

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 11, 2023

The Honorable Charles F. Sams III  
Director  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Sams III,

Thank you for your leadership and service to our country. We write to request that the National Park Service (NPS) conduct a reconnaissance survey to explore the feasibility of designating the John Brown Cabin and Museum, the John Brown Ghost Cabin at the Adair Homestead, and the Battle of Osawatomie Battlefield — all in Osawatomie, Kansas — as an official unit of the NPS.

As is recognized at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, John Brown was an important figure in the history of 19<sup>th</sup> century America, the history of Kansas, and the Civil War. Upon passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, the question of whether these territories would enter the Union as free or slave states was put to a vote. The resulting period of violence from 1854 to 1860 came to be known as Bleeding Kansas, serving as a precursor to the Civil War and proving that the national debate over slavery was not over.

In 1855, John Brown moved to Kansas, living in a cabin with his half-sister and her husband, Florella Adair and Reverend Samuel Adair, at the Adair Homestead in Osawatomie, KS. After settling in Kansas, Brown began to organize antislavery forces leading up to the sacking of Lawrence. As Congress engaged from Washington, with Senator Charles Sumner’s famous antislavery speech entitled, *The Crime Against Kansas*, Brown responded by committing the Pottawatomie massacre, sparking the deadliest few months of the Bleeding Kansas period.

Brown and his forces then engaged at the Battles of Black Jack and Osawatomie — the largest battle in the Bleeding Kansas era. For nearly three years, Brown organized and led his antislavery forces from Osawatomie, using the Adair’s cabin as his *de facto* headquarters, before leaving to plan his raid at Harpers Ferry. Osawatomie is so central to John Brown’s story that it became his nickname; when Lieutenant J.E.B. Stuart confronted him at Harpers Ferry, he recognized him, saying, “You are Osawatomie Brown, of Kansas?”

In the early 1900s, the Brown-Adair Cabin, which was also used as a stop on the Underground Railroad, was moved to the site of the Battle of Osawatomie and encased in a stone pavilion. It is now listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places as the John Brown Cabin. To preserve the Cabin’s original footprint and any history buried underneath, the City of Osawatomie and the John Brown Foundation constructed a steel-frame Ghost Cabin at the Adair Homestead in 2023.

Designating these sites as official units of the NPS would ensure their preservation for years to come and enhance their educational value to all visitors, ensuring folks can properly understand the national significance of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Bleeding Kansas, and Osawatomie's role in the leadup to the raid at Harpers Ferry and the Civil War.

These sites in Osawatomie have important historic value and a necessary story to tell. Please give our request to conduct a reconnaissance survey your full and fair consideration. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we stand ready to answer any questions or respond to any concerns.

Sincerely,



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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



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Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



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Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator