The first map of the Kansas River is dated back to 1718.

Lewis and Clark spent 3 days camped at Kaw Point at the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers.
Kansas (KAW) River History

• The Kaw was declared a navigable river in 1857 by the Kansas Legislature to encourage navigation.
• The legislature repealed this law in 1864 at the encouragement of the railroad to reduce competition.
• The river was restored to navigable status by the legislature in 1913.
Kansas (KAW) River History

- The Kaw has long been known for its fishing and recreational opportunities.
- Public access ramps for boat and canoe use were first funded by the state in the 1970's.
Background

• There are only three navigable rivers in Kansas (Kansas, Ark & Missouri). All other streams are private in Kansas.

• Kansas River is approximately 174 miles long, extending from Junction City to Kansas City.

• A few access sites were constructed in the 1970’s and early 1980’s on the Kansas River.

• Renewed interest in the 1990’s, “Kansas River Recreation” plan was developed in 1998.

• Goal was to place access every 10-15 miles.

• In 2000, there were only 5 public access sites.
Over $1,000,000 has been committed by KDWPT to develop access since 2000. Local funds and donations have probably equaled this amount.

An additional 14 access sites have been constructed.
KDWPT was contacted in 2011 about potential projects that would fall within the America’s Great Outdoors program.

The Kansas River water trail project was identified as a potential project for this program.

In 2011 KDWPT, in conjunction with the National Parks Service, started the process to apply for the Kansas River to be included in the new National Water Trail program.
Kansas River was dedicated as a National Water Trail in 2012.

Dedication River Tour
Items were identified as needed to improve the water trail.

- Path finding signs.
- Brochures
- Website
- River navigation signs
- Kiosks
Path Finding Signs

- Signs are in place directing people to all 19 access sites. Thanks to KDOT for assisting.
Brochures and website were developed with funding from a NPS grant.
Web site development

• http://www.travelks.com/ksrivertrail/

• There is also a National Water Trail site maintained by NPS
  http://www.nps.gov/watertrails/
River Navigation Signage

• Placed every two miles for safety and river user reference.
Kiosk Project

Kiosks to be placed at each access site to provide information to river users and give community historical and tourism info.
Kiosk Structure at Lecompton
Westar Green Team donates materials and installation.
Eudora access site upgrades & Governor float trip.
Current Kansas River Sites

19 sites currently open to public access.
AREAS OF NEED

No access currently available between Topeka and Belvue (29 miles).
Projects in Progress

- Working with Rossville, Shawnee County and an adjacent landowners to get two access sites along 29 mile stretch.
- Involved with Topeka & River Front Authority on Topeka Weir upgrade project.
Topeka Weir upgrade
Topeka Weir upgrade
Topeka Weir upgrade
Air Boat purchases for patrol and rescue
How Are We Moving Forward

- Potential property purchases along river for river access, and establishing new State Park
- Utilizing existing properties for a State Park
- Utilizing grants for development (Trail Grants, LWCF, & MBA)
- Partnering with local communities and interest groups (Pottawattamie Tribal Nation)
- Working with local landowners
H.R. Green Memorial Property

• Green property is currently managed by our Public Lands Division (Deed will transfer to Parks July 2016)
• Under current donation provisions, only “nonconsumptive” activities permitted
• Existing 3 mile multi-use trail
• Historically rich, many interpretative opportunities
• Donation provisions will allow development and improvements (Campgrounds, Cabins, Trails)
Allen Property
Allen Property

- 550 acres of potential land available for purchase
- 80 acres optimal for State Park development and river access (Under Legislative Restrictions)
- Construction of 5 modern cabins, 15 site full hookup campground, hike/bike-in camping, and multi-use trail system
- Property would provide ¾ mile of river front
Allen State Park Plan
Vassar Creek and Kaw Access
Special Thanks

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Friends of the Kaw

Westar Energy GREEN TEAM