

# Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie Park



Located in the endangered tallgrass prairie of eastern Kansas, and once part of the farm of William Mitchell, who was an Underground Railroad Stationmaster, the Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie Park is a remarkable resource offering visitors a blend of nature, culture, and history.

Comprising 45 acres, this hilltop prairie has been sacred to Native Peoples for hundreds of generations. The Prairie Guards respect and honor this distinction.

Envisioned over 50 years ago as place to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of the pioneers who helped defeat slavery, the Park now fulfills that purpose and much more.

The mission of the Park's managers, the Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards, has been to create a resource that community groups and individuals can use for educational and recreational purposes. The Park is now enjoyed by classes from multiple school districts, homeschoolers, scouting groups, travelers and tourists, birders, prairie enthusiasts, walkers, and geocachers.

The Park provides educators with an outdoor classroom for teaching history, geography, geology, biology, astronomy and civics. During their visits children also receive the benefits of exercise and fresh air.

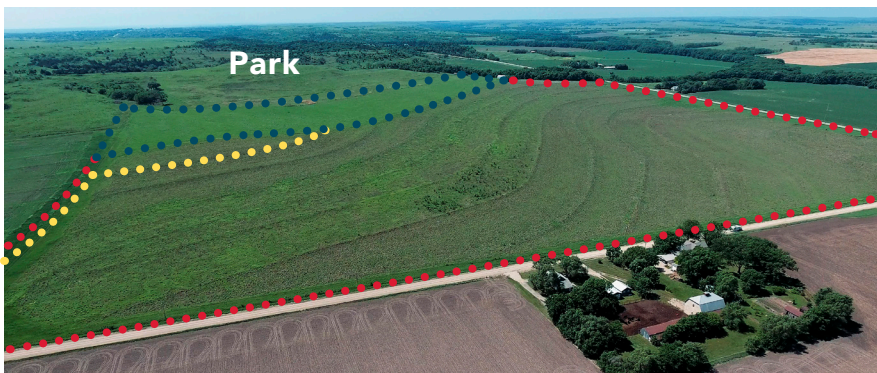
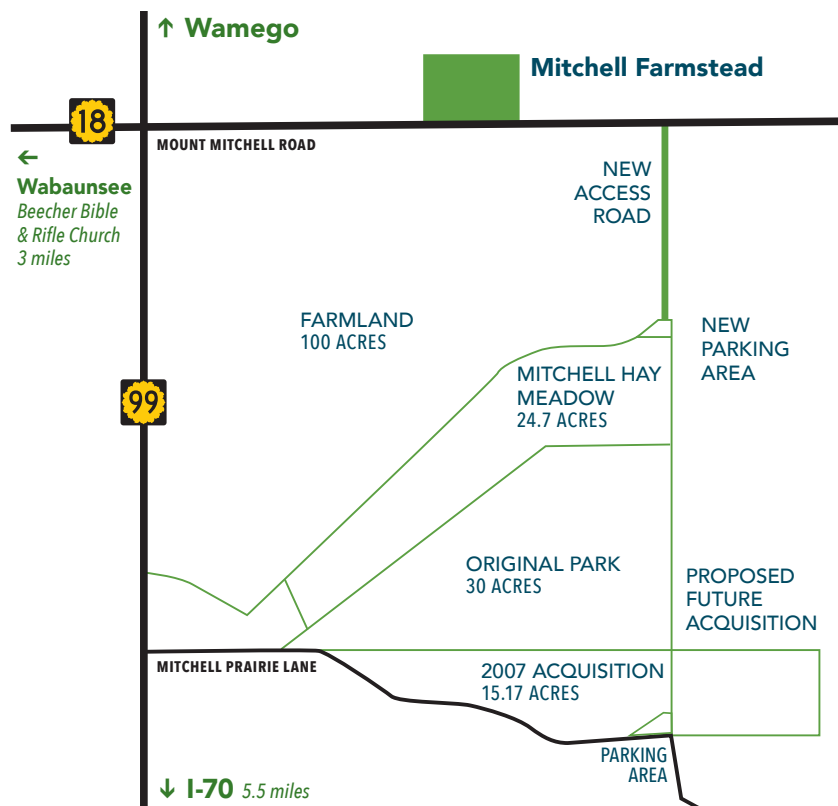
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# Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie Park (Continued)



