courses, Railroads, Bridges, Post Offices, &c" published by Beatrice, Nebraska, real estate agents Schell & Shell. However, the map, which is located in File 1964 of Drawer 3, Cabinet 16 of HNMA Archives, depicts the bridge in the wrong location on Freeman's property, and may therefore not be completely accurate.

⁶⁸The size of the cottonwoods pictured in Figure 13, which was taken ca. 1928, attest to their establishment during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

⁶⁹Hewse, p. 316; Noble and Cleek, pp. 173-174.

base map of the site. Another road (*Exhibit 4A-15*) ran south from the wagon road along the southeastern edge of the Cub Creek woods. This road was planted in crops in the 1937 aerial photographs, but its entrance appears on the 1939 NPS base map and is shown in 1940 aerial photographs of the site (*Map 11*). This dirt road, which was probably built in the mid-1870s at the same time Freeman constructed his brick house, was located east of the house and west of its associated kitchen garden (*Exhibit 4A-14*).⁷⁰ Besides these major roads and paths, additional paths must have connected the homestead's buildings and fields. These locations, however, are not known.

Historic Land Use and Site Arrangement

By the mid-1880s, when it is likely that most of the homestead's former grassland was being farmed, Freeman, or more likely his tenants, produced large quantities of the same cereal crops grown by their neighbors and other eastern Nebraska farmers. These crops included Indian corn, oats, rye, and wheat—successors to the tallgrass that previously dominated the prairie. By the early 1880s Freeman had expanded his original homestead through additional land purchase and in 1884 owned 325 acres of "improved" cropland. These 325 acres included the tilled fields on his original homestead, which were not specifically differentiated in the 1885 Nebraska Agricultural Census. In 1884 Freeman's total acreage produced 6,000 bushels of corn on 100 acres of land, 1,000 bushels of oats on 40 acres of land, 150 bushels of rye on 15 acres of land,

⁷⁰United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument, July 22, 1937, Frame UE-2-22, Film Roll 128, Record Group 145, Records of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, National Archives, College Park, Maryland; United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Engineering, Drawing NM-HOM 5302, "Base Map, Homestead National Monument, Nebraska" (1939), Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Central Classified File, 1933-1949, Box 2235, File 207 (map attached to 1937 "Preliminary Development Report by Edward Hummell and Howard A. Baker), National Archives, College Park, Maryland (hereinafter cited as File Number __, Box Number __, Record Group (RG) __). The physical evolution of HNMA between the late 1930s and mid-1960s is depicted in a chronological series of Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and Soil Conservation Service aerial photos of the site. These photos, most of which are reproduced as maps in this report, include images from 1937, 1940, 1955, 1959, and 1965.

and 150 bushels of wheat on 14 acres of land. Other field crops produced that year included 200 bushels of Irish potatoes produced on 1 acre of land and 1 bushel of grass seed and 30 tons of hay grown on 20 acres of mown grasslands.⁷¹ By 1909, however, the only documented cereal crop produced on the farm was wheat, and it is possible that this temporary shift to largely monoculture farming was made in the years prior to Freeman's death.⁷²

In addition to the dominant field crops and grains, Freeman also produced orchard crops and garden products on his homestead. By 1885 his apple orchard consisted of 75 mature fruit-bearing trees that were located on 2 acres of land and produced 4 bushels of apples. Although the Nebraska Agricultural Census does not identify the size and production of the farm's peach, cherry, pear, and/or plum trees in that year, these fruits were also presumably produced on the property.⁷³ By the time of his death, however, the orchards (*Exhibit 4A-16*) were clustered around his brick house residence. His obituary in *The Beatrice Daily Express* stated that "three fine orchards" surrounded his "fine brick dwelling."⁷⁴ In addition to the orchards, a kitchen garden plot was situated near the house (*Exhibit 4A-14*). This garden, which was located east of the dwelling and was almost certainly not the only kitchen garden farmed by the Freemans, was probably first planted sometime around the mid-1870s.⁷⁵ Some type of fencing presumably enclosed both the orchards and the kitchen gardens.⁷⁶

⁷¹Madson, p. 20 (source of information on commercial grain crops as the ecological successors to prairie tallgrasses); Olson and Naugle, pp. 65, 200-202, 245-246; 1870 United States Agricultural Census, pp. 9-10; 1880 United States Agricultural Census, pp. 10-12; 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, pp. 6-8.

⁷²Daniel Freeman Will and Probate File, Gage County Courthouse, Beatrice, Nebraska.

⁷³Daniel Freeman Affidavit "Proof Required Under the Homestead Acts;" Kaplan, pp. 33, 49; 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, p. 7; Wilson Letter.

⁷⁴Kaplan, p. 138 (source of quotation from *Beatrice Daily Express* obituary).

⁷⁵Schoen and Bleed, pp. 23, 32-35, 53-54.

⁷⁶Hewse, p. 315.

In 1885 the livestock on Freeman's homestead and other land was valued at \$5,130—approximately 15% of the total value of his farm properties. Large animals on the properties, including the homestead, numbered 18 horses, 2 mules, 200 hogs, and 128 cattle—the bovid ecological successors to the prairie's bison. Apparently Freeman, who had noted a sheep shed on his property in earlier years, no longer owned sheep. During the previous year his cows produced 250 pounds of butter and 50 calves; Freeman also purchased an additional 36 cattle. In the same time period, however, 20 cattle had died, been lost, or stolen, and had not been recovered. Poultry on the properties included 20 barnyard fowls (probably chickens and geese) and 30 other fowls, which produced 50 dozen eggs in 1884.⁷⁷ Freeman probably built post-and-rail fences on the homestead to confine his livestock in accordance with the provisions of Nebraska's 1877 statewide Herd Law. The locations of these enclosures, however, have not been identified.⁷⁸

Freeman almost certainly utilized the woods as pasture for his cattle—a practice that probably resulted in undergrowth destruction and some overgrazing. There is no indication that he attempted to manage his woods as a long-term renewable resource by planting new trees and careful harvesting practices. By the time of Freeman's death or soon thereafter, much if not most of the good old-growth timber had been removed and replaced by sparser new-growth woods.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Madson, p. 20 (source of information on cattle as the ecological successors to prairie's buffalo); 1870 United States Agricultural Census, pp. 9-10; 1880 United States Agricultural Census, Blakely Township, Gage County, Nebraska, p. 11; 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, p. 7.

⁷⁸Hewse, pp. 318-319; 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, p. 7.

⁷⁹Kaplan, pp. 49-50; Memorandum "Appraisal of the Homestead National Monument of America in Gage County, Nebraska," October 6, 1937; Memorandum from Edward Hummell, Acting Project Manager, to the Regional Director, Region II, December 12, 1939 - Attachment to Memorandum from Regional Director to Director, NPS, December 12, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; Memorandum from Donald Beard, Regional Biologist, to Mr. Cahalane, Section on National Park Wildlife, Omaha, Nebraska, May 5, 1941, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

The early aerial photographs of the homestead taken in 1937 and 1940 (*Map 11*) depict these general land use patterns. If it is assumed that these patterns did not change significantly between the late nineteenth century and the end of the 1930s, it can be concluded that Freeman's crops were produced in large fields whose edges were defined by the farm's roads, tree lines, and property boundaries. He grazed his cattle in a large wooded pasture in the west *forty* whose margins were similarly defined by the farm's boundaries and woodland edges. The fields' and pastures' configurations do not appear to reflect any specific ethnic or cultural tradition. Instead, their shape was dictated by the mix of forest and grassland on Freeman's original T-shaped homestead claim, and by the rectilinear federal township-and-range system used to survey and subdivide the land.⁸⁰

It is likely that fences had been constructed to enclose large portions of Freeman's fields and pastures and to delineate property boundaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Freeman reported in the 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census that in 1884 alone he spent \$100 building and repairing fences on his properties.⁸¹ Initially, these were post and board fences—the successors to the early post-and-rail fences built by Freeman and perhaps his squatter predecessor. The board fences (*Exhibit 4A-24*) flanking the freight road and surrounding the brick house (*Exhibit 4A-11*) and barnyard (*Exhibit 4A-18*) formed part of this network of wooden enclosures. Another board (or possibly post-and-rail) fence probably stood on the line between the farm's middle and east *forties*, although this fence line, which is currently indicated by a berm, may be associated with twentieth-century farming activities.⁸² Additional board

⁸⁰ Meinig, pp. 240-243.

⁸¹ 1885 Nebraska State Agricultural Census, p. 7.

⁸² Schoen and Bleed, pp. 21, 50. Although Schoen and Bleed state that the fenceline berm dividing the homestead's middle and east *forties* may be linked to post-1908 twentieth century farming operations, it is more likely that the fence that created the berm was built in the late nineteenth century. A twentieth-century fence would almost certainly have been constructed of barbed wire, whose thin

fences could have been built around the margins of wooded pasture in the west forty to confine his livestock in compliance with Nebraska's 1877 statewide herd law, and others could have marked portions of his property boundaries.⁸³

Besides wooden post-and-board enclosures, Freeman also used vegetative fencing on his homestead. Osage orange hedgerows were an economical alternative to expensive wooden fencing and conserved farmers' timber resources. For these reasons, Osage orange hedgerows were conspicuous features on eastern Nebraska's late nineteenth-century rural landscape. The Osage orange hedgerows of this period required several seasonal and annual maintenance measures to ensure their function and endurance. In general, Osage orange hedgerows were either started by purchasing seed or live plants and planting them in single or double rows, with plants individually spaced anywhere from 6 inches to 3 feet apart.⁸⁴ The hedgerow was maintained during the initial years by stem trimming to ensure dense growth and by cultivating or mulching to reduce the competition with weeds. Once the hedge became established after 3-4 years, two primary techniques were utilized to ensure dense growth: layering, the bending and interweaving of branches, and plashing, closing gaps by cutting part of the branches and entwining them with upright branches.⁸⁵ Trimming also continued, although it was used to shape the hedge to optimize sunlight availability to the individual plants.

strands would probably not have trapped and retained enough earth to create a berm. On the other hand, the bottommost planks of a board fence of the type Freeman constructed on his property would have created this effect.

⁸³Hewse, pp. 318-319.

⁸⁴ John A. Warder, *Hedges and Evergreens: A Complete Manual for the Cultivation, Pruning, and Management of all Plants Suitable for American Hedging; Especially the Maclura, or Osage Orange* (New York, New York: Orange Judd and Company, 1858), pp. 35-40, 50-110.

⁸⁵ Allen G. Noble, *Wood, Brick, and Stone: The North American Settlement Landscape Volume 2: Barns and Farm Structures* (Amherst, Massachusetts: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), pp. 126-127.

Periodic maintenance included spot replanting to fill in gaps left in the hedge by dead plants.⁸⁶

In ca. 1875-1885 Freeman planted a three-quarter mile long, Osage orange hedgerow along the southern boundary of his farm (*Exhibit 4-32*). Besides marking Freeman's property boundaries and conserving his timber resources, the hedge may have also served as windbreak. With the exception of this single hedgerow on the homestead's southern boundary, however, Freeman apparently had no other hedges planted on the property.⁸⁷

Freeman also continued to use inexpensive barbed wire fencing at many locations on the farm. Fragments of late nineteenth-century barbed wire found at the end of an old fence line near the site's northernmost and east boundary marker indicate that Freeman may have used barbed wire to demarcate all or some of his fields and property boundaries.⁸⁸ As was the case with the wooden fences surrounding the brick house and barnyard, early post-and-board fences marking field and property boundaries would probably have been gradually replaced by barbed wire enclosures (*Exhibits 4-25 and 4A-25*). Additionally, barbed wire could have been stapled to the hedge trees in the Osage orange hedgerow.⁸⁹ Other inexpensive barbed wire fences could have been built at locations where no fences previously existed on the homestead.

When Daniel Freeman died in 1908, he was buried on the homestead's east hill near the center of the east *forty's* eastern boundary (*Exhibit 4-31*). This site was reportedly his

⁸⁶ John A. Warder, pp. 50-110.

⁸⁷ Hewse, pp. 308-315; Kaplan, pp. 49-50; Sutton, pp. 6-9.

⁸⁸ Schoen and Bleed, p. 29.

⁸⁹ Sutton, p. 10.

favorite lookout point for surveying his property. A tombstone was later erected on the site (*Figure 14*). Memorialized on his tombstone is the information that he “filed on first homestead in USA Jan. 1, 1863,” and that he was a “Soldier, Doctor, Sheriff and Farmer. A True Pioneer.”⁹⁰

1909 – 1935: 20th Century Farming (*Exhibits 5 and 5A*)

Historic Context

The early twentieth-century prosperity of Nebraska’s post-settlement farm economy did not last. Despite a final wartime boom, which drove production, farm prices, and land values to record highs, the post-World War I collapse of demand caused Nebraska’s and the United States’ farm sectors to “go bust.” As a result, artificially high wartime prices were not maintained. The state’s “agriculture went into a tailspin from which it could not recover throughout the entire decade of the 1920s and which so weakened it that the depression of the 1930s reduced the state’s basic industry to its most desperate plight in history.”⁹¹ During the Great Depression, moreover, Nebraska’s moribund agricultural economy faced an even more basic problem—exhaustion of the state’s rich prairie soils. Decades of inadequate conservation practices coupled with record droughts resulted in heavy dust storms and widespread erosion in the HNMA vicinity. Local residents can still recall tightly closing windows and doors to keep the overwhelming amount of airborne soil from entering their homes.⁹² The Great Drought coupled with the Great Depression brought crisis

⁹⁰Photograph and narrative for Structure HS-19, Freeman Family Grave Marker, Report dated April 11, 1994, in “List of Classified Structures (LCS) - Park/Structure Index: Homestead National Monument,” HNMA Administrative Files; Kaplan, p. 33.

⁹¹Olson and Naugle, pp. 245-249, 285-287.

⁹²Genevieve P. Keller and Harold L. Reem, Interview with Mr. Robert Graff, Gage County Nebraska, at HNMA Headquarters, March 16, 1998; Olson and Naugle, pp. 305-311, 321-322.

conditions to the entire Great Plains region. By the summer of 1934, water levels were too low for plants to reach.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

Following Daniel Freeman's death in December 1908, the homestead passed to Agnes Suiter Freeman. During the 1910s and 1920s, she and several of her children and their families continued to live on the property and farm the land with at least part-time assistance from tenants. A 1922 "Map of Blakely Township," however, still shows the land as that of Daniel Freeman with the descriptive title "First Homestead Farm in Gage County" (*Map 8*). The map also shows the stability of the area with the Graff and Scheve families still owning large adjacent parcels. When Agnes Suiter Freeman died in April, 1931, she was buried next to Daniel Freeman and her name was added to the tombstone some years after her death. Her surviving children, who had already acquired a substantial interest in the property, inherited the homestead in its entirety. This inheritance resulted in the division of the old homestead into several parcels owned individually by the Freeman heirs (*Map 9*). The 1932 Gage County map no longer depicts the characteristic T-shaped homestead recognizable on earlier county and township maps.⁹³

Historic Buildings and Associated Features

Several groups of buildings and structures continued to be located on the homestead's landscape during the 1910s and 1920s. Buildings and structures included the Freeman brick house and its outbuildings, the Quackenbush house, and the Agnes Suiter

⁹³ Agnes Suiter Freeman Probate File, Gage County Courthouse, Beatrice, Nebraska; Daniel Freeman Will and Probate File, Gage County Courthouse, Beatrice, Nebraska; Kaplan, pp. 140-149.

Freeman cabin, and a small frame house built by one of the Freemans. The squatter's cabin and Freeman's homestead cabin were no longer present on the site by the 1930s—they had been destroyed or removed by the late nineteenth century.

The layout of roads and paths comprising the homestead's early twentieth-century circulation network evolved around the construction and use of the building clusters on the property. The farm's primary road remained the old Brownville to Fort Kearny freight road (*Exhibits 5-26 and 5A-26*) running diagonally across the property. This unimproved dirt road was maintained by Blakely Township road crews, which was a common practice at this time. Groups of local citizens using township-owned tools, such as scrapers, plows, axes, shovels, and horsedrawn drags and graders, would repair local road networks.⁹⁴ However, the desire for rural mail delivery and the increasing use of automobiles combined to create a need for a larger, nation-wide road network. In 1917, the US Congress passed legislature encouraging the building of highways, and states began improving their roadway systems.⁹⁵ In the late 1920s, as part of the highway improvement programs, the old freight road running through Freeman's property was upgraded and renamed Nebraska State Highway 4 (SH4), and came under the jurisdiction of the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR). It was graded and graveled, and a permanent highway bridge (*Exhibit 5*) was built over Cub Creek to replace the earlier temporary pontoon bridge maintained by the local Mennonite community.⁹⁶ A segment of the bridge is visible in a photograph of Freeman's four Quackenbush grandchildren posed on the bridge (*Figure 15*). Rows of cottonwood trees (*Exhibit 5-30*) (*Figure 13*) (*Map 11*) continued to line the edges of the road's eastern

⁹⁴Bliss Isely and W. M. Richards, *Four Centuries in Kansas* (Wichita, Kansas: The McCormick-Mathers Co., 1936), p. 209.

⁹⁵Isely and Richards, pp. 210-211.

⁹⁶Gibbs Memorandum, June 26, 1944, p. 1; Graff Interview; Olson and Naugle, pp. 296-301; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 19, 21.

portion through the mid-1930s. The homestead's roads and paths continued to feed into SH4 and new road and paths were developed to serve the new dwellings built on the property. As buildings—such as the squatter's cabin and Freeman's homestead cabin—were no longer used, the paths leading to them disappeared through disuse.

Following Daniel Freeman's death, Agnes Suiter Freeman continued to live in the homestead's brick house (*Exhibit 5A-11*). In 1916, however, the house burned. Agnes Suiter Freeman almost immediately replaced the brick house with a smaller wood-frame house located southeast of the brick house site. The brick house's summer kitchen (*Exhibit 5A-12*), shed (*Exhibit 5A-28*), privy (*Exhibit 5A-29*), pump (*Exhibit 5A-9a*), and vegetable storage shed (*Exhibit 5A-27*) were destroyed or removed in subsequent years, and by the early 1930s no intact above-ground cultural resources remained on the site.⁹⁷ However, for several years following the destruction of the house, the road (*Exhibit 5A-15*) (*Map 11*) leading to the brick house and paths (*Exhibit 5A-10*) through the area presumably continued to be used for access to the house's outbuildings and associated storage areas.

Agnes Freeman's replacement house was a one-and-half-story, L-shaped, 24- by 34-foot, gable-roofed, wood-frame dwelling, located southeast of the brick house site (*Exhibit 5A-36*) (*Figures 13, 16, and 17*).⁹⁸ Quite possibly a "pattern book" house designed and fabricated by one of the legion of early twentieth-century mail order builders, the dwelling was a simple farmhouse devoid of ornamentation. The house, which served as the focus of the homestead's farming operations, was occupied for several years by Agnes Suiter Freeman and her son George Freeman and his family. Her daughter, Agnes Freeman Quackenbush, and her family then moved into the

⁹⁷Bauxar, pp. 25-26; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55.

⁹⁸Bauxar, p. 5; Agnes Suiter Freeman Probate File; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55.

residence; consequently the dwelling is often referred to as the Quackenbush house. In 1925 the Elizabeth Montague Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution had a stone marker (*Exhibit 5A-33*) (*Figure 17*) installed in front of the house to commemorate the establishment of the United States' first homestead. The marker is attached to a stone fragment from the original Nebraska state capital. The house, which had a front porch oriented north to face the old freight road, was surrounded by barbed wire fencing (*Figures 13 and 16*). With the exception of the well (*Exhibit 5A-34*), which was located just west of the dwelling, the existence and locations of other structures and outbuildings associated with the Quackenbush house site are unknown.⁹⁹ A November, 1937, NPS plan of the site does depict three "existing farm buildings to be removed," located approximately 150 yards south-southwest of the house. However, the earliest known, July, 1937, aerial photography of the site, does not show these three structures or any apparent remains of their foundations, and therefore their existence remains conjectural. A path (*Exhibit 5A-35*) probably ran south from SH4 to the Quackenbush house. A barbed wire fence enclosed the house and its yard (*Exhibit 5A-25*), and may have also enclosed any associated agricultural structures.¹⁰⁰

A photograph of the farm taken in the late 1920s (*Figure 13*) also shows a row of telephone poles and lines (*Exhibit 5A-47*) extending along the north side of SH4 opposite the Quackenbush house and other homes on the site. Neither this photograph nor any

⁹⁹Bauxar, p. 5; Narrative for Structure HS-17, DAR Marker in "List of Classified Structures (LCS) - Park/Structure Index: Homestead National Monument," HNMA Administrative Files; *Prairie Paths: Homestead National Monument Trail Guide* (Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1988), p. 6; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55; "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, Homestead National Monument."

¹⁰⁰July 22, 1937 Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument; U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS, Branch of Plans and Design, Drawing NM-HOM-2501, "Plan of the Monument, Homestead National Monument" (November, 1937), Map attached to copy of 1937 Preliminary Development Report by Edward Hummel and Howard A. Baker, File 207, Box 2235, Record Group 79; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument.

of the other contemporaneous photographs of the homestead's dwellings, however, show the lines extending into the houses.

The Quackenbush house was dismantled in 1930. Shortly before this date the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century agricultural buildings and structures (*Figure 12*) located north of the brick house site were also razed. In 1928 the feeder barn (*Exhibit 5A-17*), granary (*Exhibit 5A-20*), shed/corncrib (*Exhibit 5A-19*), and the barnyard's barbed wire fences (*Exhibit 5A-25*) were dismantled. The windmill (*Exhibit 5A-21*), which once stood directly to the south of the granary, had been removed in approximately 1910. After these structures were removed, the barnyard (*Exhibit 5A-18*) reverted to field status and the road leading to the area (*Exhibit 5A-23*) disappeared due to disuse (*Map 11*).¹⁰¹

After moving out of the Quackenbush house, Agnes Freeman lived in a small house generally known as the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin (*Exhibit 5A-37*) (*Figures 16 and 18*). The vernacular house, built by her son John Freeman in ca. 1910, was a modest, single-story, gable-roofed, wood-frame house. There was a simple porch across the south elevation; a ca. 1925 photograph shows the utilitarian use of the porch which provided an outdoor work place and storage area (*Figure 16*). A pump, which presumably covered a well shaft (*Exhibit 5A-38*), was located directly south of the cabin near the porch, and a privy (*Exhibit 5A-39*) and another outbuilding, possibly a shed (*Exhibit 5A-45*), were south of the pump (*Figures 16 and 18*). Photographs indicate that several deciduous trees provided the modest dwelling with shade. The north elevation of the

¹⁰¹July 22, 1937, Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument; Bauxar, p. 5; Narrative accompanying photograph of Freeman Farm Buildings and Barnyard - 1911, Negative No. 162, Historic Freeman Land & Buildings/Freeman Homestead Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55.

cabin faced the freight road and the row of cottonwood trees that were planted along the road (*Figure 13*). The cabin and its yard were separated from surrounding fields by barbed wire fences (*Figures 13 and 16*) (*Exhibit 5A-25*). Agnes Freeman moved into the house around 1920 and lived there until ca. 1930 when she moved to a sanatorium in Beatrice, Nebraska, following a hip fracture in a fall on the property. In 1930 the house was destroyed by fire following a stove explosion that fatally burned her grandson, Daniel Frank Freeman, who was then living in the dwelling.¹⁰²

Another a small, gable-roofed, white wood-frame house (*Exhibit 5A-43*) on the property was probably built for one of Agnes Suiter Freeman's daughters in 1935 (*Figures 19 and 20*). This dwelling, which is apparent on the 1937 aerial photograph, was located southeast of the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin. A laundry line and a tall deciduous tree with a tire swing suspended from it were located west of this house. Cultivated corn and wheat fields which were demarcated by barbed wire fences surrounded the house (*Figure 20*). It appears that a small shed (*Exhibit 5A-46*) was located northwest of the house and a well southwest of the house (*Exhibit 5A-44*). A dirt road (*Exhibit 5A-41*) led to the both the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin and the second white frame house, and presumably paths connected the two with each other and the road (*Exhibits 5A-40 and 5A-42*).¹⁰³

¹⁰²Bauxar, p. 5; Kaplan, pp. 142, 148-149; Narrative accompanying photograph of Agnes Suiter Freeman Cabin with Quackenbush house in background, Negative No. 163, Historic Freeman Land & Buildings/Freeman Homestead Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; Schoen, pp. 6, 55.

¹⁰³July 22, 1937, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument; Bauxar, p. 5; 1960 "General Development" notes added to April 18, 1955 Homestead Master Plan drawing NM-HOM/2002-G, Sheet 1 of 1, HNMA Map Files; Edward A. Hummel and Howard A. Baker, "Preliminary Development Report - Homestead National Monument, Beatrice, Nebraska," 1937, p. 4, HNMA Administrative Files; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55; J. E. W., "Homestead National Monument Vegetative Management Map," January, 1960, HNMA Map Files.

When Congress established Homestead National Monument in 1936, the site retained no buildings and structures dating from the Freeman homesteading period. During the approximately thirty years between Daniel Freeman's death and the NPS acquisition of the property, most of the property's buildings and structures were removed or relocated. Only the small, ca. 1935, wood-frame house remained standing on the homestead. Since this house was not considered to be historically significant, it was moved to nearby Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1939.¹⁰⁴

According to a few scanty records, two additional dwellings also may have existed on the property. One textual source reports that another post-1916 frame house located east of the white frame house was removed in 1939. This may be the house shown south of SH4 in the east *forty* on a 1938 Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation map of Gage County (*Map 10*).¹⁰⁵ Contemporary and later NPS records, however, do not identify a house on this site. Instead, those records indicate that the sole structure on the property was the small, ca. 1935, wood-frame house (*Exhibit 5A-43*) on the homestead's north *forty*.¹⁰⁶ According to another unreferenced textual source, there was also an early twentieth-century house located on the site of the parking lot west of the monument's current maintenance building. Because the existence of this house, however, is not noted or confirmed in other sources, it is likely that it never existed.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴Bauxar, p. 5; 1960 "General Development" notes added to April 18, 1955 Homestead Master Plan drawing NM-HOM/2002-G, Sheet 1 of 1, HNMA Map Files; Edward A. Hummel and Howard A. Baker, "Preliminary Development Report - Homestead National Monument, Beatrice, Nebraska," 1937, p. 4, HNMA Administrative Files; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55; J. E. W., "Homestead National Monument Vegetative Management Map," January, 1960, HNMA Map Files.

¹⁰⁵Schoen and Bleed, p. 55.

¹⁰⁶"General Development" notes added to April 18, 1955, Homestead Master Plan drawing NM-HOM/2002-G, Sheet 1 of 1, HNMA Map Files; "Homestead National Monument Vegetative Management Map," January, 1960, HNMA Map Files; Hummel and Baker, p. 4. This conflicting information regarding the existence of a dwelling raises the likely possibility that both the textual source and the Nebraska State maps are incorrect and the structure which they depict is actually the frame house (3-33) removed in 1939.

¹⁰⁷Bauxar, p. 5.

Historic Land Use and Site Arrangement

In 1936 the land comprising the newly-authorized monument was a far cry from the virgin tallgrass prairie first encountered by the homesteaders and settlers whose accomplishments the monument was intended to commemorate. Throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and early 1930s, Freeman's heirs and their tenants had followed common Nebraska agricultural practice and cultivated virtually every arable acre of the property's rectangular fields (*Map 11*). Corn, wheat, and/or oats were raised in the fields on the flat areas of the farm, and prairie hay and possibly other crops were grown on the site's upland slopes (*Exhibit 5*). It is known that in the late 1930s the flat fields in the middle and east *forties* were planted in wheat, and the fields north of SH4 in the north *forty* were planted in corn (*Exhibit 5*). Most of the farm's woods (*Exhibit 5*), moreover, had been heavily grazed.¹⁰⁸ According to two prairie ecologists, these activities, pursued without the benefit of conservation practices, had "severely abused" the soil.¹⁰⁹ Severe sheet erosion on the homestead's east *forty* (*Figure 21*) led to the formation of deep gullies (*Figure 22*). The timber along Cub Creek in the west *forty* had been overgrazed and "entirely cut-over" leaving only "young new growth and a few deceased old trees [sic] trunks" standing among the "light and poor stand of grass" on this land (*Figures 23 and 24*).¹¹⁰ All of the "merchantable timber had been cut," and the area "had been seeded with Sudan grass for pasture purposes." Indeed, because of overgrazing and excessive logging, erosion was quite serious in the west *forty* and

¹⁰⁸July 22, 1937, Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument; "Appraisal of the Homestead National Monument of America;" Graff Interview; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument.

¹⁰⁹July 22, 1937 Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument; Graff Interview; James Stubbendieck and Gary D. Wilson, "Prairie Restoration/Management at Homestead: A History," *Park Science* 7, No. 4 (Summer 1987), Appendix B, p. 1 in *Prairie Management Action Plan*.

¹¹⁰"Appraisal of Homestead National Monument of America;" Graff Interview.

threatened to cause flooding that could “inundate” that portion of the monument.¹¹¹ East of the creek on the wooded half of the north *forty*, however, there was a “very attractive grove with a number of large trees” with a “much better stand of grass.”¹¹² The NPS Regional Biologist described the woodland in this area as being “in what we might loosely call a ‘virgin condition.’”¹¹³

Prior to the mid-1930s, portions of the homestead’s land also continued to be used for orchards and gardens. The three orchards (*Exhibit 5A-16*) that surrounded Freeman’s brick house certainly continued to be cultivated for a time after his death, although by the late 1920s or early 1930s they had disappeared.¹¹⁴ Additionally, the kitchen garden plot (*Exhibit 5A-14*) located east of the brick house was probably planted through ca. 1930 when the neighboring Quackenbush house was dismantled.¹¹⁵ Continued usage of the brick house area would have necessitated the upkeep of paths through the area for a time.

Daniel Freeman’s heirs continued to use wooden and barbed wire fences and vegetation to define and enclose their fields and orchards, confine their livestock, and mark the farm’s boundaries in the twentieth century. The mix of these fence types, however, continued to change, with barbed wire fencing become more and more popular. Indeed, by the late 1920s or early 1930s, all of the functional fences on the homestead were probably barbed wire enclosures, including the fences separating the

¹¹¹December 12, 1939, Memorandum from Edward Hummel to the Regional Director (source of quotations); 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument.

¹¹²“Appraisal of Homestead National Monument of America” (source of quotations on the west and north *forty* woodlands); Graff Interview.

¹¹³Memorandum from Daniel B. Beard, Regional Biologist, to Mr. Calahane, Section on National Park Wildlife, May 5, 1941, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument.

¹¹⁴Kaplan, p. 138.

¹¹⁵Bauxar, p. 5; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 23, 32-35, 53-54.

farm's several interior fields and pastures and those serving as exterior property fences along most of the homestead's boundaries.¹¹⁶

Some wooden post-and-board fences (*Exhibit 5A-24*) stood on the property through at least the middle of the 1910s. They continued to flank portions of SH4 (*Exhibit 5A-26*) and enclose the Freeman barnyard (*Exhibit 5A-18*) (*Figure 12*). It is likely that such fences continued to demarcate the boundary between the farm's middle and east *forties*. By ca. 1930, however, all these wooden fences had almost certainly been replaced by barbed wire. Daniel Freeman had begun the process of replacing the post-and-board fence along the freight road in the early 1900s with the installation of a barbed wire fence in front of the brick house (*Figures 7 and 11*) (*Exhibit 5A-25*). The change was probably completed, however, when the road was graded, graveled, and converted into SH4 in the late 1920s. Similarly, if the barnyard fences were replaced before the farm buildings were razed in 1928, such replacements almost certainly would have been of barbed wire. Along the line between the middle and east *forties* the wooden fence also would probably have been succeeded by a temporary, two-strand, barbed wire enclosure, since the permanent wire fences generally marked only property lines.¹¹⁷ By the late 1930s other barbed wire fences also enclosed the wooded pasture in the homestead's west *forty* and marked portions of the farm's boundaries in the north, east, and west *forties*.¹¹⁸

It is likely that labor-intensive maintenance of the Osage orange (*Exhibit 5-32*) hedgerow marking the property's southern boundary did not occur during this period. Since the hedgerow today shows no sign of being woven into an organized hedge, it is

¹¹⁶Graff Interview; Sutton, p. 9.

¹¹⁷Graff Interview.

¹¹⁸1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument.

likely that maintenance had halted many years ago. Indeed it is possible that it was never highly maintained. By the late 1930s parts of the hedge had almost disappeared, particularly in its eastern sections. In other areas, however, it had become overgrown and the hedge plants had reverted to tree-like growth (*Figure 25*) (*Map 11*). These characteristics indicate that care of the hedge had been suspended for a number of years. In the interim, Freeman's heirs maintained a barbed wire fence on their southern property line that probably consisted of strands of barbed wire stapled to the hedge trees.¹¹⁹

When the NPS began surveying the homestead after authorization of HNMA, its reports noted a surprising dearth of fencing on the farm. This observation may indicate that the homestead's fences had deteriorated or that the homestead had fewer fences than many similar properties. Two NPS surveyors wrote that in order to secure the property, one of "the first jobs to be undertaken in the area" would be to construct a "fence composed of 26 inch hog wire and three strands of barbed wire around the entire area."¹²⁰

¹¹⁹1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument; Sutton, pp. 9-10.

¹²⁰Baker and Hummel, p. 7; 1939 NPS Base Map of Homestead National Monument. Two early NPS memoranda documenting development of the site imply that the enclosures shown on the 1939 base map constituted the extent of the homestead's fencing when the NPS acquired the property. These memoranda by Supervisor of Historic Sites Ronald F. Lee and Acting Project Manager Edward Hummel note that the NPS's initial 1939 work on the site consisted of erosion control and prairie and woodland restoration projects. Initial NPS fence construction was not programmed until 1940. See Memorandum from Ronald F. Lee to the Director, NPS, August 30, 1939, File 618, Box 2236, RG 79; and Memorandum from Edward Hummel to the Regional Director, December 12, 1939.

1936 – 1953: Early NPS Development (Exhibit 6)

Historic Context

The HNMA prairie restoration efforts were in concert with an evolving scientific movement that began in the United States during the 1910s and continued through the early 1930s. The HNMA represents one of the prairie restorations during the 1930s when the conservation theories of the earlier years of the twentieth century were implemented in response to the environmental degradation of the American Midwest during the Great Depression. Although his direct involvement cannot be documented, one of the leading prairie theorists and activists J. E. Weaver of the University of Nebraska was aware of and commented on the prairie restoration process for HNMA. With its establishment in the 1930s, the HNMA prairie restoration serves as an early implementation model illustrative of the prairie restoration concepts of prairie scientists such as J. E. Weaver of Nebraska, and J. T. Curtis of Wisconsin, Bohumil Shimek of Iowa. The conservation theories and efforts of these scientists and others, who were concerned with the testing and application of ecological theories to degraded natural environments, are recognized today as restoration ecology.¹²¹

Spearheading this movement was wildlife biologist Aldo Leopold. What made this approach unique was the introduction of a new dimension to scientific theory based upon philosophical and ethical principles. During his tenure at the University of Wisconsin, Leopold proposed through his writings an innovative, ethical approach to

¹²¹University of Iowa botanist Bohumil Shimek, who founded the *Iowa Conservationist Magazine*, proposed an "extensive prairie protection plan" that was never implemented. Shirley Shirley, *Restoring the Tallgrass Prairie: An Illustrated Manual for Iowa and the Upper Midwest* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1994), p. 3. For a discussion on the history of the conservation movement in the United States, see Roderick F. Nash, ed., *American Environmentalism: Readings in Conservation History* (New York, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990); Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); and Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology* (San Francisco, California: Sierra Club Books, 1977).

human culture's relationship with the land that was based on the view of land as an "organism."¹²² The evolution of this ethical viewpoint is canonized in Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* as follows: "we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."¹²³ Leopold's introduction of the ethical dimension to ecology opened uncharted avenues to the application of ecological principles. His ideas of human relationships with the land were visibly coupled with his efforts to restore prairie ecosystems at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum and his private property located north of Madison, Wisconsin. These restoration efforts commenced in 1935 and are often recognized as some of the first attempts at restoration ecology in the United States.¹²⁴ Following Leopold, J. T. Curtis of the University of Wisconsin-Madison studied methods of restoring prairie to increase diminished native plant species.¹²⁵

J. E. Weaver was another activist calling for the preservation and conservation of the rapidly disappearing tallgrass prairie. Weaver, as a restoration ecologist from the University of Nebraska who was familiar with the Homestead site, termed the proposed prairie restoration "very worthwhile." NPS wildlife technician Adolph Murie, who was involved with the Homestead prairie restoration, knew Weaver's work, specifically mentioning the publication "The Prairie" [sic] by Weaver and his colleague T. J. Fitzpatrick. Murie recommended restoration techniques consistent with Weaver's

¹²²J. Baird Callicott, "The Scientific Substance of the Land Ethic" from Thomas Tanner, ed., *Aldo Leopold: The Man and His Legacy* (Ankeny, Iowa: Soil Conservation Society of America, 1987), pp. 87-104.

¹²³Roderick Nash, "Aldo Leopold and the Limits of American Liberalism" from Thomas Tanner, ed., *Aldo Leopold: The Man and His Legacy* (Ankeny, Iowa: Soil Conservation Society of America, 1987), pp. 75.

¹²⁴William R. Jordan III, Michael E. Gilpin, and John D. Aber, "Restoration Ecology: A synthetic Approach to Ecological Research" from Jordan, Gilpin, and Aber, eds., *Restoration Ecology: A Synthetic Approach to Ecological Research* (New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 3-29.

¹²⁵Shirley, p. 4. The Curtis Prairie at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum memorializes Curtis' pioneering prairie restoration research.

applied research. Weaver was an influential writer and professor who Murie considered the "leader of the academic research effort in the struggle to save the Great Plains." Weaver is believed to have trained more of the academic scientists who studied the drought of the Great Depression years than any other scientist.¹²⁶

Funding, labor, and gasoline shortages associated with the United States mobilization for World War II, however, caused delays in prairie restoration and other NPS plans for the HNMA site. At Homestead, as throughout the United States, funds and personnel were diverted from public works projects to defense concerns as the United States shifted from a depression economy to one based on the increasing hostilities associated with the escalation of World War II. Official entry into the war resulted in the virtual abandonment of most peacetime conservation, recreation, and educational projects of the Department of the Interior. The 1950s brought a gradual refocus on these types of projects as the U.S. government and the American public recovered from war and the widespread availability of automobiles and gasoline led to a renewed interest in visiting sites of historic and cultural interest.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

Recognizing the significance of Freeman's homestead, Beatrice, Nebraska residents initiated efforts to preserve the Freeman homestead within weeks of his death. From 1909-1911 prominent Beatrice citizens, Nebraska's governor and legislature, and the Nebraska Congressional delegation lobbied for recognition of Freeman's farm as a national park. However, the Homestead Bill they introduced in Congress died in 1911,

¹²⁶ Ronald C. Tobey, *Saving the Prairies, The Life Cycle of the Founding School of American Plant Ecology, 1895-1955*, (Berkeley: University of California Press 1981) 192; the NPS's initial plans and concepts for prairie restoration are discussed in Memorandum from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician, to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 9, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79;

and serious attempts to preserve the site halted until the mid-1920s. In 1925, the same year the Daughters of the American Revolution installed a commemorative plaque at the homestead, Senator George Norris resumed the campaign to memorialize the farm. A decade later, following discussion of various proposals, including establishment of an agricultural implements museum or state park, Nebraskans achieved their original objective—establishment of Freeman's homestead as a national park. On March 16, 1936, after a lengthy political campaign by Senator Norris and other members of the Nebraska Congressional delegation, Congress—more than fulfilling one of Daniel Freeman's most ambitious goals—approved the establishment of Homestead National Monument on the 160 acres comprising Freeman's original homestead claim.¹²⁷

Following President Roosevelt's March, 1936, signature of the act authorizing establishment of Homestead National Monument, the NPS initiated action to acquire the property and began planning for interpretation and development of the site. In October, 1938, after a delay of more than two-and-a-half years, the NPS purchased the homestead for \$18,000. Three months later in January, 1939, Acting Secretary of the Interior Harry Slattery issued an order formally designating the former Freeman lands as "The Homestead National Monument of America."¹²⁸

¹²⁷Ray H. Mattison, *Homestead National Monument: Its Establishment and Administration*, Reprinted from *Nebraska History* 43, No. 1 (March 1962), pp. 7-21. The enabling legislation for HNMA is as follows: "It shall be the duty of the Secretary of 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 prosperity 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. 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 judgement may perpetuate the history of the country mainly developed by the homestead law." Public Law 480, 74th Congress, 2d Sess. (March 19, 1936), *An Act to Establish the Homestead National Monument of America*, p. 165, in Appendix to "Statement for Management: Homestead National Monument of America," HNMA Administrative Files.

¹²⁸"Made One Offer," Undated Beatrice, Nebraska (?) newspaper article discussing the United States government's negotiations with the Freeman heirs for purchase of the homestead, File No. 3238, Drawer 7, Cabinet 23, HNMA Archives; Mattison, pp. 21-23.

Even before the negotiations to purchase the property were satisfactorily concluded, NPS planners began developing a plan for a monument commemorating the "settlement, cultivation, and civilization of the great west."¹²⁹ The first preliminary development plan, drafted jointly by NPS landscape architect Howard W. Baker and NPS historian Edward A. Hummel in 1937, proposed to achieve this goal through three mutually-reinforcing techniques. First, the NPS would attempt to restore the "land to a condition, as nearly as it is possible to do so" as it was when Daniel Freeman homesteaded the area. After the landscape had been restored, a "typical Nebraska frontier farm home" would be constructed on the site of Freeman's homestead cabin (*Exhibit 6-7*). The Freeman cabin, which was believed to be a typical frontier home, would serve as the archetype for this restoration. Finally, the history of the "broader aspects of the Homestead Bill" would be told through interpretive displays housed in the restored cabin or in a museum wing added to the park custodian's dwelling. The development plan called for constructing the NPS dwelling north of SH4 in the wooded portion of the north *forty*.¹³⁰ Although this plan was not implemented in its entirety, its interpretive vision has guided development of the monument for more than sixty years.

During the first twenty years of NPS development, the NPS instituted soil and woodland conservation projects and initiated programs to restore the homestead's battered fields and woodlands to the almost virgin tallgrass prairie and mature-growth forests encountered by Daniel Freeman in 1862. NPS also launched its plan to re-create a typical late nineteenth-century homestead site, and began construction of a

¹²⁹Public Law 480, 74th Congress, 2d Sess. (March 19, 1936), *An Act to establish the Homestead National Monument of America*, p. 165, in Appendix to "Statement for Management: Homestead National Monument of America," HNMA Administrative Files.

¹³⁰Baker and Hummel, pp. 4-8.

custodian's residence and a combined museum and utility building. Although implementation began in 1940, it was almost immediately curtailed because of shortages associated with United States mobilization for World War II. Appropriations for park development were already scarce before the war, and most of the initial work done at the site was accomplished using depression-era Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) economic stimulus funds.¹³¹ Funding almost ceased entirely during the war when only minimal resources were available. Congressional appropriations continued to be meager for several years after the war, and NPS planners did not begin to receive adequate funding for development at HNMA until the late 1940s.¹³² At this time, plans were resurrected in earnest, and by the mid-1950s NPS had achieved significant portions of Baker's and Hummel's original vision for development and interpretation of the park.¹³³

Historic Buildings and Associated Features

The initial actions of the NPS focused on preparing the site for restoration and interpretation as a monument to homesteading. It was determined that the small, ca. 1935, gable-roofed, wood-frame house (*Exhibit 6-43*) (*Figures 19 and 20*) located south of the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin site did not directly contribute to the interpretation of Daniel Freeman and nineteenth-century frontier homesteading. Therefore, NPS

¹³¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, ERA Projects, "Notice of Presidential Project Authorization, Fiscal Year 1941," Homestead National Monument, (LD-NB-5), O. P. Number 105-2-81-14, National Archives, Record Group 79, Box 2235, File 207; this notice authorized an amount not to exceed \$1,512 for non-labor items to "Develop Homestead National Monument by restoring and conserving historical values and natural resources of water, soil and forest landscaping; seeding; sodding; planting trees; fencing; erecting signs; rehabilitating; and performing work incidental and appurtenant thereto."

¹³² Mattison, pp. 24-25; Lee Memorandum, August 30, 1939; Letter from Howard W. Baker, Acting Director, NPS Region Two, to Laura M. Hotchkiss, February 4, 1948, File 6003, Box 2236, RG 79 (source of quotation "meager").

¹³³ Letter from Howard W. Baker, Acting NPS Regional Director, to Laura Hotchkiss, Elizabeth Montague Chapter, DAR, February 4, 1948, HNMA Administrative Files; Homestead National Monument of American Preliminary Development Outline - 1940, pp. 5-9; Mattison, pp. 24-26.

planners did not consider the building historically significant, and it was marked for removal in 1937. The dwelling was finally removed to Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1939, less than a year after the park was established.¹³⁴

By 1940 (*Map 11*), after the removal of the final Freeman building from the site, most of the roads and paths from the Freeman occupancies had been abandoned and/or overgrown. These included the barnyard road, the road and paths (*Exhibits 5A-36, 5A-37, and 5A-38*) to the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin and post-1916 frame house, and the paths to the brick house and Quackenbush house. The only farm road or path that survived from the pre-NPS period was the brick house road (*Exhibit 6-15*) which continued to run south from SH4 along the southeastern edge of the Cub Creek woods. Relict fences from the Freeman period were also removed from the interior of the property.

The NPS then began the construction of a building infrastructure to support the monument's interpretive mission. The buildings comprising this infrastructure included a utility structure, a museum facility, a park custodian's residence, and a reconstructed typical Nebraska frontier farm home. Construction of buildings in the north *forty* headquarters area, which had been initially planned in 1937, began in 1941.¹³⁵

¹³⁴Baker and Hummel, p. 4; Bauxar, p. 5; Schoen and Bleed, pp. 6, 55.

¹³⁵Mattison, pp. 24-25; United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Design, Drawing NM-HOM-2002. "General Development Plan, Part of the Master Plan for Homestead National Monument of America," 1941, Map attached to Memorandum from George F. Ingalls, Acting Regional Director, Region 2, to the Director in File 601-18, Box 2236, RG 79. Initial NPS plans located the headquarters or "control area" on the north side of SH4 approximately 200 yards southeast of the SH 4 bridge over Cub Creek. However, by the time construction began in 1941, the headquarters area had been relocated to its current site because the original proposed location was subject to flooding. Furthermore, the new site had the additional advantage of being "isolated" from the rest of the Monument and would "not be prominent in the general picture," yet would still have "adequate access to the proposed Homestead restoration." See 1937 NPS Plan of Homestead National Monument; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Design, Map NM-HOM-2502, "Control Area, Homestead National Monument," November 1939, Map attached to 1937 Preliminary Development Plan by Hummel and Baker, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; and Memorandum

Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) workers using NPS materials constructed the park's utility building (*the building to the left in Figure 26*) (*Exhibit 6-52*) between March and July of 1941.¹³⁶ NPS planners rated the building, which housed the park's museum and the superintendent's office, as "adequate," but developed designs for a larger "combined museum-administration building" that would serve as the center of future interpretive activities.¹³⁷ At approximately the same time, a pit latrine (*Exhibit 6-59*) was placed in the "wooded swale north of the temporary entrance road" (*Exhibit 6-53*).¹³⁸ Construction of the other major building in the headquarters area—the park superintendent's residence—was delayed by World War II, and the dwelling (*Exhibit 6-50*) (*the building to the right of the utility building in Figure 26*) was not completed until 1951.¹³⁹ In addition to these buildings, other structures erected at the park during its early years included the flagpole (*Exhibit 6-51*) in the headquarters area (*Figure 26*) and entrance/exit signs (*Exhibit 6-55*) (*Figure 27*).¹⁴⁰

Plans to reconstruct a typical Nebraska frontier homestead evolved as they were implemented. Originally, the NPS proposed to reconstruct a building similar or identical to Daniel Freeman's homestead cabin on or near the dwelling's original site. NPS historians and managers, however, warmly debated the merits of this proposal.

from the Region Two Director to the Director, NPS, July 9, 1940, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79 (source of quotations "not be prominent" and "adequate access").

¹³⁶William I. Williams, Assistant Architect, Region Two Headquarters, "Final Progress Report to the Regional Chief Engineer on the Construction of Combination Utility Building Homestead National Monument," July 16, 1941, File 618, Box 2236, RG 79; Willard P. Lindauer, Associate Engineer, "Final Construction Report: Acquisition of Land, Development and Improvement, Homestead National Monument, Account No. 401," File 630-07, Box 2236, RG 79.

¹³⁷Homestead National Monument Historical and Archaeological Interpretation Summary, May 19, 1948, pp. 4-5.

¹³⁸Memorandum from Clarence H. Shultz, HNMA Custodian, to the Director, September 27, 1941, File 801-02, Box 2236, RG 79. Schultz noted that the latrine, which had previously been swept away in June, 1941, flooding of Cub Creek, had again been "floated away from its moorings" during a September, 1941, flood and was "lodged in the trees northeast of its former location."

¹³⁹Mattison, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴⁰Robert Tecklenberg, "Homestead National Monument of America: An Administrative History, 1962-1981" (1982), pp. 19-20 (these two pages are not numbered).

Several contended that a historic reconstruction, regardless of how carefully it was undertaken, would destroy the site and deviate from NPS policies "relating to the historic sites under its supervision." One memorandum noted that "the bare site of a historic building or the remains of an original historic structure, even though it should consist of only a part of its foundation is much more inspiring to me than if so-called 'typical buildings' are erected on the original site."¹⁴¹ The debate was not resolved until 1948 when archeological excavations (*Figure 28*) failed to conclusively identify any remains of the building in the area marked as the homestead cabin's location. At that time interpretive planners abandoned all plans to reconstruct Freeman's home or any another frontier home on the original site.¹⁴² Instead, they proposed to establish an open-air "outdoor museum" similar to those in New Salem, Illinois; Cooperstown, New York; and Skansen, Sweden, at another location on the monument grounds. The museum would be comprised of "authentic original homesteaders' cabins chosen to represent different geographical regions settled primarily under the Homestead Law."¹⁴³ In 1950 the first of the several vernacular buildings envisioned in this plan was relocated. The ca. 1867, one-and-a-half story, 14- by 16-foot, log Palmer-Epard cabin (*Figure 29*) was moved from a homestead farm in Gage County's Logan Township to a location (*Exhibit 6-49*) just west of Cub Creek and south of the park's

¹⁴¹For the debate over the merits of reconstructing a building similar to Freeman's homestead cabin on the site see: Memorandum from the Acting Associate Director for Messrs. Drury, Demary, and R. F. Lee, November 25, 1941, File 840, Box 2236, RG 79 (source of quotations); E. F. P.'s Comments on Mr. Tolson's Memorandum on Homestead National Monument of America, January 17, 1942, File 600-1, Box 2236, RG 79; and Memorandum from Herbert E. Kahler, Acting Supervisor of Historic Sites, to the Director, July 6, 1942, File 840, Box 2236, RG 79.

¹⁴²Bauxar, pp. 6-17, 28; Homestead National Monument Historical and Archaeological Interpretation Summary, May 19, 1948, p. 4.

¹⁴³Homestead National Monument Historical and Archaeological Interpretation Summary, May 19, 1948, p. 5 (source of quotations "outdoor museum" and "authentic original..."); Memorandum for the Director from Ronald F. Lee, Chief Historian, to the Director, September 2, 1948, attached to Memorandum from the Director to the Regional Director, Region 2, September 29, 1948, File 207-03, Box 2235, RG 79; Homestead National Monument Museum Prospectus, 1951, pp. 9-10, HNMA Administrative Files.

north boundary.¹⁴⁴ However, no other buildings were moved on the site in accordance with the original plan.

A new circulation system on the site was needed to support this collection of new buildings. SH4 continued to form the backbone of the monument's circulation system throughout most of the first twenty years of the park's existence. The increasingly traveled, graveled, "farm-to-market highway" (*Exhibit 6-26*) (*Map 11*), which was in "fair condition" in 1940, had once bisected Daniel Freeman's homestead and increased its value. It now divided the monument grounds and posed significant interpretive and safety problems for the NPS staff. As NPS Regional Historian Merrill J. Mattes stated in a February, 1951, memorandum, "a modern highway bisecting the area" violated its "historical integrity," and created "a hazard and landscaping problem."¹⁴⁵

In 1940, the Nebraska highway department was considering relocating SH4 to a new position north and east of the monument. The NPS made this road relocation one of the primary objectives of its early 1941 master plan, which followed the guidelines established in its 1940 "Development Outline." After SH4 was realigned, the plan called for the old freight road, which was still lined with the cottonwood trees planted in the late nineteenth century (*Exhibit 6-30*), to be restored to its ca. 1863 condition as it ran across the grasslands of the monument's restored prairie.¹⁴⁶

In addition, the plan called for the removal of the intrusive Northwestern Bell Telephone "main trunk pole line." The line consisted of two ten-pin cross arms and

¹⁴⁴Mattison, p. 25; Charles S. Pope and Lenard E. Brown, *Historic Structures Report, Part II, Palmer-Epard Cabin, Homestead National Monument* (December 1969), pp. 3-10.

¹⁴⁵"Homestead National Monument of America Development Outline, 1940, p. 6; Memorandum from Merrill J. Mattes to the Regional Director, February 9, 1951, HNMA Administrative Files.

¹⁴⁶ Homestead National Monument of America Development Outline, 1940, pp. 6-7; 1941 General Development Plan Map; Memorandum from the Region Two Director to the Director, NPS, July 9, 1940; Memorandum from the Region Two Director to the Director, NPS, December 16, 1940, File 600-1, Box 2236, RG 79.

sixteen wires and extended across the park along the SH4 right-of-way (*Exhibit 6-47*).¹⁴⁷ However, these relocation and restoration plans would not be executed until the mid-1950s.

As was the case during previous periods, the site's network of secondary roads and paths connected to the primary highway. The first route the NPS constructed was the headquarters area access road. According to the NPS's 1940 "Development Outline," a new road and trestle bridge were needed to make the proposed headquarters area in the northwestern portion of the north *forty* "accessible," since "no trail system for access and circulation" existed.¹⁴⁸ This temporary road (*Exhibit 6-53*), was built using ERA funds and labor in 1941. It ran north from SH4 and crossed Cub Creek on a temporary trestle bridge (*Exhibit 6-54*) before terminating in a loop road and parking area (*Exhibit 6-48*), in the headquarters vicinity.¹⁴⁹

Within several years, a rudimentary network of NPS interpretive trails supplemented the new headquarters road. Until the late 1940s these trails consisted of "mowed paths" that led from informal parking turnoffs on the highway shoulder "to the sites of the original cabin and later buildings," which had been marked with signs in 1948 (*Map 13*). At the site of Daniel and Agnes Suiter Freeman's graves (*Exhibit 6*) where there was not adequate space for an automobile turnoff, "visitors leaving their cars on the road shoulder" wore "a deep trail [*Exhibit 6-56*] climbing the bank to see the memorial gravestone."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷"Homestead National Monument of America Development Outline, 1940, p. 5.

¹⁴⁸"Homestead National Monument of America Development Outline, 1940, p. 6.

¹⁴⁹Mattison, p. 24; Memorandum from the Director Region Two to the Director, NPS, December 16, 1940; Willard P. Lindauer, Final Construction Report: Acquisition of Land, Development, and Improvement, Homestead National Monument.

¹⁵⁰Homestead National Monument Historical and Archaeological Interpretation Summary, May 19, 1948, p. 4, HNMA Administrative Files.

Historic Land Use and Site Arrangement

In accordance with the preliminary 1937 development plan, NPS conservationists began restoring the Freeman homestead's tallgrass prairie after the NPS secured title to the property.¹⁵¹ The initial prairie restoration was accomplished through the Works Project Administration (WPA) using Emergency Relief Act (ERA) funding.¹⁵² There is little specific information concerning the planning of the prairie restoration, apart from a memorandum and a report from NPS Wildlife Technician Adolph Murie to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell summarizing prairie restoration techniques.¹⁵³

Murie concurred with prairie restoration from a wildlife conservation point of view and expressed the contemporary conservation theory of his times by commenting that Homestead's "grassland should never have been plowed." Murie's report summarized two methods for a program of prairie restoration. The first was to transplant prairie sod from nearby "doomed prairie areas." Murie justified transplantation since such areas in all likelihood would be destroyed and lost as prairie. Murie cited noted prairie authority and University of Nebraska professor J. E. Weaver's preference for transplantation to accomplish a prairie restoration at the HNMA. Weaver, who had been involved in prairie studies for two decades by the time of the Homestead

¹⁵¹ Edward A. Hummel and H. R. Heaton, Memorandum for the Acting Regional Director, March 9, 1939, HNMA Administrative Files.

¹⁵² It appears that there was no Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) involvement in the prairie restoration; research failed to establish a linkage to CCC work on the prairie, Record Group 114, "Records of the Soil Conservation Service," National Archives, College Park, Maryland; research did not result in any source indicating that the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) was involved either. Record Group 39, "Files on Approved Projects, 1934-1939," Boxes 248-254, "Records of the Soil Conservation Service," National Archives, College Park, Maryland. A superintendent's memorandum from 1940 mentioned that the use of a building in Beatrice that had been used formerly as a headquarters for a CCC camp was owned by the municipality and had been made available as a temporary office for the Homestead project. Perhaps the use of this structure has led to some confusion between the CCC and ERA activities in the Beatrice vicinity.

