



For assistance, call 620-273-8494

For your safety, please stay on designated trails.

## Scenic Vistas

Please enjoy the wide open spaces and all that the backcountry hiking trails have to offer!



## For More Information

At Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, the National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy, and the Kansas Park Trust work together in cooperation to protect some of the last remnants of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. The preserve offers a variety of activities, including ranch house tours, hiking trails, backcountry bus tours, and more. The historic Spring Hill Ranch house and barn are open daily 9:00 am to 4:30 p.m., except Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1. All hiking trails and all outdoor areas are open 24 hours. No camping is permitted. To learn more, contact the preserve at:

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve  
P.O. Box 585, 226 Broadway  
Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845  
Phone: 620-273-8494  
Email: [TAPR\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:TAPR_interpretation@nps.gov)  
Web: [www.nps.gov/tapr](http://www.nps.gov/tapr)



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve  
Strong City, Kansas

# Backcountry Hiking - Trail Guide and Map



The Nature Conservancy  
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

*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:

### Availability

Backcountry hiking is available year round 24 hours a day, seven days a week, conditions permitting. Check with preserve staff before setting out to learn about trail conditions, specific hiking concerns, or trail closures.

### 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.
- Plenty of drinking water.
- A first-aid kit.
- Insect repellent.
- Appropriate clothing, such as sturdy shoes, loose-fitting pants, sun hat, and sunglasses.
- Sunblock.
- 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.

### Bison safety

Bison define their own "personal space," which can vary unpredictably depending on the situation and the time of year. Keeping a safe distance from them at all times is essential. To ensure both your safety and the safety of the bison, please maintain a distance that does not disturb or displace them or cause them to alter their behavior. Use binoculars or telephoto camera lenses for safe viewing. By being sensitive to its needs, you will see more of a bison's natural activities.

### 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 nature, history, and culture of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. By not removing any natural or cultural features, you are helping to preserve a rare and threatened area for all to experience and enjoy.
- 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 when necessary for visitor safety.**

### Fire

**ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING**

No campfires or open flames in the backcountry.

### Litter

Help us preserve the natural beauty and health of the tallgrass 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