

Thunder Basin National Grassland Cooperative Working Group

April 13, 2017

Welcome and introductions

Shane Walker, Jennifer Hinkhouse, Raesha Sell, Matt Avery, Jessica Crowder, Matt Dockery, Gail Mahnke, Cheryl, Pat Wade, Joe Budd, Jordan Fisher, Marty Ertman, Michell Huntington, Tony Lehner, Emily Hartinger, Lacey Sloan, Amanda Withroder, Zack Walker, Brad Rogers, Will Rose, Quade S., Andrew Litzel, Hale Redding, Bill Lambert...

Overview (available on Ruckelshaus website) – Jessica Western

Legal foundation of the group

- Joe Budd
 - This group is exempt from FACA
 - FS to other governments, group advice is okay
- Shane Walker
 - USFS lawyers approved charter, are requesting documentation from participants on official letterhead (requests letters by next meeting)
- Is there a way to involve NGOs?
 - Collaborative Learning Sessions
 - Guest speakers
 - Individual conversation outside the meetings
 - Some entity other than a federal agency convenes the meetings

Douglas Ranger District overview – Shane (USFS)

TBNG Land and Resource Management Plan overview – Shane – handout and talk

- Questions
 - When will the plan be revised?
 - Earliest would be 2024 or 2025 on the current schedule

Breakout group mapping exercise: Which areas are most in need of treatment (lethal and/or non-lethal) in the short- and long-term?

Information needs

- Cloud seeding
- Toolbox of control methods
- Expertise to address prairie dog densities
- How to leverage resources for restoration
- Emergency funding for ranchers in trouble
- WGFD re ferrets
- Consequences of lifting shooting ban

- Desired conditions in plan – examine
- Need numbers and densities of p dogs, foxes, and other associated species

Next meeting

- Look at prairie dog data (RI)
- Finish charter (CWG)
- Are ferrets going to be reintroduced on TBNG (WGFD/FWS)
- Lethal and non-lethal methods (Slade)
- Strategy (Shane)
- Grassland plan (time permitting)
- Conservation proposals (conservation groups)
- Restoration areas (Jessica, Joe, Willow)
- Follow-up and update on map exercise