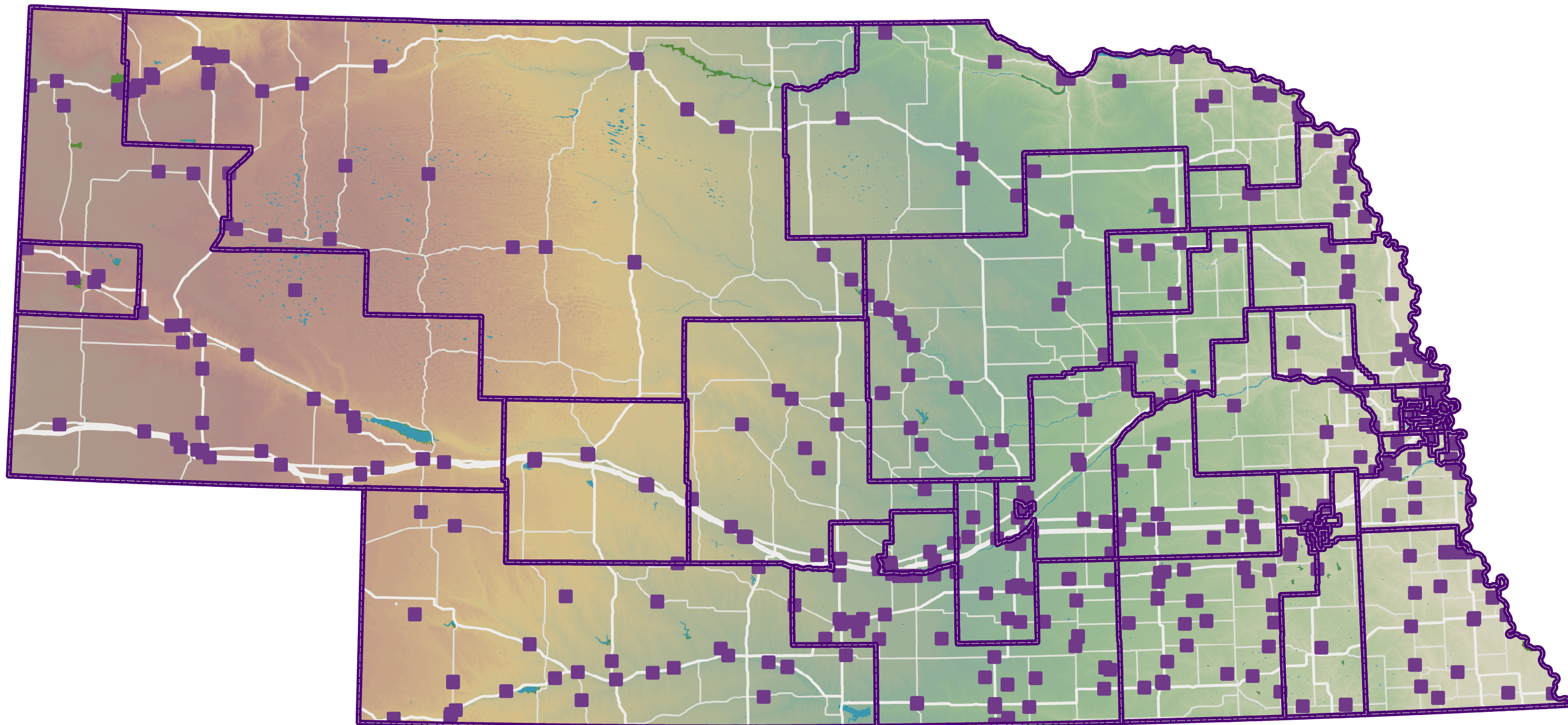


Nebraska Historical Markers



Maps Created by: Casey Dunn, GIS Analyst
Edited by: Kate Gaul, Research Analyst
Sources: Nebraska Historical Markers (Nebraska Historical Society) 2015
October 2015



Introduction

"Nebraska Historical Markers" is a book of maps displaying the state's historically significant place markers by legislative district (or, in three cases because of the small size of urban districts, by county). For each map, I selected three markers to highlight based on the uniqueness of the event, personality, site, or tradition and its contribution to the Nebraska story. For a complete list of state historical markers by legislative district, see the index at the end of this book. If a district is not included, it is because no historical markers are located within the district.

The maps were created using mapping files from the Nebraska Historical Society, U.S. Census Bureau, and U.S. Geological Survey. The close proximity of some markers resulted in them appearing "stacked" on the maps. In those cases, I modified placement to avoid stacking of markers. The maps feature a realistic topographical background, created using a digital elevation model (DEM) derived from the National Elevation Dataset 30 meter resolution lidar (light detection and ranging). Using ArcMap software, the DEM was colored with a topographic color ramp and hillshade effect to highlight changes in elevation.

As the GIS Analyst for the Legislature's Research Office, I am available to take requests for maps highlighting areas or issues of interest to senators and staff. You can contact me by calling 402-471-0078 or by emailing cdunn@leg.ne.gov.

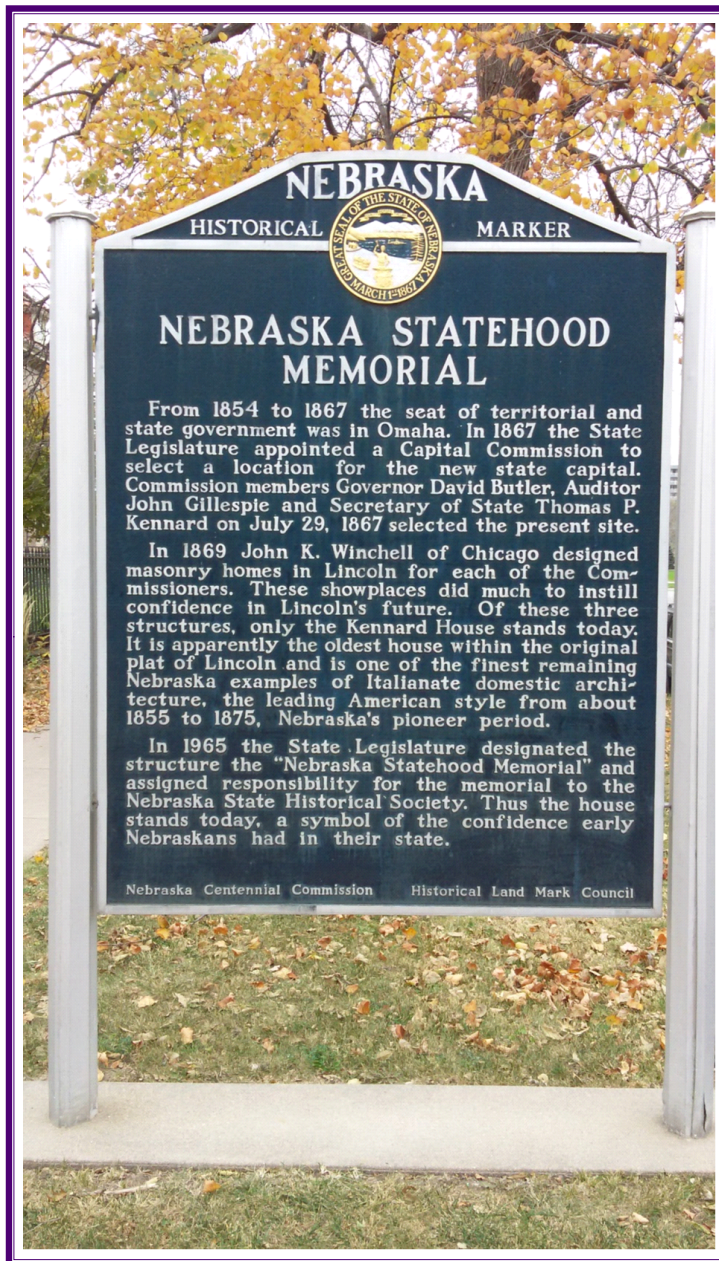
How are historical markers chosen?

The Nebraska Historical Society determines whether historical events, personalities, sites, or traditions are of importance to the state. The society accepts proposals, verifies the history, and maintains the list of historical markers. Personalities are considered for a marker if the individual made a statewide or national impact on history. Single buildings are eligible for a marker if the building had an impact on a national, state, county, or community level.

Municipalities and interest groups generally nominate and pay for the markers. Nominators suggest the marker's text, which the society must approve before the marker is cast in aluminum. Markers are usually placed on public land. On rare occasion when markers are placed on private land, it is with the approval of the society and landowner. Sponsoring entities receive credit on the bottom of the marker.

Historical markers come in three types: a double post, a single post, and a plaque. The double post is the largest of the markers, with space for 180 words; the single post is the smallest, with room for 80 words. Markers cost between \$1,950 and \$5,300 to cast and ship to the site. Markers are built and physically maintained by the Department of Roads. The department also determines where markers are specifically placed, a process that takes into account the safety of highway motorists.

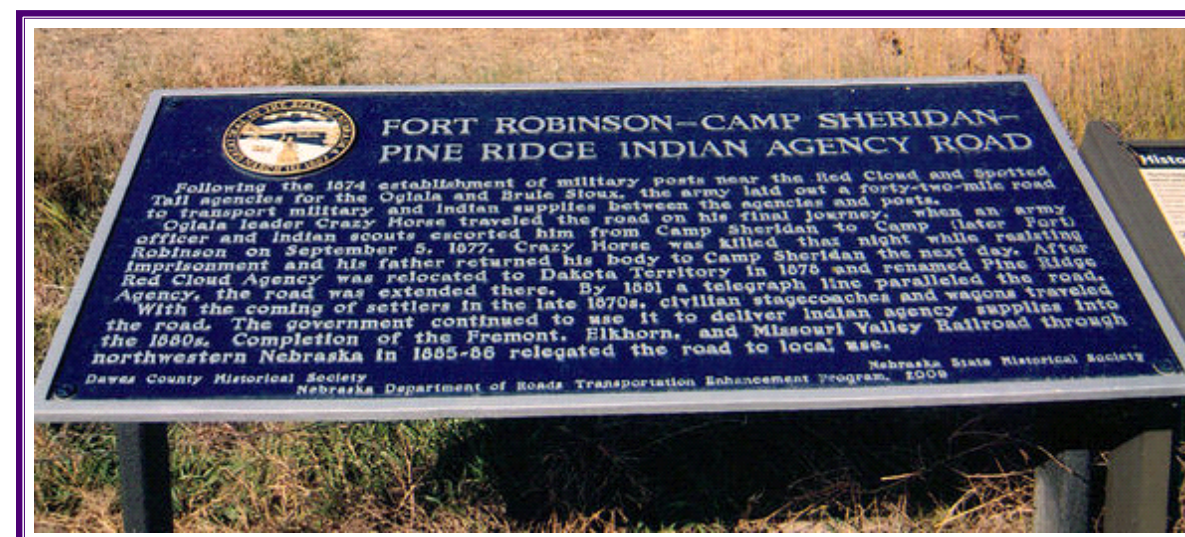
Casey Dunn, GIS Analyst



Double-post historical marker, (photo by C. Dunn)

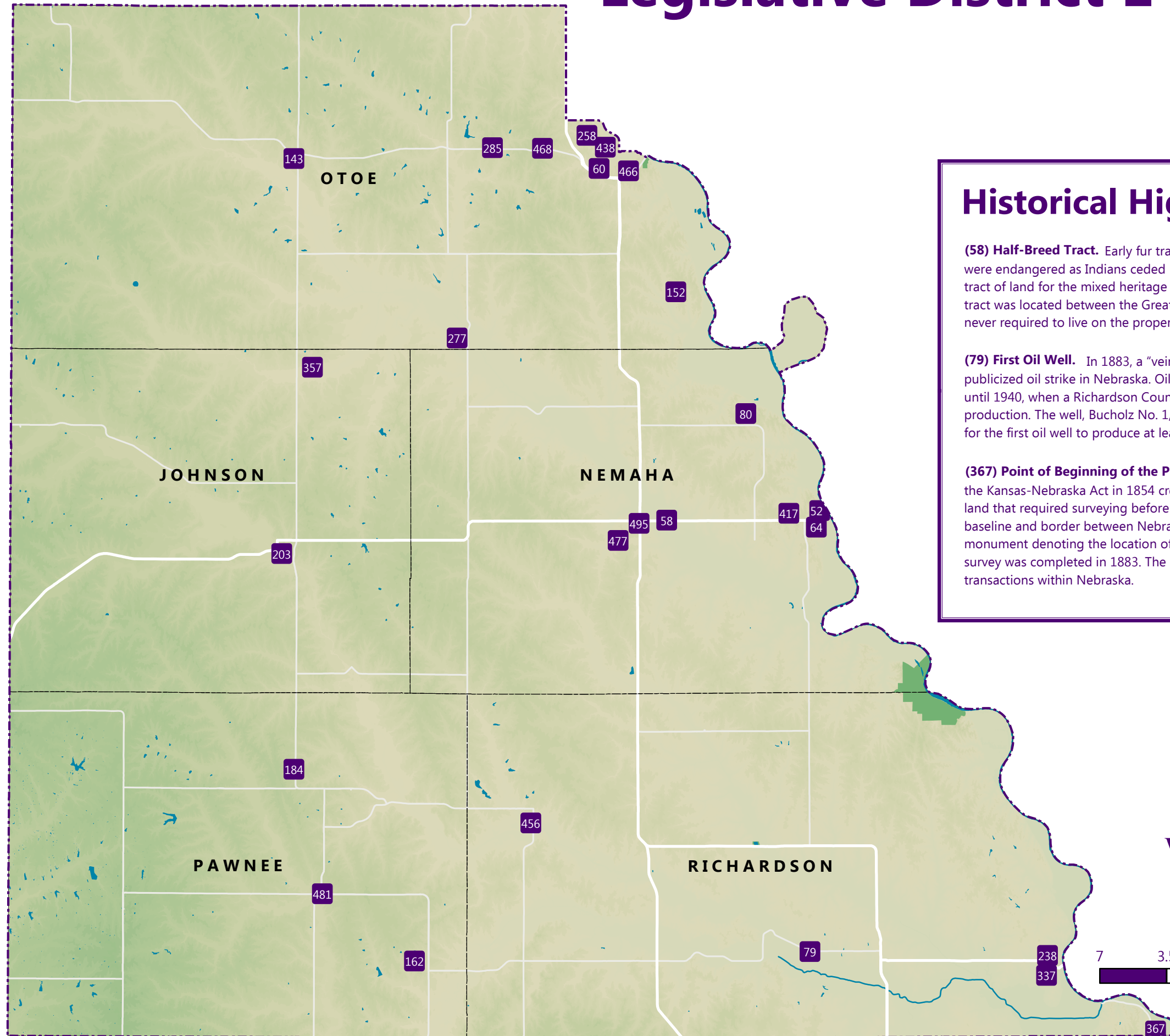


Single-post historical marker, (photo by C.Dunn)



Plaque historical marker, (photo from Encyclopedia of Nebraska History online)

Legislative District 1

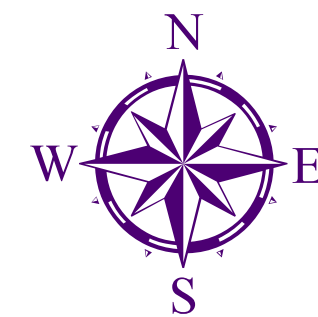


Historical Highlights

(58) Half-Breed Tract. Early fur traders married into Indian tribes, producing children whose land rights were endangered as Indians ceded land to the U.S. government. The Prairie du Chien Treaty set aside a tract of land for the mixed heritage children of the Otoe, Iowa, Omaha, and Santee Sioux tribes. The tract was located between the Great and Little Nemaha rivers. The land owners within the tract were never required to live on the property, and many sold their land to white settlers.

(79) First Oil Well. In 1883, a "vein of petroleum" found in Richardson County became the first publicized oil strike in Nebraska. Oil drillers did not produce a successful well in Nebraska, however, until 1940, when a Richardson County well produced 169½ barrels a day for the first 60 days of production. The well, Bucholz No. 1, qualified for a bonus of \$15,000 offered by the Nebraska Legislature for the first oil well to produce at least 50 barrels for 60 consecutive days.

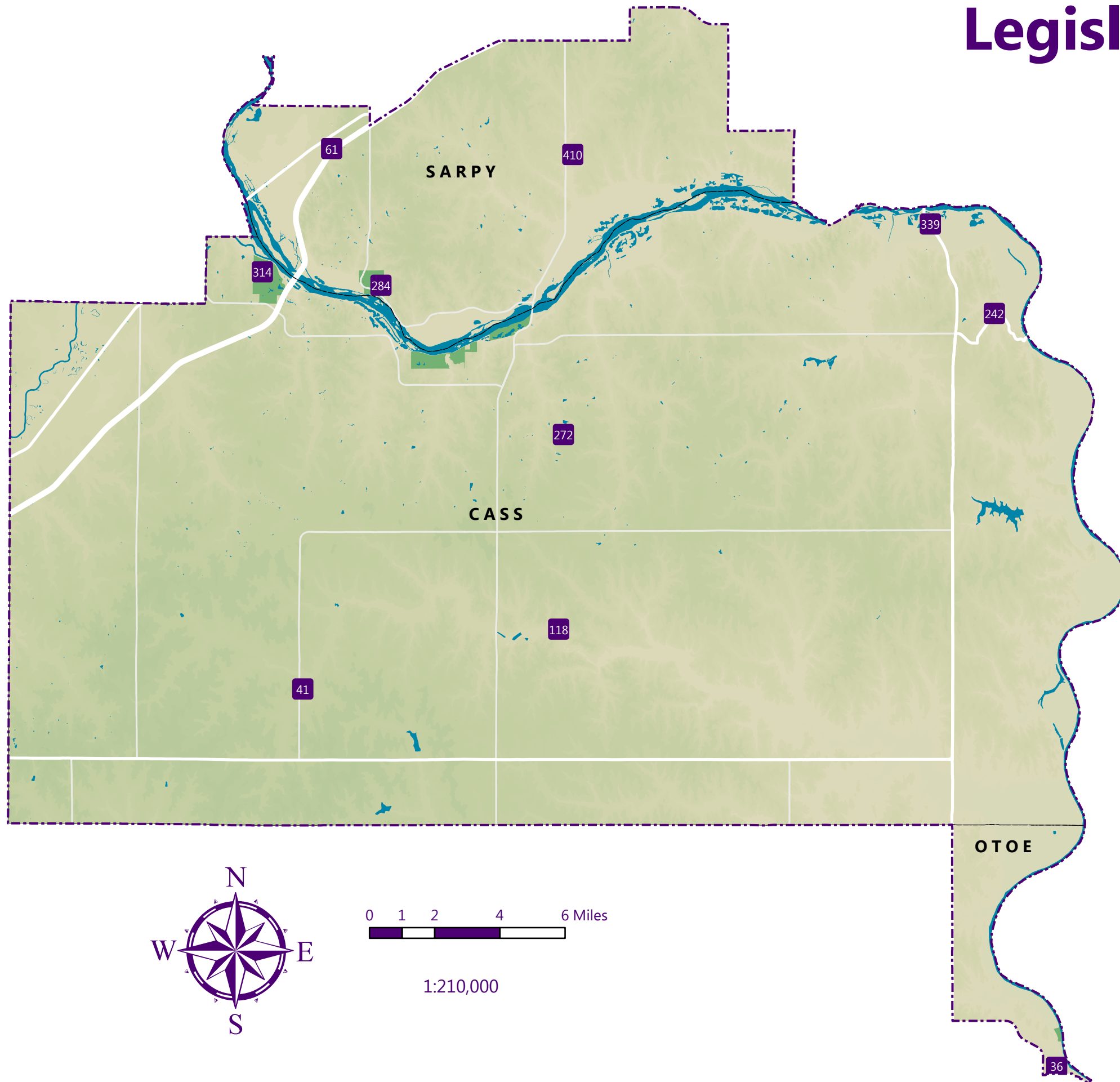
(367) Point of Beginning of the Public Land Surveys of the Sixth Principal Meridian. Passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 created the Nebraska and Kansas territories, opening an expanse of land that required surveying before settlers could claim property. The Fortieth Parallel was used as the baseline and border between Nebraska and Kansas. Land was surveyed westward from a cast iron monument denoting the location of the Fortieth Parallel on a bluff along the Missouri River. The survey was completed in 1883. The corners set by the survey continue to be referenced in all land transactions within Nebraska.



1:350,000



Legislative District 2

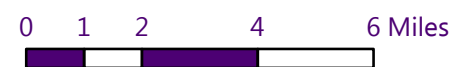


Historical Highlights

(242) Company A, First Nebraska Volunteer Infantry, 1861-1866. As the nation readied for the impending Civil War in the spring of 1861, Dr. Robert R. Livingston organized a company of infantry in Plattsmouth. Livingston was elected captain of the company, and on June 11, 1861, it was mustered as Company A, First Nebraska Volunteer Infantry. The regiment participated in battles in the South, including Fort Donelson and Shiloh in Tennessee.

