

**Prairie Dog Management Annual Public Meeting
Questions and Answers
Feb. 10, 2021**

Q: Rob when will the fencing along 63rd and Prospect be completed

A: We'll have Rob answer that in this Q&A after his presentation.

Rob Alexander Reply: Shooting for the end of February

Q: How much did the damage to the County's PD control equipment end up costing the County? Will it make the County's insurance rates go up?

A: It was less than anticipated, about \$24,000 and it will not make our insurance rates go up. We were able to repair most of the damaged equipment.

Q: The Heirshfield property is largely becoming dirt as the large population of prairie dogs have eaten most of the grass. I see the soil being blown away on windy days. Would you tell us the schedule in place to bring the population down to zero as intended for this property?

A: We will have Rob answer that after his presentation.

Rob Alexander Reply: We anticipate removal on Hirschfeld starting in 2020.

Q: What Rob is showing clearly shows how you have to stay on top of areas to keep them clear of prairie dogs. Doesn't the March-June moratorium cause us to lose ground and cost the county and tenants more money to reclear areas?

A: You are correct, you have to stay on top of cleared properties. Our partnerships with our tenants where cleared areas can be kept clear through the moratorium is helping with that.

Q: We are greatly appreciative of the efforts here over the last two years. To be clear, there are still PDs in numbers in currently described cleared areas so I suspect there will be a noticeable return after this season. So the questions is, will you be back to further the process until you can assure that there is not a return for multiple years.

A: live answered

Q: Would like a see a design for an effective barrier. Any concerns with effects on movements on other species.

A: We can share our design with you. Yes, we are concerned with the movement of other species so we try to put these barriers up only where there is private property near open space.

The chicken wire barriers we construct are pretty effective. Not perfect, effectiveness depends on population density.

Q: bobcat, right?

A: Right.

Q: Susan's slide with "plague mitigation." Were there active measures to mitigate, or did population recover naturally?

A: We have been very active with plague mitigation including dusting burrows to reduce the flea population and using the Sylvatic Plague Vaccine (SPV) on our large HCAs.

Q: Do you have and monitor for a maximum carrying capacity for number of PD per acre? What is that? What do you plan to do if the number of PD's exceed that capacity

A: We don't have an upper limit of prairie dogs per acre. Our target is 25-30% maximum occupied acres of prairie dogs on our HCAs. Our plan allows us to manage prairie dogs on HCAs and MOAs, although as you have heard, we rarely have used that.

Q: Also, what do you plan to do control PD migration off of these sites

A: On some of our HCAs and MOAs we have installed barriers to mitigate this.

Q: Are there any plans for a barrier between the ERTL Property and Heatherwood subdivision along Kincross Drive?

A: That is City of Boulder open space or private property with a conservation easement, thus BCPOS will not work on this area

Q: Approximately how much per acre does it cost to mitigate for plague (e.g., dusting).

A: We don't have an exact number. It is done by staff on foot walking across a colony and treating every burrow, so the major cost is staff time. Lindsey Sterling Crank said the average cost is \$25/acre in the Front Range and BCPOS agrees that is a reasonable, but perhaps on the low end for POS work.

Q: how does one get involved with the Burrowing Owl monitoring program?

A: You can contact our wildlife volunteer coordinator, Michelle Durant at mdurant@bouldercounty.org

Q: With regards to the pilot study at Carolyn Holmberg Preserve, how many acres will the study area be? Will it entail the entire CHP or will it be limited to a certain number of acres?

A: The pilot study will be on a limited number of acres at CHP/RCF. We have not yet determined the scope, so we don't have exact acres.

Q: I watched so many bobcats eat prairie dogs on a colony in Loveland. Almost wiped it out. It was a small colony, 10 ac.

A: Thanks for this insight.

Q: Plague management is typically \$25/acre throughout the prairie dog range.

A: That seems like an accurate cost. Thanks Lindsey.

Q: Do you have an estimated completion timeframe?

A: Which property are you referring to?

Once we get started, it is likely it will take at least 2 years.

Q: Thank you Lindsay, re plague mitigation cost.

A: Yes, thank you Lindsey.

Q: Could barrier fencing design and materials specifications be posted on your site please

A: Yes. We will post this on the website.

Q: How many protected prairie dog acres are in the Boulder County system? How many acres of HCA + MOA? Are those acres scattered throughout the County?

A: About 5000 acres of HCA and about 2000 acres of MOA. HCAs are mostly at Ron Stewart Preserve at Rabbit Mountain in the north and the South County Grasslands in the south. MOAs are scattered throughout the county.

Q: Just a comment... the county hasn't done any clearing on the moa on rock creek by the eagles even when they weren't here, why would you start doing it now?

A: Thanks for your comment, Scott.

Q: I dont know of a lot of communication shared thus far on the OSMP and BCPOS plans in the City's project area and really think that needs to occur so as to not negate conservation goals on adjacent priorities with different goals. Many of the County properties located in the City's projct area are not NPDs.

A: Thanks for your thoughts Lindsey. If you have particular comments on individual properties, please let us know.

Q: Thanks for keeping the adjoining landowners in mind.

A: You are welcome.

Q: Did BC remove prairie dogs from MOAs last year?

A: No, we did not remove any prairie dogs from MOAs last year.

In the history of our removals, we have only removed from MOAs in just a few instances.

Q: I missed the first bit of the presentations. Is this being recorded and will it be available for us to re-listen? Thanks everyone!

A: Yes, this is being recorded. We will post it on our Prairie Dog Management page on our county website so you can watch it.

Q: Are there currently any prairie dogs on the Rainbow Nursery Open Space, an NPD?

A: No, there are no prairie dogs on that property.

Q: the pdogs at Celestial were just pseudo hibernating below ground

A: Thanks for this information.

Q: Can I please be added to a notification list for boulder county pdog meetings? I did not know about this meeting until tonight.

A: Yes, we can be sure you are added to our list.