

## Creating the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve

In 1996 the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve was created in Chase County, Kansas. The preserve covers more than 10,000 acres. It is part of the Flint Hills. More than 100 years ago the Flint Hills played an important part in the start of the cattle business in Kansas.

The Flint Hills are covered with different types of grasses. Some are tall grasses that can grow higher than a man on horseback. Some are short grasses. Buffalo ate this grass and grew strong. Prairie grass is good food for cattle as well.

Stephen Jones bought some land to raise cattle. He named his ranch the Spring Hill Ranch and Stock Farm. He built the house that is still there. Over time the ranch became the largest ranch in the state. It covered parts of six counties.



The last owners renamed the ranch. They called it the Z Bar Ranch. Because of the ranch's important history, some people believed it should be preserved. They formed a group. They worked with the U.S. government to make sure part of it would become a national park. In 1996 the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve was created. It is named for the tall grass that has covered the Flint Hills for thousands of years. Today, part of the land is still used for grazing cattle.

