



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie NPRES.  
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## Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

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### Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Reopens to Visitors, Announces Shift to Off-Season Operations



Strong City, KS – Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve re-opens to visitors today, October 17, 2013. Visitors began accessing park buildings and trails early this morning, while staff quickly brought operations and other public services back online. Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve has been closed since October 1 due to the lapse in Congressional appropriations.

“We are excited and happy to be back at work and ready to welcome visitors to Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve,” said Superintendent Wendy Lauritzen. “For visitors waiting all year to see the ‘tall grass,’ autumn is a particularly special season to enjoy the tallgrass prairie environment

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and all that it has to offer.” Opportunities abound to observe wildlife, while hiking along the 40 miles of trails. However, visitors need to be aware that the bison herd is temporarily located in the West Traps pasture, rather than Windmill pasture in order to familiarize the herd with the bison handling facility. The bison will be moved back into Windmill pasture by November. The Lower Fox Creek school is open on weekends in October from noon to 4 p.m. and bus tours are available on Saturday and Sunday at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. (as staffing allows) for the remainder of October. Please call the rangers at 620-273-8494 to make a reservation.

“The change of season brings a shift to new winter operations” stated Lauritzen. The park buildings will be open six days a week instead of seven, beginning November 3 and running through February 2014. The Visitor Center and historic buildings will be open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The facilities will be closed on Sundays and holidays; however with 40 miles of trails, the remainder of the preserve will stay open to the public, 24 hours, seven days a week. Actions are targeted to have the least impact to visitors when visitation during the colder weather has historically had fewer visitors coming to the park. Such actions will reduce overall costs in park operations and allow for greater opportunities for park staff to provide a wider variety of visitor services and programs during the six days the park facilities are open. It is anticipated that the changes in the off-season winter operations, an effect of the 2014 sequestration-based park budget, should allow for the buildings to resume being open on Sundays and holidays during the busier spring and summer 2014 visitor season.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City, KS on K-177 along the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway. It is a co-managed area through partnership between The Nature Conservancy and the National Park Service. For more information, visit the park’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/NPS.TallgrassPrairie> , website at [www.nps.gov/tapr](http://www.nps.gov/tapr), email [tapr\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:tapr_interpretation@nps.gov), or call the Visitor Center at (620) 273-8494.

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