

The Native Stone Scenic Byway

Corridor Management Plan

A cooperative effort among
The Kansas communities of:

Alma, Eskridge & Dover

In Wabaunsee & Shawnee Counties

September 2005

NATIVE STONE SCENIC BYWAY

Mission Statement

The Mission of the "Native Stone Scenic Byway" is to showcase the beauty and diversity of this area in Kansas and in so doing preserve our history, our culture, and our environment while enhancing local economic growth and state tourism.

Executive Summary

The "Native Stone Scenic Byway" is the end product of several communities working together to bring economic growth to their rural towns and a sense of pride from state tourism. The byway has easy access off of I-70. The west end may be accessed at Exit 328 (Alma); the east end may be accessed by going south at Exit 353, beginning at the intersection of Glick Road and K-4 Highway. The byway was approved by the state due to its varied natural elements: twisting, winding creeks; agriculture; grazing land; vast vistas; stone deposits; elevation changes; seasonal foliage and wildflowers. The roadway, created by early pioneer travelers, follows the topography of the land. It stretches 50 miles along highways K-4 and 99, and passes through the communities of Dover, Keene, Eskridge, Lake Wabaunsee and Alma.

The incorporated cities of Eskridge and Alma, as well as Wabaunsee and

Shawnee Counties, have signed resolutions acknowledging the importance of the byway and offering support for the designation as "Native Stone Scenic Byway." In so doing, the governmental entities will encourage environmental code enforcement, adherence to zoning laws, and timely road maintenance in coordination with KDOT.

Residents of Alma, Eskridge and Dover received on-going information about the byway as plans progressed. Notice of meetings and general information about the proposed byway was printed in the Wabaunsee County Signal-Enterprise [3/13/03; 7/17/03; 7/31/03; 8/14/03; 8/21/03; 2/26/04; 10/28/04; 11/25/04; 12/2/04] and in the Topeka Capital-Journal [10/29/04; 2/18/05]. Some property owners, especially those in Shawnee County, received individual calls advising them of the proposed Native Stone Scenic Byway designation. Part of the responsibilities of the Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee (NSSBC) will be to be available to address any concerns citizens may have about activity along the byway. The Wabaunsee County Signal-Enterprise will continue to be the primary source of published information about activities of the Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee.

Statistically, where previous byways have been designated throughout the state, traffic has increased by 30% with the majority of the increased travelers being retired citizens. The increased traffic may attract new business to the towns along the byway - businesses that are supported by travelers, such as

convenience/gas shops, bed and breakfasts, antiques and gift shops. Studies will be done to see how existing businesses benefit from the byway.

Plans have been proposed for a couple of turn-outs for viewing the landscape and for signage that will provide information about the history of the area. Additionally, emphasis will be placed on stone elements found along the byway which led to the naming of the same. Preservation of stone homes, barns, bridges, fences, and supporting walls will be a priority. Residents will be encouraged to use stone to build more fences, to accentuate landscaping elements, and to mark driveways.

Volunteer efforts will be coordinated to pick up trash and to plant wildflowers along the byway.

The byway will be promoted through the Kansas Scenic Byway Program (KSBP). Color brochures depicting scenes along the byway will be stocked in travel and tourism information centers, state travel offices, and provided for local convention and visitors bureaus. Signs directing travelers to the byway, and incremental markers along the route, will be easily identified by visitors. Additionally, the Kansas Department of Transportation and Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism, will publish information about the byway on their websites, as will businesses who also have websites.

Being designated a Kansas Scenic Byway increases eligibility for grants through the National Scenic Byway Program and the Kansas Department of

Transportation. The Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee with representation from each community, including other entities (Alma Chamber of Commerce, Lake Wabaunsee Improvement District, Flint Hills Coalition, Dover Community Foundation), provides a framework for administering funding to the benefit of the entire area.

I. INTRODUCTION

The "Native Stone Scenic Byway" was the outgrowth of two communities working in tandem, desiring to bring recognition of the beauty of their area, and neither knowing about the efforts of the other. Dawn George, a member of the Alma, Kansas Chamber of Commerce, began the initial endeavor in 1998. Dawn was transferred, and in 2000, Ron Schultz, Don and Becky Frank, Patricia Ringel and Ervan Stuewe resurrected the project. Quarterly meetings were held, and the project began in earnest in 2001.

Meanwhile in 2001, the new proprietor of the 1878 Sage Inn & Stagecoach Station in Dover, Kansas, Debra Stufflebean, was seeking ways to increase the landmark's exposure. After checking on better signage for the community of Dover, she was told that eventually the names of unincorporated communities would be removed from interstate signs, and Kansas road maps. Feeling that this would even further mean the demise of small towns, she looked into the Kansas Scenic Byway Program as a tool to increase community pride and

involvement, as well as bring travelers to the area. Her effort was joined by Freda Lohse, Dawn Brown, Tammy and Gene Blake, Mike Stufflebean, and Rich and Ronda Bassett.

Both groups developed a plan for a byway that would best showcase what the area had to offer. The Alma group started with a route that began with I-70 Exit 328 and followed Highway 99 to the junction of K-4 Highway, then turned west on K-4 to Alta Vista. The Dover group started with a route that began at I-70 Exit 353 and followed K-4 Highway southwesterly to Eskridge, Kansas, then turned west to the junction of K-4 and Highway 99, and back north to I-70 Exit 328.

Both groups completed the mile by mile surveys of the proposed byway route and submitted them to the Kansas Scenic Byway Clearinghouse. The feedback received in 2002, informed both groups of the other's existence and the need to collapse the proposal into one byway for this area. Further, the proposed name of "Native Stone Scenic Byway" was approved.

At a joint meeting, Debra Stufflebean, was appointed to write the Corridor Management Plan, incorporating research and information from both proposals. After on-going discussions between groups, modifications were made to both proposals and the following Byway plan was developed. It should be noted that no representatives came forward from Alta Vista to help with the project, and to provide the necessary documentation to bring it to completion. Therefore, the Alma group withdrew the nomination for including the area of K-4 Highway from

the junction of K-4/Highway 99 west to Alta Vista. Should future interest bring forth the necessary manpower, the Kansas Scenic Byway Committee has reserved the right to include the route as part of the Native Stone Scenic Byway as long as it meets the scenic criteria.

Project Description

The "Native Stone Scenic Byway" showcases an area in Kansas that is well known for its native limestone, resulting in rocky landscapes, stone fences, bridges, commercial buildings and homes. The byway journeys through Mission Creek and Mill Creek valleys, covering parts of two counties, Shawnee and Wabaunsee, and the glorious Flint Hills. The strengths of the byway come from natural elements: twisting, winding creeks; agriculture; grazing land; vast vistas; stone deposits; elevation changes; seasonal foliage and wildflowers. The roadway follows the topography of the land, rather than cutting through it, having been created by paving earlier trails traveled by pioneers.

