



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-ON

AUG 26 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS,
CHIEFS, OPERATIONS DIVISIONS

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding for Conservation of the Black-tailed Prairie Dog

1. On 30 May 2003, Les Brownlee, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA-CW), signed the subject Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Enclosure 1) being circulated for multiple agencies signature by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Included are copies of the signature pages for the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Acting ASA-CW. Other agencies signature pages are not available at this time.
2. The purpose of the MOU is to enhance cooperation among involved Federal agencies for the conservation and management of black-tailed prairie dogs and their habitat. The black-tailed prairie dog, native to the Great Plains area, is a candidate species for listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Federal agencies can play a major role in the conservation of the black-tailed prairie dog through enhanced conservation activities on public lands. The MOU is a proactive approach to the conservation and management of the black-tailed prairie dog. Also, in addition to the MOU is a map (Enclosure 2) that depicts the range of the black-tailed prairie dog and may be used as a guide for determining potentially involved Corps projects. Parts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern, Northwestern, and South Pacific Divisions are included in the prairie-dog range depicted on the map.
3. Please ensure broad dissemination of this MOU among your staff. This memo, MOU, and map will be posted on the NRM Gateway.
4. The HQUSACE proponent regarding this matter is Ms. Denise White, Natural Resources Management Branch, Operations Division, and may be reached at (202) 761-4655.

FOR THE COMMANDER

2 Encls


MICHAEL B. WHITE
Chief, Operations Division
Directorate of Civil Works

CECW-ON

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding for Conservation of the Black-tailed Prairie Dog

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

among

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service,
Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service, and

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Bureau of Land Management,
Fish and Wildlife Service,
Geological Survey, and
National Park Service

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

U.S. Air Force, and
U.S. Army

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to enhance cooperation among involved federal agencies for the conservation and management of black-tailed prairie dogs (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) and their habitat. Black-tailed prairie dogs are an obligate species of the short to mid-grass prairie ecosystem, and require large tracts of grasslands for their survival and viability. Black-tailed prairie dogs historically occurred in at least 11 states, one Canadian province, and two Mexican states. The number of black-tailed prairie dog colonies has been greatly reduced. Habitat conversion and fragmentation, inadequate protection through regulatory mechanisms, sylvatic plague outbreaks, and control have all been identified as factors contributing to the decline of the species. On February 4, 2000, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service found that this species warrants listing under the Endangered Species Act, but that the action was deferred for the time being due to other listing priorities.

The long-term trend in black-tailed prairie dog abundance is downward throughout their historic range. The U.S. Forest Service, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army (Corps of Engineers, Civil Works), and U.S. Geological Survey agree that cooperative efforts will enhance the conservation and management of the Nation's short-grass and mid-grass prairie and desert grassland ecosystems for the benefit of the black-tailed prairie dog and other obligate and associated species of these ecosystems.

II. Objectives

The signatories agree that the black-tailed prairie dog is an important native component of the short and mid-grass prairie and desert grassland ecosystems, and serves as a key indicator of the overall health of these ecosystems. Providing for the continued presence and abundance of black-tailed prairie dogs reflects the signatories' commitment to maintaining native components and ecological processes, to the extent practicable in accordance with agency missions and authorities, of the short and mid-grass prairie and desert grassland ecosystems so that the many uses and values of these lands are sustained. Consistent with the missions and legal obligations of the signatories, specific objectives are:

- III. Maintain and increase, where appropriate, the distribution and abundance of black-tailed prairie dogs, with a special emphasis on large prairie dog colony complexes.
- IV. Develop and implement strategies to maintain, improve, and conserve habitat suitable for black-tailed prairie dogs.
- V. Implement land management actions to protect, improve, and conserve short and mid-grass prairie and desert grassland habitats.
4. Strengthen federal inter-agency cooperation on behalf of black-tailed prairie dog conservation and management.
5. Develop partnerships with Tribes, States, communities, industry, private landowners, organizations, and others to accomplish cooperatively the purpose and objectives of this MOU.

III. Actions

The signatories of this MOU will, to the extent allowed by existing authorities and appropriations and consistent with their missions:

1. Cooperate to compile, analyze, and share their existing data on black-tailed prairie dog habitat, including occupied area, complex composition, and trends.
2. Cooperate in developing and implementing land and regulatory management actions to achieve the black-tailed prairie dog objectives given above, consistent with all applicable legal requirements.
3. Coordinate in developing cooperative, incentive-based approaches for privately owned lands to achieve the black-tailed prairie dog objectives given above.
4. Cooperate on the development of a public education program to inform the public and agency personnel of the importance of conserving prairie dogs and the ecosystems upon which they depend.
5. Work together to identify and implement needed research through appropriate agencies.
6. Develop cooperative partnerships, as appropriate, with other federal, tribal, and state managers, private landowners, and other interested parties to achieve the objectives.

IV. Signatory Agreement

1. By signing this MOU, none of the signatories obligate any funds or imply fiscal responsibility. Any action involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this instrument will be handled in accordance with applicable regulations and procedures including those for Government procurement and printing. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements that shall be made in writing by representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This instrument does not provide such authority.
2. This instrument in no way restricts signatories from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
3. No part of this instrument shall entitle the signatories to any share or interest other than the right to use and enjoy the same under the existing regulations of the agencies.
4. Modifications within the scope of this instrument shall be made by the issuance of a mutually executed modification prior to any changes being performed.
5. Any party to this MOU may withdraw with a 60-day written notice.
6. The signatories agree to implement the provisions of this MOU to the extent allowed by existing authorities, appropriations, and consistent with their missions. In addition, nothing in this MOU is intended to supercede any laws, regulations or directives by which the signatories must legally abide.

