

COMPLETED PRAIRIE DOG MANAGEMENT ON THUNDER BASIN NATIONAL GRASSLAND

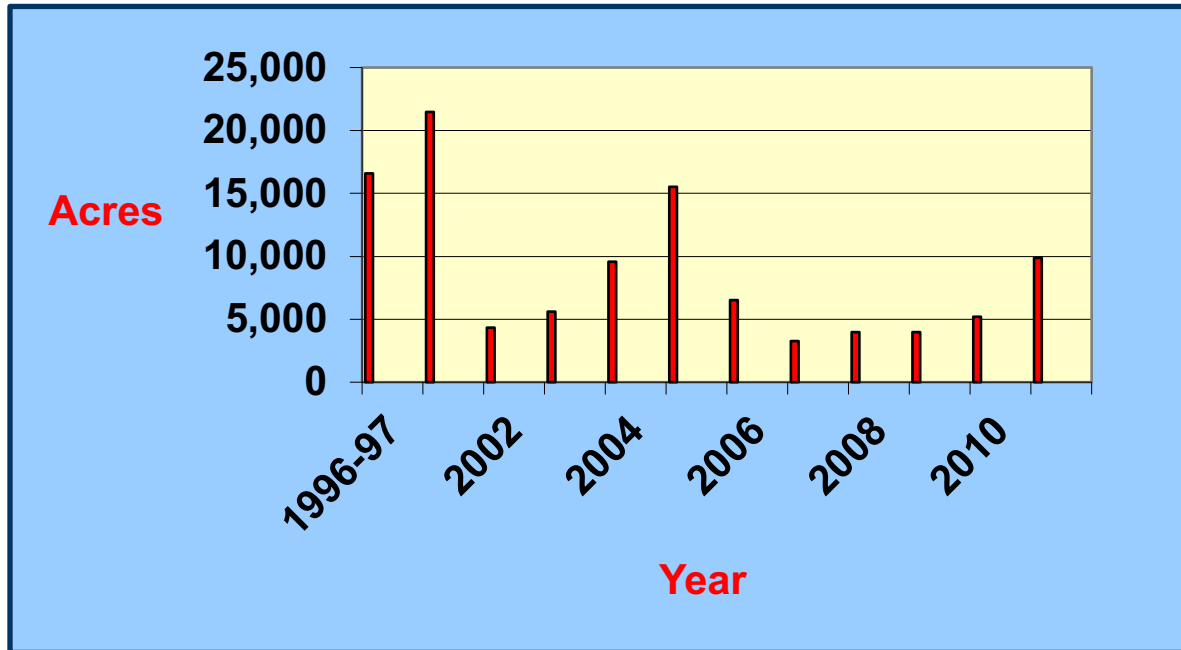


The Land and Resource Management Plan (Grassland Plan) for the Thunder Basin National Grassland, Wyoming was amended to better provide for the conservation of black-tailed prairie dogs and their habitat, to address private landowner concerns about unwanted prairie dog encroachment onto private lands within and adjacent to the TBNG boundaries, and to facilitate future recovery of endangered black-footed ferrets. Implementation has included:

- Prescribed burning
- Mowing
- Temporary fence
- Permanent vegetative buffer fence
- Dusting
- Larger shooting closure
- No shooting portal signs installed
- Translocation
- Rodenticide application
- Raptor perch construction

MAPPING

All active prairie dog colonies on Thunder Basin NG are mapped annually. Currently, the population for 2011 is 9,857 acres, with 5,600 of those acres within the 3.63.



BURNING

Prescribed fire and grazing were identified in the TBGA AMP EIS as a tool that could be used to achieve desired conditions for vegetative resources. The purpose of burning is to provide diverse and quality grassland habitat across the geographic area at levels that, in combination with habitat on adjoining lands, helps support stable or increasing populations of plover and prairie dogs and other wildlife with similar habitat needs. Burning was a tool identified to move vegetation resources toward desired conditions, benefiting wildlife habitat. Guidelines in the LRMP direct management to schedule prescribed fire activities at intervals designed to improve or maintain habitats of desired plant and animal species.

Acres completed:

- 2009 – 2,193 acres
- 2010 – 2,500 acres
- 2011 – 4,000 acres

Cost: \$12/acre

TRANSLOCATION

Translocation is a tool identified to provide for the conservation of black-tailed prairie dogs and their habitat, and to address private landowner concerns about unwanted prairie dog encroachment onto private lands within and adjacent to the TBNG boundaries.

Acres Completed/Number of Prairie Dogs Moved:

- 2010 – 550 prairie dogs (120 acres)
- 2011 – 349 prairie dogs (166 acres)

Cost:

- 2010 - \$375/acre
- 2011 - \$210/acre

MOWING

Mowing was completed for translocation preparation to encourage prairie dogs to stay where they have been moved to.

- 2010 – 12 acres
- 2011 – 40 acres

DUSTING

We applied Delta Dust to prevent plague transmission across Grassland, and to colonies within 1 mile of residences that have expressed concerns. It is worth noting that all of the Delta Dust for 2011 was either donated by the Bayer Corporation or purchased by WWF.

Acres Completed:

- 2010 – 132 acres
- 2011 – 1,997 acres (43,140 burrows)

Cost:

- 2011 - \$9.51/acre

SIGNING

We constructed wood portal type signs at every major road entrance into shooting closure to inform public of where the shooting closure was located. We are continuing to put in carsonites on every two-track that enters the shooting closure area, and 3.63.

Signs Installed:

- 2010 – 4 signs
- 2011 – 8 wooden portal signs, 30 carsonite signs.

Cost: \$16,000

BUFFER FENCE

Constructed approximately 150 acres of permanent fence in 2010 around trapping site to create a vegetative buffer and prevent future re-colonization by prairie dogs. The Wyoming State Forestry Honor Farm built the majority of the fence at no cost to the USFS.

Acres Fenced:

- 2010 – 150 acres

Cost: \$15,000

RODENTICIDE APPLICATION

Completed to address the issue of human health and safety concerns. We applied zinc phosphide oat bait on approximately 100 acres of previously trapped site.

Acres Poisoned:

- 2010 – 100 acres
- 2011 – 536 acres

Cost: \$55.97/acre

SHOOTING CLOSURE EXPANSION

2010 - Expands shooting closure from 72,500 acres to 100,460 acres.

RAPTOR PERCHES

We constructed raptor perches to help encourage natural predation on prairie dog colonies that were along private land boundaries to help provide some control.

Perches Installed:

- 2011 – 2 perches

Cost: \$2,000