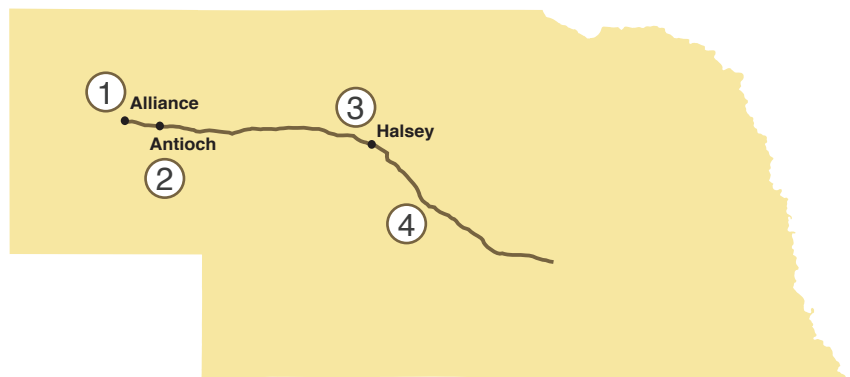


Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway

The rolling grass-covered sand dunes of Nebraska Highway 2 may not have seemed ideal at first, but the sandhills have presented a variety of opportunity for those who settled here. As a result, uses of the land throughout history have been numerous.

Historical Happenings

- ① During World War II, Alliance was home to a military airbase. But as the war effort slowed, so did the necessity for the base. It was officially deactivated in October of 1945. The Sallows Military Museum in Alliance features artifacts from the airbase.
- ② Prior to World War I, potash was imported from Germany and used for fertilizer. During the war, however, the need for domestic potash led five Nebraska companies to begin extracting it from alkali lakes in the sandhills. The business was unfortunately short-lived, and all the Nebraska potash plants were closed by the end of 1920. Plant ruins can still be seen in the Antioch area.



- ③ Dr. Charles Bessey was a nationally known botany and horticulture professor at the University of Nebraska. He had a dream of developing a forested area in the sandhills of Nebraska near what is now Halsey. The professor set to work in 1903, starting a nursery to produce seedling trees that would be hand-planted. From those seedlings grew the largest hand-planted forest in the world, now part of the Bessey Ranger District of the Nebraska National Forest. And the Bessey Nursery is still in operation today.
- ④ The life's work of Solomon Butcher was to capture the true story of the homesteaders who struggled to make a home on the Great Plains. Many of his now-famous collection of photographs were taken in Custer County, where Butcher lived for most of his life.

Funded in part by the Federal Highway Administration and the Nebraska Department of Roads with assistance from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism.



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