(284) Gretna Fish Hatchery. The Board of Fish Commissioners, precursor to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, contracted with the Santee Hatchery to propagate fish at their private facility near Gretna. The commission bought the hatchery and adjoining land in 1882. An ample supply of spring water, which still feeds the ponds above the hatchery, led to the site's selection.

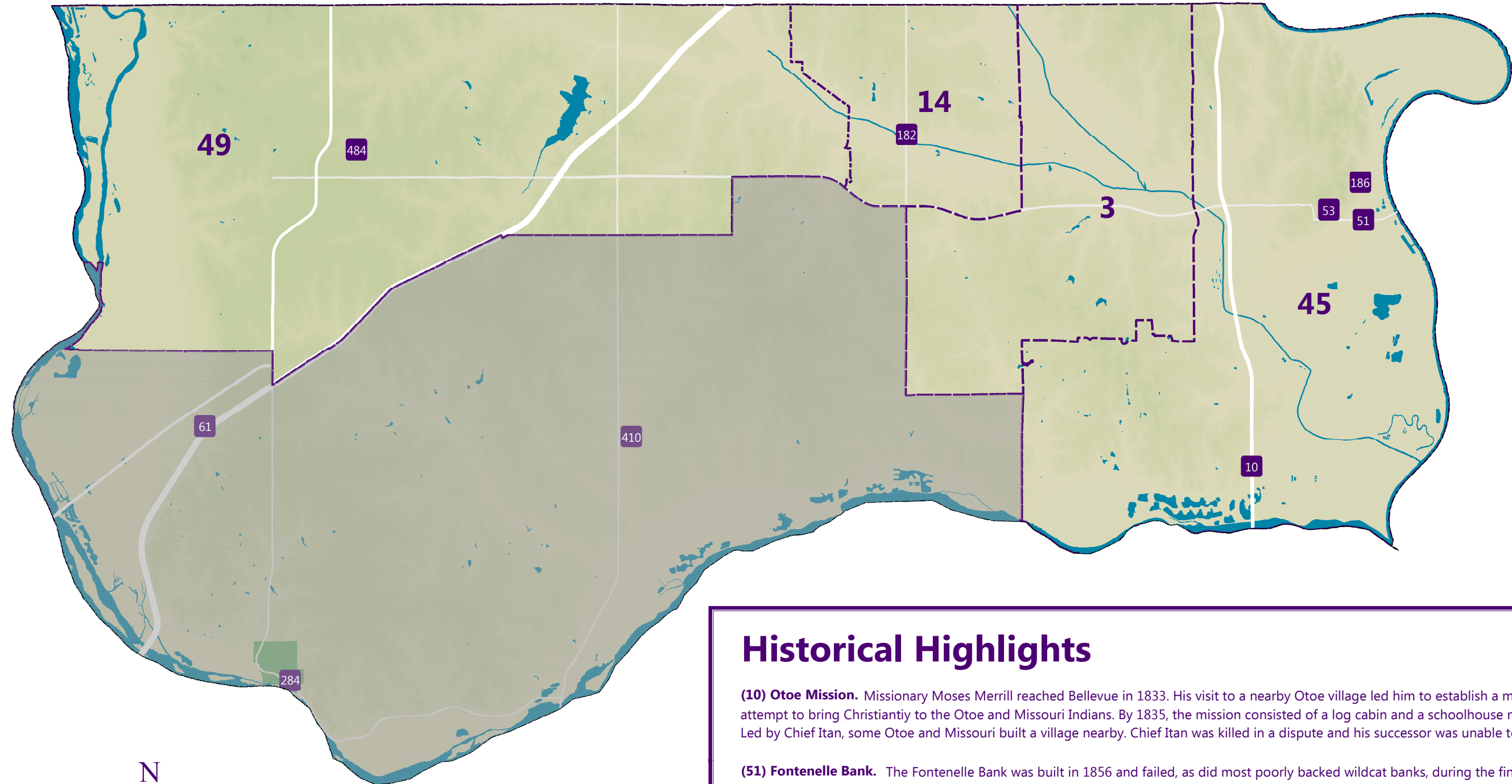
(314) Prehistoric Burial Site. From 1050 to 1400, prehistoric Indian farmers lived in small villages and isolated farmsteads in the lower Platte and Missouri River valleys. These early inhabitants lived in earth lodges containing fireplaces, beds, storage areas, and trash pits. The site contains a rare prehistoric cemetery. Archeological evidence indicates the Indians left their dead to decompose in the elements until only bones remained, when they would be buried in a communal burial ground. This tradition indicates their culture held the afterlife in high regard.



1:210,000

Sarpy County

Legislative Districts 3, 14, 45, and 49



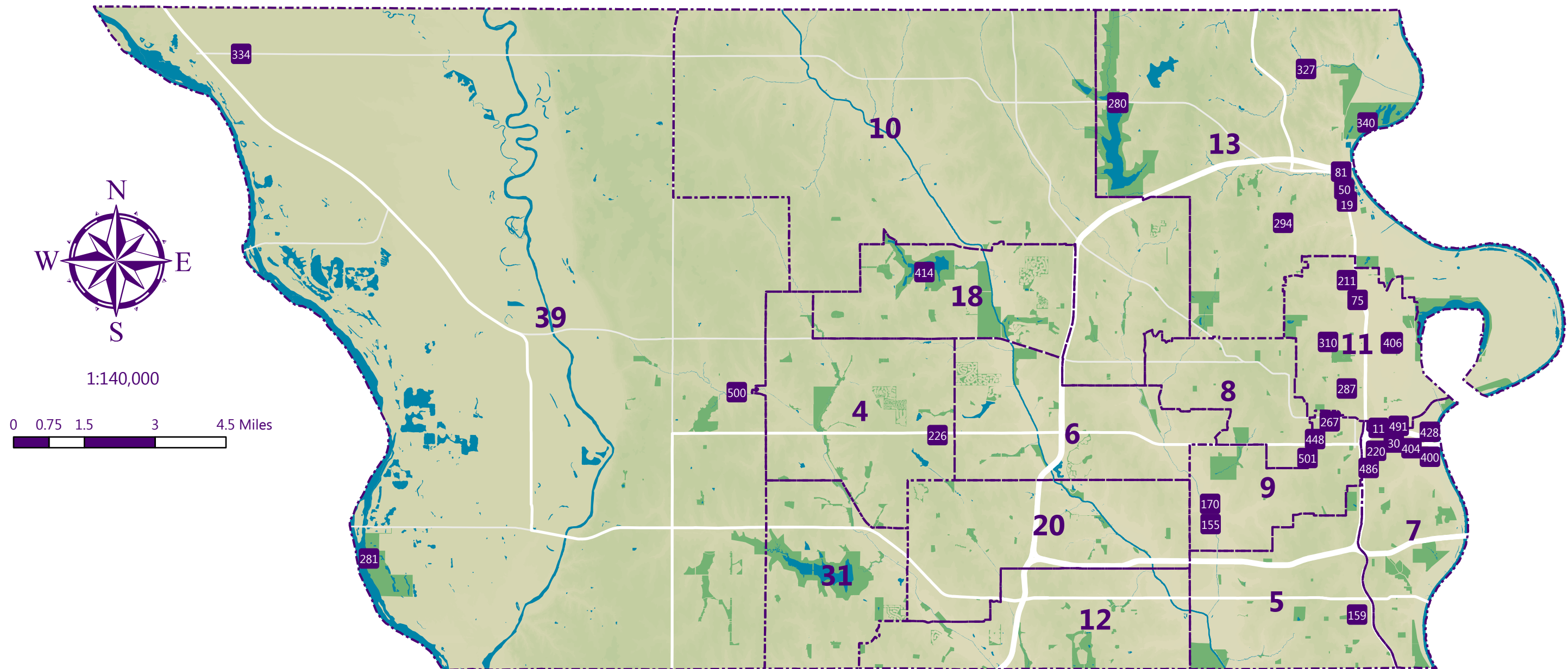
1:120,000

Historical Highlights

- (10) Otoe Mission.** Missionary Moses Merrill reached Bellevue in 1833. His visit to a nearby Otoe village led him to establish a mission in an early attempt to bring Christianity to the Otoe and Missouri Indians. By 1835, the mission consisted of a log cabin and a schoolhouse near the Platte River. Led by Chief Itan, some Otoe and Missouri built a village nearby. Chief Itan was killed in a dispute and his successor was unable to maintain the village.
- (51) Fontenelle Bank.** The Fontenelle Bank was built in 1856 and failed, as did most poorly backed wildcat banks, during the financial panic of 1857. The building served a succession of uses, including, for a time, as the Sarpy County courthouse. Eventually, the city of Bellevue purchased the bank and restored it with the help of a federal grant in 1972.
- (186) Bellevue Log Cabin.** The Bellevue Log Cabin was built in 1835 in the Missouri River floodplain, moved to higher ground to escape a cholera outbreak, and moved to its current location in 1850, where it served as a private residence until 1954. The original structure was a one-and-one-half-story building with a dirt floor, hand-hewn cottonwood logs packed with mud, and a fireplace.

Douglas County

Legislative Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 20, and 39



Historical Highlights

(19) Winter Quarters. Mormons fleeing religious persecution established their Winter Quarters in the winter of 1846-1847 near what is now Florence. Some 600 of the more than 3,000 persons who overwintered in hastily erected log cabins, sod houses, and dugouts died for lack of sufficient provisions. Ultimately, Winter Quarters became the administration center for the Mormon migration to the Great Salt Lake Valley.

(310) Malcolm "X". Malcolm X, born Malcolm Little in Omaha in 1925, became a leader in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. His family was forced to flee the state after receiving death threats for his father's work organizing the Universal Negro Improvement Association. While serving a prison term for burglary, Malcolm X converted to the Nation of Islam. He changed his name upon leaving prison. During a pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm X converted to Sunni Islam and embraced the concepts of human brotherhood and international cooperation. Malcolm X was assassinated February 21, 1965.

(414) Chief Standing Bear. The Ponca Tribe was forced from their Nebraska homeland to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) in 1877, a 500-mile journey by foot during which many died. Chief Standing Bear led a small band on a return trip to bury his son in Nebraska in January 1879. But the group was captured and imprisoned at Fort Omaha. The ensuing trial of Chief Standing Bear became a landmark case, which resulted in the ruling that American Indians were "persons within the meaning of the law."

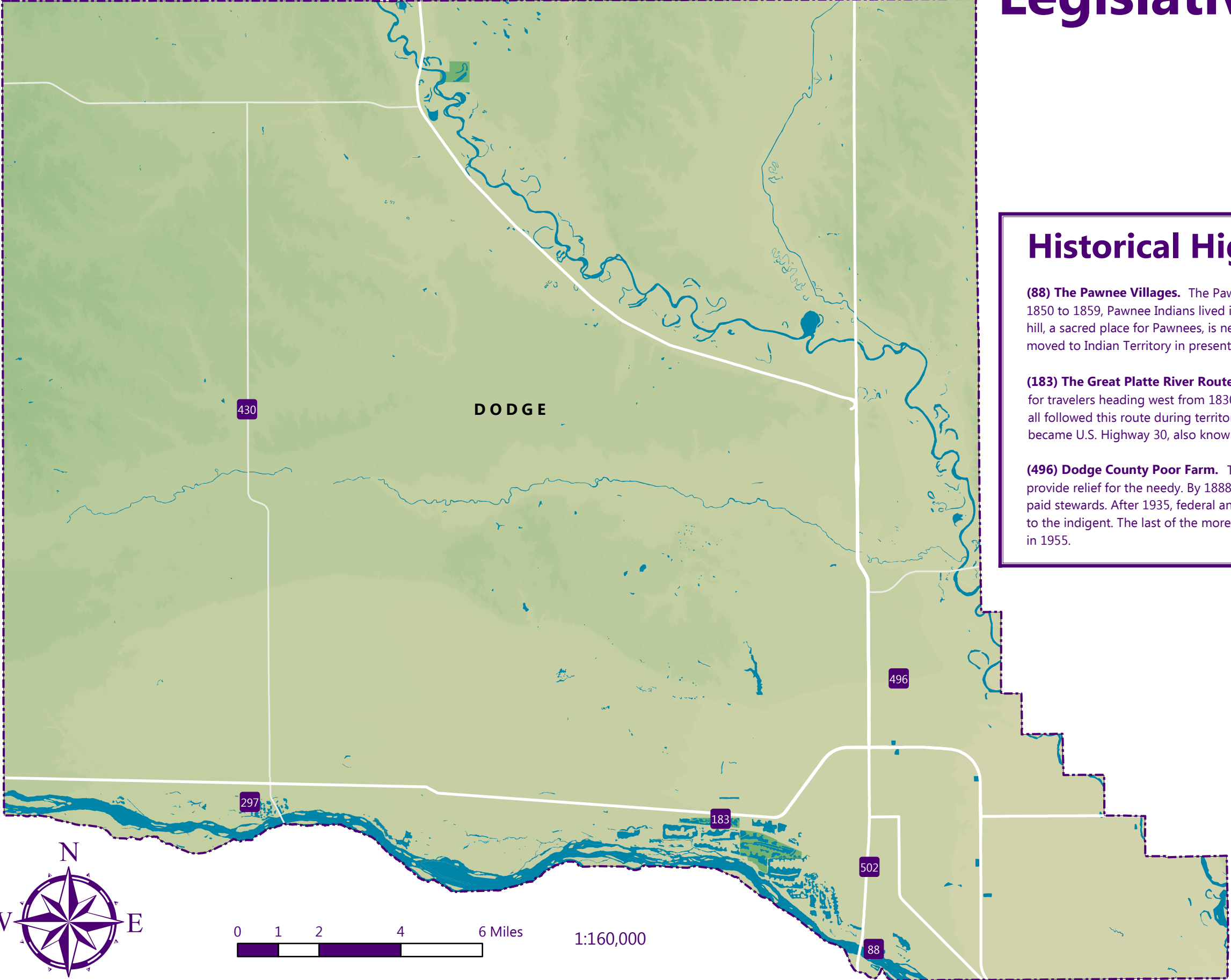
Legislative District 15

Historical Highlights

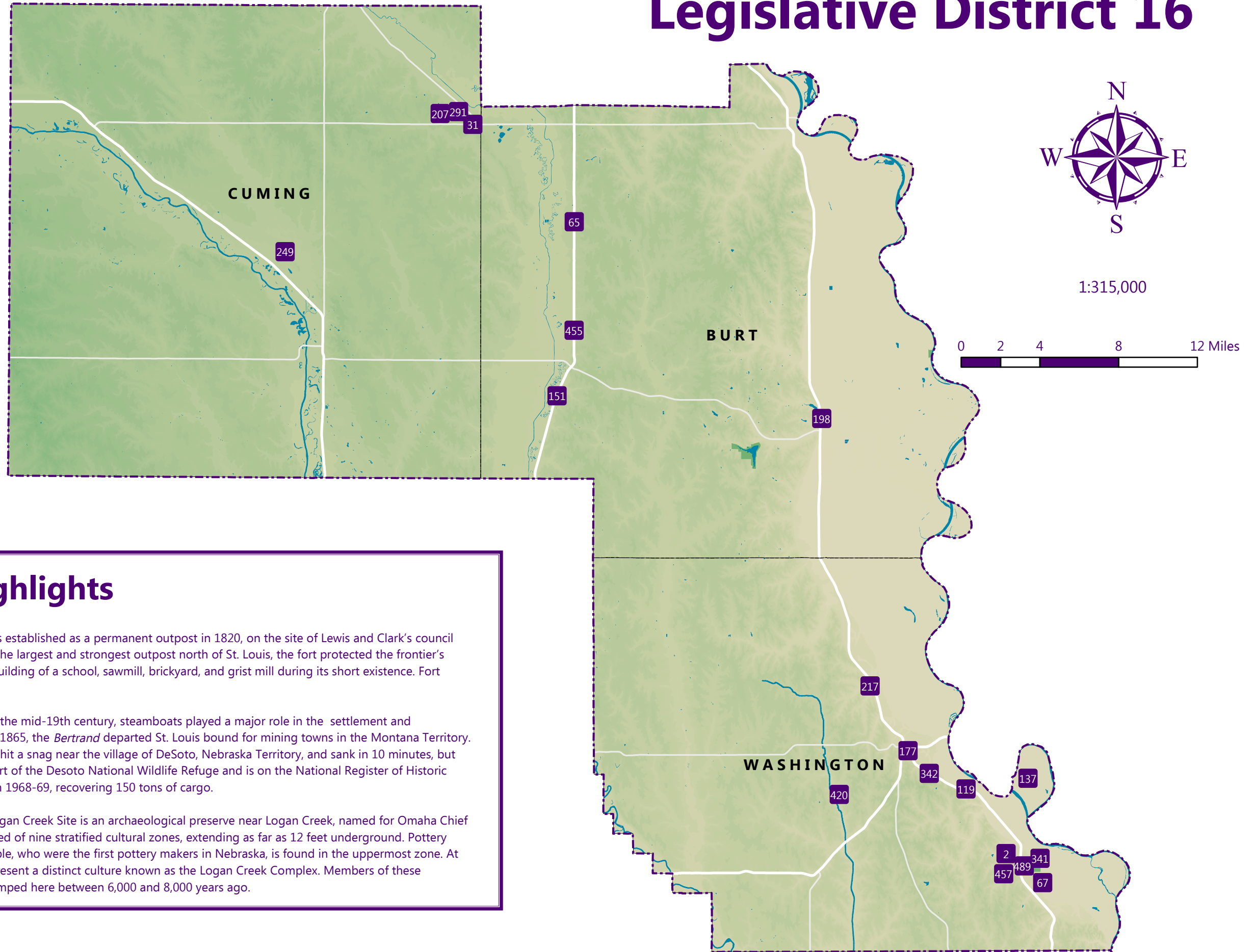
(88) The Pawnee Villages. The Pawnee Tribe once numbered more than 10,000 people. From 1850 to 1859, Pawnee Indians lived in earth-lodge villages in and near Dodge County. Pa-huk' hill, a sacred place for Pawnees, is near this marker. In 1875, the Pawnee left Nebraska and moved to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma.

(183) The Great Platte River Route West. The Platte River created a natural overland route for travelers heading west from 1830 to the 1860s. Stagecoaches, railways, and telegraph lines all followed this route during territorial Nebraska's frontier days. In the 20th century, the route became U.S. Highway 30, also known as the Lincoln Highway, the first transcontinental road.

(496) Dodge County Poor Farm. The Dodge County Poor Farm was established in 1872 to provide relief for the needy. By 1888, the farm encompassed 245 acres and was overseen by paid stewards. After 1935, federal and state old-age insurance reduced the need for county aid to the indigent. The last of the more than 400 residents died in 1944 and the farm was sold in 1955.



Legislative District 16



Historical Highlights

(2) Fort Atkinson. Fort Atkinson was established as a permanent outpost in 1820, on the site of Lewis and Clark's council with the Otoe and Missouri Indians. The largest and strongest outpost north of St. Louis, the fort protected the frontier's developing commerce and saw the building of a school, sawmill, brickyard, and grist mill during its short existence. Fort Atkinson was abandoned in 1827.

(137) Steamboat *Bertrand*. During the mid-19th century, steamboats played a major role in the settlement and development of the nation. In March 1865, the *Bertrand* departed St. Louis bound for mining towns in the Montana Territory. On April 1, the fully laden steamboat hit a snag near the village of DeSoto, Nebraska Territory, and sank in 10 minutes, but with no loss of life. The site is now part of the Desoto National Wildlife Refuge and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Salvors excavated the wreck in 1968-69, recovering 150 tons of cargo.

(151) The Logan Creek Site. The Logan Creek Site is an archaeological preserve near Logan Creek, named for Omaha Chief Logan Fontenelle. The site is comprised of nine stratified cultural zones, extending as far as 12 feet underground. Pottery attributed to a Plains Woodland people, who were the first pottery makers in Nebraska, is found in the uppermost zone. At least five of the lower layers may represent a distinct culture known as the Logan Creek Complex. Members of these hunter-gather groups periodically camped here between 6,000 and 8,000 years ago.