## THE MOUNT MITCHELL PRAIRIE IS:

- Recognized by the National Park Service as a site of national importance to the commemoration of the Underground Railroad. The Topeka – Fort Riley Road, which runs through the Park, was the westernmost route of that trail to freedom. Captain Mitchell hid escaping slaves in the loft of his log cabin north of the Park.
- One of the most popular attractions in the Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area.
- An attraction of the Native Stone Scenic Byway.
- A hands-on resource for the Flint Hills Discovery Center.
- A feature of the Kansas River Trail, a National Water Trail.
- A major feature of the envisioned Kaw River Historic Corridor between Topeka and Fort Riley.



# Recognition Opportunities



Following a long philanthropic tradition, the Prairie Guards are pleased to accept named gifts in honor of the donor, another living person, or to establish a memorial in honor of someone else.

## FORMER MITCHELL FARM

Purchase of the 125 acres of farmland and prairie hay meadow adjoining the Park on the north. Income from the farmland will serve as an endowment for the Park's maintenance and ongoing restoration of its prairie.

**\$450,000.**

## NATIVE PRAIRIE MEADOW

Purchase of 25 acres, doubling the amount of prairie in the Park.

**\$100,000.**

## FARMLAND

Purchase of 100 acres of farmland, whose income will fund the Park's yearly operating expenses and prairie restoration.

**\$350,000.**

## ACCESS ROAD

New road for handicap and senior access to the ruts and swales of the historic Topeka – Fort Riley Road and the Interpretive Structure/Shelter.

**\$20,000.**

## ELECTRONIC GATE

For the security of the Park's improvements when the Park is closed.

**\$10,000**

## PARKING AREA AND RETAINING WALL

Gravel parking to accommodate school buses and handicapped access.

**\$20,000**

## HANDICAPPED TRAIL

To enable wheelchair access to the ruts and swales of the Topeka/Fort Riley Road.

**\$10,000**

## INTERPRETIVE STRUCTURE/SHELTER

A structure where school groups and visitors can seek shelter from the elements and view signage that interprets the Park's themes.

**\$75,000**

## TOILETS

Composting toilets.

**\$15,000**

## WATER LINE

**\$10,000**

## ELECTRICITY

**\$10,000**

## PARK BENCHES

**\$3,000**

## TOTAL

**\$610,000.**



# Acre-Maker Form



The Acre-Maker program is a way for individuals, families and groups to play a vital role in the acquisition of 125 acres of the original Mitchell Farm. It is also a wonderful way for families to honor their predecessors, farm or ranches by name.

The purchase of land by the Prairie Guards to expand the existing Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie affords a wonderful opportunity to protect this unique landscape and ecosystem while securing it for public use.

It will also protect valuable farmland and prairie from commercial and residential development.

All participants in the Acre-Maker program will be recognized on a permanent display in the interpretive shelter at the Park, and will receive a personalized Acre-Maker certificate.

To become an Acre-Maker of the Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie, please return this form with your donation to: Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards, PO Box 136, Wamego KS 66547-1036. Your payment can be made all at once or spread over two years.



**Yes, I want to participate in the Mount Mitchell Acre-Maker program!**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW MANY ACRES ARE YOU MAKING? \_\_\_\_\_ X \$3,500/ACRE = TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I PLAN TO MAKE PAYMENT FOR MY ACRE(S) IN FULL.

I PLAN TO SPREAD MY PAYMENT EQUALLY OVER 2 YEARS.

I/WE WISH TO MAKE THIS GIFT IN HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Prairie Guards are a 501(c) (3) charitable organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

CUT AREA



## The Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards— Preserving the Cultural Heritage of the Northern Flint Hills

The Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards are a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization registered with the IRS in 2010. Our membership is comprised of local residents and friends and supporters from throughout the country.

The Prairie Guards began as an ad hoc committee in 2005 when it was learned that the Kansas Historical Society planned to return Mount Mitchell to the Mitchell family. The state had been unable to fulfill the terms of the gift. After fifty years of ownership they had not developed the public Park stipulated by the property's donor William Izott Mitchell.

