



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie
National Preserve

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Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

September 9, 2011
For Immediate Release
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Trenching Temporarily Redirects Parking and Tour Availability at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve



NPS Photo: 2003 trench work at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve

Beginning Monday, September 12, 2011 visitors to the main building complex at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve will encounter construction activity that will require re- routing how visitors get to buildings, trails and bus tours. Trenching will be underway that is required to lay water

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and utility lines in association with the Visitor Center and Administration Building under construction. The trench line will cut through the existing parking lot and up the driveway on the hill leading to the barn. The activity requires closures or partial closures to road sections used by visitors to get to buildings and the bus tours. “Without question, the trench going up the hill will require temporary closure to all road and foot traffic on the hill for a day or two,” stated Superintendent Lauritzen. “Trenching through the lower level parking lot will require part of the parking lot to be closed with a slight risk that the entire parking lot may have to be shut down for a couple of days. The good news is we have work- arounds to allow for visitor activity to continue and still be able to provide bus tours with a little re- routing and visitor patience.”

Visitors are asked to proceed with caution and follow directional signs that will be placed in the parking lot and elsewhere. Climbing the stone stairs to enter the main house at the first floor level is one of the re- routes for visitors. Unfortunately, wheelchair parking, currently located on the hill, and wheelchair access to the buildings will not be available during this temporary construction closure. Due to lack of available turn- around space, RVs will be redirected to the Bottomland Trail parking lot. The park will manage a will- call shuttle between bottomland trail and the historic buildings during any closure of the entire parking lot. Please call ahead (620- 273- 8494 or 6034) on the day of your visit to assess parking lot, tour and shuttle availability.

If the entire parking lot is closed, then all visitors will be redirected to the Bottomland Nature Trail parking lot located two miles south of the historic ranch on K- 177. Please watch for directional signs. The Bottomland Trail parking lot is located east of St. Anthony cemetery on the gravel county road 227. Travel east 1/3 mile and parking lot is located on the north side. A shuttle, staff and signage will assist visitors in getting to hiking trails, bust tours and self- guiding tours through the historic structures.

It is expected for the trenching activity will last one week from September 12th through the 16th. Barring any unforeseen complications, the trenching should be completed before the heaviest visitation days on the weekend begins. We apologize in advance for the inconvenience this will cause and ask for our visitor’s cooperation and patience so that everyone may have a safe and enjoyable visit. For updates and photos on the Visitor Center construction, please visit us on Facebook.



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway). All programs and activities are free of charge. For more information or to make group reservations, visit the preserve's website at www.nps.gov/tapr, email tapr_interpretation@nps.gov, or call the preserve at (620) 273- 8494.

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