

An ORDINANCE for the GOVERNMENT of the TERRITORY of the UNITED STATES, North-West of the RIVER OHIO.

The Northwest Ordinance: A Plan for Government

There was much interest among the new Americans in settlement of the Northwest Territory. Sale of the lands would bring in welcome money to the struggling United States government. The Second Continental Congress approved the Ordinance of 1785 which set up rules for how the land would be surveyed and divided for sale. The territory would be divided into townships. Each township was to be made up of thirty-six sections which were each one square mile. Each township was required to set aside one section to be saved for a school.

As plans were made to open the Northwest Territory for settlement, a plan for government which would allow for population growth and, eventually, states to be carved out of the Territory was needed. It was Congress's job to draw up a plan which would then open the door to settlement in the Northwest Territory and future territories.

The Northwest Ordinance laid out these governing guidelines:

*A three stage plan for gaining statehood

1) Congress would elect a governor, secretary and three judges.

They would govern under the watch of Congress until the population of any part of the territory reached 5,000 free males.

2) A new territorial legislature would be elected to make the laws.

The governor, however would have the power of the veto. The territory would be governed by the legislature, the governor and the three judges. Once the population of this part of the territory reached 60,000 residents, it could move towards statehood.

3) To prepare for statehood, delegates would be elected to meet at a constitutional convention, write a state constitution, and send it to the U.S. Congress for approval.

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* Determined the territory could be divided into not less than three and no more than five states.

* A bill of rights protecting religious freedom, the right to a writ of habeas corpus, the benefit of trial by jury, and other individual rights.

* The ordinance encouraged education and forbid slavery.

Once finished, the Northwest Ordinance provided a bill of rights for territorial citizens, a plan for territorial government, and a path to achieve statehood which paved the way for settlement of the Northwest Territory and future U.S. territories.

Name the 5 states carved out of the Northwest Territory.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Number 6 shows part of what state?

6. _____

