



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie
National Preserve

2480 B Ks. Hwy 177
Strong City, KS 66869

620-273-8494 phone
620-273-8066 fax

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

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For Immediate Release

Kristen Hase, 620-273-6034 ext. 231

Park Rangers, 620-273-8494

Fall Prescribed Fire and Bison Bring Changes to the Preserve



Autumn is a great time to visit the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. Cooler temperatures, crisp clear skies, and beautiful autumn colors in the prairie offer a welcome change from summer. Autumn is also the time to see tallgrass prairie grasses reach towering heights of six feet along the trails in the bottomland prairie. The change in seasons also brings about changes in visitor activities and land management.

The National Park Service Midwest Archeological Center is coordinating with preserve staff to conduct archeological surveys in an effort to identify some important features and sensitive

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areas on the preserve. To accommodate the survey, the preserve is planning to conduct a prescribed burn this fall to remove residual vegetation and make it easier to conduct the survey.

Weather conditions must be optimal before a prescribed burn can occur. Due to the unpredictable nature of Kansas weather, there is typically little advanced notice leading up to a prescribed burn. Some trails and areas may be closed during prescribed fire operations (on short notice). Visitors who are hiking may have their plans interrupted as a result of the burn activity, but this typically does not last more than a day. For safety, visitors are asked to not cross fire lines or venture beyond barricades and signs.

The preserve is also planning to augment the bison herd in October with additional animals from Wind Cave National Park. These new animals will ensure a healthy and stable herd over the long-term. “We look forward to working with our partners to learn more about historic resources and build our bison herd. October is going to be a busy month.” said Kristen Hase, Chief of Natural Resources.

Fall visitor activities include the new exhibits in the Visitor Center, the newly opened barn, and seasonal programs. While the Visitor Center and historic buildings will be closed for the fall and winter holidays, the 40-plus miles of trails on the preserve will remain open.

Land management activities can impact visitor access to certain areas of the preserve, however, those impacts are expected to be temporary and short-term. All visitors should check with the Visitor Center staff when planning a visit. Historic buildings (that are currently open) and the Visitor Center will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please call the rangers at 620-273-8494 for daily updates, check the website at www.nps.gov/tapr, or check out the Facebook page for Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway) and is a unique public/private partnership between the National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy. For more information, visit the preserve’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/NPS.TallgrassPrairie>, website at www.nps.gov/tapr, email tapr_interpretation@nps.gov, or call the preserve at (620) 273-8494. To learn more about The Nature Conservancy in Kansas, visit the Conservancy’s website at www.nature.org/Kansas or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TNCKansas>.

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