¹⁵³ Memorandum from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician, to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 9, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; "Restoration of Native Grassland at Homestead National Park, Report from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 20, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

restoration, advised NPS personnel that the restoration could be expected to be successful. Weaver termed the Homestead project an "excellent experiment and expressed an interest in being rather closely associated with the project."¹⁵⁴

Direct involvement from either Weaver or any of his graduate students has not been confirmed. It appears, however, that Weaver's advice was followed, and that the restoration was initiated using a combination of sod transplantation and grass seeding. Murie quoted Weaver as believing, "As time went on, adjustments would occur among the plants, which would bring the grass community nearer and nearer to the original prairie." For this reason, Murie recommended establishing both big bluestem and little bluestem to provide an opportunity for "a natural adjustment" to be made over a "period of years." He felt that if both species were appropriate, they would "adjust accordingly." Murie, repeating the advice of Weaver, wrote that a specific advantage of transplantation was the "special advantage in that not only is prairie grass brought into an area, but also native species of prairie herbs." The preferred transplantation method recommended in the report was to transplant several sod patches, rather than one large patch to ensure a more rapid spread of prairie plants. The recommended minimum patch size was "15 or 20 yards in diameter." Murie continued that it was important to "take care to have sufficient nucleus in each patch for healthy growth." He also advised against sodding the southern exposures if available sod was limited in quantity since those areas would dry out first. The areas to be sodded were to be plowed and harrowed prior to transplantation.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ "Restoration of Native Grassland at Homestead National Park, Report from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 20, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

¹⁵⁵ "Restoration of Native Grassland at Homestead National Park," Report from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 20, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

Apparently the restoration was consistent with the points and recommendations Murie made in his report.¹⁵⁶ Beginning in the spring of 1939, ERA-funded laborers transplanted strips of sod to check the severe sheet, rill, and gully erosion (*Figures 21 and 22*) in these areas. This procedure, which was expanded to include the construction of small checkdams (*Figure 30*), was repeated in several subsequent years through the late 1940s.¹⁵⁷

The design intent for the prairie as expressed by Murie was for the "ultimate aim ... to approach the original as near as possible." He stated in his report that it was possible that the entire homestead could have been occupied prior to pioneer settlement by either big bluestem or little bluestem, but that there may have been sloughgrass in some wet habitat areas. Murie believed that there were principally two habitats and that those included the well-aerated lowlands occupied by big bluestem and the upland occupied by little bluestem. Murie made recommendations for seeding a mix of prairie grasses and herbs since he believed that there would not be sufficient sod for transplantation. Murie believed that including herbs was important because their fall flowers, in particular, showed a "part of nature ... that gave some cheer to the first settlers." Although he advised that the herbs could be planted either "now or later," he cautioned against planting certain (but unspecified) herbs, "which are aggressive and may compete too strongly with the grasses before they are established." He

¹⁵⁶"Restoration of Native Grassland at Homestead National Park," Report from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 20, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

¹⁵⁷Stubbendieck and Wilson, p. B-1; Richard K. Sutton, J. Stubbendieck, and Jayne Traeger, "Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations for Homestead National Monument of America (Lincoln, Nebraska: Natural Resources Enterprises, Inc., December 1984), pp. 2-13; For a detailed discussion of ERA erosion control and prairie and woodland restoration projects at HNMA see Notice of Presidential Project Authorization, Homestead National Monument, LD-NB-5, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; Memorandum from Ronald F. Lee to the Director, NPS, August 30, 1939; Memorandum from Edward Hummel to the Region Two Director, December 12, 1939; Memorandum from Isabelle F. Story to the Region Two Director, August 2, 1940, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; and Letter WPA Project in the State Program, Homestead National Monument, Nebraska, December 9, 1941, File 618, Box 2236, RG 79.

recommended planting prairie shrubs once the grasses were established. The named species included *Amorpha canescens* (leadplant amorpha), *Rosa arkansana* (Arkansas rose), *Ceanophus pubincina* (?), *Salix humilis* (prairie willow), and *Rhus rudbergii* (western poison ivy).¹⁵⁸ He also advised that if future studies showed the historical presence of needlegrass or other native species, they could be established later. Clearly, Murie's intent was to reestablish a native prairie, to allow it to evolve and "adjust accordingly" with little intervention, and to add new prairie species as research identified their presence.

Murie concluded his report with a summary of five recommendations: construction of a fence "to prevent the trespass of hogs and other livestock," plowing the fields to prepare them for sodding and seeding, purchase and transplantation of prairie sod, seeding areas where sod was not going to be transplanted with either big bluestem or little bluestem, and the need to secure the "close cooperation and supervision" of J. E. Weaver. The extent of Murie's involvement following completion of the report is not known.

As actual work began, the first priority was controlling erosion on the southern upland slopes; this aspect of the prairie restoration project commenced in 1939. At the same time that the erosion control program was proceeding, NPS ecologists also began replanting the lowland fields with a mix of native grasses.¹⁵⁹ ERA workers initially seeded the fields using seed gathered from an area of prairie located approximately 5

¹⁵⁸ Murie gave only Latin names; it is assumed that these are the common names of the shrubs he was referencing in the report.

¹⁵⁹The NPS's initial plans and concepts for prairie restoration are discussed in Memorandum from Adolph Murie, Regional Wildlife Technician, to Regional Historian E. A. Hummell, February 9, 1939, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79; and Memorandum from E. A. Hummell, Acting Regional Historian, and H. R. Heaton, Assistant Attorney, to the Acting Regional Director, March 9, 1939, National Archives, File 207, Box 2235, RG 79.

miles west of the monument. The seed mixture, which was selected to approximate that found on the tallgrass prairie when Freeman homesteaded the site, included 45 percent big bluestem, 50 percent little bluestem, and 1 percent each of Kentucky bluegrass, needleandthread, Indian-grass, prairie dropseed, and sideoats grama.

By 1941, approximately 110 acres had been planted with a mixture of thirteen native grasses, although a combination of big bluestem and little bluestem accounted for between 80 and 85% of the planting. In addition, the elimination of grazing in the woodland area had begun to result in "undergrowth and forest reproduction" as desired by the early 1940s. The loss of personnel to military duty and other wartime activities as well as decreased spending for non-defense programs diverted attention away from the restoration and interpretive efforts at Homestead until 1946. In fact, for a time, a representative of the State Savings and Loan Association served as the acting custodian; by early 1946, when personnel were beginning to return to NPS assignments, the Homestead custodian returned after an absence of almost four years while performing military service. Upon his return, the custodian wrote, "The appearance of the area after an absence of several years was heartening. The seeding and sodding of native grasses begun in 1939 has been very successful. The grass is now so well established that the weed growth, except in the marginal areas, is crowded out. It is believed that the sheet and rill erosion is now checked by the present stand of the grass." Schultz was disappointed that many of the trees planted in the 1930s, however, had not survived. The trees that had survived during his absence had experienced a rate of growth that Schultz described as "excellent." The wartime period of neglect allowed a "rank growth" of weeds in areas where woodland had been cut in the southwest *forty* prior to federal acquisition. A number of other conservation issues, including major gullies in fields, creek bank erosion, and concentrations of logs and

debris in the creek remained as NPS concerns in 1946. NPS attributed "bad farming methods" as the source of most of its conservation problems.¹⁶⁰

The restoration had become sufficiently established by 1946 to require cutting, which was accomplished through a bidding process with neighboring farmers.¹⁶¹ Once personnel was available following the end of World War II, prairie restoration efforts continued. In 1947, NPS seeded approximately fifteen acres in little bluestem; another project that year included erosion control dams of native grass sod in gullies that had worn in the field areas. NPS also had a "heavy stone" retaining wall constructed in areas of "critical erosion in creek banks" in 1947.¹⁶² Although the big bluestem (*Andropogon furcatus*) had grown as tall as nine feet tall in some selected areas, "weed growth ... kept apace." The Homestead custodian reported that daily mowing was necessary to arrest the weeds, which included pigweed, smartweed, and sunflowers.¹⁶³ A superintendent's report for 1949 documents weed spraying programs for forested areas and reports "a complete kill of all the weeds in the treated areas." The only undesirable weed identified was ragweed.¹⁶⁴ Additional seeding of prairie vegetation using both imported seeds and seeds harvested on the site occurred in subsequent years.

¹⁶⁰ Memorandum from Clarence H. Schultz, Custodian, Homestead National Monument to the Director, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, March 4, 1946, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207.

¹⁶¹ Memorandum from Daniel B. Beard, Regional Biologist, United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Omaha, May 5, 1941, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207. The memorandum also reported that the newly restored prairie attracted at least thirty-three bird species.

¹⁶² Memorandum from Clarence H. Schultz, Custodian, Homestead National Monument to the Director, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, June 12, 1947, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207.

¹⁶³ Memorandum from Clarence H. Schultz, Custodian, Homestead National Monument to the Director, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, September 15, 1948, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207.

¹⁶⁴ Memorandum from Clarence H. Schultz, Custodian, Homestead National Monument to the Director, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, June 11, 1949, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207.

Other post-World War II site work included installation of interpretive signs and highway signs leading to the site. Homestead's custodian expressed pleasure with the signs for their effectiveness in silencing visitor criticism for the lack of interpretive facilities.¹⁶⁵

1954 – 1966: Mission 66 Development (Exhibit 7)

Historic Context

The development of the NPS during the late 1950s and the early 1960s was driven primarily by the NPS Mission 66 initiative. There was a significant increase in the number of visitors to the NPS following World War II, and Mission 66 was designed to enhance NPS programs to meet the needs of these visitors. Mission 66, which was to be completed in 1966 on the 50th anniversary of the NPS, was a development program for improving the physical infrastructure and staffing of areas managed by the NPS. Mission 66's goal was to provide maximum protection of the "scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources of the National Park System" while insuring that these resources were "available for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Memorandum from Clarence H. Schultz, Custodian, Homestead National Monument to the Director, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, September 15, 1948, National Archives, Record Group 79, E 7B, Box 2235, File 207.

¹⁶⁶ Mattison, pp. 26-27 (source of quotation "scenic, scientific, wilderness, and historic resources"); *Questions and Answers: Mission 66* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, ca. 1956), pp. 1-5; Tecklenberg, pp. 2-3.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

In 1954 the proposed realignment of SH4 took place as part of the efforts to enhance the interpretive experience of the HNMA site. The original location of SH4 was considered to be intrusive and unsafe to the monument, and the NPS supported the realignment plans. However, the new paved highway (*Exhibit 7-71*) (*Map 12*), which crossed Cub Creek on a new bridge (*Exhibit 7*) east of the park's headquarters, severed two, small, several acre plots of land located in the northeast corners of the north and east *forties* from the rest of the monument. NPS officials reluctantly approved this less-than-satisfactory realignment so the road could be relocated before a change in Nebraska highway funding procedures might postpone the project for many more years.¹⁶⁷

In 1956, concurrent with initial implementation of its programs to interpret the Freeman homestead, the NPS began planning for the Mission 66 program. At Homestead, Mission 66 projects designed to improve the monument's interpretive and prairie restoration programs included construction of a visitor center, an additional employee residence, an agricultural implement display building, a road and parking lot, and a suspension foot bridge over Cub Creek. Boundary stones and marker signs were also installed. With the exception of the employee residence, all the projects were completed by the summer of 1962 in time to coincide with the anticipated rush of visitors to the park during the centenary of the Homestead Act.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷Memorandum from Ronald Lee, NPS Region 2 Director, to NPS Director, May, 1952, HNMA Administrative Files; Memorandum from Merrill Mattes, Region 2, Historian, to Regional Director, May 20, 1952, HNMA Administrative Files; Memorandum from Fred J. Hall, Assistant Region 2 Director, to Region 2 Director, August 29, 1952, HNMA Administrative Files; Memorandum from Edward Baker, NPS Region 2 Director, to NPS Director, September 19, 1952, HNMA Administrative Files.

¹⁶⁸Tecklenberg, p. 3.

Historic Structures and Building Clusters

Mission 66 significantly expanded the HNMA building infrastructure (*Map 14*).

Buildings constructed included a new residence (*Exhibit 7-62*) and a visitor center with an agricultural implement display building (*Exhibit 7-61*) (*Figure 36*). By 1962, the visitor center and display building were complete.¹⁶⁹ A possible alternate location for the visitor center, which housed museum, library, and park administration functions, was discussed prior to its construction. In May, 1959, the Homestead park superintendent, in conjunction with the park historian, suggested the new location. They recommended that the visitor center be constructed on the triangular five-acre plot of land outside NPS ownership and owned by the Nebraska Department of Roads (*Exhibit 5-28*) located between the east boundary of the north *forty*, the north boundary of the east *forty*, and realigned SH4. The proposed site had safety advantages and offered more space, but most importantly it had interpretive advantages. From its vantage point, park visitors would “be given the opportunity of seeing the full expanse of the Freeman homestead” and its restored prairie, instead of being placed at a location on the periphery where the average visitor “misses the best part of Homestead National Monument.” The recommendation, however, was not adopted, and the new park visitor center was constructed in the old headquarters area.¹⁷⁰

Besides this major new construction, SH4 realignment and Mission 66 resulted in several other changes to the monument’s headquarters. A new park entrance sign (*Exhibit 7-55*) was erected outside the new visitor center along new SH4, and the old signs were replaced. The old utility and headquarters building was converted to a maintenance facility (*Exhibit 7-52*), and the flagpole (*Exhibit 7-51*) was moved to the

¹⁶⁹Mattison, pp. 26-27; Tecklenberg, pp. 3-5.

¹⁷⁰Mattison, p. 27; Letter from Donald G. Warman, Park Historian, to Superintendent, HNMA, May 10, 1959, HNMA Administrative Files; Letter from Warren G. Hotchkiss, Superintendent, HNMA, to Regional Director, May 25, 1959, HNMA Administrative Files.

northwest corner of the visitor center. In 1954, the Palmer-Epard cabin was moved from its original location at HNMA because road fill from realigned SH4 came within a few feet of the building's rear wall. It was relocated to a concrete pad east of the utility building (*Exhibit 7-63*) (*Figure 37*). Then, in 1962, the Palmer-Epard Cabin, still the only structure in the park's "outdoor" building museum, was moved again—its third location since 1950 (*Figure 38*). Relocation of the building to the new site (*Exhibit 7-64*) southeast of the new visitor center was required to provide space for the center's construction. The newly constructed residence (*Exhibit 7-62*) became the superintendent's residence while the old residence (*Exhibit 7-50*) became a residence for other park staff.¹⁷¹

Vegetation and Land Use Patterns

While planning and implementing Mission 66's infrastructure construction programs, the NPS continued its two decades-old effort to restore the Freeman homestead's tallgrass prairie and woodland. No additional seeding of the restored prairie occurred during this period. With the exception of the introduction of a "native grasses" wayside exhibit (*Exhibit 7-69*) adjacent to the monument's loop trail in 1963, management efforts focused on developing and improving the existing grassland. Management challenges, which were similar to those previously encountered, included flooding (1957 and 1963), potentially dangerous buildups of dried grasses, and weed infestations—partially caused by weed seeds deposited by flood waters. As in the past, these problems were countered by mowing and selective application of herbicides.¹⁷² A particularly nettlesome and persistent problem, however, were the trees and shrubs that invaded the old freight road right-of-way (*Exhibit 7-26*) and created a linear and unnatural form

¹⁷¹Brown, p. 10; 1961 HNMA *Master Plan Maps*.

¹⁷²Stubbendieck and Wilson, p. B-1; Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, p. 14 and Appendices I-8, I-9, and I-10; Tecklenberg, p. 6.

amid the carpet of prairie grasses. The continued presence of trees planted in the vicinity of the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin and other Freeman residences also disrupted the prairie landscape.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, a similar visual interruption—the row of cottonwood trees that lined the eastern part of the old freight road—was removed in the early 1960s.¹⁷⁴ Despite these varied challenges, more than 80 species of native grasses had been found on the restored tallgrass prairie by 1962. It was on its way to becoming what was considered in the 1970s as one of the best examples of restored grassland in the Midwest (*Figure 39*).¹⁷⁵

The NPS programs to restore the Freeman homestead's previously overgrazed woodlands were less aggressive. By the early 1960s the woods (*Exhibit 7*), which were largely being reestablished through natural propagation after initial reforestation efforts, were considered to have "approximately the same composition as existed at the time of settlement by Daniel Freeman." NPS conservationists concluded "protection alone, without the need for reforestation, should permit the wooded area to continue to thrive." The sole exception to this rule was a potential requirement to replant stands of willows damaged by beavers—one of the several presettlement animal species reestablishing themselves in the park.¹⁷⁶

Historic Circulation Network

Numerous changes to the site's circulation patterns occurred as a result of SH4 realignment and during development of Homestead's Mission 66 projects (*Map 14*).¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, pp. 78, 80.

¹⁷⁴Soil Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument, September 10, 1965, Frame UE-1F-267-X.

¹⁷⁵Tecklenberg, p. 6.

¹⁷⁶Fred F. Dickson, "Master Plan: Vegetative Management of Homestead National Monument," July 8, 1960, p. 4, Appendix I-8 to Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger.

¹⁷⁷Soil Conservation Service Aerial Photography of Homestead National Monument, September 10, 1965, Frame UE-1F-267-X.

Realigned SH4 (*Exhibit 7-71*), which crossed Cub Creek on a bridge (*Exhibit 7*) near the northern boundary of the north *forty*, served as the site's access road. In 1954, when the road was realigned, a short spur (*Exhibit 7*) was constructed to connect the NPS headquarters loop road and the parking area with the realigned SH4 (*Map 13*). For a short time, a short temporary spur (*Exhibit 7-70*) also continued to connect the new road with the old roadbed in the west *forty*. The bridge from the old freight road over Cub Creek was dismantled. The old road trace and right-of-way, which were incorporated into the restored prairie and trail system, gradually began to disappear into the site's grassland and woods (*Exhibit 7*) (*Figure 40*). However, the trace of the road spur (*Exhibit 7-70*) that had connected the old and new highways continued to be visible in the east *forty*. In the park's headquarters area, the access and circulation roads (*Exhibit 7-60*) were realigned and expanded during construction of the new Mission 66 visitor center and implement display building (*Exhibit 7-61*) and employee residence (*Exhibit 7-62*). The original headquarters loop road (*Exhibit 6-48*) was also expanded into a parking lot (*Exhibit 7-60*). Southeast of the headquarters buildings, the 1941 access road and bridge were obliterated, although the old road trace (*Exhibit 7-53*) continued to be visible in the encroaching woods.¹⁷⁸ The old roads associated with the Freemans' late nineteenth- and early-twentieth century homesteading and farming activities all but disappeared by the mid-1960s. Only a faint trace of the northern portion of the brick house road (*Exhibit 7-15*), which had been partially incorporated into the parks' trails, remained.

Equally extensive changes were made to the park's interpretive trails. Between 1955 and 1957, following the realignment of SH4, NPS planners designed and built a more

¹⁷⁸Mattison, p. 26; United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *The Master Plan for Preservation and Use of Homestead National Monument* (May 1961), various maps, HNMA Map Files.

substantial but still temporary self-guiding interpretive trail (*Maps 12 and 13*) to improve the situation caused by numerous visitors and vehicles creating auto turnoffs and eroded pathways. The trail was designed for visitors to drive their vehicles to some points of interest and was marked with directional signs and requests to not drive on the restored prairie (*Figure 41*). It began at the visitor center (*Exhibit 7-61*) and continued in a loop primarily through the north *forty*.¹⁷⁹ Other interior trails and roads shown on aerial photographs of the site from this period (*Maps 12 and 13*) appear to be associated with highway construction or prairie restoration activities, and were not part of the monument's interpretive program.

During Mission 66 implementation, NPS planners expanded the original, mid-1950s, temporary, loop trail into a longer, one-mile, self-guiding trail route. The trail (*Exhibit 7-67*) departed from the east side of the new visitor center and crossed Cub Creek on a newly-constructed suspension footbridge (*Exhibit 7-65*). After entering the restored prairie, the trail loop passed the homestead cabin (*Exhibit 7-7*), the Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin (*Exhibit 7-37*), the Quackenbush house and DAR Monument (*Exhibits 7-36 and 7-33*), the brick house (*Exhibit 7-11*), and the late nineteenth century barnyard and agricultural buildings (*Exhibit 7-18*). Spurs (*Exhibit 7-66 and 7-68*) from the main trail followed the trace of the old freight road and ran to the Freeman graves (*Exhibit 7-31*) and the site of the squatter's cabin (*Exhibit 7-1*). The trail was marked with interpretive signs identifying building sites as well as other points of interest (*Figure 42*). The temporary loop trail was obliterated in the north *forty*.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹Draft "History of Homestead National Monument" (1955 or 1956), copy of draft attached to February 13, 1957 letter from Merrill J. Mattes, Acting Regional Chief of Interpretation, to the Superintendent, Homestead National Monument, HNMA Administrative Files.

¹⁸⁰1961 HNMA *Master Plan* maps and narrative; Tecklenberg, p. 3; United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Homestead Visitor's Guide and Trail Map" (1971).

Fences and Boundary Demarcations

There were only minor changes to the park's system of fencing and boundary demarcations between the mid-1950s and mid-1960s. The NPS continued to maintain wire fences (*Exhibit 7-57*) around the perimeter of the monument to protect the property from vandalism and other hazards. In 1960 the NPS also placed concrete boundary markers at most of the corners of the monument's *forties* and at other points along the site's perimeter (*Exhibit 7-72*).¹⁸¹ The only fencing from the Freeman period remaining on the property by the mid-1960s was Daniel Freeman's Osage orange hedge (*Exhibit 7-32*), which the NPS continued to maintain as an interpretive landscape feature. Maintenance of the hedge, however, was still subordinated to restoration of the tallgrass prairie, and the hedgerow continued to resemble most old unmaintained hedges in the region (*Figure 39*).¹⁸² Other features continuing to demarcate the landscape included the fence line berm (*Exhibit 7-24a*) between the east and middle *forties* and the water diversion canal (*Exhibit 7-58*) in the west *forty*.¹⁸³

1967 – 1998: Recent NPS Development (*Exhibits 10 and 10A*)

Historic Context

The NPS Mission 66 era focused on the physical infrastructure necessary to support a growing interest in all national parks. Changes in the late twentieth century were primarily related to modernizing and expanding HNMA facilities and infrastructure and expanding interpretation to continue building on the NPS Mission 66 initiatives.

¹⁸¹ Annotated Map NM-HO 5301, Sheet 10, "Boundary and Topographic Survey Data, Homestead National Monument, Nebraska - Entire Area" (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service Regional Engineering Office, ca. 1960); 1961 HNMA *Master Plan* maps and narrative.

¹⁸² Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, pp. 78-79.

¹⁸³ Schoen and Bleed, pp. 19-21, 50.

Site Chronology

Historic Background

HNMA visitation grew steadily during the later years of the Mission 66 era and reached a peak of almost 45,000 visitors in 1968. However, after this peak year, the number of annual visitors dwindled again, only reaching approximately 16,000 visitors per year by 1980.¹⁸⁴ During the late 1980s the park once again experienced an increase in visitation. Between 1985 and 1989 the average annual number of visitors grew to around 38,000 visitors, mostly concentrated in the summer months.¹⁸⁵ That increase in annual visitors led to increases in staff and activities planned to serve visitors. Major changes at HNMA have centered around interpretive goals, focusing primarily on changes in programs and functions at the Monument. The primary physical change was the addition of the Freeman Schoolhouse and surrounding area to the property in 1970.

The HNMA General Management Plan (GMP) of 1988 is a direct reference to the growth at HNMA. The GMP recognized that changes at the site necessitated updated management objectives, particularly in regard to general development, land protection and natural resource management, and interpretation. These were the major issues addressed at HNMA for the period 1967 to 1998. The draft GMP developed during the CLR process called for development of a new visitor center, adoptive use of the existing visitor facility as an education center, and other circulation and interpretive changes (see Chapter 6 for further discussion of current plans).¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴Robert Tecklenberg, "Homestead National Monument of America: An Administrative History, 1962-1981" (NPS Midwest Regional Office, 1982) "Appendix B: Visitation 1947-1980."

¹⁸⁵"A Plan for the Interpretation of Homestead National Monument of America" (Harpers Ferry, West Virginia: Division of Interpretive Planning, 1990), p. 4.

¹⁸⁶U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Draft-General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Homestead National Monument of America*, 1999.

General Development

The majority of the existing facilities were in place by the close of the Mission 66 era, with the exception of several new building projects. A new storage building was located in the southwest corner of the maintenance area. An addition to the visitor center was constructed on the southern wing of the building, and the new space was used to house the agricultural implement display. A septic tank (10A-98) and drain field (10A-99) were installed directly south of the visitor center in 1987. A 25,000-gallon underground water tank (10A-92) was also buried in the visitor center complex, east of the utility building. The new installations lie in the 100-year flood plain of Cub Creek with the rest of the visitor center complex. These projects represent the large-scale changes to HNMA of this time period although additional developments occurred relating to circulation patterns, vegetation, and small-scale features.

The visitor parking area north of the visitor center was defined, and more specific roads and parking areas were added to the maintenance areas. Pedestrian paths developed between buildings and the new parking areas. A new entrance sign adjacent to SH4 and a steel entrance gate across the entry from SH4 were installed. Additional plantings in the visitor center area, especially around the visitor parking, were added to reinforce the new circulation patterns of the site. The area east of the visitor parking lot was established as a picnic area. Several picnic tables were installed and trash receptacles were located adjacent to the area. A soft drink machine (10A-93) was installed at the eastern end of the visitor center and encased in a wooden structure to partially conceal it from view.

Many of the small-scale features installed at the site were related to maintenance functions. Supply and return wells (10A-82 and 10A-84) were installed southwest of the entrance to the visitor center area; steel clotheslines (10A-86) were placed west of the

staff residences; a utility pole (10A-87) was installed west of the original staff residence; a radio transmission tower (10A-88) was erected north of the utility building; a garbage dumpster (10A-89) was located south of the original staff residence; a fire hydrant (10A-90) was installed at the southeast corner of the visitor parking lot; a satellite dish (10A-94) was located in the middle of the maintenance area; and a station for the monitoring of the weather (10A-96) was constructed west of the visitor center's agricultural implement display shed.

Land Protection and Natural Resource Management

As in the past, preservation and enhancement of the 100 acres of restored tallgrass prairie remained the primary land protection and natural resource management issue. The park continued the practice of prescribed burning, selective mowing, and application of herbicides to maintain the prairie, and they have succeeded in the return of the majority of the native species of vegetation. One area in particular was the recent focus of intense maintenance efforts. In an attempt to reduce the high nitrogen levels of the soil of the Freeman barnyard, NPS planted corn in the area. This method was effective and reintroduced tallgrass prairie species have done quite well.¹⁸⁷

Flooding was one of the major concerns in the management of natural resources at HNMA. Periodic floods damaged the Cub Creek banks, the surrounding woodland area, and threatened the visitor center complex. A particularly heavy flood occurred in 1978, which obscured and damaged portions of the low-lying interpretive trails. A similar flood that occurred in 1986 caused a large section of the creek bank to erode. Between the years 1984 and 1988 and in 1993-1994, flood waters from Cub Creek have reached 100-year flood plain levels, approaching very close to the visitor center

¹⁸⁷*General Management Plan*, pp. 5, 8; Tecklenberg, p. 6.

complex. In particular, the water has reached within feet of the Palmer-Epard Cabin, necessitating emergency sandbagging measures.¹⁸⁸

Land protection issues at HNMA were primarily related to complementing the natural resource management efforts by displaying the prairie and woodland restoration projects. The construction of new trails allowed visitors better views and a greater understanding of the site. In addition, HNMA sought to enhance the site's natural resources by protecting the park's viewsheds and scenic easements.

Interpretation

Interpretation at HNMA continued to focus on providing visitors with an "understanding and appreciation of the homestead era and the cultural and natural resources at the Monument," a goal which was greatly augmented by the construction of a new visitor center.¹⁸⁹ The Gage County Historical Society donated its collection to HNMA in 1948, but the majority of the items were kept in storage for lack of display space. Construction of the visitor center, however, provided space for interior exhibits of household and personal items while larger farm implements were accommodated in the south wing of the building. The new visitor center also allowed for the expansion of the HNMA collection, which grew from 1,700 artifacts cataloged in 1960 to more than 3,500 in 1980.¹⁹⁰ Exhibits and displays in the visitor center space have been changed throughout the years to present information about aspects of pioneer life and the restored prairie.

¹⁸⁸*General Management Plan*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁹*General Management Plan*, p. 17.

¹⁹⁰Tecklenberg, pp. 4-5.

In addition to the visitor center displays, living history demonstrations became a popular way of interpreting the homestead era. Beginning in earnest in the summer months of 1973, park personnel demonstrated various chores and activities of typical pioneer life. Seasonal park employees planted and tended garden plots, spun yarn, and made soap, candles, and lard. These activities gave weekend visitors a more detailed view of the daily life of people associated with the Homesteading Act. To implement the living history demonstrations, additional staff members were necessary at HNMA. When the NPS first acquired the site, one ranger staffed the entire park, but by 1981, park growth and activities necessitated six permanent employees and five seasonal employees. Living history demonstrations were supplemented by annual events that originally included "Christmas on the Homestead" and "Homestead Days," a festival of pioneer life and homesteading activities. "Homestead Days" still occurs in June, and this program has been joined by the "Heartland Storytelling Festival" in May, "Horse Power and More" in June, "Prairie Appreciation Days" in September, and "Winter on the Homestead" in December.¹⁹¹

The restoration of the Palmer-Epard Cabin was another aspect of interpretive planning. A full-scale restoration cabin project was undertaken at HNMA in April, 1977, and completed in August, 1997. Since the cabin had been gradually slipping towards the south and east as a result of slightly uneven ground at its third and present location, it was straightened and braced following replacement of damaged and rotted logs and removal of chinking and whitewash. Once a new clay floor had been laid and the old shingle roofing replaced with authentic cedar shakes, the cabin was furnished to resemble a typical pioneer cabin. The cabin, which was the center for some of the living

¹⁹¹*General Management Plan*, p. 17; Tecklenberg, pp. 14, 17.

history programs, provided a backdrop for the demonstrations of pioneer life and activities.¹⁹²

Interpretation of the natural resources at HNMA also paralleled land protection and natural resource management activities. As prairie preservation and restoration continued, the historic SH4 alignment and associated spurs or entryways were largely incorporated into the restored prairie or woodland zones. An expansion of the trail system through the site was concurrent with the disappearance of the roadway. The enhanced trail system allowed greater interpretive opportunities for self-guided visitors to the park. In addition to educational wayside exhibits, the trail system gave visitors a much more complete view of the landscape of the site.

The circular self-guiding trail, with its attendant squatter's cabin spur, Freeman gravesite spur, and maintenance trail, was upgraded and expanded. The original circular trail served as the central trail for the expanded trail network and was renamed the Farmstead Loop Trail (10-67). The gravesite spur continued to follow the old SH4 alignment, passing the gravesite to provide access to views of the Osage orange hedgerow. The trail follows the southern boundary of HNMA and meets the old maintenance trail at the eastern edge of the woodland. This trail then travels north, returning to the Farmstead Loop Trail and to complete the Upland Prairie Loop Trail (10-79). The Upland Prairie Loop Trail was constructed to give visitors a closer view of the Osage orange hedgerow as well as a broad view of the expansive restored prairie. A wayside exhibit interpreting Cub Creek was installed adjacent to the trail at the edge of the woodland where there is a view of Cub Creek (10-78).

¹⁹²*General Management Plan*, p. 18; Tecklenberg, pp. 7-9.

To increase visitor understanding of the prairie, NPS developed a wayside exhibit on prairie grasses. The original exhibit was built during the Mission 66 era and located near the Quackenbush house site. This exhibit was replaced by an interpretive display of prairie plants (10-75) just east of the suspension bridge, at the start of the Farmstead Loop Trail and the entrance to the restored prairie. The interpretive planting consisted of a small garden plot containing several labeled species of native grasses, forbes and shrubs, showing the diversity of species reintroduced during the prairie restoration efforts.

A final trail extension was added to provide a more complete understanding of the importance of woodlands and water sources for the pioneers.¹⁹³ The original squatter's cabin spur was continued to create a loop, known as the Squatter's Cabin Loop Trail, through the woodland (10-66). A wayside exhibit entitled "Water on the Homestead" (10-77) was added next to Cub Creek along the Squatter's Cabin Loop Trail. Several other wayside exhibits and small-scale features completed the improvements made to the trail network in this time period. One wayside exhibit at the western side of the suspension bridge explains "Homesteading" (10-74), which another, titled "Challenge of the Prairie" (10-76), was placed near the Suiter-Freeman cabin site. The section of the Farmstead Loop Trail between the Quackenbush house site and the Suiter-Freeman cabin site was elevated with a section of raised, wooden boardwalk (10-67a). Several wooden log benches were provided adjacent to portions of the trail system. A time capsule was placed in the ground east of the DAR monument by the City of Beatrice.

¹⁹³*General Management Plan*, p. 17; Tecklenberg, pp. 6-7.

The Freeman Schoolhouse (*Exhibits 8, 9 and 10B*)

The Freeman Schoolhouse: 1871–1910 (*Exhibit 8*)

The Freeman Schoolhouse, a 20- by 26-foot, one-room, brick structure (*Exhibit 8-S1*) (*Figure 43*), was built in 1871 to serve the students of Gage County School District 21. Located west-northwest of the Freeman homestead at the junction of the east-west freight road (*Exhibit 8-26*) and a north-south county road on a parcel of land sold to School District 21 by John Scheve, the school replaced an earlier log structure on another site. Although it is uncertain, the design and plan of the school may be based upon recommendations published in the 1871-1872 Nebraska State Superintendent of School's Report.¹⁹⁴

Daniel and Agnes Suiter Freeman's children attended the school, and both Daniel and Agnes served as school board directors. The daily religious exercises in the school were the genesis of the 1899 Nebraska Supreme Court Case in which Freeman protested sectarian religious instruction in the public schools. Popular tradition has held that the building was named for Daniel Freeman, who may have produced the bricks for the school in the kiln on his property. This assumption, however, is possibly incorrect. Instead, the building may be named for Thomas Freeman, a local farmer and brick maker who was school board director the year the school was built and later received payment from the school treasury "on account of brick."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴Lenard Brown and Renzo Ridlo, *Historic Structure Report: Freeman School, Homestead National Monument of America* (Denver, Colorado: National Park Service - Denver Service Center Historic Preservation Team, March 1973), pp. 3-4; "Freeman Homestead and Freeman School National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form (October 1966), p. 3; Christopher Schoen, "Excavations at the Freeman School (25GA90), Homestead National Monument of America" (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, May 15, 1986), pp. 1-4; Enid Thompson, "Freeman School Furnishings Study" (Beatrice, Nebraska: July 1973), pp. 7-14.

¹⁹⁵Brown and Ridlo, pp. 4-10; Schoen, pp. 2-3.

In addition to serving as a school and providing educational opportunities to rural children, the building also provided a location for other community functions, including political and farm meetings, voting, and social gatherings such as box dinners. A Freeman family member, presumably Agnes Suiter Freeman, noted in an October 1896, letter that the rest of the family had "gone to the school house to a McKinley speaking" while she was writing her letter. Clara Frolich, who taught at the school in 1902 and 1903, recalled that "they had quite a few box suppers at night. They'd bring their boxes and sell them. You didn't know who you were going to eat with..."¹⁹⁶ Undoubtedly, the participants at such events visited in the school yard when the weather was pleasant, and perhaps even picnicked outside.

Besides the school building, several other structures and features were located on the site during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One was an approximately 6-foot-square, wood-frame, lean-to structure that adjoined the front part of the west elevation of the schoolhouse (*Exhibit 8-S2*). It appears to be a woodshed because of the woodpile evident directly in front of its doorway (*structure to the far left in Figure 43*), but it reportedly was also used as a horse shed and as a voting booth. Also present was a short entrance drive (*Exhibit 8-S3*) connecting the school with the county road and a pump located at an unidentified site in the schoolyard. The school's girls' and boys' privies (*Exhibit 8-S4*) may have been located approximately 30 feet north of the schoolhouse within the margins of a patch of unaltered native prairie

¹⁹⁶Transcript of July 19, 1968, Clifford Soubier Interview of Clara Frolick [sic], Freeman School Information File, HNMA Library; Agnes Suiter Freeman (?) Letter to Nellie W. Suiter, October 24, 1896, Freeman Family History and Genealogy Notebook, HNMA Library; Schoen, p. 3; Thompson, p. 20.

Little else is known of the school landscape during this period. The schoolyard was probably unfenced during most of the period.¹⁹⁷ It is assumed that the school children used the immediate environs as an informal playground but that there was no playground design or structured play equipment. It is also assumed that native prairie vegetation continued to predominate but that it would have been worn thin or bare in areas near the school and other structures, where informal paths developed through persistent use, and where the children played.

The Freeman Schoolhouse: 1911-1970 (*Exhibit 9*)

Between 1911 and 1967, the Freeman School (*Exhibit 9-S1*) (*Figure 44*) continued to operate as a rural grammar school and community center. Its landscape was never formally developed but did experience some minimal schoolyard enhancements in the twentieth century. The addition of play equipment added an informal site organization that resulted in more structured areas for play than had existed previously.

Since it is believed that the schoolyard was never plowed or planted, it retained areas believed to still remain as virgin prairie throughout this period. It is likely, however, that some exotic and introduced vegetation could have been deposited inadvertently and may have existed on the site in small quantities.

With the exception of the removal of its shutters and the installation of a large concrete slab in front of its entrance, the schoolhouse remained virtually unchanged during this period.¹⁹⁸ The school's outbuildings, however, were all replaced. In 1911 the school's old woodshed (*Exhibit 9-S2*) and girl's and boy's privies (*Exhibit 9-S4*) were dismantled

¹⁹⁷Batzer, p. 24; Brown and Ridido, p. 6; September 1981 Freeman School Site Plan, Drawing No. 368/8009, Sheet 2 of 2, HNMA Map Files; Frolick Interview Transcript; Narrative with Negative No. 169, Historic Freeman Schoolhouse Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; Schoen, p. 3.

¹⁹⁸Brown and Ridido, pp. 10-12; Graff Interview; Schoen, p. 5.

and replaced with a new 12- by 14-foot storage shed (*Exhibit 9-S6*) and girl's (*Exhibit 9-S7*) and probably boy's privies. This new boy's privy was in turn replaced by a structure (*Exhibit 9-S8*) built by Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers in the mid-1930s.¹⁹⁹

Other new structures in the schoolyard included several hitching posts (*Exhibit 9-S5*), which were in place by 1913; a new well and pump (*Exhibit 9-S9*), which were installed in 1914; and a playground maypole (*Exhibit 9-S10*) (*left side of Figure 44*), which was erected by the mid-1930s. One unconfirmed report also states that for several years around 1910 a small horse barn stood northwest of the schoolhouse.²⁰⁰ The school's entry road (*Exhibit 9-S3*) retained its previous configuration. The telephone poles and wires that lined the Blakely Township road running north-south just east of the school do not appear to connect with the school building in the late 1930s (*Figure 44*).

Electric lights were introduced in the schoolhouse in 1940, and utility poles located in the schoolyard. Also in the early 1940s, a flagpole (*Exhibit 9-S12*) was installed in the yard east of the school; the children's merry-go-round (*Exhibit 9-S11*) was probably installed between the school and the maypole during this period.²⁰¹ By 1958 the storage shed (*Exhibit 9-S6*) had an addition on its south side (*the structure in the left foreground in Figure 45*). Additional playground equipment may have been installed in the vicinity of

¹⁹⁹Brown and Riddo, p. 10; "Freeman Homestead and Freeman School National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form (October 1966), p. 2; Narrative for structures HS-08 - Freeman School Storage Shed, HS-09, Freeman School Girls' Privy, and HS-10, Freeman School Boys Privy, in "List of Classified Structures (LCS) - Park/Structure Index: Homestead National Monument," HNMA Administrative Files.

²⁰⁰Brown and Riddo, p. 10; Arthur Duerscher, "Phase One Report: Restoration of the Freeman School, Homestead National Monument" (Lincoln, Nebraska: May 16, 1974), summaries of taped interviews on Freeman School with William Clifford, Alberta Graf, William Scheve, and Louis Esau (source of information on the reported horse barn); Narrative for structures HS-7A - Freeman School Playground Equipment Pole, and HS-11, Freeman School Pump, in "List of Classified Structures (LCS) - Park/Structure Index, Homestead National Monument."

²⁰¹Brown and Riddo, p. 11; Graff Interview.

the merry-go-round by that date. The hitching posts were probably removed from the schoolyard by the late 1950s.²⁰²

The building continued in use as a schoolhouse and community center until June, 1967, when it closed after 96 years of operation as a rural grammar school.²⁰³ Throughout its final years of operation, NPS planners at HNMA recognized the school's importance as an "authentic contemporary structure, closely associated with the life of the homesteaders."²⁰⁴ After the school closed in 1967, it remained unused until it was acquired by the NPS in 1970.

The Freeman Schoolhouse: 1970-1998 (*Exhibit 10B*)

On September 25, 1970, the Freeman Schoolhouse became a part of the HNMA "in order to further the interpretation and commemoration of the pioneer life of the early settlers of the West."²⁰⁵ After a period of extensive planning and preparation, NPS began work to restore the school to its 1880-1890 period. The restoration involved replacement of worn and damaged bricks and extensive structural stabilization. NPS, using authentic materials whenever possible, modeled the work after the craftsmanship of the original pioneer builders. Structural restoration was completed in the summer of 1978. During this period of restoration, the merry-go-round (9-S11), the woodshed (9-S2) directly west of the schoolhouse, and the flagpole (9-S12) at the southeast corner of the schoolhouse were removed. The original fence around the perimeter of the school yard was removed and replaced with a fence surrounding the entire NPS property. A wayside exhibit (*Exhibit 10B-S15*) was installed on the southeast corner of the site. With

²⁰²Graff Interview; Exterior photographs of Freeman School - 1967, Negative No. 1358, Historic Freeman School Classification, HNMA Photograph Files.

²⁰³Photograph of the Freeman School and outbuildings - July 1958, Negative No. 175, Historic Freeman School Classification, HNMA Photograph Files; Tecklenberg, pp. 9-11

²⁰⁴Homestead National Monument Museum Prospectus, p. 12.

²⁰⁵Tecklenberg, p. 12.

the completion of the restoration project, park employees incorporated the Freeman Schoolhouse into the living history demonstrations, reenacting the typical lessons and activities of the school.²⁰⁶

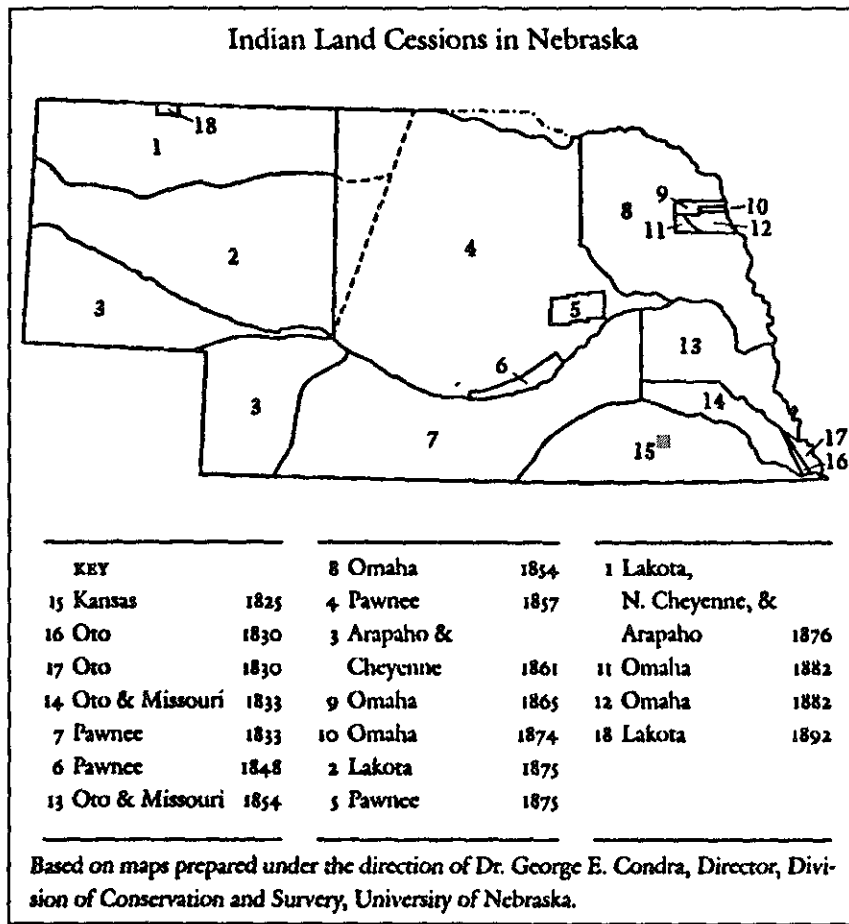
In addition to restoring the schoolhouse, the NPS also recognized a need to maintain the small tract of prairie located immediately north of the schoolhouse. It is believed that this piece of prairie is virgin tallgrass prairie. Owing to the rarity of virgin tallgrass prairie in the area, the NPS has retained the prairie for interpretive and comparative purposes within the interpretive goals of the park.²⁰⁷

The 1988 GMP specified the need for additional parking and room for a bus turn-around at the Freeman Schoolhouse. An adjacent piece of property to the north of the school was purchased and a gravel parking circle was developed between 1996 and 1997.²⁰⁸ There are gates (10B-S14) to limit access to the parking area when the HNMA is not open to the public.

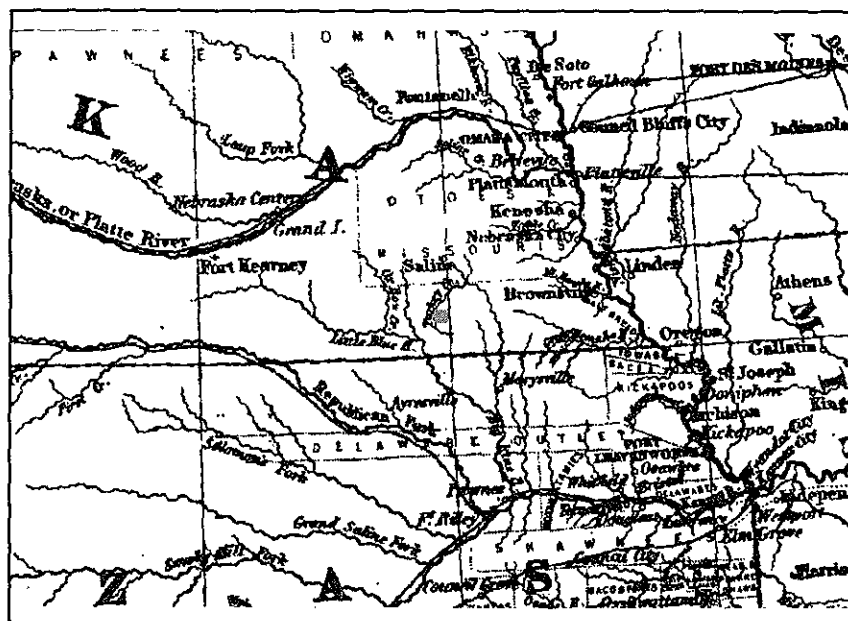
²⁰⁶*General Management Plan*, p. 13; Tecklenberg, p. 13.

²⁰⁷*General Management Plan*, p. 20.

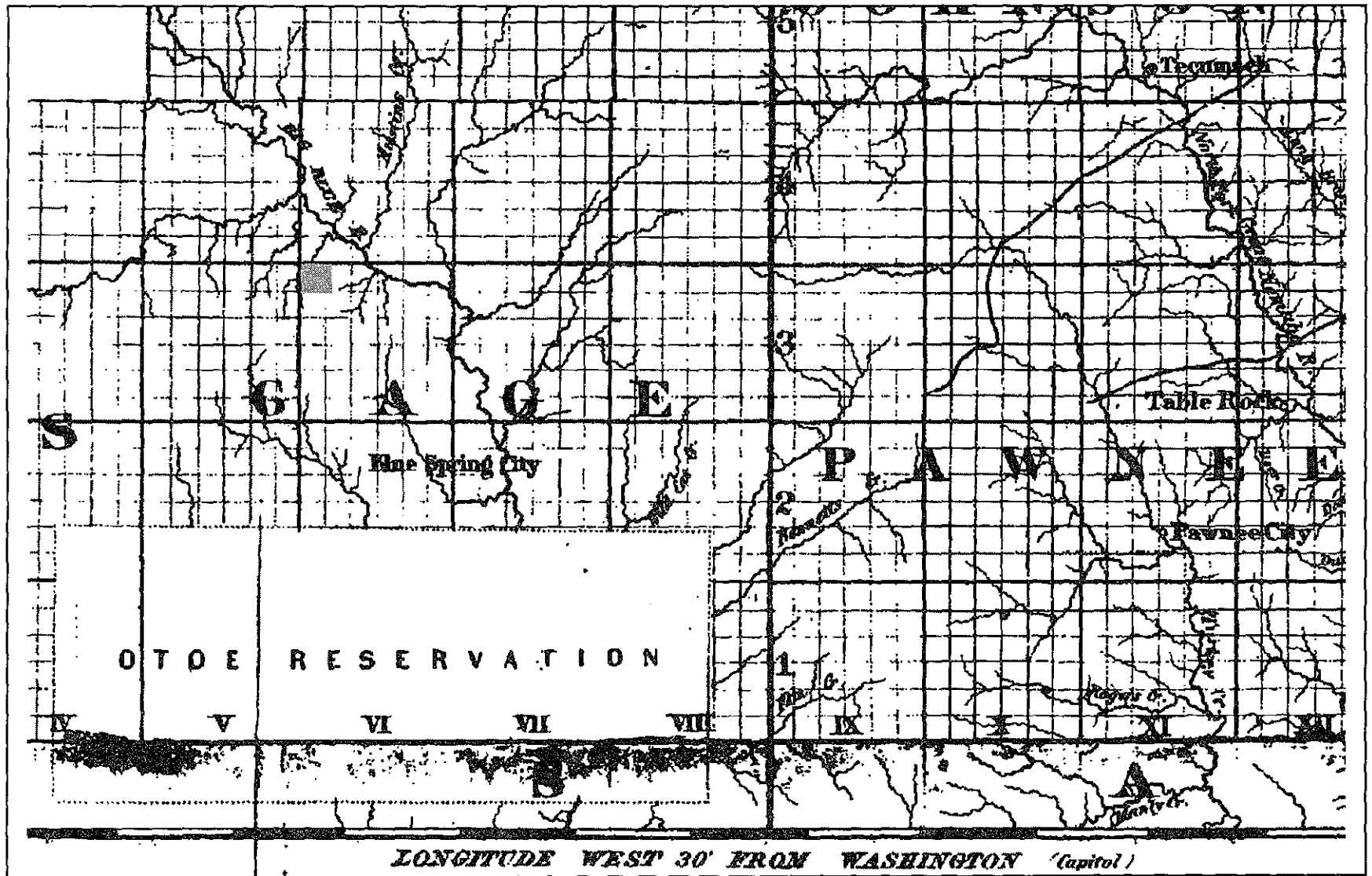
²⁰⁸*General Management Plan*, pp. 4-5.



Map 1. "Indian Land Cessions in Nebraska" from Olson and Naugle's *History of Nebraska*. 1997. (Present day HNMA site indicated by "■" symbol upon map. HNMA site located relative to historic map features.)



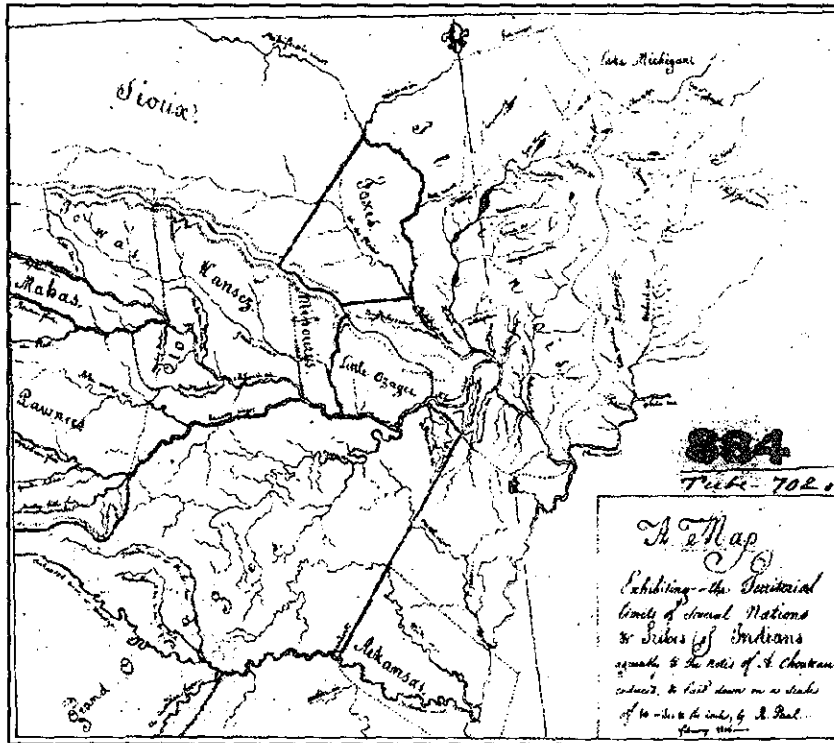
Map 2. "Nebraska and Kansas" J. H. Colton & Co. 1885. [Library of Congress] (Present day HNMA site indicated by "■" symbol upon map. HNMA site located relative to historic map features.)



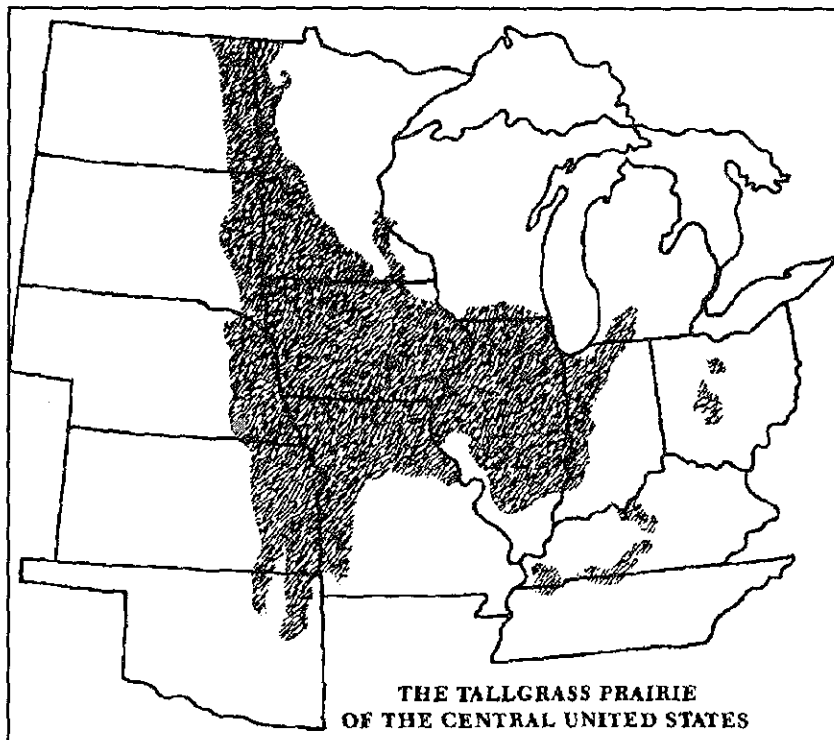
Map 3. Colton's New Sectional Map of Nebraska. J.H. Colton & Co. 1858. [Library of Congress]
(Present day HNMA site indicated by "■" symbol upon map. HNMA site located relative to historic map features.)



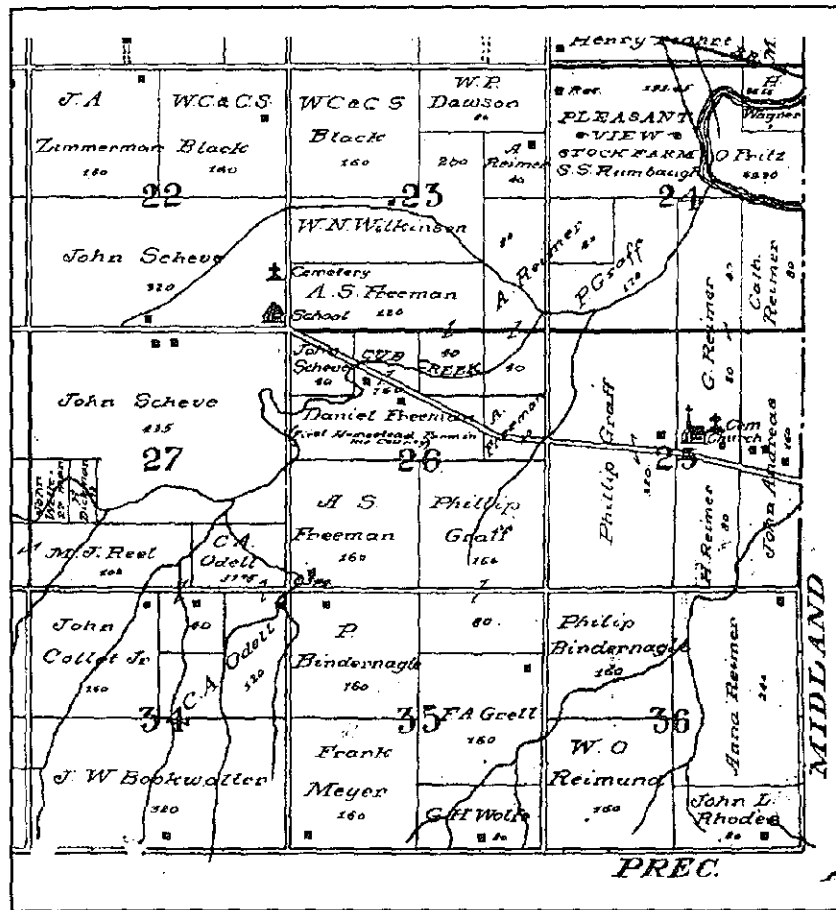
Map 4. Colton's Nebraska. G.W. and C.B. Colton & Co. 1867. [Library of Congress]
 (Present day HNMA site indicated by "■" symbol upon map. HNMA site located relative to historic map features.)