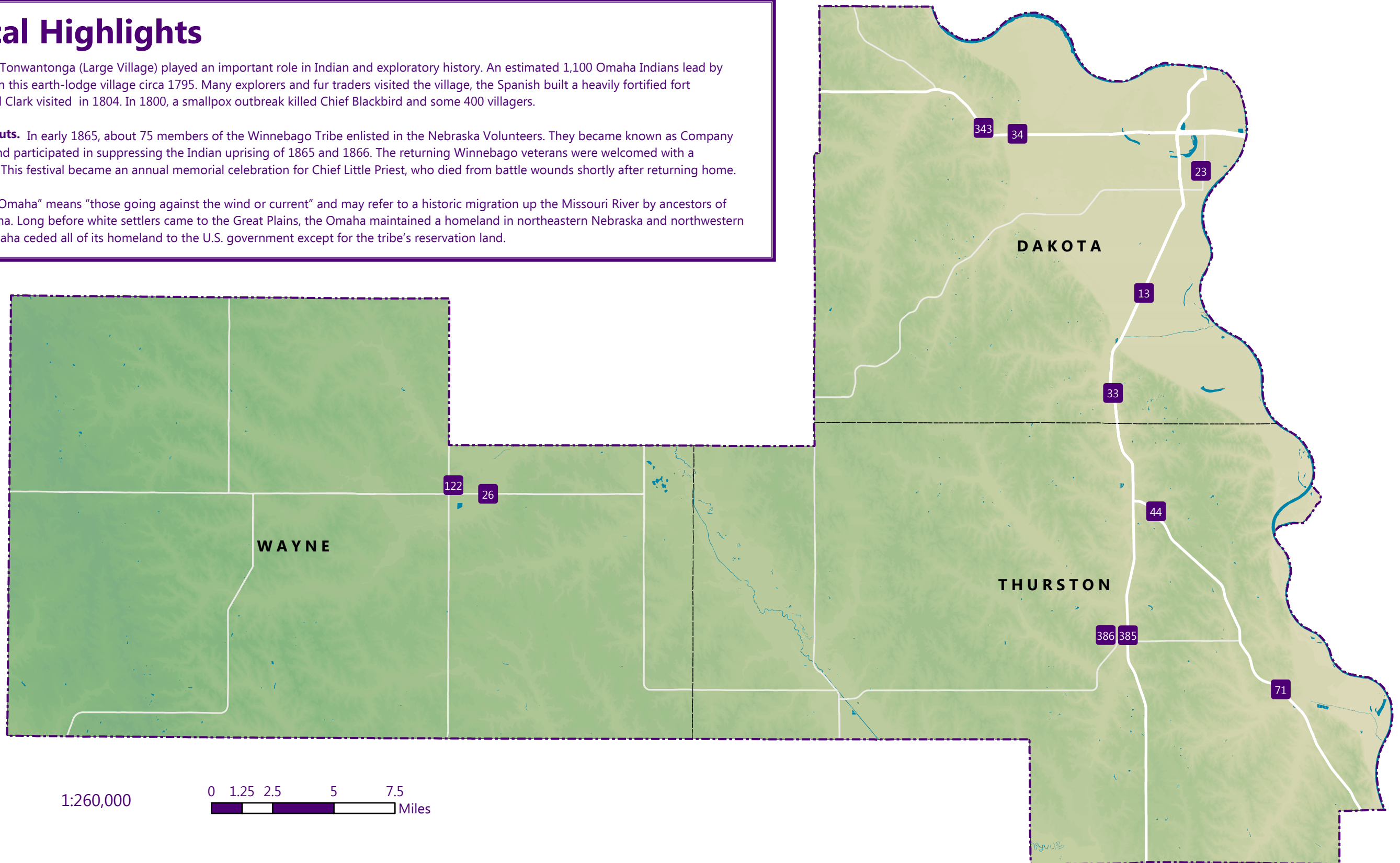
Legislative District 17

Historical Highlights

(13) Tonwantonga. Tonwantonga (Large Village) played an important role in Indian and exploratory history. An estimated 1,100 Omaha Indians lead by Chief Blackbird lived in this earth-lodge village circa 1795. Many explorers and fur traders visited the village, the Spanish built a heavily fortified fort nearby, and Lewis and Clark visited in 1804. In 1800, a smallpox outbreak killed Chief Blackbird and some 400 villagers.

(44) Winnebago Scouts. In early 1865, about 75 members of the Winnebago Tribe enlisted in the Nebraska Volunteers. They became known as Company "A", Omaha Scouts, and participated in suppressing the Indian uprising of 1865 and 1866. The returning Winnebago veterans were welcomed with a homecoming festival. This festival became an annual memorial celebration for Chief Little Priest, who died from battle wounds shortly after returning home.

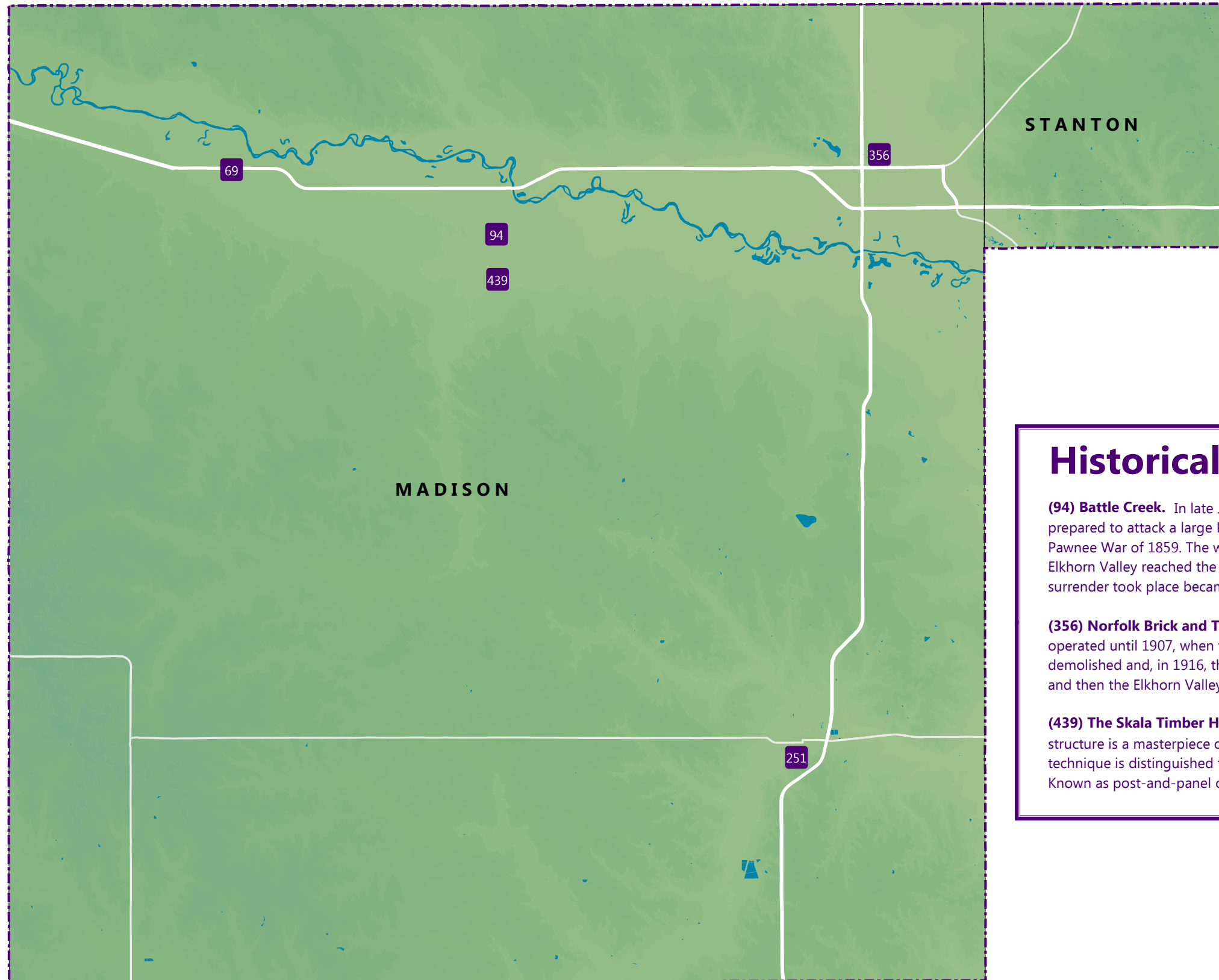
(71) Omaha Tribe. "Omaha" means "those going against the wind or current" and may refer to a historic migration up the Missouri River by ancestors of the present-day Omaha. Long before white settlers came to the Great Plains, the Omaha maintained a homeland in northeastern Nebraska and northwestern Iowa. In 1854, the Omaha ceded all of its homeland to the U.S. government except for the tribe's reservation land.



1:260,000

0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 Miles

Legislative District 19



1:180,000

Historical Highlights

(94) Battle Creek. In late July 1859, Nebraska Territorial Militia and U.S. Army Dragoons, totaling 300 men, prepared to attack a large Pawnee Village. Alerted, the Pawnee immediately surrendered, abruptly ending the Pawnee War of 1859. The war began on July 1, 1859, after reports of Pawnee aggression toward settlers in the Elkhorn Valley reached the territorial capital of Omaha. Although no battle occurred, the stream where the surrender took place became known as Battle Creek.

(356) Norfolk Brick and Tile Company, Verges Park. The Norfolk Brick and Tile Co. was formed in 1888 and operated until 1907, when the the quality of the clay found in the area declined. The factory buildings were demolished and, in 1916, the area became a private park. The park was deeded to the city of Norfolk in 1959 and then the Elkhorn Valley Historical Society in 1986.

(439) The Skala Timber House. Built in 1869, this house is a rare product of Czech-American culture. The structure is a masterpiece of ancient Slavic carpentry skills so old they are rare in Europe. The Czech technique is distinguished from similar methods by the use of thin planks set within a post-and-beam frame. Known as post-and-panel construction, this is the only known example in Nebraska.

Legislative District 22

Historical Highlights

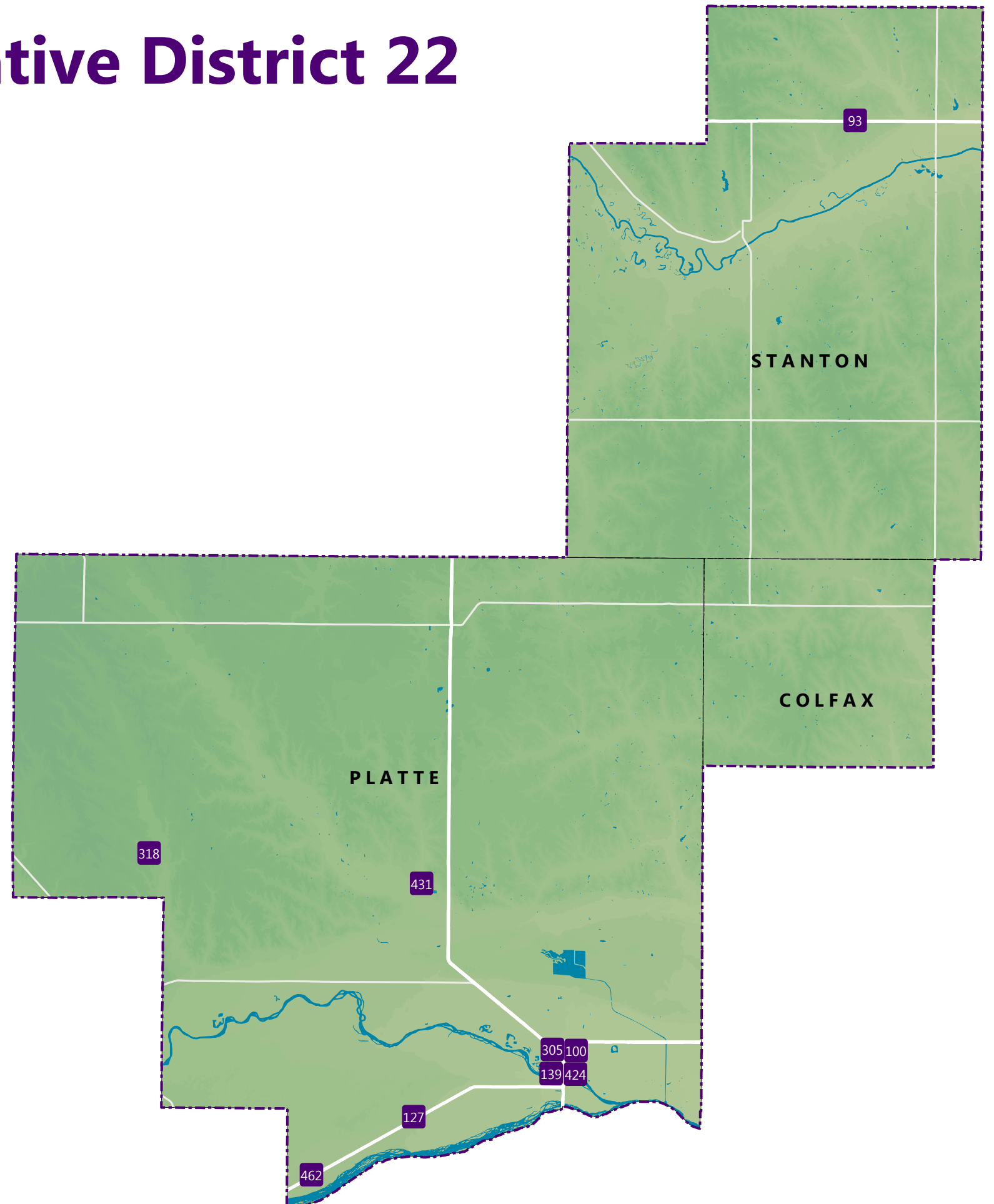
(100) The North Brothers. Frank and Luther North of Columbus led the legendary Pawnee Scouts. The Pawnee, eager to join the U.S. Army against the Sioux and Cheyenne, were organized into a fighting unit in 1864. The Pawnee Scouts participated in the Powder River Campaigns of 1865 and 1876-1877 and the Republican River Campaign of 1869. Frank North, known as Pani Leshar or Pawnee Chief, was revered by the Indian soldiers. When the Pawnee were relocated to Oklahoma in 1875, the brothers remained in Columbus.

(305) The Villasur Expedition. In 1720, an ill-fated Spanish military expedition led by Sir Pedro de Villasur set out from Santa Fe intending to spy on French activities near the Missouri River. The Spanish forces encountered a large band of Pawnee and Otoe Indians near present day Schuyler. The Spaniards retreated, but the French-aligned Indian groups found and killed most of the expedition. This event represents the greatest loss of life suffered by white men against Indians on Nebraska soil and the farthest north the Spanish explored on the Great Plains.

(424) Andrew Jackson Higgins (1886-1952). Andrew Jackson Higgins was the inventor and producer of the "Higgins boat," which was the landing craft used by the U.S. in amphibious invasions, specifically D-Day in 1944 and throughout the Korean and Vietnam wars.

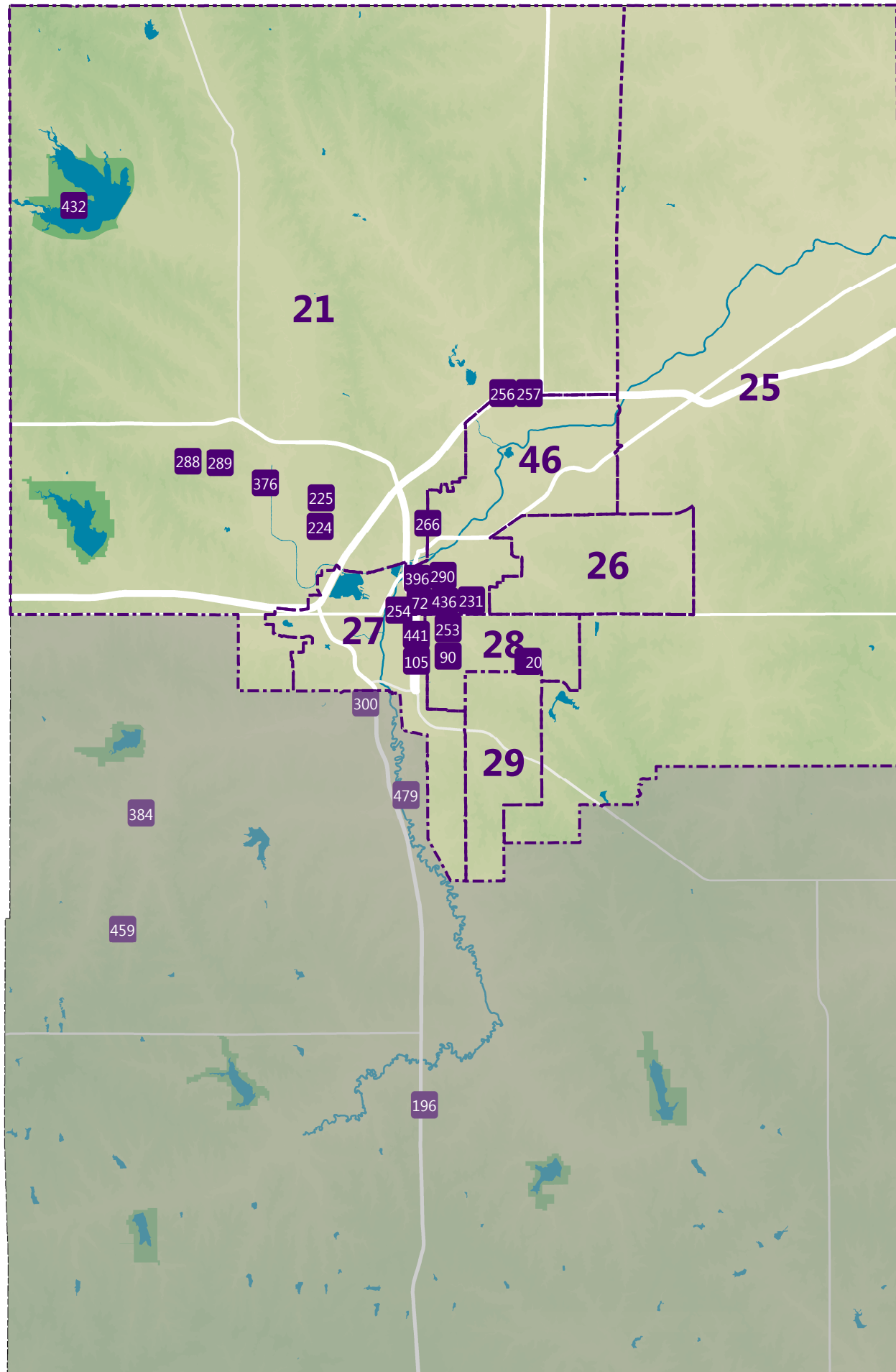


1:330,000



Lancaster County

Legislative Districts 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 46



Historical Highlights

(90) Nebraska Statehood Memorial. The Legislature designated the Kennard House as the Nebraska Statehood Memorial in 1968. The house was home to Nebraska's first Secretary of State, Thomas P. Kennard. Kennard, Governor David Butler, and Auditor John Gillespie comprised the Capitol Commission, whose task in 1867 was to select a new site for the state capitol. All three members of the commission built ornate homes within the original plat of Lincoln, testimony to their confidence in the new capital city. Only the Kennard House still stands. It is considered one of the finest remaining Nebraska examples of Italianate domestic architecture, a leading American style during Nebraska's pioneer period.

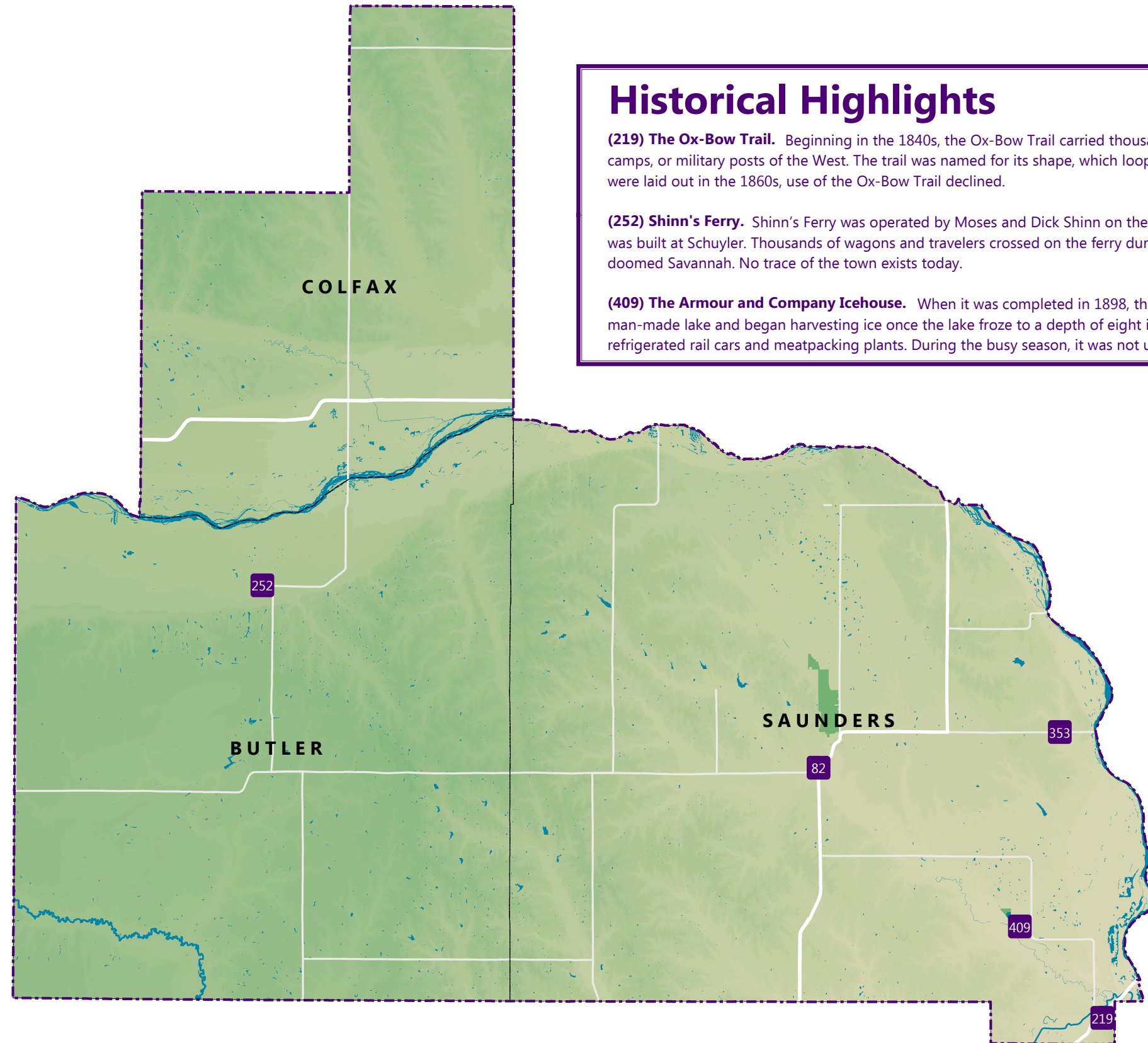
(266) Giant Glacial Boulder. The boulder is one of the largest "erratics" deposited in the Belmont area of Lincoln as continental glaciers receded thousands of years ago. The boulder is composed of Sioux sandstone and quartzite. Glaciers covered Nebraska during the Great Ice Age, coming from the north and east.

