



NO DOGS ALLOWED!

No Dogs Allowed

No Dogs Allowed! is a South Dakota-specific version of the Project WILD activity, *To Zone or Not to Zone*. It uses the re-introduction of the black-footed ferret for a discussion of public land use.

Objectives

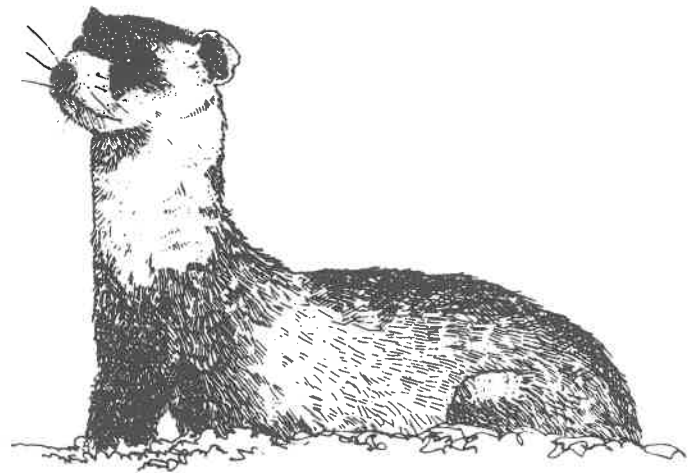
Students will: 1) identify social and ecological considerations where human uses of land conflict with each other and with wildlife habitat needs; and 2) describe the importance of building consensus when re-introducing an endangered species.

Method

Students role-play a public comment meeting pertaining to the re-introduction of the endangered black-footed ferret.

Background

This activity uses a role-play strategy for the study of the issues surrounding the re-introduction of an endangered species. It emphasizes the complexities of decision making where people of different points of view are involved. Land use decisions affecting wildlife have become a familiar issue where wildlife decisions are concerned. The following is an imaginary conflict that corresponds to some real life dilemmas. This information should be provided to students as background information.



The major purpose of this activity is for students to understand the importance, as well as some of the complexities, of endangered specie re-introduction, land-use planning, and public decision making.

Materials

Participants will need: copies of the role descriptions; props for role-play (optional); copies of *Natural Source* fact sheets - *Black-footed Ferret*, *Prairie Dog*, and *South Dakota Badlands*; copies of the map in Figure 1, and a room for setting up the meeting.

Procedure

- 1. Provide the students with copies of the black-footed ferret, prairie dog, and Badlands fact sheets from *The Natural Source*, plus the background

information concerning this hypothetical land use dilemma.

- 2. Sixteen students will be assigned (or volunteer) for roles as wildlife managers, local residents, concerned citizens and organization representatives--with each receiving a card describing his or her situation. The rest of the students will have roles as news reporters, outside experts, concerned citizens, etc. These students may ask questions of people commenting at the meeting. As an expansion of the lesson, they can be required to: write letters to the editor or one of the wildlife managers in support of a particular point of view; write news articles about the hearing or personal impact stories describing the potential consequences for local landholders, business people, visitors, etc.; or prepare technical reports as researchers, etc. Every student should have a role either as one of the 16 people preparing presentations at the meeting or as the active observers who prepare verbal or written questions, reports or news articles.
- 3. To set the stage for the simulation, have each of the 16 participants read their personal data cards. The other students should select their role: they do not need personal data cards, although they may write their own. In a basic version of this activity, students will take a short period of time to prepare for the meeting. In the expanded version, students should be given homework time to prepare their presentations either as members of the inquiry or questions, letters to the editor and news stories as the public observers. Students should be encouraged to improvise in developing their presentations and questions.
- 4. The day (or days) of the meeting, the chairperson of the group is to facilitate the meeting. It is up to him or her to maintain order. All participants must be recognized by the chairperson before they speak. After all those presenting prepared testimony have spoken and have been questioned - the reporters, researchers and concerned citizens will be asked to read their

statements. This is an excellent way to start the final day of the simulation. After all presentations, questions and statements, the wildlife managers will make their decisions and give reasons. Then, the whole group will vote on whether or not the black-footed ferret should be reintroduced in the National Park. Comparisons will be made between the decisions made by the wildlife managers and the outcome of a vote by the concerned citizens.