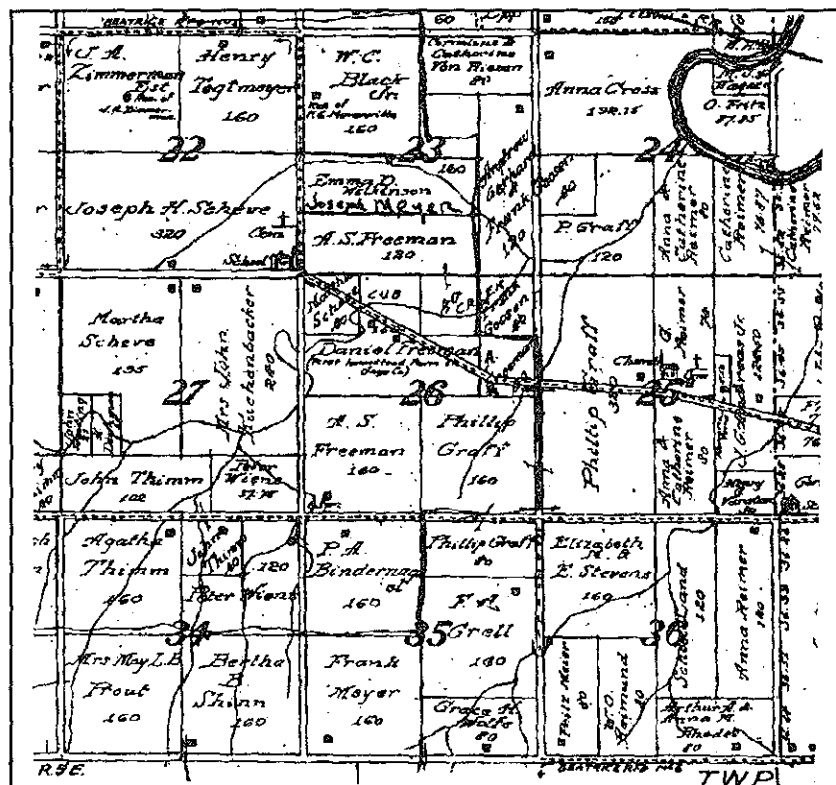
Map 5. A Map Exhibiting the Territorial Limits of several Nations and Tribes of Indians. A. Chouteau. 1867. [National Archives]



Map 6. "The Tallgrass Prairie of the United States" from Madson's *Where the Sky Began: Land of the Tallgrass Prairie*. 1995. (Present day HNMA site indicated by "■" symbol upon map. HNMA site located relative to historic map features.)



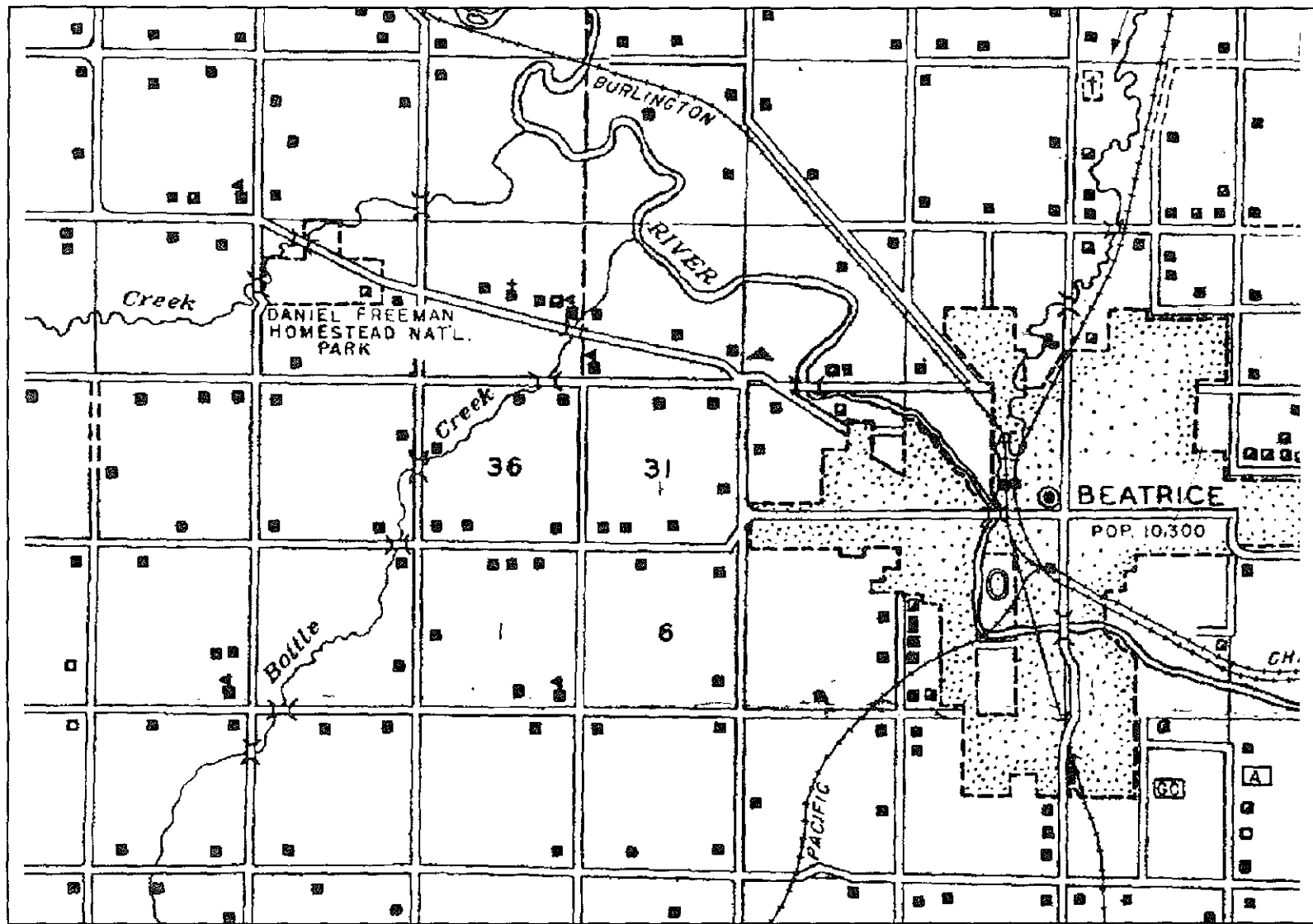
Map 7. "Map of Blakely Township." from Geo. A. Ogle & Co.'s Standard Atlas of Gage County, Nebraska Including a Plat Book. 1906.



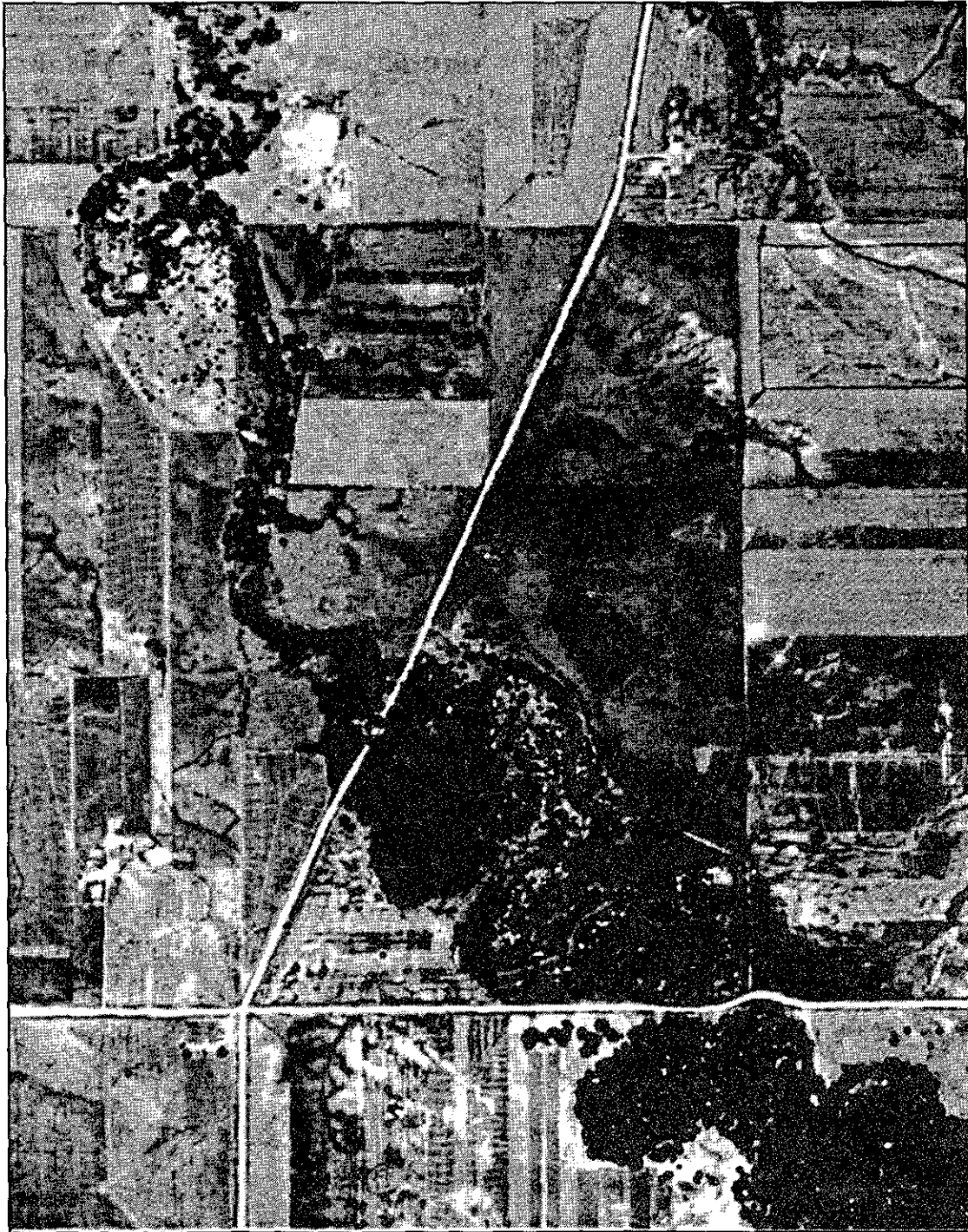
Map 8. "Map of Blakely Township." from Geo. A. Ogle & Co.'s Standard Atlas of Gage County, Nebraska Including a Plat Book of the Villages, Cities and Townships of the County. 1922. [HNMA]



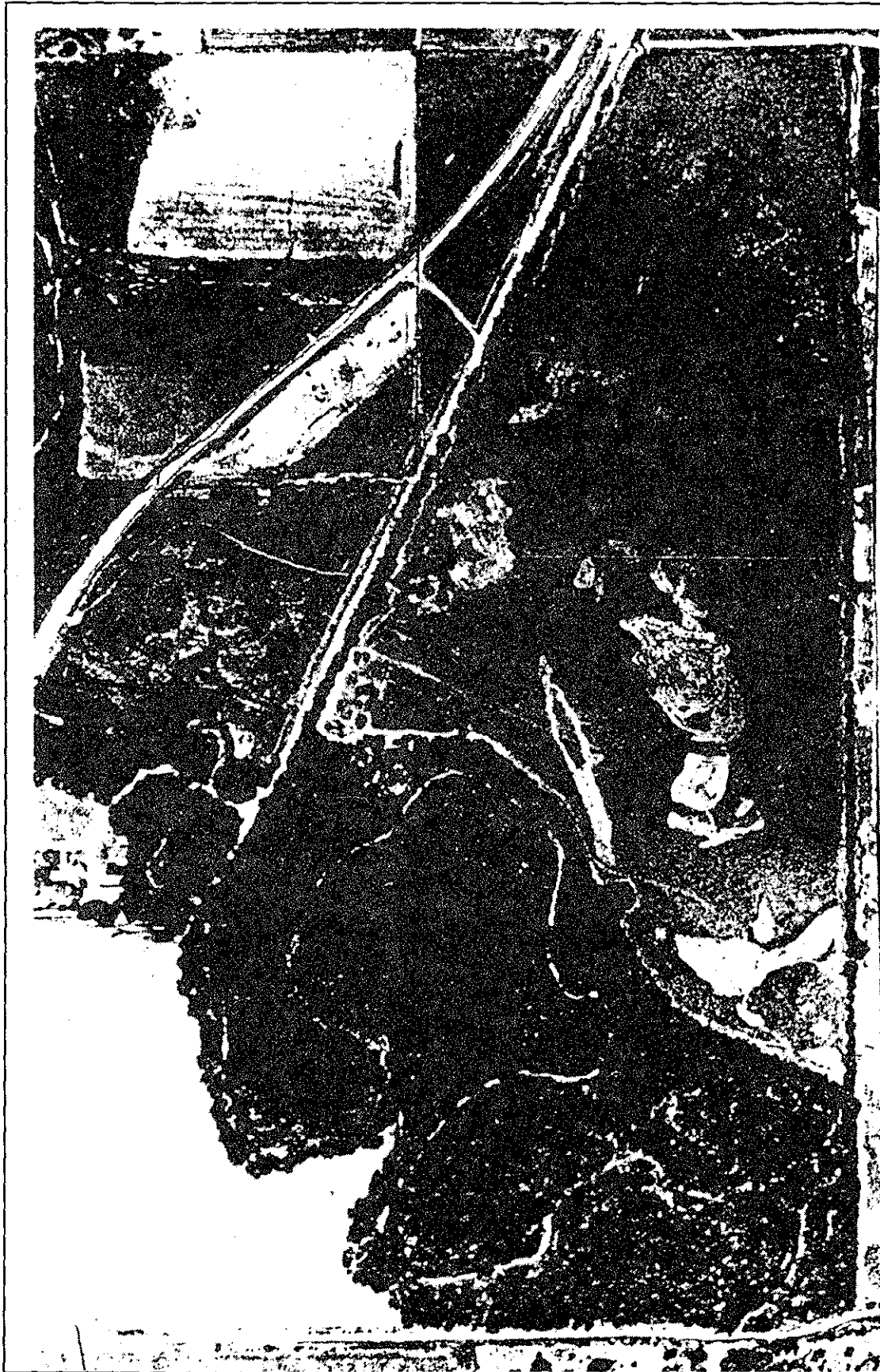
Map 9. Map of Gage County, Nebraska. O.L. Clarke. 1932. [Library of Congress]



Map 10. Base Map- Gage, County, Nebraska. Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation. 1938. [Library of Congress]



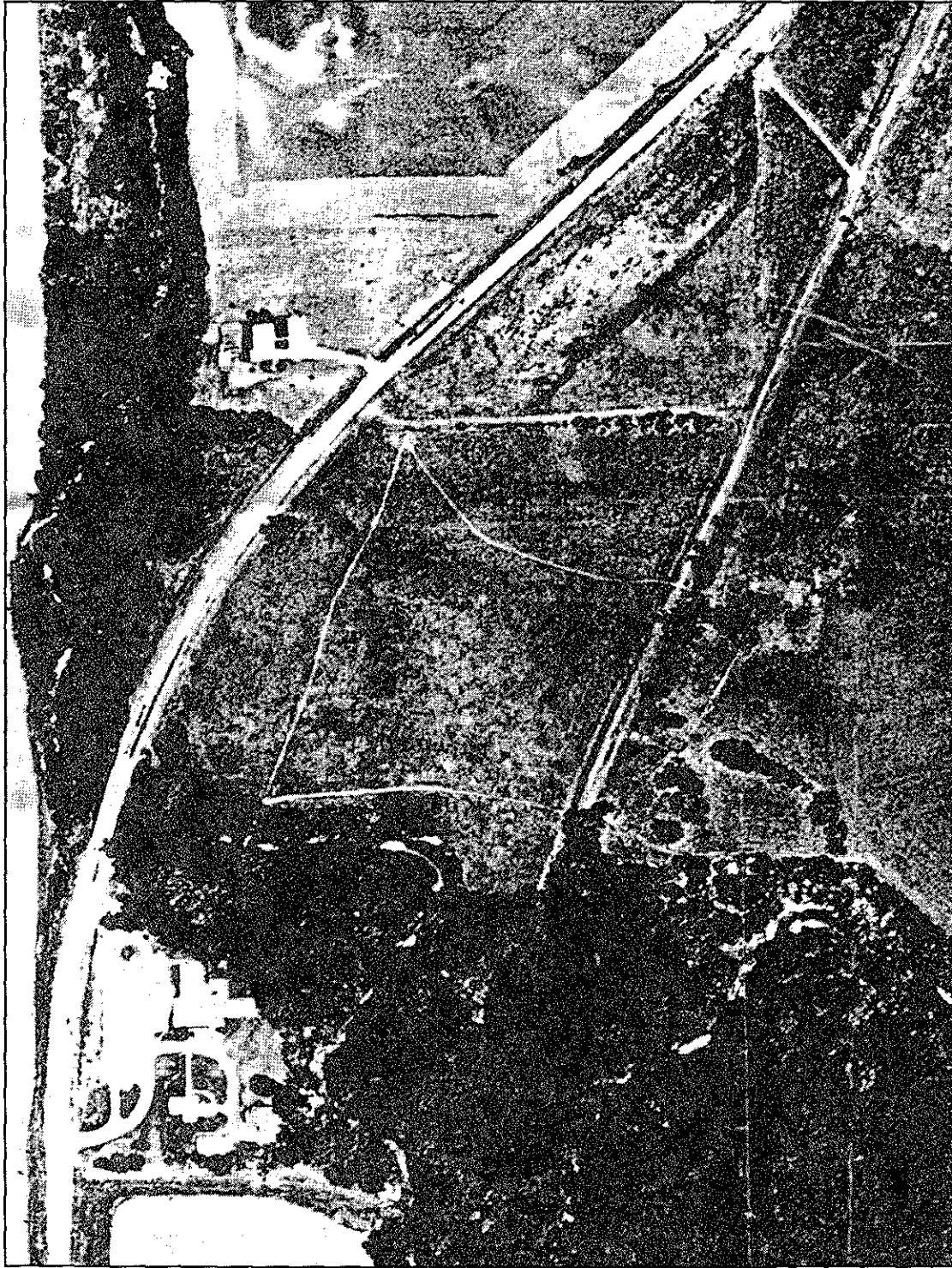
Map 11. Aerial Photography of HNMA. 8/6/1940. A.S.C.S. [HNMA]



Map 12. Conservation Plan Map of Homestead National Monument. 5/22/1959. S.C.S. [HNMA]



Map 13. Aerial Photography
of HNMA. 7/29/1955. S.C.S.
[HNMA]



Map 14. Aerial Photography of HNMA. 9/10/1965. S.C.S. [HNMA]

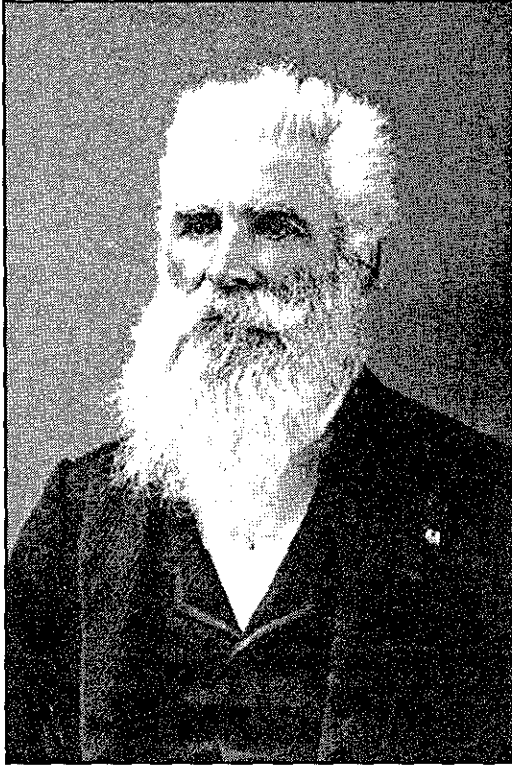


Figure 1. Daniel Freeman, ca. 1885. [HNMA]



Figure 2. Agnes Suiter Freeman, ca. 1884-1888. [HNMA]



Figure 3. The Freeman family, ca. 1885-1888. [HNMA]



Figure 4. Freeman Homestead Cabin, ca. 1867. [HNMA]

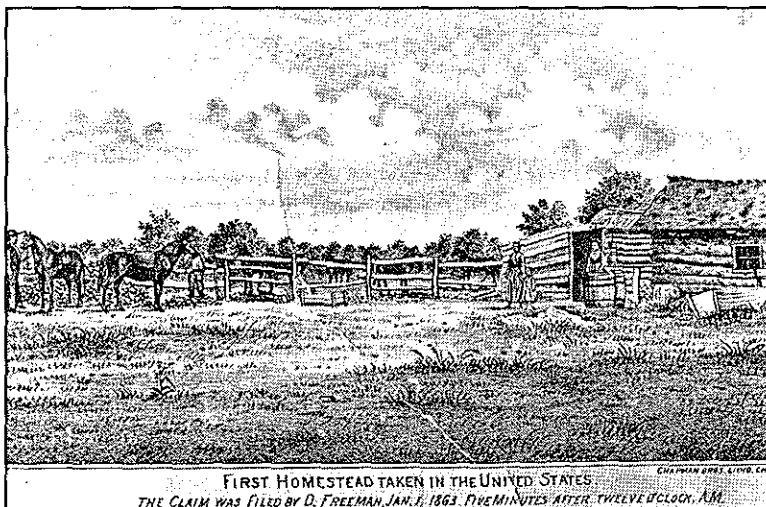


Figure 4a. Engraving of Freeman Homestead Cabin, ca. 1888. [HNMA]



Figure 5. Daniel Freeman's Homestead Cabin and John Suiter's Cabin. [Kaplan 1992]

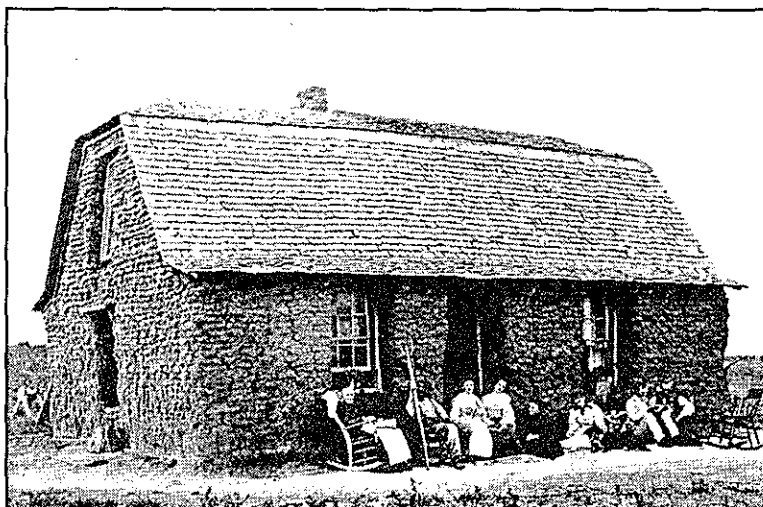


Figure 6. Typical sod house (near Kearney, NE). [HNMA]



Figure 7. North elevation of Freeman's Brick House, early 1900's. [HNMA]

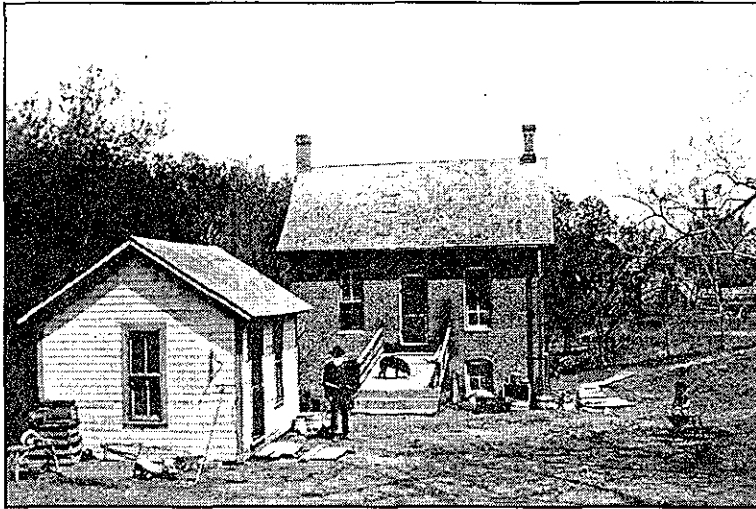


Figure 8. South elevation of Freeman Brick House and summer kitchen ca. 1905-1907. [HNMA]

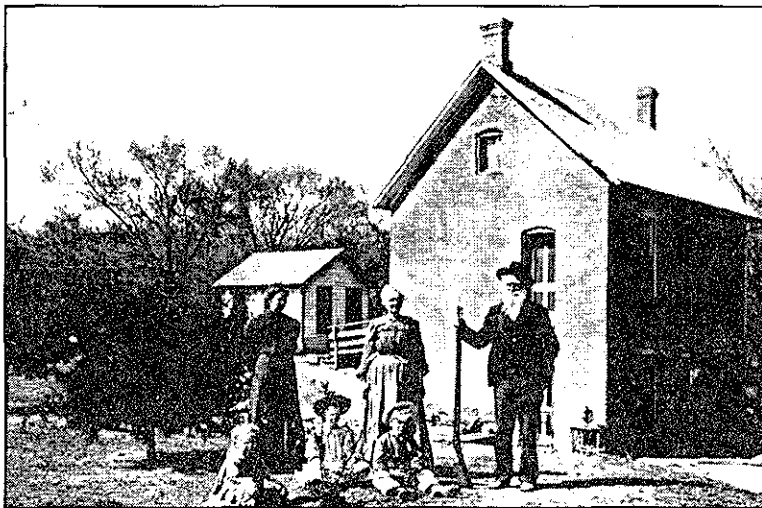


Figure 9. North and east Elevations of Freeman Brick House with summer kitchen and agricultural buildings, ca. 1905-1907. [HNMA]

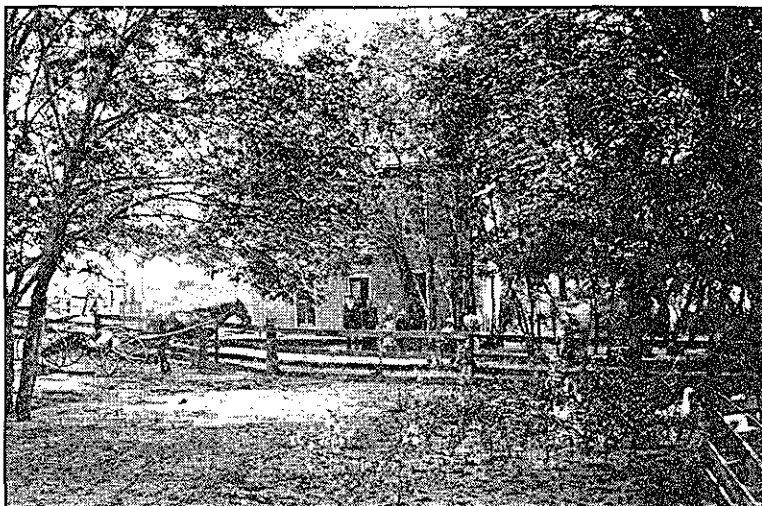


Figure 10. North elevation of Brick House and environs, ca. 1897. [HNMA]



Figure 11. Freeman Brick House with Daniel Freeman in foreground, ca. 1903-1904. [HNMA]



Figure 12. Freeman agricultural buildings, 1911. [HNMA]

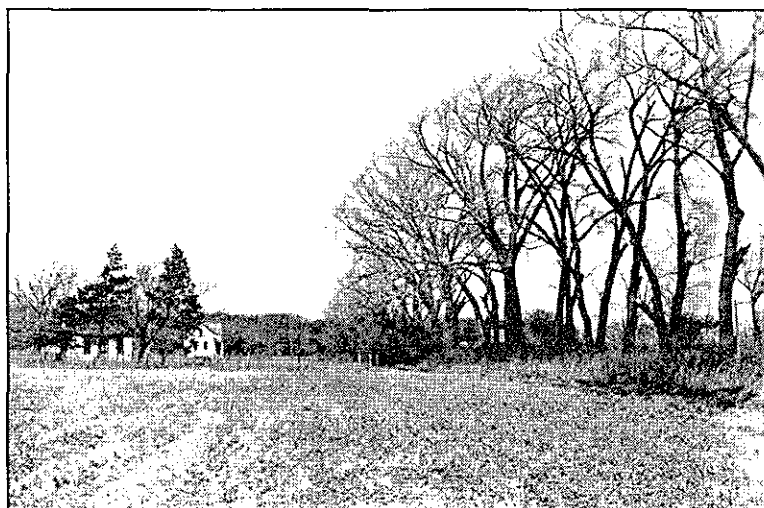


Figure 13. Freight Road/SH4 with Quackenbush House and Agnes Suiter Freeman Cabin in background, ca. 1928. [HNMA]

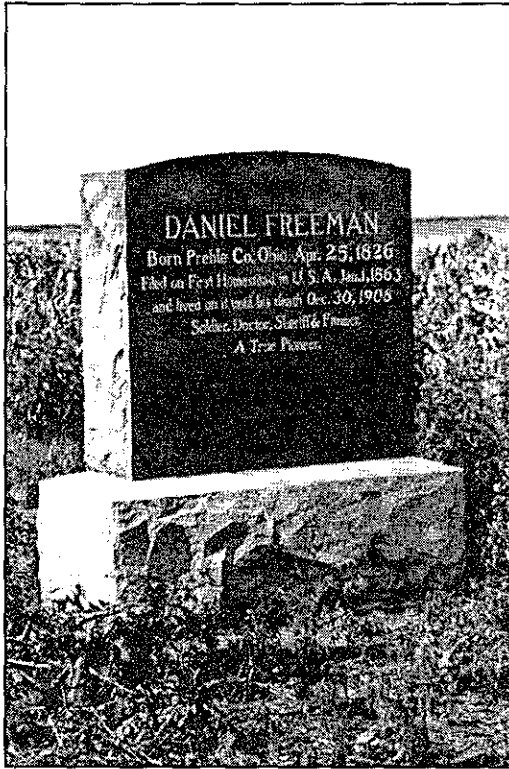


Figure 14. Freeman gravestone prior to the additions of Agnes Suiter Freeman's name. [HNMA]



Figure 15. Quackenbush children on SH 4 bridge, ca. 1935. [HNMA]

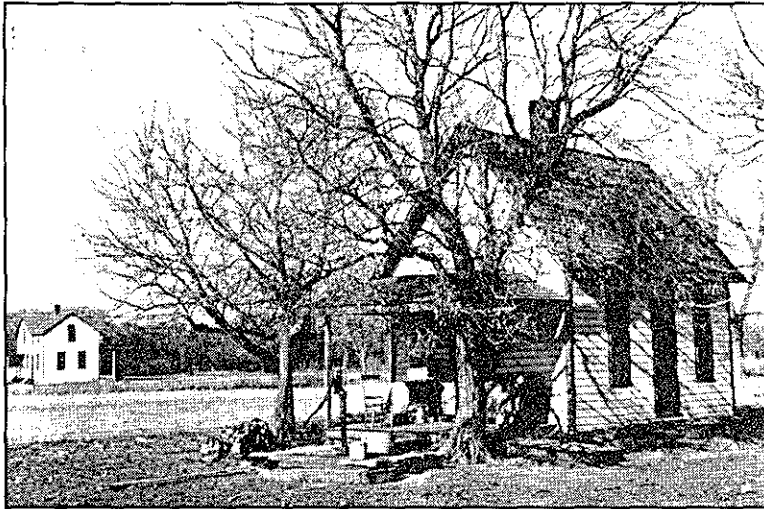


Figure 16. Photograph of Agnes Suiter Freeman Cabin on the south side of the road, ca. 1925. [HNMA]

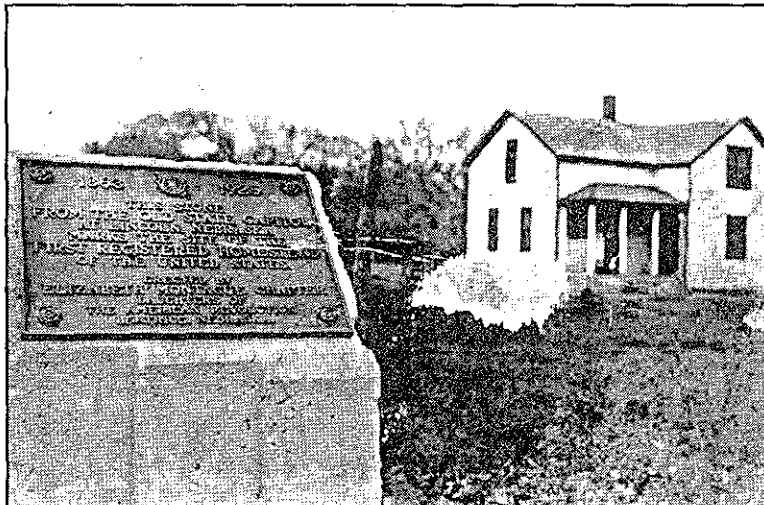


Figure 17. DAR Monument with Quackenbush House in background. [HNMA]



Figure 18. North and east elevations of Agnes Suiter Freeman Cabin, ca. 1925. [HNMA]

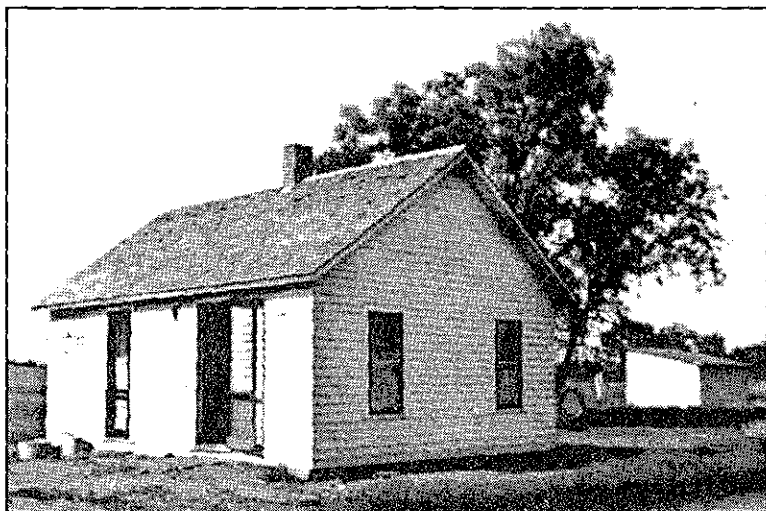


Figure 19. North and east elevations of 1935 white frame house. [HNMA]

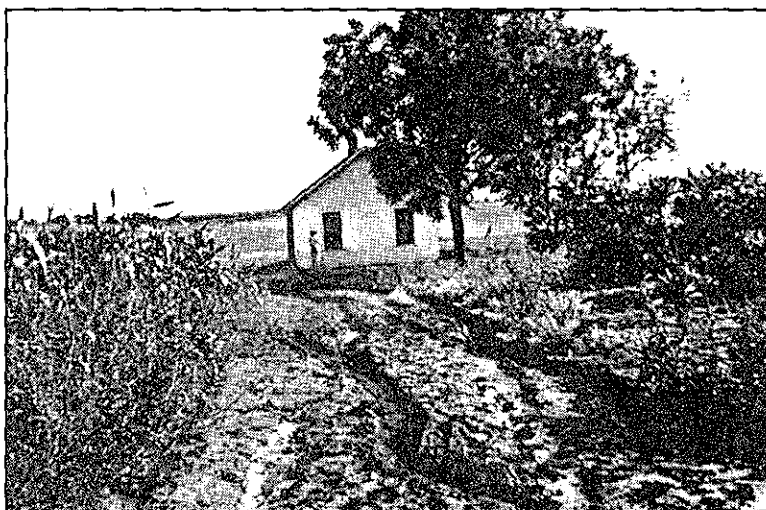


Figure 20. North elevation of 1935 white frame house. [HNMA]

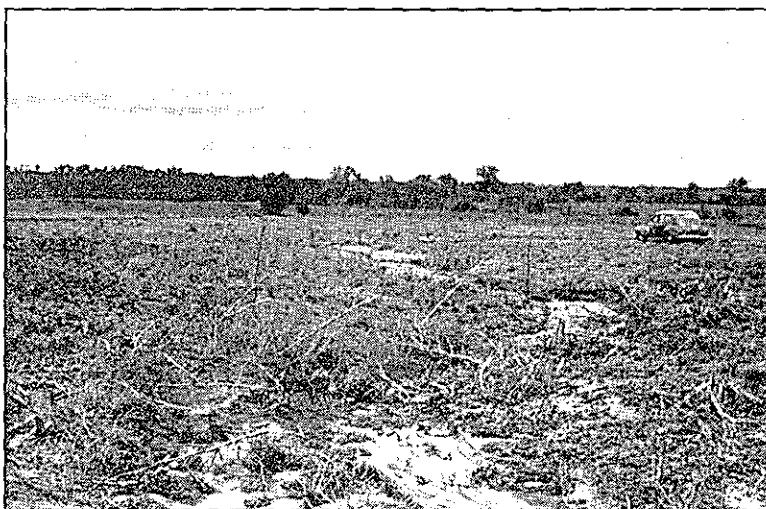


Figure 21. Sheet erosion on the middle forty (looking N-NE), 1942. [HNMA]



Figure 22. Gully formed by erosion in west forty, 1942. [HNMA]

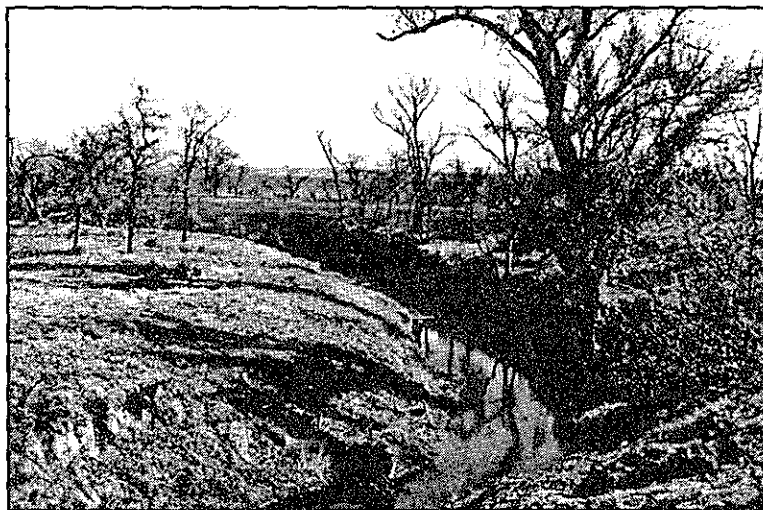


Figure 23. Overgrazed woodland and erosion in west forty, 1937. [HNMA]



Figure 24. Overgrazed woodland in west forty, 1937. [HNMA]



Figure 25. Osage orange hedgerow, 1937. [HNMA]

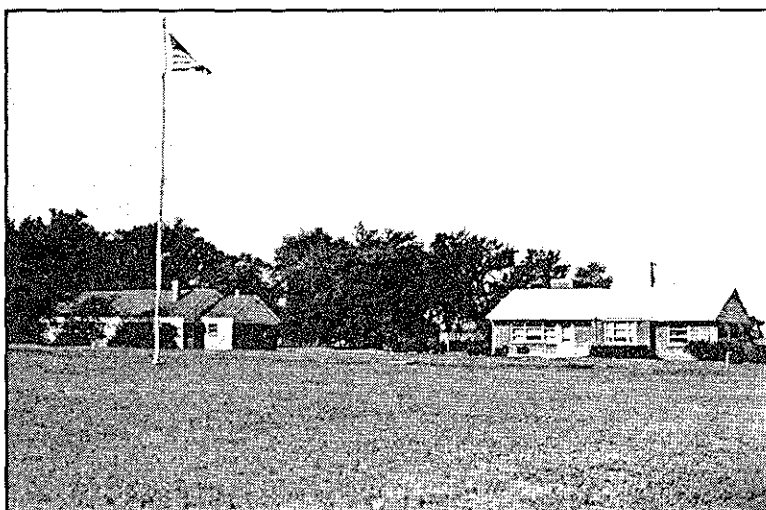


Figure 26. NPS residence, utility building and flagpole. [HNMA]



Figure 27. Entrance sign at east boundary of HNMA, 1952. [HNMA]

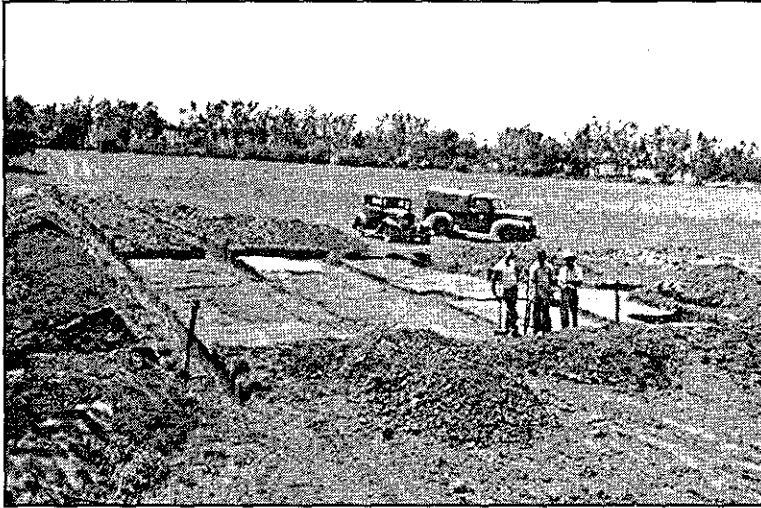


Figure 28. Archeological excavations at Freeman Homestead Cabin site, 1948. [HNMA]

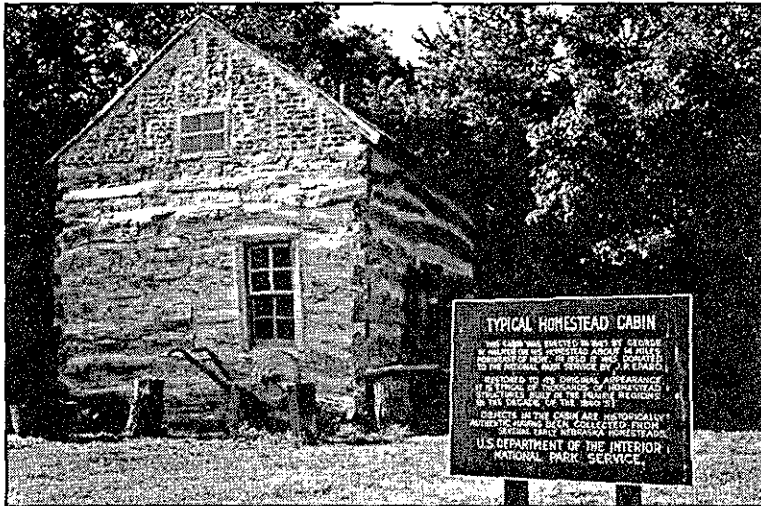


Figure 29. Palmer-Epard Cabin, 1954. [HNMA]



Figure 30. Check dams in middle forty, 1942 [HNMA]



Figure 31. Flooding in north forty, 1947. [HNMA]

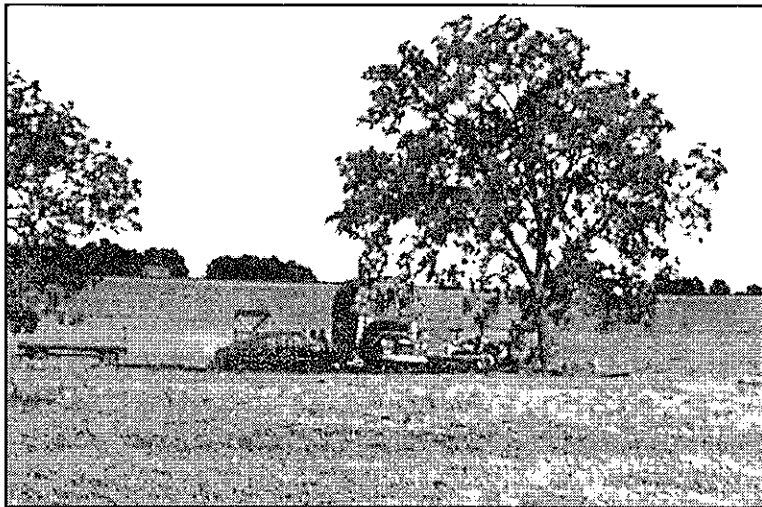


Figure 32. Haying operations, 1952. [HNMA]



Figure 33. Restored tallgrass prairie, 1938. [HNMA]

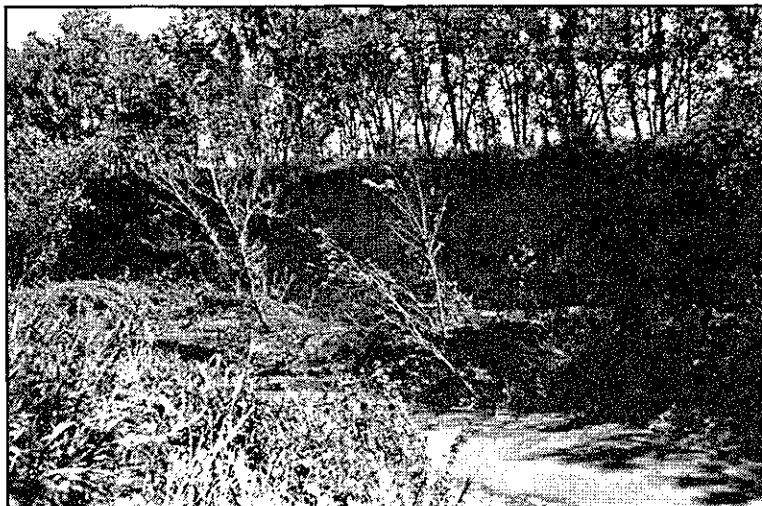


Figure 34. Willow plantings and bank stabilization along Cub Creek, 1958. [HNMA]



Figure 35. Cub Creek erosion south of utility building, 1951. [HNMA]

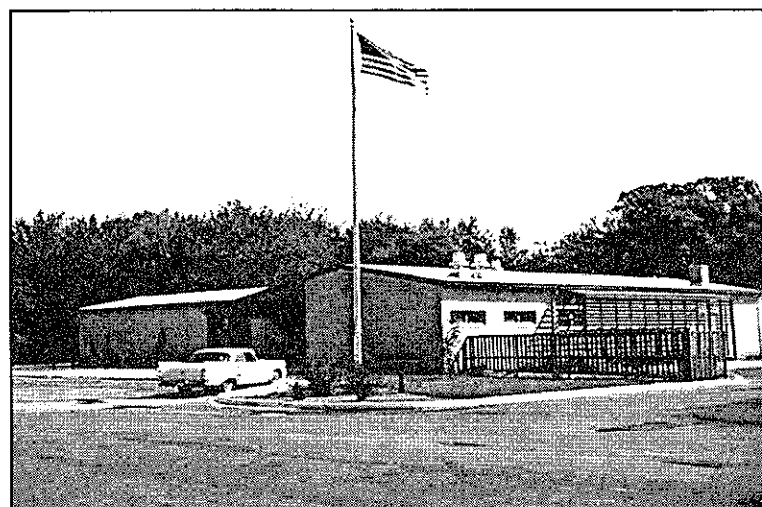


Figure 36. Mission 66 visitor center, ca. 1962. [HNMA]



Figure 37. HNMA Headquarters area, 1957. [HNMA]

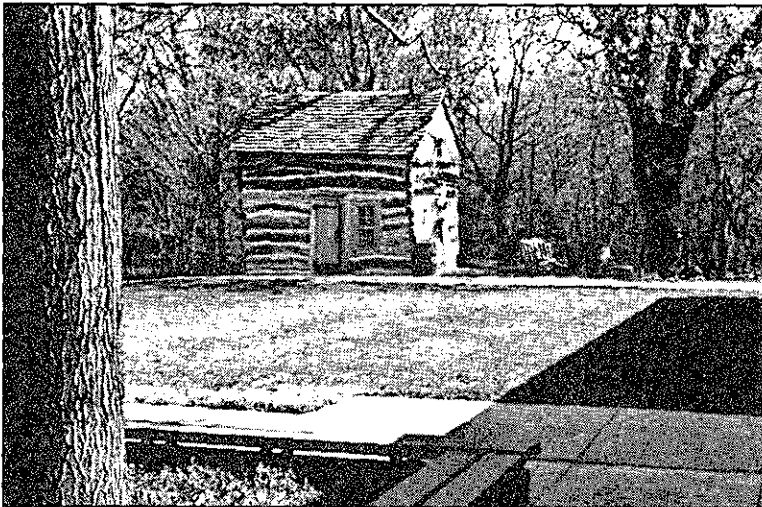


Figure 38. Third location (existing) of Palmer-Epard Cabin, 1988. [HNMA]



Figure 39. Restored prairie and Osage orange hedgerow on middle forty, 1961. [HNMA]



Figure 40. Site of old freight road (looking east), 1964. [HNMA]

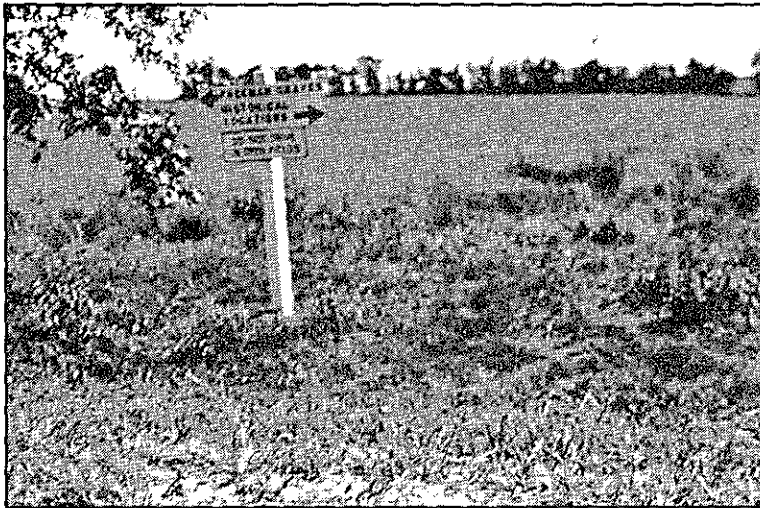


Figure 41. Directional signs along paths, 1955. [HNMA]



Figure 42. Wayside exhibit on self-guiding trail, 1959. [HNMA]

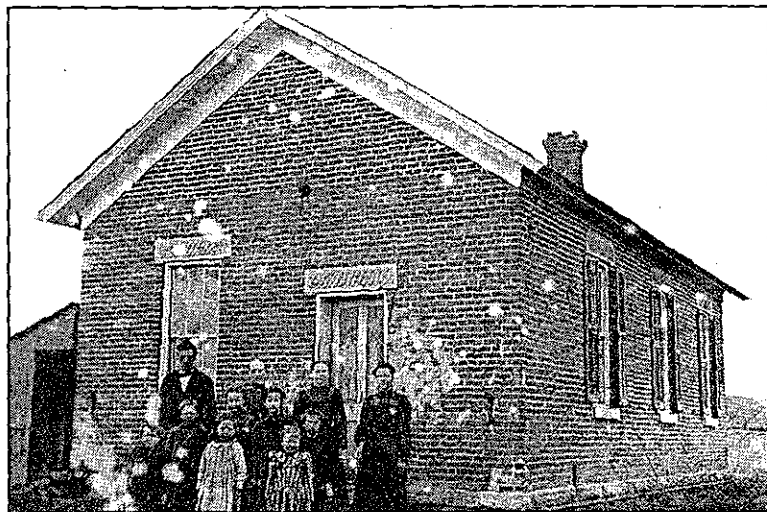


Figure 43. South and east elevations of Freeman Schoolhouse, ca.1902. [HNMA]

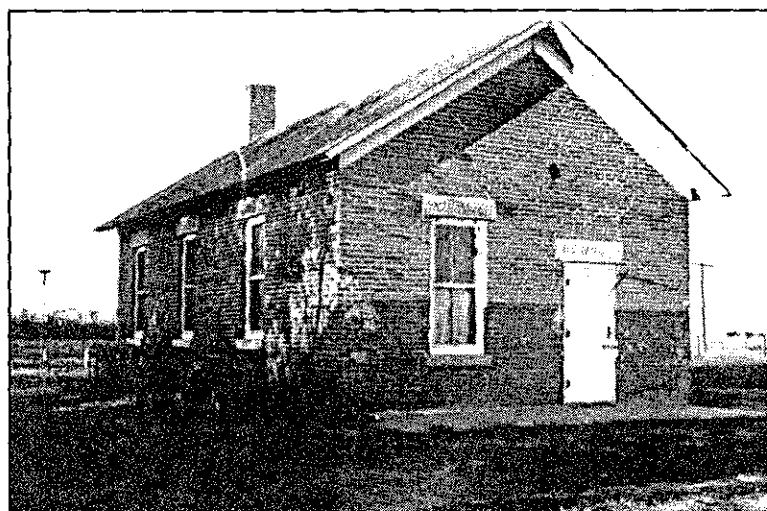


Figure 44. South and west elevations of Freeman Schoolhouse, 1937. [HNMA]

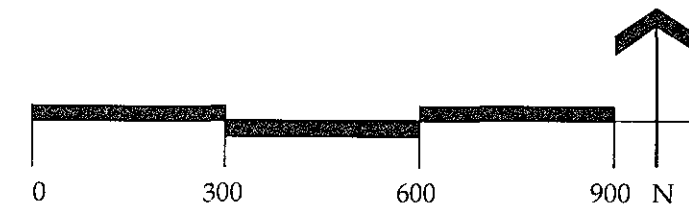
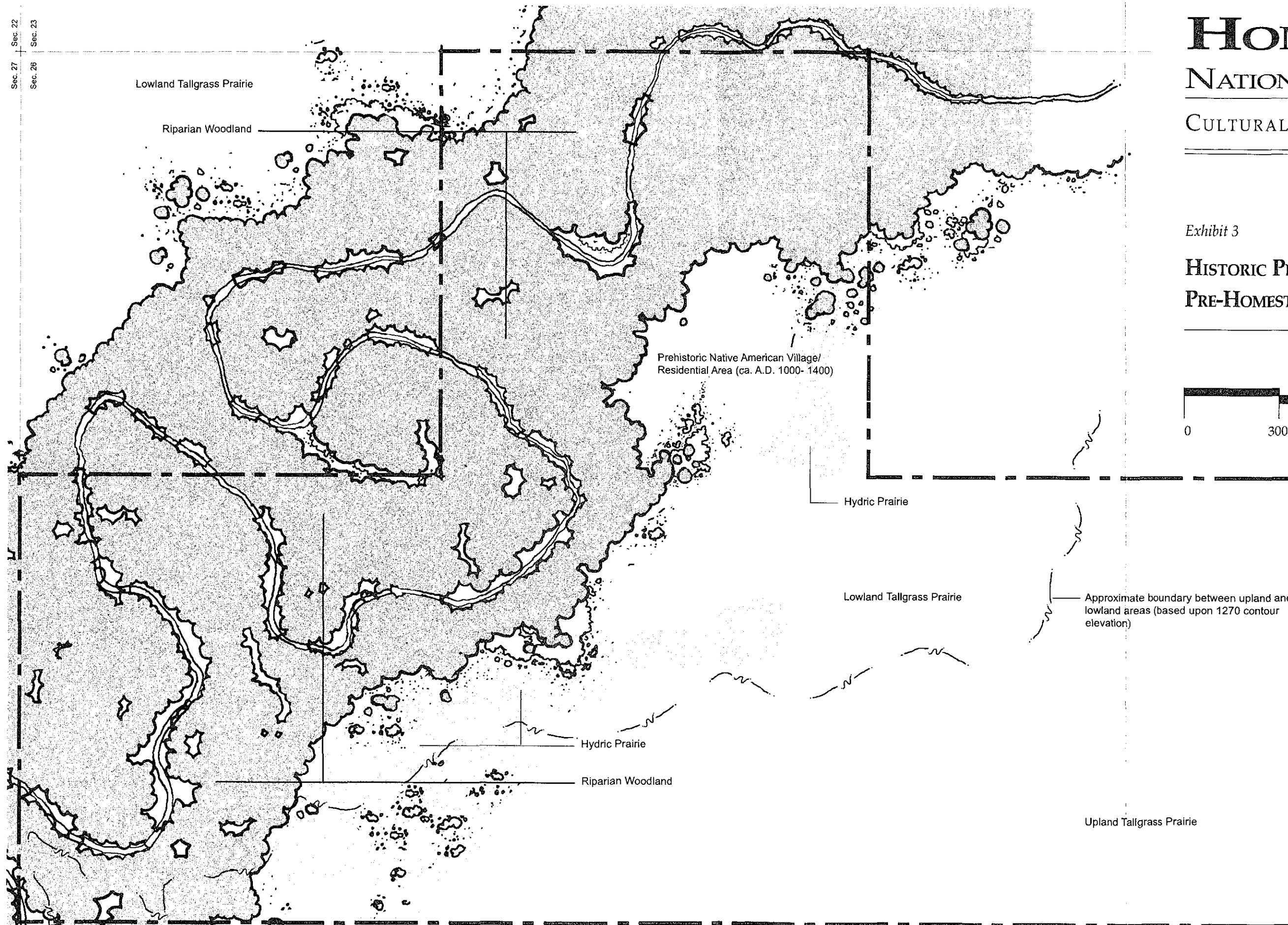


Figure 45. South elevation of Freeman Schoolhouse and outbuildings, 1958. [HNMA]





HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 3

HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: PRE-HOMESTEAD SETTLEMENT (PRE-1856)



MAP KEY

-  Wooded Vegetation
-  Shrubs
-  Cub Creek
-  HNMA Boundary Line

SOURCES:

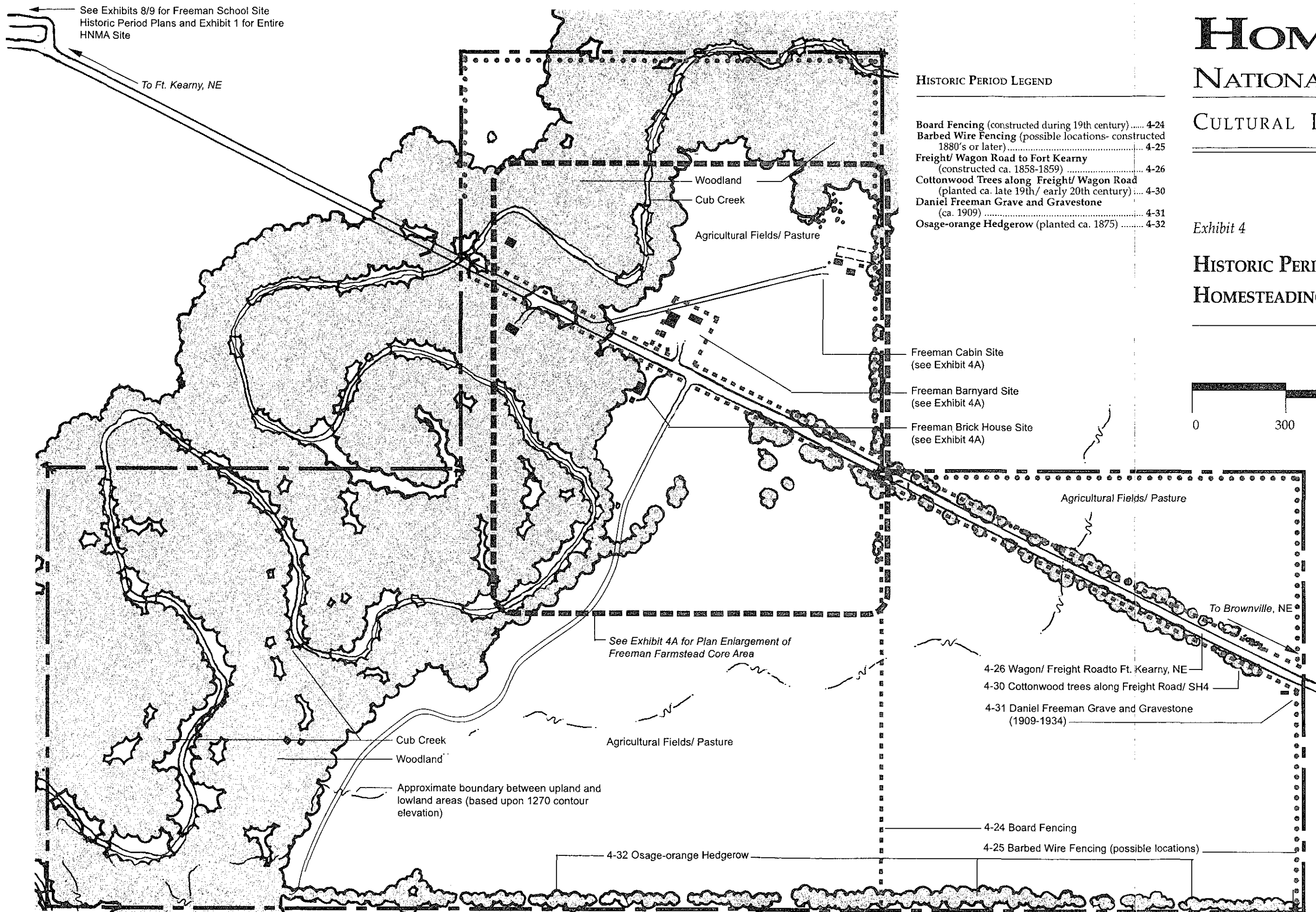
- 1857 Surveyor Field Notes, W.D. Herbert. [HNMA]
- 1857 Map of T4 R5E, Nebraska Territory. [HNMA]
- Archaeological Survey of HNMA, Schoen and Bleed. 1986. [HNMA]
- HNMA Prairie Management Action Plan- Appendix F: Soils Profile, U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service. 1993. [HNMA]
- Soil Survey of Cage County, Nebraska, U.S. Department of Agriculture, SCS. 1964. [HNMA]
- Native Vegetation of Nebraska, J.E. Weaver. 1965.
- Sketches of the Physical Geography and Geology of Nebraska, S.A. Aughey. 1880.