(290) Pershing Rifles. Before commanding American Expeditionary Forces in Europe during World War I, General John J. Pershing was professor of Military Sciences at the University of Nebraska. In a successful effort to improve morale of the Reserve Officers Training Corps, Pershing created an elite drill team that became known as the Society of Pershing Rifles.



1:230,000

Legislative District 23

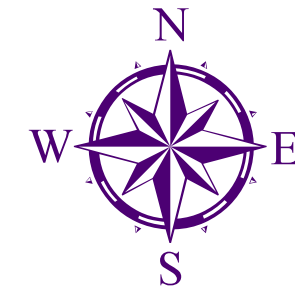


Historical Highlights

(219) The Ox-Bow Trail. Beginning in the 1840s, the Ox-Bow Trail carried thousands of immigrants and millions of pounds of freight destined for settlements, mining camps, or military posts of the West. The trail was named for its shape, which looped north from Plattsmouth and Nebraska City to the Platte River. Once more direct routes were laid out in the 1860s, use of the Ox-Bow Trail declined.

(252) Shinn's Ferry. Shinn's Ferry was operated by Moses and Dick Shinn on the Platte River near Savannah, the first Butler County seat, from 1859 until 1872, when a bridge was built at Schuyler. Thousands of wagons and travelers crossed on the ferry during this time. However, the demise of the ferry and the removal of the county seat to David City doomed Savannah. No trace of the town exists today.

(409) The Armour and Company Icehouse. When it was completed in 1898, the Armour and Company Icehouse was one of the largest in the U.S. Each fall, workers filled a man-made lake and began harvesting ice once the lake froze to a depth of eight inches. Ice blocks were stored in ice rooms packed in sawdust until the ice was used in refrigerated rail cars and meatpacking plants. During the busy season, it was not uncommon to ship 100 or more cars filled with ice. The icehouse burned in 1921.



1:370,000

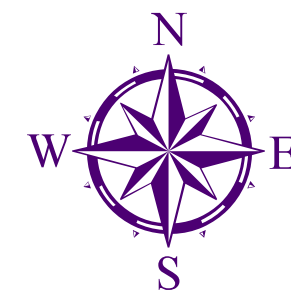
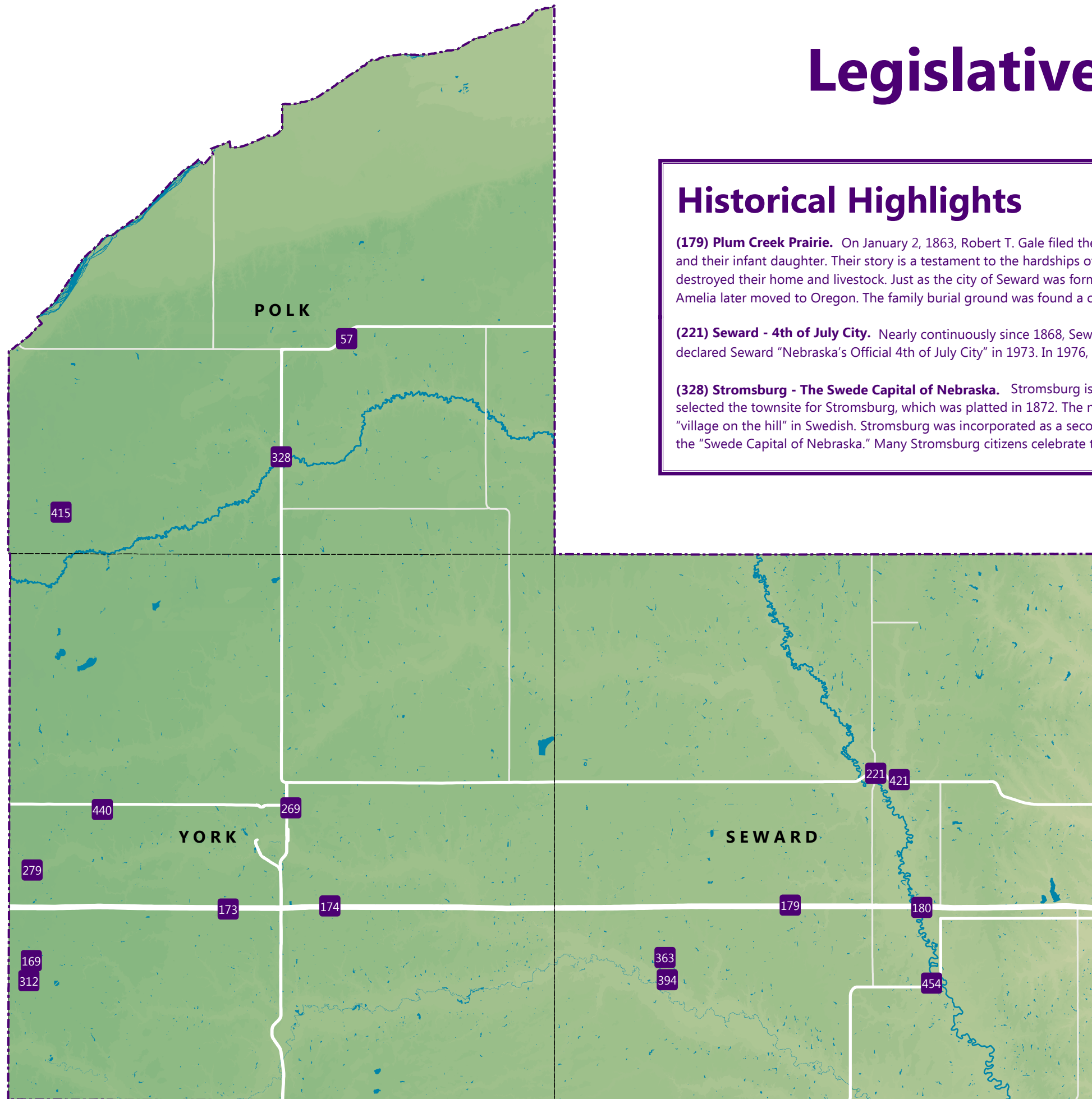
Legislative District 24

Historical Highlights

(179) Plum Creek Prairie. On January 2, 1863, Robert T. Gale filed the first homestead patent in Seward County, where he settled with his wife and their infant daughter. Their story is a testament to the hardships of the state's early settlers. The family was nearly washed away in a flood that destroyed their home and livestock. Just as the city of Seward was forming in 1868, Robert died, followed by their baby girl, both of tuberculosis. Amelia later moved to Oregon. The family burial ground was found a century later along with letters by Amelia describing the family's story.

(221) Seward - 4th of July City. Nearly continuously since 1868, Seward has sponsored an annual 4th of July Celebration. Governor J. James Exon declared Seward "Nebraska's Official 4th of July City" in 1973. In 1976, Seward was cited by the American Revolution Bicentennial officials.

(328) Stromsburg - The Swede Capital of Nebraska. Stromsburg is named for the man who would become its mayor. In 1870, Lewis Headstrom selected the townsite for Stromsburg, which was platted in 1872. The name is derived from Lewis Headstrom's surname and "burg," meaning "village on the hill" in Swedish. Stromsburg was incorporated as a second-class city in 1888. In 1966 Governor Frank Morrison declared the town the "Swede Capital of Nebraska." Many Stromsburg citizens celebrate their Swedish heritage with an annual festival.



1:300,000

Legislative District 30

Historical Highlights

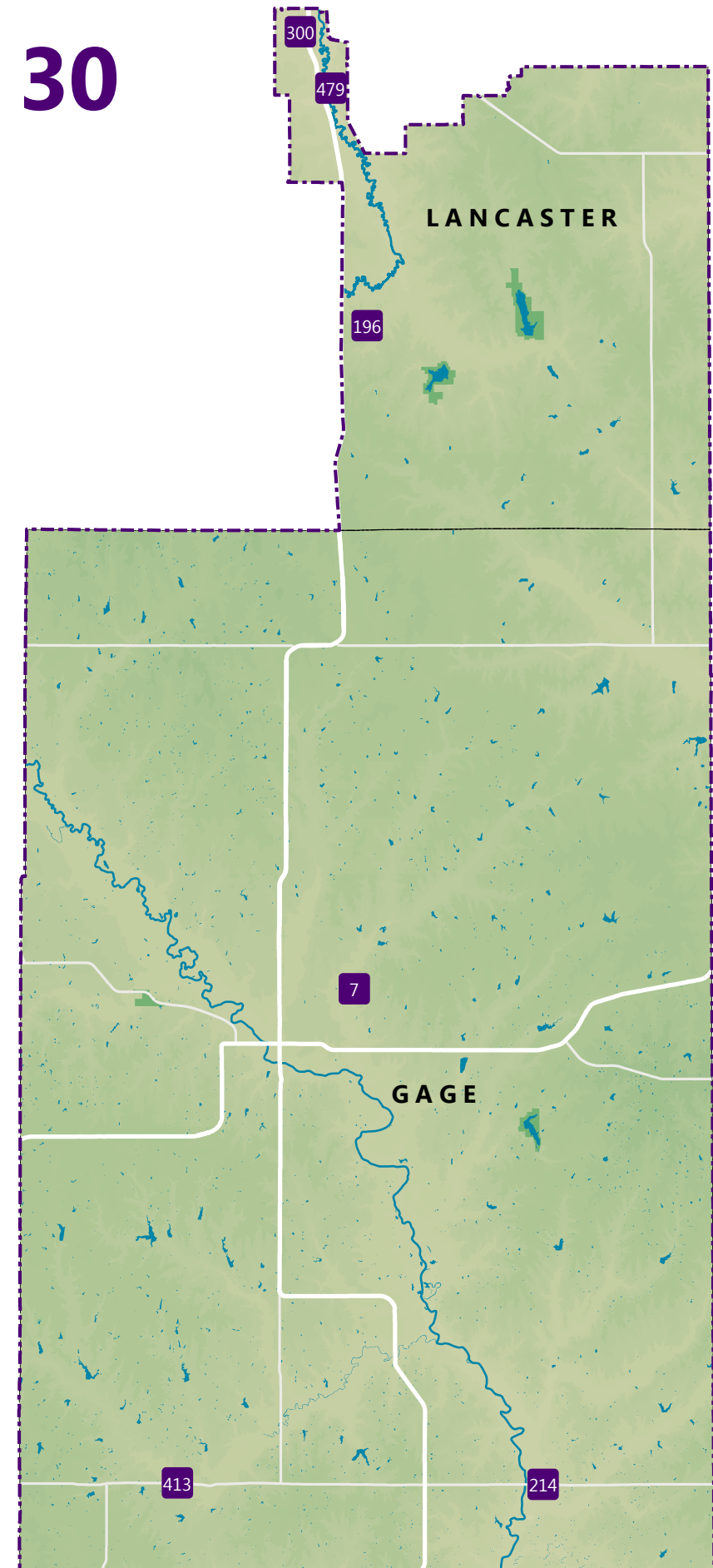
(7) Homestead Movement. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act on May 20, 1862, granting heads of families 160 acres of land for a filing fee and the promise to live on the claimed land for five years. No single act had more effect on the Middle West and Great Plains. The action brought thousands of land-hungry pioneers, freemen, and immigrants to the region. The Homestead National Monument of America, located on the Daniel Freeman homestead, is part of the National Park System.

(214) The Otoe and Missouri Agency. When Nebraska became a territory, the Otoe and Missouri Indians relinquished their land along the Platte River in exchange for goods and a reservation centered around the site of their largest village. The Indian agency was also located nearby. In 1870, Indian Agent Major A. L. Green described the village as being comprised of a combination school and church, 40 earth lodges, several bark houses and tipis. A blacksmith, steam powered sawmill, and grist mill sat south of the village. The tribes relocated to Indian Territory in Oklahoma by 1881 and the reservation lands were sold off.

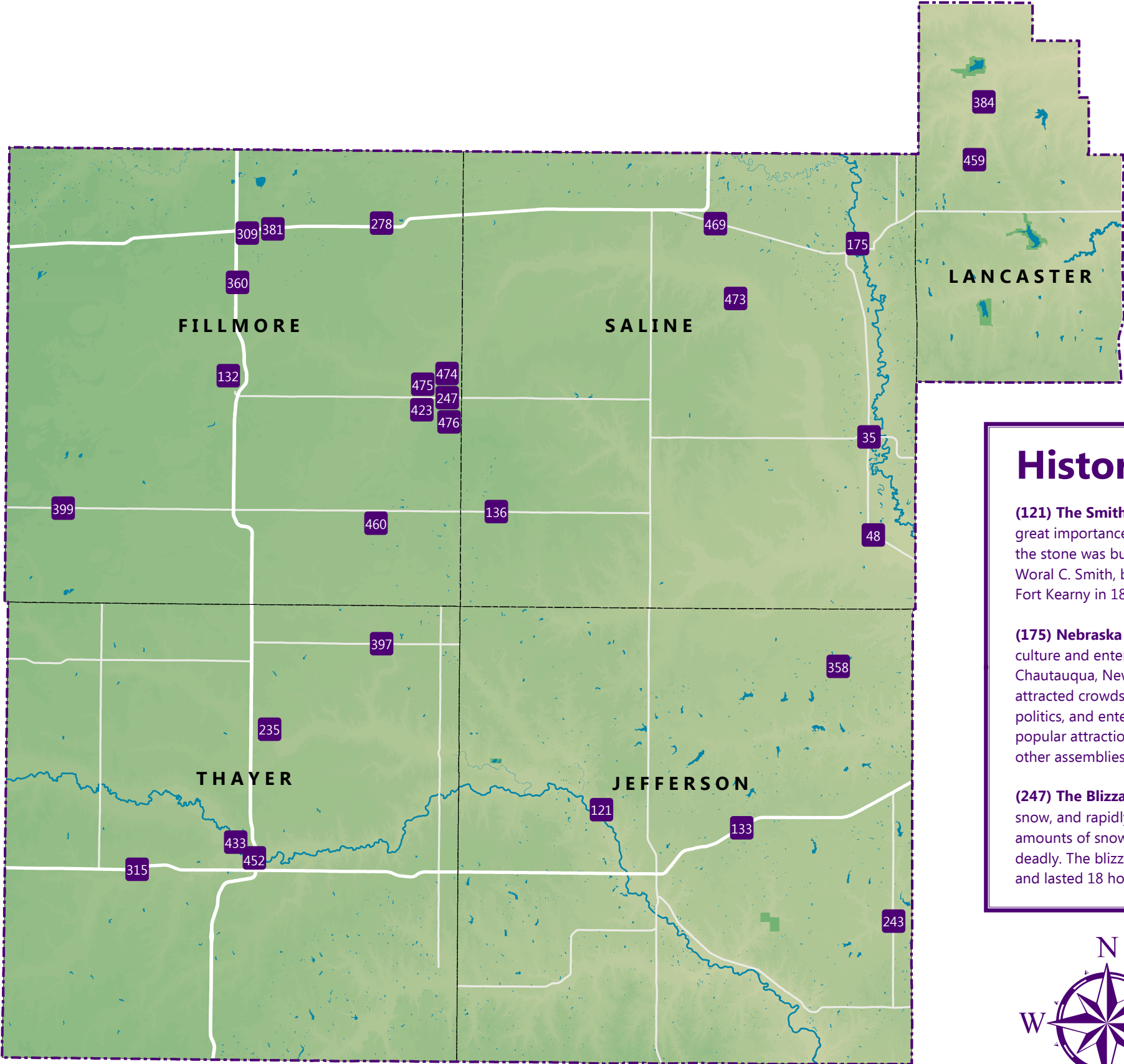
(413) The Oketo Cutoff. Ben Halliday, owner of an express company with government contracts to carry mail and passengers from the Missouri River to California, ordered the Oketo Cutoff to be laid out after the town of Marysville refused to improve the Fort Leavenworth-Fort Kearny Military Road. From October 1862 until March 1863, stagecoaches traveled along the Oketo Cutoff, which, although a more direct route, could not compete with the Military Road's popularity.



1:350,000



Legislative District 32

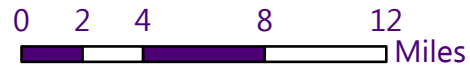


Historical Highlights

(121) The Smith Limekiln and Limestone House. The availability of suitable building material was of great importance to Nebraska’s pioneer settlers. Jefferson County used native limestone for building and the stone was burned in kilns to create mortar and whitewash. The limekiln at this site was built in 1874 by Woral C. Smith, but the U.S. Army reportedly operated the first kiln in this area during the construction of Fort Kearny in 1848.

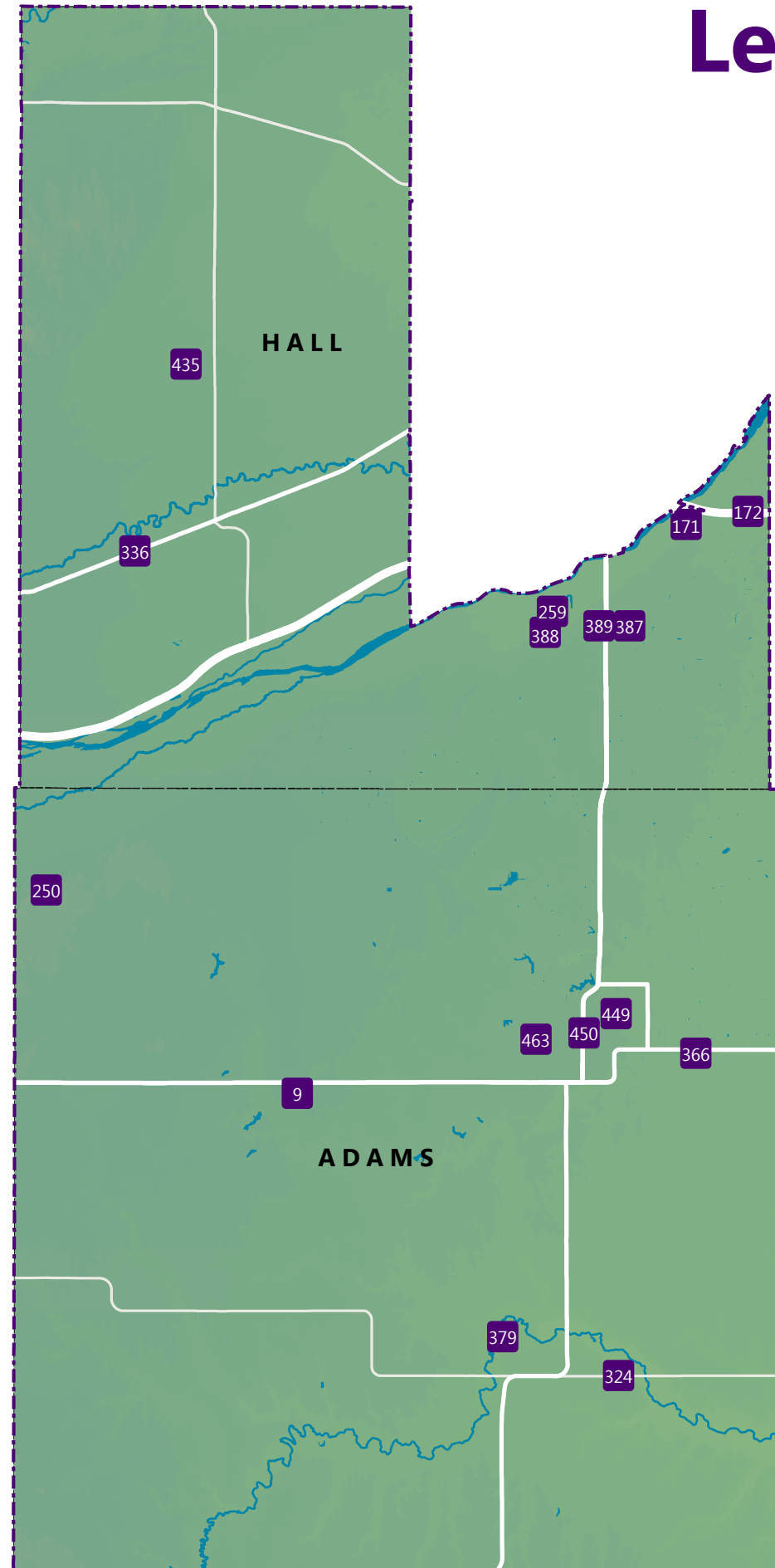
(175) Nebraska Chautauquas. Nebraska was a leader in the Chautauqua movement, which brought culture and entertainment to rural America through the 1920s. The movement began in 1874 in Chautauqua, New York, and spread across America. The Crete Chautauqua was founded in 1883 and attracted crowds of up to 5,000 people during the 10-day summer sessions. Topics included religion, politics, and entertainment, with William Jennings Bryan and the Negro Slayton Jubilee Singers among the popular attractions. Backers dissolved the Crete Chautauqua in 1898 because of financial losses after other assemblies took place in Lincoln, Beatrice, and Long Pine.

