



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

2609 Anderson Avenue
Manhattan, Kansas 66502



In Reply Refer to:
FWS/IR05/IR07

August 23, 2021

Board of Logan County Commissioners
710 West 2nd Street
Oakley, Kansas 67748

Dear Board of Logan County Commissioners,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Kansas Ecological Services Field Office (KSFO), was approached by participating Cooperators in the ongoing Black-footed ferret (BFF) recovery program efforts in Kansas in the fall of 2018. The Cooperators inquired about enrolling other properties (see attached approximations for geographic locations) they owned or operated into the existing Black-Footed Ferret Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement (October 23, 2013). They were looking to expand their participation with the recovery of BFF in Logan County, Kansas.

We assessed the properties with the landowners on June 24-25, 2019, to evaluate the potential for the new properties to advance recovery efforts locally and range wide. Our observations indicated that the potential properties do have basic and fundamental biological components, i.e., prairie dogs, the main source of prey for BFF. It was noted that the new properties could contribute to BFF recovery efforts in Kansas and across the range.

The properties were enrolled into the programmatic safe harbor agreement under the name of the Smoky Hill Safe Harbor Agreement in November of 2019. To date, the sites have not been surveyed for ferrets and there have not been ferrets released on the new sites. However, it is the Cooperators desire to receive Black-footed ferrets on the property to support recovery efforts for the species.

Future plans for the sites could involve ferret releases and surveys, similar to the activities on the Butte Creek Ranch Safe Harbor Agreement, however, introductions will not happen until all participating and non-participating interests and involvement have been discussed, detailed logistics are ready to be implemented and the framework is fiscally supported.

The KSFO desires to continue discussions with the Logan County Commission and to further explore opportunities that can serve all interests. We would like to specifically discuss Service priorities for the recovery of the BFF at the Logan County sites, our ability to implement the necessary actions to serve in the recovery of the BFF, working with the Cooperators and Logan County.

INTERIOR REGION 5 MISSOURI BASIN

KANSAS, MONTANA*, NEBRASKA, NORTH DAKOTA,
SOUTH DAKOTA

*PARTIAL

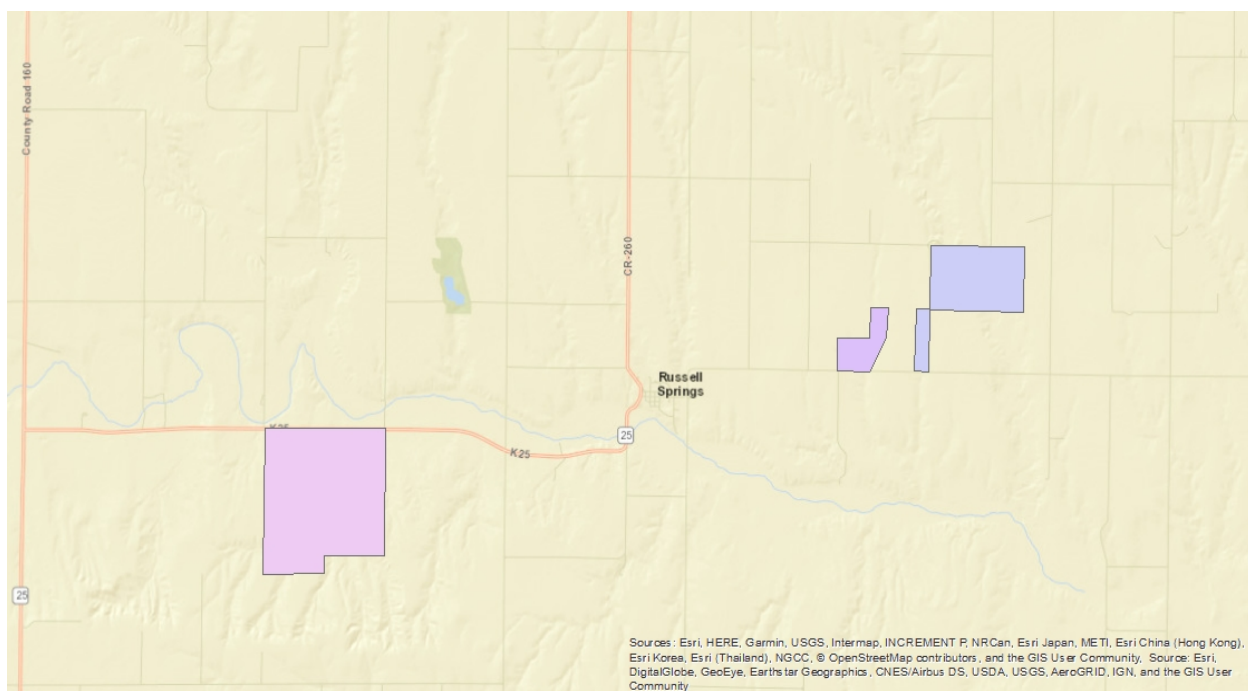
INTERIOR REGION 7 UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN

COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, UTAH, WYOMING

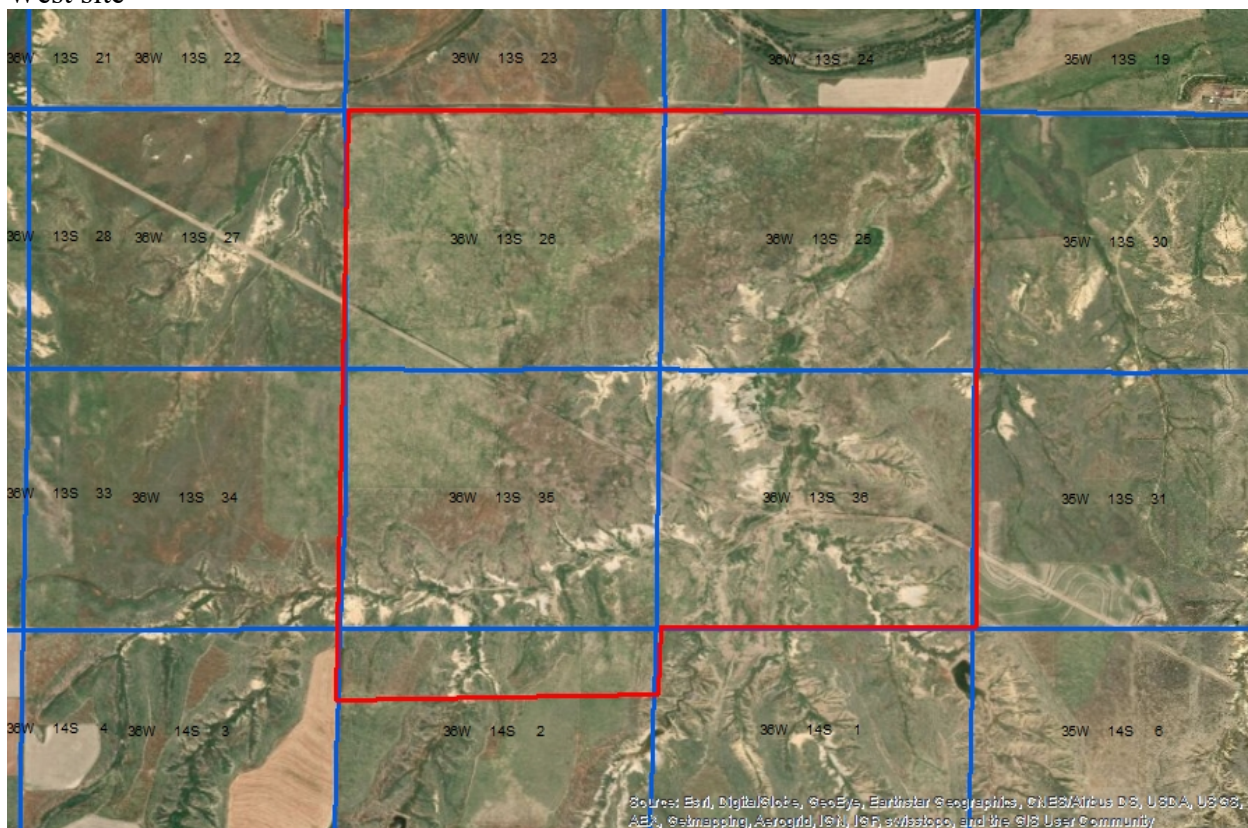
The KSFO requests a meeting with the commissioners in the fall of 2021. We will coordinate the meeting by reaching out via email or letter for proposed dates. In the interim, if you have questions or would like to discuss anything prior to our meeting please feel free to reach out to me at jason_luginbill@fws.gov. Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Jason S. Luginbill
Project Leader



West site



East sites