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 4

HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: HOMESTEADING (1856-1908)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

- Board Fencing (constructed during 19th century)..... 4-24
- Barbed Wire Fencing (possible locations- constructed 1880's or later)..... 4-25
- Freight/ Wagon Road to Fort Kearny (constructed ca. 1858-1859)..... 4-26
- Cottonwood Trees along Freight/ Wagon Road (planted ca. late 19th/ early 20th century).... 4-30
- Daniel Freeman Grave and Gravestone (ca. 1909)..... 4-31
- Osage-orange Hedgerow (planted ca. 1875)..... 4-32

- Freeman Cabin Site (see Exhibit 4A)
- Freeman Barnyard Site (see Exhibit 4A)
- Freeman Brick House Site (see Exhibit 4A)



MAP KEY

- Building
- Wooded Vegetation
- Shrubs
- Cub Creek
- Wood Slat Fencing
- Barbed-Wire Fencing
- HNM Boundary Line

SOURCES

- 1857 Surveyor Field Notes, W.D. Herbert. [HNMA]
- 1857 Map of T4 R5E, Nebraska Territory. [HNMA]
- Freeman Homestead Affidavit, 1868. [HNMA]
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- "Sketch Showing Old Buildings, HNMA", 1949. [HNMA]
- Oral Interview Transcript, C. Souhier. 1968. [HNMA]
- Archaeological Survey of HNMA, Schoen and Bleed. 1986. [HNMA]

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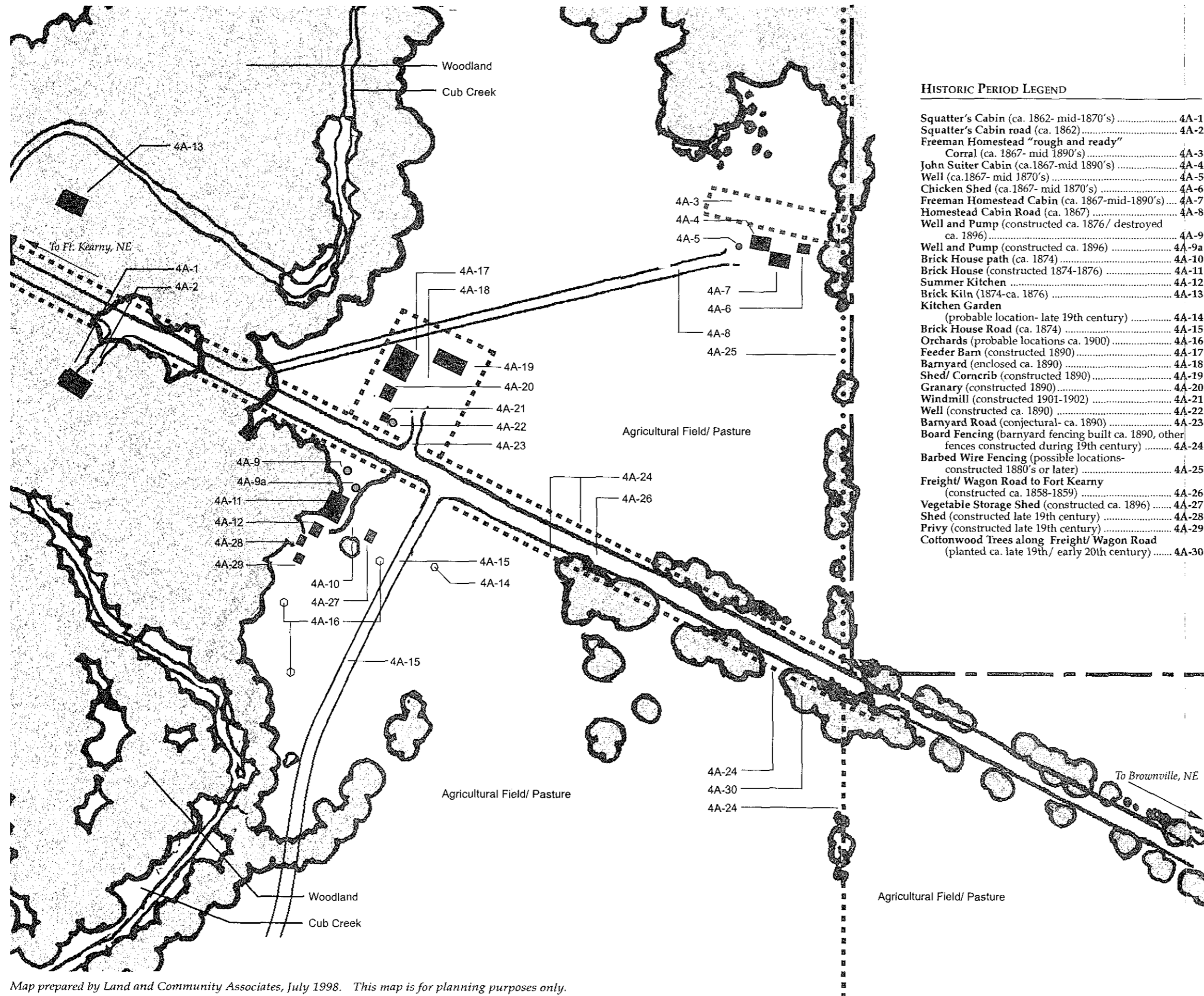
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HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

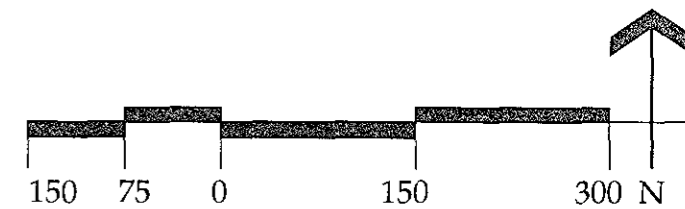
Exhibit 4A

HISTORIC PERIOD PLAN: FREEMAN FARMSTEAD AREA (1856-1908)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

Squatter's Cabin (ca. 1862- mid-1870's)	4A-1
Squatter's Cabin road (ca. 1862)	4A-2
Freeman Homestead "rough and ready" Corral (ca. 1867- mid 1890's)	4A-3
John Suiter Cabin (ca.1867-mid 1890's)	4A-4
Well (ca.1867- mid 1870's)	4A-5
Chicken Shed (ca.1867- mid 1870's)	4A-6
Freeman Homestead Cabin (ca. 1867-mid-1890's)	4A-7
Homestead Cabin Road (ca. 1867)	4A-8
Well and Pump (constructed ca. 1876/ destroyed ca. 1896)	4A-9
Well and Pump (constructed ca. 1896)	4A-9a
Brick House path (ca. 1874)	4A-10
Brick House (constructed 1874-1876)	4A-11
Summer Kitchen	4A-12
Brick Kilt (1874-ca. 1876)	4A-13
Kitchen Garden (probable location- late 19th century)	4A-14
Brick House Road (ca. 1874)	4A-15
Orchards (probable locations ca. 1900)	4A-16
Feeder Barn (constructed 1890)	4A-17
Barnyard (enclosed ca. 1890)	4A-18
Shed/ Corncrib (constructed 1890)	4A-19
Granary (constructed 1890)	4A-20
Windmill (constructed 1901-1902)	4A-21
Well (constructed ca. 1890)	4A-22
Barnyard Road (conjectural- ca. 1890)	4A-23
Board Fencing (barnyard fencing built ca. 1890, other fences constructed during 19th century)	4A-24
Barbed Wire Fencing (possible locations- constructed 1880's or later)	4A-25
Freight/ Wagon Road to Fort Kearny (constructed ca. 1858-1859)	4A-26
Vegetable Storage Shed (constructed ca. 1896)	4A-27
Shed (constructed late 19th century)	4A-28
Privy (constructed late 19th century)	4A-29
Cottonwood Trees along Freight/ Wagon Road (planted ca. late 19th/ early 20th century)	4A-30



MAP KEY

	Building
	Wooded Vegetation
	Shrubs
	Cub Creek
	Wood Slat Fencing
	Barbed-Wire Fencing
	HNMA Boundary Line

SOURCES

1857 Surveyor Field Notes, W.D. Herbert. [HNMA]
 1857 Map of T4 R5E, Nebraska Territory. [HNMA]
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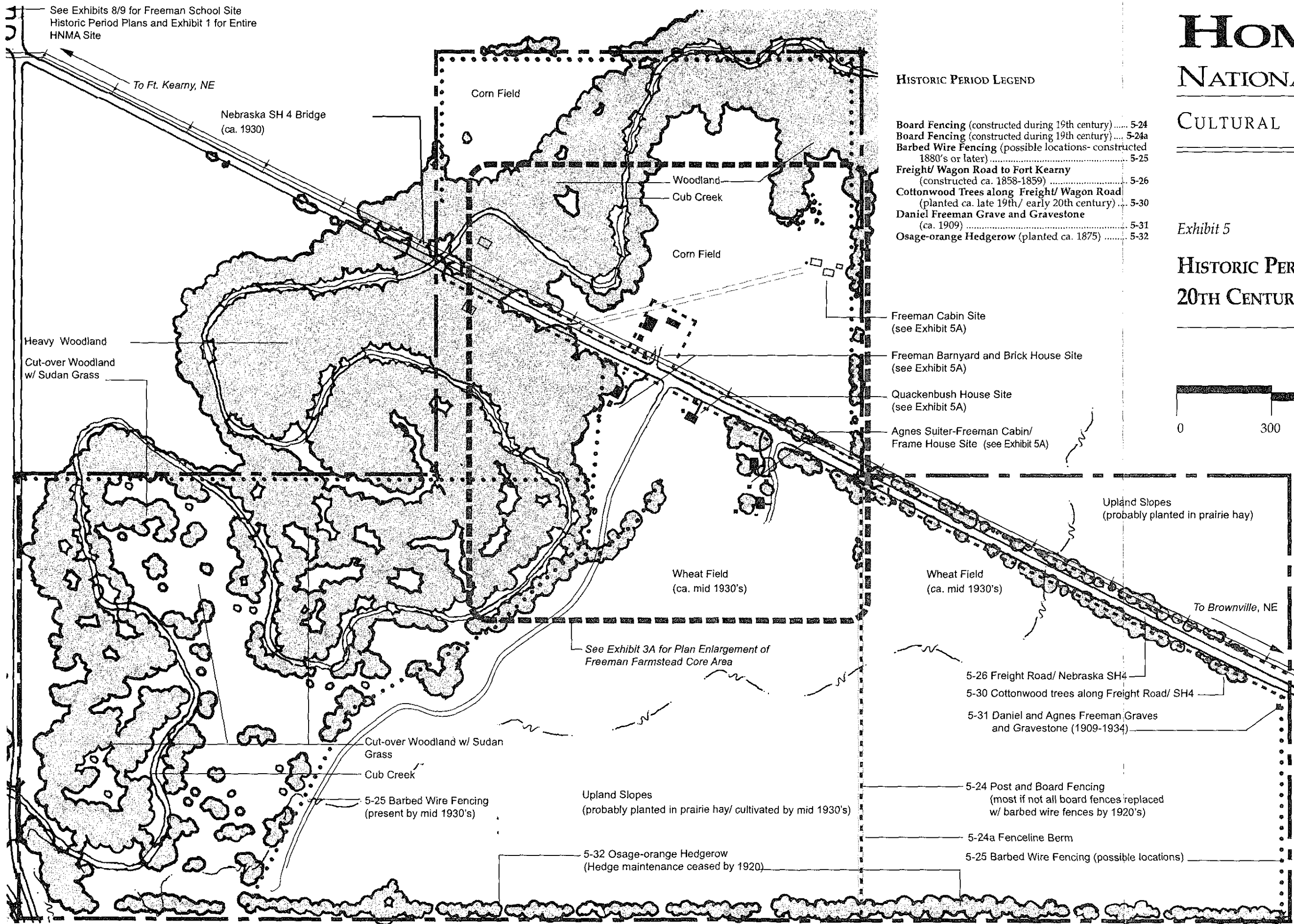
Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 5

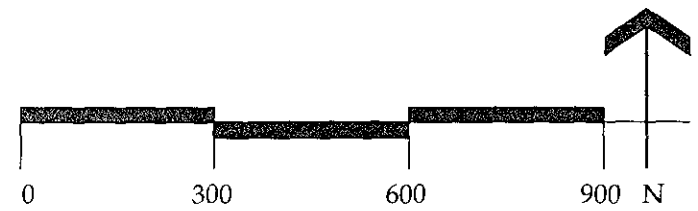
HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: 20TH CENTURY FARMING (1909-1936)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

- Board Fencing (constructed during 19th century) 5-24
- Board Fencing (constructed during 19th century) 5-24a
- Barbed Wire Fencing (possible locations- constructed 1880's or later) 5-25
- Freight/ Wagon Road to Fort Kearny (constructed ca. 1858-1859) 5-26
- Cottonwood Trees along Freight/ Wagon Road (planted ca. late 19th/ early 20th century) 5-30
- Daniel Freeman Grave and Gravestone (ca. 1909) 5-31
- Osage-orange Hedgerow (planted ca. 1875) 5-32

- Freeman Cabin Site (see Exhibit 5A)
- Freeman Barnyard and Brick House Site (see Exhibit 5A)
- Quackenbush House Site (see Exhibit 5A)
- Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin/ Frame House Site (see Exhibit 5A)



MAP KEY

- Building
- Former Building Site
- Wooded Vegetation
- Cub Creek
- Wood Slat Fencing
- Barbed-Wire Fencing
- HNM Boundary Line

SOURCES

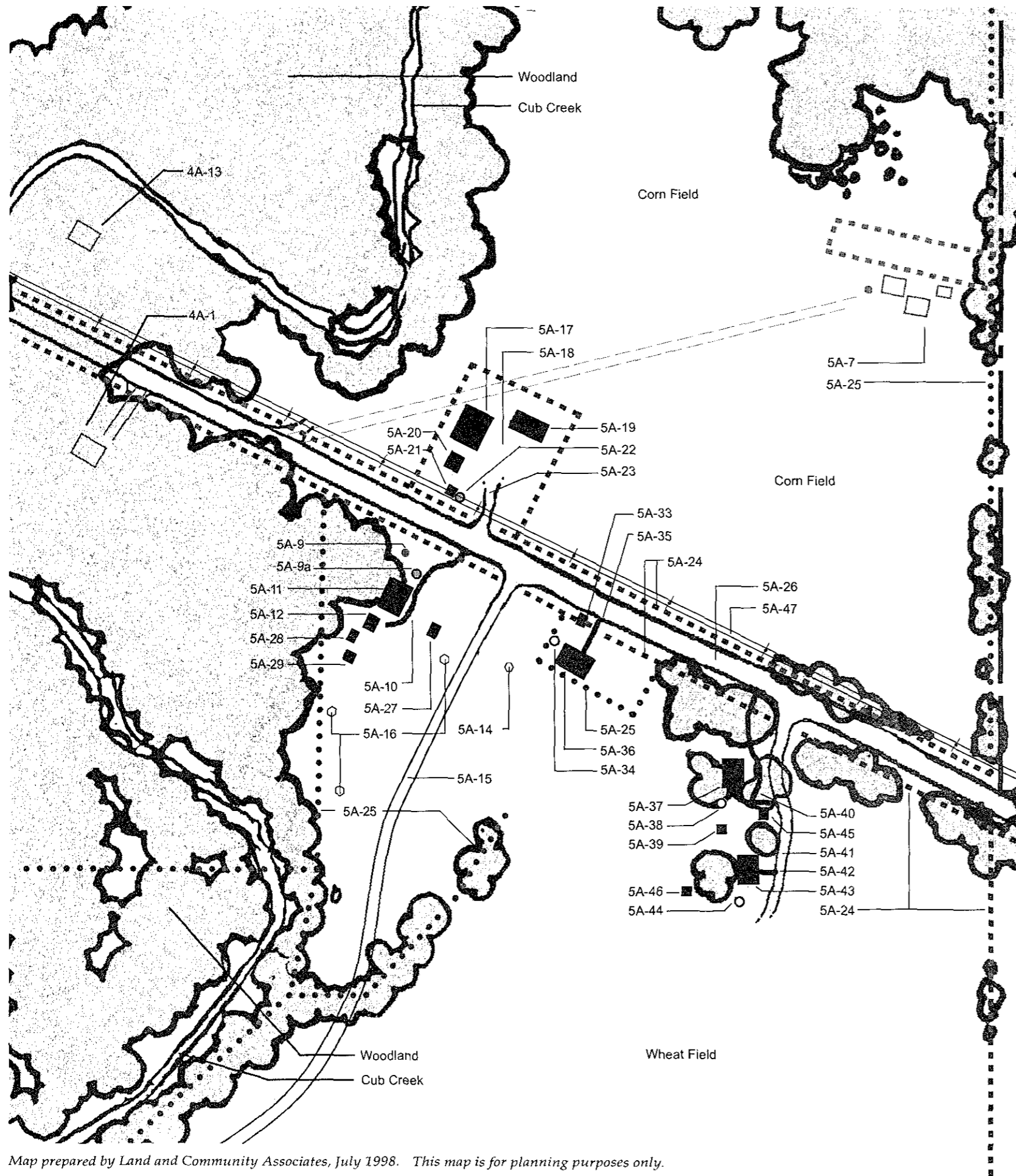
Preliminary Development Report, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1937 [HNMA]
Base Map- Gage County, NE, Nebraska Department of Roads and Irrigation, 1938. [Library of Congress]
1940 Aerial Photograph, U.S. D.A., S.C.S. [HNMA]
Memo to Regional Director, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. R. Gibbs, 1944 [HNMA]
Report of Excavations at the Daniel Freeman Homestead, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1948
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HNMA Vegetative Management Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1960. [HNMA]
Freeman Homestead and Freeman School National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1966. [HNMA]
Archaeological Survey of HNMA, Schren and Bleed, 1986. [HNMA]
Oral Interviews of Robert Graff, Keller and Reem, 1998.

Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 5A

HISTORIC PERIOD PLAN: FREEMAN FARMSTEAD AREA (1909-1935)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

Squatter's Cabin Site	5A-1
Freeman Cabin Site	5A-7
Well and Pump (destroyed ca. 1896)	5A-9
Well and Pump (constructed ca. 1896)	5A-9a
Brick House Path (overgrown/ disappeared by early 1920's)	5A-10
Brick House (burned 1916)	5A-11
Summer Kitchen (destroyed/dismantled ca. 1930)	5A-12
Brick Kiln Site	5A-13
Kitchen/ Cash Crop Garden (probable location- late 19th century through ca. 1930)	5A-14
Brick House Road (ca. 1874)	5A-15
Orchards (probable locations-destroyed ca. late 1920's- early 1930's)	5A-16
Feeder Barn (dismantled 1928)	5A-17
Barnyard (overgrown or cultivated by early 1930's)	5A-18
Shed/ Corncrib (dismantled 1928)	5A-19
Granary (dismantled 1928)	5A-20
Windmill (dismantled ca. 1910)	5A-21
Well (above-ground portions destroyed/ dismantled by ca. 1930)	5A-22
Barnyard Road (overgrown/ disappeared by early 1930's)	5A-23
Post & Board Fencing (most, if not all, board fences replaced w/ bared wire fences by 1920's)	5A-24
Barbed Wire Fencing (definitely located around the Quackenbush House- other locations are probable sites)	5A-25
Freight Road/ Nebraska Route 4	5A-26
Vegetable Storage Shed (constructed ca. 1896)	5A-27
Shed (destroyed/dismantled ca. 1930)	5A-28
Privy (destroyed/dismantled ca. 1930)	5A-29
D.A.R. Monument (erected 1925)	5A-33
Well & Pump (constructed ca. 1916; above ground portions destroyed/ dismantled by ca. 1930)	5A-34
Quackenbush House Path (constructed 1916; overgrown by mid-1930's)	5A-35
Quackenbush House (constructed 1916; dismantled 1930)	5A-36
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin (constructed ca. 1910; burned 1930)	5A-37
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Well & Pump (constructed ca. 1910; above ground portions destroyed/ dismantled by early 1930's)	5A-38
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Privy (constructed ca. 1910; destroyed/dismantled by mid-1930's)	5A-39
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Path (constructed ca. 1910; overgrown by mid-1930's)	5A-40
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin/ Frame House Road (constructed ca. 1910)	5A-41
Frame House Path (conjectural- constructed ca. 1935)	5A-42
Frame House (constructed ca. 1935; moved to Beatrice, NE in 1939)	5A-43
Frame House Well (constructed ca. 1935)	5A-44
Agnes Suiter- Freeman Shed (ca. ?)	5A-45
Frame House Shed (constructed ca. 1935)	5A-46
Telephone Poles and Lines (erected by late 1920's)	5A-47

MAP KEY

	Building
	Former Building Site
	Wooded Vegetation
	Cub Creek
	Wood Slat Fencing
	Barbed-Wire Fencing
	HNM Boundary Line

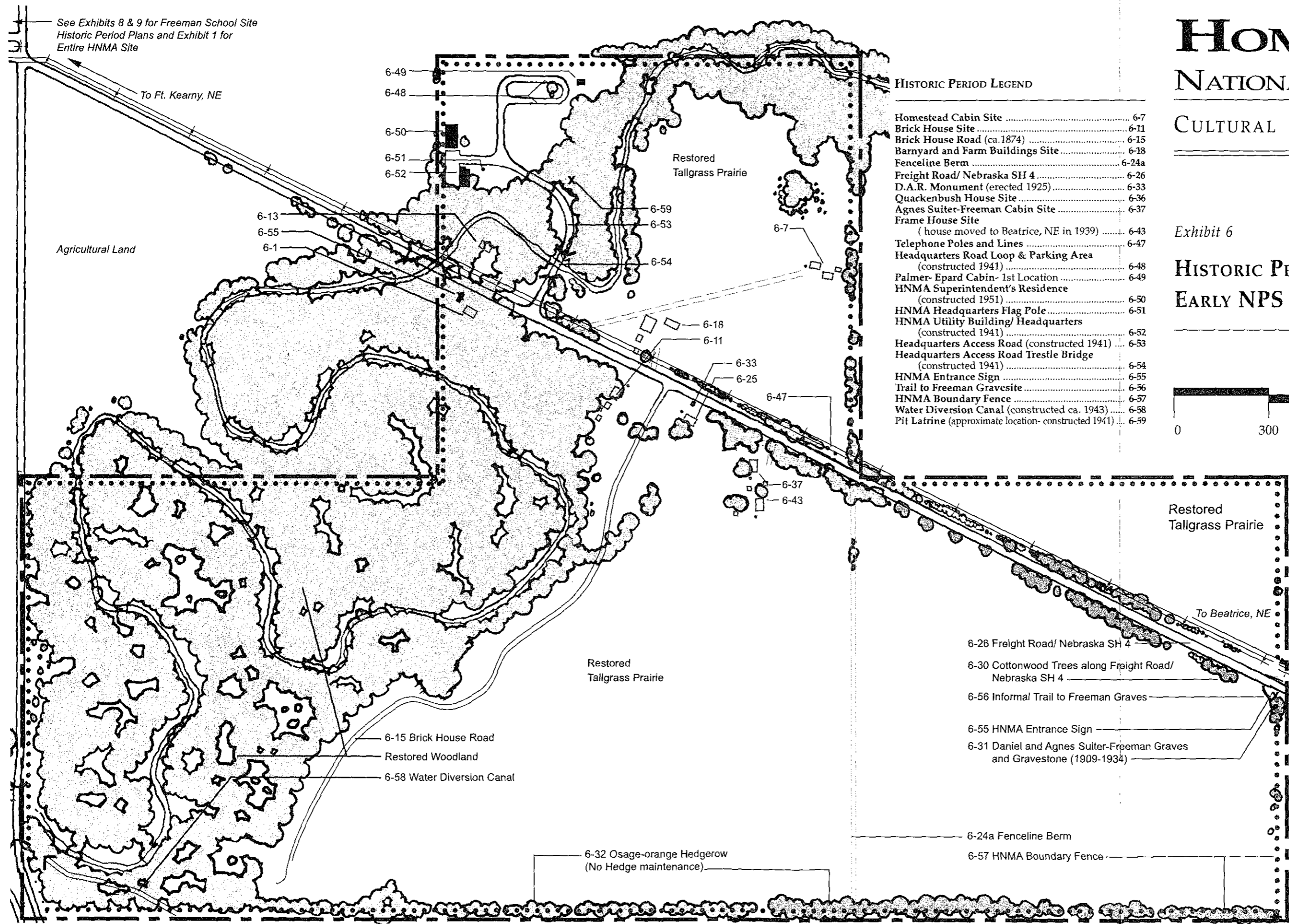
SOURCES

Preliminary Development Report, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, NPS, 1937 [HNMA]
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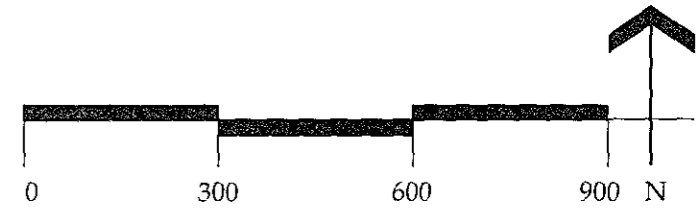
HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 6 HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: EARLY NPS DEVELOPMENT (1936-1953)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

Homestead Cabin Site	6-7
Brick House Site	6-11
Brick House Road (ca. 1874)	6-15
Barnyard and Farm Buildings Site	6-18
Fenceline Berm	6-24a
Freight Road/ Nebraska SH 4	6-26
D.A.R. Monument (erected 1925)	6-33
Quackenbush House Site	6-36
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Site	6-37
Frame House Site (house moved to Beatrice, NE in 1939)	6-43
Telephone Poles and Lines	6-47
Headquarters Road Loop & Parking Area (constructed 1941)	6-48
Palmer- Epard Cabin- 1st Location	6-49
HNMA Superintendent's Residence (constructed 1951)	6-50
HNMA Headquarters Flag Pole	6-51
HNMA Utility Building/ Headquarters (constructed 1941)	6-52
Headquarters Access Road (constructed 1941)	6-53
Headquarters Access Road Trestle Bridge (constructed 1941)	6-54
HNMA Entrance Sign	6-55
Trail to Freeman Gravesite	6-56
HNMA Boundary Fence	6-57
Water Diversion Canal (constructed ca. 1943)	6-58
Pit Latrine (approximate location- constructed 1941)	6-59



MAP KEY

	..... Building
	..... Former Building Site
	..... Wooded Vegetation
 Cub Creek
 Wood Slat Fencing
 Barbed-Wire Fencing
 HNM Boundary Line

SOURCES

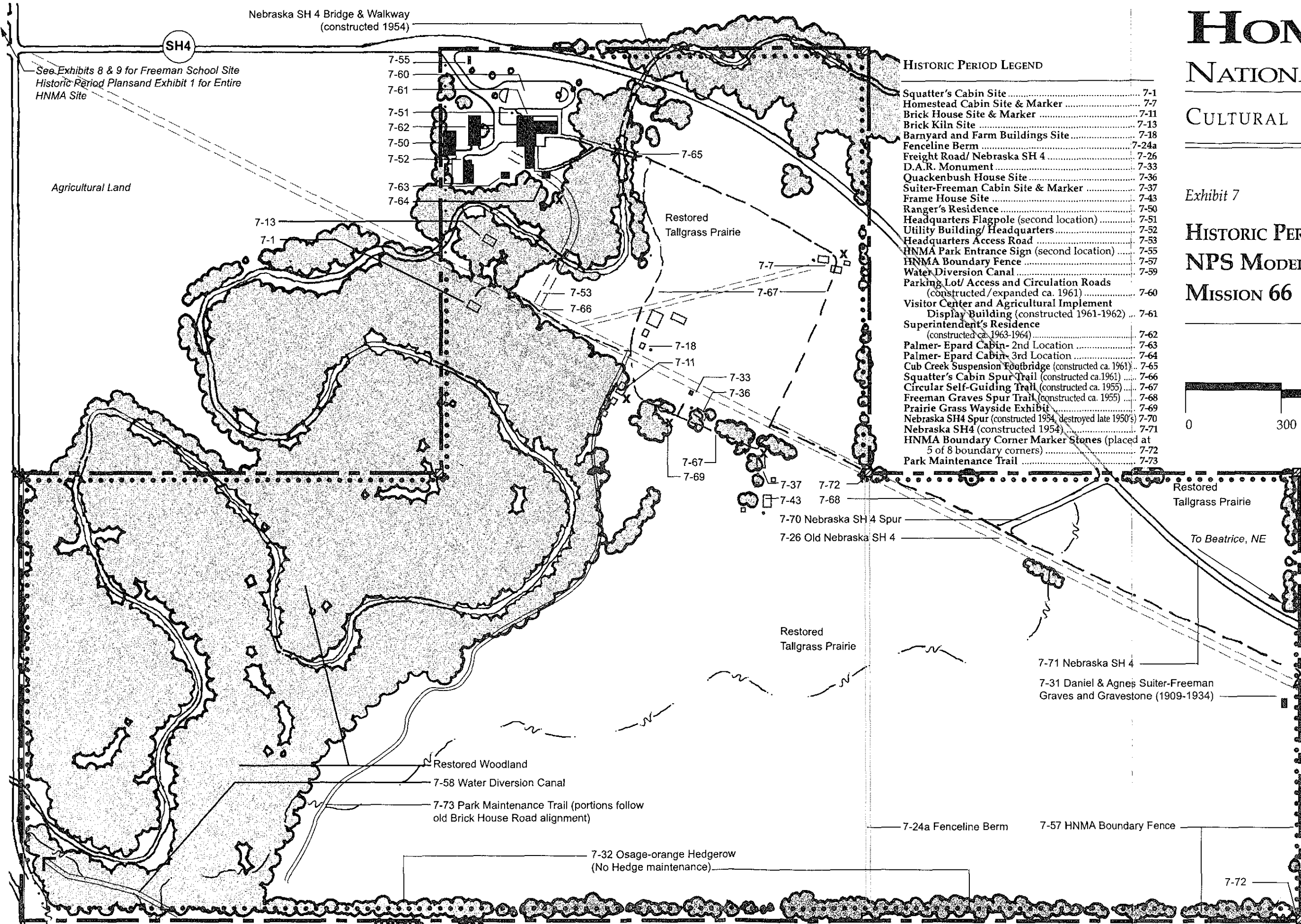
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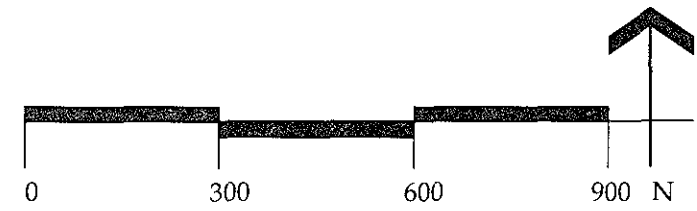
Exhibit 7

HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: NPS MODERNIZATION AND MISSION 66 DEVELOPMENT (1954-1966)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

Squatter's Cabin Site	7-1
Homestead Cabin Site & Marker	7-7
Brick House Site & Marker	7-11
Brick Kiln Site	7-13
Barnyard and Farm Buildings Site	7-18
Fenceline Berm	7-24a
Freight Road/ Nebraska SH 4	7-26
D.A.R. Monument	7-33
Quackenbush House Site	7-36
Suiter-Freeman Cabin Site & Marker	7-37
Frame House Site	7-43
Ranger's Residence	7-50
Headquarters Flaggpole (second location)	7-51
Utility Building/ Headquarters	7-52
Headquarters Access Road	7-53
HNMA Park Entrance Sign (second location)	7-55
HNMA Boundary Fence	7-57
Water Diversion Canal	7-59
Parking Lot/ Access and Circulation Roads (constructed/expanded ca. 1961)	7-60
Visitor Center and Agricultural Implement Display Building (constructed 1961-1962)	7-61
Superintendent's Residence (constructed ca. 1963-1964)	7-62
Palmer- Epard Cabin- 2nd Location	7-63
Palmer- Epard Cabin- 3rd Location	7-64
Cub Creek Suspension Footbridge (constructed ca. 1961)	7-65
Squatter's Cabin Spur Trail (constructed ca. 1961)	7-66
Circular Self-Guiding Trail (constructed ca. 1955)	7-67
Freeman Graves Spur Trail (constructed ca. 1955)	7-68
Prairie Grass Wayside Exhibit	7-69
Nebraska SH4 Spur (constructed 1954, destroyed late 1950's)	7-70
Nebraska SH4 (constructed 1954)	7-71
HNMA Boundary Corner Marker Stones (placed at 5 of 8 boundary corners)	7-72
Park Maintenance Trail	7-73



MAP KEY

	Building
	Former Building Site
	Wooded Vegetation
	Cub Creek
	Wood Slat Fencing
	Barbed-Wire Fencing
	HNMA Boundary Line

SOURCES

Boundary and Topographic Survey Data, HNMA- Entire Area, Drawing NM-HOM 5301, Sheet 10 U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1955. [HNMA]

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Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

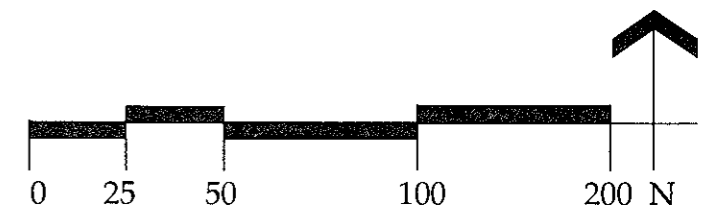
Agricultural Land

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

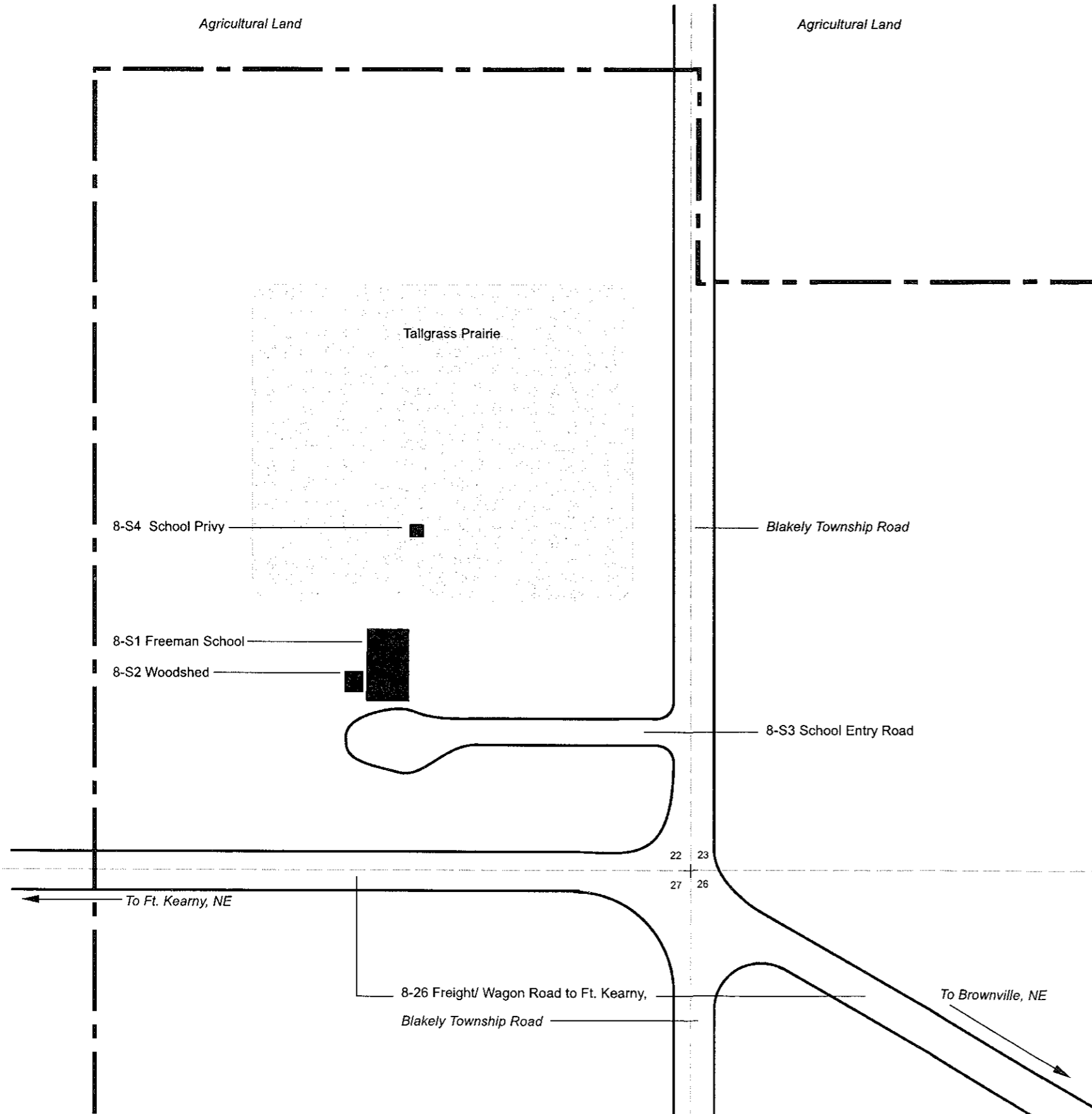
Exhibit 8

HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: FREEMAN SCHOOL AREA (1871- 1910)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

- Freeman School (constructed 1871-1872; minor alterations made ca. 1910) 8-S1
- Freeman School Woodshed (constructed ca. 1890) 8-S2
- Freeman School Entry Road (constructed 1872) 8-S3
- Freeman School Girls/Boys Privy (approximate location- probably constructed 1872) 8-S4
- Freight/ Wagon Road to Ft. Kearny, NE (constructed ca. 1858-1859) 8-26



MAP KEY

- Building
- Prairie
- HNMA Boundary Line (current)

SOURCES

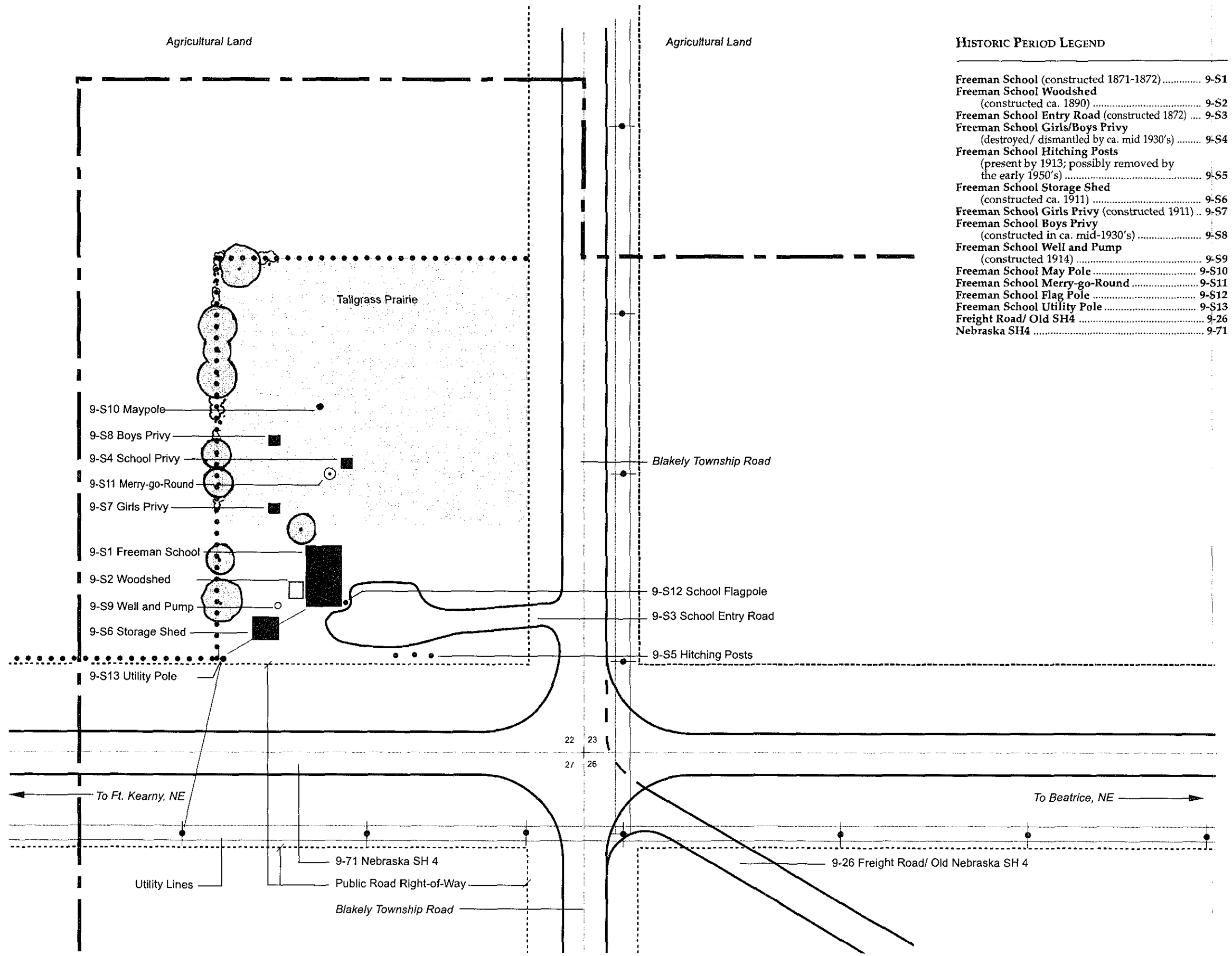
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- 1940 Aerial Photograph, U.S. Department of Agriculture. [HNMA]
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- Historic Structure Report: Freeman School, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1973.
- Freeman School Site Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1981. [HNMA]
- Excavations at the Freeman School, Schoen. 1986. [HNMA]
- Archaeological Survey of HNMA, Schoen and Bleed. 1986. [HNMA]

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HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

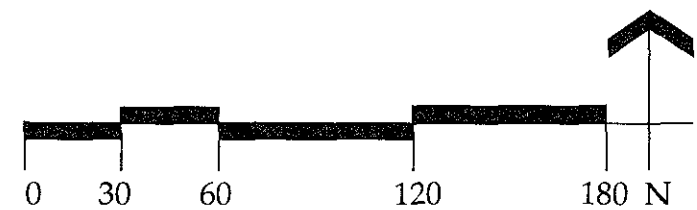
Exhibit 9

HISTORIC PERIOD SITE PLAN: FREEMAN SCHOOL AREA (1909-1936)



HISTORIC PERIOD LEGEND

Freeman School (constructed 1871-1872).....	9-S1
Freeman School Woodshed (constructed ca. 1890).....	9-S2
Freeman School Entry Road (constructed 1872)	9-S3
Freeman School Girls/Boys Privy (destroyed/ dismantled by ca. mid 1930's)	9-S4
Freeman School Hitching Posts (present by 1913; possibly removed by the early 1950's).....	9-S5
Freeman School Storage Shed (constructed ca. 1911).....	9-S6
Freeman School Girls Privy (constructed 1911)	9-S7
Freeman School Boys Privy (constructed in ca. mid-1930's).....	9-S8
Freeman School Well and Pump (constructed 1914).....	9-S9
Freeman School May Pole.....	9-S10
Freeman School Merry-go-Round.....	9-S11
Freeman School Flag Pole.....	9-S12
Freeman School Utility Pole.....	9-S13
Freight Road/ Old SH4.....	9-26
Nebraska SH4.....	9-71



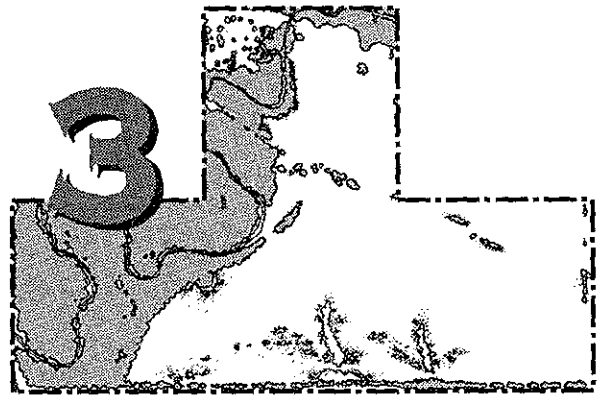
MAP KEY

- Building
- Wooded Vegetation
- Shrubs
- Prairie
- Fence
- HNMA Boundary Line (Current)

SOURCES

1940 Aerial Photograph, U.S. Department of Agriculture. [HNMA]
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EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Environmental Context and Setting

Site Location

Homestead National Monument of America (HNMA) is located in Gage County, in southeastern Nebraska, 40 miles south of Lincoln, Nebraska, and 185 miles northwest of Kansas City, Missouri. The Monument is situated on Nebraska State Highway 4 (SH4), 3.5 miles west-northwest of Beatrice, the county seat of Gage County. The Monument lies primarily within Section 26 of Township 4N, Range 5E, with the non-contiguous Freeman schoolhouse site lying in the southeast corner of Section 22, T4N, R5E. The Freeman schoolhouse site lies approximately 0.25 miles west of the visitor center entrance at SH4 (*Exhibit 1*). The 194.57 acre Homestead National Monument of America site consists of 163.93 acres in simple ownership, and 18.18 acres in scenic easement ownership and 12.46 acres of privately owned land lying within the authorized boundary.¹ HNMA consists of three primary areas: the original 162.73 acre Daniel Freeman homestead site, the 1.5 acre Freeman schoolhouse site, and 30.64 acres of agricultural land and state highway right-of-way held in scenic easement (*Exhibit 1*).

Site Description

The original acreage of the Freeman homestead can be considered today, as it was historically, as being comprised of four distinct sections (each approximately 40 acres) known as *forties* (*Exhibit 2*).² The current NPS acreage closely approximates the land owned by and included in Freeman's homestead claim. Prairie-covered rolling uplands and nearly level lowlands characterize the majority of this land. The winding Cub

¹U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *General Management Plan- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1988, pp. 1-2.

²The original Daniel Freeman homestead is composed of 160 acres arranged in an inverted T shape that is divided into four, approximately 40-acre, square plots of land, referred to as the north, east, middle, and west *forties*..

Creek and its sheltering riparian woodland transect the lowland prairie valley. SH4 enters the eastern boundary of the park (*Figure 46; see Exhibit 13 for Existing Conditions Photostation Points Map*) in the northeastern corner of the east *forty* and passes northwest, crossing Cub Creek, and then passes westward south of the Freeman School site. The non-contiguous Freeman School parcel is located 0.25 miles west of the park entrance at the northwest corner of the intersection of SH4 and Blakely Township Road. This portion of HNMA is connected to the primary acreage of HNMA via SH4 and surrounding NPS scenic easements (*Exhibit 1*).

The entrance to the HNMA visitor center and administrative area is found along SH4 in the northwest corner of the north *forty* (*Figure 77*). This entrance leads to the visitor center parking lot (50 car capacity) as well as to the HNMA staff parking, maintenance facilities and staff housing (*Figure 49; see page 3-20 for site facilities descriptions*).

Site Geomorphology

Homestead National Monument of America lies within the glaciated Drift Hill Region of southeastern Nebraska. Nebraskan and Kansan glacial till deposits overlain with deep deposits of loess characterize this region. The general landscape of this region can be characterized as mature due to well-developed surface drainages. The resulting clearly defined surface drainage patterns frequently cut through the overlaying layers of loess and glacial till and expose underlying limestone and shale bedrocks.³

Much like the region that surrounds it, the landform of the HNMA site is strongly influenced by surface hydrology, particularly the 92,350 acre Cub Creek watershed. The overall topography of the site can be characterized as nearly level to rolling. Its

³A. L. Lugn, "Bulletin Number 41: The Geology and Mammalian Fauna of the Pleistocene of Nebraska: Part I - Outline of the Pleistocene Geology of Nebraska." *Bulletin of the Nebraska State Museum*, Vol. I, 1934, pp. 320-340.

topographic character is typical in this region of Nebraska where there are steep upland waterways and nearly level, lowland floodplains. Cub Creek enters the southwestern corner of the park and meanders for approximately 1.2 miles through the park before exiting the northern boundary of the park (*Exhibit 10*). Normal channel flow for Cub Creek averages 3-5 feet in depth and 20-25 feet in width. However, during major flooding conditions, the creek may rise to a depth of 16 feet and a width over 125 feet.⁴ These periodic floods result in the inundation of lowland trails and accelerated streambank erosion. During normal conditions, the channel of Cub Creek lies 10 or more feet below the surrounding riparian woodland and restored prairie lowlands (*Figures 53, 54, 70, and 71*). These vegetated areas of the Cub Creek floodplain are nearly level, maintaining an elevation near 1,260 feet, with minor variances, for the majority of the lowland areas of the park. Soils of this lowland valley consist of clay and silty loams of the Alluvial Land, Muir, Hobbs, and Rokeby Series.⁵ The Cub Creek lowland rises in the eastern and southern portions of the park, forming a moderately steep sloping valley wall with elevations peaking at 1,320 feet. Soils of the footslopes, valley wall, and prairie uplands are loess-derived (wind-blown) and are of the Judson, Morrill, Geary, Crete, and Wymore Series.⁶ These soils, as well as the lowland Muir, Rokeby, and Hobbs Series, were formed under prairie vegetation.⁷

Vegetation

The overall vegetative cover of HNMA can be distinguished in five cultural zones: the collective upland, lowland and hydric prairie communities, the riparian woodland community, the historic Osage orange hedgerow, the visitor center/administration

⁴*General Management Plan- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1988, pp. 1-2.

⁵J. F. Batzer and R. D. Lacome, *Into the Twenty-First Century: Homestead National Monument Prairie Management Action Plan, 1993-2002*. U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, 1988, pp. 7, 13, 20, 24, 24, 27 and Appendix F: Soils Profile, pp.1-2; United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Gage County*, 1964.

⁶Batzer and Lacome; *Soil Survey of Gage County*, 1964.

⁷Batzer and Lacome; *Soil Survey of Gage County*, 1964.

complex, and the non-contiguous Freeman Schoolhouse site (*Exhibits 10B, 11 and 11A*). Vegetative landcover consists of two primary vegetative communities: riparian woodland and restored prairie. Each vegetative community consists of a variety of native and exotic trees and shrubs, as well as woody and herbaceous vines, forbs, grasses and sedges. The restored upland, lowland, and hydric prairies compose approximately 100 acres of the landcover of HMNA (*Figures 55 and 63*). Sampling conducted at HNMA reveals a species composition dominated by Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) with other grass and forb species present including Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.), Field Pussytoes (*Antennaria neglecta*) and leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*).⁸ These species and their composition association are indicative of the "tallgrass prairie" community.⁹ This community is suggestive of pre-settlement vegetative landcover according to HNMA-specific studies conducted by Sutton et al. in 1984¹⁰ and Great Plains Region-specific plant community studies by Weaver in 1954.¹¹ This analysis is supported by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data indicating soil formation under prairie vegetation. The HNMA tallgrass prairie is perhaps one of the "oldest ongoing prairie restorations on a human-altered landscape. The only other nearly contemporaneous example is the Curtis Prairie in Madison, Wisconsin."¹²

⁸Batzer and Lacome; *General Management Plan- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1988, pp. 7-9.

⁹See Master Plant List for species listing of plants documented at HNMA. In addition, see J. E. Weaver, *North American Prairie*, (Johnsen Publishing Company, Lincoln Nebraska, 1954) for studies on prairie ecology and plant community composition as well as J. R. Thompson, *Prairies, Forests, and Wetlands: The Restoration of Natural Landscape Communities in Iowa*, (University of Iowa Press, Iowa City, 1992). See Packard, Stephen, and C. F. Mutel, eds., *The Tallgrass Prairie Restoration Handbook: For Prairies, Savannas, and Woodlands*, (Society for Ecological Restoration; Island Press, Washington D.C., 1997) for a current discussion on the ecological art and science of prairie restoration.

¹⁰R. K. Sutton, J. Stubbendieck, and J. Traeger, *Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations for Homestead National Monument of America*, Natural Resources Enterprises, Inc., 1984.

¹¹J. E. Weaver, *Native Vegetation of Nebraska*, (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1965).

¹²J. Stubbendieck and G. D. Wilson, "Prairie Restoration/Management at Homestead: A History" *Park Science*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer, 1987, p. 21.

Dotting the prairie are several drifts of indigenous species shrub plantings in the upland prairie drainages, installed by the NPS for soil conservation purposes (*Figure 67*). In addition, a cluster of cottonwoods near the Agnes Suiter Freeman homestead also is part of the prairie setting. This cottonwood grouping can be associated with the former SH4 road alignment as indicated by 1947 aerial photography (*Figures 57 and 60; Exhibit 11*).¹³

The riparian woodland within the Cub Creek landscape corridor composes approximately 60 acres of land cover at HNMA (*Figures 54 and 72*). The predominant species include Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), Boxelder (*Acer negundo*), and Red Elm (*Ulmus rurbum*)¹⁴ (see Master Plant List for species listing of plants documented at HNMA). These species as well as woody and herbaceous understory communities are indicative of the riparian woodland community found in eastern Nebraska.¹⁵ Several trees along the riparian woodland edge are notable for their height, trunk diameter and presumed age. Of particular note is a group of at least 80-foot-tall Cottonwoods located at the western edge of the prairie near the northern turn of the Upland Prairie Loop Trail (*Figure 69*). In addition, a Cottonwood with a trunk diameter in excess of 60 inches is located south of the previously mentioned stand, adjacent to the woodland-prairie edge (*Figure 82*). Based upon its girth and height, this tree is potentially indicative of a period in history associated with early

¹³U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. Aerial Photograph of Homestead National Monument, 1947, Frame UE-20-67-X. HNMA Map Files Conservation Service Aerial Photographs.

¹⁴Batzer and Lacome; *General Management Plan- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1988, pp. 7-9; U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1989, pp. 1-2. Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger noted "with only cursory observation...the species diversity in the woodland is very poor."

¹⁵Weaver, p. 34.

Freeman homesteading activities. The third specimen of note is an aged, large diameter Northern Red Oak (*Quercus borealis*) southwest of the Palmer-Epard cabin along the woodland edge. No formal surveys or baseline data exists for the riparian woodland community at HNMA.

An Osage orange hedgerow planted during Daniel Freeman's homestead tenure (date unknown) identifies the south boundary of HNMA (Figures 64-68; Exhibit 11). The Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*) is native to the southern United States but was introduced into Nebraska and other midwestern states by early pioneers for use as a "hedge fence."¹⁶ This rapidly growing, 25-30 feet tall tree was also utilized by farmers as a fence-post lumber source due to the limited supply of native woodland stands in Nebraska.¹⁷ The Osage orange is the primary species in the hedgerow, with some invasion of Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and shrubs introduced into adjacent areas for conservation purposes. This hedgerow is on the List of Classified Structures (LCS #05085, 6480 HS-18). The trees are in good condition, although the vast majority of the trees are quite mature and nearing the end of their life expectancy.¹⁸

The vegetation of the visitor center/administration complex is composed of approximately 4.5 acres of turfgrass groundcover with a variety of trees and shrubs planted for landscaping purposes (Exhibit 11A). The tree species, including Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), and Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*), are indigenous to the riparian woodland community context of Cub Creek (Figures 49-52, 83, and 84). Ornamental shrubs and

¹⁶Raymond Pool, "Bulletin Number 32: Handbook of Nebraska Trees: A Guide to the Native and Most Important Introduced Species." *Nebraska Conservation Bulletin Series*, 1951 (rev. 1978), p. 109.

¹⁷Pool, p. 109.

¹⁸Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger recommended management by traditional slashing, pruning and braiding of a minimum 100-yard section of the Osage orange hedgerow. They also recommended removal of all other woody species, allowing the remaining Osage orange trees not managed with traditional methods to continue growth approximating contemporary remnant hedgerows.

perennials are used in this area as traditional foundation landscape plantings. The overall condition of the vegetation in the visitor center area appears good with a range of plant ages represented.