(247) The Blizzard of 1888. On January 12, 1888, a blizzard struck Nebraska with gale winds, blinding snow, and rapidly falling temperatures. While other storms produced colder temperatures and greater amounts of snow, the combination and timing made the Blizzard of 1888 much more dangerous and deadly. The blizzard began suddenly, while many children were away from home in one-room schoolhouses, and lasted 18 hours.



1:400,000

Legislative District 33



Historical Highlights

(9) The Oregon Trail. Beginning in Independence, Missouri, the Oregon Trail followed the Kansas River west, then the Little Blue River north into Nebraska to the Platte River, and connected to the Platte River Valley roadway. An estimated quarter of a million pioneers used this route in the 25 years after the first wagons traveled on the Oregon Trail in 1841. While Oregon was an early goal for travelers on the Oregon Trail, the '49'ers trekked to California, and the Pony Express and military expeditions used this route as well.

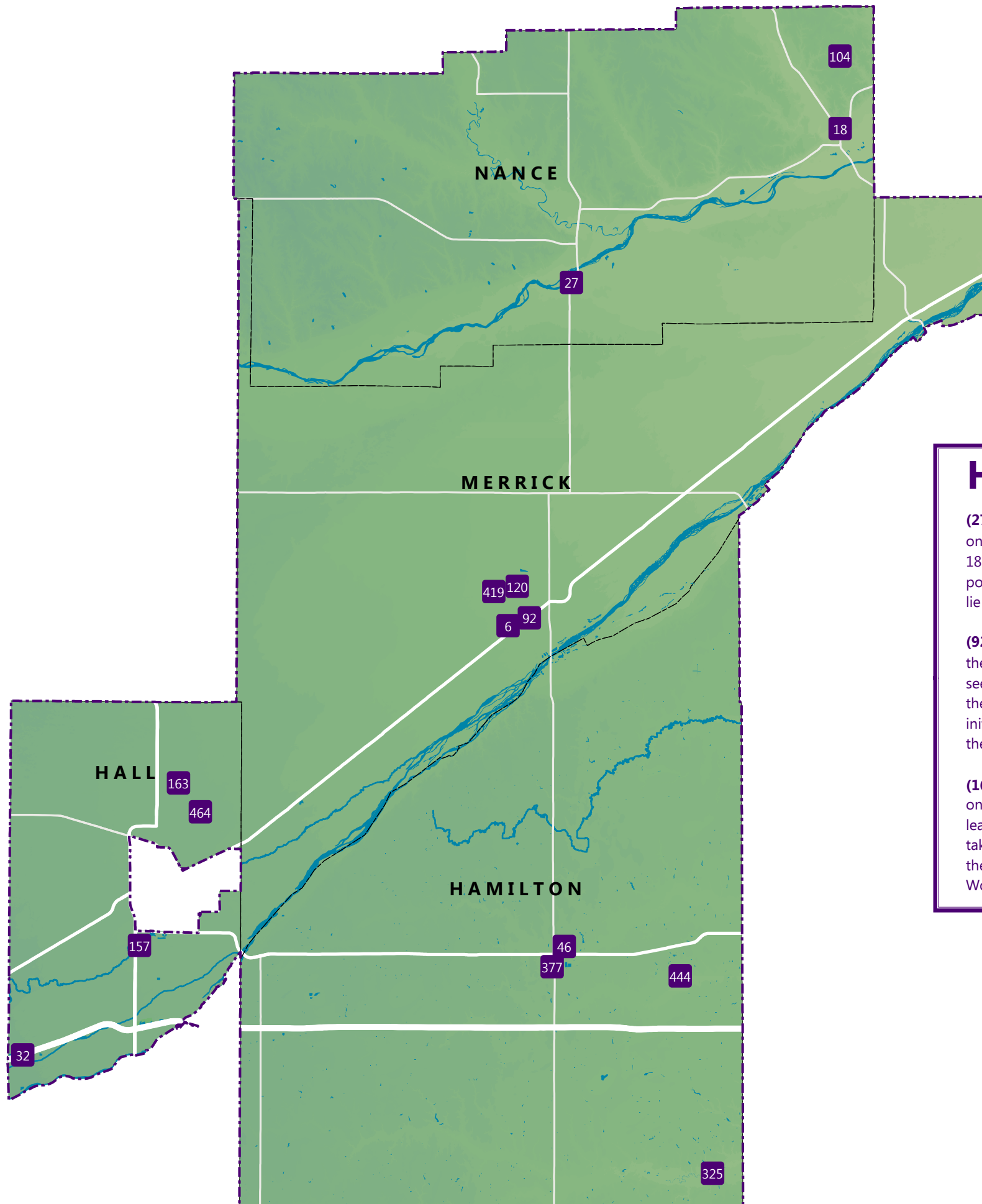
(366) Naval Ammunition Depot. The U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot (NAD) was the Navy's largest World War II inland munitions depot, covering 49,000 acres in Adams and Clay counties. Built in 1942, NAD employed 10,000 military and civilian workers by V-J Day in 1945. At one point during WWII, NAD produced almost 40 percent of the Navy's ordnance. NAD cost \$71 million to build and included 207 miles of railroad track, 274 miles of road, and 2,200 buildings. In 1944, an explosion killed nine, wounded 53, and left a 550-foot-long crater. NAD closed in 1966.

(389) Sandhill Cranes. The Big Bend of the Platte River is one of the most important habitat areas for the spring migration of the world's largest population of Sandhill cranes. Sandhill crane remains have been found in nine-million-year-old deposits in western Nebraska and in prehistoric and historic Native American sites throughout the Central Plains.



1:310,000

Legislative District 34



Historical Highlights

(27) Mormon Pioneer Campsite. Having left Winter Quarters, several hundred Mormon pioneers camped near here on their trek to the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847. The first group of 148 travelers was led by Brigham Young. Between 1855 and 1860, several thousand Mormons made the 1,300-mile journey on foot using handcarts to transport their possessions across the prairie. Overpowered by summer heat or caught in the cold of prairie blizzards, hundreds of them lie buried in unmarked graves along the trail.

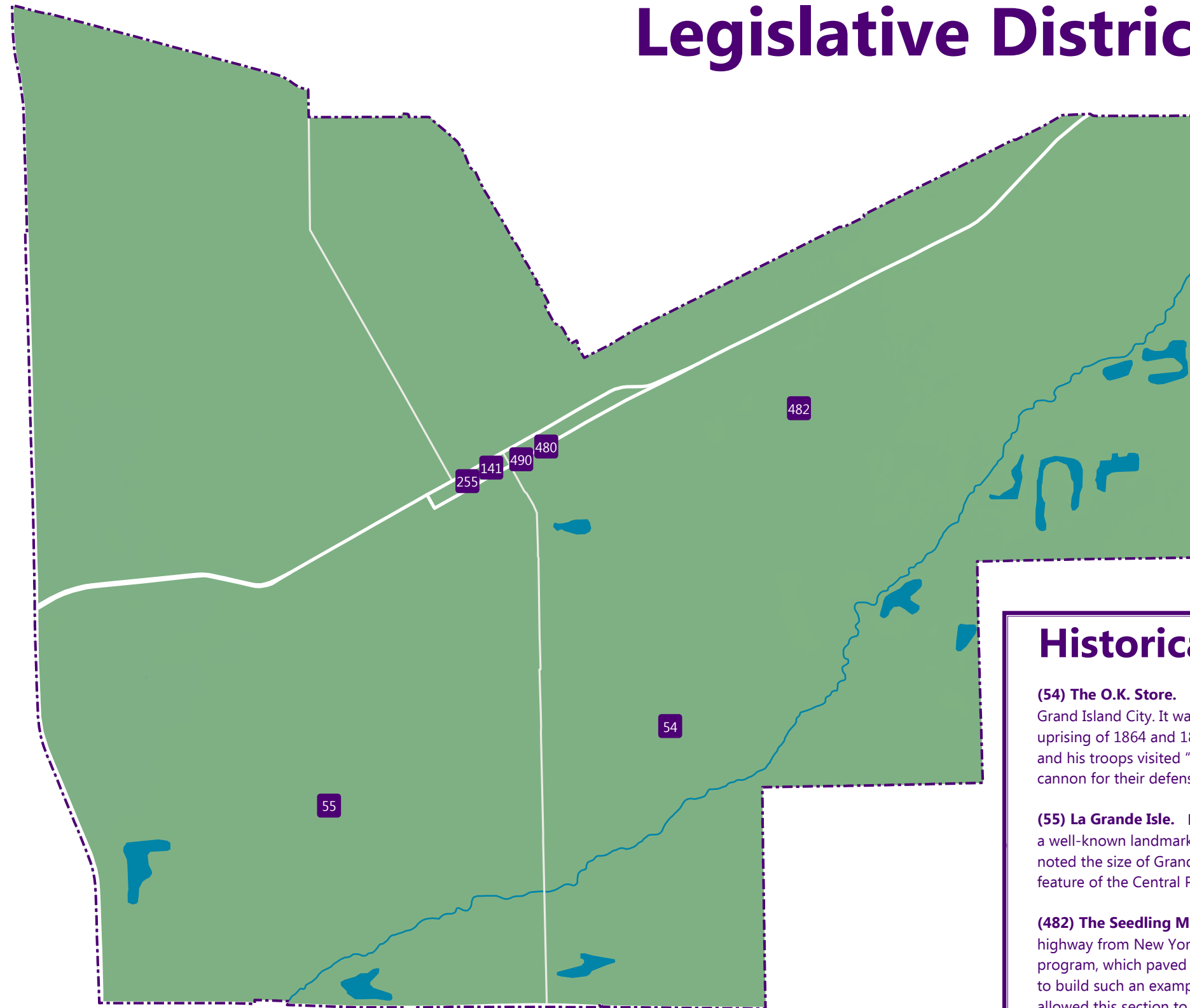
(92) Lone Tree. As early as 1833, travelers noted a solitary cottonwood tree as a Platte River landmark. Standing on the north side of the Platte River, the tree was visible from great distances. Some accounts estimated the tree could be seen for 20 miles. The tree stood about 50 feet tall, with a circumference of between 10 to 12 feet. The Mormon Trail and the Omaha-Fort Kearny stage route passed by the tree. Travelers would often camp beneath its canopy and carve their initials on the trunk, likely speeding the tree's demise in 1863. A severe storm in 1865 felled the landmark. In 1911 the residents of Merrick County erected a stone in the shape of a tree trunk on the site once occupied by Lone Tree.

(163) B-17G Bomber Crash, 1944. On February 25, 1944, a B-17G bomber from the Grand Island Army Airfield crashed on the Langenheder farm, killing nine aboard. The Grand Island base served as a training location for aircrews prior to leaving for overseas duty. The B-17 was on a training flight in the early morning hours, when it crashed shortly after takeoff. The plane slid across a field, struck a berm next to an irrigation ditch, and exploded. The marker memorializes the more than 15,500 Army Air Forces airmen who died in nearly 6,350 aircraft training accidents in the U.S. during World War II.



1:360,000

Legislative District 35



Historical Highlights

(54) The O.K. Store. In 1862, the O.K. Store was opened by Henry Koenig and Fred Wiebe near the Mormon Trail in Grand Island City. It was the first store in the settlement and also served as the telegraph station. During the Indian uprising of 1864 and 1865, the O.K. Store was fortified with sod and sheltered 168 men and women. General S.R. Curtis and his troops visited "Fort O.K." on August 22, 1865. Impressed by the settlers' preparations Curtis left a six-pounder cannon for their defense.

(55) La Grande Isle. Probably discovered by French fur traders in the late 1700s, the large island in the Platte River was a well-known landmark for fur traders by 1810. Both the Long and Fremont expeditions of 1820 and 1842, respectively, noted the size of Grand Island. Westbound travelers of the 1830s often mentioned the island as the most conspicuous feature of the Central Platte Valley. Grand Island was ceded to the United States government by the Pawnee in 1848.

(482) The Seedling Mile. The Lincoln Highway Association set a goal to develop a paved, toll-free, transcontinental highway from New York City to San Francisco. In order to reach this goal, the association developed the Seedling Mile program, which paved portions of road to "seed" the roadway. Grand Island became the second city in the United States to build such an example of concrete roadway, which it completed in late 1915. Realignment of the highway in 1931 allowed this section to be preserved. It is the only remaining original section of a concrete Seedling Mile that has not been widened or covered with asphalt.



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1:35,000

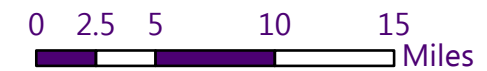
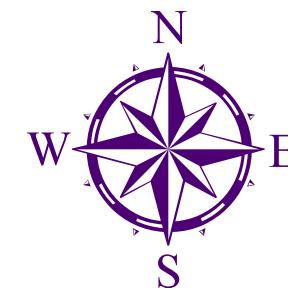
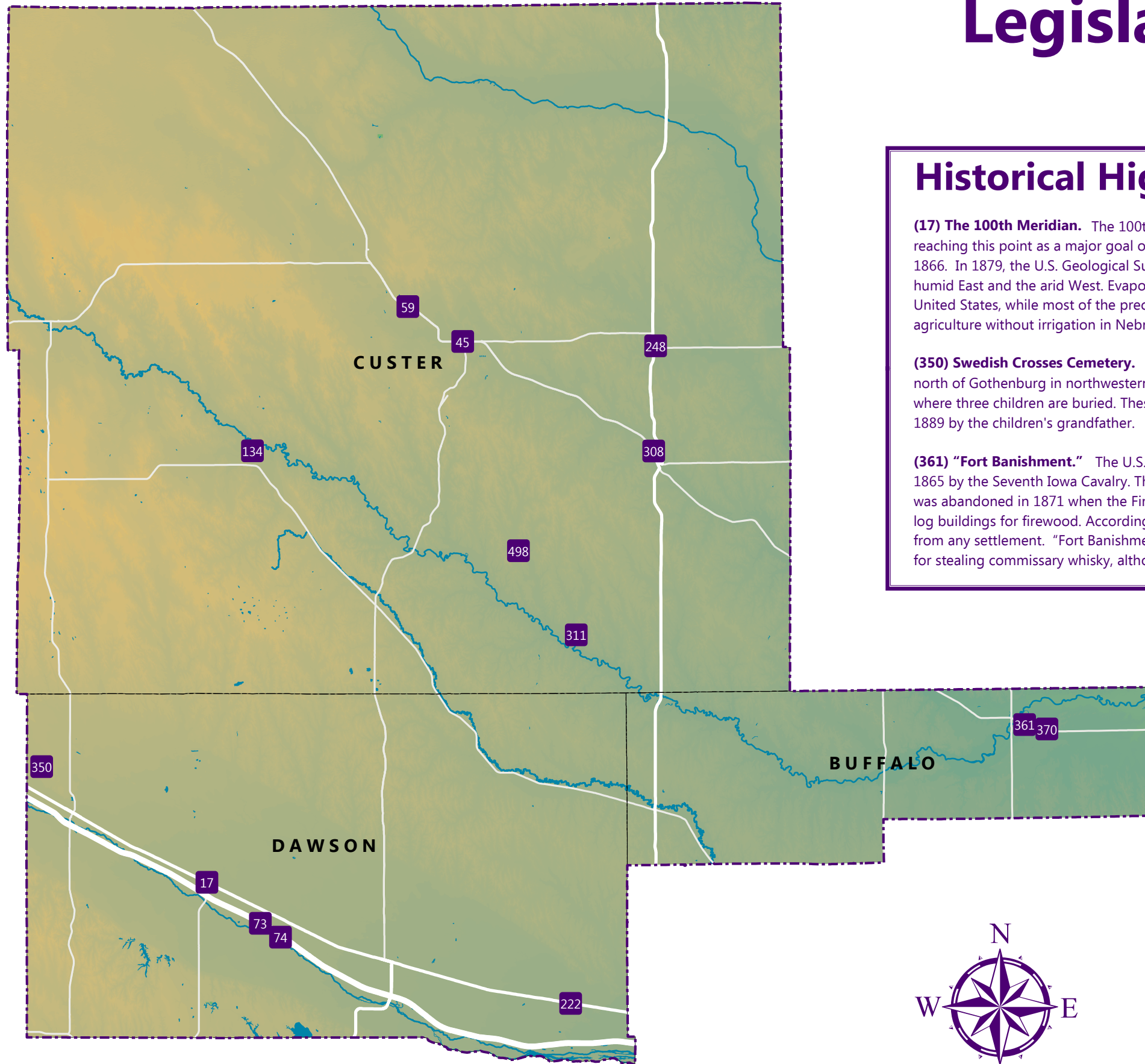
Legislative District 36

Historical Highlights

(17) The 100th Meridian. The 100th Meridian is the 100th longitudinal line west of Greenwich, England. Congress set reaching this point as a major goal of the first transcontinental railroad. The Union Pacific accomplished this on October 5, 1866. In 1879, the U.S. Geological Survey recognized the 100th Meridian as the natural demarcation line between the humid East and the arid West. Evaporation from the Gulf of Mexico supplies most of the rainfall for the eastern half of the United States, while most of the precipitation for the western half comes from the Pacific, an insufficient source for agriculture without irrigation in Nebraska.

(350) Swedish Crosses Cemetery. One of the many Swedish settlements in Nebraska during the late 19th century was north of Gothenburg in northwestern Dawson County. An enduring symbol of this settlement is Swedish Crosses Cemetery, where three children are buried. These unique grave markers were made in a traditional Swedish style between 1885 and 1889 by the children's grandfather.

(361) "Fort Banishment." The U.S. Army's Post South Loup Fork was a small outpost of Fort Kearny established in May 1865 by the Seventh Iowa Cavalry. The post monitored the movements of Indians in the Loup River valleys. The post was abandoned in 1871 when the First Nebraska Cavalry replaced the Iowa cavalry. Pioneer settlers from Gibbon used the log buildings for firewood. According to legend, the post became known as "Fort Desolation" because it was about 30 miles from any settlement. "Fort Banishment" was another nickname based on tales that soldiers were sent there as punishment for stealing commissary whisky, although military records do not confirm this.