The byway can be accessed from Kansas I-70, coming from the east or the west, making it easy for vacationers to get off and back on the interstate, in order to experience a true taste of Kansas life, while only going approximately 25 miles out of their way. The east end of the Native Stone Scenic Byway is accessed by taking Exit 353, south and west on K-4. The byway begins at the intersection of Glick Road and K-4 Highway and continues southwest to Dover, Kansas (8 miles). The byway continues west through Dover following K-4 and

will curve south to Eskridge, Kansas (15 miles). This area is known for its rolling hillsides of rich agricultural land.

From Eskridge, the byway continues west past Lake Wabaunsee to the junction of K-4 and Highway 99 (10 miles). The area provides magnificent vistas of the Flint Hills. The traveler will turn north on Highway 99, going through the city of Alma, Kansas to Exit 328 on I-70 (15 miles). This area is known for its rocky terrain, that was sectioned off with stone fences in order to raise cattle.

Not only is there a diversity of scenery, but the towns offer a glimpse at the differences in Kansas communities, from the unincorporated village of Dover, to the small town of Eskridge, to a mid-size town like Alma. Lifestyles are apparent as you pass by farms, ranches, small businesses, and observe families going about their daily routines, children going and coming home from schools.

A map of the area, with the "Native Stone Scenic Byway" highlighted, is included in the appendix (A-1).

City/County Resolutions

The length of the byway requires a great deal of cooperation among governmental entities. The state is involved, obviously, for oversight of state highway projects. Shawnee County is involved, since the east end of the byway and the Valencia access road, lies within Shawnee County and zoning/environmental codes fall under its purview. The incorporated communities of Eskridge and Alma support the byway designation. The bulk of the byway

falls within Wabaunsee County causing that county's Comprehensive Plan and zoning/environmental code regulations to have the greatest impact. Therefore Shawnee County, Wabaunsee County, City of Eskridge and City of Alma were identified as governmental entities who needed to approve and agree to cooperate with the byway project. Copies of resolutions provided by the Clearinghouse were sent to the clerks with request for notice to be given when said resolutions would be put on their meeting agendas. Byway representatives attended said meetings. Resolutions are attached and marked as Appendix A-2.

Purpose

The purpose for developing the Corridor Management Plan is to clearly state the byway route; identify our most important resources so that ways can be sought to enhance them, be it through preservation or economic development; to address major issues that will need monitoring; and to set specific, measurable goals that can be attained within a feasible time period.

Future decisions by members of an oversight committee should always refer back to these goals, leading them to change or reinforce actions taken.

Vision

Kansas is not considered a tourism state. The Kansas Department of Transportation should be commended for adopting a scenic byway program. This program may change people's perceptions of Kansas. Evaluators who submit

nominations of roadways for the designation must look at Kansas through fresh eyes, through the eyes of a visitor. Sometimes the experience can be discouraging; sometimes it is rewarding. Either way, the experience can be the impetus for improving.

The "Native Stone Scenic Byway" is an awakening of communities to the beauty of what we see from our windshield every day, and becoming excited enough about that to want to share it with others. It's about putting on our Sunday-best and being proud of our heritage. It's NOT about change; it's about continuing to be.

Imagine with me, being a traveler from another state. *I've just traveled miles and miles on the interstate without stopping when I see a sign, "**Native Stone Scenic Byway.**" I turn off, partly out of curiosity, partly out of boredom. Right away I see there are agricultural differences from one farm to the next. Being a stranger, it can be fun to try to identify what is being grown in first this field, then the next. All kinds of animals wander over to the fences. I see horses, cattle, llamas, mules, and buffalo. There are also beautiful ponds filled with ducks and geese. I notice as I'm driving that there are a lot of pick-ups in these parts, and everyone acts like they know me as they wave with a finger or two from the steering wheel.*

When I stop off for a bite to eat, I realize that folks around here are all too aware that I'm not from these parts. Heads turn and they study me as I walk inside to order the special of the day. It's starting to get late and as I

continue my drive west, it occurs to me that I've never seen such a large sky and breathtaking sunset. I climb a hill top to see the land drop out from under me and I imagine what life was probably like as a cowboy sitting on his horse looking across the horizon.

On this byway I notice demographic differences, too. Very small farms, perhaps a tiny garden, some chickens and a cow, stand in contrast to large cattle ranches with huge modern homes high upon the hilltops. Not only do I see more recently built homes burrowed into the sides of hills to protect them from the cold and wind, but I also see the remains of barns and stone buildings that tell a story of life on the prairie from long ago.

It's time to head back to the interstate, but I notice that there are sure a lot of rock fences along this road. I've got time to read the historical marker. So this is what "home on the range" was all about. People in town are starting to close up shop. I've never seen so many stone buildings before, and they've got a museum! And an antique mall! I'll remember this place. On the way back I'll get off at the Alma exit, spend a little time there, and repeat the rest of it all over again. Without that scenic byway sign, I'd never known all of this was here.

Goals/Objectives/Action Plans

The goals we plan to achieve from scenic byway designation are to preserve our heritage, to bring tourism to our area, to financially benefit

businesses along the byway, and to encourage economic development in our communities.

Goal 1: To Preserve Our Heritage

Objective 1a. We intend to preserve the existing nature of our countryside.

Action: To stay abreast of zoning applications or governmental changes to the existing codes that would adversely impact the agrarian feel of the roadway. [Whenever issues come before any governing body.]

Action: Discourage and monitor any application for the erection of wind turbines in visual areas of the byway. [Whenever this issue is brought before any governing body.]

Action: [Annually, if funding can be secured] Encourage, and provide scholarships to, youth who go into farming and ranching (agricultural studies).

Action: [On-going] Work with County Extension Offices to educate persons on how to be good stewards of the land, such as crop rotation and pasture burning.

Action: [On-going] Monitor byway to see if groups who have volunteered to pick up litter are doing so with enough frequency.

Action: [As needed] Request state/county/township maintenance for shoulders to be mowed and weeds to be sprayed, unless those areas have been designated for wildflower growth.

Objective 1b. We intend to restore, maintain and preserve old buildings, especially stone buildings and barns, along the roadway.

Action: [Within six months of a byway being established] Members of the Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee (NSSBC) will create a list of stone buildings and barns along the byway, and identify ones that need to be restored.

Action: [Within six months of a byway being established] Members of the NSSBC will seek to identify funding for preservation projects.

Action: [Within six months of the list of stone structures being developed] Members of the NSSBC will meet with owners of stone barns or stone homes to see what assistance is needed.

