

Pre-Meeting Information Needs
Billings, Montana
August 30, 2001

On July 25, 2001, we received a letter from the Field Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Service in Pierre, South Dakota, notifying Federal agencies that they were in the early phases of completing the annual status review for the Black-tailed prairie dog, a species that was determined to be warranted but precluded from listing under the Endangered Species Act in February, 2000. As a result of this status, the FWS is required to complete an annual review to determine if listing is warranted. As part of this review, the BLM State Offices are required to annually provide the FWS through our Washington Office, information on management activities that may assist the FWS in completing this review. The information below will be consolidated and then provided to the FWS by their November 2, 2001 deadline. On August 30, 2001, we would like to assemble as much information as possible, therefore, we would appreciate your assistance in bringing as much of this information as is to the meeting in Billings. In addition, please plan on summarizing the current status of black-tailed prairie dog colony mapping efforts under way in your State and projections on when this work will be completed. The FWS is requesting that the BLM provides the following information regarding black-tailed prairie dog populations of which you are knowledgeable. Useful information would include but would not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Recent estimates of the amount of black-tailed prairie dog occupied habitat in specific areas, as well as the supporting documentation;
- Recent estimates of the amount of black-tailed prairie dog potential habitat, as well as the supporting documentation;
- Extent of any recreational shooting of black-tailed prairie dog populations, especially during the past 12 months;
- Any documented occurrences of sylvatic plague in black-tailed prairie dog populations, especially during the past 12 months;
- Current management and/or regulatory policies regarding the black-tailed prairie dog; and
- Extent (amount of toxicant and size of area affected) of and chemical control of black-tailed prairie dog populations, especially during the past 12 months.