1:510,000

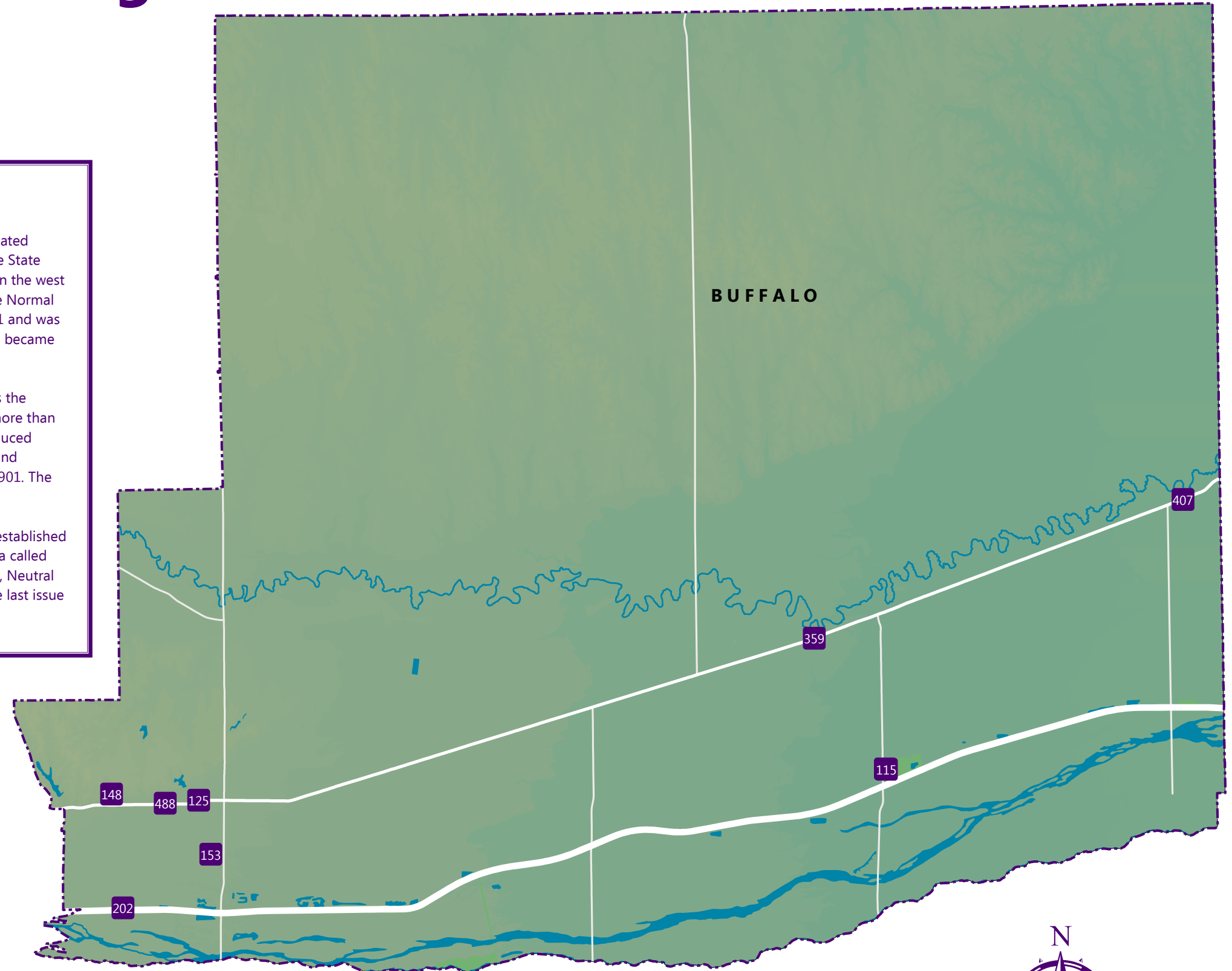
Legislative District 37

Historical Highlights

(125) University of Nebraska at Kearney. In 1903, the Legislature appropriated \$50,000 to establish a state normal school in central or western Nebraska. The State Board of Education chose Kearney as the site and the city donated 20 acres on the west side of town. Ninety-six students enrolled for the first classes at Kearney State Normal School in the summer of 1905. The school became a four-year college in 1921 and was renamed the Nebraska State Teachers College at Kearney. In 1991, the school became part of the University of Nebraska system.

(148) Kearney Cotton Mill. Completed in 1892, the Kearney Cotton Mill was the largest manufacturing plant in Nebraska. The two-story brick structure cost more than \$400,000 to build. At its peak, the mill employed about 450 workers and produced 26,000 yards of unbleached muslin a day from raw cotton shipped by barge and railroad from the South. The mill, which never turned a profit, was closed in 1901. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1902.

(407) The Huntsman's Echo. In April 1860, Joseph E. Johnson, a Mormon, established a road ranch and began publishing Nebraska's first newspaper west of Omaha called The Huntsman's Echo. The paper, with a motto of "Independent in Everything, Neutral in Nothing," discussed the Nebraska scene in a vigorous and breezy style. The last issue of The Huntsman's Echo was published in August 1861.

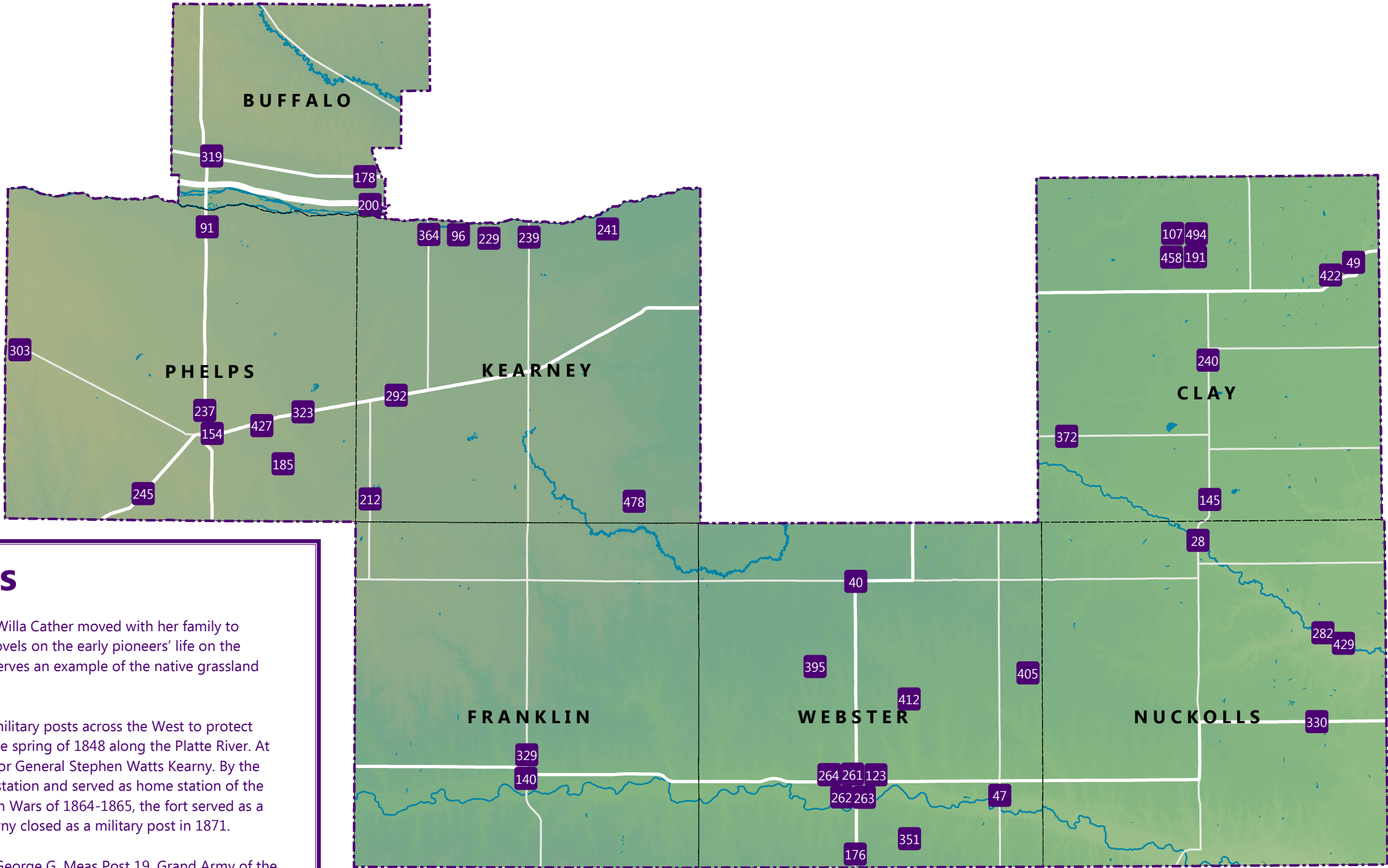


0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

1:140,000



Legislative District 38

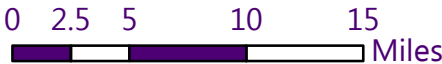


Historical Highlights

(176) Willa Cather Memorial Prairie. Nine-year-old Willa Cather moved with her family to Webster County from Virginia in 1883. She based her novels on the early pioneers' life on the prairie. The 610-acre Willa Cather Memorial Prairie preserves an example of the native grassland that once covered Nebraska.

(229) Fort Kearny. The U.S. government established military posts across the West to protect pioneers. Fort Kearny was the first post established in the spring of 1848 along the Platte River. At first called Fort Childs, the outpost was renamed to honor General Stephen Watts Kearny. By the 1860s, Fort Kearny had become a significant freighting station and served as home station of the Pony Express. Although never attacked during the Indian Wars of 1864-1865, the fort served as a outfitting depot for several Indian campaigns. Fort Kearny closed as a military post in 1871.

(422) The Soldiers' Monument. On March 27, 1879, George G. Meas Post 19, Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), Department of Nebraska, was founded in Sutton by 20 former Union soldiers. The GAR was a national fraternal organization created to provide for the welfare of Union veterans of the Civil War, their widows and orphans, and to keep alive memories of wartime sacrifices. In 1909, a granite base was laid, but the monument was never finished. A bronze statue of a Civil War soldier was commissioned in 2001, which finally completed the monument to Union Soldiers.



1:520,000



Legislative District 40



1:700,000

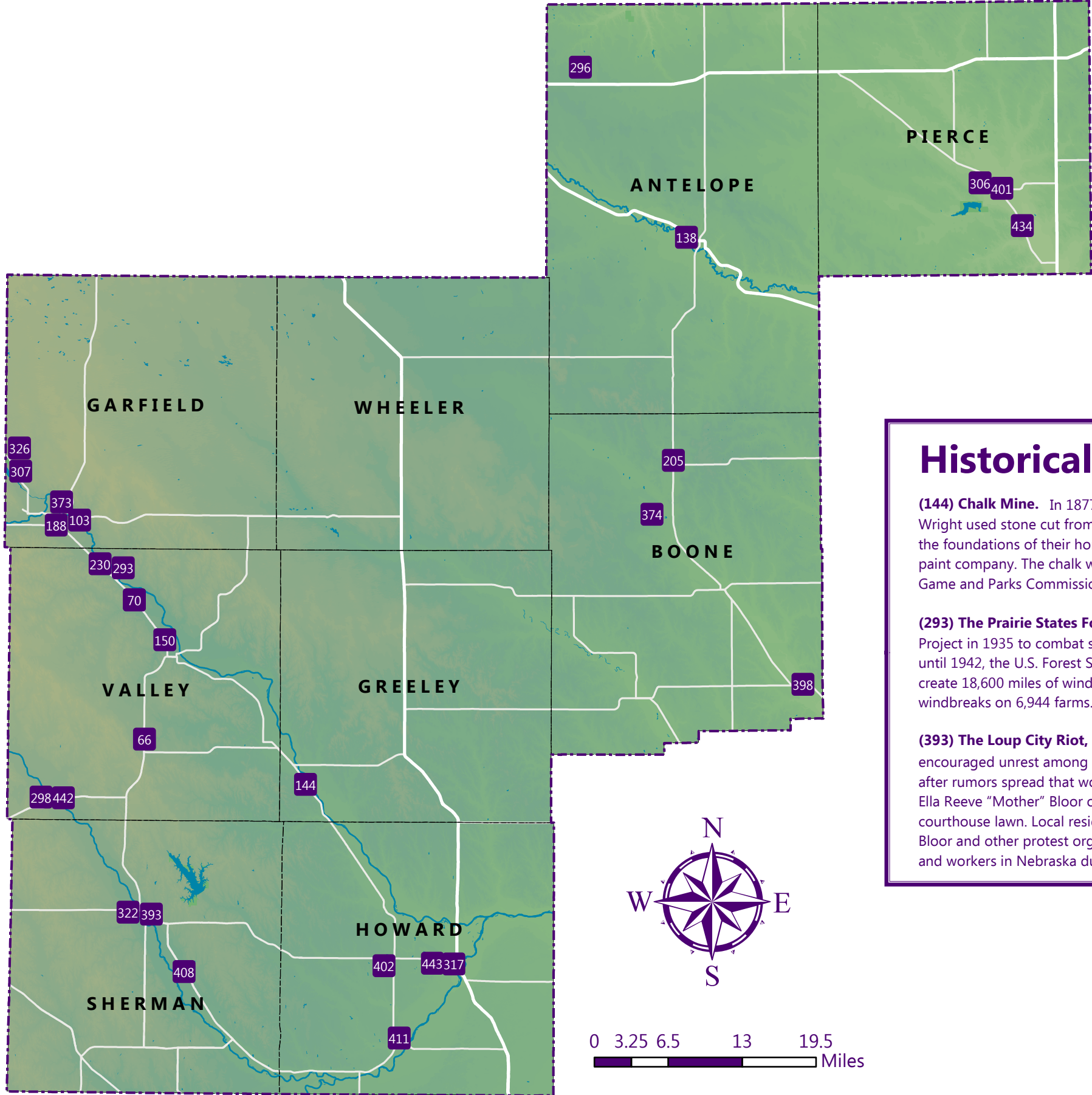
Historical Highlights

(62) Ponca Tribe. Ponca Indians lived in this area of northeast Nebraska since the earliest recorded history. In 1868, the federal government signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie, which transferred the land to the Sioux without the permission of the Ponca, who had been guaranteed their land by treaties signed with the U.S. government in 1858. The Ponca were forcibly removed to Indian Territory in Oklahoma in 1877. Unable to adjust to the new climate, many Ponca died in the South.

(68) The Ionia "Volcano." The Lewis and Clark Expedition noted a tall bluff that appeared to have been on fire and was still very hot. Later, fur traders frequently noticed dense smoke and fire in the area. In 1839, J.N. Nicollet theorized that the decomposition of iron pyrites, in contact with water, resulted in a heat capable of igniting other combustible materials. Local settlers continued to call the bluff the "Ionia volcano," unaware of Nicollet's theory. An earthquake in 1877 aroused new fears of an impending volcanic eruption. By 1878, the Missouri River undermined the bluffs and a large section of the "volcano" fell into the river.

(76) Aviation Pioneers. The Savidge brothers conducted experiments in flight with a heavier-than-air vehicle. Before 1907, the Savidge brothers began studying hawks and built model gliders, full-size gliders, and a self-powered airplane. In 1911, the brothers held a public demonstration of their self-powered plane. One of the brothers was among the first to develop a method of skywriting. The brothers barnstormed throughout the Midwest from 1911 until 1916, when one brother died during a test flight.

Legislative District 41



Historical Highlights

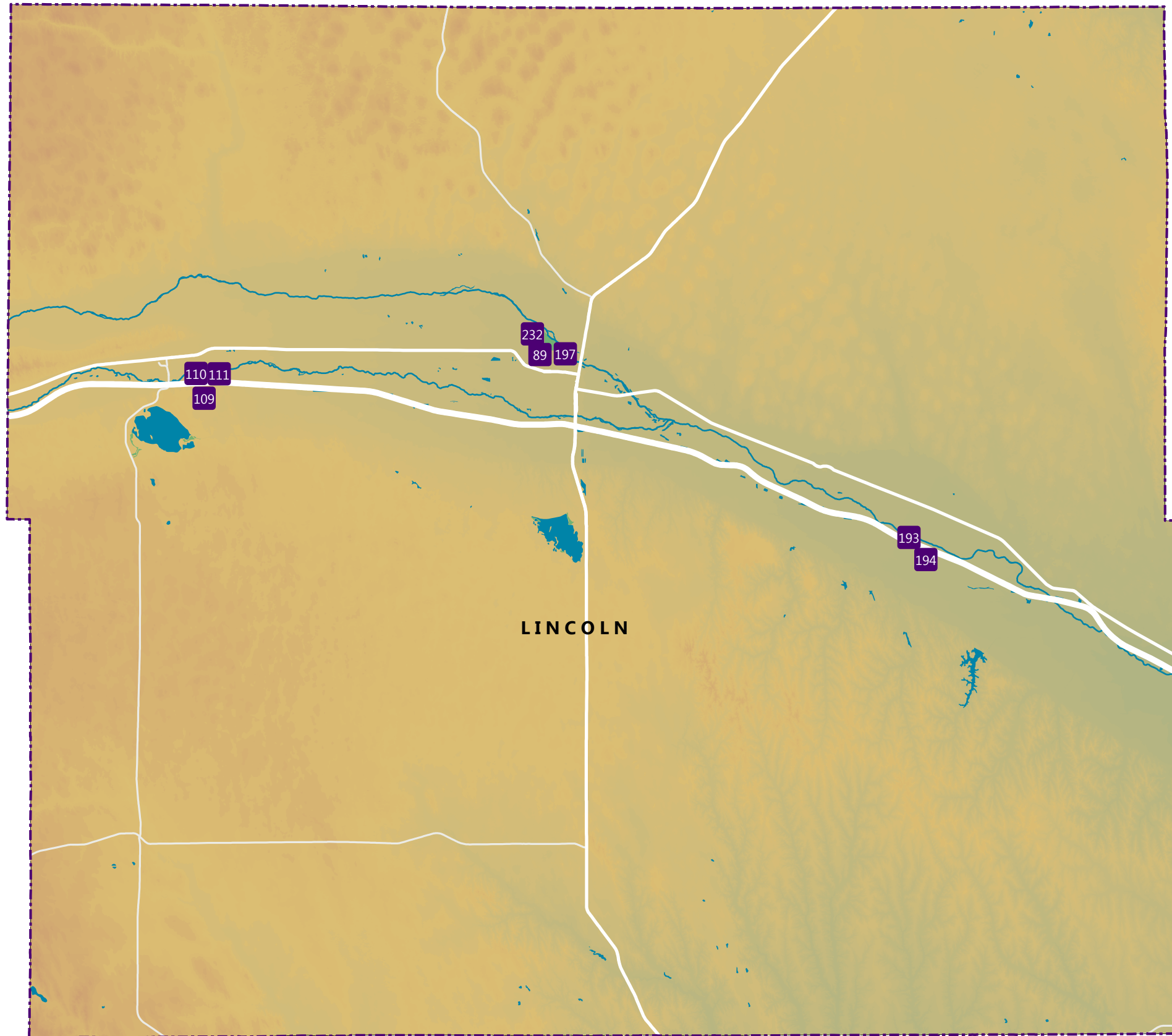
(144) Chalk Mine. In 1877, Ed Wright began to mine chalk from the white chalk bluffs in the North Loup Valley. Wright used stone cut from the bluffs to build a general store in 1887; other settlers soon began using chalk for the foundations of their homes. The mine stood idle for a number of years and was reopened in the 1930s by a paint company. The chalk was used in paint, whitewash, cement, polishes, and chicken feed. The Nebraska State Game and Parks Commission purchased the land in 1967 to preserve the bluffs as a wayside park.

(293) The Prairie States Forestry Project. President Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated the Prairie States Forestry Project in 1935 to combat severe wind-caused soil erosion that happened during the Dust Bowl days. From 1939 until 1942, the U.S. Forest Service worked with groups in the Great Plains to plant nearly 220 million seedlings to create 18,600 miles of windbreaks on 30,000 farms. Nebraska led the effort, planting almost 4,170 miles of windbreaks on 6,944 farms.

(393) The Loup City Riot, 1934. During the Great Depression, low farm prices, dust storms, and drought encouraged unrest among farmers and workers across Nebraska. Violence erupted in Loup City on June 14, 1934, after rumors spread that women poultry workers at the Fairmont Creamery plant might strike for higher wages. Ella Reeve "Mother" Bloor of the American Communist Party organized a demonstration of support on the courthouse lawn. Local residents clashed with protesters. The resulting jail sentences and fines levied against Bloor and other protest organizers effectively marked the end of the attempt by the far left to organize farmers and workers in Nebraska during this time.

1:650,000

Legislative District 42



Historical Highlights

(197) Fort McPherson. Cantonment McKean was established on the Oregon Trail in 1863 in response to intensified Indian raids on pioneers and settlers. Renamed Fort Cottonwood and then Fort McPherson, the post served to protect travel and communication in the Platte Valley. Fort McPherson was also a home base for scouting parties and a starting point for military field campaigns in the late 1860s. The fort was abandoned in 1880.