The 1.5-acre Freeman Schoolhouse site includes approximately 0.75 acre of turfgrass groundcover and 0.75 acre of virgin tallgrass prairie (*Exhibit 10B*). Recent sampling indicates a primary species composition of Big Bluestem and the exotic Smooth Brome (*Bromus inermis*) with forb species of Prairie Wild Rose (*Rosa arkansana*) and Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.) also present.¹⁹ This highly visible area contains the "only un-plowed, non-restored prairie"²⁰ at HNMA. The overall condition of vegetation at the Freeman schoolhouse site is fair. Of primary concern is the significant presence of smooth brome, an exotic species. Control of this species within the small prairie tract is a recognized management issue.²¹

*Master Plant List*²²

Trees

<i>Acer negundo</i>	Boxelder
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Silver Maple
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Hackberry
<i>Euonymus atropurpureus</i>	Eastern Wahoo
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	Green Ash
<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Common Honeylocust
<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black Walnut
<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Eastern Red Cedar
<i>Maclura pomifera</i>	Osage Orange
<i>Morus alba</i>	White Mulberry
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Eastern Cottonwood

¹⁹Batzer and Lacome, p. 24.

²⁰Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, p. 82.

²¹Batzer and Lacome, pp. 24-26; Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, p. 82.

²²J. F. Batzer and R. D. Lacome, "Appendix K: Plant Species List, Homestead National Monument of America, 8/96".

<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry
<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur Oak
<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Northern Red Oak
<i>Salix spp</i>	Willow
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American Elm
<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	Siberian Elm
<i>Ulmus rubra</i>	Red Elm

Shrubs

<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	Rough-leaved Dogwood
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	Gray Dogwood
<i>Prunus americana</i>	American Plum
<i>Rhus glabra</i>	Smooth Sumac
<i>Rhus aromatica</i>	Fragrant Sumac
<i>Ribes missouriense</i>	Missouri Gooseberry
<i>Rosa arkansana</i>	Prairie Wild Rose
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Common Elderberry
<i>Spirea x arguta</i>	Garland Spirea
<i>Symphoricarpos orbiculatus</i>	Coralberry
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum

Woody Vines

<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia Creeper
<i>Parthenocissus tricuspidata</i>	Boston Ivy
<i>Smilax hispida</i>	Bristly Greenbriar
<i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>	Poison Ivy
<i>Vitis riparia</i>	River-bank Grape

Woody Forbs

<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>	New Jersey Tea
<i>Smilacina stellata</i>	Starry False Solomon's Seal

Herbaceous Plants and Forbs

<i>Abutilon theophrasti</i>	Velvet-leaf
<i>Acalypha rhomboidea</i>	Rhombic Copperleaf
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Agalinis tenuifolia</i>	Slender Gerardia
<i>Agrimonia spp.</i>	Agrimony
<i>Allium spp.</i>	Wild Onion
<i>Amaranthus hybridus</i>	Slender Pigweed
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i>	Rough Pigweed
<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i>	Common Ragweed
<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	Western Ragweed
<i>Ambrosia trifida</i>	Giant Ragweed

<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Leadplant
<i>Androsace occidentalis</i>	Western Rock Jasmine
<i>Antennaria neglecta</i>	Field Pussy-toes
<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	Indian Hemp Dogbane
<i>Artemesia ludoviciana</i>	White Sage
<i>Asclepias sullivantii</i>	Smooth Milkweed
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Milkweed
<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	Whorled Milkweed
<i>Asclepias viridiflora</i>	Green Milkweed
<i>Asclepias viridis</i>	Spider Milkweed
<i>Asparagus officinalis</i>	Asparagus
<i>Aster ericodes</i>	Heath Aster
<i>Aster simplex</i>	Panicled Aster
<i>Astragalus canadensis</i>	Canada Milkvetch
<i>Astragalus crassicaarpus</i>	Ground-plum
<i>Baptisia bracteata</i>	Plains Wild Indigo
<i>Baptisisa lactea</i>	White Wild Indigo
<i>Biden spp.</i>	Beggar-ticks
<i>Callirhoe alcaeoides</i>	A. Gray Pink Poppy Mallow
<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	Purple Poppy Mallow
<i>Calylophus serrulatus</i>	Raven Plains Yellow Primrose
<i>Campanula americana</i>	American Bellflower
<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Hemp
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's Purse
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	Musk Thistle
<i>Cassia chamaecrista</i>	Showy Partridge Pea
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Lamb'[s Quarters
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory
<i>Cirsium altissimum</i>	Tall Thistle
<i>Cirsium undulatum</i>	Wavy-leaf Thistle
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Bull Thistle
<i>Clematis virginiana</i>	Virgins Bower
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed
<i>Conyza canadensis</i>	Horse-weed
<i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	Plains Coreopsis
<i>Corydalis flavula</i>	Yellow Cordaylis
<i>Corydalis micrantha</i>	Slender Fumewort
<i>Dalea candida</i>	White Prairie Clover
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple Prairie Clover
<i>Delphinium virescens</i>	Prairie Larkspur
<i>Descurainia pinnata</i>	Tansy Mustard
<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	Illinois Bundleflower

<i>Desmodium canadense</i>	Canada Tickclover
<i>Desmodium illinoense</i>	Illinois Tickclover
<i>Draba reptans</i>	White Whitlowort
<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>	Purple Coneflower
<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	Pale Purple Coneflower
<i>Ellisia nyctelea</i>	Waterpod
<i>Erigeron strigosus</i>	Daisy Fleabane
<i>Eryngium yuccafolium</i>	Rattlesnake Master
<i>Eupatorium altissimum</i>	Tall Joe-pye Weed
<i>Eupatorium rugosum</i>	White Snakeroot
<i>Euphorbia corollata</i>	Flowering Spurge
<i>Euphorbia dentata</i>	Toothed Spurge
<i>Euphorbia marginata</i>	Snow-on-the-Mountain
<i>Euphorbia nutans</i>	Eyebane
<i>Fagopyrum esculentum</i>	Buckwheat
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Catchweed Bedstraw
<i>Gaura longiflora</i>	Large-flowered Gaura
<i>Gentiana puberulenta</i>	Downy Gentian
<i>Geranium spp.</i>	Cranesbill
<i>Geum canadense</i>	White Avens
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	Wild Licorice
<i>Grindela squarrosa</i>	Curly-cup Gumweed
<i>Hedeoma hispidum</i>	Rough False Pennyroyal
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Sneezeweed
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Common Sunflower
<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Saw-tooth Sunflower
<i>Helianthus maximilianii</i>	Maximillian Sunflower
<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	Ashy Sunflower
<i>Helianthus rigidus</i>	Stiff Sunflower
<i>Helianthus tuberosus</i>	Jerusalem Artichoke
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	False Sunflower
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dame's Rocket
<i>Heuchera spp.</i>	Alumroot
<i>Hibiscus trionum</i>	Flower-of-an-Hour
<i>Hieracium longipilum</i>	Hawkweed
<i>Hieracium longipilum</i>	False Boneset
<i>Kuhnia eupatoroides</i>	Blue Lettuce
<i>Lactuca canadensis</i>	Wild Lettuce
<i>Lactuca oblongifolia</i>	Pricky Lettuce
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	Pricky Lettuce
<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Henbit
<i>Laportea canadensis</i>	Wood Nettle

<i>Lepidium densiflorum</i>	Miner's Pepperwort
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i>	Poorman's Pepperwort
<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>	Round-headed Lespedeza
<i>Lespedeza violacea</i>	Violet Bushclover
<i>Lespedeza virginica</i>	Slender Lespedeza
<i>Liatris aspera</i>	Rough Gayfeather
<i>Liatris punctata</i>	Dotted Gayfeather
<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	Thick-spike Gayfeather
<i>Linum sulcatum</i>	Grooved Flax
<i>Lithospermum incisum</i>	Narrow-leaved Puccoon
<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	Great Lobelia
<i>Lomatium foeniculaceum</i>	Wild Parsley
<i>Lotus purshianus</i>	Deer Vetch
<i>Lycopus spp.</i>	Water Horehound
<i>Lysimachia ciliata</i>	Fringed Loosetrife
<i>Malva neglecta</i>	Common Mallow
<i>Melilotus alba</i>	White Sweet Clover
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Yellow Sweet Clover
<i>Mirabilis nyctaginea</i>	Wild Four-o'clock
<i>Mollugo verticillata</i>	Carpetweed
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot
<i>Muhlenbergia schreberi</i>	Nimblewill
<i>Nepeta cataria</i>	Catnip
<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	Common Evening Primrose
<i>Orobanche fasciculata</i>	Broomrape
<i>Oxalis stricta</i>	Yellow Wood Sorrel
<i>Oxalis violacea</i>	Violet Wood Sorrel
<i>Penstemon albidus</i>	White Beardtongue
<i>Penstemon cobaea</i>	Cobaea Penstemon
<i>Physalis virginiana</i>	Virginia Groundcherry
<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Poke Berry
<i>Plantago patagonica</i>	Patagonian Plantain
<i>Plantago rhodosperma</i>	Red-seed Plantain
<i>Plantago rugelii</i>	Rugel's Plantain
<i>Plantago virginica</i>	Pale-seeded Plantain
<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>	Water Smartweed
<i>Polygonum arenastrum</i>	Knotweed
<i>Polygonum coccineum</i>	Swamp Smartweed
<i>Polygonum pensylvanicum</i>	Pennsylvania Smartweed
<i>Polygonum virginiana</i>	Virginia Knotweed
<i>Potentilla arguta</i>	Tall Cinquefoil
<i>Potentilla spp.</i>	Cinquefoil
<i>Prenanthes aspera</i>	Rough Rattlesnake Root

<i>Psorelea argophylla</i>	Silver-leaf Scurfpea
<i>Psorelea esculenta</i>	Prairie Turnip
<i>Psorelea tenuiflora</i>	Wild Alfalfa
<i>Ranunculus abortivus</i>	Early Wood Buttercup
<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	Prairie Coneflower
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Gray Headed Coneflower
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan
<i>Ruellia humilis</i>	Fringeleaf Ruellia
<i>Rumex altissimus</i>	Pale Dock
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Curly Dock
<i>Salvia azurea</i>	Blue Sage
<i>Saponaria affinalis</i>	Bouncing Bet
<i>Schrankia nuttalli</i>	Sensitive Briar
<i>Scutellaria parvula</i>	Leonard's Small Skullcap
<i>Senecio plattensis</i>	Prairie Ragwort
<i>Sicyos angulatus</i>	Bur Cucumber
<i>Silene antirrhina</i>	Sleepy Catchfly
<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	Rosin-weed
<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>	Compass Plant
<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Cup Plant
<i>Solanum ptycanthum</i>	Black Nightshade
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	Canada Goldenrod
<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	Late Goldenrod
<i>Solidago missouriensis</i>	Prairie Goldenrod
<i>Solidago rigida</i>	Rigid Goldenrod
<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Showy-wand Goldenrod
<i>Solidago tenifolia</i>	Slender Fragrant Goldenrod
<i>Spermolepis inermis</i>	Scale-seed
<i>Spiranthes cernua</i>	Lady's Tresses
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Common Dandelion
<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	American Germander
<i>Thlaspi arvense</i>	Pennycress
<i>Triodanis leptocarpa</i>	Narrow-leaved Venus Looking Glass
<i>Tradescantia bracteata</i>	Bracted Spiderwort
<i>Tragopogon dubius</i>	Goat's Beard
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Stinging Nettle
<i>Urtica procera</i>	Tall Nettle
<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	Common Mullein
<i>Verbena bracteata</i>	Prostrate Vervain
<i>Verbena hastat</i>	Blue Vervain
<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary Vervain
<i>Verbena urticifolia</i>	Nettle-leaved Vervain

<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i>	Wingstem
<i>Veronica agrestis</i>	Field Speedwell
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	Corn Speedwell
<i>Vernonia baldwinii</i>	Western Ironweed
<i>Vernonia fasciculata</i>	Prairie Ironweed
<i>Vicia americana</i>	American Vetch
<i>Viola pedatifida</i>	Prairie Violet
<i>Viola pratincola</i>	Blue Prairie Violet
<i>Viola pubescens</i>	Downy Yellow Violet
<i>Viola rafinesquii</i>	Johnny-jump-up

Grasses and Sedges

<i>Agropyron smithii</i>	Western Wheatgrass
<i>Agrostis hyemalis</i>	Ticklegrass
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big Bluestem
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Sideoats Grama
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	Blue Grama
<i>Bromus commutatus</i>	Hairy Chess
<i>Bromus inermis</i>	Smooth Bromegrass
<i>Bromus japonicus</i>	Japanese Brome
<i>Bouchloe dactyloides</i>	Buffalo Grass
<i>Carex pensylvanica</i>	Sedge
<i>Carex sparganoides</i>	Sedge
<i>Carex stipata</i>	Saw-beak Sedge
<i>Cenchrus longispinus</i>	Field Sandbur
<i>Cyperus</i>	Umbrella Sedge
<i>Dichanthelium oligosanthes</i>	Scribner Dichanthelium
<i>Dichanthelium wilcoxianum</i>	Wilcox Dichanthelium
<i>Digitaria sanguinalis</i>	Hairy Crabgrass
<i>Echinochloa crusgalli</i>	Barnyard Grass
<i>Eleusine indica</i>	Goosegrass
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada Wildrye
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia Wildrye
<i>Eragrostis ciliananthus</i>	Stinkgrass
<i>Eragrostis pilosa</i>	India Lovegrass
<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>	Purple Lovegrass
<i>Equisetum spp.</i>	Scouring Rush
<i>Festuca obtusa</i>	Nodding Fescue
<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	Foxtail Barley
<i>Hordeum pusillum</i>	Little Barley
<i>Juncus interior</i>	Inland Rush
<i>Koeleria pyramidata</i>	Junegrass
<i>Muhlenbergia frondosa</i>	Wirestem Muhly

<i>Panicum capillare</i>	Common Switchgrass
<i>Panicum dichotomiflorum</i>	Fall Panicum
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed Canary Grass
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Kentucky Bluegrass
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little Bluestem
<i>Setaria faberii</i>	Giant Foxtail
<i>Setaria glauca</i>	Yellow Foxtail
<i>Setaria viridis</i>	Green Foxtail
<i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i>	Blue-eyed Grass
<i>Sisyrinchium campestre</i>	White-eyed Grass
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian Grass
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	Prairie Cordgrass
<i>Sphenopholis obtusata</i>	Wedgegrass
<i>Sporobolus asper</i>	Tall Dropseed
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie Dropseed
<i>Stipa spartea</i>	Porcupine-grass
<i>Tridens flavus</i>	Redtop
<i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	Eastern Gammagrass

The overall condition of vegetation within HNMA varies according to perspective. The primary vegetative community is the restored prairie. The HNMA Prairie Management Action Plan formulated in 1993 and revised in 1995 states that the long-range objective of the prairie restoration effort is "to restore the tallgrass prairie scene to one typical of that seen by pioneers when the area was first settled in the mid-1860's."²³ The document also states that the primary goals of prairie management are to "restore and maintain the tallgrass prairie ecosystem to represent the pre-settlement scene, encourage the propagation of native species and provide for visitor education, enjoyment and safety."²⁴ Owing to the lack of historical data regarding prairie composition at the time of Freeman's arrival, it was recommended in 1984 by Sutton, et al., that future HNMA restoration and management efforts should target the species

²³Batzer and Lacome, p. 1.

²⁴Batzer and Lacome, p. 2.

composition recommended in Weaver's 1954 *North American Prairie*.²⁵ In regard to these recommendations, the 1993 plan concludes "management actions have largely been successful in the restoration of the tallgrass prairie plant community."²⁶ Further prairie management actions to promote and sustain the landscape restoration include species inventory, fire management, and woody plant and exotic species control.

The riparian woodland vegetation of HNMA has undergone no formal baseline survey or qualitative assessment recently. This lack of sufficient data makes difficult the tasks of assessing and managing the core woodland and woodland edge communities relative to pre-settlement conditions. However, analysis of 1857 Survey Field Notes, early HNMA reports, aerial photography, woodland plant community research (Weaver, Thompson), and the species-specific environmental conditions (soil conditions, hydrology, etc.) required of riparian woodland species, shows that the site has the potential to reflect pre-settlement plant community composition. In conclusion, the visual appearance of the restored prairie and riparian woodland can be characterized as approximating that of the pre-settlement landscape condition relative to mid-to-late 20th century, native landscape-community research.

Patterns of Landscape Organization

The overall landscape organization of HNMA consists of a relatively level lowland floodplain bisected by the Cub Creek riparian corridor and its meandering stream channel. The gently to moderately steep slopes of the Cub Creek watershed define the lowland area. The rolling topography was caused primarily by prehistoric glaciation as well as the subsequent hydrological development of stream and river valleys over time. The majority of the site, approximately 100 acres of restored prairie, is perceptually

²⁵Recommendation for reference to Weaver (1954) in Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger, p. 18.

²⁶Batzer and Lacombe, p. 5.

defined by these valley walls to the south and east, and by the Cub Creek riparian woodland to the north and west. The various settlement areas chosen by the Freeman family for their dwellings were all located within the aforementioned lowland areas of the Cub Creek valley. These locations took advantage of close proximity to woodland and water resources as well as the fertile bottomland soils desirable for row-cropped agricultural land.

Existing patterns of landscape organization within the majority of the site are strongly influenced by SH4 (*Figures 46, 56, and 77*). The highway noticeably descends from the eastern valley wall into the lowlands, crossing through the eastern portions of the park. The Highway's alignment physically and psychologically separates approximately 6.5 acres from the rest of the HNMA area (*Exhibits 1 and 10*). The highway passes over Cub Creek in the northern portions of the site, with the roadbed eventually spatially defining the northern portion of the park visitor arrival area and visitor center.

The site's physical infrastructure development occurs upon a relatively flat terrace, topographically defined by the 1260-foot contour, to the north and west of Cub Creek in the far northwestern corner of the park. This approximately 7 acre area is defined by the Cub Creek woodland to the south and east, the elevated roadbed of SH4, and a wooded drainage to the west (*Exhibit 10A*). Here, the landscape organization of the visitor center development area is divided and defined by the visitor center and the fence north of the staff residence. This effectively creates three spatial zones: the visitor arrival zone north of the visitor center including the entrance road and parking lot (*Figure 49*); the NPS staff zone west of the visitor center including the maintenance shop and staff residence, access lane, and maintenance parking/storage (*Figures 50, 51 and 83*); and the initial outdoor visitor experience zone including the south and east veranda facades of the visitor center and the Palmer-Epard cabin (*Figure 84*). The enclosed

visitor/NPS development area is linked to the open-prairie lowland by a suspension bridge leading over Cub Creek and through the woodland (*Figure 79*).

The landscape organization of the Freeman schoolhouse site (*Figure 48*) is characterized by the township's historically defined agricultural fields and occupies a relatively level landscape. The landscape organization is defined primarily by SH4 to the south, the Blakely Township road alignment to the east, the visitor parking area and fence to the north, and agricultural lands to the west. The schoolhouse and shed, located in the southern portions of the parcel, also help to define the southern boundary of the area when viewed from the north parking lot (*Exhibit 10B*).

Land Uses, Activities, and Management

The Homestead National Monument of America land has been removed from its historical agricultural use, but the site's vegetative context and current use have taken upon an important interpretive role. Current use of the site focuses around early NPS efforts to restore the natural environment and conditions consistent with the "condition shortly after Freeman settled there [HMNA]."²⁷ These efforts have resulted in a management concentration, and thus a land use focus, upon restoring pre-NPS agricultural lands to a tallgrass prairie condition. Through assistance from prairie ecologists and botanists at the University of Nebraska, one of whom is noted prairie botanist J. E. Weaver, the current prairie restoration project at HNMA strives to accurately reflect within park boundaries a vegetative context similar to that found prior to the period of Freeman settlement.

²⁷U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, *Homestead National Monument of America Preliminary Development Outline*, 1940 (HNMA Administrative Files).

Park staff and support facilities offer the visitor opportunities to discover and explore the impact the Homestead Act of 1862, with particular emphasis upon the United States westward expansion and its resultant impact to the interconnected social, economic, cultural, and natural processes of the Great Plains Region. Visitor experience opportunities reinforce this theme through a visitor center film and historic exhibits on the Homestead Act of 1862 and pioneer life. Passive visitor recreation experiences at the park include native plant and wildflower study, wildlife observation, and picnicking. The visitor experience is supplemented with the opportunity to walk 2.5 miles of self-guided history and nature trails. During the winter season, these trails are also available for cross-country skiing by park visitors. NPS interpretative personnel provide scheduled nature walks and living history programs on a seasonal basis, as well as scheduled programs to schools and organizations during the spring and fall. Annual special events and programs such as "Heartland Storytelling Festival" in May, "Horse Power and More" and "Homestead Days" in June, "Prairie Appreciation Days" in September, and "Winter on the Homestead" in December occur throughout the year. A small bookstore managed by Eastern National is located in the visitor center lobby.

Facilities, Structures and Small-Scale Features

The historical facilities and structures associated with the Daniel Freeman homestead during his period of settlement at the site are no longer extant. The only existing historic structures currently found at HNMA include the Palmer-Epard cabin and the structures associated with the Freeman schoolhouse site. These structures provide the visitor with a local, contextual, and historical perspective because of their construction and associations with the period of settlement and inhabitation of the site by Daniel Freeman. The Palmer-Epard cabin, however, is not original to the site. It was moved to the HNMA to facilitate NPS interpretation of a historic homestead. It may be just as

correctly considered as a historical exhibit or display as a historic building. The existing historic structures currently on the site include:

- HS-04 Palmer-Epard Cabin/ 1867
- HS-07 Freeman School/ 1871
- HS-08 Freeman School Storage Shed/ 1911
- HS-09 Freeman School Girls Privy/ 1911
- HS-10 Freeman School Boys Privy/ 1930
- HS-11 Freeman School Pump/ 1914
- HS-16 Daniel and Agnes Freeman Foot Stones/ 1909 and 1935
- HS-17 DAR Monument/ 1925; plaque added 1984
- HS-19 Freeman Family Grave Marker/1909 and 1935; 1984
- HS-7A Freeman School Playground Equipment Pole (May Pole)/ 1930

The 16- by 14-foot Palmer-Epard Cabin was built in 1867 from hand-made bricks from Bear Creek clay as well as lumber from Beatrice.²⁸ The one-and-one-half story cabin was brought from its original site 14 miles away from HMNA to the park in the 1950's, and relocated to its current location south of the Visitor Center in 1961. This structure provides the visitor with interpretation of residential living conditions, as well as typical construction materials and methods representative of the frontier homesteading period (*Figures 52 and 84*).

The Freeman schoolhouse is an example of early frontier education in rural Nebraska (*Figures 47 and 48*). The 20- by 36-foot brick structure was constructed in 1871 by local mason Thomas Freeman, using local materials. In addition to providing visitors with a historical period association with homestead life, the schoolhouse also has associations

²⁸Freeman Homestead and Freeman School National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1966 (HNMA Administrative Files).

with Daniel Freeman's Nebraska Supreme Court case. This case, which ruled in his favor, set the precedent for the separation of religion and state in public education.²⁹ The Freeman Schoolhouse complex also consists of a storage shed, two privies, a well pump, and a maypole, all of which were constructed after the turn of the twentieth century. The schoolhouse and associated features were added to the HNMA in 1970.

Other historic structures at the site include the Freeman gravesite (*Figures 61 and 62*). The Daniel and Agnes Freeman gravesites are located adjacent to one another on the east upland ridge, south of SH4 and directly adjacent to the east boundary fence. The gravesites are identified by two foot stones and a granite marker, with the actual gravesites demarcated by a 24-inch high, black metal post and single chain fence. The marker was moved in conjunction with the realignment of SH4. This area is accessed by the Upland Loop Trail and provides an overlook from the ridge of the former homestead located in the valley below. The Freeman Farmstead Loop Trail leads past the Daughter of American Revolution (DAR) Monument, a 1925 sandstone pillar, originally part of the old state capital, with an affixed bronze memorial plaque installed in 1984 (*Figure 81*). This monument is located south of the old SH4 road alignment, between the Freeman Brick House site and the Agnes Suiter Freeman house sites

Additionally, several existing landscape elements could be associated with the former Freeman homestead settlement. They include the general riparian woodland landscape pattern and specifically several large-diameter tree specimens (see the Vegetation section of this chapter), as well as the former Freight Road/SH4 road alignment. The highway apparently followed an old spur trail, which was used as a freight road, passing to the north of the brick Freeman farmstead home (*Figure 76*). The former

²⁹Freeman Homestead and Freeman School National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1966 (HNMA Administrative Files).

road is distinguishable in several areas including its passage through the Cub Creek woodland as well as through the restored prairie (*Figures 56, 60, and 73-75*). The micro-climatic soil conditions of the former roadbed and its restoration, which occurred later than in adjacent areas, results in instances where the vegetation within the former road alignment visibly varies in character from that of immediately adjacent areas.

The primary concentration of existing facilities at HNMA occurs within an approximately 7-acre development area in the northwestern quarter of the north *forty*. The non-historic structures of this area include the visitor center, the maintenance office and shop, and two staff residences (*Figure 83, Exhibit 10A*). The brick, 8,400-square-foot visitor center was built in 1962 with a collection storage addition completed in 1986 (*Figure 49*). The visitor center offers initial interpretation of HMNA historic and natural resources through visual and audio-visual displays. In addition, the visitor center houses a small bookstore and a 60-person capacity, audio-visual room, as well as HNMA administrative offices, archival collection storage, staff meeting room and library, restrooms, and mechanical facility space. Supporting HNMA management activities is a brick, 2,000-square-foot maintenance building that contains office space, a workshop, and a two-bay garage housing mowers, tractors, and other equipment. Additional storage support occurs within the building's attic and adjacent maintenance yard (*Figure 51*). The maintenance facility was constructed in 1941 as part of the original HNMA Master Plan. Staff residences include a brick, three bedroom, 1,400-square-foot residence and garage built in 1951 and a wood-frame, three bedroom, 1,200-square-foot residence and garage built in 1965 during the NPS Mission 66 period (*Figure 50*). The overall condition of the park's visitor, administrative, and residential structures is good. However, a general concern for the management of the Visitor Center development area is that it lies within the 100-year floodplain of Cub Creek.³⁰

³⁰ *General Management Plan- Homestead National Monument of America*, 1988, pp. 6, 24.

Several small-scale features support the interpretation of the HNMA. These features include pioneer agricultural exhibits along the south and eastern facades of the visitor center. In addition, the visitor experience is accentuated by a series of wayside exhibits located at several points along the interpretive trail system (*Figures 78 and 80; Exhibit 10*). These exhibits discuss historical aspects of the site and the themes interpreted to the public at HNMA. The overall condition of these wayside exhibits is fair to poor due to seasonal weathering.

Boundary Demarcations

The boundaries of HNMA today reflect the original Freeman Homestead boundaries and their configuration since current NPS ownership includes all of Freeman's original homestead land. In addition, the current boundaries of HNMA reflect the addition of the Freeman School site and a scenic easement. The scenic easement's south boundary begins at a point 300 feet south of the original north *forty* northern boundary, while the scenic easement's north boundary begins at a point 300 feet north of the north *forty's* northern boundary (*see Exhibits 1 and 2 for comparison*).

The existing boundary of HNMA begins .25 miles east of the center of Section 26, at the southeast corner of the site. From this corner, the boundary extends 0.75 miles west, demarcated by the historic Osage orange hedgerow, to the section line between Section 26 and Section 27. From this southwestern corner of HNMA, the boundary extends north for 0.25 miles, paralleling the centerline of the gravel-surfaced Blakely Township Road. From this corner in the road's centerline, the boundary extends east 0.25 miles east to the southwestern corner of the north *forty*, demarcated with a NPS concrete post. The boundary then passes north over Cub Creek to a point 300' south of the SH4

centerline; this point is west of the staff residences. The boundary then passes westward, and extends 300' west of Blakely Township Road. From this corner, the HNMA boundary then turns north, passing over SH4 to a fence 400' north of the SH4 centerline. The boundary then turns east for 300' to the centerline of the gravel-surfaced Blakely Township Road. The boundary follows the road centerline south for 100' and then turns east. The boundary travels east approximately .75 miles to the northeast corner of HNMA. From this corner north of Cub Creek, the boundary travels south, over SH4, to the northwest corner of the east *forty*. From this corner the boundary extends 0.25 miles east to the northeastern corner of the east *forty* to a NPS concrete marker. From this corner, it extends south 0.25 miles to the starting point.

The non-contiguous Freeman schoolhouse site is a rectangular parcel shaped parcel found at the southeast corner of Section 22 (northwestern corner of Section 26). This area is visually defined on the east by the Blakely Township road and on the south by SH4. The Freeman schoolhouse site is fenced on the north and western sides by a post and wire fence.

Several areas within HNMA are delineated by various methods, including fencing for privacy, screening and boundary definition. Entry into HNMA is designated at the east boundary by an entrance sign where SH4 enters HNMA and additionally at the visitor center access road by another entrance sign east of the park entrance road. Within the visitor center complex, a four-foot tall, wood, post-and-rail fence is located approximately 30 feet south of SH4. This fence extends west of the visitor entrance road to the NPS boundary and extends about 7 feet east of the entrance road to an area south of the HNMA entrance sign. Also within the visitor center complex, an additional post-and-rail fence extends from the south façade of the visitor center south to the wood's edge, prohibiting visitor access to the maintenance and residential areas. To the

east of the Freeman's gravesite along the NPS boundary a four-foot tall, wood, post-and-rail fence extends from the southern edge of the SH4 right-of-way to approximately 100 feet south of the Freeman grave marker.

Also within the visitor center complex are several six-foot tall, wood-slat, privacy, one of which runs north of the residence area from the western NPS boundary to the maintenance/residence access road west of the visitor center. This fence visually screens entering/exiting visitor traffic from the maintenance and residential portions of the park. Landscape plantings have been utilized to "soften" the visual impact of this fence. Plantings have also been used east of the access lane to screen the staff parking area. A similar fence is used west of the maintenance building to screen maintenance equipment and supplies, and another fence extends south of the building to the wood's edge to screen a storage area.

Circulation Systems

Vehicular

Primary vehicular approach to Homestead National Monument of America is via SH4, a two-lane asphalt highway that leads west out of Beatrice, Nebraska. SH4 passes through the eastern and northern portions of HNMA, crosses Cub Creek on a concrete bridge, and becomes a divided highway at the park entrance. Vehicular access to the park visitor center, administrative offices, and staff residences is via a gated, two-lane, access road leading off of SH4 in the northwestern corner of the north forty. The access road enters from the north and loops immediately east into a 0.75 acre, 50 car, asphalt-paved parking lot, which provides direct visitor access to the visitor center and nature/history trailhead (*Figure 49*). Before entering the parking area, a paved lane with signage proclaiming its restricted access status leads south and west, providing access to staff vehicle parking along the west facade of the visitor center. This lane also

leads to a maintenance vehicle parking, service, and storage area west of the maintenance shop and to staff residences and their respective parking (*Exhibits 1, 10, and 10A*).

Although it is located only 0.25 miles to the west of the visitor center complex, due to safety concerns associated with SH4, access to the Freeman Schoolhouse site is by vehicle only. An asphalt vehicle pull-off area is located 100 feet north of the intersection of SH4 and the gravel-surfaced Blakely Township road, on the east side of the site. The pull-off is a remnant of the previous, crushed aggregate access lane to the schoolhouse, much of which is now covered with herbaceous plant growth. Primary vehicular access to the Freeman Schoolhouse site is now via a single loaded-gravel surfaced parking area 400 feet north of the aforementioned intersection. This single lane, double-access, parking area is located north of the schoolhouse and the prairie area.

Pedestrian

Physical access within the park is primarily pedestrian. A concrete walkway along the south edge of the parking area leads west to the visitor center's north entrance and east and south to the interpretive trail access, the Palmer-Epard cabin, the visitor center's south access, and the visitor center's south-wing exhibits (*Exhibit 10A*). A concrete walkway leads along portions of the visitor center's south and the eastern veranda facades, passing several small-scale pioneer implement exhibits (*Figure 84*). Four-foot wide, concrete walkways for staff use also lead from the visitor center's west facade to staff parking areas, the access lane, and staff residences. An asphalt path leads southeast from the east end of the south-facing veranda to the interpretive trailhead exhibit and the suspension bridge. A six-foot wide, recycled polymer boardwalk exits the south of the east-facing veranda and immediately curves east providing access to the Palmer-Epard cabin. From a point approximately 50 feet down slope and east from

the cabin, an aggregate surfaced spur trail leads south to a woodland clearing, while the primary walkway becomes an asphalt path leading northeast to the interpretive trailhead exhibit. From this point, a suspension footbridge rises to the east, spanning Cub Creek (*Figure 79*). At the east end of the bridge, a short path connects to approximately two miles of interpretive trail (*Exhibit 10*). This trail's surface varies from fine-crushed aggregate and low-rise (10-18 inches) boardwalk in portions of the Freeman Farmstead Loop, to mown grass on the Upland Prairie Loop Trail, to dirt and grass on the Squatter's Cabin Spur Trail. This interconnected system of trails passes through the restored prairie and riparian woodland and provides access to several archeological sites and historic sites including: the Freeman house sites (*Figures 55, 57, 58, 59, 80, and 81*); the Freeman grave site (*Figures 61 and 62*); and the Osage orange hedgerow (*Figures 64-66*). Portions of the Upland Prairie Loop Trail and the Squatters Cabin Loop Trail follow sections of the abandoned SH4 alignment (*for comparison, see Exhibits 7 and 10*). HNMA signs at designated sites and a 16-page trail brochure interpret historical sites and features, the riparian woodland and restored prairie.

Conditions of vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems within HNMA can be generally categorized as good. In times of inclement weather, accessibility can be a problem with both surfaced and earthen trails. The boardwalks near the Palmer-Epard cabin and near the Agnes- Freeman house site may become slippery during wet and icy weather (*Figure 57*). In addition, during periods of wet weather, the crushed aggregate sections of the interpretive trail may become difficult to negotiate either by walking or by wheelchair access.

Archeological Resources

This archeological summary is based on existing information available from NPS; no archeological studies or evaluations have been done as part of this CLR.

The HNMA contains archeological sites associated with both the prehistoric and historic occupations of the HNMA site. The prehistoric archeological remains are typical of the Central Plains Tradition which dates to the time period between 1000 AD and 1400 AD. These sites are located primarily in the north *forty*. Historic archeological materials are grouped in several zones of archeological interest and artifact concentration (*Exhibit 12*). These zones include the squatter's cabin site, Freeman's homestead cabin and John Suiter's cabin sites, the brick kiln site, the brick house site, the barnyard north of the brick house, sites associated with twentieth century habitation and farming activities on the property, and the Freeman Schoolhouse site.³¹

The first extensive archeological excavations took place at HNMA in 1948, and were directed by J. Joseph Bauxar. Bauxar identified the following four areas of historic interest: Freeman's homestead cabin site, the squatter's cabin site, the brick kiln site, and the site of Freeman's brick house. The locations of Freeman's homestead cabin and John Suiter's cabin were identified by two of Freeman's children as being on a knoll half way between the east boundary of the north *forty*, and their testimonies were supported by excavations that found two probable cabin areas.

The probable Suiter cabin area was located northwest of the probable Freeman cabin area since a series of post holes were found north of the two cabins. This arrangement would be consistent with ca. 1867 photographs of the cabin sites (*Figures 4 and 5*). However, since habitation debris was found scattered in the whole area and the only foundation found was a fragment of the southwest corner of the original cabin built by Daniel Freeman for his family, it was difficult for archeologist Bauxar to determine the

³¹Christopher M. Schoen and Peter A. Bleed, "An Archaeological Survey of Homestead National Monument of America," (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Anthropology, University of Nebraska, 1986), p. 60.

exact location of the cabins. Habitation debris included a variety of nails, cast iron fragments, glass pieces, china and crockery fragments, silverware, buttons, ash, charcoal, and burnt earth.³²

Samuel Freeman identified the squatter's cabin site as a low-lying area south of old SH4 and east of the old bridge over Cub Creek. However, no evidence was found to support this area as the site of the cabin. Since the area is subject to frequent flooding of the creek, it is possible that all traces of the cabin have been removed by flooding. It is also possible that flooding has changed the topography of the site to such an extent that Sam Freeman was unable to recognize it accurately.³³ An area southwest of the initial test area was excavated because of the interest generated by the presence of a collection of large stones. No cultural debris was found, but a 10-foot long and 1-foot wide fire trench was identified. The trench contained a large concentration of burnt earth, ash, and charcoal. The rock cluster could have been the remains of a semi-permanent structure, and it is Bauxar's belief that this is the site of the brick kiln, although it does not correspond with Sam Freeman's memory of the kiln site.³⁴ Magnetic surveys were performed in 1979 and 1980 at the fire trench site, but no magnetic values were found that would indicate a kiln.³⁵

Although Samuel Freeman identified the brick kiln site as located directly north of old SH4 from the squatter's cabin site, no artifacts or evidence of extensive fires could be found at this location. However, it is possible that the area was cleared of debris at the

³²J. Joseph Bauxar, "Report of Excavations at the Daniel Freeman Homestead, Homestead National Monument of America," (Omaha, Nebraska: June, 1948), pp. 6-18.

³³Bauxar, pp. 18-20.

³⁴Bauxar, pp. 20-23.

³⁵Schoen and Bleed, p. 9.

end of the kiln's usage and the remaining evidence has been washed away by the flooding of Cub Creek.³⁶

Bauxar readily identified the brick house site. A mound of brick rubble and habitation debris, including the remains of an iron bedstead and kitchen range, marked the site. The foundation and base of the brick walls were easily located and exposed, and a causal excavation of a section of the interior was performed. No evidence of internal partitions was found in the interior of the site, which supports the conclusion that internal walls were not constructed of brick.³⁷

The information from this early excavation was augmented by work conducted in 1985 by a team from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Nebraska and the NPS Midwest Archaeological Center. The team's survey methods included careful pedestrian visual surveys and systematic shovel testing.³⁸ Seven areas of concentration were identified in this survey: the Freeman School area; a historic midden and large-scale debris pile in the west *forty*; the brick house and squatter's cabin sites; the homestead cabin site; the site of the garden between the brick house and the Quackenbush house; and the open prairie land that made up much of the north, middle, and west *forties*. Artifacts found around the school, at the middens, at the garden plot, and at the house sites were typical remains of construction, habitation, social activities, and farming activities. Items found included ceramic fragments, glass fragments, nails, wire pieces, bricks and mortar, charcoal and ash, and assorted cast iron fragments. The collection of items throughout the open prairie land included ceramics, glass, fragments of farm tools, nails, and barbed wire. Such items are indicative of farming and

³⁶Bauxar, pp. 23-25.

³⁷Bauxar, pp. 25-26.

³⁸Schoen and Bleed, p. 11.

habitation.³⁹ These artifacts, however, provided no substantial new information about historic activities at Freeman's homestead; rather the surveys produced artifacts that support previously established structure locations and land use functions on the site.⁴⁰

At the beginning of the survey, prehistoric materials were noticed in the north *forty*, in the area between the homestead cabin and the Quackenbush house sites. A large survey area was established; it extended from the current SH4 roadbed in the north to the Quackenbush house site and garden plot area in the south. It also included the brick house agricultural buildings to the west and the state-owned triangle of land over the eastern boundary of the north *forty*.⁴¹ Both historic and prehistoric artifacts were recovered from this area, with the former appearing typical of the farming and habitation artifacts that had been found elsewhere on the site. Although prehistoric artifacts were not found in other locations on the site, this does not rule out prehistoric habitation in other locations since flooding and erosion on the upland prairie slopes and in the Cub Creek basin could have removed or destroyed artifacts. Found prehistoric artifacts were concentrated on a low ridge in the middle of the north *forty* and in the area of the brick house agricultural buildings and barnyard, and included a variety of stone tools and ceramic potsherds. Stone tools included projectile points, scrapers, flakes that showed evidence of being retouched and used multiple times, waste flakes, fluted cores that were used to make long and narrow flakes, bifacial knives, and sandstone abraders.⁴²

Analysis of the prehistoric artifacts by Schoen and Bleed suggests that there are at least two separate concentrations, one between the Freeman homestead cabin and Agnes

³⁹Schoen and Bleed, pp. 21-35.

⁴⁰Schoen and Bleed, pp. 53-54.

⁴¹Schoen and Bleed, p. 16.

⁴²Schoen and Bleed, pp. 37-39.

Suiter Freeman cabin sites and one at the site of the barnyard north of the Freeman brick house. This could be indicative of two distinct sites separated in space and perhaps in time or they could represent two different functional areas within a large site. The prehistoric artifacts have been identified as belonging to the Central Plains Tradition, which dates from 1000 AD to 1400 AD, and they likely are remains from a functionally complex group of people that may have resided on the site or, at the very least, performed hunting and agriculture activities in the area. However, the prehistoric remains are heavily disturbed due to historic cultivation and building on the site, and they are mixed with historic remains in many places as well. Since many artifacts are not *in situ* and given the limited subsurface extent of the testing, the full size and significance of the prehistoric site was unable to be determined.⁴³

The University of Nebraska Department of Anthropology and the NPS Midwest Archeological Center also performed a series of test excavations and surveys at the Freeman Schoolhouse site during 1984 and 1985. Excavation trenches were established on all sides of the school and covered the area that would be disturbed in the construction of a drainage trough. A 10-foot wide, shallow, drainage ditch was planned to surround the school on the east, north, and south sides to divert water away from the building to a roadside ditch along SH4 south of the school.⁴⁴ Layers of gravel and ash were also found under the sod ground cover in the schoolyard, showing that water drainage around the school building has been a reoccurring problem.⁴⁵

Artifacts found in the school vicinity were classified by their function and included the following categories:

⁴³Schoen and Bleed, pp. 59-60.

⁴⁴Christopher Schoen, "Excavations at the Freeman School (25GA90), Homestead National Monument of America," (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska, 1986), pp. 8-10.

⁴⁵Schoen, pp. 26-38.

- architectural (window glass, bricks and mortar, plastic floor tiles, several types of nails, shingle fragments, hardware pieces, wood fragments);
- educational (slate boards, pencils, pen nibs, chalk, erasers, desk fragments, ink bottle pieces);
- domestic (ceramic sherds, bottle glass, jar lids);
- personal (buttons, pins, jewelry, suspender clip, shoe heel plate); and
- recreational (glass marble, gun cartridges, brass musical keys).⁴⁶

This collection of remains supports the CLR site history that the Freeman School served a variety of social, academic, and recreational uses.

Several prehistoric artifacts were found at the school, including ceramic sherds, two stone flakes, a stone scraper, and a stone projectile point. These artifacts are stylistically and chronologically similar to those found on the Freeman homestead.⁴⁷ Given the paucity of prehistoric remains, it is impossible to determine if this specific site has a prehistoric component. Few of the artifacts at the site, both historic and prehistoric, are *in situ*, due primarily to construction during the school's long history and NPS renovations in more recent years. In addition, few of the artifacts are particularly unusual or chronologically specific; rather they are common items that were produced and used for long periods of time.⁴⁸

In general previous archeological studies have revealed little information specifically related to the cultural landscape. There have been no in-depth studies that were directed at identifying historical information concerning non-architectural resources or artifacts. While studies have tended to support historical assumptions about site relationships and general land use, archeological information has not been identified

⁴⁶Schoen, pp. 13-23.

⁴⁷Schoen, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁸Schoen, pp. 43-44.

that would inform detailed cultural landscape analysis. Data concerning field subdivisions and boundaries, locations of agricultural structures, plant species and locations, and topographic and hydrological changes would be greatly beneficial, but it is rare that such information can be derived archeologically. The current archeological data remains useful in examining the site's broader historical land use.



SW

Figure 46. View from eastern valley ridge @ east entrance on SH4. [LCA 1998]



Figure 47. Freeman School, south facade. [LCA, 1998]

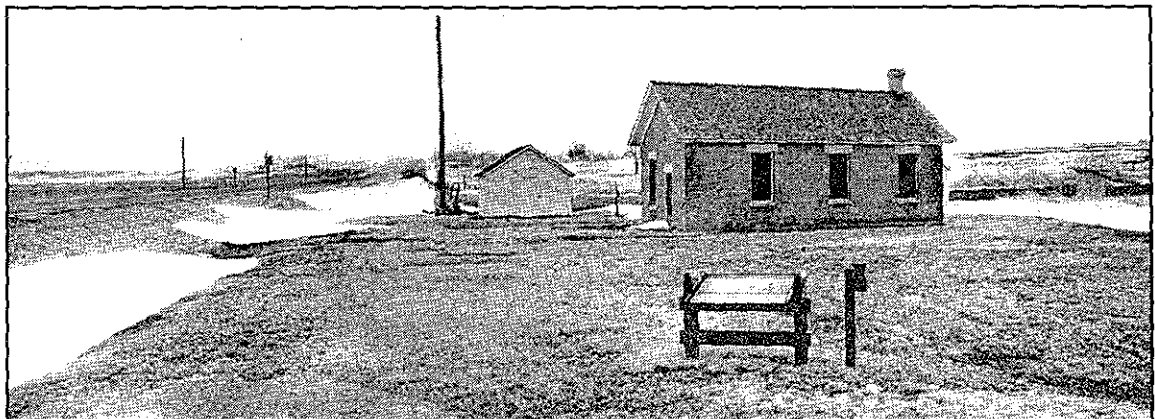


Figure 48. Freeman School site looking west-northwest. [LCA, 1998]

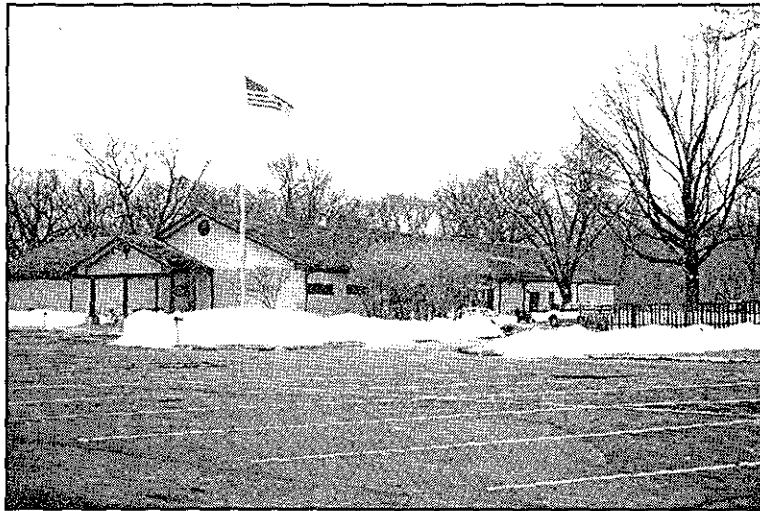


Figure 49. Visitor center and parking lot. [LCA, 1998]

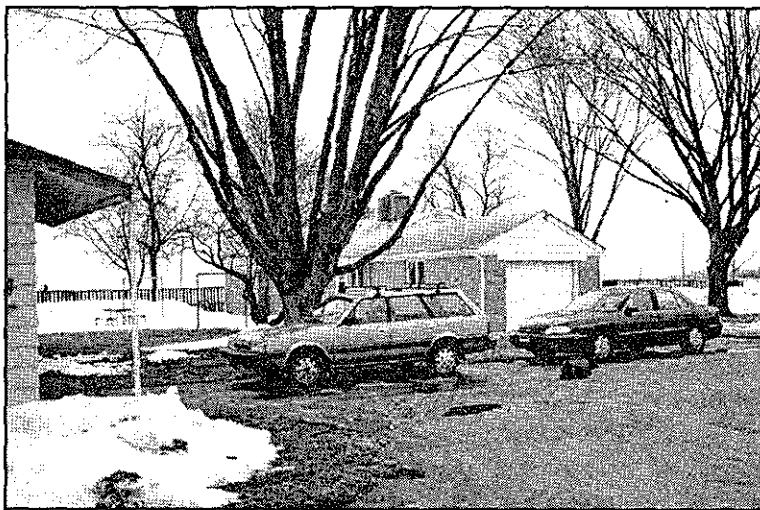


Figure 50. Staff residential area looking north-northeast. [LCA, 1998]

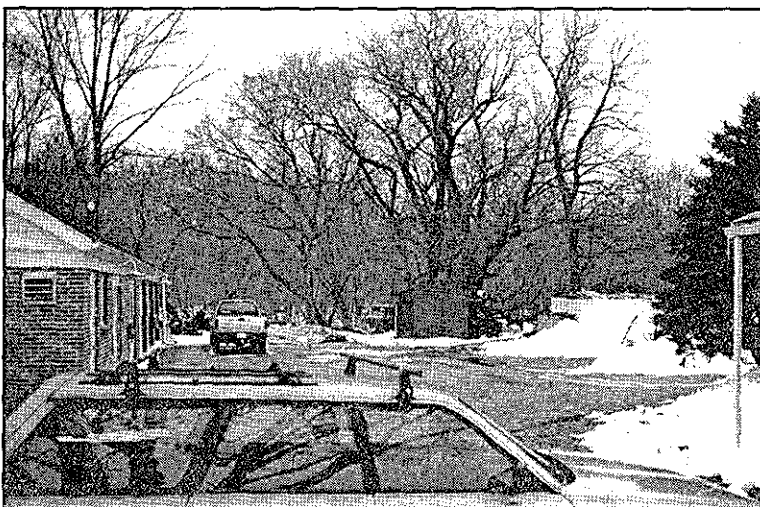


Figure 51. Utility building and maintenance area looking south. [LCA, 1998]

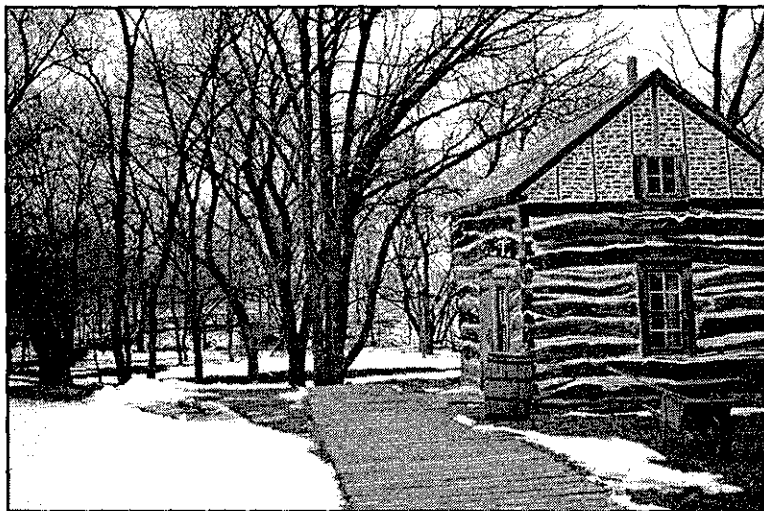


Figure 52. Palmer-Epard Cabin looking east. [LCA, 1998]

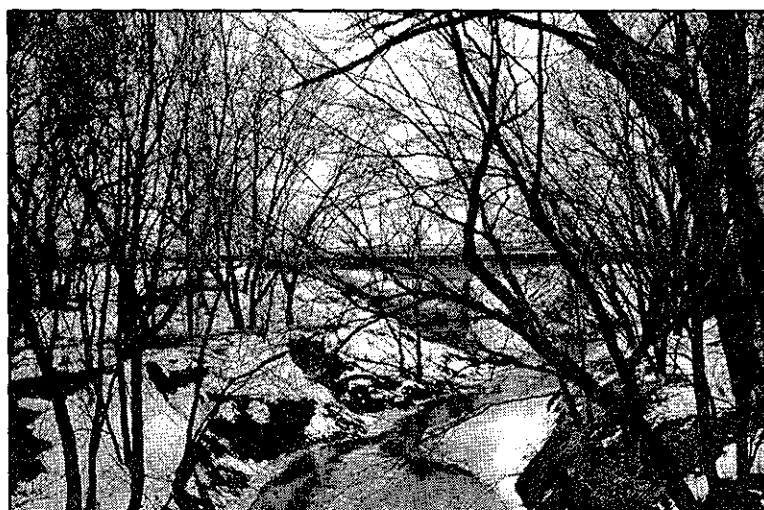


Figure 53. Cub Creek and SH4 Bridge looking north from suspension bridge. [LCA, 1998]

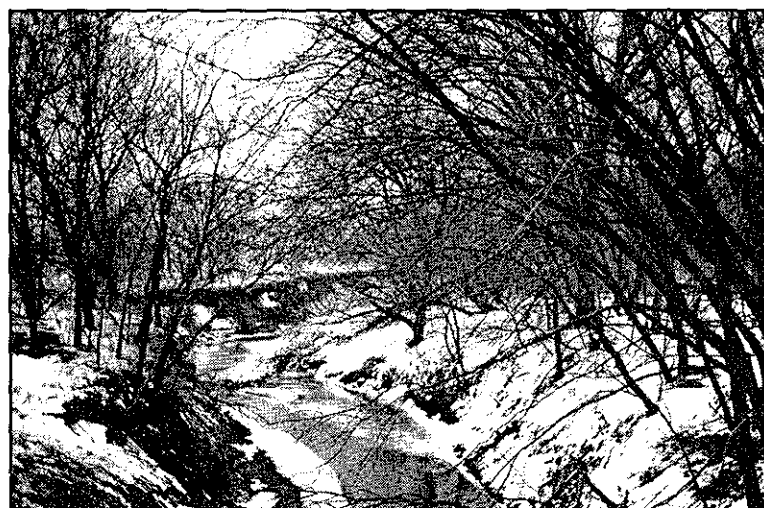


Figure 54. Cub Creek looking south from suspension bridge. [LCA, 1998]



SW

W

Figure 55. View of lowland prairie and Cub Creek woodland from Freeman Homestead Cabin site. [LCA, 1998]

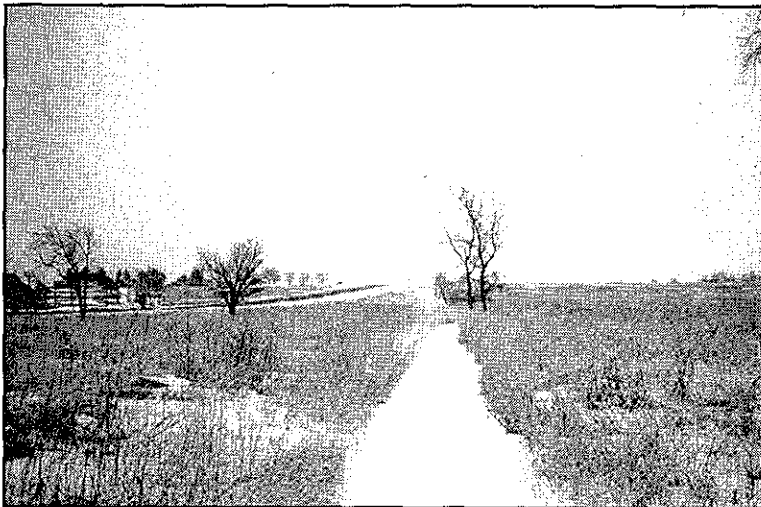


Figure 56. Trail and old SH4 alignment looking east. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 57. Trail and Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin site looking east. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 58. View of Freeman Brick House site.
[LCA, 1998]



Figure 59. Freeman Brick House site looking north. Foreground trees are directly south of old SH4 east-west alignment. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 60. View of old SH4 alignment and cottonwood plantings. Current SH4 is in background. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 61. Approach to Freeman gravesite looking east. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 62. Freeman gravesite looking southwest. Osage orange hedgerow is in background. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 63. View of valley looking west from Freeman gravesite. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 64. View of Osage orange hedgerow and upland interpretive trail. [LCA,1998]



Figure 65. Typical character of Osage orange within hedgerow. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 66. Osage orange hedgerow and upland trail. Cub creek woodland is in background. [LCA, 1998]

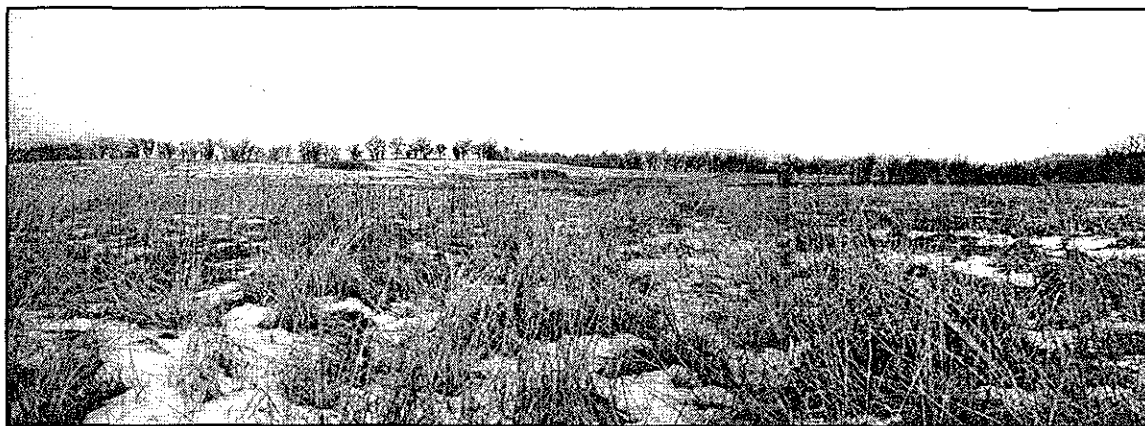


Figure 67. View of Osage orange hedgerow and upland drainages with shrub-drift conservation plantings. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 68. Osage orange hedgerow looking south. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 69. Cub Creek woodland and lowland prairie looking west, shows 80-foot-tall cottonwoods. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 70. Typical conditions along Cub Creek.
[LCA, 1998]



Figure 71. Cub Creek way-side exhibit. Note adjusted trail alignment due to Cub Creek advancements.
[LCA, 1998]



Figure 72. Typical woodland condition along Cub Creek.
[LCA, 1998]



Figure 73. Old SH4 alignment through woodland looking west. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 74. Old SH4 alignment through woodland looking east. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 75. Old SH4 alignment looking east near woodland edge; approaching Freeman Brick House site to the south and barnyard to the north. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 76. North of old SH4 looking south at Freeman Brick House site. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 77. Visitor center and parking lot approach from SH4. Freeman Schoolhouse is in distant background. [LCA, 1998]