- 5. Suggested time for this activity.
Condensed Version: Day 1: Read the background information and select roles (20 minutes); prepare presentations (20 minutes); conduct meeting (40 minutes); discuss results and vote. Following the meeting and vote, discuss questions such as the following: What are some things we have learned about resource management decision making?; What factors influence land-use decision making and planning?; What differences and similarities were there between how decisions were made in this activity and what actually happened?; Why are wildlife/resource management decision making and wildlife/resource management planning important for people, wildlife and the environment?
Expanded version: Day 1: Read the background information and select roles (approximately 30-45 minutes) Homework: Prepare presentations. Day 2: Conduct hearing (approximately 30-45 minutes). Day 3: Continue hearing if necessary, and include reading of news items and letters to the editor; vote; discuss results.

Extensions

- Have students identify a wildlife issue in their local area, gather data and develop their own simulation.
- Alter the role descriptions or change roles and repeat the simulation.
- Use copies of a topographic map as a common reference for participants.
- Bring in real experts to add perspective and balance.

- Adapt this activity to a debate format.
- Attend a local wildlife management public meeting.

Evaluation

- Describe wildlife management/ endangered species laws. Identify and describe possible effects and values of these laws. Consider possible positive and negative effects.
- Find out how local zoning laws are passed and how these relate to wildlife management issues.
- Describe how citizens can get their opinions considered in wildlife management decision processes.

Background (For the Simulation)

Once distributed across 12 western states, endangered black-footed ferrets survive today only on experimental release sites and in captivity. The black-footed ferret was federally listed as an endangered species in 1967, and the state of South Dakota listed them as endangered in 1978. This species is almost completely dependent on the prairie dog ecosystem, which has been reduced in size more than 95% since the early 1900's. Black-footed ferrets prey almost exclusively on prairie dogs and live in prairie dog burrows. The demise of the black-footed ferret was likely the result of poison used to kill rodents and agricultural tillage, which together have been very effective at reducing and fragmenting the existing prairie dog ecosystem.

Because of the success of the captive propagation efforts, the next major step for recovering the black-footed ferret is to re-establish this species in the wild. The information from conducting this proposed experimental release would contribute to the national recovery effort for this endangered species, such as improved black-footed ferret re-introductions at other sites. The re-introduction program has a goal of establishing 10 self-sustaining populations across the black-footed ferret's historical range. An interagency agreement to conduct an environmental analysis and to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on black-footed ferret re-introduction into the Conata Basin of South West South Dakota was signed by three federal agencies: the National Park Service; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the U.S. Forest Service. The Conata Basin/Badlands Area is being considered as a potential re-introduction area because of its history as black-footed ferret habitat, its current and project acreage of black-tailed prairie dog colonies, the lack of historical documentation of the occurrence of plague in the prairie dog population, and a land base that is predominately publicly owned. This public meeting is the first in a series to provide a venue for interested citizens to share their views with wildlife managers tasked with the re-introduction effort.

Selected Resources For Teachers

- Black-footed Ferret*, by Denise Casey, 1985. Dodd, Mead and Company. New York, NY.
Black-footed Ferret, a video by the National Audubon Society, 666 Pennsylvania Ave SE, Washington, DC. 20003
Black-footed Ferret, Understanding an Endangered Species, Curriculum for Grades 4 - 8, 1996. Badlands National Park, Interior, SD

Written by:

Chris Niewold, Education Specialist Badlands National Park, Box 6, Interior, SD ©1997.

Reviewed by:

Maggie E. Hachmeister, Education Services Coordinator, S.D. Game, Fish and Parks and educators in the "Focus is Ferrets" workshop held June 18 & 19, 1996 in Wall, SD.

Adapted with permission from:

Project WILD 1992, 1987 Western Regional Environmental Education Council, Inc.

Publication of the *No Dogs Allowed* fact sheet was funded by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Division of Wildlife, Pierre, SD.

