



## Freedom's Way Heritage Association

The Freedom's Way Heritage Area, comprising 37 communities in Massachusetts and 8 New Hampshire communities, is a region with a series of historic events that influenced democratic forms of governance and the development of intellectual traditions that underpin American freedom, democracy, conservation, and social justice. These 42 towns share common threads that have contributed toward this special landscape of American history. Freedom's Way truly is the "Landscape of Visionaries and Experimenters". All Americans have been affected by generations of people who have shaped the heart of Freedom's Way.

The Freedom's Way story is interpreted in three separate but interwoven themes:



***Rediscovering the Native Landscape***

***Inventing the New England Landscape***

***Shaping the Landscape of Democracy***

A strong sense of land stewardship is the legacy of the Native Americans, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Benton MacKaye, and scores of others. They have connected the use of the landscape to a deeper understanding of ideas about independence, individual rights, conservation, social justice, and democracy. Evidence of this connection is in the picturesque town commons, Shaker villages, Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands, and Thoreau's walks through the countryside. Having learned to cherish the native land, the Freedom's Way towns inspire a sense of stewardship in children and adults, for now and in the future.

The Freedom's Way Heritage Association, Inc. (FWHA) is a grass roots 501 (c) (3) organization whose goal is to preserve, protect and promote the shared nationally significant historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the region. FWHA forms partnerships with local, regional, state, and federal governmental entities, public and private sector organizations and individuals. to ensure that a Cultural Heritage and Management Plan for Freedom's Way will be developed and that appropriate entities carry it out. Membership is open to individuals and organizations.

Establishment of Freedom's Way as a National Heritage Area will encourage theme related physical structures and landscapes of importance to be preserved and

interpreted, and will actively engage communities and citizens in partnering to maintain the rich resources and history. Congressional designation will recognize the national significance of the Area and provide for authorization of Federal financial support. The National Park Service role will also be defined as will be the responsibilities and authority of the partners.

As part of the National Heritage Area, cultural heritage trails will link the Freedom's Way towns. The trails will illustrate the American ethos that recognizes the interconnections between people and the landscape. Signs, interpretive sites, maps, and interpretive centers will lead the visitor to discover the stories of the land, the people and their ideas.

**Ways you can help:**

- 1.** Volunteer to help FWHA! Rediscover and help document your town's history. Learn how to put your town's important sites into our data base.
- 2.** Join FWHA or invest in the area's heritage by making a donation. [Become a member.](#)
- 3.** Stay Informed. Who is your town's [liaison](#) to FWHA?
- 4.** Help to distribute our Freedom's Way maps and brochures. Call: 978-772-3654 or e-mail [mail@freedomsway.org](mailto:mail@freedomsway.org) for more information.

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