Action: [Within one year of making original contact with owners of property in need of repair] If property owners have not made any improvements, the NSSBC will designate endangered buildings and barns as historic resources in need of preservation with the state historic registry.

Objective 1c. We intend to save any further stone bridges or walls from demolition or replacement.

Action: Meet with state, county and township officials. [when changes are proposed]

Action: Call public meetings and start petitions. [if meeting with the appropriate officials has not brought about the desired action]

Action: Contact the program administrator for the Kansas Scenic Byways Program. [When first become aware of an issue of concern]

Objective 1d. We intend to restore, maintain and encourage stone fencing along the roadway.

Action: [Within six months of a byway being established] Members of the NSSBC will create a list of property owners where stone fencing exists, and identify fencing in need of care.

Action: [Within six months of a list being completed] Members of the NSSBC will meet with property owners about the condition of their stone fencing, to see what assistance is needed.

Action: Articles in local newspapers will be used to promote the construction of stone fencing along the byway, [Intermittently] and to advertise a service project opportunity. [When the landowner needs assistance]

Action: Members of the NSSBC will encourage stone masonry apprenticeships through vocational-technical programs in schools.

Goal 2: To Bring Tourism to Our Area

Objective 2a. We intend to identify existing resources available that would be of interest to visitors.

All of the following actions will be accomplished as a result of preparing the Corridor Management Plan [see Resources section of Plan].

Action: Develop a resource directory identifying places to shop, eat,

spend the night, recreation available, historical and educational opportunities.

Action: Identify parks where travelers may be able to stop for recreation or picnics.

Action: Identify back road excursions off of the byway.

Objective 2b. We intend to take advantage of the marketing expertise available through the Kansas Scenic Byway Program.

Action: [On-going] The Kansas Scenic Byway Program will advertise the Native Stone Scenic Byway on the Interstate, on the internet, and in print such as tourism guides, brochures, and other promotional materials.

Objective 2c. We will include the Native Stone Scenic Byway in all of our promotional materials.

Action: Promote annual festivals in the three communities through local newspaper ads, flyers, posters, and the Kansas Getaway Guide.

Goal 3: To financially benefit existing businesses.

Objective 3a. We intend to identify which businesses along the roadway are most likely to benefit from tourism.

Action: [Before the Byway designation] Meet with business owners to let them know what ways we hope the byway will be of benefit to them.

Action: [At the end of the first year] Request annual information

from identified businesses about whether revenues have increased (Not dollar amount; percentage of increase.)

Goal 4: We intend to identify types of businesses needed in the area that will further enhance tourism and the quality of life in our communities, thus providing economic development for the area.

Objective 4a. Attract lodging to the Alma area.

Action: Within one year of the byway being established, members of the Alma Chamber of Commerce will assess possible sites and advertise for a motel, hotel, or bed and breakfast to come to Alma.

Objective 4b. Attract a gift shop or antiques shop to the town of Eskridge, specifically as a new owner or tenant to the Waugh Bank building.

Action: Within one year of the byway being established, members of the Eskridge City Council and/or the NSSBC will meet with Annie John (or current owner) to develop a plan for restoring said building and opening it as a shop attractive to tourists along the byway.

Action: Within two years of the byway being established, if the Waugh Bank building is still vacant, members of the NSSBC will apply for protective status of the building under the Kansas Registry of Historic Preservation, (Objective 1b).

Objective 4c. Attract a gas station and/or convenience store in

Dover.

Action: [Within one year of the byway being established] A task force will be assigned by the Dover Community Foundation to determine if traffic has increased enough to support a new gas station and/or convenience store in Dover.

Action: [If the task force has a favorable finding] Business owners or leaders in Dover will seek to find, and meet with, prospects.

Objective 4d. Meet with prospective developers who represent a desirable business for our communities to encourage them to locate in business districts along the byway.

Action: [On-going] The NSSBC will keep an on-going record of any calls made on developers by members of the byway committee (or other leadership organizations), as well as a log of new businesses that move into the area.

II. OTHER ISSUES

Roadway Safety

K-4 Highway and Highway 99 are well maintained thoroughfares in our state. During times of inclement weather, state crews work diligently to clear the roads of ice and snow. Both the Alma Township Fire Department and Shawnee County Fire District #4 (Dover, Willard & Valencia) are prompt at

responding to emergency calls, in addition to the Wabaunsee County Sheriff's Department. Medical and rescue training is immediately available.

Portions of K-4 and K-99 are narrow, winding roadways. K-4 northeast of Dover, and parts of Highway 99 south of Alma, are hilly and curvy, giving minimal visibility. It is precisely this topography that makes the route so scenic, yet because it is attractive to many bicyclists, it is also potentially hazardous. The state should consider widening the shoulders along the roadway, at least in areas approaching hills and curves where a driver may attempt to go around a bicyclist by crossing the center and creating a hazardous situation. It will be important, however, that any road improvements not disturb native stone features that serve as the context for the byway.

The NSSBC will communicate and work with the Kansas Department of Transportation and the counties to provide a safe, scenic experience on the byway for our visitors.

Visual Improvements

Two areas have been identified as needing turn-outs in order that travelers may enjoy the scenic vistas. Those areas are both located on K-4 Highway: two and one-half miles northeast of Dover, near mile marker 312, and on the hilltop west of Eskridge, as you leave the city limits. We will work with Kansas Department of Transportation and local landowners to develop turn-outs.

Existing stone fences along the byway need to be repaired by some

property owners. Other property owners should be encouraged to build stone fencing, and use stone in landscaping elements or as driveway markers.

Some of the hillier or rockier areas may benefit from wildflower sowing, such as using yellow sunflowers, blue flax, orange butterfly milkweed, or cascading purple crown vetch. Since the right-of-way is narrow, after the state mows the shoulders there is little ground left for seeding unless farmers can be encouraged to seed along their fence lines. Said wildflowers also encourages wild life, another visual asset to the country. We will request that land owners take this initiative, especially if the seed can be provided to them.

Environmental Code Enforcement

High school groups, scouts, and other civic groups presently participate in the "adopt-a-highway" program covering most of the proposed byway. The road is patrolled for trash and litter at regular intervals.

According to Shawnee County code, problematic areas should be required to clean up their property under existing regulations. "Nuisance" is broadly defined as endangering the comfort, repose, health, safety or welfare of the public. If it essentially interferes with comfortable enjoyment of life or tends to depreciate the value of property of another, it is considered a nuisance.

Abandoned vehicles, wrecked, dismantled or inoperable for a period of thirty days are considered a nuisance. Grass, weeds or noxious vegetation [wildflowers, being the exception] allowed to grow over 18" high is a nuisance.

