



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services
420 South Garfield Avenue, Suite 400
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5408

RECEIVED

WILDLIFE
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

EXHIBIT 6
DATE 2.8.05
HB 286

January 20, 2005

Interested Parties (see enclosure):

As most of you are aware, the black-tailed prairie dog was removed from the Candidate Species List pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) in August 2004. However, we remain interested in the status of the species, both for its own sake and because of its significance to many other species of concern throughout the short- and mixed-grass prairies. As noted in the 2004 Candidate and Listing Priority Assignment Form, we will reconsider our determination of "not warranted" in the event that new information indicates that threats exist such that the species is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. We may also be involved in legal actions pertaining to the species, e.g., a recent Notice of Intent to Sue from several conservation organizations concerning the recent candidate removal. For all of these reasons, we believe that it is important for all of us to remain aware of the most current information available regarding the species. We will continue to communicate with the Interstate Prairie Dog Conservation Team and other interested parties in our efforts to maintain the best available information about the species.

We are aware that several management plans and/or surveys of occupied habitat have been completed by State wildlife agencies and other parties. Additionally, several research studies by States, universities, and various organizations are ongoing. We encourage continued action on these efforts. We are requesting that you provide us with any new information regarding the black-tailed prairie dog that you may have, on an annual basis, including but not necessarily limited to:

- Recent estimates of occupied habitat in specific locations or statewide, with particular emphasis on population trends.
- Recent estimates of potential habitat.
- Recent documented occurrences of or findings pertaining to sylvatic plague.
- Extent of chemical control (both quantity of toxicant and size of area treated).
- Extent of recreational shooting during the past year.
- Current management and/or regulatory policies.

We will request new information annually each January. You may send this information directly to me at the address of the above letterhead, e-mail me at pete_gober@fws.gov, or telephone me at (605) 224-8693, Extension 24.

Copies of the following documents related to black-tailed prairie dogs, which include information provided by you in response to earlier requests, can be found at our website at: <http://southdakotafieldoffice.fws.gov>.

- Candidate and Listing Priority Assignment Form (2004).
- Federal Register Notice for Finding on a Resubmitted Petition (2004).
- Candidate and Listing Priority Assignment Form (2002).
- Federal Register Notice for Candidate Notice of Review (2002).
- Candidate and Listing Priority Assignment Form (2001).
- Federal Register Notice for Candidate Notice of Review (2001).
- 12-Month Administrative Finding (2000).
- Federal Register Notice of 12-Month Administrative Finding (2000).

Please forward this request to other interested parties. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Pete Gober
Field Supervisor
South Dakota Field Office

Enclosure: Mailing List