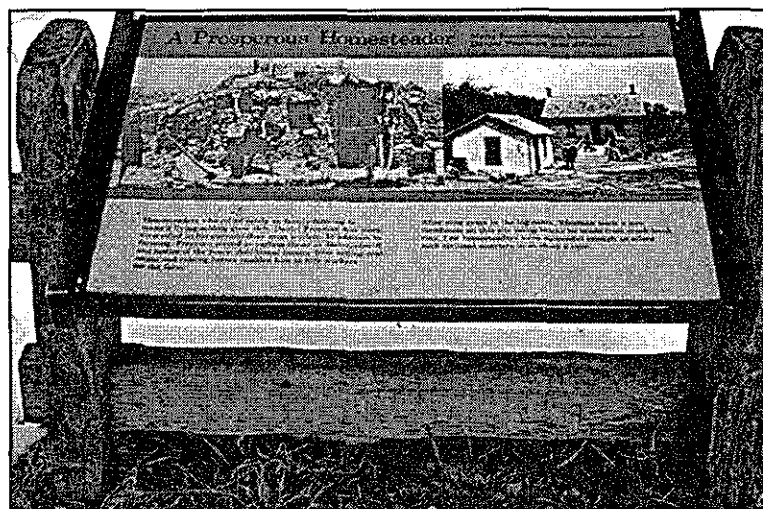


Figure 78. Typical wayside exhibit found at historical sites within HNMA. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 79. Suspension bridge over Cub Creek leading to lowland prairie. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 80. Typical wayside exhibit; Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin site with hedgerow in background. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 81. D.A.R. Monument looking south-southwest. Quackenbush house site is in the background. [LCA, 1998]

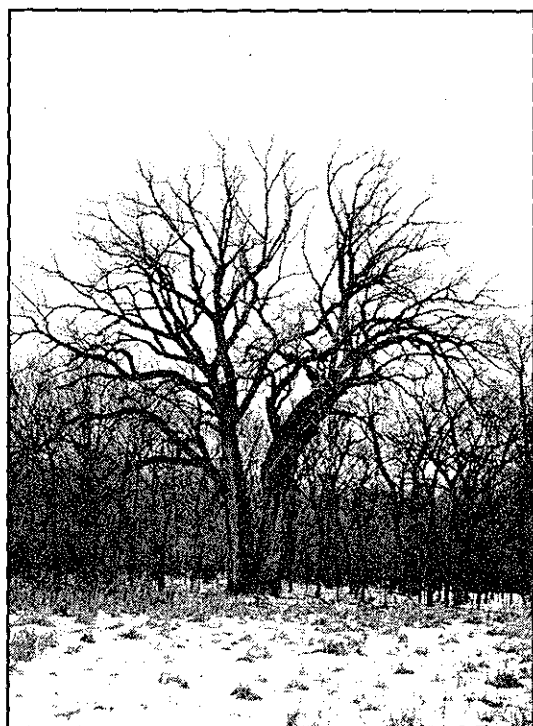


Figure 82. Cottonwood (60+” diameter) along woodland edge, looking west from trail. [LCA, 1998]



Northwest

North

Northeast

Figure 83. HNMA administrative area including utility building, staff residence and visitor center. [LCA, 1998]



East

Southeast

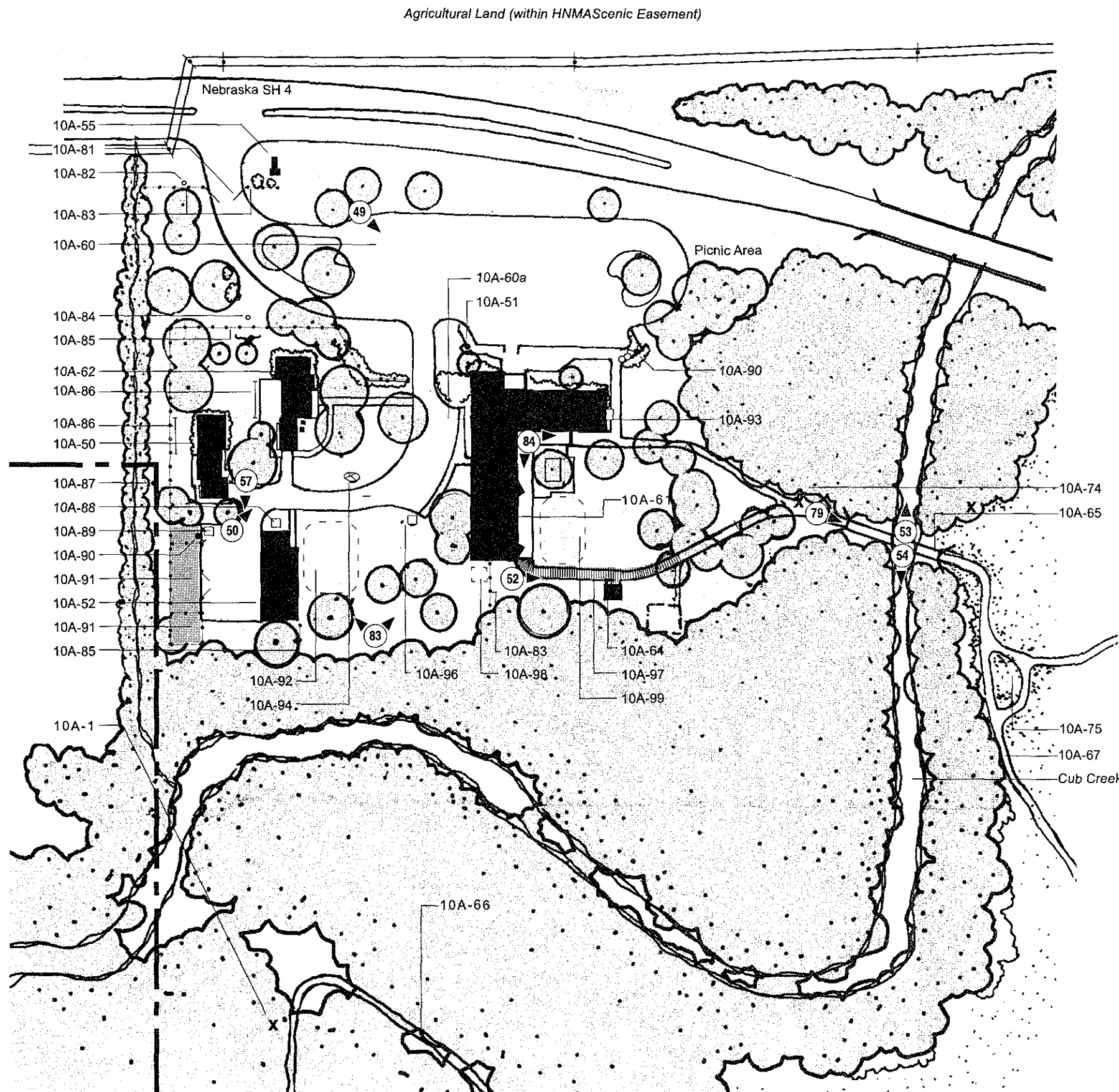
South

Figure 84. HNMA visitor center courtyard and veranda viewed from south visitor entrance. Palmer-Epard cabin is on the right; suspension bridge is on the left. [LCA, 1998]

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 10A

EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN: VISITOR CENTER AREA SITE PLAN



EXISTING CONDITIONS LEGEND

Squatter's Cabin Site & Marker	10A-1
HNMA Park Staff Residence	10A-50
HNMA Headquarters Flagpole	10A-51
Utility Building	10A-52
HNMA Park Entrance Sign	10A-55
Parking Lot/ Access and Circulation	
Roads (asphalt surfaced)	10A-60
Staff Parking Area (asphalt surfaced)	10A-60a
Visitor Center and Agricultural Implement Display Building	10A-61
HNMA Park Staff Residence	10A-62
Palmer- Epard Cabin	10A-64
Cub Creek Suspension Footbridge	10A-65
Squatter's Cabin Loop Trail	10A-66
Farmstead Loop Trail	10A-67
'Homesteading' Wayside Exhibit	10A-74
Prairie Plants Interpretive Planting Display	10A-75
Steel Entrance Gate	10A-81
Supply Well	10A-82
4' Wood Post and Rail Fence	10A-83
Return Well	10A-84
6' Wood Slat Fence	10A-85
Steel Clothesline	10A-86
Utility Pole	10A-87
HNMA Radio Transmission Tower	10A-88
Garbage Dumpster	10A-89
Fire Hydrant	10A-90
Maintenance Storage Area	10A-91
25,000 gal. Underground Water Storage Tank	10A-92
Pop Machine (encased in wooden structure)	10A-93
Sattelite Dish	10A-94
Weather Station	10A-96
Wood Plank Walkway (at grade)	10A-97
Underground Septic Tank	10A-98
Underground Septic Field	10A-99

MAP KEY

	Building
	Wooded Vegetation
	Shrubs
	Canopy Trees
	Grass Lawn
	Underground Tank/ Field
	HNMA Boundary Line and Corner Marker

SOURCES

HNMA Vegetative Management Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1960. [HNMA]
 Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1961. [HNMA]
 Land Use Plan, HNMA, Beatrice, NE, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1976. [HNMA]
 Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations, HNMA, Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger. 1984. [HNMA]
 HNMA Road and Parking Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1987. [HNMA]
 General Management Plan, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1988. [HNMA]
 Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1989. [HNMA]
 HNMA Prairie Management Action Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1993. [HNMA]
 HNMA Landscaping Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1992. [HNMA]

Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

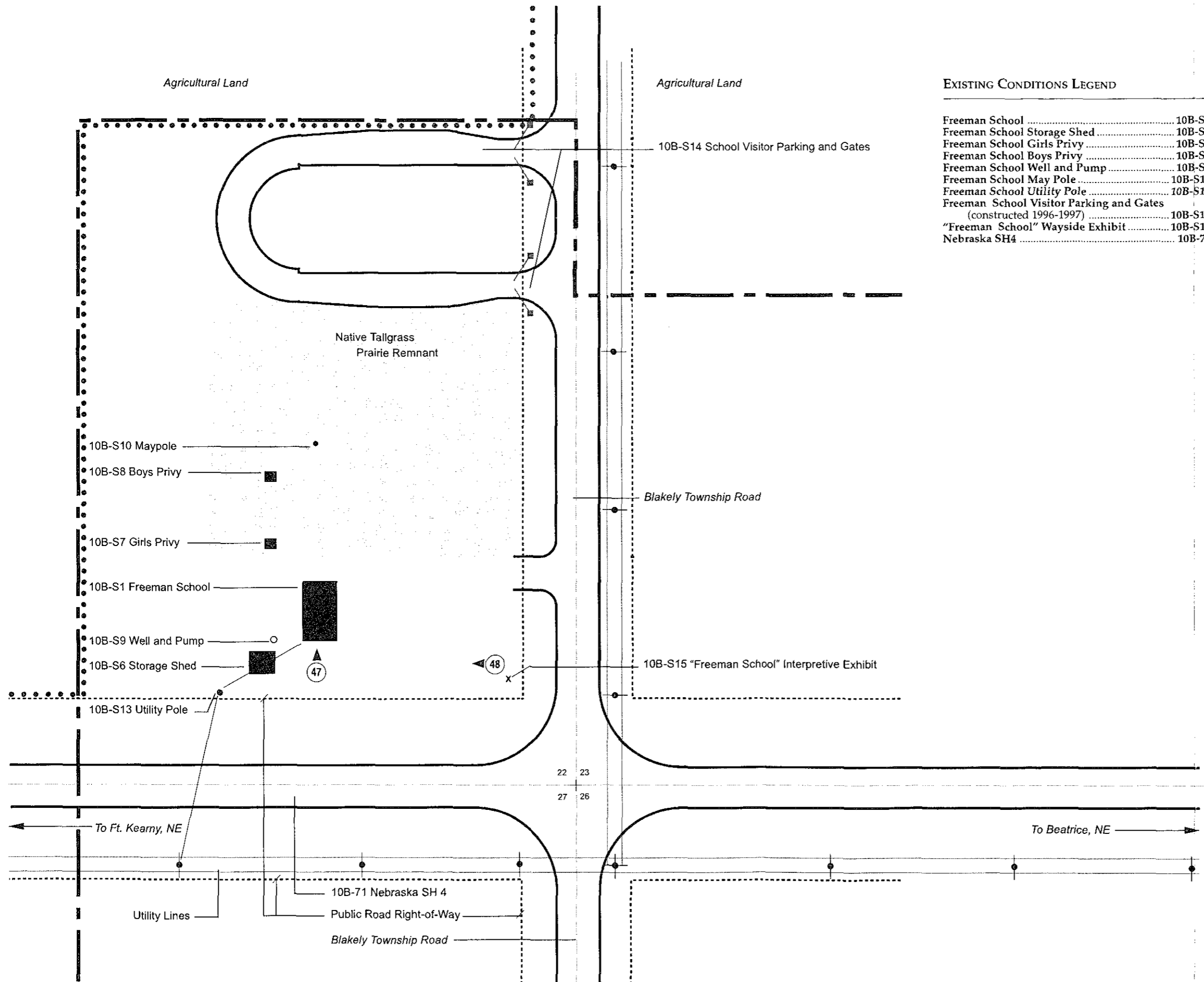
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CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

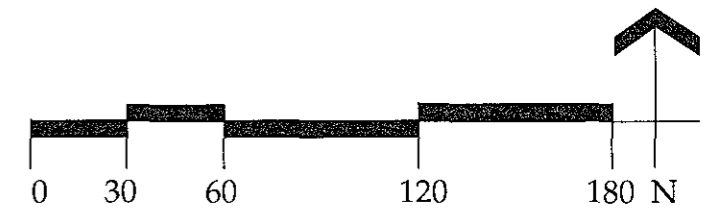
Exhibit 10B

EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN: FREEMAN SCHOOL AREA SITE PLAN








EXISTING CONDITIONS LEGEND

Freeman School	10B-S1
Freeman School Storage Shed	10B-S6
Freeman School Girls Privy	10B-S7
Freeman School Boys Privy	10B-S8
Freeman School Well and Pump	10B-S9
Freeman School May Pole	10B-S10
Freeman School Utility Pole	10B-S13
Freeman School Visitor Parking and Gates (constructed 1996-1997)	10B-S14
"Freeman School" Wayside Exhibit	10B-S15
Nebraska SH4	10B-71



MAP KEY

-  Building
-  Wooded Vegetation
-  Shrubs
-  Prairie
-  HNMA Boundary Line

SOURCES

- HNMA Vegetative Management Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1960. [HNMA]
- Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1961. [HNMA]
- HNMA Road and Parking Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1976. [HNMA]
- Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations, HNMA, Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger. 1984. [HNMA]
- HNMA Road and Parking Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1987. [HNMA]
- General Management Plan, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1988. [HNMA]
- Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1989. [HNMA]
- HNMA Prairie Management Action Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1993. [HNMA]
- HNMA Landscaping Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1992. [HNMA]

Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.

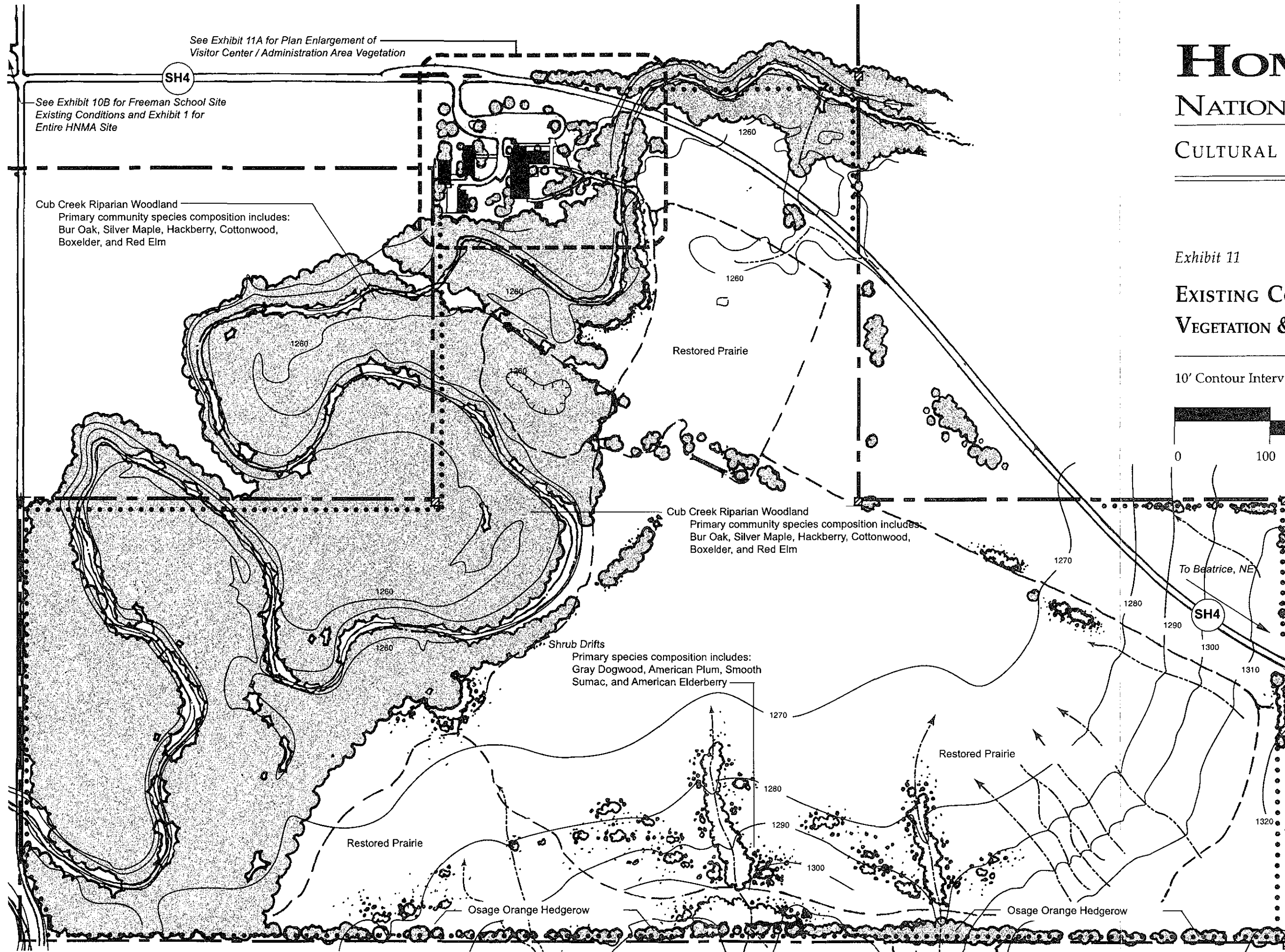
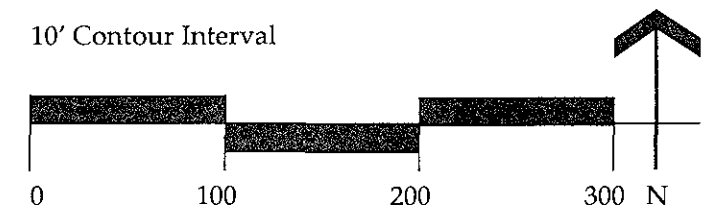
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HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 11

EXISTING CONDITIONS: VEGETATION & TOPOGRAPHY SITE PLAN

10' Contour Interval



See Exhibit 11A for Plan Enlargement of
Visitor Center / Administration Area Vegetation

SH4

See Exhibit 10B for Freeman School Site
Existing Conditions and Exhibit 1 for
Entire HNMA Site

Cub Creek Riparian Woodland
Primary community species composition includes:
Bur Oak, Silver Maple, Hackberry, Cottonwood,
Boxelder, and Red Elm

Restored Prairie

Cub Creek Riparian Woodland
Primary community species composition includes:
Bur Oak, Silver Maple, Hackberry, Cottonwood,
Boxelder, and Red Elm

Shrub Drifts
Primary species composition includes:
Gray Dogwood, American Plum, Smooth
Sumac, and American Elderberry

Restored Prairie

Osage Orange Hedgerow

Restored Prairie

Osage Orange Hedgerow

To Beatrice, NE

SH4

- MAP KEY**
- Building
 - Former Building Site
 - Wooded Vegetation
 - Shrubs
 - Cub Creek
 - Barbed-Wire Fencing
 - HNMA Boundary Line and Corner Marker

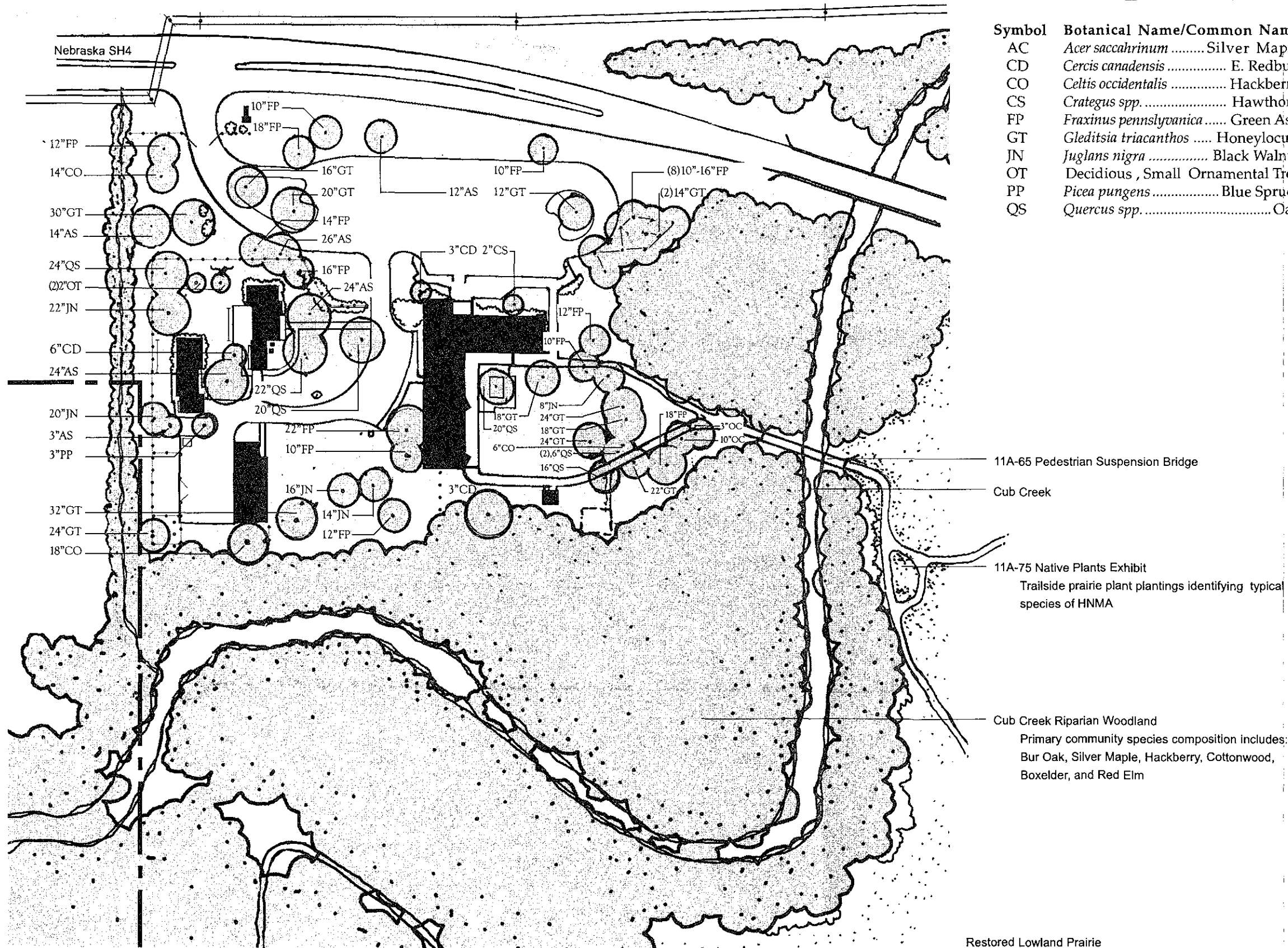
- SOURCES**
- Conservation Plan Map of HNMA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, S.C.S. 1959. [HNMA]
 - HNMA Vegetative Management Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1960. [HNMA]
 - Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1961. [HNMA]
 - 1971 Aerial Photograph, U.S.D.A., S.C.S. [HNMA]
 - 1979 Aerial Photograph, U.S.D.A., S.C.S. [HNMA]
 - Land Use Plan, HNMA, Beatrice, NE, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1976. [HNMA]
 - Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations, HNMA, Sutton, Stubbendieck, and Traeger. 1984. [HNMA]
 - General Management Plan, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1988. [HNMA]
 - Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1989. [HNMA]
 - HNMA Prairie Management Action Plan, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1993. [HNMA]
 - The Changing Prairie: HNMA Trail Guide, Eastern National Park and Monument Association. 195. [HNMA]

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

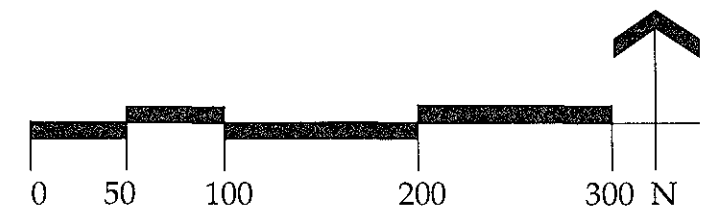
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 11A

EXISTING CONDITIONS SITE PLAN: VISITOR CENTER AREA VEGETATION



Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.



Restored Lowland Prairie

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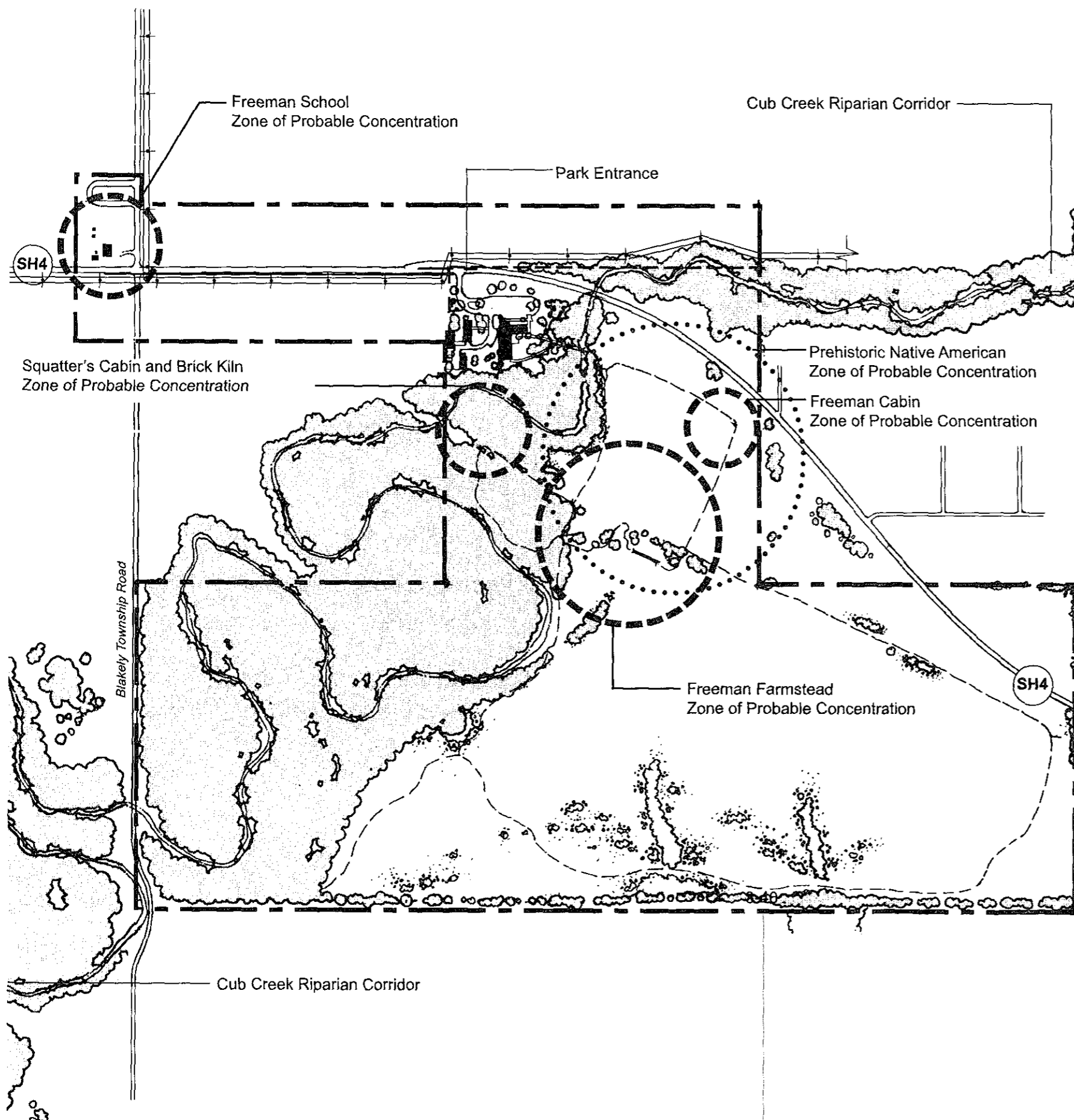
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CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 12

SITE ARCHEOLOGY: ZONES OF PROBABLE CONCENTRATION



ZONES OF PROBABLE CONCENTRATION LEGEND*

SQUATTER'S CABIN AND BRICK KILN ZONE KNOWN FEATURES	
Squatter's Cabin Site	A-1
Brick Kiln Site	A-13

FREEMAN CABIN ZONE KNOWN FEATURES	
Freeman Cabin Site	A-7
Freeman Homestead "Rough and Ready" Corral	A-3
John Suiter Cabin	A-4
Well	A-5
Chicken Shed	A-6
Freeman Homestead Cabin	A-7
Homestead Cabin Road	A-8

FREEMAN FARMSTEAD ZONE KNOWN FEATURES	
Well and Pump	A-9
Well and Pump	A-9a
Brick House path	A-10
Brick House	A-11
Summer Kitchen	A-12
Kitchen/ Cash Crop Garden	A-14
Brick House Road	A-15
Orchards	A-16
Feeder Barn	A-17
Barnyard	A-18
Shed/ Corncrib	A-19
Granary	A-20
Windmill	A-21
Well	A-22
Barnyard Road	A-23
Post & Board Fencing	A-24
Freight Road/ Old SH4	A-26
Vegetable Storage Shed	A-27
Shed	A-28
Privy	A-29
Pump & Well	A-34
Quackenbush House Path	A-35
Quackenbush House	A-36
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin	A-37
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Well & Pump	A-38
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Privy	A-39
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Path	A-40
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin/ Frame House Road	A-41
Frame House Path	A-42
Frame House	A-43
Frame House Well	A-44
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Shed	A-45
Frame House Shed	A-46

FREEMAN SCHOOL ZONE KNOWN FEATURES	
Freeman School	A-S3
Freeman School Woodshed	A-S1
Freeman School Entry Road	A-S2
Freeman School Girls/ Boys Privy	A-S4
Freeman School Hitching Posts	A-S5
Freeman School Storage Shed	A-S6
Freeman School Girls Privy	A-S7
Freeman School Boys Privy	A-S8
Freeman School Well and Pump	A-S9
Freeman School May Pole	A-S10
Freeman School Merry-go-Round	A-S11
Freeman School Flag Pole	A-S12
Freeman School Utility Pole	A-S13

*See Historic Period Plan exhibits for 'Known Features' locations



MAP KEY

	..... Park Building
	..... Wooded Vegetation
	..... Shrubs
	..... Cub Creek
	..... Trail
	..... HNM Boundary Line

SOURCES

Report of Excavations at the Daniel Freeman Homestead, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1948
 HNMA Historical and Archeological Interpretation Summary, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1948 [HNMA]
 Land Use Plan, HNMA, Beatrice, NE, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1976 [HNMA]
 Archeological Survey of HNMA, Schoen and Bleed. 1986. [HNMA]
 General Management Plan, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1988 [HNMA]
 Resource Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, HNMA, U.S. Department of Interior, N.P.S. 1989. [HNMA]
 The Changing Prairie: HNMA Trail Guide, Eastern National Park and Monument Association. 1995. [HNMA]
 Archeological Survey of HNMA, Schoen and Bleed. 1986. [HNMA]

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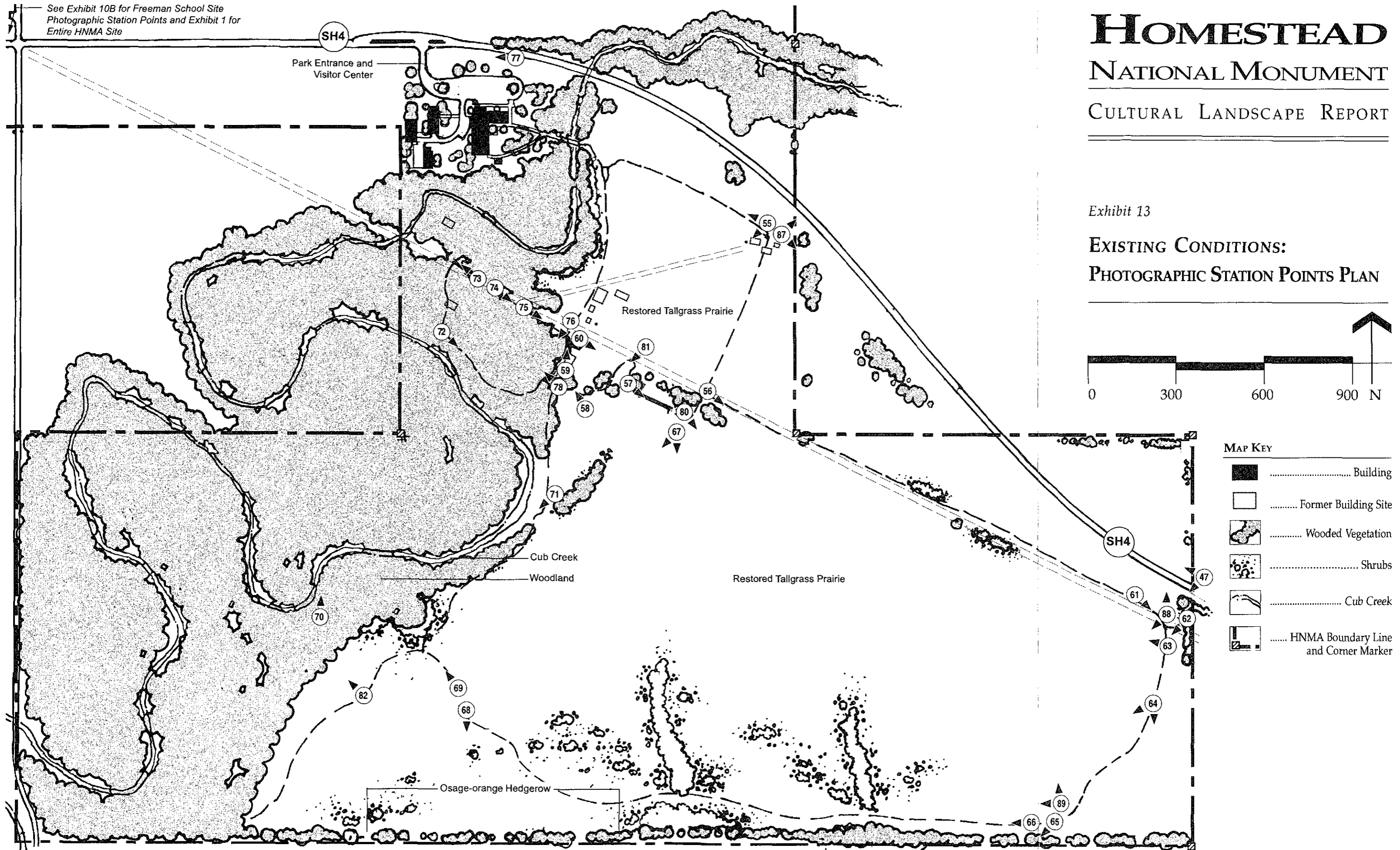
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See Exhibit 10B for Freeman School Site
 Photographic Station Points and Exhibit 1 for
 Entire HNMA Site

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

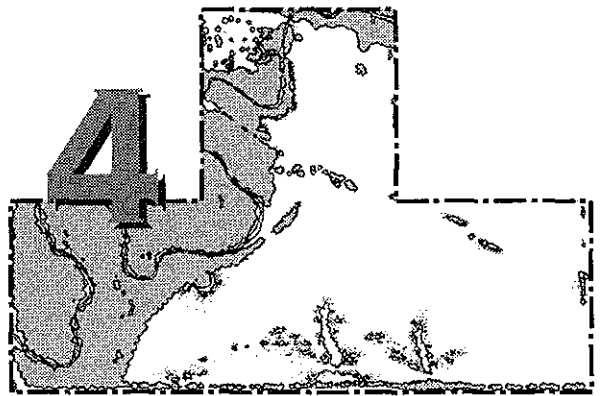
Exhibit 13

EXISTING CONDITIONS: PHOTOGRAPHIC STATION POINTS PLAN



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MANAGEMENT ISSUES

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The CLR scope of work identified several management issues related to the HNMA cultural landscape. Team meetings in consultation with HNMA and regional NPS staff, fieldwork, and analysis identified additional issues and concerns related to the cultural landscape. A discussion of each particular issue follows.

Site Flooding

Although the CLR team has not observed flooding, it is well documented that periodic floods occur within the HNMA. At these times Cub Creek can rise to flood levels that inundate lowland trails and accelerate streambank erosion. Flood conditions from time to time necessitate trail closure (*Figures 85 and 86*). The Palmer-Epard cabin environs, situated in close proximity of the creek, are especially vulnerable to flooding. During severe floods, only the visitor center and exhibit areas are accessible to the public. Substantial floods require debris removal and site maintenance when the creek waters have receded. Most structures, including the visitor center, administrative offices, maintenance facilities, residences, as well as the Palmer-Epard cabin, are located in the flood plain.¹

Loss of Historic Fabric and Misrepresentation of the Historic Landscape

The HNMA landscape does not reflect to any great extent either the landscape developed and known by Daniel Freeman and his heirs or a typical homestead landscape. Most historic features have been lost. In addition, the decision to restore much of the site to a tallgrass prairie has resulted in a landscape that neither reflects the almost pristine natural setting encountered by the homesteaders nor the everyday

¹"Homestead National Monument Cub Creek 100 Year Flood Plain Delineation," DOQQ Map, Nebraska Natural Resources Commission.

working environment that homesteaders created to qualify their claims and survive in a new region.

The most serious cultural landscape issue associated with the HNMA is the loss of historic features dating from the Freeman period. The HNMA retains few cultural landscape features from Daniel Freeman's period of residence; furthermore it retains no cultural landscape features associated with his heirs during the period following his death. Despite the fact that Freeman occupied the HNMA site and fulfilled the requirements of the Homestead Act, the only major above ground feature associated with Freeman is the Osage orange hedgerow, which is an aging vegetative feature. The only historic building on the Freeman homestead land is the Palmer-Epard cabin, which NPS relocated on the site and which has no association with the Freeman family. Furthermore, the cabin environs do not represent typical homestead environs. The Freeman Schoolhouse and its outbuildings constitute the only other historic structures within the NPS boundaries.

Strength of Historic Associations

Despite the fact that there is little tangible, physical evidence from the homestead era, the site possesses an interesting layered history of human occupation related to western settlement and development. The history of the site extends from the pre-homestead era squatter who built a cabin and began to cultivate the land through Daniel Freeman to his wife, children, and grandchildren who still owned and lived on the site in the 1930s. The extent of the Freeman extended family's occupation and use of the site, however, are not interpreted to the public. Tenants were also present on the site for much of its history. That story is also not apparent. The continuous occupation of the site from squatter to NPS acquisition is inextricably linked to the homestead era history.

However, these threads of continuity are not apparent or addressed through interpretation.

The HNMA site is unique because of the presence of several elements not typical of many homesteads. Freeman's claim was a desirable site that included Cub Creek, a natural source of water, and substantial woodlands, a natural source of lumber and firewood, as well as tallgrass prairie. The versatility of the site was a favorable factor that contributed to its success as a claim site. These landscape characteristics—the inherent qualities that made the site desirable enough for Freeman to purchase the squatter's rights to the property—still exist to a substantial degree and could be featured more prominently in interpretation. These features tend to be overlooked while the prairie that Freeman sought to subdue and replace in many areas of the site is a major interpretive and landscape focus.

Perhaps the absence of above ground cultural resources directly related to Freeman provides an opportunity to make the site more representative of homesteading in general. Their absence, however, makes the site difficult to interpret and treat as either the Freeman's homestead or as a farmstead typical of the homesteading movement. The multiple house sites associated with the extended Freeman family apart from the three sites Daniel Freeman occupied—the squatter's cabin, the homestead cabin, and the brick house—are not adequately interpreted. The squatter's house and Freeman's brick house site, in particular, appear to possess potential for increased and enhanced interpretation and are associated with Freeman's earliest involvement with the site and the culmination and ultimate success of his homesteading efforts. The sites of agricultural structures or functions also appear to have potential for greater interpretation. The absence of specific archeological information for many site features has prevented more complete interpretation or landscape treatment.

In addition, the freight road was of central importance to the development of the site and the prosperity of the Freeman family. Although its trace can be discerned in places, it is not the focus of interpretation and would not be apparent to a visitor without prior knowledge of the site. Other landscape features associated with the Freeman family's use of the land are also absent from the site. The loss of fences, the absence of agricultural fields or pastures, and small-scale features associated with historic land uses diminishes the potential for onsite understanding of the HNMA.

The conflict between prairie and developed homestead is an issue that must be considered in developing both preservation treatments and site interpretation. The planted prairie restoration, while effective in presenting an image of the kind of environment that early homesteaders encountered, covers the actual sites associated with Freeman and with the history of human occupation associated with the act of homesteading on this site (*Figure 87*). It is difficult to imagine even the first structures built within the prairie setting since the prairie is broken only by the interpretive trail. The first NPS preliminary development plan dating from 1937 articulated a goal of attempting to restore the "land to a condition, as nearly as it is possible to do so" to represent its character during the period in which Daniel Freeman homesteaded the area. In fact, the prairie wayside exhibit that the visitor confronts immediately upon crossing the bridge and entering the historic core of the Freeman homestead focuses attention on individual prairie grasses and their identification, and not on the overall site or its homestead era associations. The visitor—having been introduced to the homesteading story, agricultural history and technology, and the Freeman family through wayside exhibits and the video presentation offered in the visitor center—is forced to redirect attention to individual prairie specimens. There is no interpretive link to the agricultural technology exhibits that explain planting, harvesting, and other agricultural activities that occurred on this site. The site also offers unrealized potential

for increased interpretation of the effects of continuous planting, grazing, and other uses that occurred historically and that were responsible for the site erosion that NPS has spent much of its tenure addressing. The restoration of the creek environs would be a topical issue that could relate to the homesteading story as well as to current environmental concerns.

Prairie Management

Planting much of the core homestead site in native grasses was intended to impart something of the feeling and appearance of the virgin prairie that homesteaders found in the American west. The presence of the restored prairie, however, diverts attention from the cultural associations that are the intentional focus of the park's mission. The prairie restoration has actually created a natural/cultural resource management conflict that is especially difficult to address in the absence of aboveground cultural resources that date from the homestead era. The original enabling legislation specifically mandated interpretation and preservation of the homesteaders' interaction with the land.²

The prairie, as it has developed over time and has been interpreted to the public, appears to have more merit for its natural resource value than for its role in interpreting the hardships of pioneer life and the "settlement, cultivation, and civilization of the great west."³ As one of the "oldest ongoing prairie restorations on a human-altered landscape in the United States,"⁴ the replanted tallgrass prairie has come to be

²Division of Interpretive Planning, "A Plan for Interpretation of Homestead National Monument of America," Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, 1990.

³Public Law 480, 74th Congress, 2d Sess. (March 19, 1936), *An Act to Establish the Homestead National Monument of America*, p. 165, in Appendix to "Statement for Management: Homestead National Monument of America," HNMA Administrative Files.

⁴James Stubbendieck and Gary D. Wilson, "Prairie Restoration/Management at Homestead: A History" in *Park Science*, Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer, 1987, p. 21.

considered by some as a resource in its own right apart from its associations and interpretive value as part of the homesteading experience.

In addition, the 1.5-acre Freeman Schoolhouse site also includes approximately .75 acre of vegetation largely considered to be the “only un-plowed, non-restored prairie”⁵ at HNMA. Control of smooth brome within the small schoolhouse prairie tract is already a recognized management issue.⁶ It is not clear, however, if this area can actually be considered an authentic virgin prairie given the likelihood of intensive use as a play yard during its 96 years as a school. Its constant use as a play yard and for daily human movement as students, teachers, and the rural community entered and left the site for school and public events are likely to have affected the prairie’s extent and composition.

Although the prairie restoration effort’s long-range objective was “to restore the tallgrass prairie scene” that pioneers confronted when the area was first settled in the mid-1860’s,⁷ it is not clear that this objective is compatible with the park’s mission to commemorate the settlement and cultivation of the American west. This approach can be interpreted as celebrating the prairie rather than its sodbusters. It should be remembered that the HNMA was established to tell the story of homesteading, not the management of tallgrass prairie.

Given this emphasis, it is necessary to reconcile the desire to maintain the restored tallgrass prairie with the goal of portraying a typical homestead. To qualify for land ownership, at least ten acres of a homestead needed to be put into agricultural use to

⁵Richard K. Sutton, J. Stubbendieck, and Jayne Traeger, “Vegetation Survey and Management Recommendations for Homestead National Monument of America” (Lincoln, Nebraska: Natural Resources Enterprises, Inc., December 1984), p. 82.

⁶John R. Batzer and Rebecca D. Lacome, *Into the Twenty-First Century: Homestead National Monument Prairie Management Action Plan, 1993-2002*, 1993.

⁷Batzer and Lacome, p. 1.

qualify as a claim, which the current HNMA landscape does not represent. The HNMA also does not impart the sense of the site arrangement and organization that would have been typical of a working homestead. In addition, the money and time necessary to manage the prairie sometimes needs to be justified to local residents who regard the prairie as a "patch of weeds" and a source of predatory insects that threaten carefully managed fields. Others, however, regard the prairie as a source of pride and a place of beauty. Prairie management actions necessary to promote and sustain the landscape restoration include species inventory, fire management, and woody plant and exotic species control. In general, there are several interrelated and complex management issues concerning the tallgrass prairie and its role in the cultural landscape of the HNMA.

Historic Vegetation

Currently there is no specific vegetative management policy or plan that addresses the HNMA's historic vegetation. In addition there is an absence of baseline data for the riparian woodland community that inhibits woodland management. Although there have been major prairie restoration efforts and interpretation, the woodland has not been the subject of the same intensity of efforts. It appears that the woodland would have the potential to approximate pre- and early-settlement conditions that would complement or supplement prairie interpretation.

The existing conditions documentation undertaken for this CLR identified several vegetative groups that may warrant specific attention. These include the several trees along the riparian woodland edge that are notable for their height, trunk diameter and presumed age and the group of at least 80-foot tall cottonwood trees found at the western edge of the prairie near the northern turn of the Upland Prairie Loop Trail. Since the individual cottonwood with a trunk diameter in excess of 60 inches (*Figure 82*)

that is located south of that group of cottonwoods and adjacent to the woodland-prairie edge may be associated with early Freeman homesteading activities, it also merits special care and management. There is also an aged, large diameter Northern Red Oak southwest of the Palmer-Epard cabin along the woodland edge.

The HNMA's best documented historic vegetation is its Osage orange hedgerow that dates from the homestead era of Daniel Freeman and that delineates the south boundary of HNMA (*Figure 88*). The Osage orange hedge fence has experienced some invasion of Eastern Red Cedar and other shrubs introduced into adjacent areas for conservation purposes. Its distance from the historic core prevents many visitors from observing this major cultural landscape feature associated with Freeman and typical of midwestern nineteenth-century farms prior to the availability of barbed wire. Although the hedgerow is in good condition, the majority of the trees are quite mature and nearing the end of their life expectancy. Grafting, re-planting, and other horticultural techniques need to be explored to ensure the survival and conscientious management of the Osage orange hedgerow.

Views and Viewsheds

Viewsheds play an important role in the visitor perception of the site's physical characteristics and their role in the history of the site (*Exhibit 14*). In general, the current views of the riparian woodland and restored prairie provide the visitor with a portrait of the historic landscape character prior to the time of the Freeman homestead.

However, over a century of societal and economic change to the rural fabric of the Great Plains Region has resulted in significant site changes. While agricultural land still surrounds the majority of the site, the Pioneer Acres rural subdivision north and east of the site, as well as the altered SH4 alignment, visually detract from the desired historical setting representing the early 1860's (*Exhibit 10*). Views to the south and west generally

reflect historic contextual views of the reconstructed prairie and riparian woodland. Views from the north and east are interrupted by SH4, although the views from SH4 do offer an excellent, elevated view into the site.

The vistas from within HMNA vary in historic value based upon the visitor's viewpoint. The views from the lowland of the southern ridge and hedgerow are generally undisturbed; this holds true as well for lowland views of the riparian woodland to the west. In addition, the view from the upland ridge offers excellent, site-encompassing views to the southwest (*Figures 94 and 95*). However, from this point, views to the north and northwest are dominated by the adjacent housing area and by the highway. The Pioneer Acres subdivision and SH4 are visually prominent because of their elevated landscape position relative to the lowland landscape position of much of the HNMA. The subdivision in particular is especially prominent from the suspension bridge and creates a visual backdrop as the visitor enters the reconstructed prairie (*Figure 89*).

Historic contextual problems occur from lowland views to the east and north, consisting of vistas dominated by the state highway and its traffic, power lines, the Pioneer Acres subdivision, and occasional emissions from two fertilizer plants located several miles northwest of the site. Existing trail alignments reinforce these because they direct and focus visitor views upon these adjacent land uses (*Figures 90, 93 and 94*). Although modern views could be seen as the logical or at least eventual progression of the homesteading experience, there is no interpretation that encourages the visitor to make this leap of judgment. Several comments observed in the visitor center guest book mention these objectionable or intruding modern developments visible from the site.

Views of the adjacent highway and residential subdivision are less noticeable from the visitor center complex. This situation may be attributable to the developed context of the immediate area, the directed arrival views oriented to the visitor center, and/or the spatial senses of enclosure both south and east of the visitor center. However, the developments found in the visitor center area obviously are not part of the historical landscape character of the Freeman homesteading period. No historic associations are evident upon arrival. Additionally, the Palmer-Epard cabin is located within 50 feet of the visitor center providing the visitor with a minimal contextual sense of place relative to the cabin's historical period, although the Cub Creek woodland provides a rural setting for the cabin (*Figure 91*). The views of the Freeman schoolhouse site as well are strongly shaped by road alignments. SH4 traffic and overhead utility lines to the south of the site, Blakely Township traffic to the east, as well as rural farmhouses and power transmission lines all detract from the historical setting of the schoolhouse. Views from the schoolhouse area are also influenced by the new addition of a NPS bus turn-around and parking area directly north of the schoolhouse (*Figure 92*). Billboards on the corner opposite the school also affect the quality of views and interrupt views toward the homestead site.

Circulation Alterations

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has developed plans for SH4 that if implemented would have an effect on the HNMA. Physical changes proposed by NDOR include addressing the safety of the bridge over Cub Creek and adding shoulders to the highway. There also have been discussions regarding rerouting the highway to a location outside of NPS boundaries, leaving the present road for local use.

Although the condition of pedestrian circulation within the HNMA is good, accessibility during inclement weather can be a problem. The boardwalks near the

Palmer-Epard cabin and the Agnes Suiter Freeman house site and the bridge floor may become slippery during wet weather; they are extremely slippery when there is ice. In addition, during periods of wet weather, the unsurfaced sections of the interpretive trail are sometimes difficult for both pedestrians and wheelchair users to traverse. Many sections of trail are also subject to flooding during periods of severe wet weather.

Visitor Center Landscape

The Visitor Center entry landscape, while pleasant and well maintained, has no direct physical or associational linkages with the rest of the HNMA. The visitor center, staff residences, parking area, and picnic area dominate this area. There are no associational or interpretive links with the prairie landscape that predominates in the historic core area of the homestead. The Palmer-Epard cabin at present has been incorporated into the visitor center experience and landscape as an extension of interior wayside exhibits. Its proximity to the implement exhibit structure makes it appear to be more of an exhibit than an authentic homestead structure. At present it provides a transition from the visitor center to the historic core that awaits the visitor upon crossing Cub Creek. HNMA staff would also like to develop a new "icon" for the Park, apart from the cabin, that would be more appropriate to the significance of the site and still have visitor appeal.

Small-Scale Features

There are few historic small-scale features remaining within the HNMA landscape. Their absence makes those that do exist more obvious despite their lack of historic association with the site. These include the DAR monument built out of a pillar from the old Nebraska State Capital and the time capsule buried on the site. The DAR monument was originally located in close proximity to the historic road alignment; the current interpretive trail loop passes the monument but the significance and integrity of

the monument need to be considered. The presence of the time capsule adjacent to the trail appears as an afterthought and adds little to the interpretive experience. The headstone for the two graves on the site was rotated approximately 90 degrees when SH4 was re-routed from the original spur trail which was used as a freight road. It is possible that the current location of the stone should be reevaluated.

Existing utilitarian landscape features such as trash receptacles, vending machines and covers, picnic tables and benches are intended to be unobtrusive. While their effects are not substantial, they do nothing to enhance the overall visitor impression or visual character of the HMNA. Some current waysides and interpretive markers are beginning to exhibit the stresses of aging and weathering and may need to be replaced. Their replacement may provide opportunities for increased landscape interpretation.

The Effects of Traffic on SH 4

NPS has identified vehicular traffic on SH4 as diminishing the quality of the visitor experience within the HNMA and is considered a threat to visitor safety. The highway passes over Cub Creek in the north portions of the site, with the roadbed defining the northern portion of the park visitor arrival area and visitor center. The road no longer follows its historic alignment; yet it continues to be a major site organizational element. It descends noticeably from the eastern valley wall into the lowlands, crossing through the eastern portions of the HNMA. Its alignment separates approximately 6.5 upland and woodland acres from the remainder of the HNMA. A parkway corridor comprised of the HNMA and adjacent and nearby rural properties has been recommended in the GMP to demonstrate and interpret the effects of the homesteading experience and western land development. Establishment of a parkway along the existing SH4 alignment would provide the visitor with a historic and contemporary context of adjacent farmsteads to show the changes in farming and farmsteads since the

nineteenth century. If such an approach is developed, the interpretive role of the existing HMNA site could be reevaluated in the light of a more regional context. Physical linkages and vehicular and pedestrian connectors are important design considerations. Local cooperation, support, and participation are central to the success of such a proposal.

State-owned Land

The adjacent state-owned land bound by SH4 and the eastern edge of the Park boundary provides opportunities for HNMA expansion. At present, it provides an undeveloped rural edge and appropriate entrance or exit for motorists entering or leaving the HNMA. Cooperative management and viewshed protection and enhancement could be explored. The present Park boundary demarcates a section of the original Freeman homestead boundary; NPS acquisition of this section of land could diminish the integrity of the boundary. Regardless of ownership, ensuring that the parcel remains rural and undeveloped will enhance the setting of the HNMA.

Relationship with Freeman School

The Freeman Schoolhouse site is located just 0.25 miles west of the HNMA but is accessible only by vehicle as a result of safety concerns associated with SH4. Although the school site is a valuable resource and has substantial interpretive value, its visual and cultural relationship with the Freeman homestead portion of the site is not strong. Currently, there is no exterior interpretation and visitors almost certainly could benefit from some explanations of how the school landscape was used historically.

The prairie portion of the site could also be interpreted to provide a linkage with the restored prairie on the homestead site. The recent parking area and entry projects have

diminished the timeless, rural feeling of the site. Adequate parking, however, is necessary since there is no pedestrian link from the visitor center.

