National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
Strong City, Kansas

Tallgrass Prairie

"Whenever you stop on the prairie to lunch or camp, and gaze around, there is a picture such as poet and painter never succeeded in transferring to book or canvas... [We] ought to have saved a Park in Kansas, ten thousand acres broad-the prairie as it came from the hand of God, not a foot or an inch desecrated by 'improvements' and 'cultivation'. It is only a memory now."

—D.W. Wilder, editor of the *Hiawatha World*, 1884

Aerial photograph showing a now inland sea of grass in the heart of the Flint Hills of Kansas.

Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve was established on November 12, 1996 to preserve, protect, and interpret for the public an example of a tallgrass prairie ecosystem and the historic and cultural values represented by the Spring Hill Ranch. Once the bed of a vast inland sea located in the heart of the Flint Hills of Kansas, the preserve represents a portion of less than 4% of remaining tallgrass prairie.

Ranching heritage at the preserve

Cattleman Stephen F. Jones built his home in 1881 with hand-cut limestone. The 11-room house is characteristic of the Second Empire style of 19th century architecture. The springs on the hillside provided water to the house – thus the name, Spring Hill Farm and Stock Ranch. Nearby are the massive three-story limestone barn and Lower Fox Creek School, a one-room schoolhouse. The ranch was designated a National Historic Landmark in February 1997.

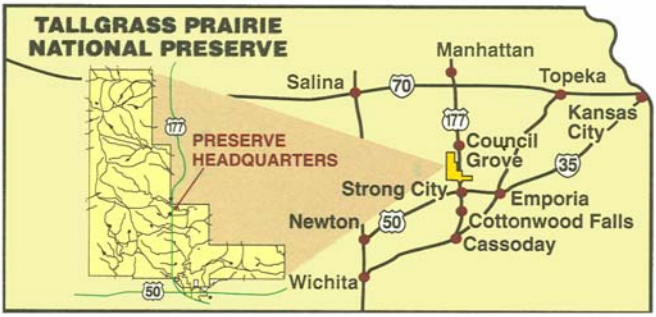
Spring Hill Farm and Stock Ranch and the Lower Fox Creek Schoolhouse

Site Information:

Experience the natural wonder and rich history of the Kansas Flint Hills. The expansive rolling hills and wide-open vistas of this Great Plains region are a rare remnant of the expanse of tallgrass prairie that once covered 170 million acres of central North America.

Each of the site's historic structures, exhibits, guided house and prairie bus tours, costumed interpreters, educational activities, special interpretive programs, hiking trails, audio visual program, and scenic vistas of tallgrass prairie help you experience the natural and cultural history of the preserve.

How to get here:
Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is 2 miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (Flint Hills National Scenic Byway).



Hours of operation:
Open 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. daily, except Thanksgiving, December 25, and New Years Day.
Visitor Information Stations
located in the house and also at the intersection of U.S. 50 Hwy and Cottonwood Street in Strong City, KS.

For further information contact:
Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
P.O. Box 585, 226 Broadway
Cottonwood Falls, Kansas 66845
620-273-8494
Websites:
www.nps.gov/tapr
www.nature.org/kansas

The Nature Conservancy