The Prairie Guards worked with their representatives and persuaded the legislature to return the property to local control in 2006.

### TODAY THE PRAIRIE GUARDS:

- Manage the Park, a 45-acre tallgrass prairie remnant located in Wabaunsee County, Kansas, south of Wamego.
- Have fulfilled the terms of Will Mitchell's gift of Mount Mitchell to the people of Kansas by creating the Park he envisioned to honor his father and the Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony.
- Erected directional and interpretive signage and an information kiosk.
- Have coordinated over two thousand hours of volunteer labor restoring the Park's native tallgrass prairie.
- Provided local educators with a resource for fulfilling the requirements of the Kansas Teaching Standards for History and Government, Economics and Geography.
- Are founding partners of the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.
- Applied for and received official designation by the National Park Service as an authenticated Network to Freedom Underground Railroad site commemorating the Underground Railroad.
- Successfully lobbied the Native Stone Scenic Byway committee to extend the byway to include Mount Mitchell.

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## Who are the Prairie Guards? (Continued)



- Applied for and received Kansas Department of Transportation Tourist Attraction Status to erect brown attraction signs on Highway 99 directing travelers to the park.
- Have fulfilled the terms of Will Mitchell's gift of Mount Mitchell to the people of Kansas by creating a memorial to his father and the Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony.
- Formed working relationships with the Kansas State Historical Society, Wabaunsee County Historical Society, Wamego Historical Society, Wabaunsee Township Board, Wabaunsee County Commissioners, Westar Energy Green Team, Pottawatomie County Economic Development Council, Wabaunsee County Economic Development Committee, Flint Hills Regional Council, Flint Hills Discovery Center, The Native Stone Scenic Byway Committee, The National Park Service, The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, The Citizens Band Potawatomi Nation, Wamego Chamber of Commerce, Symphony in the Flint Hills, Kansas Explorers Club, Oregon/California Trails Association, Konza Prairie, and Unified School Districts 320, 329 and 330.



### CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PRAIRIE GUARDS INCLUDE:

The Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen Charitable Trust, Wallis Foundation, Bill Haber, The Ceil and Michael E. Pulitzer Foundation, Samuel George Terbovich Fund, Carolyn Curry Elbel Foundation, KanEquip, Sabatini Family Foundation, Stockgrowers State Bank, Lockton Family Foundation, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, Neff Pasture Services, Torrey Brothers Construction, Hummell Tree Service, Ag Data Map, Feyh Farm Seed Co., Quindaro Press, Glenn Jordan, Carl and Connie Miller, Bruce and Nancy Waugh, Christine Crenshaw, Patty and Jerry Reece, Helen Umbehr, Jane Eagleton, Virginia Gray, Bruce McCollom, Kathryn Mitchell Buster, Mitch and Mary Jane Mitchell, Roe Goodman, Suzanne Dreibelbis, Marsha Reeves, Julie Mitchell, Suzanne Smith, Joanne Harrison, Simon McGee and Anne Gagel, John Bottenberg and Carol McDowell, Julie Taylor, Cara and Henry Newell, Jim and Barbara Meinhardt, Dave Webb, Joe Carpenter and Barb Downey, Judith Little, John Hewitt, Steve and Kathy Hund, Joe and Kim Mertz, Ron and Linda Highland, Dennis and Jeanne McPhail, Dwayne and Regina McCoy, Matt and Julia Anderson, Dennis DeYoung, John and Debbie Divine, Don and Rosa Hendricks, Lee Rucker, Larry and Julie Hoerner, Justin and Mary Janssen, Rob and Stephanie Manes, Paul and Nancy Miller, Ann and Pat Murphy, Connie and Norman Pillsbury, Dee Puff, Routh Family LLC, Clay and Sandra Warren, Jerry and Elizabeth Wigglesworth, Witt Trust, Allen Fuhrmann, Susan Blackford, William Cornfield, Karen Cox, William and Ann Feyerharm, Jennifer Gehrt, Tony Meseke, Michael Nelson, Cindy Quinlan, Mary Reed Spencer, Dan Watkins, Roy and Sue Crenshaw, Lorn Clement and Lynn Ewanow, Bob and Janice Cole, De Ann, James, and Ellen Cook, Laurie Hamilton, Rhonda Nehring, Ron and Kelly Lockton, Lee Rucker, Ladeen and Rodney Allen, Curt and Shelly Waugh, Nancy Grace Sommers, Allan and Effa Winkler, Betsy Anderson, Dr. William and Sylvia Brethour, M. H. Paxton, Frank Sabatini, Jack Bricker, Andy Badeker and Liz Seaton, Michelle and Morris Crisler, Louise Latham, Nathaniel Lamar, Wendy Minot, Ann and Bill Baldock, Bruce and Tina Breckenridge, Peter and Suzanne Cohen, Ken Gnadt, Betsy and Rick Solberg, William French, Carol Jory, Darcy and Gerald Stuewe, Roger and Gaye Badeker, Donna Reuter, Bill and Judy Waugh, Susan Grant, Beth Hopkins, John and Terry Hund, Michael Stubbs, Howard Neff, Tony Meseke, Anonymous.