An accumulation of garbage, trash, junk, metals, abandoned vehicles, stuffed furniture, old lumber, etc. is considered a nuisance. Any condition that has the potential to pollute or harbor vermin is not permissible. Upon being cited for a nuisance, residents have ten days to abate the same.

With regard to run down or abandoned houses, the Shawnee County ordinance requires that buildings have all exterior surfaces (other than decay resistant surfaces) protected from the weather by paint or protective covering. Owners of properties damaged by fire are given a reasonable time to demolish or repair the structure. Vacant and unoccupied structures must be secured to prevent public access. If these conditions are not met, notice is mailed, and if the condition is not abated within 10 days, then a \$50 per day penalty is assessed to the property or the county will remedy the nuisance and assess the cost of the work.

Since county code enforcement is largely a result of neighbor reporting, more publicity needs to be done about the codes already of record. Instances of environmental code violations can be seen in both Shawnee and Wabaunsee Counties, which need to be brought to the attention of the county health officers. The NSSBC will assist in keeping nuisances in check by reporting violations and requesting informative articles be printed in local newspapers.

Wabaunsee County has ordinances against trash similar to Shawnee County. It does not have any environmental or zoning codes dealing with housing, which would provide legal recourse for dealing with a couple of

identified eyesores along the byway. This is an issue that needs to be addressed by the Wabaunsee County Commissioners. Both counties have adopted the ***Neighborhood Revitalization Act*** giving incentives to property owners to fix up their homes.

Impact Education

Landowners will need to be educated about the impact a scenic byway program will have on their properties. Questions such as increased traffic, and possibly litter, will be addressed in the executive summary and mailed to owners of property contiguous to the byway. It will also be pointed out that the property along the byway may increase in value since their location is desirable and “scenic,” and will benefit from state and local communities working together to maintain its beauty. To date, the communities in the area have been informed of the byway nomination process through printed newspaper columns and public meeting notices [articles in Wabaunsee County Signal-Enterprise 3/13/03; 7/17/03/ 7/31/03; 8/14/03; 8/21/03; 2/26/04; 10/28/04; 11/25/04; 12/2/04 and in the Topeka Capital-Journal 10/29/04 and 2/18/05].

Land Use/Zoning

A great concern for any scenic byway, would be to have the area over-developed, thus losing everything that was scenic about it in the first place. A review of the existing restrictions that preclude land from being carved into small

building lots shows the following variation between Wabaunsee and Shawnee Counties:

Wabaunsee County enforces a minimum lot size of 40 acres in an agricultural district. Each 40 acres is considered an agricultural unit and has the right to split one time. A builder can take a 40 acre plot and split off two, three, four or however many acres to build a home so long as that plot of ground will support a sewer system, be it septic, laterals, or lagoon, and also has a water supply. Only one additional home can be on the balance of those 40 acres. However, there is an exception. The entire 40 acres can be platted as a housing development.

Shawnee County has a denser building minimum. Each county lot must be a minimum of three acres with 200 feet of frontage. It must be pointed out that the encroachment of development that has occurred along K-4 Highway from Auburn Road (west of Topeka) to Glick Road rendered that area ineligible of scenic byway designation. Likewise, the county shows evidence of several housing developments.

The existing zoning regulations for Shawnee County, allowing for three acre minimum building lots, and the allowance of platted housing developments in both Wabaunsee and Shawnee County could potentially endanger the scenic byway status unless builders are sensitive to building without obstructing the natural beauty of the area. County commissioners and zoning boards, which cooperate with the NSSBC's goals for the area, can help circumvent problems

before they occur. A copy of the Corridor Management Plan should be given to regulators by the NSSBC for mutual reference.

Manufactured homes (including trailer houses) are allowed in Wabaunsee County on agricultural property. However, ag units cannot be platted for a series of said homes in a housing development, such as a trailer park. Modular homes, minimum of 22 feet wide with a standard roof pitch, are allowed in Shawnee County. Trailer houses are not allowed, UNLESS upon application for a conditional use permit, the neighboring properties have no objections. Otherwise, trailer houses are confined to mobile home parks. If Wabaunsee County were to adopt the same verbiage, it would minimize the number of mobile homes in the country.

Another issue of concern is the permissibility of wind farming or the erection of wind turbines on land visible from the byway. This issue has been a political hot bed in Wabaunsee County and has been temporarily decided to disallow wind farming in all of Wabaunsee County. The decision is presently being appealed through legal recourse. Any change in the decision will be closely monitored by the NSSBC, so that if wind farming should prevail, it will only be allowed in designated areas away from the proposed byway.

III. RESOURCES

Historical Significance of the Byway

K-4 Highway became a paved highway in our state in the early 1920's. It

was a primary east-west roadway extending from Leavenworth to Colorado. The origin of this road was a trail that went from Ft. Leavenworth to Council Grove, Kansas called "*The Southwest Trail*," (referring to its direction from the Fort). By 1861, some citizens referred to it as the "*Topeka-Council Grove Road*." It was this same route that the Kansa Indians traveled back and forth to Topeka to receive government subsidy. A 1918 official Kansas road map refers to the road as the "*The South West Trail*," changing in Council Grove to the name, "*The Bee Line*" as it continues on to Colorado.

Highway 99 is at least as old, or older, than "*The Southwest Trail*." A trail splintering off of the Santa Fe Trail in Burlingame, went northwest, crossing "*The Southwest Trail*," and proceeded to Westmoreland in the same location as Highway 99. No name, however, was found for this trail.

The village of Dover, named for the white cliffs of Dover, England, started in a cabin on the site of the Dover Cemetery in the year 1856. The pioneers were Alfred and John Sage, brothers who had immigrated from England, who lived a short while in New York, and then headed west with their wives, Mary Ann & Elizabeth Bassett. In Iowa they joined abolitionist, James Lane, and took the "*Lane Trail*" to Kansas. It was not until 1870, however, that the town of "*Dover*" was established. Before that time, people referred to living "*up Mission Creek*" or "*down Mission Creek*." Most of the settlers were English.

K-4 Highway goes right through the middle of Keene, Kansas, which no longer is home to any businesses, yet farmers along the road

cling tenaciously to the town's identity. Apparently most of the town was built up around a country school built in 1886. The old schoolhouse has been converted to a single family home but still serves as a visual marker of "having arrived" and "having left" the town of Keene. Keene's claim to fame may have been the S.E. Beach Camp, now demolished, a hall built in 1893 as a meeting place for a group of men whose fathers were Union Veterans of the Civil War.