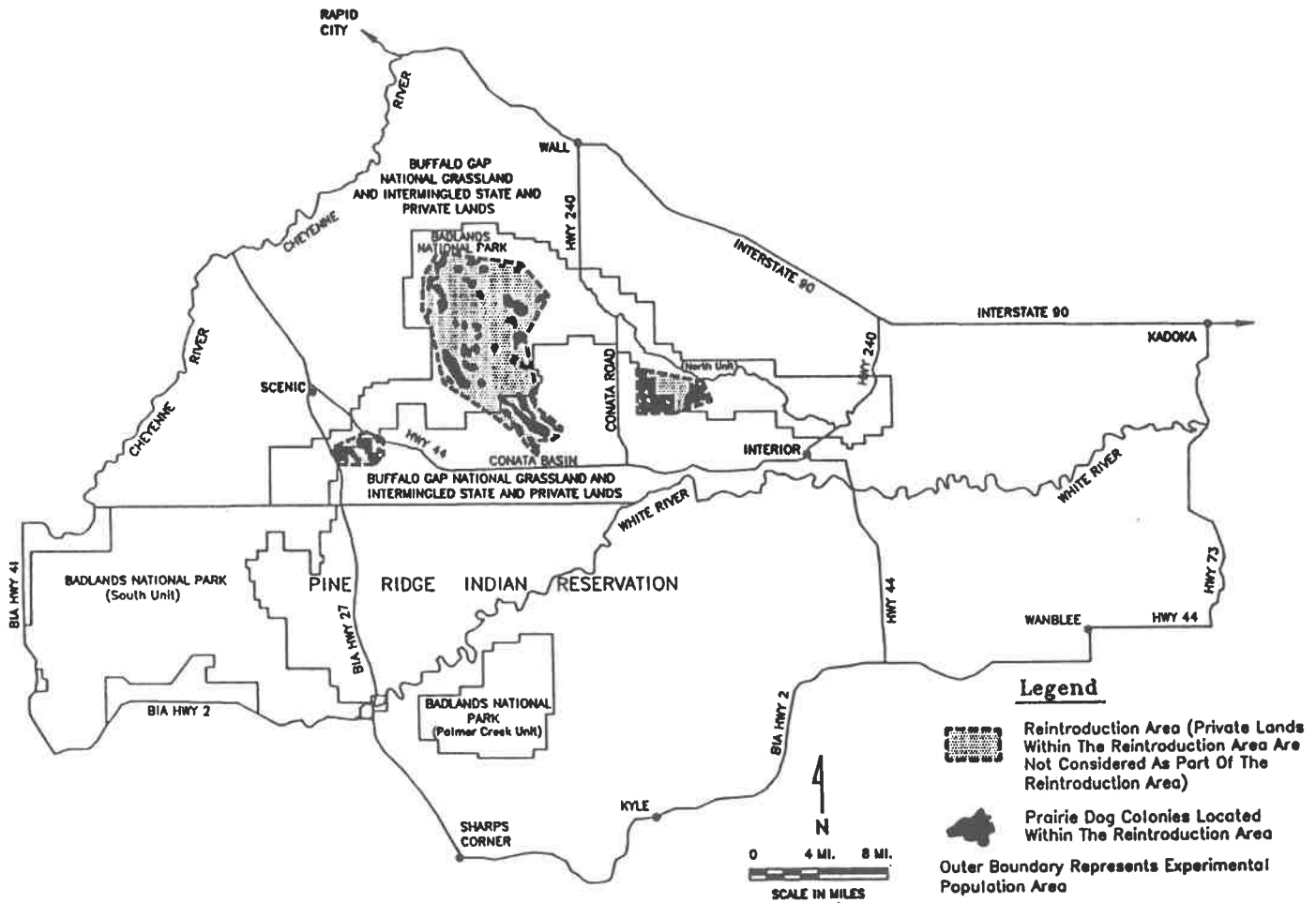


Figure 1. Proposed Black-footed Ferret Re-introduction Area in Badlands National Park.

