



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie  
National Preserve

226 Broadway  
P.O. Box 585  
Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845

620-273-6034 phone  
620-273-6099 fax

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## Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

For Immediate Release

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Wendy Lauritzen, (620) 273- 6034

Heather Brown, (620) 273- 6034

### **Visitor Center Ground Breaking Ceremony and 14<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration at the Preserve**

On Friday, November 12, 2010, we welcome and encourage you to come to the preserve and witness an event that has been 14 years in the making. Become part of the history of the preserve as people of the past and present officially break ground for the construction of visitor center and administrative office buildings.

Festivities begin at 1 p.m. at the main entrance located two miles north of the intersection of U.S. Highway 50 and K- 177, just northwest of Strong City, KS. Ceremonies will be under the tents in the field south of the historic limestone barn. The event will take place within the footprint of the new buildings to be constructed beginning in spring 2011. Local Chase County Elementary School children start the ceremony by singing the National Anthem followed by two local students presenting their speeches that made Little Bluestem the state grass of Kansas. Federal and state officials will speak on the past, present, and future of the preserve, while honoring those who lead the way toward the creation of the preserve. At approximately 2 p.m. the “Shovel Brigade” will officially break ground and bring the dream of a visitor center to fruition.

Following the ceremony join us in celebrating the preserve’s 14<sup>th</sup> birthday with cupcakes and refreshments in the historic limestone barn. National Park Service employees will play historic music throughout the celebration for your enjoyment. The six student quilts, children’s essays, and central master educational quilt from the “Building Common Ground Through the Quilts of Many Hands” project will be on display in the barn. The display will feature the people’s choice quilt that was selected

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by visitors across the country who visited the five National Park Service units in Kansas this summer. An hour-long prairie bus tour will be available at 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. All activities are free. Please join us in celebrating these special achievements in the history of the preserve and our local community. It's not often that you can have fun and be a part of a park's history at the same time.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway). For more information or to make group reservations, visit the preserve's website at [www.nps.gov/tapr](http://www.nps.gov/tapr), email [tapr\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:tapr_interpretation@nps.gov), or call the preserve at (620) 273-8494. Superintendent Wendy Lauritzen can be reached at the Cottonwood Falls office headquarters at 620-273-6034.

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