

# Tallgrass Prairie

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve  
Cottonwood Falls, Kansas



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## Commercial Filming and Photography at the Preserve

It is the policy of the National Park Service to allow filming and photography consistent with the protection and public enjoyment of park resources. Therefore, the primary consideration in the evaluation of permit requests is the potential for resource damage and the disruption of normal public use.

Permits are not generally required for:

- Visitors engaged in filming/photography intended for their personal use and enjoyment
- The filming of a breaking news event by news crews
- Filming conducted pursuant to a cooperative agreement or contract with the National Park Service

A request for a filming or photography permit may be denied if:

- The requested activity represents a potential for an adverse impact or damage to the parks natural, cultural, wilderness, or recreational resources or the visitor experience, or poses health or safety risks
- The requirements for supervising the project exceed the staffing capacity
- The applicant fails to obtain insurance/bonding, or to agree to pay assessed cost recovery
- The request includes entry into areas closed to the visiting public or activities not permitted to the average park visitor

### Sharing the Park

A filming or photography permit does not allow the permittee to restrict park visitors from any location; therefore, sites which attract a large number of visitors should be avoided as well as filming during peak visitor use hours. Interruptions to normal visitor use patterns will not be permitted for long periods of time and are only allowed as specified in the approved permit. Filming/photography permit activities may not occur simultaneously with other permitted activities or unduly conflict with scheduled public activities. Visitors will be allowed to watch filming.

### Closures

Permit activities may be restricted based on weather or seasonal conditions (fire danger, prescribed burns, standing water after rain, nesting season, etc.). Additional closures, use limits, weight limits, and/or restricted activities may also apply.

## Prohibited Activities

The following activities have the potential to damage or significantly impact or alter park resources and are prohibited:

- 1) altering, damaging or removing vegetation or disturbing historic buildings, fences, or features
- 2) vehicle use off established roads and parking areas
- 3) use of insecticides, herbicides, and pesticides
- 4) loud noises (60 decibels or higher)
- 5) use of fragile vegetation areas or disturbance of historic landscapes and features
- 6) flying aircraft below FAA recommended minimum altitude (usually 1,000 feet) or landing of aircraft
- 7) writing on or discoloring any natural or historic feature or structure
- 8) consumption of alcoholic beverages or possession, sale, or use of controlled substances
- 9) disturbance of any wildlife, picking or damaging plants, or removal of any natural or historical features
- 10) pets off leash. Pets must be restrained on a visible leash that is six feet or shorter at all times. Pets shall not be tied to any preserve feature, waste must be removed, and pets must be attended at all times. **Pets are not allowed in the backcountry of the preserve.**
- 11) historic fences and rock walls will not be utilized in any way due to their fragility, cultural value, or visitor safety risk
- 12) all bicycling, including mountain biking. No motorized vehicles are allowed unless specifically authorized.
- 13) Harassment of wildlife is prohibited by law. Filming of preserve wildlife is permitted, ensuring **no** disturbance, feeding, teasing, or manipulation of resident or free- roaming animals. Wildlife captured elsewhere may **not** be used in any in- park filming, whether trained or not.

## Further Permit Guidance

**Cost Recovery and Fees:** We are required to recover costs for staff time spent in monitoring the compliance of this permit. Many filming projects require the permit to be monitored by a park ranger, such as when the permit is located in areas normally closed to visitors or if there is potential for resource damage. In compliance with the requirements of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, the applicant must submit his or her Social Security number or Federal Tax ID number when completing the permit application.