V. Authorities

This MOU is among the signatories under the provisions of the following laws:

National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1-3)
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act [of 1934] (16 U.S.C. 661-667)
Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742 *[et seq.]*)
Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act [of 1960] (16 U.S.C. 528-531)
National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National
Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 (16 U.S.C. 668dd *[et seq.]*)
Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. [1531 *at seq.]*)
Federal Land and Policy Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1737 (a))
National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 *[et seq.]*)
Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1641-48)
Sikes Act, (16 USC §§ 670 *et seq.* (1997)).
National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 (16 U.S.C. 5931-5937)

VI. Approval

We, the undersigned designated officials, do hereby approve this Memorandum of Understanding and it is effective for each agency on the date of its signature, and expires 5 years from the last execution date, at which time it will be subject to review and renewal.

Approved *Steve Williams*
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date 3/17/03

Approved


Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

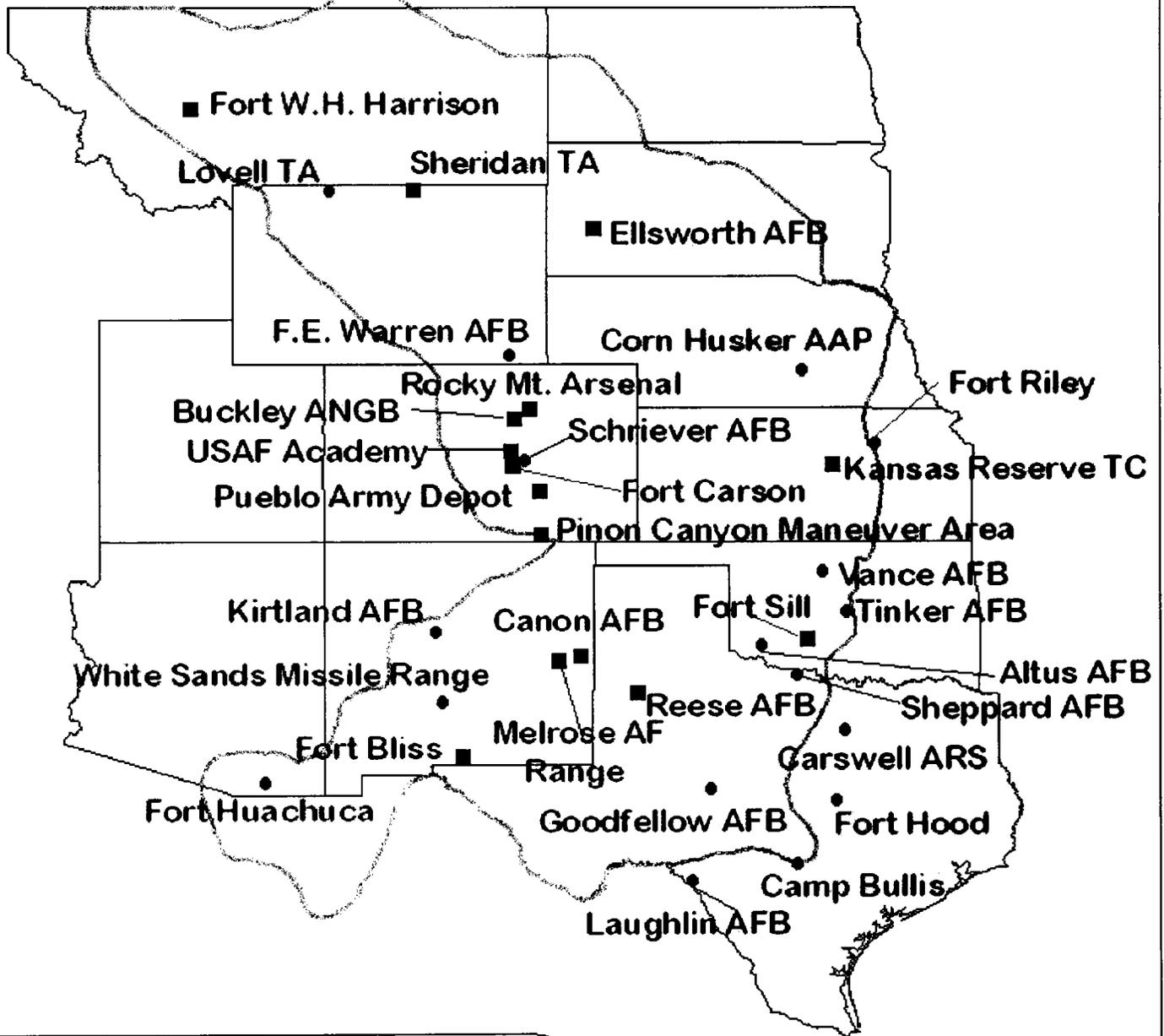
Date

May 30, 2003

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Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Distribution on Department of Defense Installations



● Installations Without Known BTPD
■ Installations With Known BTPD
□ Prairie Dog Range
▨ States

