

On-site pre-trip

- Check participants for suitable footwear/clothing, sun-screen, and insect repellent as needed.

Pre-trip introduction

- Start the introduction between 3-5 minutes after the scheduled start time.
- Introduce yourself and other leaders (if the group is small, attendees can introduce themselves).
- Announce hand-out materials and sign-up sheets.
- Explain that there will be a brief introduction, but plenty of time during the hike for questions.
- Give a brief introduction to prairies/savannas – what is a prairie; what is their value; what is TPE.
- Give a brief introduction to the site – community type; protection status; how it became protected.

Before beginning the hike (reorder these to best fit the trip):

- Ask for any quick questions.
- Ask if any hikers have medical issues which you should be aware of.
- Ask if any hikers do not want to be photographed (use standard photography notice, if appropriate).
- Announce restroom facilities that might be available.
- State the approximate hike length (time and distance) and difficulty.
- Mention upcoming TPE trips/events.
- Encourage carpooling if traveling from meeting place to site.
- Take a head-count prior to starting the hike.

Begin Hike

- Keep the group together as much as possible. If possible, have a co-leader stay at back of group.
- Set a good example by not trampling vegetation or disturbing wildlife.
- Stop periodically at various locations with something to point out.
- Focus on what is there, but also point out things that are there other times of the year.
- Make sure conversations are at suitable knowledge levels.
- Try to engage with each attendee at some point during the hike.

Conversation topics:

- Flora ID
- Fauna ID
- Special traits of flora
- Role of fire and grazing in prairie plant communities
- Management techniques
- How prairies were lost
- Role of soil types in prairies

End hike

- End the trip on time.
- Take a head count to be sure all attendees are still with the group.
- Give a concise conclusion and review highlights.
- Ask for quick questions.
- Thank participants for coming!
- Stay around for additional conversation.