The town of Eskridge, also known as the "*Gateway to the Flint Hills*" was established in 1869. Col. Ephriam Sandford named the town for Lt. Governor Charles Eskridge, who was one of the founders of Emporia, Kansas, and editor of Emporia's first newspaper. Sandford established the first store in 1868, known as "*The Sunflower Store.*" Early on, the M.A.B. Railroad came to Eskridge, primarily to transport coal, but by 1895 it had become a branch of the Santa Fe Railroad and was used for the shipment of cattle to and from the Flint Hills so that they could graze on the bluestem prairie grass.

Alma, "*City of Native Stone,*" sprung up from the Alma Township in 1857. The area was a central point for tributaries off of Mill Creek: South Branch, West Branch, East Branch, and Hendricks Creek. It has a rich Native American history, at one time home to the Pottawatomie and Kansa tribes, and was quickly settled by Germans when the Indian Reservation was opened to settlers. One of the earliest homesteaders was Gottlieb Zwanziger who was a surveyor responsible for laying out most of the roads. In the 1880's it also became the crossroads for both the Santa Fe and Rock Island Railroads.

Historic Landmarks

Dover has two historic landmarks that were built by its founder, Alfred Sage: **The 1878 Sage Inn & Stagecoach Station** and **The Dover General Store** (Café). In 1865, Alfred Sage and his second wife, Mary Ann Buell, built the Sage Inn from native limestone where Mission Creek was shallow enough to ford wagons across on the Southwest Trail (northwest corner of Dover intersection on K-4 Highway). The Inn also served as a stage station after Copp's Station in Mill Creek Township burned during the Civil War. In 1878 the Inn was doubled in size when the Sage's contracted with the Southwestern Stage Company.

Alfred Sage built a wood frame mercantile across from the Sage Inn. The downstairs served as a store, the upstairs served as a town hall, including the meeting place for the I.O.O.F. Lodge. In 1905 the lodge purchased the building after Sage's death, and continues to own it and meet there to this day. The downstairs is leased as a café. The Sage Inn has been completely restored and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The General Store is presently undergoing a facelift inside and out. It was repainted in 2003.

Mission Creek Township Cemetery at Keene on K-4 Highway may be one of the earliest cemeteries in the Kansas territory. Long before the land was

surveyed and the boundaries marked for an official cemetery with oversight by the township (1885), people were interred at this site, simply known as the "*Graveyard at Mission Creek*." The cemetery has several unmarked graves, the oldest marked graves date to 1860, and are the children of early Dover settlers.

The **Atlas E. Missile Launcher** at Keene serves as a private residence of Ed and Diana Peden. Built in 1961 for the U.S. Air Force, a cradle held an Atlas missile (75 feet long by 10 feet in diameter) in a horizontal position until the 400 ton door was opened to raise the missile for launching. The Peden's have preserved the original manned station, other parts of the launcher, and their collection of memorabilia. They provide tours by reservation.

The Waugh family from Eskridge has been engaged in many types of enterprises through the years: banking, farming, oil, merchandising, law, medicine and engineering. Eskridge's most prominent landmark is the **Security State Bank Building**, 101 S. Main, that was built in 1904 by John Waugh. The beautiful brick building sports a turret and columned arches at the entrance. John Waugh was joined by his brother, George, in his banking venture. The bank operated for 76 years, until it merged with the Eskridge State Bank.

The **1905 Henry Sump Barn** on Highway 99 south of Alma, is a spectacular example of the quality of workmanship that can be found in limestone barns along the byway. [Another unique stone barn is situated on the curve of K-4 Highway west of Dover where the road turns south toward Eskridge.] The huge barn south of Alma is made from lumber (painted red) and

native limestone. It is accentuated by the first man-made stocked, fish pond in the state of Kansas.

Approximately 98% of Alma's business district is comprised of native stone structures dating to the late 1800's. The buildings run contiguously for entire city blocks. An example would be the **Bank of Alma** building which was operated by the Stuewe Brothers in 1895. Originally the commercial building was built by two Irish brothers, J. F. & R. J. Limerick, in 1880. But after their funds ran out, they were forced to sell to other entrepreneurs who could make a success out of what they had started.

A majestic building is the **Wabaunsee County Courthouse**, 215 Kansas Avenue, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Courthouse was built in 1931 of both native limestone and Carthage stone. Carthage stone was used for facing, giving the exterior the appearance of Granite. The interior was decorated by Italian workers who used Terrazzo on the floors, including a second floor map of Wabaunsee County. Stairways, handrails and corridor walls have been faced with marble.

For over 50 years, Alma Cheese has produced great tasting natural cheeses that thousands of customers enjoy. All-natural and handmade from only

the finest ingredients, there is a variety of cheeses to compliment any meal or occasion. Tours are given at the **Alma Creamery**, 509 East Third, where visitors can observe cheese in the making.

The Alma Chamber of Commerce has developed a driving/walking tour with a brochure covering the history of the buildings in the business district. Plaques were also purchased for each building, providing a brief history. Many fine examples of stone homes and churches also exist in Alma. A replica of the St. John Lutheran Church was made for the Exploration Place museum in Wichita.

Archeological Significance

The byway area was inhabited by several native American tribes before the white man homesteaded the land. Cultivation of the land has reaped a bounty of Indian arrowheads, tomahawks, and spear tips. An archeological dig in the 1960's at a location one mile west of Dover and one mile south of K-4 Highway, known as "**Echo Cliff**" provided artifacts of historical significance. The artifacts dated back to the Grasshopper Falls Phase, 1000 A.D., belonging to the Woodland Indians.

Parks

Visitors will enjoy the quiet serenity of **Echo Cliff**, west of Dover, where

they may still find treasures along Mission Creek. The park is maintained by the Dover Grange. Tables and stools cast from concrete are available for picnics. An old iron bridge crosses the creek and offers good fishing.

Land for **Eskridge City Park** was donated by John Waugh. It is located one block south of the intersection where K-4 turns west to go to Lake Wabaunsee. The park includes a bandstand and paved area for dancing, picnic tables, play equipment, and lighted tennis courts.

Maisie DeVore Public Swimming Pool is located at 104 Maple. Maisie received the National Jefferson Award for Community Service and has been recognized on national television. She financed the pool for Eskridge youth by collecting aluminum cans.

Wabaunsee County Park was deeded to the City of Eskridge in 1937. The park evolved into a beautiful spring-fed lake, **Lake Wabaunsee**, also known as "*Gem of the Flint Hills.*" Some small buildings on the north side of the park/lake are reminiscent of the 1933 WPA project by the Federal Government, which later served as a German Prisoners of War Camp in the 1940's. Today, many nice homes surround the lake's perimeter. Public picnic grounds, boat docks and designated swimming area are on the north side of the lake.

Railroad Park, 99 Highway & Missouri Street, is situated at the site of the former Rock Island Depot in Alma. The land is still owned by the railroad. The park includes a shelter house, a restored 1800's log cabin, a millinery shop, and a hand-dug well enclosed in a small stone building. Visitors enjoy the step-

back-in-time experience.