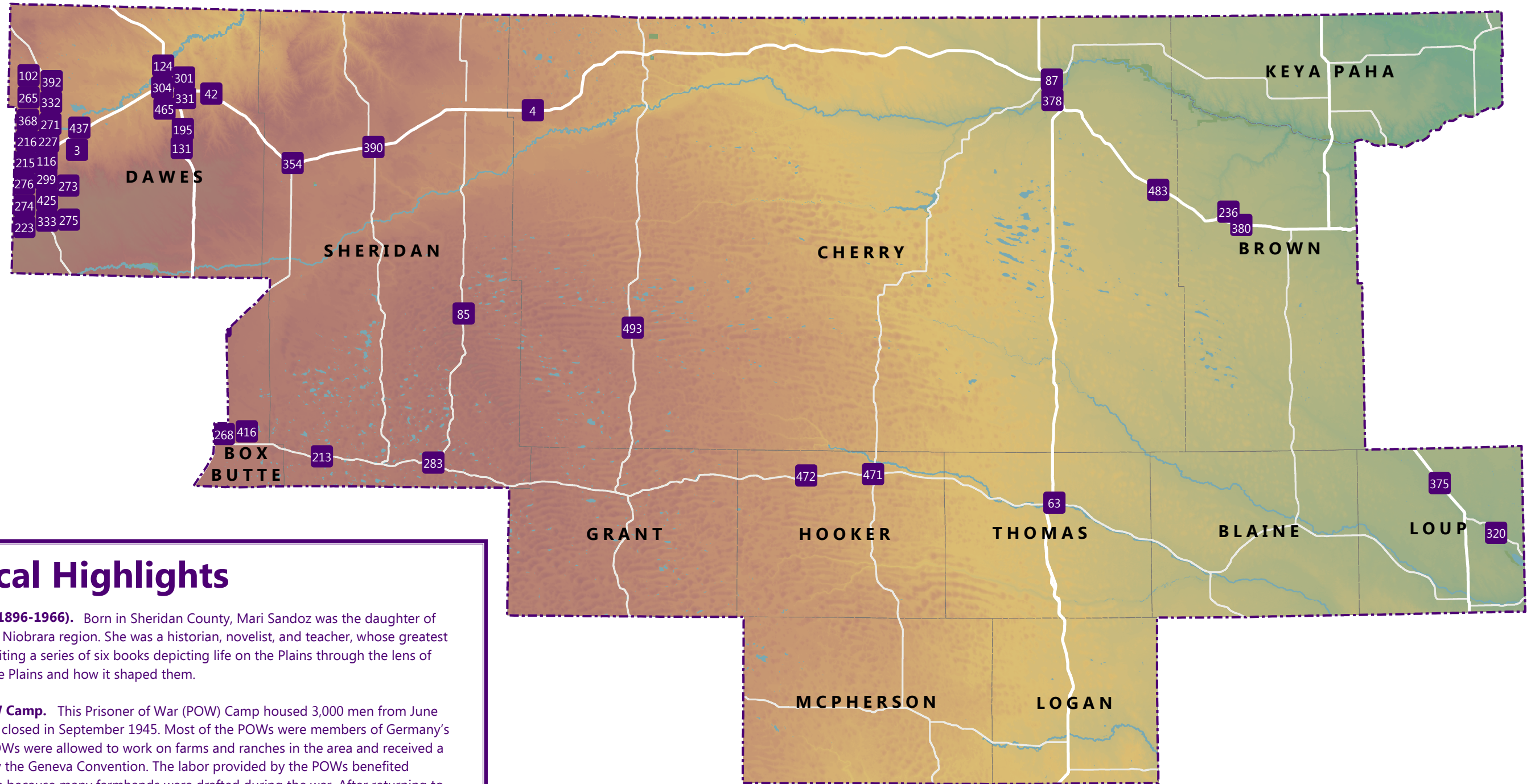
(194) Road Ranches Along the Platte. As overland freighting and travel increased, establishments known as road ranches popped up every few miles along the overland trail. Road ranches provided lodging and provisions for travelers. Many ranches were scorned for poor service and unsanitary conditions, although some ranches were known for their produce and imports for sale. After the Union Pacific Railroad line was constructed through the area, the demand for road ranches declined.

(232) Scout's Rest. William Frederick Cody (1846-1917), also known as Buffalo Bill, was the most notable Nebraskan of his day. His "Wild West" exhibition tours in the U.S. and abroad made Cody a living embodiment of the American West. Cody came to Nebraska in 1869 as a guide and scout for the U.S. Army at Fort McPherson. He also guided wealthy sport hunters on buffalo hunts. Cody first took the stage as Buffalo Bill in 1872 and formed his "Wild West" show in 1883. He built Scout's Rest in 1886 as a place to relax between tours.



1:350,000

Legislative District 43



Historical Highlights

(85) Mari Sandoz (1896-1966). Born in Sheridan County, Mari Sandoz was the daughter of settlers in the upper Niobrara region. She was a historian, novelist, and teacher, whose greatest achievement was writing a series of six books depicting life on the Plains through the lens of how men shaped the Plains and how it shaped them.

(299) German POW Camp. This Prisoner of War (POW) Camp housed 3,000 men from June 1943 until the camp closed in September 1945. Most of the POWs were members of Germany's Afrika Korps. The POWs were allowed to work on farms and ranches in the area and received a wage guaranteed by the Geneva Convention. The labor provided by the POWs benefited Nebraska agriculture because many farmhands were drafted during the war. After returning to Germany once the war ended, some POWs returned to the U.S. to become citizens.

(505*) Japanese Balloon Bombs. An obscure tactic used by the Japanese military during World War II, was building and releasing 9,000 hydrogen-filled paper balloons to carry small bombs to North America, with the intent to set fires and inflict casualties. Once released, the balloons rose 30,000 feet in the atmosphere, where winds transported them across the Pacific Ocean. A balloon was seen floating east in February 1945 in Sheridan County. Parts of five balloon bombs were recovered in Nebraska; 285 balloon-bomb incidents were reported in North America. Only after the war ended were the mysterious paper balloon bombs explained.



1:1,000,000

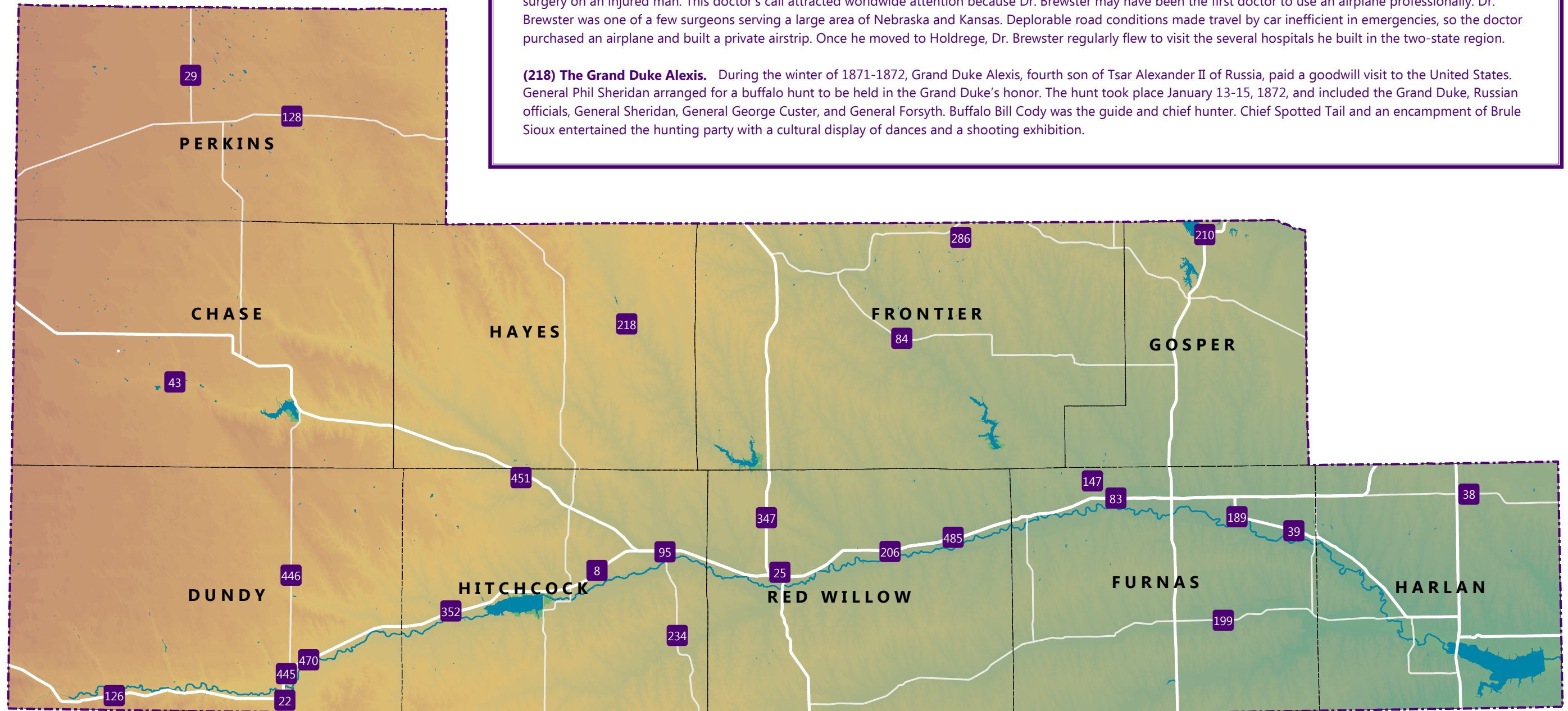
* In the process of being placed in Sheridan County.

Legislative District 44



0 3.25 6.5 13 19.5 Miles

1:670,000



Historical Highlights

(126) Texas Trail Canyon. After the slaughter of the bison and the last of the Indian hunts, ranchers moved into this part of the Republican River country in 1875. Among them were I. P. and Ira Olive, who used the canyon on their range in 1876. Herds of Texas cattle were delivered to them here before being driven north to Ogallala. The influx of homesteaders in Nebraska pushed the Texas trail west to the canyon by 1880. Eventually, the canyon became a checkpoint where cattle were checked for brands and disease.

(199) Nebraska's Flying Doctor. In May 1919, Dr. Frank A. Brewster of Beaver City and pilot Wade Stevens flew to Herndon, Ks., where Dr. Brewster performed life-saving surgery on an injured man. This doctor's call attracted worldwide attention because Dr. Brewster may have been the first doctor to use an airplane professionally. Dr. Brewster was one of a few surgeons serving a large area of Nebraska and Kansas. Deplorable road conditions made travel by car inefficient in emergencies, so the doctor purchased an airplane and built a private airstrip. Once he moved to Holdrege, Dr. Brewster regularly flew to visit the several hospitals he built in the two-state region.

(218) The Grand Duke Alexis. During the winter of 1871-1872, Grand Duke Alexis, fourth son of Tsar Alexander II of Russia, paid a goodwill visit to the United States. General Phil Sheridan arranged for a buffalo hunt to be held in the Grand Duke's honor. The hunt took place January 13-15, 1872, and included the Grand Duke, Russian officials, General Sheridan, General George Custer, and General Forsyth. Buffalo Bill Cody was the guide and chief hunter. Chief Spotted Tail and an encampment of Brule Sioux entertained the hunting party with a cultural display of dances and a shooting exhibition.

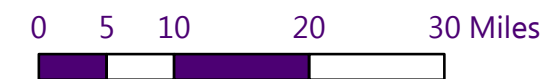
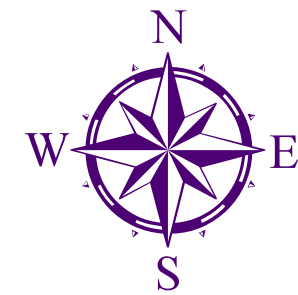
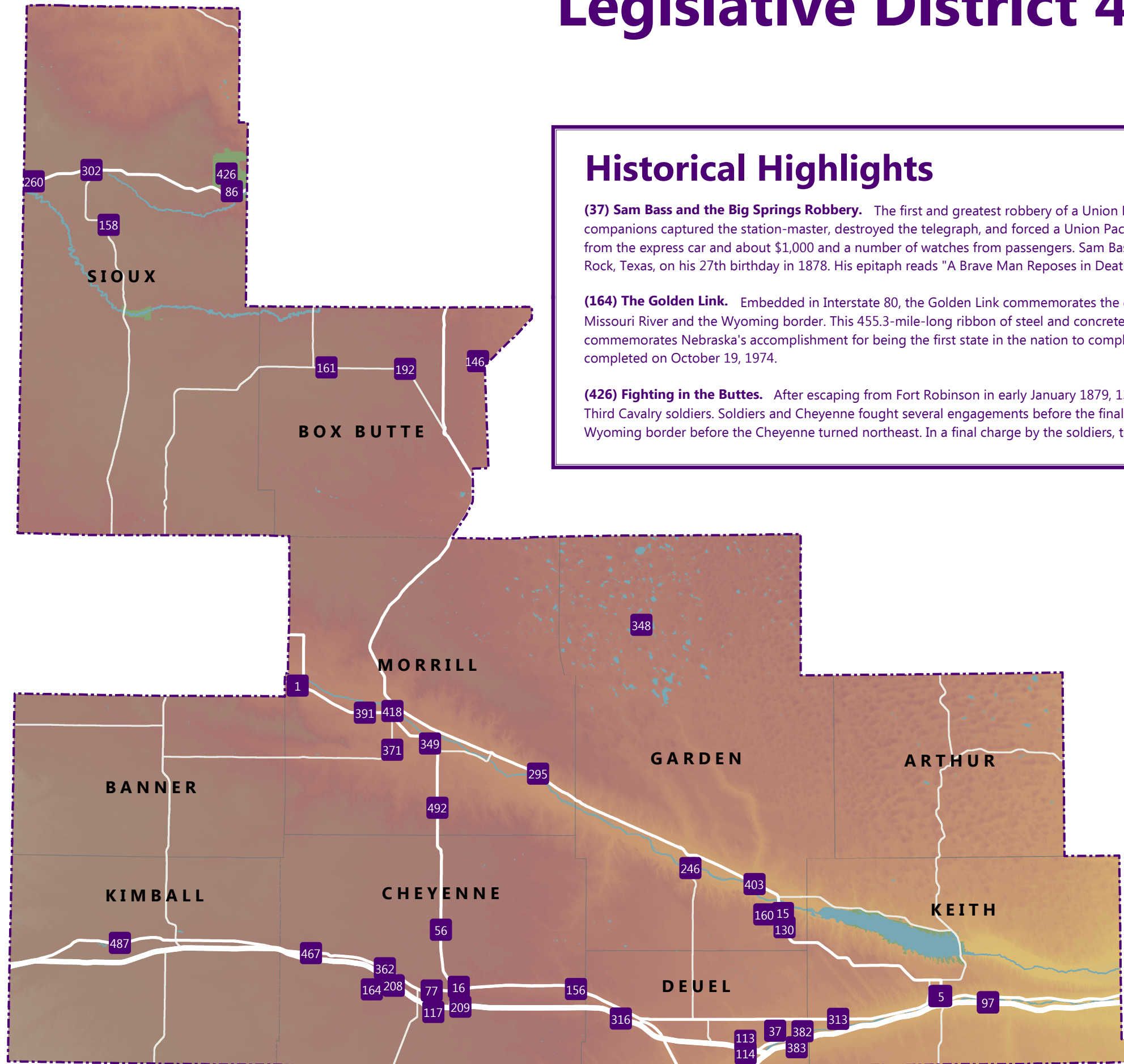
Legislative District 47

Historical Highlights

(37) Sam Bass and the Big Springs Robbery. The first and greatest robbery of a Union Pacific train took place on September 18, 1877. The legendary Sam Bass and five companions captured the station-master, destroyed the telegraph, and forced a Union Pacific express train to halt. The outlaws reportedly stole \$60,000 in gold and currency from the express car and about \$1,000 and a number of watches from passengers. Sam Bass robbed four more trains in Texas before being killed by Texas Rangers at Round Rock, Texas, on his 27th birthday in 1878. His epitaph reads "A Brave Man Rests in Death Here. Why was he not true?"

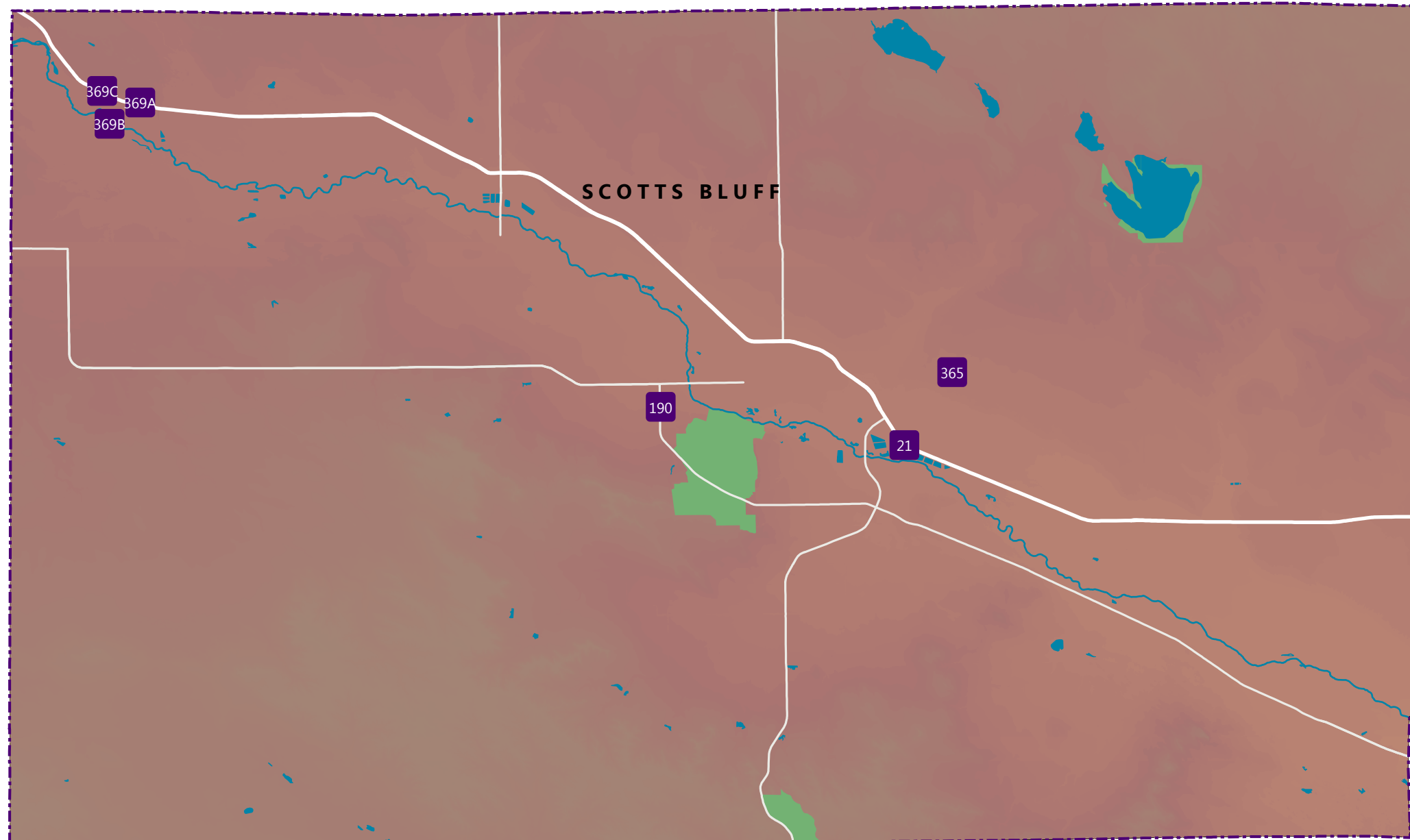
(164) The Golden Link. Embedded in Interstate 80, the Golden Link commemorates the completion of the final portion of Nebraska Interstate Highway 80 between the Missouri River and the Wyoming border. This 455.3-mile-long ribbon of steel and concrete is a vital link between eastern and western Nebraska. The Golden Link also commemorates Nebraska's accomplishment for being the first state in the nation to complete its main Interstate system. Started on March 8, 1955, the roadway was completed on October 19, 1974.

(426) Fighting in the Buttes. After escaping from Fort Robinson in early January 1879, 130 Cheyenne climbed the buttes to the south and fled through this area, pursued by Third Cavalry soldiers. Soldiers and Cheyenne fought several engagements before the final charge in late January near Antelope Creek. The pursuit continued to near the Wyoming border before the Cheyenne turned northeast. In a final charge by the soldiers, the last thirty-two Cheyenne were killed or captured.



1:900,000

Legislative District 48



Historical Highlights

(21) Rebecca Winters, 1802-1852. Rebecca Winters is a symbol of the pioneer mother who endured great hardships in the westward movement. Cholera struck her traveling party in the Platte River Valley, where some died. Rebecca survived until reaching Scotts Bluff County, where her grave was marked by an iron wagon tire. Her family continued on with the wagon train and settled in Pleasant Grove, Utah.

(365) Scottsbluff Army Airfield. During World War II, the U.S. Army Air Forces operated a satellite airfield in Scottsbluff. Twenty-eight farms were vacated so three runways and approximately 108 buildings could be built in the fall of 1942. The first troops arrived in early December 1942. B-17 and B-24 bomber, C-47, and glider air, ground and maintenance crews all trained at Scottsbluff Army Airfield. In 1947, the city of Scottsbluff bought the airfield for use as a municipal airport.

