



NHL Executive Summary



Name of Property: Kregel Windmill Company Factory

City, State: Nebraska City, Nebraska

Period of Significance: 1902-1941

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme: I. Peopling Places
3. Migration from outside and within
V. Developing the American Economy
1. Extraction and Production

Previous Recognition: 1993, National Register of Historic Places
Historic American Engineering Record, HAER No. NE-8

National Historic Context: Labor History in the United States
XVIII. Technology
D. Tools and Machines



NHL Significance:

- The Kregel Windmill Company Factory is the only known surviving and intact windmill factory in the country, a property type which once numbered over one-thousand factories nationally.
- The factory has an exceptional ability to convey the history and impact of windmill manufacturing in the United States during the early twentieth century.
- The windmill was instrumental in facilitating railroad expansion and Euro-American settlement, farming, and ranching practices into the American Great Plains.
- The period of national significance begins in 1902, when the Kregel Windmill Company Factory was constructed and ends in 1941, when national windmill manufacturing was dramatically reduced and the Kregel Windmill Company produced its last windmill.

Integrity:

- The Kregel Windmill Company Factory retains a remarkably high degree of integrity.
- The machinery, tools, and supplies the company used to produce windmills and other goods during its period of national significance are all retained within the factory.
- Now a museum, the interior reflects the working space much as it would have appeared in 1939.
- The factory remained in the Kregel family's ownership until the owner's death in 1991. From the end of the period of significance until that time, the company operated much as it did during its era of windmill manufacturing, resulting in minimal changes to the building.
- A rehabilitation of the building completed in 2012 followed the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, resulted in minor visible alterations, and allowed for the building to be opened as a museum.

Owner of Property: Kregel Windmill Factory Museum

Acreage of Property: Less than one

Origins of Nomination:

The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO) prepared a Letter of Inquiry on behalf of the Kregel Windmill Factory Museum, receiving a favorable response from NPS. Nomination author began research and writing as NeSHPO employee and continued preparation of documentation after being hired as NPS Architectural Historian.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

National Historic Landmark designation of the Kregel Windmill Company Factory would bring attention to an area of United States history that has not been fully recognized in the NHL Program—the instrumental role of the windmill in the expansion of the railroad network and facilitation of Euro-American settlement of the Great Plains.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of December 21, 2023):

- Senator Julie Slama, District 1, Nebraska Senate (via email)
- Mayor Bryan Bequette, Mayor of Nebraska City, Nebraska (via email)
- Betty Gillespie, Interim Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, History Nebraska



- T. Lindsay Baker, W.K. Gordon Endowed Chair in Texas Industrial History (retired), Tarleton State University
- Isaiah Yott, Executive Director, Kregel Windmill Factory Museum (via email)
- David K. Silcox, Board Member and Docent, Kregel Windmill Factory Museum (via email)
- Doug Friedli, Executive Director, Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Visitor Center (via email)
- Pam Frana, Advisory Board Member, Leadership Nebraska City (via email)
- Dean M. Shissler, Museum Coordinator, Nebraska City Museum Association (via email)
- Tammy Partsch, Marketing Director, Nebraska City Tourism & Commerce

Landmarks Committee Comments:

The Landmarks Committee had no substantive comments on the content of the nomination.

Landmarks Committee Recommendation:

The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior the designation of the Kregel Windmill Company Factory in Nebraska City, Nebraska, as a National Historic Landmark, with any additions and corrections as noted by the Committee being made prior to the nomination being forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for action.

Advisory Board Recommendation: The National Park System Advisory Board recommends to the Secretary of the Interior the designation of the Kregel Windmill Company Factory in Nebraska City, Nebraska, as a National Historic Landmark.