McKnight Park, is a sports complex that includes ball fields, soccer field and tennis courts. It is 1/8 mile south of Alma on Highway 99.

Alma City Park, behind the east side of the business district on Missouri Street, has a paved walking path around its half-block perimeter. Families enjoy a large shaded play ground area. Performances are occasionally held at the bandstand. The park has a nice public swimming pool with bath house and restrooms. An on-going project is restoration of a native stone building on the park's corner, which will someday provide restrooms and an art center.

Museums

The **Wabaunsee County Historical Museum** is located at 227 Missouri, Alma. It is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to Noon and 1 - 4 p.m. It is open Sundays from 1-4 p.m. The museum has benefited from many gifts from families in the area and does an excellent job of educating people on the history of Wabaunsee County and depicting life in the Flint Hills. Some permanent exhibits include a blacksmith shop, doctor's office, and schoolhouse.

The **Shawnee County Historical Society** and the **Kansas Museum of History and Research** are within five miles of the eastern I-70 exit/entrance to the byway. Easy access off of I-70 provides visitors with a unique opportunity to continue their educational experience.

Environmental/Agricultural Preservation

By traveling the "Native Stone Scenic Byway," the visitor is rewarded with panoramic views of Kansas land in its native state, as well as the rich land that was cultivated for agrarian life. Rolling Flint Hills provide a seasonal parade of wildflowers and prairie grasses. Red bud trees bloom in their entire splendor in the spring, followed by the bright orange blossoms of the native milkweed in the summer. In the winter, when trees are stripped bare, travelers get a closer look at streams with natural waterfalls and remains of old stone bridges where streams were once crossed. Due to the many natural rock deposits, part of the land along the byway is more suitable for raising cattle. By contrast, parts of the byway will stand out like a patchwork quilt with growing fields of corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa, and brome.

Farming and ranching families can research their roots to ancestors who homesteaded the area. They learned first hand how to be good stewards of the land through soil conservation and crop rotation. They have genetically perfected the cattle that are raised, offering some of the best beef in the world.

In conjunction with this lifestyle is the desire to preserve the farm/ranch identity. Thus there is a commitment to not only preserve the rock fences, stone barns, and old farm houses, but also to prevent the crowding of new housing developments or the erection of wind turbines. Minimal disturbance of the ecosystem is of utmost importance in keeping nature in balance, protecting the

land, wildlife and scenery.

Agri-Tourism

A growing market niche in tourism is the agricultural lifestyle experience. Urban dwellers long for a taste of the great outdoors and there are land owners along the byway that could be educated on how to take advantage of this growing market. Horseback riding is always highly valued, but there are also people who would be interested in working at a cattle ranch or helping with harvest. Even providing farm or ranch tours could become popular.

Art

The craftsmanship of rural people can be seen in local shops. Women still meet regularly to work on quilts for church auctions; crafts for fairs and shows. In addition to the handmade items of women, are the artistic endeavors of men who create metalwork from cowboy silhouettes placed on the horizon, to roadside sculptures made from bicycle parts.

Culture

There are several ways that visitors can experience the unique rural Kansas lifestyle, other than through observation from a car passing through. The quickest way is to stop for a bite to eat or a cup of coffee. Rural folks are very social people. Part of their daily routine is often to meet for coffee,

breakfast or lunch to catch up on what is happening with their neighbors and others in town. If they are approached with a question by a visitor, you're likely to need to pull up a chair and stay awhile. No one stands on ceremony about getting dressed up to go out and eat; sometimes the combine is even pulled up to the café, and the farmer walks in with dusty overalls and a John Deere cap. Generally the menu at these small cafes consist of food more likely to have been served by your ma and pa, with little concern about counting nutrients.

Another cultural difference that can be enjoyed by the visitor is the type of merchandise found when shopping in a small town. Straw hats and aprons are still sold as a hot commodity. Regional antiques can be a gold mine for tourists.

Annual festivals are another way rural folks rally to enjoy themselves, and meet long-lost relatives. Visitors are always welcome, even encouraged, to participate in the festivities.

Annual Festivals

MAY: The **Native Stone Festival & Mulligan** is held the first Saturday in May in Alma. Beginning in the early afternoon, events include a run/walk west of Alma, free old-fashioned mulligan stew cooked over an open fire in city park, and gospel or bluegrass musical entertainment.

JUNE: Heritage Days is held the third weekend in June in Dover.

Events of the day include a fun-run, pancake feed, two parades, turtle races, kiddie t-ball game, tractor pulls, team horse-pulling contest, musical jamboree, food & craft booths, BBQ supper, antiques appraisal fair and fireworks display.

JULY: The 4th of July Celebration is held at McKnight Sports Complex in Alma. The 4-H and FFA Shooting Sports Teams demonstrate and coach participants in the BB Gun Shoot, Air Rifle Shoot, and Archery. A hamburger feed, and a free ice cream social, is followed by a slow-pitch softball game. The grand finale` is a fireworks display.

Lake Wabaunsee Boat Parade is also held on July 4th. Residents decorate boats which sail in and out of coves during the afternoon. Prizes are awarded. The Fire District #5 provides a fireworks display from the dam at 9 p.m.

Wabaunsee County 4-H Fair is the last week in July at the Wabaunsee County Fair Ground, 9th & Grand, in Alma. The four day event includes many exhibits, a parade and 4-H Show.

SEPT: Cowboys from all over come to the **Eskridge Labor Day Rodeo.** The PRCA competition rodeo has been held for 30 years. It is a 2-day event with three rodeo performances.

Eskridge Fall Festival is held the last Saturday in September. It includes carnival rides, vendors, parade and floats. Prizes are awarded.

OCT: Alma Garage Sale Days is the second Saturday in October and

is held in conjunction with a German meal served at the American Legion Hall, 504 Missouri.

NOV: Christmas in the Country is Veteran's Day weekend in November. Events include holiday open houses at local shops from the Valencia exit, through Dover, to south of Eskridge. Holiday crafts fair, homes tour, book signings by Kansas authors, historical re-enactment, and an evening musical Christmas jamboree are some of the highlights.

Veteran's Day Parade and Celebration is held each year in Eskridge in recognition of our nation's veterans. Local veterans, including the American Legion and local patrons participate in the parade. Usually representatives from state and national government are also present. Legislative delegates give presentations in City Park, followed by a ceremonial flag burning of retiring American flags.

DEC: Santa & Soup - visitors in Eskridge the first Saturday evening in December can enjoy a hot bowl of soup and a visit with Santa Claus. Likewise, the American Legion in Alma also holds a soup supper and sleigh ride.