Beginning May 15, 2006 location fees will be collected according to the following fee schedule for all commercial filming and photography pursuant 16 U.S.C. 4601- 6d. The ranges of people in the table below refer to the number of cast and crew members.

| MOTION PICTURES/VIDEOS                        | COMMERCIAL STILL PHOTOGRAPHY |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 – 2 people, camera and tripod only: \$0/day |                              |
| 3 – 10 people: \$150/day                      | 1 – 10 people: \$50/day      |
| 11 – 30 people: \$250/day                     | 11 – 30 people: \$150/day    |
| 31 – 49 people: \$500/day                     | Over 30 people: \$250/day    |
| Over 50 people: \$750/day                     |                              |

## **Processing Time**

Please allow at least 30 days for permit processing. If the permit request is approved, restrictions and conditions will be stipulated in the permit. Permit activities may be restricted according to seasonal conditions, fire danger, preserve activities, and/or visitation levels. We require that all relevant details and changes regarding permitted activities be confirmed at least 72 hours prior to activation of the permit. Prior to issuance of the permit, we must be in possession of the following items:

- Copy of your insurance certificate made out in the group's name with appropriate data
- Completed and signed application
- Permit processing charge (check) and the bond if required

You will need to secure and sign your film permit prior to initiating any activity in the park.

## **Insurance**

Commercial general liability insurance is required for most projects in the following amounts:

- \$100,000 for simple still photography
- \$1,000,000 minimum for electronic media and commercial motion photography
- \$3,000,000 minimum for special activities (feature films, elaborate stunts, etc.)

The United States Government must be named as additionally insured. See guidance under previous section **"How to Apply, Certificate of Insurance."**

## **Bond**

A bond may be required in the form of money order, cashiers check, or bank draft. No personal checks shall be accepted. All or a portion of the bond may be retained to pay for the costs of site rehabilitation, damage to park property/resources and/or unpaid charges associated with the permit. The balance will be returned upon the completion of filming activities and payment of all outstanding bills.

## **Closures & Traffic Control**

If your request includes road closures or blockage within the preserve, arrangements must be made with preserve staff before issuance of permit. If your permit requires the use of local law enforcement officer(s), you will be billed by these agencies for officer overtime. The contact number for these agencies is (620) 273- 6313.

## **Restrictions and Conditions**

Restrictions and conditions will be enumerated in the permit. The following activities are restricted and must be approved on a case by case basis:

- 1) use of children or animals as models
- 2) discharge of live or blank ammunition and all living history black powder weapons (all weapons are illegal on federal property)
- 3) mechanical or pyrotechnic special effects

- 4) stunts
- 5) amplified music or sound
- 6) placing of large set dressings or trailers
- 7) filming inside interiors of government administrative work areas
- 8) film equipment or activities on roadways or in visitor use areas
- 9) access to closed areas or access to areas during non- visitor use hours. The permit will specify the number of people and the exact types of equipment allowed. Activities not specified in the permit will not be allowed by the NPS monitor on duty.
- 10) use of generators, unless specifically authorized due to noise level and location
- 11) parking must be authorized, except in visitor parking lot. Parking lot closes at 4:30 p.m. Permittee must obey all parking rules. Parking on grass is not allowed unless authorized.
- 12) smoking in designated area only

### **Trash Removal**

Permittees will remove their trash from the preserve at the end of each day during filming and will leave the area as they found it. Cost recovery will be assessed if removal of permittee's trash is necessary by park staff.

### **Models**

Please note that the permit does not include authority to film or photograph individuals. Model releases are the responsibility of the permittee.

### **Staging Trailer**

NPS buildings are not authorized for use as dressing rooms or make- up staging area. Only authorized personnel are permitted in non- public areas. Permittee may provide a small trailer for dressing/make-up staging area, but must be approved prior to writing the permit with trailer location stated in the permit.

### **Termination of Permit**

All filming or photography permits issued by the National Park Service may be revoked **without notice** if the terms of the permit are violated. Deliberate infractions of the terms of the filming permit or the deliberate making of false or misleading statements concerning intended actions in order to obtain a permit are causes for immediate termination of the permit and cause for possible prosecution. Permits will be revoked if damage to resources or facilities is threatened, or if there is a clear danger to public health or safety.