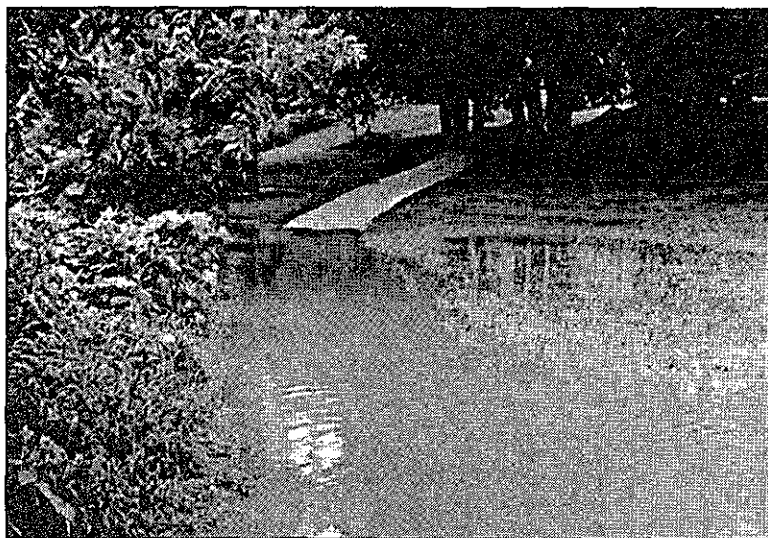


Figure 85. Flooding submerges interpretive trail, 1978. [HNMA]

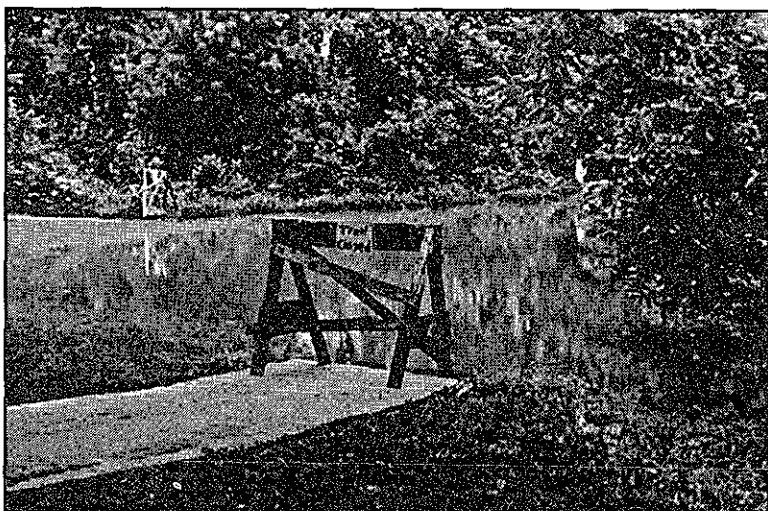


Figure 86. Interpretive trail closed due to flooding, 1978. [HNMA]



Figure 87. View of restored prairie, looking south. [LCA, 1998]

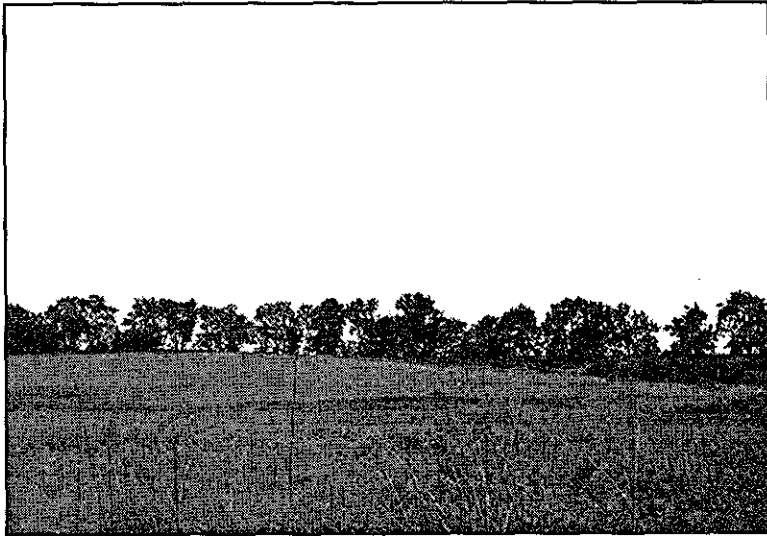


Figure 88. View of Osage orange hedgerow. [LCA, 1998]

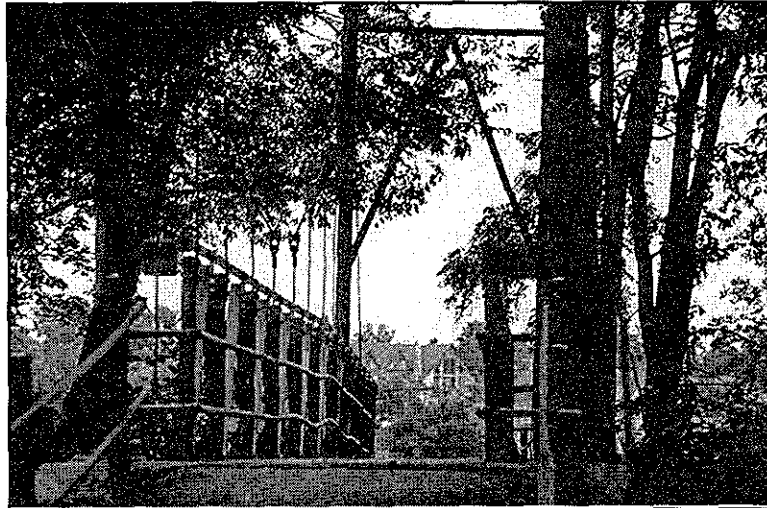


Figure 89. Pioneer Acres Sub-division, as seen from suspension bridge. [LCA, 1998]

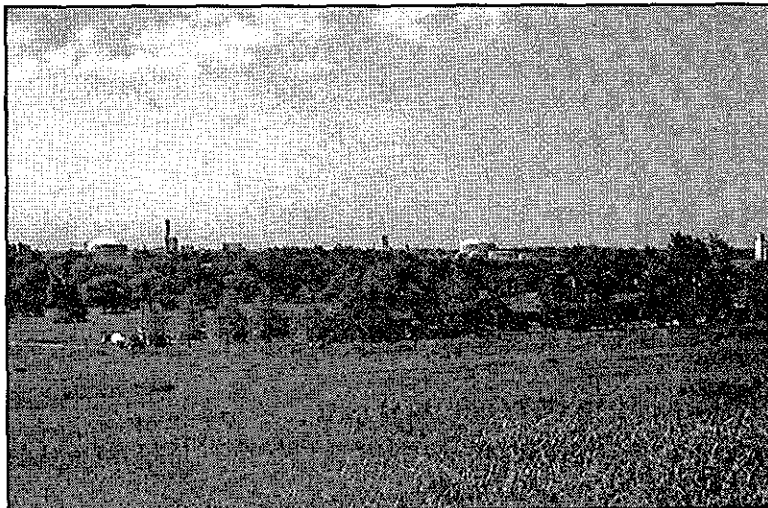


Figure 90. View of northern adjacent land use. [LCA, 1998]



Figure 91. Context of Palmer-
Epard Cabin in relation to the
Visitor Center. [LCA, 1998]

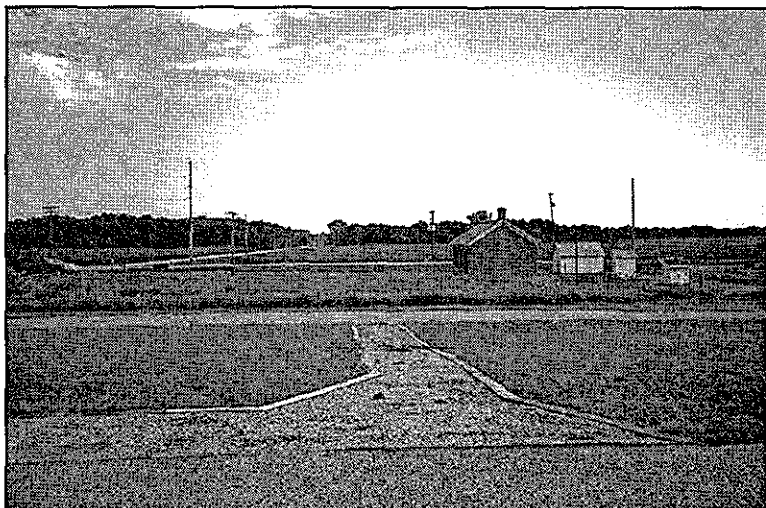


Figure 92. Context of Free-
man Schoolhouse. [LCA,
1998]

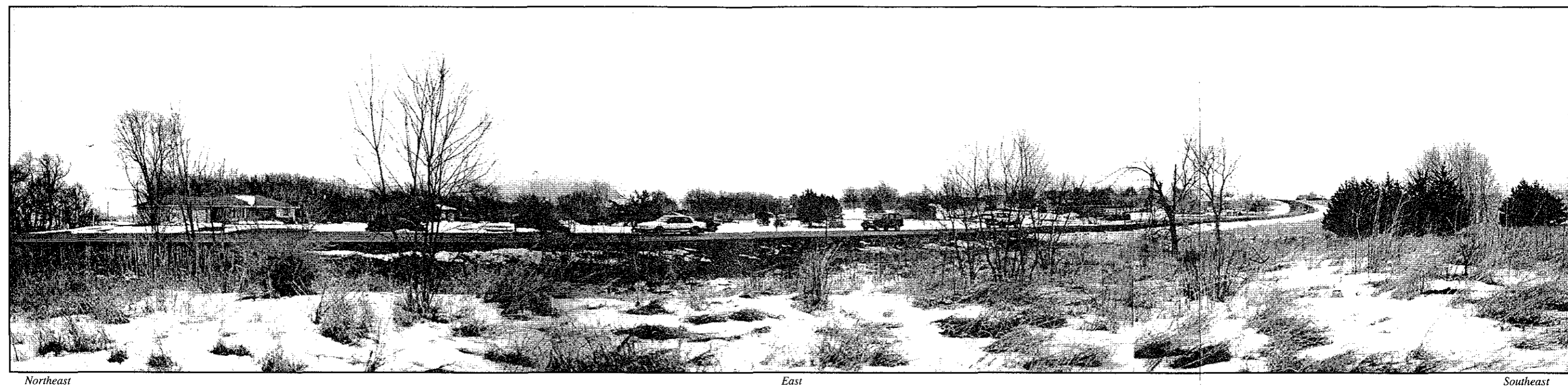


Figure 93. View from Freeman Cabin site and marker of eastern adjacent land use. SH4 is in midground and Pioneer Acres subdivision is in background. [LCA, 1998]

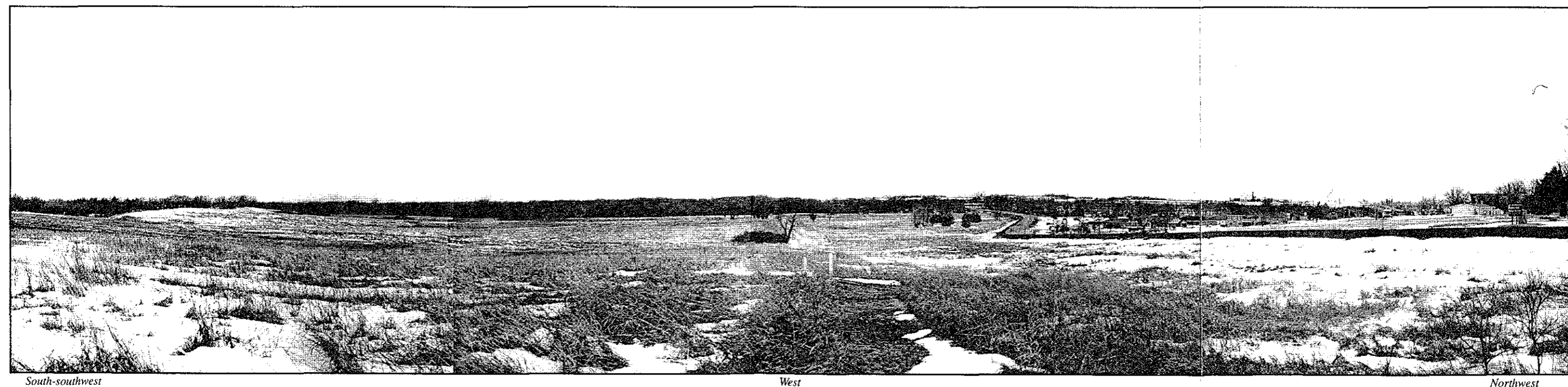
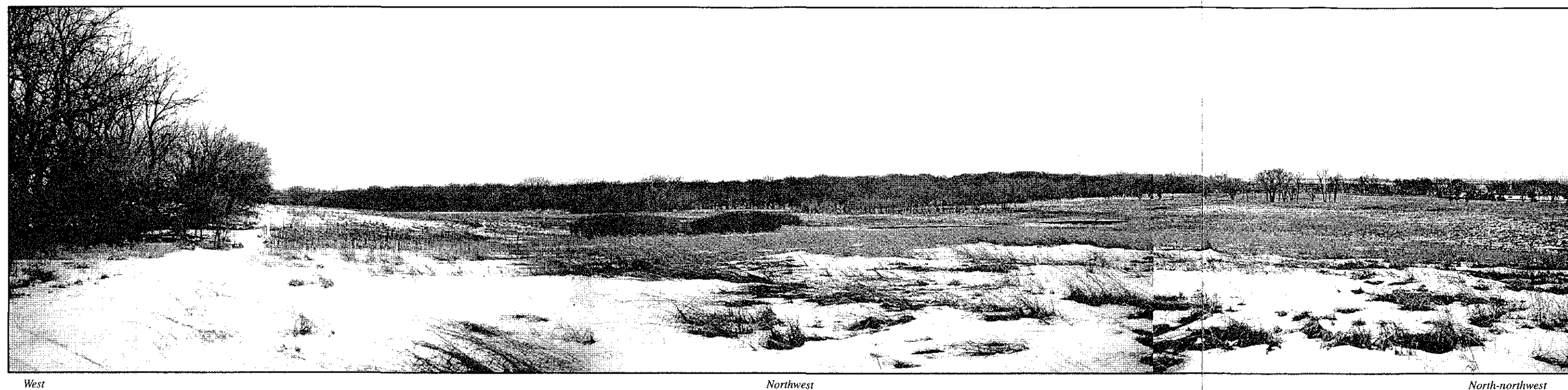


Figure 94. HNMA site viewed from Freeman gravesite atop eastern valley ridge. Pioneer Acres subdivision is on right, hedgerow is left, Cub Creek woodland passes in background from left to right. [LCA, 1998]

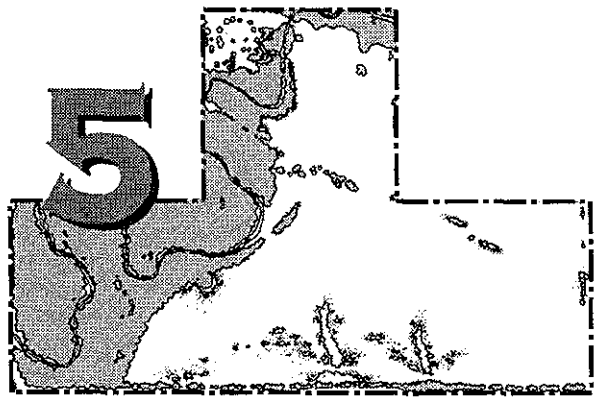


West

Northwest

North-northwest

Figure 95. View of HNMA site from upland trail. Hedgerow is on left, midground tree grouping within prairie are cottonwoods at Agnes Suiter Freeman cabin site/old SH4. [LCA, 1998]



ANALYSIS

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Significance

The historic 160-acre homestead tract that was owned by the Daniel Freeman family and that now comprises the majority of the HNMA is listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places. The HNMA possesses significance according to National Register criteria A, B, and D. The site is associated with the Homestead Act and “events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history,” including its influence on American migration, immigration, agricultural development, industrial development, federal land policy, native cultures, and the landscape of the West.

The historic homestead of the HNMA is the actual site that Daniel Freeman claimed on January 1, 1863, the first day of the Homestead Act’s implementation. Freeman was the first Nebraskan to improve his patent, and he played a popular and symbolic role in the Homestead movement. Freeman, who finalized his claim on September 1, 1869, promoted himself as the “first homesteader.” His homestead site, however, retains only a few aboveground physical resources that represent distinctive design or construction characteristics from the homesteading period. The absence of cultural features from the homesteading period diminishes significance related to criterion C and diminishes the integrity of the site. The HNMA, however, may possess significance for its ability to yield important archeological information and may be evaluated in the future as possessing significance under criterion D.

Evaluating cultural landscape significance for the HNMA is complex. It is the only site authorized and designated by the U.S. Congress as a national monument that commemorates and interprets the Homestead Act and its influence in U. S. history. It

continues to be a rural site in a largely rural setting. As the major site in the United States where the Homestead Act is commemorated and interpreted, the extant cultural features that give meaning to the site have been evaluated for their ability to help explain the homesteading story; such features have been evaluated as contributing features. The events the HNMA commemorates are significant but the site itself does not retain sufficient integrity to represent the homesteading period adequately without site interpretation.

Despite the fact that the site does not possess design-related significance because of the considerable losses of historic cultural resources, it does possess some significant characteristics that help to inform an understanding of the site. The site still exemplifies the qualities and characteristics that made it an ideal homestead site. The HNMA's enduring landscape features, such as the creek and the rehabilitated woodland, reflect and illustrate some of the desirable features that attracted Daniel Freeman to the site originally. The woodlands along the creek were an essential source of building material, fuel, and shade. The rich soil beneath the prairie landscape that Freeman claimed was the basis for successful agricultural activities. The HNMA also retains its T-shaped configuration, which closely approximates the original acreage that Daniel Freeman claimed and qualified as his homestead. The woodland setting, the continuity of Cub Creek, the historic road alignment fragment, and the section of Osage orange hedge enhance an understanding of the homesteading era landscape. The historic freight road through the property linked the homestead with developing towns and other farms as well as the Oregon Trail at Fort Kearney; there were frequent travelers on the road, which made the Freeman homestead less isolated than more remote farms of the period.

In addition, the effort to recreate a tall grass prairie on this site was a significant early twentieth-century prairie restoration that relates to the broader context of prairie restoration in the American Midwest during the early twentieth century. Portions of the prairie possess significance in conservation history as an example of a surviving early prairie restoration with scientific and design value.

The non-contiguous Freeman Schoolhouse is part of the HNMA, but is located approximately one-fourth of a mile west of the former Freeman homestead. It is an original homestead era structure representative of the role of one-room schools, which were often associated with communities where homesteads were established historically. The school is a well-preserved example of a nineteenth-century, one-room, rural school and schoolyard. The school and its landscape retain the ability to represent the homesteading era although the school remained in use from 1871 until 1967. When it closed, it was the oldest operating school in Nebraska. The Freeman and other local families sent their children to this school, which also provided a social focus and served as a gathering place for neighborhood farm families. The school is also associated with Daniel Freeman's appeal to the Nebraska State Supreme Court in a case involving separation of church and state. Freeman opposed religious readings during the school day, and in 1902 the Court ruled in his favor.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the homestead portion of the HNMA can be defined as 1862–1936. This coincides with the major homesteading period, which extends from President Lincoln's signing of the Homestead Act to the end of homesteading in the continental United States. These dates also roughly coincide with the Freeman ownership and residency since Freeman purchased a squatter's rights to the property in

1862 and signed for the Freeman homestead in January, 1863; Freeman heirs owned and used the land through 1936.¹

The period of significance for the Freeman Schoolhouse can be considered to extend from 1871, when the school district relocated to this site and the existing brick school was constructed, through 1967, when educational use was discontinued. The period has been extended through 1967 to reflect the continuity of educational use and lack of physical change that characterized the property throughout its active life as a school. The minimal degree of change that occurred between the 1940s and 1967 would indicate that the latter date would be more representative of the entire history of the school and reflect its significant community role even into the second half of the twentieth century.

Landscape Integrity

Although some specific individual landscape features possess integrity, the Freeman homestead tract as a whole does not retain enough tangible, historic character to represent its period of significance with integrity. The Freeman Schoolhouse retains integrity using the evaluation criteria of the National Register of Historic Places. Not only are the buildings and structures that occupied the homestead site between 1863 and 1930 non-extant, but also most of the character-defining landscape features of the historical period have also been removed or have disappeared from the site. Only Cub Creek, which has been altered through both erosion and conservation efforts designed to correct the effects of erosion, remains a reliable point of identity. Prairie restoration and woodland regeneration help the site achieve some relatively close approximation of their pre-homestead appearance. Their appearance today, however, probably bears scant visual resemblance to the utilitarian landscape developed by Freeman and his

¹ Daniel Freeman died in 1908; Agnes Suiter Freeman died in 1930.

family and tenants. The hallmark of a qualified homestead was a habitable dwelling and agricultural improvements such as pastures and cleared and cultivated lands. The absence of such significant landscape features precludes an evaluation of integrity.

Despite the absence of integrity, the homestead site retains its significant historic associations with the Homestead Act. Daniel Freeman was one of the best-known historical figures associated with publicizing the homesteading movement. He promoted his property as the first homestead and encouraged visitation and publicity based on the "first homestead" theme. As a result, this land has been closely associated with westward settlement and the homestead movement since 1863. The absence of historic resources from the period of significance places even greater emphasis on those few features and characteristics that survive from 1863–1930 and that can be used to help interpret the site.

The restored prairie retains integrity as an example of an early twentieth-century prairie restoration. In keeping with the dynamic nature of the prairie, considerable change in its character occurs seasonally and over time as a result of changing environmental conditions (*Figures 67 and 87*). Changes in management practices are not considered to diminish prairie integrity since there was an expectation and design intent that the prairie would evolve and be maintained appropriately as prairie restoration practices and philosophies developed over time.

The seven aspects of integrity identified by the National Register of Historic Places include integrity of association, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and

setting. An overall evaluation of integrity based on the National Register's seven aspects of integrity follows.

Association

The HNMA possesses integrity of association. It is the site authorized by Congress to represent the homesteading experience in the United States. It is the actual site associated with Daniel Freeman's homestead claim in 1863, and is the site where Freeman, his wife, children, and grandchildren lived and worked from 1863 into the 1930s.

The Freeman Schoolhouse site retains integrity of association as the school where the Freeman and other neighborhood children were educated and where the community assembled for lectures, box suppers, and other gatherings.

Location

The integrity of location for the HNMA is diminished by the loss of historic buildings, structures, and other landscape features. The fact that the locations of some of these resources have been identified as archeological sites enhances integrity; some locations, however, have not been definitively identified and the incidence of periodic flooding from Cub Creek appears to have resulted in the loss of some archeological resources. The current T-shaped configuration closely approximates Freeman's original historic acreage, but integrity of location would be enhanced significantly if that configuration were evident on the landscape. A portion of the Osage orange hedge survives in its original location; the gravestone for the Freeman graves was moved with the realignment of SH4. It is assumed that the actual burial places for Daniel and Agnes Suiter Freeman have not changed. While the restored prairie possesses integrity of

location in its own right, it actually diminishes integrity of location for the archeological sites associated with the Freeman family since the native grasses would have been removed from those areas when they were developed initially.

The Freeman School possesses integrity of location. It occupies its original rectangular site and retains some of its historic outbuildings that are also on their original sites.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship

There is little integrity of design, materials, or workmanship remaining for the homestead site. The site retains none of its historic layout or arrangement. No buildings or structures survive from the period of significance. The survival of the Osage orange, historic cottonwoods, and woodland species contributes to some integrity of material and workmanship. The prairie restoration retains a substantial degree of integrity of design, plant material, and workmanship although the prairie is a dynamic system intended to change somewhat over time.

The Freeman School possesses a substantial degree of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, although some masonry repairs have been handled insensitively, diminishing integrity of materials and workmanship. Its rectangular site is intact and apparent due to the domination of the schoolhouse on the site and the continued orientation toward the road that connected it to many of its students. The schoolhouse itself retains a considerable degree of integrity of design having changed little on the exterior. It appears the schoolyard was never highly developed and that standard schoolyard play equipment appeared on the site only in its later years of operation. Its surviving prairie also enhances integrity of material.

Feeling

The homestead site retains little integrity of feeling. The loss of activity and animation associated with a working farm and rural residences as well as the loss of the actual buildings and structures associated with the homesteading family have resulted in a loss of integrity of feeling. The HNMA has an institutional feeling; its character is defined by the visitor center, interpretive trail loop, and waysides, and not by a historic homestead. Perhaps the hillside where Daniel and Agnes Suiter Freeman were buried, which overlooks the site and is within sight of the surviving Osage orange hedgerow, is the portion of the HNMA that retains the highest degree of integrity of feeling. Even that degree of integrity, however, has been eroded to some extent by the realignment of SH4.

The Freeman Schoolhouse retains substantial integrity of feeling. It is not at all difficult to imagine that the schoolhouse doors could swing open once more and active school children would spill out to play in the schoolyard.

Setting

The realignment of SH4, the development of the Pioneer Acres housing subdivision, and other modern encroachments (*Figure 94*) disrupt the HNMA's integrity of setting somewhat, as does modern NPS development necessary for operational and interpretive needs. The absence of most aboveground historic resources results in a setting that is twentieth-century and not nineteenth-century in character. The site's setting, however, is still rural. Even the Freeman's closest neighboring families—Sheves and Graffs—still occupy and farm neighboring land. If interpreted by NPS, modern developments and innovations in both agriculture and housing could be seen as related to their nineteenth-century homesteading antecedents and would seem more related to

the continuity of human occupation adjacent to the HNMA. In that context, they could appear to be less disruptive of integrity of setting.

The Freeman Schoolhouse retains a substantial degree of integrity of setting. Its rectangular, corner parcel is still intact and defined by intersecting roads and agricultural fields. The development of a parking area on site and the visual intrusion of billboards on the adjacent corner diminish this integrity somewhat, however.

Contributing, Noncontributing, and Missing Features (*Exhibit 14*)

All documented features have been evaluated as either contributing or noncontributing. Non-extant or missing features documented to have been on the site have also been identified to the greatest extent possible using the project research methodology and are listed below. Each contributing, noncontributing and missing feature is further organized according the eleven landscape characteristics outlined in *National Register Bulletin 30 Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Districts*. Several features are noted under multiple categories. Noncontributing features are further defined as neutral or intrusive. Although there are contributing features, there are more noncontributing features.

Contributing Features

land uses and activities

Freeman Homestead Restored Prairie
Woodland
Freeman School Prairie

patterns of spacial organization

T-shaped Boundary lines

response to natural features

Cub Creek

Freeman Homestead Restored Prairie
Woodland
Freeman School Prairie

cultural traditions

Freeman Gravesite (#31)

circulation networks

historic SH4 alignment remnants

boundary demarcations

T-shaped Boundary lines

Osage orange Hedgerow (#32)

Cottonwood Trees remaining along Old Freight Road alignment

vegetation related to land use

Osage orange Hedgerow (#32)

buildings, structures and objects

Freeman School (#S1)

Freeman School Storage Shed (#S6)

Freeman School Girls Privy (#S7)

Freeman School Boys Privy (#S8)

Freeman School Well and Pump (#S9)

Freeman School May Pole (#S10)

clusters

Freeman School, Schoolyard, and Site configuration including:

Freeman School (#S1)

Freeman School Storage Shed (#S6)

Freeman School Girls Privy (#S7)

Freeman School Boys Privy (#S8)

Freeman School Well and Pump (#S9)

Freeman School May Pole (#S10)

archeological sites

Site of Freeman Homestead Cabin (#7)

Site of Freeman Brick House (#11)

Site of Freeman Barnyard (#18)

small-scale features

Freeman Gravesite (#31)

D.A.R. Monument (#33)

Missing Features

land uses and activities

Kitchen Garden (#14)

Orchards (#16)

Barnyard (#18)

circulation networks

Squatter's Cabin road (#2)
Homestead Cabin Road (#8)
Brick House path (#10)
Brick House Road (#15)
Barnyard Road (#23)
Freight/Wagon Road to Fort Kearny (#26)

boundary demarcations

Freeman Homestead "Rough and Ready" Corral (#3)
Board Fencing (#24)
Barbed Wire Fencing (#25)
Cottonwood Trees along Freight/Wagon Road (#30)

buildings, structures and objects

Squatter's Cabin (#1)
John Suiter Cabin (#4)
Freeman Cabin Well (#5)
Chicken Shed (#6)
Freeman Homestead Cabin (#7)
Well and Pump (#9)
Well and Pump (#9a)
Brick House (#11)
Brick House Summer Kitchen (#12)
Feeder Barn (#17)
Shed/Corncrib (#19)
Granary (#20)
Windmill (#21)
Well (#22)
Vegetable Storage Shed (#27)
Shed (#28)
Privy (#29)
Well & Pump (#34)

clusters

(most of the features in buildings, structures and objects occurred in clusters)

archeological sites

(most of the locations of the missing features are archeological sites)

small-scale features

Brick kiln (#13)
Quackenbush House Path (#35)
Quackenbush House (#36)
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin (#37)
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Well & Pump (#38)
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Privy (#39)

Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin Path (#40)
Agnes Suiter-Freeman Cabin/Frame House Road (#41)
Frame House Path (#42)
Frame House (#43)
Frame House Well (#44)
Agnes Suiter Freeman Shed (#45)
Frame House Shed (#46)
Telephone Poles and Lines (#47)
Headquarters Road Loop (#48)
Palmer-Epard Cabin—1st Location (#49)
HNMA Headquarters Flagpole (#51)
Headquarters Access Road (#53)
Headquarters Access Road Trestle Bridge (#54)
Pit Latrine (#59)
Palmer-Epard Cabin—2nd Location (#63)
Prairie Grass Interpretive Marker & Exhibit (#69)
Nebraska SH4 Spur (#70)
Freeman School Woodshed (#S2)
Freeman School Entry Road (#S3)
Freeman School Girls/Boys Privy (#S4)
Freeman School Hitching Posts (#S5)
Freeman School Merry-go-round (#S11)
Freeman School Flag Pole (#S12)

Non Contributing Features

Non contributing features are considered intrusive unless noted as neutral.

land uses and activities

Maintenance Storage Area (#91)
Underground Septic Field (neutral) (#99)
Staff Parking Area (asphalt surfaced) (#95)
Maintenance Storage Area ("boneyard")

circulation networks

Parking Lot/ Access and Circulation Roads (#60)
Squatter's Cabin Spur Trail (#66)
Circular Self-Guiding Trail (#67)
Freeman Graves Spur Trail (#79)
Nebraska SH4 (#71)
Park Maintenance Trail Wood Plank Boardwalk (#97)
Freeman School Visitor parking (#S14)
Wood Boardwalk on Interpretive Trail (#67a)
Concrete and Asphalt Staff and Visitor Sidewalks

boundary demarcations

Steel Entrance Gate (#81)
4' Wood Post and Rail Fence (#83)
6' Wood Slat Fence (#85)

vegetation related to land use

Prairie Plants Interpretive Planting Display (#75)
Ornamental Landscaping throughout Visitor Center area

buildings, structures and objects

HNMA (former) Superintendent's Residence (#62)
HNMA Utility Building/former Headquarters (#52)
Visitor Center and Agricultural Implement Display Building (#61)
Ranger's Residence (#50)
Palmer-Epard Cabin—3rd Location (#64)
Cub Creek Suspension Footbridge (#65)
Water Diversion Canal (#59)
Supply Well (#82)
Return Well (#84)
Underground Septic Tank (neutral) (#98)
HNMA Radio Transmission Tower (#88)
25,000 gal. Underground Storage Tank (neutral) (#92)
Erosion Control Gabions along Cub Creek streambank

small-scale features

HNMA Entrance Sign (#55)
HNMA Boundary Corner Marker Stones
Steel Clothesline (#86)
Utility Pole in Visitor Center Complex (#87)
Garbage Dumpster (#89)
Fire Hydrant (#90)
Satellite Dish (#94)
Vending Machine (encased in wooden structure) (#93)
'Homesteading' Interpretive Exhibit (#74)
"Freeman School" Wayside Exhibit (#S15)
Picnic Tables
Barrel Trash Receptacles (throughout)
State Highway Directional Signage
Manufactured Benches
Wood Log Benches
Bicycle Rack
Visitor Center/Staff Residences Site Lighting
Utility Poles (throughout)
Mailbox
Exterior Pioneer Interpretive Exhibits near Cabin and Visitor Center
Stormwater inlets and pipe outlets into Cub Creek
Utility Meters
Residential Air Conditioning units
NPS Vehicular Directional and Regulatory Signage
4"x4" Post Interpretive markers on Interpretive Trail

HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

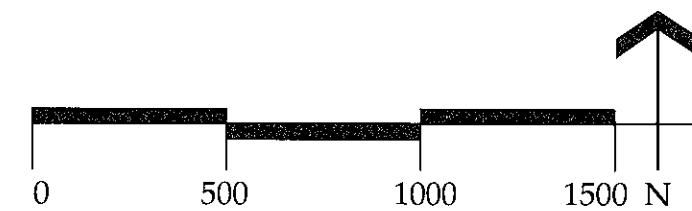
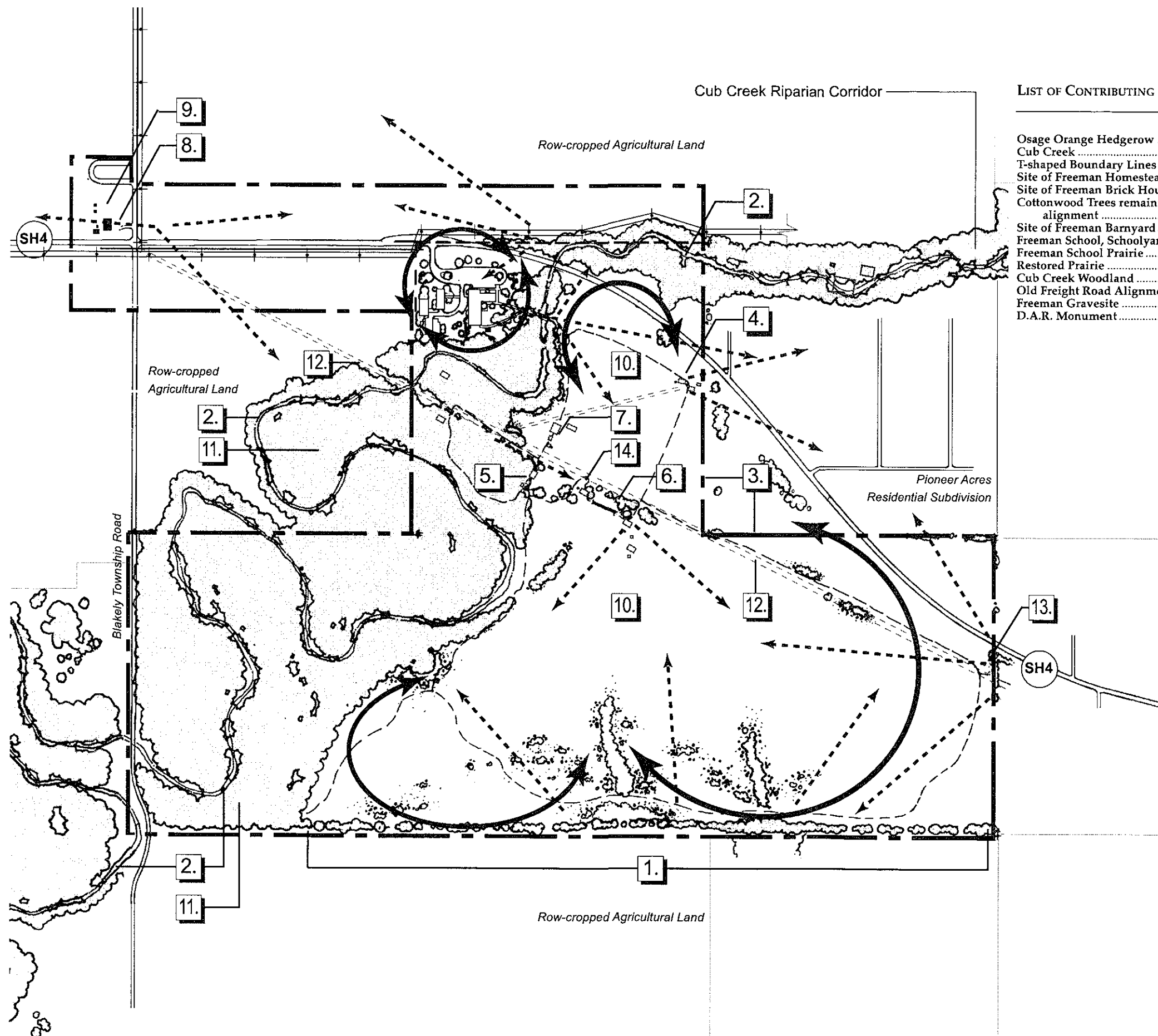
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 14

ANALYSIS

LIST OF CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

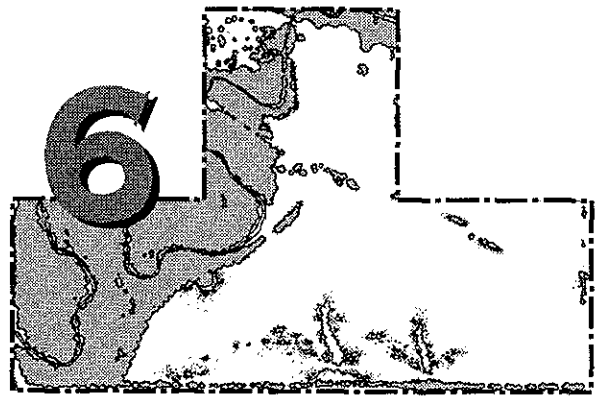
Osage Orange Hedgerow	1
Cub Creek	2
T-shaped Boundary Lines	3
Site of Freeman Homestead Cabin	4
Site of Freeman Brick House	5
Cottonwood Trees remaining along old Freight Road alignment	6
Site of Freeman Barnyard	7
Freeman School, Schoolyard, & Site Configuration	8
Freeman School Prairie	9
Restored Prairie	10
Cub Creek Woodland	11
Old Freight Road Alignment	12
Freeman Gravesite	13
D.A.R. Monument	14



MAP KEY

- Non-contributing Feature
- Missing Feature
- Wooded Vegetation
- Shrubs
- Cub Creek
- Trail
- HNM Boundary Line
- Views
- Spatial Enclosure

Map prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1998. This map is for planning purposes only.



TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Treatment Approach

The *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Homestead National Monument of America* (GMP) supports cultural landscape treatment recommendations based on a rehabilitation approach.¹ The CLR treatment approach has been designed to build off and facilitate implementation of the GMP. Rehabilitation is a flexible treatment intended to accommodate landscape alterations that are desirable to enhance the visitor experience, and yet still preserve those features of the landscape that help to convey the history of homesteading on this site and in the United States. Rehabilitation is defined in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* as appropriate when repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use²

The rehabilitation recommendation is informed by extensive site-related research, field investigations, the findings presented in the previous chapters, and thorough reviews of park planning documents, particularly the GMP, which was developed concurrently with the CLR, as well as discussions with NPS personnel. The treatment phase of this CLR included a treatment planning session at the HNMA in May 1999 attended by representatives of NPS, Quinn/Evans Architects, and Land and Community Associates.

¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Midwest Region, Midwest Support Office, Omaha, Nebraska, *Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for Homestead National Monument of America*, 1999 (hereinafter cited as *GMP*).

² NPS recognizes four approaches for treatment of a cultural landscape; they include preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Charles Birnbaum with Christine Capella Peters, ed., *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1966), p. 46.

The absence of many of the cultural landscape features associated with a nineteenth-century homestead or farmstead precludes an overall restoration treatment approach. In addition, research indicates that there is not adequate documentation to reconstruct most of the missing features associated with the Freeman homestead. Finally, the need to continue to meet the monument's legislative mandate, accommodate visitor uses, improve interpretation of the Homestead Act, respect the scientific and interpretive value of the prairie, manage riparian resources and flooding, reduce the effects of traffic on State Highway 4, strengthen the relationship of the Freeman School to the rest of the HNMA, and to repair, replace, relocate, and modify existing features eliminated the selection of preservation as an appropriate treatment approach. Rehabilitation is consistent with the guidance offered by the 1999 draft *Homestead National Monument of America Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement*, which outlines a vision for upgrading visitor and educational facilities and for alterations to State Highway 4 within the HNMA. The GMP calls for changing the location of HNMA functions away from the existing flood hazard zone and to an adjacent location outside of the historic and current HNMA boundaries. This change will enhance stewardship of the site's historic and natural resources, facilitate efficient management, and improve site operations. The recommendations of this cultural landscape report build directly off the preferred alternative of the updated GMP. The overall philosophy of the GMP is to "maintain a memorial that commemorates and interprets the Homestead Act and its influence upon the country." The NPS will also "maintain the 160-acre original homestead and the Freeman School ... in a manner that provides ... an appropriate perspective of the influences and impacts upon the land in its transition from its natural state to cultivation and agriculture."³

³ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *GMP*, 1999, p. 16.

If more cultural landscape features from the homesteading era survived, restoration to that period would be desirable. Similarly, if specific information concerning character-defining cultural landscape features could be determined through future research and archeological investigations, reconstruction could be considered to facilitate understanding of the site. Since there appears to be insufficient historical landscape resources and information at this time, rehabilitation with enhanced interpretation of well-documented missing features is the preferred course of action. Rehabilitation will accommodate increased and enhanced interpretation of both the landscape and of the Homestead Act, as well as allow for improvements to visitor parking, circulation, and connections with adjacent areas.

Treatment Plan (*Exhibits 23 & 24*)

The treatment plan has been designed to allow the Freeman family homestead landscape to represent better the homesteading movement that was an important part of the story of westward development and agricultural history. The plan calls for using the fully evolved Freeman homestead, including the sites of twentieth-century family homes to show how the property developed over time. Concurrent changes in interpretation could emphasize the role of the landscape in homestead selection and success and failure. Effective landscape conservation would also address the effects of homesteading and agricultural practices on the natural environment. The degraded landscape of the 1930s and the subsequent conservation measures that included establishment of an early prairie restoration, streambank stabilization, and riparian woodland plantations are part of the homesteading story that can best be presented through the landscape itself.

The plan includes some recommendations that apply to the overall HNMA as well as others that address particular areas of the site, specific issues, or groupings of interrelated resources. The plan as a whole recommends improved and enhanced interpretation, expansion of the pedestrian trail system, expansion and adaptive use of visitor facilities, and the development of agricultural demonstration areas as well as viewshed enhancement, and changes to the existing vehicular approaches to the HNMA (*Exhibit 22*).

Overall HNMA

The following recommendations have been grouped below with management actions preceding those most closely associated with physical treatments.

- Interpret the landscape evolution of the HNMA and of its immediate vicinity as representative of the experience and longterm effects of the Homestead Act in the Beatrice community, the State of Nebraska, the Midwest, and throughout the United States. Promote an understanding of land use, land development, and conservation within the overall homesteading theme.
- Monitor and participate in state and local governmental processes that are likely to have an effect on the HNMA, particularly those affecting transportation and land use.
- Implement opportunities to provide expanded and improved visitor facilities outside the T-shaped boundaries of the original Freeman homestead and expand the HNMA's educational program in the existing visitor center.
- Interpretive programs should accept and acknowledge nearby contemporary development as related to the homesteading story, interpreting this development along approaches to the site and at the proposed visitor center.
- Explore innovative interpretive opportunities to decrease dependence on traditional waysides. As part of an overall new interpretive approach, design any new outdoor

interpretation to be less obtrusive and more integrated with the character of the site. At the same time, strive to interpret more of the natural and cultural history of the site. Emphasize the interrelationships between plant and animal communities and the importance of both native prairie plants and riparian systems within the HNMA environment.

- Acknowledge, study, interpret, and manage the restored prairie as an important resource with both cultural and natural values. Avoid static management and continue to explore opportunities to provide opportunities for scientific investigations and analyses. Reevaluate and modify prairie management practices as new natural resource information becomes available.
- Acknowledge, interpret, and manage the riparian woodland as a significant site resource with natural value and cultural associations.
- Acknowledge that vegetation occurred in different locations and in different concentrations at various times during the period of significance. Interpret differences and the basis for NPS/HNMA vegetative management policies.
- Emphasize and interpret the importance of natural resources as natural systems and attempt to redirect prairie interpretation away from plant identification to promote an enhanced ecological understanding of geography and natural history. Link natural resource interpretation to the homesteading story by clarifying the role that the site's natural resources played in making the site desirable as an early homestead choice and in influencing its T-shaped configuration.
- To the greatest extent possible, adopt sustainable landscape practices and management policies.
- Favor the balanced use of indigenous plant species whenever possible in providing landscape enhancements for visitor-related facilities while still presenting the "maintained" appearance the public expects of the NPS.

- Inform neighboring farmers of NPS policies and actions to control species that may affect adjacent farms.
- Acknowledge the interrelationship of the HNMA's hydrologic resources with those of nearby properties and explore ways to cooperate with local governments and other property owners in managing these resources.
- Continue to take advantage of opportunities for archeological investigations that will reveal information related to the cultural landscape. Interpret ongoing archeological investigations while they are in progress and incorporate the findings of these investigations into the HNMA interpretive program.
- Continue to protect all known and potential archeological sites.
- Coordinate treatments with a qualified archeologist. Undertake archeological investigations prior to any proposed ground-disturbing activities, such as the development of new trail segments and historic agricultural demonstration areas.
- Explore opportunities to increase awareness of the Freeman School and better integrate its interpretation into that of the overall site. Explore opportunities to expand interpretation to include the history of rural education and one-room schools, and not just the singular story of the Freeman School.
- Expand research opportunities and interpretive collections at the HNMA to facilitate further study of historic rural landscapes associated with homesteading and early western settlement. Consider acquiring copies of significant homesteading and western land development records that would be of interest to those researching the history of homesteading or of particular homesteaders. Improve and enhance the accessibility of such records through innovative digital and electronic techniques that would assist researchers, particularly amateur and lay historians. Explore electronic linkages with other major depositories in Washington, D.C. and in the various state and academic repositories with significant homestead-related collections.

- Improve and enhance the vehicular approach to the HNMA through adaptation of SH4 to a rural parkway. The parkway will allow the visitor to enjoy and understand the HNMA as a part of a larger agricultural settlement that has evolved since its nineteenth-century subdivision and development as a rural community of dispersed farmsteads.
- Expand and modify the existing pedestrian trail circulation to accommodate proposed changes in visitor facilities, to provide access to more of the site, to address current flooding and drainage issues, to direct pedestrian views away from contemporary development, and to orient visitors toward homestead-related resources within the HNMA. Design modifications and extensions with regard to Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) for accessibility by physically handicapped persons.
- Consider developing a logo based on the site's unique T-shape and incorporate its use into site brochures, websites, signage, trail markers, and other applications.

Visitor and Maintenance Facilities

- Strive for a less institutional and more rural appearance for all visitor facilities and their grounds. Design new facilities to be harmonious with the natural character of the site. Consider the use of indigenous materials and vegetation to provide strong linkages—both symbolically and physically—with the site's ecological systems. While avoiding designs that are replicative or imitative of historical styles and periods, develop architectural designs that are unique to the site and that are compatible within a rural environment. Consider siting new facilities and vehicular and pedestrian systems to take advantage of natural characteristics that may help to visually absorb new construction while also allowing increased visual and physical access to the HNMA.
- Integrate the grounds of visitor facilities into the overall interpretive experience of the HNMA. Consider the selective and balanced use of indigenous vegetation for portions

of the visitor center grounds while still providing a comfortable, well-maintained landscape for visitors to enjoy. Employ a careful site planning process that exploits the potential for views and vistas, and other characteristics that would encourage visitors to become actively involved in and aware of the landscape. Move away from a landscape that encourages passive pass-through without active involvement in and understanding of the landscape.

- Update existing site furnishings with a coordinated, contemporary system, in keeping with the rural character of the site. Avoid trying to portray a historic appearance.
- Explore converting portions of mowed grounds to indigenous wildflower/tallgrass prairie and restore riparian woodland conditions to promote vegetative diversity. Avoid conversions that will not present a maintained landscape image to the public.

Proposed Visitor Center

- Relocate the visitor center function to a new site on the eastern upland outside of, but adjacent to, the HNMA boundaries. This move recommended by the GMP will allow the new center to take advantage of the opportunity for panoramic views. Develop site and architectural designs that fit the site and relate to its history without replicating historic styles. Consider the appropriateness of such characteristics as height, massing, scale, form, and materials. Develop and evaluate simulations that will facilitate an understanding of the effects of new construction when viewed from within the historic HNMA boundaries and along the heritage corridor. Avoid designs that are visually prominent within the original homestead boundaries.
- Develop an appropriate and sustainable landscape plan for the proposed visitor center that utilizes indigenous plant species that include a mix of native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, and trees.

- Relocate the Palmer-Epard cabin to the proposed visitor center site, away from the flood zone, and use it as an interpretive exhibit. Avoid creating a false historical impression through conjectural landscape recreations.

Converting the Existing Visitor Center to an Education Center

- Adapt the existing visitor center for use as an education center.
- Redesign the existing parking lot to facilitate tour and school buses and to enhance its appearance.
- Develop a landscape plan based on using a mix of native grasses and wildflowers for the education center.
- Develop vegetated swales to capture surface runoff and discontinue Cub Creek runoff discharge from the education center).

Maintenance Facilities and Site Housing

- Reduce the suburban feeling of the maintenance and housing area by developing a sustainable landscape plan for the residences that employs tallgrass and wildflower mixes and that includes riparian trees and shrubs.⁴
- Consider developing a maintenance plan that ensures that this area will appear tidy and unobtrusive. Reduce outdoor storage, eliminate build-up of on-site refuse adjacent to Cub Creek, and identify appropriate locations for cuttings, prunings, mowed grasses, and other materials generated on site. Select locations that are not highly visible to the public and where there is little likelihood of introducing undesirable exotic plant species.

⁴ When the List of Classified Structures (LCS) was updated in 1995, the significance of individual structures dating from the Mission 66 site improvements was not assessed. Mission 66 was an initiative of NPS to upgrade facilities in time for the 50th anniversary of the service; this initiative resulted in visitor centers and other facilities recognizable today for their relatively uniform designs. Most of the existing facilities at HNMA were developed during this initiative. The documentation found during the course of this CLR project indicate a lack of integrity for the organization of the complex and landscape features. While a complete evaluation has not been conducted, the resources do not appear to support an evaluation of significance for the Mission 66 context.

- Consider retaining site housing as long as it is useful to the HNMA; if a decision is made to eliminate housing, consider appropriate adaptive uses, such as administrative offices or expanded educational uses. Consider full documentation of all structures and their relationship to the overall site plan of the HNMA before implementing plans for major modifications or removal.

Vehicular Circulation and Interpretation (*Exhibit 16*)

- Work with the State of Nebraska and the local community to reroute SH 4 to remove non-local and non-visitor traffic from the HNMA environs.
- Work with the Nebraska Department of Roads to modify the highway status of existing SH 4 and rehabilitate it as the Homestead Heritage Parkway to connect HNMA with Beatrice and to facilitate vehicular circulation within the HNMA.
- Develop a bicycle trail along the proposed parkway corridor (existing SH 4). Design the bicycle lane to extend from the Freeman School to the education center, new visitor center, and work with local and state officials to physically link the HNMA with Beatrice. Prohibit the use of bicycles on pedestrian trails. Install bicycle racks in the parking lots of the visitor center, education center, and Freeman School. Alert cyclists of the parkway crossing the near the Freeman School.
- Provide opportunities, such as overlooks along the parkway corridor (existing SH 4), to experience the evolving agricultural landscape. In addition, consider developing alternative interpretive aids such as audio tapes, travel information radio technology, or other media that interpret the agrarian environment, including both traditional farmsteads, more recent agricultural innovations, and related commercial enterprises such as the anhydrous ammonia facility visible from the HNMA and the parkway. Interpret this landscape in the visitor center and provide more in-depth opportunities for examining agrarian change through educational activities associated with the education center.

- Develop two wayside vehicular overlooks and interpretive exhibits south of the proposed parkway (existing SH 4). The first should be located outside HNMA boundaries within the State-owned triangle of land south of SH 4, once the proposed agricultural demonstration fields are implemented, and the second should be located just east of the Blakely Township Road.
- Accept and interpret Pioneer Acres as the eventual outcome of government subdivision of western lands and rural development patterns as they have evolved from the nineteenth century.
- Consider converting portions of the parkway corridor (existing SH 4) plantings to indigenous wildflower/tallgrass prairie. Selected areas could include the segments adjacent to overlooks, near historic agricultural demonstration areas, and near the Freeman School.

Pedestrian Circulation and Interpretation (*Exhibits 18 and 20*)

General

- Use the historic freight road alignment as the central spine of a trail extending from the visitor center to the education center and then to the Freeman School (*Exhibit 18*). The proposed trail system retains the majority of existing trails but modifies some existing segments and adds new segments (*Exhibit 20*). Extensions and modifications have been designed to provide greater access to the site, reduce trail closings associated with flooding, and enhance the HNMA's interpretive potential. As part of a future update of the long-range Interpretive Plan, review recommended trail system for application to site interpretation.
- Consult with a qualified archeologist before implementing trail modifications and extensions to evaluate the effects of existing and future compaction associated with trail usage. Develop and undertake mitigation measures to safeguard archeological resources that may be present on or adjacent to the trail alignment. Because of the

potential concentrations of archeological resources in the vicinity of the farmstead interpretive sites, design the specific alignments of trail segments in these areas to avoid resource damage. Interpret any known archeological sites, resources, or in-progress activities adjacent to trails.

- Establish a hierarchy of trail widths based on historic character with the trails in descending order of width from the widest, the freight road which originated as a public wagon road, to the narrower internal farm lane (which would have also been used by wagons), to the most narrow, contemporary pedestrian paths developed to facilitate visitor circulation and interpretation.
- Consider trail surfaces that will be appropriate in a rural, agrarian setting and that facilitate an enjoyable walking experience for visitors. The trail experience should feel much like walking farm paths and country road. Buffalo grass has been used successfully at this and other NPS sites; pelletized hay may also be appropriate, and could be tested in selected areas (especially where grass becomes thin) for comfort, durability, and maintenance requirements for. The use of consolidated soil may be best suited to areas where there is recurrent ponding following heavy rains and storms. Wood chips or board walks may be more appropriate in woodland areas.
- Provide a limited number of seating and resting places along trails near interpreted sites. Select unobtrusive, contemporary site furnishings compatible with a rural setting.

Existing Trails

- Continue to provide a pedestrian trail alignment on the earliest known farm lane leading to the early Freeman cabin site. This segment also provides pedestrian access to the proposed agricultural demonstration area in the triangle.
- Eliminate the existing trail to the Freeman cabin site from the Cub Creek footbridge. Retain the trail segment from the education center over the footbridge to the proposed north *forty* agricultural demonstration area.

- To alleviate erosion adjacent to the creek, relocate portions of the existing trail adjacent to Cub Creek. Explore the potential to interpret cultural impacts on the woodlands and early twentieth-century conservation efforts from the trail.
- Maintain the majority of the current upland trail alignment along the southern boundary and modify its alignment to connect with a partially realigned Cub Creek Trail (*Exhibit 20*).

Freight Road Trail

- Develop a pedestrian trail on the abandoned freight road alignment as the primary visitor circulation route to interpretive and demonstration sites. This alignment will provide better access to the historic landscape during periods of site flooding. Consider extending the trail to visually and physically connect the isolated Freeman School and environs to the remainder of the HNMA. Where the trail passes through the riparian zone, keep vegetation pruned to provide a sight line to and from the Freeman School. Consult with a qualified archeologist to assess archeological resources in this area and to recommend appropriate any necessary mitigation prior to trail implementation to prevent damage that could result from soil compaction associated with the trail. Avoid mitigation treatments such as raised walks that could be highly visible from important viewpoints (*Exhibit 23*).
- Use archeological information, if available, to inform the trail design. Keep the proposed trail width, crown, adjacent plantings, and fences consistent with the conditions and character that was present during the earliest years of the period of significance. Since an intention of the original prairie restoration was to provide a representation of the early pioneer landscape, adopt a similar attitude in developing this trail through the prairie. Determine the trail width based on the width of the original two-track wagon road. Avoid clearing a wide right-of-way adjacent to the trail, and allow prairie vegetation to grow to the trail edge. If no archeological evidence is

available to confirm the historic freight road width, maintain the trail at its current width.

- Maintain the existing trail access to the Freeman gravesite from the freight road trail.
- Identify the freight road alignment outside the original 160-acre boundary and consider extending the trail to the visitor center utilizing this alignment if possible. If this is not feasible, clearly differentiate any new trail segments used to connect the visitor center with the historic freight road trail to avoid visual confusion concerning the historic alignment.
- Use variations in color, surface texture, width, and/or other identifying characteristics to distinguish between the historic freight road alignment and any non-historic trail segments. The surface material used should also provide the desired levels of accessibility as prioritized in an updated *Long Range Interpretive Plan*.

Historic Agricultural Demonstration Area Trail

- In consultation and coordination with a qualified archeologist, develop a trail adjacent to a portion of the traditional eastern boundary near the proposed historic agricultural demonstration area.
- Use this trail to provide access from the Freeman cabin site to the freight road.
- Use variations in color, surface texture, width, and/or other identifying characteristics to distinguish between the historic freight road alignment and non-historic trail segments.

Riparian Corridor (Exhibit 15)

- Preserve and manage large diameter trees in the woodland, the large diameter northern red oak southwest of the Palmer-Epard Cabin, and the large diameter cottonwoods.

- Manage areas southwest and southeast of the education center as riparian woodland to provide vegetative diversity and reduce the incidence and extent of flooding. Continue to remove woody vegetation and thickets as necessary.
- Undertake a hydrological study of Cub Creek and its environs to inform implementation of the following recommendations.
- Restore the riparian woodland along Cub Creek throughout the HNMA. Expand the corridor width where appropriate. Introduce more native species to increase vegetative diversity and overall vegetation width adjacent to the creek along portions of Cub Creek south of the existing footbridge to approximate early settlement conditions. Allow woodland edge vegetation to expand, migrate, and evolve with lowland prairie throughout length of the Cub Creek corridor. Control prescribed fires adjacent to the riparian zone without creating or maintaining a hard (plowed, bladed, raked, etc.) fireline. Considering allowing fires to creep or back into the riparian zone occasionally, but only after they are fully established, to produce a more natural-appearing edge effect.
- Interpret the rationale behind riparian management policies and the degraded condition of Cub Creek and its environs at the end of the period of significance.
- Stabilize the banks of Cub Creek through bio-engineering and vegetative restoration methods and address streambank erosion.
- Cease static woodland edge management practice along the woodland edge.
- Develop a riparian woodland maintenance plan.

Prairie Management (*Exhibit 19*)

- Acknowledge and interpret both the cultural and natural resource significance of the prairie.
- Interpret the prairie as the landscape Daniel Freeman and many other homesteaders encountered as they established and improved their claims.

- Interpret the scientific value of the prairie as well as its cultural associations with twentieth-century conservation and prairie restoration efforts. Clarify that the prairie's major scientific value is as an early prairie restoration project.

- Respect the spirit of the prairie without adopting static management practices.

Interpret the evolution of prairie management on this site. Prairie management should continue to evolve, and not replicate the 1930s-installation-era appearance. Continue to study and stay current with prairie management philosophies, practices, and technologies. Modify prairie management as appropriate as new scientific information becomes available.

- Continue prairie restoration practices that promote ecological biodiversity. Control invasive woody species and exotic species through prairie management techniques to ensure integrity of the prairie.

- Undertake a prairie species inventory to use in interpretation and use the NPS long term prairie monitoring effort to provide information on the existing prairie and changing conditions.

- Relocate the prairie plant identification function to the education center. Integrate prairie plant identification into the overall design of the facility.

- Continue to conduct annual prairie burns as a prairie management technique.

Continue to ensure human safety and protect other cultural and natural resources and NPS infrastructure and facilities during prairie burns.

Interpretation

General

- Expand the interpretive period to the entire period of the Freeman family habitation and their use of the T-shaped quarter section. Emphasize that the Daniel and Agnes Freeman and their family are the HNMA's illustrative example of all homesteaders.

Make as many interpretive linkages as possible to the national and regional homesteading experience during this period.