Recreation

Visitors to the Native Stone Scenic Byway can arrange horseback riding with Happy Trails; clay shoots and hunting at the Ravenwood Lodge; fishing at Echo Cliff, Lake Wabaunsee & Alma City Lake, two miles southeast of Alma;

swimming at Eskridge City Park, Lake Wabaunsee or Alma City Park; boating at Lake Wabaunsee; hiking at General Walt's trail in Alma; bicycling, motorcycling, and bird watching can be enjoyed all along the byway. Aerobic classes are offered at various locations.

Dining

The old **General Store in Dover**, at K-4 & Douglas, offers breakfast and lunch meals, Monday through Saturday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Fridays, the café is open until 8 p.m. and serves a rotating buffet menu.

The **Pizza Fountain**, 109 S. Main in Eskridge, makes fresh specialty pizzas and is open

The **Annie Mae's Café** sits in the center of downtown Eskridge, 113 S. Main. It is open for breakfast and lunch daily; and Friday evening dinner.

The **Flint Hills Steak House**, located at the front entrance of Lake Wabaunsee is open Wednesday through Saturday evenings, 5 - 9 p.m.

Gambino's Pizza is on the east side of downtown Alma, 308 Missouri. It is open 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. on Monday; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Across the block from Gambino's is **T.D.'s & Company**, 327 Missouri, which is a family restaurant. Their hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Closed on Monday.

Shopping

Thunderwood Galleries, Antiques and Collectibles is located at the Valencia Road exit, Exit 350, on I-70. The shop specializes in art, vintage clothes and jewelry, antique furniture, guns, and an assortment of other items. In addition it has become a monthly auction house.

Grapevine Antiques & Gifts, is one mile west of K-4 & 35th. The rustic store is located at a working vineyard; August through December, jellies are available from the vineyard. It specializes in antique furniture, pottery, candles and collectibles.

Wall's Ceramics, 112 S. Main in Eskridge, is a place where "hands-on" crafters will enjoy themselves. Visitors may make their own ceramics or purchased finished pieces.

Norma's is a used clothing and gifts store in Eskridge at 114 S. Main. Specializing in knick-knacks and "off-the-wall" items, some browsers will feel it is "far out!"

Everyone who visits Eskridge, should stop in at **Dunn's Home Supply**, 118 S. Main. The old time hardware/variety store is operated by Dean and Inez Dunn, who are in their 80's, and are interesting folks to stop and chat with. Dean was born and raised in Eskridge.

Alma Antiques, 200-204 Missouri, is an eclectic antique shop with one side serving as an antique furniture refinishing service.

Hendricks Hardware Store, 300 Missouri, in Alma, is a stroll back in

time to earlier general stores and hardware stores. Built in the 1870's by Conrad Mueller as a saloon, prohibition changed the business's direction to selling hardware. Browsers are always welcome.

Anyone visiting Alma needs to stop at the **Alma Bakery and Sweet Shoppe**. Not only is the stonework on this building at 309 Missouri beautiful - including a stain glass window, but the smell of fresh baked breads and cookies, will make visitor's drool.

Rags to Riches sells flowers, gifts and second-hand items. It does business at 317 Missouri, Alma.

Alma Antique Emporium is a 6,000 Sq. Ft. antiques mall offering a collectible for everyone. It is located at 322 Missouri.

Gasoline/Public Restrooms

Public restrooms and a lone gas pump are available at the **Dover General Store** during regular business hours, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday; 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday.

Eskridge has two service stations. One is right on the byway, **Clark's Standard**, 202 S. Main; the other is the **Rush Inn** at 104 E. Third St. Both stations are open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

Reynolds Lakeside Convenience Store, on K-4 Highway across from Lake Wabaunsee, is open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Stop-2-Shop Convenience Store, 100 Missouri, across from Railroad Park in Alma, has public restrooms and gasoline available from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week. Within the same block is the **Alma Co-op**, 109 Missouri. Their hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday. Another station, at the junction of K-99/I-70 (entering or leaving the byway) is **Quality Gas 'N Shop** which is open seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Lodging

The **1878 Sage Inn & Stagecoach Station in Dover** is a four guestroom bed and breakfast. Average room cost is \$85 per night. The closest lodging to Eskridge, other than the Sage Inn (15 miles), would be in Council Grove (35 miles). Alma also does not have overnight lodging. The closest lodging would be in Wamego, Kansas (about 15 miles) or Council Grove (35 miles).

Side Excursions

Visitors in the area may find **buffalo herds** to be of interest. There are herds near **Auburn, Kansas** (about 8 miles southwest of Dover) and in **Alta**

Vista, Kansas (12 miles west of the K-4/99 Highway intersection. Also at Alta Vista is the **Ag Heritage Park** where old farm machinery and an old schoolhouse is on display. Alta Vista also has an old jail, sundries shop, the Rock Island Railroad's wooden bridge, and an antique store.

Skyline Mill Creek Drive is a back road that cuts across the prairie, winding through farm land, climbing hills, and following the creek, from K-4 Highway west of Keene to Alma - truly reminiscent of the covered wagon days. For visitors who want to get up close and personal with cows, wildlife, and native grasses, this is an enjoyable "off the beaten path" experience. From Alma, travelers can also take Mill Creek Drive and go diagonally to Alta Vista, then connect with K-177 and continue south to the **Tallgrass Prairie Preserve**, north of Cottonwood Falls.

Snokomo to Paxico Road is a different fork at the beginning of Skyline Mill Creek Drive that will take a traveler north via gravel road to the small community of **Paxico**, which is known for its concentration of antiques shops in the downtown business district.

General Walt's Hiking Trail was established by the Alma Boy Scout's in honor of a four star general from Wabaunsee County. Lewis W. Walt was born and raised near Harveyville, Kansas. During his distinguished military career, he was awarded two Navy Crosses, two Distinguished Service Medals, a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, and two Purple Hearts for valor. Information about the life of "General Walt" is available at the Wabaunsee County Museum. The hiking trail

winds through the Wabaunsee County hills, beginning south of Harveyville and going northwest to the outskirts of Eskridge, then west to Lake Wabaunsee, north through Hessdale, and continuing northwest to Alma for a total of 32.4 miles. All groups and individuals wishing to hike the trail must file an application ahead of time. Forms are at the museum and are to be mailed to George G. Edgerton, Eskridge, Kansas 66423.

Volland is an old cow town/railroad stop that locals refer to as a “ghost town.” It is 8 miles west of Alma on old Highway 10. The remains of an old red brick general store is the only thing left where the wind and the memories blow.

