

Region Readies For "Great Northwest Day" In February 2014

News

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As legislators are gearing up for a new season in Jefferson City, so too are the citizens of Northwest Missouri.



Over the past few months, the Great Northwest Day at the Capitol Steering Committee gathered and prioritized legislative issues for the region's annual visit to the state capitol city on February 4-5, 2014. At this event, approximately 350 people from the 18-county region will visit Jefferson City to make their regional voice heard in a single, cohesive message. Great Northwest Day's legislative platform for the upcoming event includes the following priorities:

Transportation Infrastructure and Funding: Quality transportation infrastructure is important for the viability, growth and safety of our Northwest Missouri communities. Northwest Missouri has 5,263 miles of roadway cared for by the Missouri Department of Transportation and 11,373 miles by the GNW counties. Adequate funding for the economic development, maintenance, and care of the transportation system creates a stronger competitive base from which to grow and attract businesses to northwest Missouri. Therefore, we encourage the support of initiatives that support increased transportation funding for State and County systems.

Water Supply & Wastewater Infrastructure: Access to affordable, quality, and dependable water sources are of highest priority to all Northwest Missouri communities. Additionally, the pressures to comply with governmental regulations materialize into great monetary stress upon our local governments. Therefore, we encourage State government's assistance in partnering with local governments in their efforts to deal with the regulatory and infrastructure needs associated with water and wastewater concerns.

Flood Impacted Infrastructure/Levees/State Parks: Protection and restoration of property from flood damage is and has been vital to many of our Northwest Missouri communities. The economic base of the entire region is greatly built around the management of rivers. Additionally the restoration and protection of our Missouri State Parks, many of which are closely associated with rivers, is of vital economic importance.

Education Funding: Preschool through 12 and Higher Education Funding: Adequate and sustained funding of our public educational institutions is a keystone to the success of our region. The core and capital needs of our educational institutions are at a critical point and we support the legislature attending to these needs. We support increased funding for Missouri's universities as is adequate and appropriate to institution size, mission, performance and service to the state. We also support the elimination of the sunset date in state statutes that limits universities' ability to enter into long-term land leases.

The criteria for reviewing regional issues included legislative impact, overarching regional impact, non-partisan perspective and timeliness of concern. Local issues were collected by County Coordinators and then compiled by a volunteer committee. Those issues were then regionally defined and sent back to County Coordinators and the steering committee for additional input before being established as Legislative Priorities for the event. The four priorities will be monitored as

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<http://www.kttn.com/kgofm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=110993>

Great Northwest Day nears, and the message to legislators will be further refined during that time.

Great Northwest Day at the Capitol is an annual legislative event that includes introduction on the Missouri House and Senate floors, time with legislators, an educational luncheon, and an evening event inviting all of Missouri's legislators and department heads to meet with citizens from the Northwest Missouri region.

For more information on the event or how you can attend, contact the Grundy County Coordinator, Ralph Boots at (660)359-4310 or visit the website at <http://www.greatnorthwestday.com>.