- Emphasize the role of Cub Creek, the woodland, and the freight road during the homestead era.
- Along the parkway corridor (existing SH 4) and bicycle/pedestrian trails, develop opportunities for historic interpretation and native plant identification.
- As part of an overall interpretive plan, decrease dependence on waysides that visually intrude into the significant views or can be generally seen above the unknown tallgrass prairie. Ensure that any essential waysides are well-designed; avoid allowing interpretive devices to dominate the landscape. Consider use of universally accessible ground-level or low interpretive waysides where such interpretation is most effective. Consider using ground-level interpretation that is visible only at the site of the resource; in other areas use low-scale panels that will not be visible above the height of the adjacent prairie vegetation. Avoid the use of any signage that exceeds the height of unmowed prairie vegetation. Explore opportunities for innovative electronic/digital interpretive alternatives that would have fewer permanent visual effects on the landscape. Innovative technologies may be able to provide visitors with an increased awareness of landscape development and use from the initial homestead period through twentieth-century conservation efforts. They may also provide increased accessibility for visitors who are not able to visit the entire site.
- Consider the needs of all handicapped visitors, including the visually and hearing impaired when planning cultural landscape interpretation. Address the unique sensory qualities of the prairie setting, including the sights and sounds of the wind-blown prairie grasses, the light quality of the prairie sky, and the presence of native birds and insects.

- Work with community and governmental groups to provide information about the HNMA outside its borders, especially within the community of Beatrice. Increase and improve directional signage to the HNMA.
- Maintain the DAR monument as an example of early commemoration of the significance of homesteading at the site. Retain the time capsule because of its linkages to the local community.

Interpretive Sites and Cultural Resources Related to the Freeman Family

- Acknowledge that the Freemans were a locally significant family but that their importance to the HNMA is as a symbolic homesteading family. Interpret the Freeman landscape by calling out the ways in which this landscape is both a typical and a unique example of a nineteenth-century homestead. Interpret the creek, woodland, freight road, and other features that made the property a desirable homestead site for Freeman to select and claim as one of the first homesteads under the Homestead Act.
- Reorient the gravesite marker by rotating it 90° to return it to its original orientation. Remove the low metal fencing that delineates the grave site. Use small, non-mechanical tools to remove vegetation from the gravestone vicinity to avoid damage to the stone.
- Interpret the panoramic view of the homestead, the freight road, the Freeman School, the historic Osage orange hedge, and other points of interest from the gravesite.
- Develop cultural landscape interpretation based on the Freeman family's use of the site during their residence. Facilitate an understanding of the ways in which the Freemans were typical of other homesteaders and the ways in which they were unique. Appropriate sites for such interpretation include the squatter's cabin site, the Freeman homestead cabin site, the brick kiln site, the Freeman brick house site, the Freeman barnyard (including the barn, corncrib, etc) site, the outer Freeman cabin site, the Quackenbush house site, the Freeman graves, and the Freeman School. In developing interpretive plans, use each site as part of a coordinated interpretation that covers the

entire homestead landscape period of significance and homestead's varied land uses. For example, interpret the agricultural aspects of the homestead near the barnyard site. Interpret the pre-homesteading and initial homesteading era at the squatter's cabin site emphasizing natural site characteristics. Develop interpretation of the early Freeman period and homesteading requirements at the cabin site. Continue homesteading interpretation at the brick house site and present the transition from frontier life to well-established rural community life. The school provides many opportunities for addressing such aspects of the homesteading experience as community institutions, rural education, and childhood.

- Coordinate the interpretation of the above sites with a pedestrian trail network linking them together (see Pedestrian Circulation and Interpretation). The freight road provides a visual and physical link between the two portions of the HNMA.
- Use the interpretive sites located adjacent to the pedestrian trails to address the homesteaders' responses to natural features, historic land uses, attitudes towards ecosystems during the homestead era, and prairie and riparian woodland vegetation.
- Undertake archeological studies of these sites to inform their interpretation and modify cultural landscape treatments as new information becomes available.
- Consider interpreting historic orchard development in the vicinity of the brick house where there were three orchards at the time of Daniel Freeman's death. Freeman is known to have had peach, cherry, pear, and plum trees. Consider undertaking archeological investigations to assist in identifying an orchard location.

Historic Agricultural Demonstration/Cultivated Fields (Exhibit 19)

- Consider development of two historic agricultural demonstration zones, the priority site in the triangle of state-owned land south of the existing SH4,⁵ and a secondary site

⁵ Acquire in fee simple, by easement, or as a long-term lease, the state-owned triangle of land south of SH 4 to use as an agricultural demonstration area. The triangle is a priority site for agricultural interpretation

in the north 40 east of the Cub Creek bridge. Although the monument's most recent archeological assessments completed in 1986 do not indicate a high likelihood of significant archeological resources in these areas, the assessments describe concentrations in adjacent areas. Because of this proximity, consult and coordinate treatment with a qualified archeologist prior to implementation; incorporate any archeological information that becomes available into plans and interpretation of these areas. Utilize historical agricultural practices and demonstrate the use of historic equipment and technologies.

- Develop the triangle to clearly delineate and interpret the ten acre-minimum amount of land in agricultural use that was necessary to qualify a homestead claim. Plant crops known to have been associated with the Freeman family, such as corn, oats, rye, wheat, Irish potatoes, and hay (*Exhibit 23*).
- Develop a fencing demonstration along the southern and western boundaries of the triangle. Develop a demonstration split log rail fence along the west boundary of the triangle adjacent to the trail connecting the Freeman cabin and the freight road and reference Freeman's own description of such a fence. As the interpretive plan is developed, explore opportunities to interpret and demonstrate the sequence of fence types that spanned the homesteading era to interpret the enclosure of the prairie and the importance of fencing to agrarian life. Consider the use of a variety of fencing alternatives from the period along the southern boundary, including barbed wire, post and board, wood rail, picket, and post and wire. The intent of the fencing demonstration is to be experiential and interpretive. Such fencing examples should not be planned as reconstructions unless archeological or visual evidence becomes available.

and demonstration since it lies outside the historic HNMA boundaries, is located in close proximity to the visitor center, and provides opportunities for visibility from a potential parkway overlook.

The Freeman Schoolyard and Environs (*Exhibit 24*)

- Retain and continue to interpret all buildings and structures associated with the historic school uses.
- As part of an overall interpretive upgrading, increase interpretation of the school landscape and its use during the period of significance.
- Reestablish the schoolyard entrance off Blakely Township Road in its original location south of the existing entrance. Develop a vehicular gate allowing for pedestrian access at this location. The gate should also accommodate maintenance vehicles.
- Consolidate all vehicular entrances and parking to the recently developed bus parking area in the northern portion of the site.
- Designate handicapped parking spaces at the southern edge of the parking area.
- Develop a north-south mowed pedestrian connection between the parking area and the schoolhouse.
- Develop directional sign for visitor parking on the gate to the relocated schoolyard entrance.
- Develop a pedestrian connection across the proposed parkway (alignment of existing SH4) to the proposed freight road trail. Investigate the potential to acquire rights of way or easements where necessary to facilitate crossing. Alert pedestrians of the crossing through signage and walking trail brochures.
- Work with NDOR and other appropriate entities to designate the area near the Freeman School, which is used by school groups, a "school zone" with a reduced speed limit in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing during peak season usage. Use temporary signage that can be removed seasonally.
- Reestablish the semi-elliptical clearing south of the school for group orientation and other activities.

- Consider reestablishing the flag pole in its 1960's location. Flying a flag would reinforce the visual connection with the remainder of the HNMA and provide a visual terminus for the freight road trail.
- Consider reconstructing the woodshed in its 1960's location. If needed, it would be appropriate to use the woodshed to conceal mechanical equipment or to store supplies or tools.
- Reestablish the fencerow vegetation evident in the 1940 aerial photograph. Maintain the area west of the proposed fencing as a vegetative buffer between the HNMA and adjacent land not owned by NPS.
- To reduce maintenance and promote sustainability, consider planting the non-prairie areas of the schoolyard in short native grasses such as buffalo grass.
- Work with the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), utility companies, and adjacent property owners to install underground utilities in the immediate vicinity of the school.
- Work with adjacent landowners toward the removal of the billboards opposite the school near Blakely Township Road that interrupt views toward the Freeman Farmstead.

Rehabilitation of Historic Osage Orange Hedge (*Exhibit 17*)

- Rehabilitate historic Osage orange hedgerow through the selective removal of existing trees and the planting of new trees along the length of the south HNMA boundary.
- Maintain and replenish the Osage orange hedge; plan for its over maturity and associated vegetative losses through propagating, grafting, and/or replanting.
- Eliminate the invasion of the hedge by eastern red cedar and shrubs.

Views and Vistas (*Exhibit 21*)

- Strengthen views to the prairie and riparian woodland areas.

- Strengthen the physical and visual connection between the Freeman homestead "T" and the Freeman School.
- Acknowledge views to Pioneer Acres and as part of the GMP preferred alternative implementation, interpret the residential subdivision as a predictable outcome of land subdivision trends set in place in the nineteenth-century through homesteading and other development-oriented initiatives.
- Encourage the planting of wildflowers at Pioneer Acres subdivision in the currently mowed area.
- Take advantage of the opportunity of views from SH 4 to the HNMA through the development of vehicular overlooks where they will not interfere with the traditional spatial arrangement of HNMA (*Exhibit 23*). Consider overlook design as part of overall parkway design to provide enhanced visual access from the parkway to the prairie, to historic agricultural demonstration areas, and to the Freeman School.
- Consider purchasing or accepting as donation outdoor advertising rights along the entire proposed parkway (existing SH 4) to eliminate billboards and other outdoor advertising that could detract from the historicity and visual quality of the site.
- Monitor conditions on adjacent properties or on properties visible from the HNMA to identify potential changes and recommend appropriate actions to protect the viewshed.

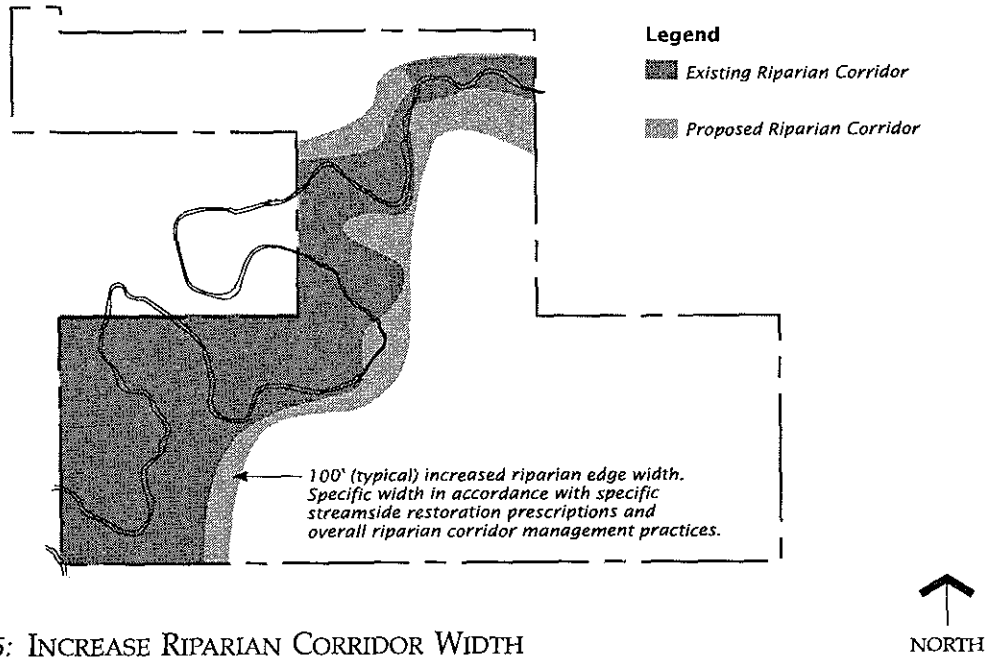


Exhibit 15: INCREASE RIPARIAN CORRIDOR WIDTH

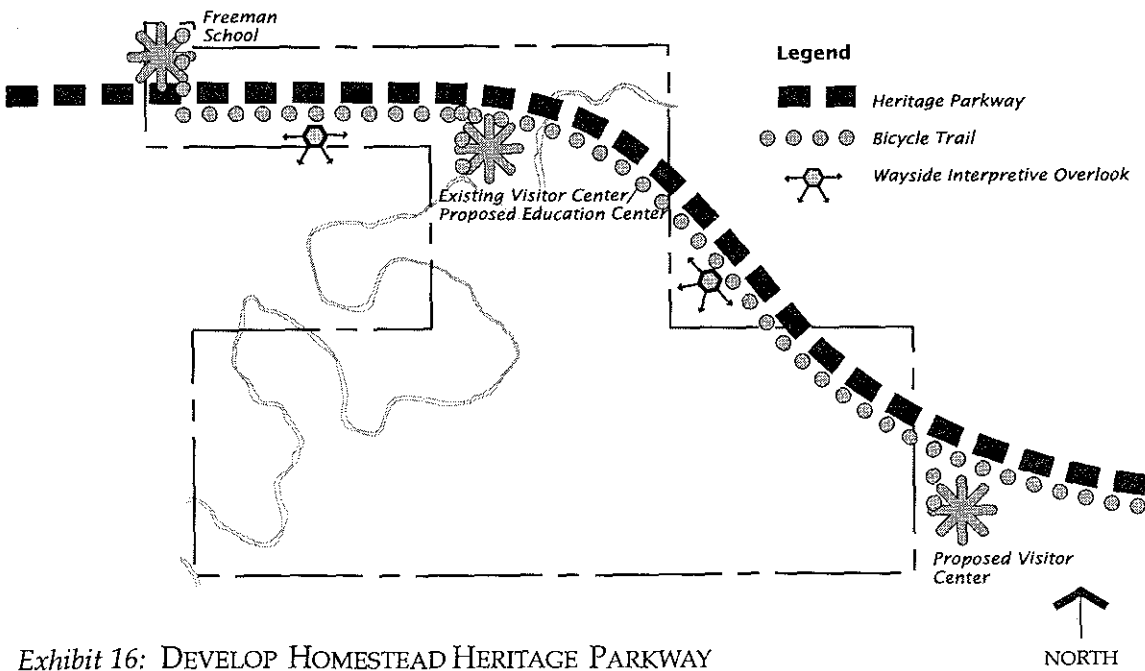


Exhibit 16: DEVELOP HOMESTEAD HERITAGE PARKWAY

368/20007
2008/25

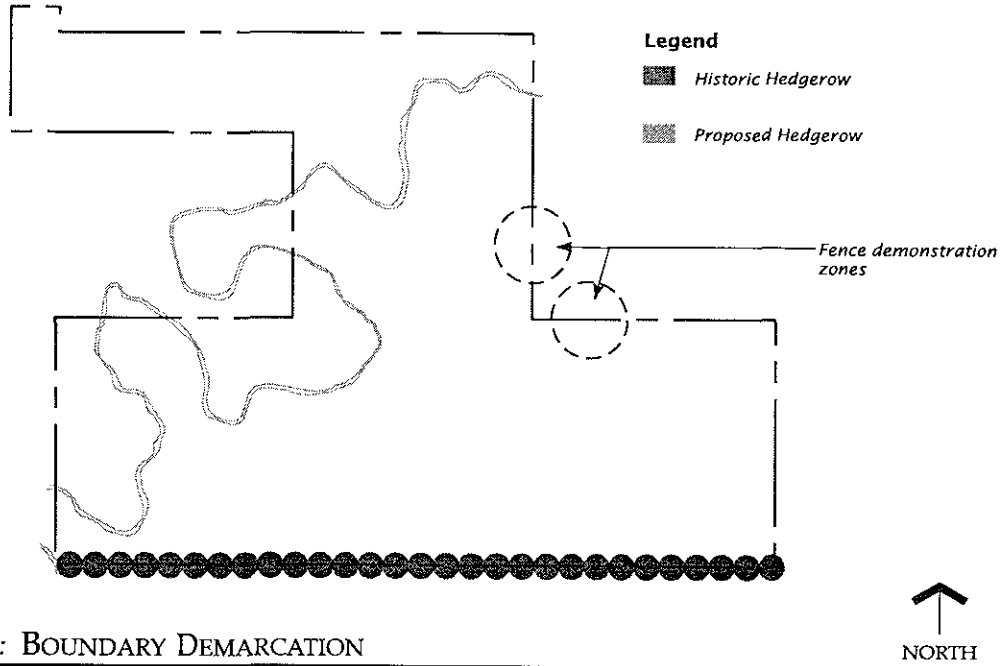


Exhibit 17: BOUNDARY DEMARCATION

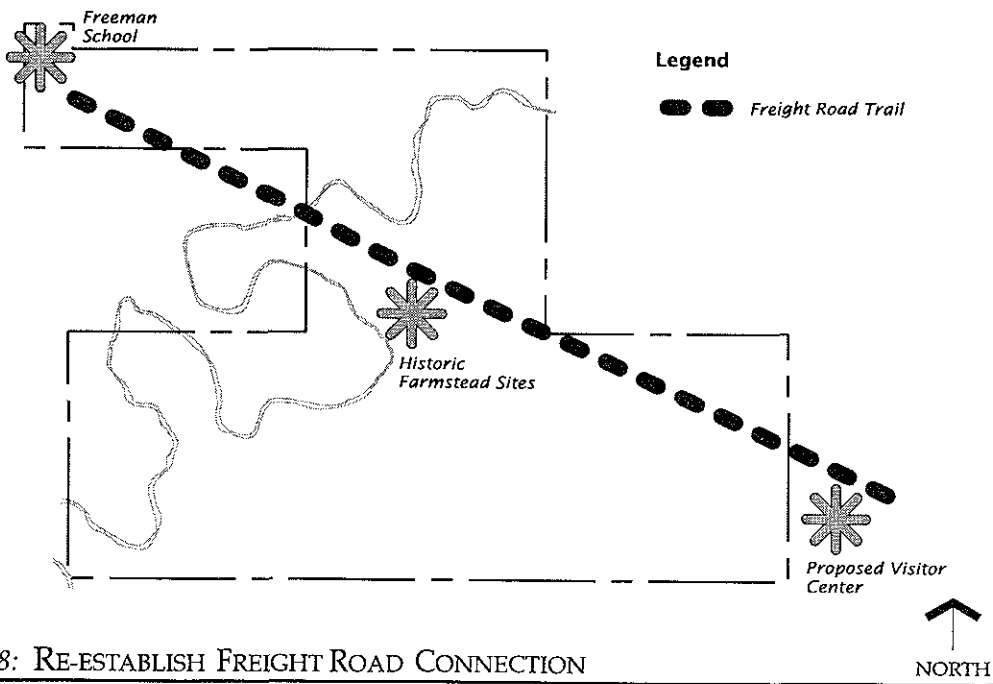
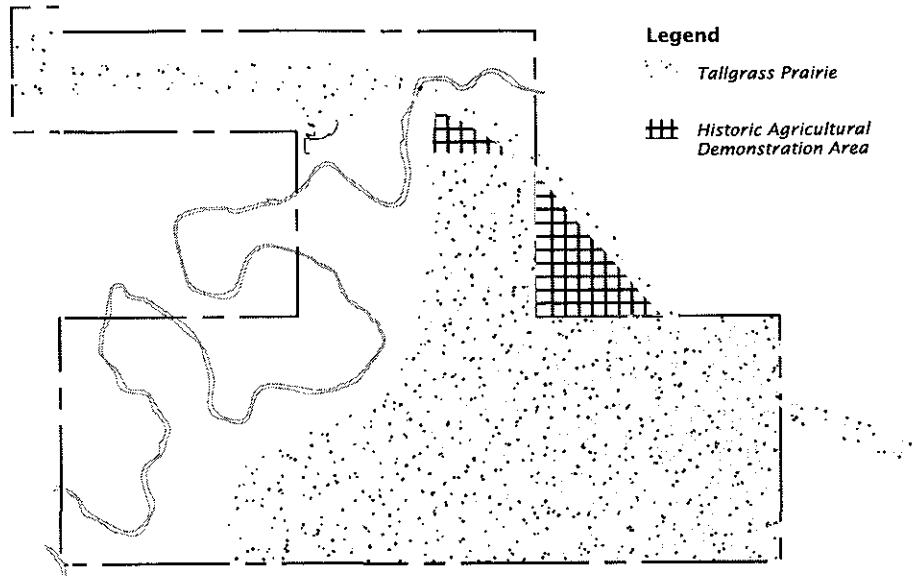


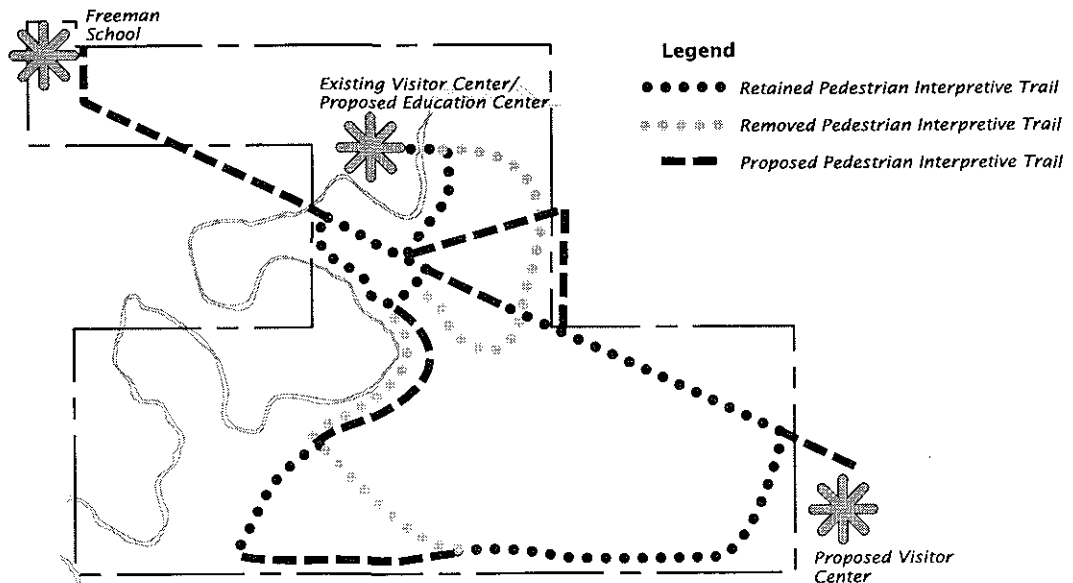
Exhibit 18: RE-ESTABLISH FREIGHT ROAD CONNECTION



Legend

- Tallgrass Prairie
- ▣▣▣▣ Historic Agricultural Demonstration Area

*Exhibit 19: DEVELOP AGRICULTURAL DEMONSTRATION AREAS/
MAINTAIN TALLGRASS PRAIRIE*



Legend

- Retained Pedestrian Interpretive Trail
- ▣▣▣▣ Removed Pedestrian Interpretive Trail
- - - Proposed Pedestrian Interpretive Trail

*Exhibit 20: DEVELOP PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND
INTERPRETATION SYSTEM*



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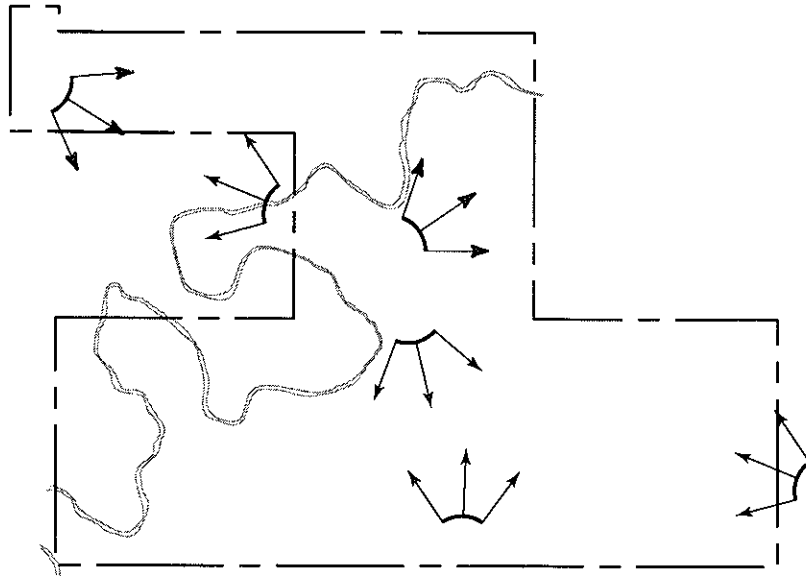


Exhibit 21: PRIMARY VIEWS

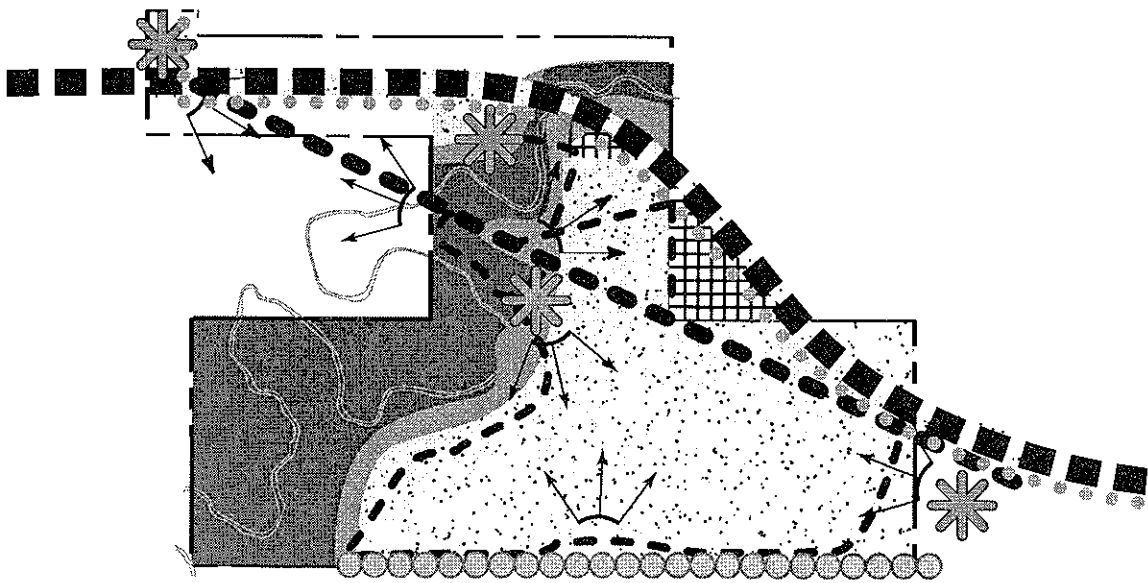


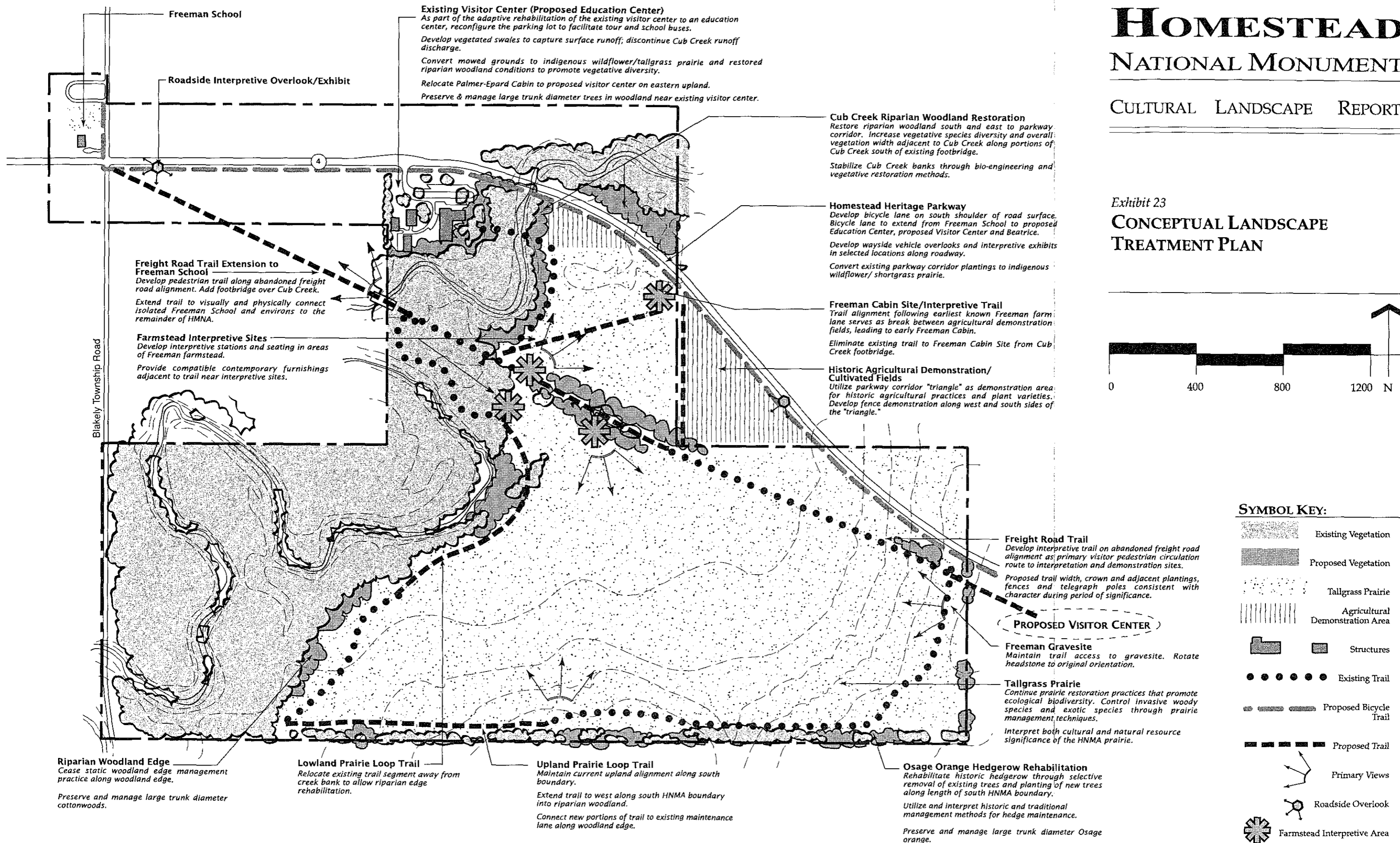
Exhibit 22: SCHEMATIC LANDSCAPE PLAN



HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

Exhibit 23 CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE TREATMENT PLAN



Map Prepared by Land and Community Associates, July 1999. Revised January, June 2000. This map is for planning purposes only.

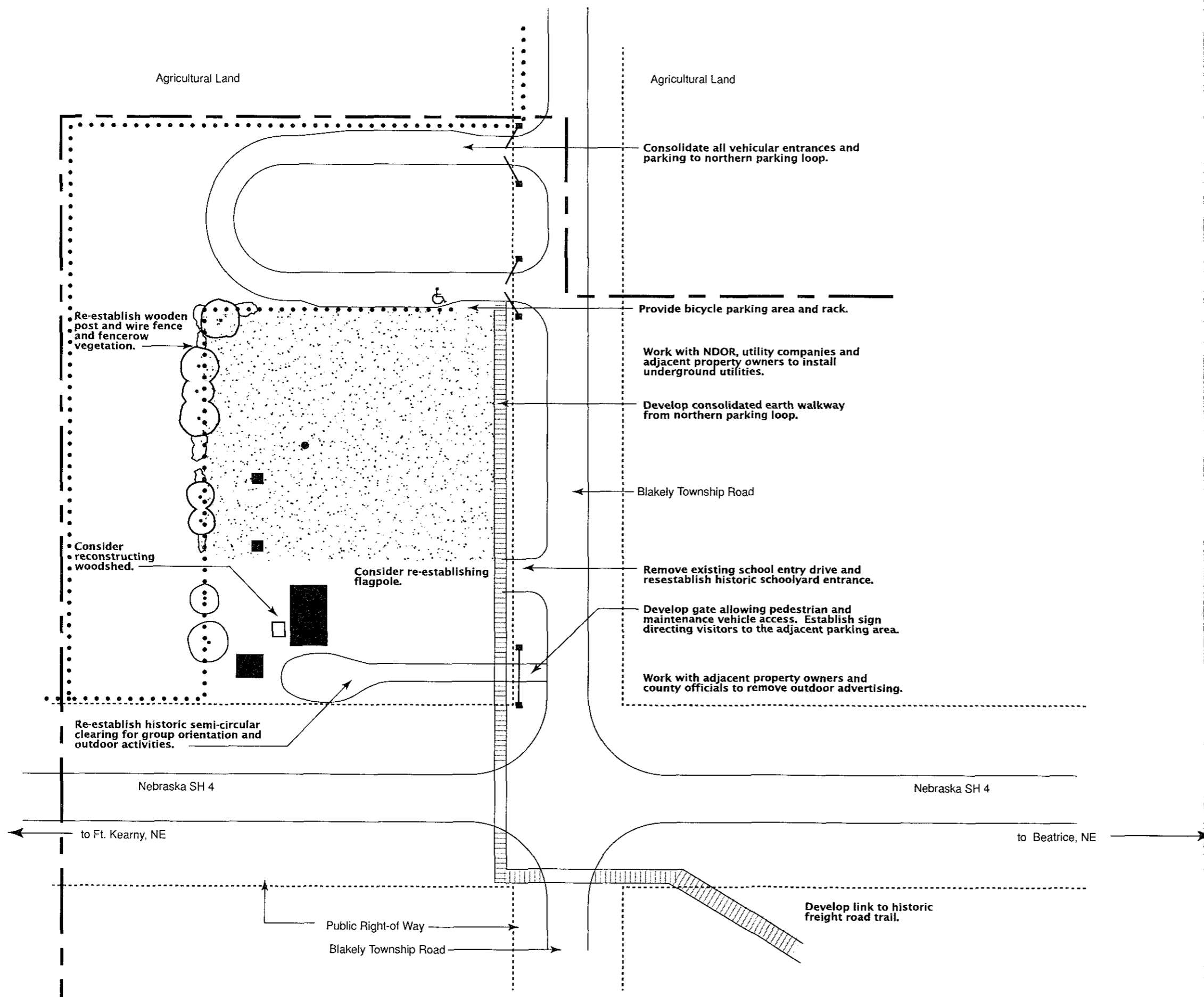
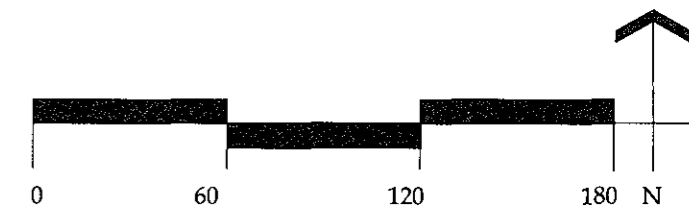
HOMESTEAD NATIONAL MONUMENT

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT




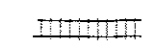


Exhibit 24

CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE TREATMENT PLAN

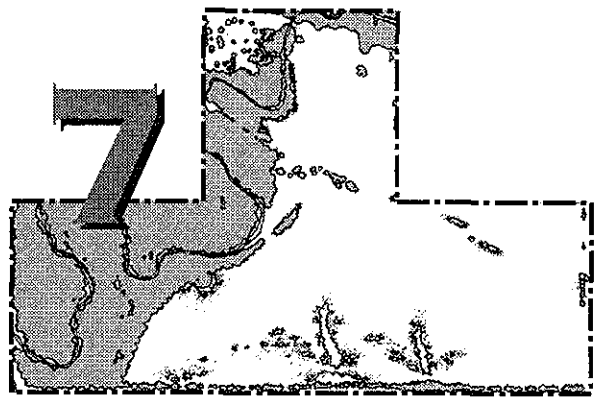
FREEMAN SCHOOL



SYMBOL KEY:

-  Prairie
-  Woody Vegetation
-  Structure/ Building
-  Walkway/ Trail
-  Fence
-  HNMA Boundary

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IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Implementation of the CLR treatment recommendations can be accomplished incrementally and coordinated with implementation of the General Management Plan (GMP) preferred alternative and interpretive plan revisions. Implementation can be assisted also through the long-range prairie monitoring process, additional archeological studies, and hydrological studies. The treatment plan presented and outlined in the CLR Chapter 6 *Treatment Plan* has been divided into eight discrete projects for implementation. These eight projects are discussed in this chapter with a project description, justification, accomplishment, and budget detailed for each. These recommendations can be accomplished through a combination of HNMA personnel, regional NPS personnel, and NPS contractors. Some work may be appropriate to accomplish with volunteer assistance from the local community or through cooperative agreements with colleges and universities. Some projects can be implemented independently; others require at least partial implementation of the GMP preferred alternative before they can be accomplished.

Implementation requires coordination of eight distinct but interrelated projects that include the following: monument landscape rehabilitation, Freeman gravesite rehabilitation, vegetative resource management, development of historic agricultural demonstration areas, modification of pedestrian circulation and interpretation, Freeman School landscape rehabilitation, landscape development and rehabilitation related to visitor and maintenance facilities, and parkway and overlook development.

The GMP preferred alternative supports protection of cultural landscape resources and values and recommends that “Monument staff would implement recommendations from the Cultural Landscape Report.”¹

I. Monument Landscape Rehabilitation

Project Description

The CLR proposes an overall monument landscape rehabilitation intended to provide additional resource information from further archeological study, enhance the rural qualities of the site, strengthen connections between the restored prairie and other portions of the landscape, guide maintenance decisions, particularly as related to historic vegetation, and provide visitor information and amenities. The components of rehabilitation include undertaking archeological studies of the Freeman family farm sites, either individually or collectively, to provide additional information concerning the spatial organization of the family’s various domestic clusters, internal circulation, vegetation in the residential environs, and other historic characteristics and features. Pollen and phytolith studies, the use of ground-penetrating radar, and some sub-surface testing could provide valuable information concerning these sites. Once additional information has been analyzed, it can be included in a comprehensive landscape interpretation system for the site that addresses the interrelationships of natural and cultural features and land use during the Freeman family ownership. While an interpretive study will probably include waysides, it is also anticipated to include exploration of the use of less intrusive innovative technologies. Improved directional signage includes both vehicular and pedestrian signs with vehicular signs bearing the HNMA logo to direct visitors traveling to the visitor center, the education center, and the Freeman School. Pedestrian signs will direct visitors throughout the site

¹ GMP, p. 41.

and may bear the logo as well. Site furnishings will include the installation of 15 contemporary wooden benches, and 15 converted stave barrels with special tops to serve as trash receptacles. A landscape maintenance plan will be necessary to address seasonal, annual, and periodic landscape maintenance issues. It will provide an outline that HNMA maintenance personnel can use in developing their work plans. This plan will address the prairie, the riparian corridor, the various interpretive areas of the monument, including the several sites associated with the Freeman family, proposed cultivated areas, and the Freeman School. It will also address the landscape immediately adjacent to the visitor center, education center, and housing and maintenance areas.

Justification

The HNMA mission goals state that the monument is to be maintained in good condition to preserve natural and cultural resources and to provide for visitor enjoyment and understanding. Developing a maintenance plan and improving landscape interpretation and site furnishings are supportive of these goals. These recommendations provide visitors with "an appropriate perspective...of the land" in fulfillment of the monument's stated mission. Undertaking additional focused archeological studies will contribute to the body of knowledge necessary to preserve and interpret the monument's resources, which are other mission goals. Only limited subsurface testing was conducted in the most recent archeological study conducted in 1986. Landscape rehabilitation includes activities that support the GMP's preferred alternative to facilitate "sound future stewardship, operations, and management of the Monument." Increased operational costs related to this recommendation will include the increased maintenance and occasional replacement of furnishings and signage, the clearing of vegetation that grows near installations, and increased monitoring to repair damage from vandalism.

Project Accomplishment

The project can be accomplished incrementally. Portions of it, specifically site furnishings and signage, will require continued monitoring and maintenance. The archeological studies will be accomplished by NPS regional personnel, or by contracts or cooperative agreements with private firms or state universities. The cultural landscape interpretation system will be accomplished by NPS as part of an interpretive plan update. The directional signage system should be implemented in conjunction with the implementation of the GMP preferred alternative since it relates to the development and adaptive use of new facilities and the heritage parkway. Similarly, coordinated site furnishings can be implemented in conjunction with the GMP preferred alternative because they also relate to the development and adaptive use of new facilities. The development of a cultural landscape maintenance plan should be phased to occur following implementation of the GMP preferred alternative, the proposed hydrological assessment, and take into account the findings and recommendations of the Long-Term Prairie Monitoring team.

Budget: \$64,000 See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

II. Freeman Gravesite Rehabilitation

Description

The Freeman gravesite rehabilitation includes a 90% reorientation of the existing gravesite marker to replicate its original siting and orientation in relation to the freight road and removal of the fencing surrounding the gravesite. There will be increased operational costs associated with hand-removing prairie vegetation to keep the gravesite marker visible since mechanical removal could damage the marker.

Justification

Implementation of the GMP preferred alternative to develop a visitor center near the gravesite will result in increased visitation. In keeping with the monument's mission and goals, visitor enjoyment will be enhanced by reorienting the marker to make it more visible from the pedestrian trail. Reorientation will also meet preservation goals by returning to the original relationship to the freight road.

Project Accomplishment

This project could be accomplished by HNMA personnel or contractors at any time, but should be accomplished by the time proposed pedestrian trail modifications occur and the visitor center is operational.

Budget: \$1,250 See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

III. Vegetative Resource Management

The vegetative resource management project has three main components: prairie management, the riparian corridor, and rehabilitation of the historic Osage orange hedge. All may require the purchase of plants and seeds, and some transplanting may be necessary as well. The recommendation for a comprehensive prairie study is a continuation of ongoing efforts and could be undertaken as part of NPS Long-Term Prairie Monitoring or could be undertaken as a specific contract or cooperative agreement with a state university. The plan will provide direction for prairie modifications, in terms of diversity and health of species, edge treatment, fire management, and adjacent land uses. It will provide information to use in developing the cultural landscape maintenance plan. The results of this effort will be a part of the enhanced interpretation of the prairie's scientific significance and its role in conservation history. Relocation of the existing prairie exhibit to an area near the

education center involves transplanting the existing or identical specimens and the actual work necessary to prepare a site suitable for their introduction. Operational costs will include any management costs associated with the prairie study recommendations and the cost of site preparation and relocation for the prairie exhibit.

A hydrological study will involve an investigation of the relationship of the portion of Cub Creek that flows through the HNMA with its watershed and adjacent areas to better understand periodic flooding and identify mitigation alternatives. It will identify actions that NPS can undertake independently and those that may require cooperative efforts with other property owners. The study may involve consultations with local, state, and regional officials. The riparian management recommendation is also a continuation of activities that have been underway since the establishment of the monument. Proposed activities involve monitoring water levels, water flow, water quality, and stream bank erosion. The project should also identify historic channel configurations that can be used in conjunction with other historical information in interpreting the HNMA's interrelationship between nature and culture. The vegetative component will address the vegetative composition of the corridor presently and historically and recommend specific action plans for additions to the current vegetative mix as well as actions to preserve, manage, and replace large diameter trees. These studies may be accomplished by contracts with private firms or through contracts or cooperative agreements with state universities. Operational costs may include costs associated with removal of existing vegetation, pruning, and replanting. There may also be costs associated with the hazard removal of large diameter trees.

The rehabilitation of the historic Osage orange hedgerow will require manual removal of other species of trees that have invaded the hedge, manual removal of dead Osage orange, and replanting of Osage orange seedlings to replenish the hedge. The work can

be accomplished by HNMA personnel or through a contractor. Increased operational costs will involve removal, replanting, and nurturing transplants.

Justification

This vegetative management project is justified by the mission of the HNMA, which is to *"maintain the 160-acre homestead ... 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."* Both the prairie and the riparian corridor represent this transition. The Osage orange hedge is a rare surviving bio-cultural feature from the homesteading period and represents the early settlers' efforts to enclose cultivated areas and mark their boundaries with living fences.

Project Accomplishment

The Long-Term Monitoring efforts are ongoing. The riparian corridor and hydrological studies should be planned to precede or to be included as part of the cultural landscape maintenance plan. They should provide information for use in cultural landscape interpretation. The Osage orange rehabilitation is an independent project that can be taken without coordination with other projects. Due to the age and condition of the hedge, this project should be given priority.

Budget: \$99,000.00, plus to be determined. See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

IV. Development of Historic Agricultural Demonstration Areas

Description

Implementation of this project involves land acquisition outside the current boundaries, site preparation, soil preparation and amendment, purchase of plants and seeds for crops, planting and fertilizing, staking and labeling, fence construction, and installation.

There is an opportunity in the land to be acquired to develop and interpret the extent of the 10 improved acres required to settle a homestead claim. A portion of this land could be reserved for planting Osage orange seedlings to be used in replenishing the historic hedge. A number of fence types will be used to represent the diversity of fencing used by homesteaders. Operational costs will be associated with annual plantings, care, and cultivation; fence repair and occasional replacement. Additional employees and volunteers will be necessary. The start-up phase may be expected to be more labor-intensive than later phases when the demonstrations are well-established, and their care is more predictable. Contractors may be necessary for site preparation, planting, installation, and construction.

Justification

This project is justified by the mission of the HNMA, which is to *“maintain the 160-acre homestead ... 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.”* In addition, this project will meet mission goals of public enjoyment and understanding of the homesteading experience in the United States.

Project Accomplishment

This project can be accomplished in conjunction with the GMP preferred alternative or independently. However, implementation depends upon land acquisition and the availability of a workforce of employees and volunteers. Once land is available and work is assured, the project can be implemented in phases over several years.

Budget: to be determined. See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

V. Modification of Pedestrian Circulation

Description

Modifying the existing pedestrian circulation involves trail extension through the addition of 1.1 miles of trail, removal of approximately 0.29 mile of existing trail, site preparation for new trail extensions and surface rehabilitation of existing trails, bridge construction, preparing and replanting former trail surfaces, and right-of-way acquisition. This total project is an integrated project that requires coordination with all other aspects of the CLR and the GMP preferred alternative. It must be coordinated with parkway development, new construction and adaptive use, prairie and riparian management, interpretation, the Freeman School landscape rehabilitation, placement of signage and site furnishings, and development of demonstration areas. Work can be accomplished by HNMA personnel, volunteers, and contractors. Operational costs will be associated with the development of new trails and the rehabilitation and removal of existing ones. There will be a net increase of approximately .67 mile of trail that will require maintenance. One trail will be relocated to an existing fire break and will serve a dual purpose. Implementation should reduce existing costs associated with repairing flood damage to trails and removing debris.

Justification

This project is supportive of the overall mission and mission goals of the HNMA and helps implement the GMP preferred alternative by providing a pedestrian linkage between the new visitor center and the original 160-acre site and facilitates movement to all portions of the HNMA. Modifying pedestrian circulation allows the HNMA to enhance its interpretation and commemoration of the Homestead Act, and increases accessibility to and visibility of the Freeman School. A significant portion of the new trail addition replaces portions of existing trail that are subject to periodic flooding and that may contribute to streambank erosion.

Project Accomplishment

Portions of this project can be phased and implemented independent of others, or the entire project could be implemented as part of the GMP preferred alternative implementation. Phasing should be coordinated with the GMP preferred alternative implementation to provide access to newly developed or rehabilitated areas. The highest priority for implementation is completion of the trail along the freight road alignment from the east side of Cub Creek to the eastern HNMA boundary and relocation of the trail along Cub Creek within the existing boundaries.

Budget: \$313,300, plus to be determined See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

VI. Freeman School Landscape Rehabilitation

Description

This project includes several tasks that clarify and improve parking and pedestrian access, reestablish missing historic features and historic appearance, and delineate boundaries. The project involves development of a pedestrian link to the remainder of the HNMA, provides a delineated mowed pedestrian link from the parking area to the school and its yard, designation of handicapped parking spaces, and installation of a bicycle rack. The handicapped parking spaces can be designated through site preparation of an asphalt pad with a painted handicapped symbol, and the bicycle racks will need to be purchased. Implementation of the pedestrian link depends upon acquiring a right-of-way along the freight road alignment across private property (see V). To facilitate crossing the parkway near the Blakely Township Road intersection will require a designated crosswalk on the southern and western sides of the intersection, and caution and pedestrian crossing signs will need to be purchased and installed. Site preparation of road shoulders with culverts may be necessary at the crossing site. Purchases include a flagpole; installation will require site preparation. The elliptical

clearing will require grading, compacting, and soil consolidation. There are excavations associated with installing utilities underground; the installation needs to be coordinated with an archeologist. The possible reconstruction of the woodshed will be based on visual research and architectural drawings. Replacement of non-prairie areas with native tallgrass requires site preparation, purchase of seed and plants, and planting as well as reestablishment of the fencerow vegetation. Purchase and installation of post and wire fencing will be necessary to reestablish boundary fencing. Work can be accomplished through a combination of HNMA personnel, volunteers, and contractors. Operational costs associated with the rehabilitation include mowing the pedestrian connection and fence maintenance.

Justification

These recommendations are justified because they help to fulfill the purpose of the HNMA to “protect the setting, provide access to the Freeman School, and maintain a visual relationship” with the rest of the HNMA. The Freeman School is a contributing component landscape that represents the significance of one-room rural schools during the homesteading era. Implementation of these recommendations will strengthen the visual and physical relationship of the school with the remainder of the HNMA.

Project Accomplishment

Most of this project can be implemented independent of the GMP preferred alternative implementation. Trail connections need to be coordinated with other pedestrian circulation modifications and are dependent on acquiring a right-of-way.

Budget: \$38,800, plus to be determined. See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

VII. Landscape Development and Rehabilitation Related to Visitor and Maintenance Facilities

Description

A major recommendation of the GMP preferred alternative, and also proposed as part of the CLR, is development of a new visitor center adjacent to the existing HNMA, outside the historic and character-defining boundaries of the monument. Although the facility is to be developed outside the traditional Freeman homestead boundaries, adopting a similar attitude toward the rural landscape for the new visitor center site will provide continuity of setting for visitors and motorists traveling through the monument on the heritage parkway. A balanced use of native vegetation, coordinated signage, trail linkages, and historic view protection are necessary to enhance the physical connections between the traditional homestead and the new development. The landscape portion of the project will include site preparation, purchase, and planting of a native tallgrass/wildflower mix for the new visitor center. The relocation of the Palmer-Epard Cabin for use as an interpretive exhibit will involve the use of a moving contractor and site restoration for the previous location of the cabin. The redesign of the education center includes parking lot modifications necessary to reduce stormwater runoff and to accommodate increased bus traffic and parking. Portions of the mowed lawn areas of the education center, maintenance area, and housing area will need site preparation, and soil preparation and amendments to be replanted with a tallgrass/wildflower mix. This work can be accomplished through a combination of HNMA personnel and contractors. Operational costs should not change appreciably although they may decrease over time if there is less mowing.

Justification

Creation of a new visitor center is a major aspect of the GMP preferred alternative implementation and will facilitate expanded understanding of the entire homesteading

experience in the United States, its effects on the natural landscape and its cultural landscape manifestations throughout the United States, but particularly in the great plains states. Development of such a facility outside the existing HNMA boundaries will prevent encroachment onto additional land within the original homestead acreage. Adaptive use of existing facilities for education, housing, and maintenance will provide continuity and continued uses for existing structures in locations that have already been disturbed and that are not believed to possess substantial concentrations of archeological resources or information. These recommendations are justified by the mission of the HNMA and its goals.

Project Accomplishment

The project will be accomplished as part of the GMP preferred alternative implementation. Adaptive use of the education center cannot occur until the visitor is completed. Landscape enhancements should be coordinated with construction schedules.

Budget: \$99,475. See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

VIII. Parkway and Overlook Development

Description

This project, recommended in the GMP preferred alternative, reroutes SH4 and requires local support as well as the support of the Nebraska Department of Roads for implementation. Converting the existing alignment of SH4 to a parkway includes construction of one access interchange to the visitor center, delineation of a bicycle lane, development of two wayside vehicular overlooks, the purchase and planting of wildflowers at Pioneer Acres subdivision, and the purchase of outdoor advertising rights on SH4. Most work will be accomplished by contractors or NDOR. Volunteers

may be able to undertake the wildflower component of the project. The overlooks will require the use of paving contractors and the purchase of wayside exhibits.

Justification

The parkway is recommended as part of the GMP preferred alternative implementation and will provide opportunities for increased awareness of the rural cultural landscape of the HNMA and its setting.

Project Accomplishment

This project will need to be implemented through coordination with the Nebraska Department of Roads. Its completion should be timed to coincide with the opening of the visitor center.

Budget: \$33,000, plus to be determined. See total project budget at end of chapter for details.

Cost Estimates

See spread sheet following.

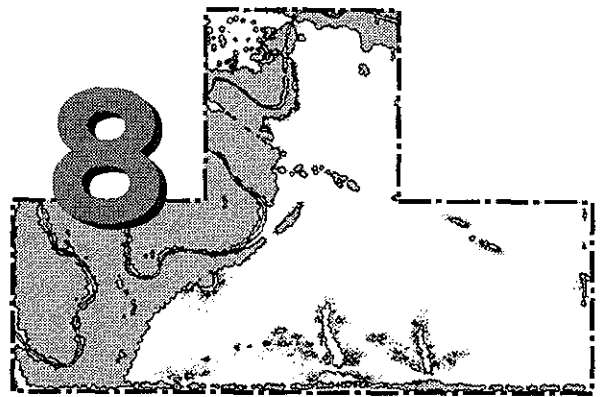
Budget Breakdowns

The total cultural landscape implementation budget can be assigned as follows:

Implementing GMP	\$ 4,936,083.
Further Studies	\$ 150,000.
Interpretive	\$ 212,840.
Implementing CLR	\$ 877,980.

IMPLEMENTING GMP				
PROJECT COST ESTIMATES				
Item	Unit	Gross	Design Cost	Total
I. Monument Landscape Rehabilitation				
A. Coordinated site furnishings	benches, trash receptacles*	\$ 26,250	\$ 2,625	\$ 28,875
II. Visitor and Maintenance Facilities Rehabilitation				
A. Proposed Visitor Center				
1. Develop shortgrass/wildflower mix for new visitor center	17 acres@\$7840	\$ 133,280	\$ 13,328	\$ 146,608
2. Relocate the Palmer-Epard cabin for use as interpretive exhibit			\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
III. Parkway and Overlook Development				
A. Reroute SH 4			\$ -	\$ 4,500,000
B. Construct 1 access interchange to visitor center				\$ 250,000
			SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,936,083
IMPLEMENTING CLR				
PROJECT COST ESTIMATES				
Item	Unit	Gross	Design Cost	Total
I. Monument Landscape Rehabilitation				
A. Directional signage system (including logo)	15 installed @\$600	\$ 9,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 14,000
B. Develop cultural landscape maintenance plan			\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
II. Freeman Gravesite Rehabilitation				
A. Reorient gravesite marker; rotate 90°		\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
B. Remove fencing at gravesite		\$ 250		\$ 250
III. Vegetative Resource Management				
A. Prairie				
1. Relocate prairie exhibit to proposed education center	plants/interpretive signs	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 11,000
B. Riparian Corridor				
1. Restore riparian woodland throughout HNMA	To be determined			
2. Pruning of large diameter hazard trees	30@\$1000	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 33,000
C. Osage Orange Hedge Rehabilitation				
1. Rehabilitate historic Osage orange hedgerow	50 trees@\$500, clearing	\$ 50,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 55,000
IV. Development of Historic Agricultural Demonstration Areas				
A. Acquire stated-owned triangle of land south of SH 4	To be determined		\$ -	\$ -
V. Pedestrian Circulation				
A. Trail extension	1.1 miles@\$26,880/mile	\$ 29,568	\$ 2,957	\$ 32,525
B. Trail removal and replanting		\$ 7,000	\$ 700	\$ 7,700
C. Obtain right-of-way, freight road extension to Freeman School	To be determined			
D. Pedestrian and Service Bridge over Cub Creek (freight road)		\$ 250,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 275,000
VI. Freeman School				
A. Reestablish historic entrance with gate	consolidated earth, gate**	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,500
B. Develop pedestrian link to freight road trail	crosswalks	\$ 2,000	\$ 200	\$ 2,200
C. Define Handicapped parking in parking area	asphalt pad with symbol	\$ 2,000	\$ 200	\$ 2,200
D. Develop mowed path from parking area to elliptical clearing		\$ 1,000	\$ 100	\$ 1,100
E. Reestablish elliptical clearing		\$ 5,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 7,500
F. Reestablish flagpole	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500	\$ 150	\$ 1,650
G. Reconstruct woodshed	To be determined			
H. Reestablish post and wire fencing	640'@\$14/linear ft	\$ 8,960	\$ 896	\$ 9,856
I. Reestablish fencerow vegetation	10 trees@\$1000	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 11,000
J. Underground overhead utility lines	To be determined			
VII. Visitor and Maintenance Facilities Rehabilitation				
A. Proposed Education Center (Existing Visitor Center)				
1. Redesign parking lot to accommodate functional changes			\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
B. Maintenance Facilities and Park Housing				
1. Improve visual separation from adjacent visitor access areas	fencing, trees, shrubs***	\$ 22,250	\$ 2,225	\$ 24,475
VIII. Parkway and Overlook Development				
A. Redesign SH 4 as Homestead Heritage Parkway w/bicycle lane	To be determined		\$ -	\$ -
B. Develop 2 wayside vehicular overlooks adjacent to HNMA	2@\$15,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 33,000
C. Purchase outdoor advertising rights on SH 4	To be determined			
			SUBTOTAL	\$ 877,180
INTERPRETIVE				
PROJECT COST ESTIMATES				
Item	Unit	Gross	Design Cost	Total
I. Monument Landscape Rehabilitation				
A. Develop cultural landscape interpretation system	30 installations@\$1000	\$ 30,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 33,000
II. Vegetative Resource Management				
A. Prairie				
1. Develop interpretation of scientific significance of prairie			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
III. Development of Historic Agricultural Demonstration Areas				
A. Develop historic agricultural demonstration zones				
1. Develop fencing demonstration	1600'@\$14/linear ft	\$ 22,400	\$ 2,240	\$ 24,640
2. Develop cultivated fields demonstration	Clear 10 acres@\$3200/acre	\$ 32,000	\$ 3,200	\$ 35,200
			SUBTOTAL	\$ 212,840

FURTHER STUDIES				
PROJECT COST ESTIMATES				
Item	Unit	Gross	Design Cost	Total
I. Monument Landscape Rehabilitation				
A. Undertake archeological studies of Freeman family sites	To be determined			
II. Vegetative Resource Management				
A. Prairie				
1. Complete comprehensive prairie study			\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
B. Riparian Corridor				
1. Undertake hydrological study of Cub Creek				\$ 75,000
			SUBTOTAL	\$ 150,000
TOTAL COSTS				\$ 6,176,103
*15 contemporary benches@\$1000 (installed), 15 converted stave barrels w/ special tops@\$750				
**wooden gate				
***500' fencing@\$14/linear ft., 35 shrubs@\$150 installed, 10 trees@\$1000 installed				



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