“Grassland scientists and visitors from around the world come to this special place in the heart of North America where white limestone rock, grasses, and wildflowers merge with a blue prairie sky. Today the tallgrass prairie stands as the world’s best remaining example of a diminished ecosystem that is more endangered than the Amazon rainforest. The largest remnant of tallgrass prairie rests on the rolling landscape of the Flint Hills of Kansas. This precious vestige of approximately 5 million acres represents only 3% of the once vast tallgrass prairie in North America. Protected from the plow by outcrops of limestone and maintained by prairie fires, this treasure of tallgrass remains largely unaltered. It offers the finest forage on earth for grazing livestock, a last sanctuary for prairie plants and animals, and an unspoiled landscape of serene natural beauty.

The prairie grasses and wildflowers that embrace the Flint Hills today began to assemble ten thousand years ago following the retreat of the ice sheet that extended to just south of Mount Mitchell. The pink quartzite boulders seen in the Park were scooped up and carried in the ice from what is now Wisconsin and South Dakota.

Wildflowers, the signature of the prairie, produce ever-changing landscapes of color from early spring through fall. The earliest wildflowers that hide in the grass give way to a summer of colorful penstemon, purple coneflowers, and black-eyed Susans. The procession ends with the autumn goldenrod swaying in the wind.

In the spring, when fires again sweep across the prairie, wildflowers come to life and renew the cycle.”

**TOM EDDY, PROFESSOR OF BOTANY  
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY**



**THE PRAIRIE GUARDS** manage Mount Mitchell’s prairie under advisement from grassland scientists at Konza Prairie, The Nature Conservancy, and local ranching families who have successfully managed grasslands for generations.



**Thank you for your interest in helping the Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards acquire 125 acres of the original Mitchell Farm, including 25 acres of native prairie in Wabaunsee County, Kansas. We have until June of 2019 to raise the purchase price of \$435,000.**



THE PURCHASE OF THE MITCHELL FARM LAND WILL:

- Increase the size of the Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie grassland by more than fifty per-cent.
- Protect a historic site nationally recognized by the National Park Service as making a "significant contribution to the understanding of the Underground Railroad in American history."
- Protect a Native American sacred site.
- Preserve ruts and swales of the Topeka-Fort Riley Road used by the Underground Railroad.
- Make it possible to increase our recreational trails.
- Protect farmland from commercial and residential development.
- Add to the quality of life in the region.
- Enhance the economic development possibilities of the Wamego area.

**If you would like to support the Mitchell Farmland acquisition with a donation, please complete the pledge information below and return it in the enclosed envelope.**

*Thank you!*

Please return the form below to:  
Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards  
PO Box 136  
Wamego KS 66547-1036  
The Prairie Guards are a 501(c) (3) charitable organization.  
Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

**785-221-4061**  
**mountmitchellprairie.org**



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEDGE AMOUNT \$: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RECOGNIZE ME/US AS: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD PREFER THAT THIS CONTRIBUTION AND/OR MY NAME BE ANONYMOUS FOR REPORTING AND RECOGNITION PURPOSES.

PLEASE MAKE MY GIFT  IN MEMORY OF /  IN HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_