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Comments: The black-footed ferret (*Mustela nigripes*), also known as the American polecat or prairie dog hunter, is a species of mustelid native to central North America. It is listed as endangered by the IUCN, because of its very small and restricted populations. The species declined throughout the 20th century, primarily as a result of decreases in prairie dog populations and sylvatic plague. It was declared extinct in 1979 until Lucille Hogg's dog brought a dead black-footed ferret to her door in Meeteetse, Wyoming, in 1981. That remnant population of a few dozen ferrets lasted there until the animals were considered extinct in the wild in 1987. However, a captive-breeding program launched by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service resulted in its reintroduction into eight western US states, Canada, and Mexico from 1991 to 2009. Now, over 1,000 mature, wild-born individuals are in the wild across 18 populations, with five self-sustaining populations in South Dakota, Arizona, and Wyoming.

Black footed Ferrets are one of the most endangered mammals in the world, and their diet consists almost entirely of prairie dogs. They NEED prairie dogs to survive and thrive!

LET ME REPEAT THAT FOR THE SLOW PEOPLE. IF YOU REMOVE THE PRAIRIE DOGS THE BLACK FOOTED FERRET WILL DIE.