Personal Data Cards

<p>Farm Bureau: You are the Director of State Affairs for the Farm Bureau. The Farm Bureau believes black-footed ferrets should not be re-introduced at all. Your concern is for the landowner's private property rights and their protection from penalties under the Endangered Species Act. You also feel the USFWS has been slow in cooperating with local landowners in negotiating agreements related to the re-introduction.</p>	<p>United States Fish and Wildlife Service: You are a biologist working for the USFWS on the black-footed ferret recovery program. The USFWS is the leading agency in the re-introduction of endangered species, i.e., the black-footed ferret. They are working cooperatively with the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the State to try and re-introduce endangered black-footed ferrets. There are already over 200 adult ferrets in captivity. The next step is re-introduction into the wild.</p>
<p>National Motorcyclists Association: You are a 30-year-old member of the NMA and an avid recreational ATV rider. You have been riding your ATV in the National Grasslands for the past five years. As Vice-president of the NMA chapter in your area, it is your job to represent their interests. The NMA feels the ferrets should be released in the National Park first; then once that population is established they can start releasing the ferrets on the Grasslands. Use of ATVs on the Grasslands is moderate and probably won't increase and riders usually avoid prairie dog towns for obvious reasons. You feel there is no reason to not allow ATV recreationalists the use of the Grasslands if they use already established roads, tracks, and trails.</p>	<p>Area Resident, Western South Dakota: You strongly oppose the re-introduction because of the cost of the experiment. You believe that this is a frivolous way to spend money when the National Debt is out of control. You also remember the near dust bowl year of 1981 when dust coming off of prairie dog towns resembled the smoke from a prairie fire. You believe that if the black-footed ferret is re-introduced that it will cause an explosive growth in the number of prairie dogs in the area and will contribute to the already tough economic hardships of area ranchers. You believe that because the population could not survive in the wild in the 1980's that it should only be in zoos.</p>

<p>The Fund for Animals: You are an out-of-town lawyer working for the Fund. You represent their interests. The local people dislike you for being an outsider, a hot shot lawyer, and a so called "animal rightist." The Fund supports the black-footed ferret re-introduction. The Fund believes public land ranchers must assume certain risks that may not be present on private lands if they want to continue to use federal lands. The ranchers already get plenty of subsidies, including below cost grazing fees, and inexpensive predator control services. Should they be unwilling to share public land and assume certain risks, then they shouldn't be using public lands.</p>	<p>U.S. Forest Service Biologist: You are a biologist with oversight of the National Grasslands bordering the black-footed ferret re-introduction area. Re-introductions of the ferrets will occur on suitable sites on the National Grasslands after the re-introductions on the National Park lands have been successful. Prairie dog management strategies on the National Grasslands include managing the size and distribution of prairie dog towns, hunting of prairie dogs by sportsmen, and providing areas on the grasslands where prairie dog towns are minimally managed. Your agency is one of the federal agencies assigned to implement programs under the Endangered Species Act.</p>
<p>State Game, Fish and Parks Department: You are a non-game biologist working for the state. The state Game, Fish and Parks Department is one of the cooperating agencies involved in the black-footed ferret re-introduction. You are concerned with keeping the public informed about the re-introduction and working with the ranchers to make the introduction run smoother. The department assists the National Park Service by providing person power and any equipment they can to help the re-introduction.</p>	<p>Midwest University Professor: You have been bringing students to the Badlands National Park for the past 10 years to study the prairie environment. You believe the wilderness area in the Badlands National Park is one of the best remaining places to study the ecological relationships in a mixed grass prairie in America. You use the area as an outdoor classroom to build upon classroom theory and discussion. You believe that the re-establishment of the black-footed ferret is one small step toward re-establishing the prairie ecosystem to what it was before white settlement in the late 1800's.</p>
<p>Local Minister (Audience): You are the pastor of a local religious organization. You preach to your congregation that man is the caretaker of fellow creatures. You have decided to attend the public meeting because you feel that you need to practice what you preach. You have encouraged the members of your congregation to also attend so that they can become involved in this public process.</p>	<p>United Farmwives Organization: You are a member of the area chapter of United Farmwives. You feel that ferrets shouldn't be re-introduced at all because of the cost of the program and because private property rights may be diminished. You are also worried about the loss of vegetation due to prairie dogs because we won't be able to control prairie dogs as we have in the past if the ferrets are re-introduced</p>
<p>National Park Service: You are the Chief of Resource Management in the Badlands National Park. Since the Badlands National Park is a federal agency it must comply with the <u>Endangered Species Act</u> which states, "all federal agencies shall . . . utilize their authorities in furtherance of the purposes of the Act by carrying out programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species . . ." If your Park is chosen as a site for the re-introduction of the endangered black-footed ferret, it will give you national recognition and coverage, potentially increasing tourism and funding for future projects for your park.</p>	<p>Private Non-local Citizen from New York City: You are adamant that the black-footed ferret be re-introduced into the Badlands and surrounding National Grasslands area. Even though you do not live in South Dakota and have no plans to travel there you believe that as an American citizen the land belongs to you. You also believe that we have sacrificed our environment for the sake of short term profits and if our forefathers would have considered the future we would still have viable populations of many of the extinct and endangered species today. You believe that it is your generation's responsibility to repair the damage that has been done.</p>

