

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/9/2020 12:01:55 PM

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Comments: As a biologist and environmental educator, I emphatically support the continuation of protections on prairie dogs, black-footed ferrets and their habitat in Thunder Basin. The continuation of protection not only preserves the habitat and both species, but benefits dozens and dozens of species that use the valuable habitat created by prairie dogs. Wyoming provides ample recreational opportunities for people in many other ways than the unnecessary killing of prairie dogs. Prairie dogs are not a nuisance species, but a keystone species that are fundamental to the health of the prairie.

Black-footed ferret recovery is so important to this iconic species that represents the value of the endangered species act. Each recovery area is precious and vital. I have witnessed first hand the many times that adults and children have been delighted to learn the story of this species recovery while coming nose to nose with our nature center's live education black-footed ferret. We tell the story of the dedication and commitment of literally thousands of people to preserve and protect this fascinating animal and its habitat for the future. It gives people hope to know that good conservation decisions work to benefit both people and the environment.

The few who might take pleasure in shooting prairie dogs will have opportunities supplied elsewhere , by private land owners and public lands that are not a part of the black-footed ferret recovery program. Please choose to continue to protect this extremely important public land and the species it protects for the sake of the many, many more citizens who enjoy other forms of recreation that do no harm to the environment.

Please make the choice that will preserve the legacy of good management and the efforts to preserve North Americas most endangered mammal.