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Comments: I write to oppose the plan to kill prairie dogs on National Forest lands. Prairie dogs are a keystone species, providing homes and food to dozens of other species. They must not be poisoned, shot or prevented from accessing their native habitats either on or off National Grasslands. Rather than removing these animals, they should be restored to their historic density and range.

Instead, non-native livestock should be removed from the Thunder Basin if they cannot coexist with native, keystone species such as prairie dogs. Instead, livestock could and should be replaced with free-roaming bison which would also improve the ecosystem.

The only management of prairie dogs that should occur should be relocating them to repopulate areas where the populations are low and non-existent to build up the populations in those areas. As well, dusting for fleas to avoid the plague, which can devastate prairie dog colonies, should also be permitted.

Finally, the Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction Area should be fully restored to allow for reintroduction of this species on the Thunder Basin.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comments.