<p>Concerned Citizen (Audience): You are a member of several environmental groups. You live in the local area but have no ties to ranching and farming. You make your living as an artist and feel very deeply about preserving nature for inspirational purposes. You believe that if we lose nature you will lose your soul. You are distressed that there is even a controversy surrounding the re-introduction.</p>	<p>Television Reporter (Audience): You are the weekend anchor for the local TV station assigned to this week night meeting. You need to get sound bites for the next evening's broadcast and information to write 20 seconds of copy. You are a second generation resident of the area whose family has a ranching and farming background. You agree somewhat with the view that the ferret should not be re-introduced.</p>
<p>Private Local Rancher (adjacent landowner, leaser): You are opposed to the re-introduction of the black-footed ferret anywhere in the Conata Basin. You believe that your rights as a private land owner will be taken from you if an endangered species is allowed to be re-introduced into the area. You believe that because your family homesteaded this area in the early 1900's that you should have more say as to management decisions on local land than someone in New York.</p>	<p>County Commissioner: You are the commissioner for one of the counties adjacent to the proposed re-introduction area. Your county has officially declared their county a "Ferret Free Zone." You oppose any re-introduction efforts in lands surrounding your county because you believe that the ferrets will eventually migrate onto your county's land and you will be faced with the federal regulations related to an endangered species. Your county aggressively pursues the management of prairie dogs.</p>
<p>Newspaper Reporter (Audience): You are a beat reporter assigned to cover this open public hearing. You have been living in the area for several years so you have become familiar with the controversy surrounding the issue of ferret re-introduction. You anticipate that the meeting could generate some anger and therefore might make for an interesting story for the next day's newspaper. You decide to ask pointed questions about costs associated with the re-introduction and future plans for the program. Personally you could not care less about whether or not the ferret gets re-introduced.</p>	<p>President-Western South Dakota Multiple Use Coalition: You represent a coalition of land users of the Black Hills and western South Dakota. The groups you represent include: grazing association; four-wheelers group; pistol and gun club; trapping association; snowmobile association; an irrigation district; and a mining association. Your coalition has passed a resolution that states that your association does not support the re-introduction. Your coalition believes that the rights of multiple users will be taken away by re-introducing an endangered species on public lands.</p>
<p>Congressional Aide (Audience): You are here as the representative of one of the state's senators. You officially have no opinion on the decision to re-introduce the black-footed ferret. You are here merely in an information gathering capacity to assist your senator with gauging the reaction of his constituents on this topic. If pressed, you will repeat your senator's current view that he does not support the re-introduction because he is concerned about disrupting the current ecology.</p>	<p>Local entrepreneur (Audience): You run a local business that takes vacationers on horseback trips through the Badlands Wilderness and surrounding area. Most of your clientele want to see buffalo and wolves like they saw on the movie, "Dances with Wolves." They invariably ask you why there aren't wolves here and where have all the buffalo gone. You are attending this meeting because you want to find out if there is some potential to see the ferret in the wild and use this as a marketing tool to attract rich environmental types to your business.</p>
<p>Cow and Hog Operators and Producers Society: You are a private property owner, professional livestock operator, Director of the Stock Growers Assoc. , and are very involved in other organizations. As a representative of the Cow and Hog Operators and Producers Society, you feel black-footed ferrets should not be re-introduced at all. You are a private property owner, with property in and out of the experimental population area. You are not ready to experience the loss of \$60 - \$70,000 in disposable income and property value each year for a group of federal laws and regulations that promote the existence of animals over your grandchildren, not to mention the custom and culture of your state.</p>	<p>Private Landowner: As a private landowner next to the National Park and the Grasslands, you would be directly affected by this re-introduction because your land is in the experimental area. You believe the basic elements are in this area for possible successful re-introduction of black-footed ferrets. You feel that rights of citizens must be protected, but area citizens also have a responsibility to protect and respect the demands of the ferret introduction program. You believe with the involvement and consideration of all concerned parties, the re-introduction of black-footed ferrets can occur without infringing on anyone. You support the ferrets being re-introduced.</p>