(369A) "The Great Smoke." In the late summer of 1851, Plains Indian tribes were summoned by U.S. government officials so tribal chiefs could sign a treaty and smoke the peace pipe with representatives of the U.S. President. An estimated 8,000 to 12,000 Plains Indians joined the assembly. The parley was originally planned to take place at Fort Laramie. However, the sheer number of people, horses, and lack of forage caused the assembly to move downstream.



1:210,000

Historical Marker Index by Legislative District

Legislative District 1

- 52 Muir House
- 58 Half-Breed Tract
- 60 Nebraska City
- 64 Brownville
- 79 First Oil Well
- 80 Peru State College
- 143 Nebraska City-Fort Kearny Cutoff
- 152 Camp Creek Cemetery and Chapel
- 162 Dubois Czech Hall
- 184 Village of Steinauer
- 203 Tecumseh
- 238 Missouri River
- 258 Indian Treaty Monument
- 277 1882 Talmage, Nebraska 1982
- 285 Arbor Lodge
- 337 Lewis and Clark Camp Site: July 13, 1804
- 357 Cook
- 367 Point of Beginning, Public Land Surveys of Sixth Principal Meridian
- 417 The Nebraska State Teachers' Association
- 438 The First United Methodist Church of Nebraska City
- 456 Humboldt Commercial Historic District
- 466 Mayhew Cabin 1855
- 468 U.S. Air Force Atlas Missile Site
- 477 Nemaha County Courthouse
- 481 Pawnee City
- 495 Auburn Post Office Mural

Legislative District 2

- 36 Old Fort Kearny
- 41 Bess Streeter Aldrich: 1881-1954
- 61 The Great Platte Valley
- 118 Weeping Water Academy
- 242 Company A - First Nebraska Volunteer Infantry 1861-1866
- 272 St. Patrick's Cemetery
- 284 Gretna Fish Hatchery
- 314 Prehistoric Burial Site
- 339 Lewis and Clark Campsite: July 21, 1804
- 410 Springfield Community Hall

Legislative District 4 (see Douglas County map)

- 226 Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

Legislative District 5 (see Douglas County map)

- 159 South Omaha People

Legislative District 7 (see Douglas County map)

- 11 Creighton University
- 30 Capitol Hill
- 220 Central High School
- 400 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition
- 404 William Henry Jackson
- 428 Captain William Clark and Private Reuben Field
- 486 Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church
- 491 Before Creighton

Legislative District 8 (see Douglas County map)

- 501 Poynter Hall

Legislative District 9 (see Douglas County map)

- 155 Omaha
- 170 Ak-Sar-Ben Field and the U.S. Air Mail
- 267 Duchesne Academy
- 448 George and Sarah Joslyn Home

Legislative District 11 (see Douglas County map)

- 75 Fort Omaha
- 211 Crook House
- 287 Historic Prospect Hill - Omaha's Pioneer Cemetery
- 310 Malcolm "X"
- 406 Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition
- 447 Buffalo Bill at the Trans-Mississippi & International Exposition & Indian Congress of 1898

Legislative District 13 (see Douglas County map)

- 19 Winter Quarters
- 50 The Bank of Florence
- 81 The Florence Mill
- 280 Boettger Farm
- 294 Forest Lawn Memorial Park
- 327 Shipley Cemetery
- 335 Fort Atkinson
- 340 Lewis and Clark Camp Site: July 27, 1804

Legislative District 14 (see Sarpy County map)

- 182 Original Union Pacific Main Line through Papillion

Legislative District 15

- 88 Pawnee Villages
- 183 The Great Platte River Route West
- 297 Millar-Sloss Pioneer Cemetery
- 430 Webster
- 496 Dodge County Poor Farm
- 502 Fremont, Nebraska

Legislative District 16

- 2 Fort Atkinson
- 31 Bancroft
- 65 Lyons
- 67 Fort Atkinson
- 119 DeSoto Townsite
- 137 Steamboat Bertrand
- 151 The Logan Creek Site
- 177 Congregational Church of Blair
- 198 Tekamah
- 207 John G. Neihardt Center
- 217 Cuming City Cemetery and Nature Preserve
- 249 DeWitt Historical Site
- 291 John G. Neihardt Study
- 341 Lewis and Clark Camp Site: July 30 - Aug 2, 1804
- 342 Lewis and Clark Camp Site: Aug 3 - 4, 1804

Legislative District 16 continued

- 420 Brewster Cemetery
- 455 Victor Colson Homestead
- 457 The Death of Marshal Suverkrubbe
- 489 Fort Calhoun Schools at Washington Square

Legislative District 17

- 13 Tonwantonga
- 23 Territorial Church
- 26 Wayne
- 33 Combs School, Built 1857 - Closed 1964
- 34 St. John's, 1856
- 44 Winnebago Scouts
- 71 Omaha Tribe
- 122 Wayne State College
- 343 Lewis and Clark Camp Site: Aug 21, 1804
- 385 Susan LaFlesche Picotte Memorial Hospital
- 386 Susan LaFlesche Picotte Memorial Hospital

Legislative District 18 (see Douglas County map)

- 414 Chief Standing Bear

Legislative District 19

- 69 Meadow Grove
- 94 Battle Creek
- 251 Barnes Reserve Cemetery
- 356 Verges Park (Norfolk Brick and Tile Company)
- 439 The Skala Timber House

Legislative District 21 (see Lancaster County map)

- 224 Lincoln Aviation Personalities before 1930
- 225 Lincoln's Emergence as an Aviation Center
- 256 Nebraska's Prairie Plants
- 257 The City of Lincoln
- 288 Nine-Mile Prairie
- 289 Nine-Mile Prairie Memorial
- 376 Lincoln Army Air Field/Air Force Base
- 432 Crouse

Legislative District 22

- 93 Stanton County
- 100 The North Brothers
- 127 Duncan, 1871-1971
- 139 Agricultural Park
- 305 The Villasur Expedition, 1720
- 318 West Hill Community
- 424 Andrew Jackson Higgins
- 431 Alfred Maximilian Gruenther: 1899-1983
- 462 The Lincoln Highway-Gardiner Station Section

Legislative District 23

- 82 Saunders County
- 219 The Ox-Bow Trail
- 252 Shinn's Ferry
- 353 The Yutan Otoe Indian Village
- 409 The Armour and Company Icehouse

Legislative District 24

- 57 Osceola and The Early Pioneers: 1867-1967
- 169 Henderson Mennonite Centennial 1874-1974
- 173 Nebraska City - Fort Kearny Cut-Off
- 174 Nebraska City - Fort Kearny Cut-Off
- 179 Tall Grass Prairie
- 180 The Big Blue River
- 221 Seward, Nebraska's Fourth of July City
- 269 Nebraska 4-H Clubs Began in York County
- 279 Porcupine Ranch
- 312 Henderson, Nebraska 1887-1987
- 328 Stromsburg - The Swede Capital of Nebraska
- 363 Beaver Crossing, Nebraska
- 394 The Beaver Crossing Mill
- 415 Village of Polk
- 421 Plum Creek Prairie
- 440 Bradshaw
- 454 Historic Milford

Legislative District 27 (see Lancaster County map)

- 105 County-City Building

Legislative District 28 (see Lancaster County map)

- 20 Fairview: Home of William Jennings Bryan
- 90 Nebraska Statehood Memorial
- 253 The Ferguson House

Legislative District 30

- 7 Homestead Movement
- 196 1776 Bicentennial Prairie Marker 1976
- 214 The Otoe and Missouri Agency
- 300 The Lincoln Regional Center
- 413 The Oketo Cutoff
- 479 Rock Island Wreck Site, 1894

Legislative District 32

- 35 Czech Capital
- 48 Swan City
- 121 The Smith Limekiln
- 132 Fillmore County, 1871-1971
- 133 Jansen
- 136 Sgt. Leodegar Schnyder
- 175 Nebraska Chautauquas
- 235 The Forty-Niner Trail
- 243 1880 Diller 1980
- 247 The Blizzard of 1888
- 278 1879 Exeter 1979
- 309 Fairmont Creamery Company
- 315 Friedensau
- 358 Plymouth
- 360 Fairmont Army Air Field
- 381 Fairmont Army Air Field
- 384 Civilian Conservation Corps Co. 2738
- 397 Bruning Army Air Field
- 399 Stockholm Lutheran Church and Swedish Cemetery
- 423 The Pioneer Chapel and Cesky Bratri Cemetery
- 433 Thayer County
- 452 The Hebron CCC and POW Camps

Historical Marker Index by Legislative District

Legislative District 32 continued

- 459 Nebraska City--Fort Kearny Cutoff
- 460 Ohiowa Auditorium
- 469 PFC Charley Havlat
- 473 Pleasant Hill
- 474 B-17G "Flying Fortress" and P-47D "Thunderbolt" Crash, 1944
- 475 Two B-24 "Liberators" Crash Near Milligan, 1943
- 476 BT-13B "Valiant" and P-47D "Thunderbolt" Crash, 1944

Legislative District 27 (see Lancaster County map)

- 9 The Oregon Trail
- 171 Grand Island
- 172 Grand Island
- 250 Susan O. Hail Grave
- 259 Conflict of 1867
- 324 Kingston Cemetery
- 336 Original Townsite of Wood River
- 366 Naval Ammunition Depot
- 379 Crystal Lake
- 387 St. Joseph and Grand Island Railroad
- 388 The Old Fort Kearny (Nebraska City) Road
- 389 Sandhill Cranes
- 435 B-17 Crash, 1943
- 449 Heartwell Park Historic District
- 450 Central Hastings Historic District
- 463 Hastings Chautauqua Pavilion

Legislative District 34

- 6 The Mormon Trail
- 18 Pawnee
- 27 Mormon Pioneer Campsite
- 32 Martin Brothers
- 46 Deep Well Irrigation
- 92 Lone Tree
- 104 Genoa: 1857-1859
- 120 The Neligh Mills
- 157 The Mormon Trail
- 163 B-17G Bomber Crash, 1944
- 325 Farmers' Valley Cemetery
- 377 Hamilton County Courthouse
- 419 The Neligh Mill Bridge
- 444 Youst Cemetery, Hampton, Nebraska
- 464 Central Nebraska Regional Airport

Legislative District 35

- 54 The O.K. Store
- 55 LaGrande Isle
- 141 Pioneer Park
- 255 The Lincoln Memorial Highway
- 480 Hall County Courthouse
- 482 The Seedling Mile
- 490 Old Dodge School - World War II POW Branch Camp

Legislative District 36

- 17 The 100th Meridian
- 45 Broken Bow
- 59 The Nebraska State Grange
- 73 Central Platte Valley
- 74 Central Platte Valley
- 134 Custer County's First Courthouse
- 222 The Tobin Indian Raid
- 248 Westerville 1880-1980
- 308 Ansley 1886-1986
- 311 Cumro, Nebraska
- 350 Swedish Crosses Cemetery
- 361 Post South Loup Fork "Fort Banishment"
- 370 CCC Camp, Ravenna, Nebraska
- 498 Buckeye

Legislative District 37

- 115 Gibbon, 1871-1971
- 125 University of Nebraska at Kearney
- 148 Kearney Cotton Mill
- 153 Historic Kearney
- 201 Gibbon
- 202 The Great Plains
- 359 Nebraska Centre - Boyd Rancho
- 407 Joseph E. Johnson and The Huntsman's Echo
- 488 Buffalo County's Lincoln Highway Seedling Mile

Legislative District 38

- 28 1864 Indian Raids
- 40 Catherland
- 47 Republican Pawnee Village
- 49 Sutton
- 91 Historic Platte Valley
- 96 Dobytown
- 107 Harvard Jail
- 108 Red Cloud, 1871-1971
- 123 Webster County, 1871-1971
- 140 Franklin County
- 145 Edgar 1872-1972
- 154 Phelps County
- 176 Willa Cather Memorial Prairie
- 178 Watson Ranch
- 185 Site of Old Sacramento
- 191 Harvard
- 200 Kearney - Fort Kearny
- 212 Walker's Ranch
- 229 Fort Kearny
- 237 Holdrege Silt Loam - The Nebraska State Soil
- 239 The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad
- 240 Clay Center
- 241 1872 Lowell 1972
- 245 Atlanta Prisoner-of-War Camp
- 261 Grace Episcopal Church
- 262 Burlington Depot
- 263 St. Juliana Falconieri Catholic Church
- 264 Cather Childhood Home

Legislative District 38 continued

- 282 Indian Captives
- 292 Axtell, Nebraska
- 303 Bertrand 1885-1985
- 319 Elm Creek
- 323 Funk, Nebraska
- 329 Franklin Academy
- 330 Skirmish at Spring Creek
- 351 Benjamin Wagoner Memorial Cemetery
- 364 The Great Platte River Road
- 372 Spring Rancho
- 395 Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 1904-1952
- 405 School District 35, "The Killough School"
- 412 Cowles Consolidated School
- 422 The Soldiers' Monument
- 427 First Site of Bethel Lutheran Church and Cemetery
- 429 Original Townsite of Oak
- 458 Harvard Army Air Field
- 478 Osco Cemetery and School
- 494 Midair Collision of B-17 Bombers

Legislative District 39

- 281 Otoe Indians
- 334 Platte River History
- 500 Lincoln Highway of Elkhorn

Legislative District 40

- 62 The Ponca Tribe
- 68 The Ionia "Volcano"
- 76 Aviation Pioneers
- 78 O'Neill
- 101 The Sage Brothers
- 106 Spring Valley Park
- 129 O'Neill, Irish Capital of Nebraska
- 149 Ponca
- 167 Historic Missouri Valley
- 168 Scenic Missouri Valley
- 204 Cedar County
- 228 U.S. Highway 281
- 270 Ponca State Park
- 321 Hartington - Home of two Nebraska Governors
- 344 Lewis and Clark Campsites: Aug 23-25, 1804
- 345 Lewis and Clark Campsite: Sept 2, 1804
- 346 Lewis and Clark Campsite: Sept 7, 1804
- 453 Lost Airmen of WW II
- 461 Paragon Cemetery

Legislative District 41

- 66 The Blizzard of 1888
- 70 Fort Hartsuff, 1874-1881
- 103 Kamp Kaleo
- 138 Ponca Trail of Tears - White Buffalo Girl
- 144 Chalk Mine
- 150 Evelyn Sharp
- 188 Garfield County
- 205 Logan Fontenelle
- 230 Fort Hartsuff State Historical Park

Legislative District 41 continued

- 293 Calamus Townsite
- 296 The Prairie States Forestry Project
- 298 Arcadia Centennial, 1885-1985
- 306 Gilman Park
- 307 The Calamus Valley
- 317 Grover Cleveland Alexander
- 322 Dead Horse Creek
- 326 The North Loup Project
- 355 St. Mary's Catholic Church
- 373 The Pebble Creek Fight
- 374 The Easter Blizzard of 1873
- 393 Loup City Riot, 1934
- 398 St. Edward
- 401 Old Willow Creek Bridge
- 402 St. Wenceslaus Cemetery
- 408 Austin
- 411 Dannebrog, Nebraska's Danish Capital
- 434 The Meridian Highway
- 442 Arcadia Congregational Church
- 443 First Presbyterian Church of St. Paul

Legislative District 42

- 89 Sioux Lookout
- 109 Crossing the Overland Trail
- 110 The Great Platte River Road
- 111 The Great Platte River Road
- 193 Fort McPherson and North Platte
- 194 Road Ranches Along the Platte
- 197 Fort McPherson
- 232 Scout's Rest

Legislative District 43

- 3 Butte Country
- 4 Opening the Sandhills
- 42 Bordeaux Trading Post
- 63 The Sandhills
- 85 Mari Sandoz, 1896-1966
- 87 Fort Niobrara
- 102 Fort Robinson
- 116 Red Cloud Agency
- 124 Chadron State College
- 131 Chadron State Park
- 146 Box Butte Country
- 195 Chadron Creek Trading Post
- 213 Antioch: Potash Boom-Town
- 215 Post Headquarters, 1905
- 216 Adobe Officers' Quarters
- 223 The Fort Robinson Cemetery
- 227 Crawford
- 236 Lakeland Sod High School
- 265 The Death of Baptiste Garnier
- 268 Burlington Locomotive 719
- 271 Crawford 1891 School Bell
- 273 Officer's Row, 1909
- 274 Officer's Row, 1874-1875

Historical Marker Index by Legislative District

Legislative District 43 continued

- 275 Flagstaff, 1890
- 276 1909 Brick Barracks
- 283 Spade Ranch
- 299 German P.O.W. Camp
- 301 The First Church in Chadron
- 304 The Fort Pierre-Fort Laramie Trail
- 320 Valleyview
- 331 Chadron-Chicago Cowboy Race (1893)
- 332 1887 Barracks Row
- 333 K-9 Training Area
- 354 Camp Sheridan and Spotted Tail Agency
- 368 Fort Robinson and the Railroad
- 375 Harrop
- 378 Bryan Bridge
- 380 Ainsworth Army Air Field
- 390 Rushville
- 392 Buffalo Soldiers at Fort Robinson
- 416 The Alliance Army Air Field
- 425 The Flight of the Cheyennes
- 437 The Council Tree
- 465 Fort Robinson-Camp Sheridan-Pine Ridge Indian Agency Road
- 471 Mullen, Hooker County
- 472 Site of Hecla, Nebraska
- 483 Midair Collision of P-47 "Thunderbolt" Fighter Planes, 1944
- 493 Survey Valley, Cherry County, Nebraska

Legislative District 44

- 8 Massacre Canyon
- 22 General Custer in Nebraska
- 25 George William Norris, 1861-1944
- 29 Wild Horse Spring
- 38 Pioneer Crossing
- 39 The Republican River Flood of 1935
- 43 Champion Water-Powered Mill
- 83 Burtons Bend
- 84 Frontier County, Stockville
- 95 Culbertson, First Hitchcock County Seat
- 126 Texas Trail Canyon
- 128 The Texas Trail
- 147 Norwegian Lutheran Church
- 189 The Small Schoolhouse
- 199 Nebraska's Flying Doctor
- 206 Pawnee Woman's Grave
- 210 George E. Johnson
- 218 The Grand Duke Alexis
- 234 Stone Church
- 286 Ingham
- 347 McCook Army Air Base
- 352 The Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express
- 445 Ward Bond's Boyhood Home
- 446 Prisoners of War in Dundy County
- 451 Prisoners of War in Hitchcock County
- 470 Nature's Gift: The Highway 34 Springs
- 485 Granville Cemetery

Legislative District 45 (see Sarpy County map)

- 10 Otoe Mission
- 51 Fontenelle Bank - County Courthouse
- 53 First Presbyterian Church
- 186 Bellevue Log Cabin

Legislative District 46 (see Lancaster County map)

- 72 The University of Nebraska
- 231 The Lewis-Syford House
- 254 Lincoln's Founding Block
- 266 Giant Glacial Boulder
- 290 Pershing Rifles
- 396 The North Bottoms
- 436 The Nebraska State Historical Society
- 441 U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (Old City Hall)

Legislative District 47

- 1 Chimney Rock
- 5 Cowboy Capital
- 15 Ash Hollow
- 16 Fort Sidney
- 24 Boot Hill
- 37 Sam Bass and the Big Springs Robbery
- 56 Discovery Oil Well - Marathon Oil Co
- 77 Sidney-Black Hills Trail
- 86 The Cheyenne Outbreak
- 97 Ogallala
- 98 Ash Hollow
- 99 Court House Rock, Chimney Rock, and Scott's Bluff
- 113 The Great Platte River Road
- 114 Big Springs
- 117 Nebraska's Earliest Documented Burial
- 130 Windlass Hill Pioneer Homestead
- 156 Lodgepole and the Union Pacific Railroad
- 158 Fort Laramie-Fort Robinson Trail
- 160 Ash Hollow Geology
- 161 The Sidney-Black Hills Trail
- 164 The Golden Link
- 192 Hemingford
- 208 Cheyenne County
- 209 Sidney-Cheyenne County
- 209A Geology
- 246 John Hollman Grave
- 260 Coffee Siding
- 295 Narcissa Whitman
- 302 Village of Harrison
- 313 California Hill
- 316 Historic Lodgepole Creek Valley
- 348 B-24J Bomber Crash
- 349 Amanda Lamme
- 362 Sioux Army Depot
- 371 Courthouse and Jail Rocks
- 382 Phelps Hotel
- 383 Waterman Sod House
- 391 Camp Clarke Bridge and Sidney Black Hills Trail
- 403 Battle of Blue Water

Legislative District 47 continued

- 418 Bridgeport, Nebraska
- 426 Fighting in the Buttes
- 467 Early Irrigation in Cheyenne County
- 487 Maginnis Irrigation Flume
- 492 Mud Springs

Legislative District 48

- 21 Rebecca Winters
- 190 Fort Mitchell, 1864-1867
- 365 Scottsbluff Army Airfield
- 369A The Great Smoke
- 369B The Horse Creek Treaty
- 369C Map of Horse Creek Treaty Grounds

Legislative District 49

- 484 New Pennsylvania Cemetery