Grandma Hoerner’s Gourmet Foods manufacturing plant is located three miles west of the byway exit/entrance 328, at exit 324 off of I-70. A gift store attached to the manufacturing plant offers the opportunity to purchase their all-natural and organic applesauce, preserves, fruit spreads, salsas and BBQ sauce. Visitors can also watch products being made through the special viewing window.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

Markers/Signage/Turn-Outs

The Native Stone Scenic Byway has a great opportunity to be well traveled, given its visibility along the most heavily traveled roadway in the state of Kansas, I-70. Scenic Byway markers should be placed at exits 350 and 328

and continue at regular intervals throughout the byway.

Three separate locations have been identified as good placement for historical signage. The first location already exists on Highway 99 south of Alma where the state has erected the "Open Range" sign explaining why there are so many stone fences in the area.

The second location would be on the hilltop west of Eskridge and pertain to how the native grasses of the Flint Hills has provided the richest grazing land for cattle in the world. The third location is approximately five miles northeast of Dover where Glick Road joins K-4 Highway marking the old Southwest Trail which joined the Oregon Trail at Topeka with the Santa Fe Trail at Council Grove and depicts an early stagecoach with horses. There is a small water district brick building already at this intersection with a small lot of land that could be landscaped with native stones and signage.

Finally, two turn-outs are recommended along the route. The first turn-out is located a couple of miles northeast of Dover (near mile marker 312) where a turn-out at the crest of the hill on the east side would provide a beautiful view of Mission Valley and the rich agricultural area. This land is owned by Wayne Probasco, an attorney in Topeka, Kansas. The second area is the same location as the placement for the cattle grazing sign, the west hilltop outside of Eskridge. This land is owned by Mrs. Robert Warren.

Promotion

The most useful means of promotion will be the creation of the Native Stone Scenic Byway brochures which will be available at all travel and tourism sites. The Kansas Getaway Guide, published by the Kansas Department of Travel and Tourism, is provided to all communities and has a huge mailing to recipients outside of the state. Businesses along the byway who have their own brochures or websites should publicize the byway with their information.

The Wabaunsee County Signal-Enterprise, which has a readership covering most of the byway will periodically provide information about the byway to increase awareness and a sense of pride by local residents. It will publish NSSBC minutes.

The Topeka Convention and Visitor's Bureau should be supplied with byway information and brochures to give out to area travelers and conference attendees so they are aware of the close proximity to Topeka.

The NSSBC will assist the Kansas Scenic Byways Program to develop brochures and a byway sign image using local artists, if possible.

Funding

Fortunately, most of the proposed action for the Native Stone Scenic Byway is "preservation" rather than "construction." We can encourage more residents to utilize the native stone that is plentiful on their land to build fences, driveway markers, and landscape features. Some rock may be donated by

owners who have an abundance. If money is needed for signage (outside of money available through the byway program), then a public campaign can be used to raise the money. Civic leaders, established organizations, and businesses along the byway may be willing donors. The biggest challenge will be to get the landowners of property for the suggested turn-outs to donate the land for such use. If a grant is needed for the Department of Transportation to develop these turn-outs along K-4 Highway, then the NSSBC will make the application. There is the possibility of being eligible for a National Scenic Byway grant, which would require the communities to raise matching funds.

The town of Eskridge may be eligible for the "Main Street" program through the Kansas Department of Commerce and being along a state designated scenic byway may enhance their opportunity for said funds.

Volunteers/ Monitoring/ Byway Committee

The strength of any plan of action is the commitment from the volunteers who will see something through to completion. Each community: Dover, Eskridge, and Alma, has identified leaders. These are the people who attend most of the other town meetings because they know that when you come from a rural area, you may have to wear several different hats. And, like so many folks, these volunteers can get over-extended, but because of their passion to see their community thrive, they find a way to remain dedicated to the cause. Through partnering with our neighboring communities, there is a sense of pride in

accomplishing state recognition. Being aware that this could be an important step in each communities economic livelihood, the NSSBC will be formed with representatives from Dover, Eskridge, Alma, and the businesses along the Scenic Byway.

The Alma Chamber of Commerce, The Flint Hills Coalition, the Lake Wabaunsee Improvement District, and the Dover Community Foundation are committed to the byway project and as such, will designate members to serve on the newly formed Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee. The Alma Chamber of Commerce will choose two members, one of whom must be a member of the Chamber. The Flint Hills Coalition and the Lake Wabaunsee Improvement District will each choose one member (thus providing two representatives from the Eskridge/Lake Wabaunsee area): one member must be active in the coalition; the other must be a resident at Lake Wabaunsee. The Dover Community Foundation will choose two members, one of whom must be a board member on the foundation. In this manner, there is a reporting mechanism back to established organizations within the communities about the actions of the NSSBC.

The six appointed NSSBC members shall then elect three at-large members, bringing the total number of members of the NSSBC to nine (9). Preferably, the committee will endeavor to ensure that there is representation of business owners along the byway.

Members of the NSSBC shall commit to serving for three years; **however,**

in the beginning, the at-large members shall serve one year; of the two appointments from the three general areas, one member will serve for three years, the other serve for two. In this way, one-third of the committee is replaced annually, providing continuity while at the same time, rejuvenating itself with new ideas from new members.

The NSSBC will elect one person to chair the meetings and also serve as the media contact for the byway committee. The NSSBC will notify the Kansas Scenic Byways Program of all changes.

Decisions shall be made by vote of the majority of representatives present at quarterly meetings; however, initially the committee will meet monthly while the byway is in its infancy. The purpose of the committee will be to check progress of their action plans toward achieving their objectives, and ultimately their goals. Further, they will identify and set new goals as needed, including setting the objectives and action plans. If applications for grants are needed to accomplish a goal, this committee will take responsibility.

The committee should also use positive recognition as media opportunities to recognize people who are "making a difference." Establishing an award to be given to individuals and groups for volunteerism or property improvements may be the key to increasing such activity.

V. APPENDIX

The appendix provides further clarification about matters discussed in this

plan. Appendix A-1, **Area/Byway Map**, outlines the loop off of I-70 which will be designated the Native Stone Scenic Byway.

We are including signed **Resolutions** from the City Council of Alma, City Council of Eskridge, Wabaunsee County Commissioners, and Shawnee County Commissioners. These are all marked as Appendix A-2.

A listing of the parks, museums, restaurants, shops, gas stations and lodging found along the byway is marked as Appendix A-3. This **Resource Directory** provides names and addresses.

An **Excursions Map**, Appendix A-4 is also included showing the proximity of places visitors may like to go veering off of the byway.

Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee, Appendix A-5, includes everyone but the appointment of the three at-large members. Debra Stufflebean was replaced on the committee by Richard Bell as designee for the Dover Community Foundation. Stufflebean's responsibilities to the byway project ends with the adoption of the Corridor Management Plan.