



For assistance, call 620-273-8494

For your safety, please stay on designated trails.

Scenic Vistas

So please enjoy the wide open spaces and all that the backcountry day hiking trails have to offer!



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

For More Information

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is a unique public / private partnership between the National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy, and the Kansas Park Trust. The preserve offers a variety of activities: 1881 ranch house tours, hiking trails, prairie bus tours (May - October), and more. The historic ranch headquarters and schoolhouse area are open daily 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1. The Southwind Nature Trail and Bottomland Trail are open daylight hours year-round. Please call 620-273-8494 to learn more about the preserve and the different activities available or visit the preserve's official website at www.nps.gov/tapr.

The preserve may also be contacted at:

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
 P.O. Box 585, 226 Broadway
 Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845

E-mail: TAPR_Interpretation@nps.gov

National Park Service
 U.S. Department of the Interior



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
 Strong City, Kansas

Backcountry Day Hiking - Trail Guide and Map



The Nature Conservancy
 Protecting nature. Preserving life.™



Welcome to Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve. We hope you enjoy your hiking experience in the preserve's spectacular backcountry. To assist in planning your hike, we have put together this informational brochure. Please help us preserve this beautiful area for future generations by following these simple rules. Thank you for your cooperation.

Here are a few things you should know before you travel into the backcountry:

Registration

Backcountry day hiking is available seven days a week from May through October and on weekends the remainder of the year, conditions permitting. Hiking hours are between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Individual permits are required and limited to 100 permits issued per day. You may make a reservation up to 4 weeks in advance by calling 620-273-8494. Sign in at the visitor information station to get your permit before hiking. The station is located in the barn from the last Saturday in April to the last Sunday of October and on the back porch of the ranch house during the rest of the year. Display the permit when in the backcountry and return it when you sign out. All hikers must be back at the historic ranch headquarters by 3:30 p.m. If you have not returned, preserve staff will come looking for you.

Visitor Safety Tips

- * Do not disturb wildlife or cattle.
- * Stay on designated ranch roads and hiking trails.
- * The preserve has a high tick and chigger population. Use insect repellent, stay on designated roads and trails, and check for ticks regularly.
- * Beware of venomous snakes.
- * Check the forecast for severe weather.
- * Always carry a map and compass and know how to use them.

Suggested Items For Hiking

- * Cell Phone - Leave number with rangers
- * Plenty of drinking water
- * A first-aid kit
- * Insect repellent
- * Appropriate clothing, including sturdy shoes, loose-fitting pants, sun hat, and sunglasses.
- * Sunblock to avoid sunburn
- * Emergency snack food, such as raisins, candy, dried fruits, or freeze-dried snacks
- * Some hiking supplies are available in bookstore

Water

For your safety do not drink from any natural water source found on the preserve. Do not swim or wade in the stock ponds, streams, or springs found on the preserve.

Wildlife

All preserve wildlife is protected. Do not feed, hunt, or disturb wildlife. Rattlesnakes and other venomous snakes live in the preserve. To reduce risk, stay on designated ranch roads and hiking trails, look before you step, and use caution. Snakes are protected within preserve boundaries and are an important part of the natural community. Do not kill them.

Resource Protection

- * **Do not remove anything from the preserve. It is illegal to remove any object, plant, or animal from the property.**
- * Do not remove any plant, wildflower, artifact, or rock. Every element is an important part of the prairie ecosystem. By not removing any natural or cultural features, you are helping to preserve a very important ecosystem, and allowing all visitors to experience this beauty.
- * Do not climb, sit on, or disturb rock walls or fences, as they are important cultural features.

NOTE: Hiking will be cancelled in times of high fire danger, during prescribed burning, and severe weather.

Fire

ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING

No campfires or open flames in the backcountry.

Litter

Help us preserve the natural beauty and health of the prairie by packing out all of your trash. **Please do not bury or burn your litter.** There are trash cans at the historic ranch headquarters for refuse. If you discover debris on the hiking trails, please help us preserve the beauty of the prairie by disposing of it at the ranch headquarters area.

Fishing

Fishing is not allowed in the backcountry day hiking area of the preserve. Do not fish or seine in the stock ponds, springs, or streams.

Crossing Between Pastures

Use the self-closing hiking gates to cross between pastures. Do not cross between the barbed wire fences or over the cattleguards. Slipping between the metal bars of the cattleguards can cause injury and broken bones. Cattle sometimes congregate around the cattleguards. Remember these are wild animals and can cause injury. Do not pet or disturb the cattle.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in the backcountry and may not be left at the historic ranch headquarters area unattended. Please be kind to your pet and be aware that campers and vehicles heat up rapidly in the summer months. Do not leave your pet inside these confined spaces.

All pets at the preserve must be on a leash and attended by the owner. Please remove and dispose of animal waste properly. Pet waste disposal bags are located at the information kiosk closest to the parking lot.

Thank you for following these rules and regulations. We hope you have a very enjoyable experience and come back soon.

Take Only Memories



Leave Only Footprints