

velop a management plan. In return, the landowner agreed to allow prairie dogs to be reintroduced onto the property and managed for 15 years.

Although the landowner liked receiving cost-share and technical assistance, he was concerned that prairie dog numbers would skyrocket and expand to other areas on the ranch or to his neighbor's property. Also he wanted to be free to use his land as he wished in the future. The USFWS offered him a Safe Harbor agreement.

This agreement allows him to manage prairie dog population levels to prevent undesirable expansion. In addition, he will be free to use the land however he wishes after 15 years.



*Wayne County* — This rancher wanted to restore a degraded irrigated pasture but lacked the financial capital to make it happen. He did not have prairie dogs on his property but was interested in learning how his proposed improvements could provide habitat for prairie dogs

that inhabited a neighbor's property. He thought that by including some extra habitat measures for prairie dogs he would be more competitive for 2002 Farm Bill funding; he was right. He negotiated a 15-year Safe Harbor agreement and, with NRCS, developed a project proposal that provides 75% of the improvements' costs.

Like his neighbor in Garfield County, his Safe Harbor agreement allows him to use his property as he wishes during this term even if prairie dogs exist on the property and to incidentally take prairie dogs (for 40 years) in the course of his normal ranching activities. This agreement has given him the peace of mind to proceed with the project to improve the productivity of his land and restore habitat for prairie dogs.

#### ***Working together we can recover and delist the Utah prairie dog!***

Delisting is in everyone's best interest since it would simplify management and ease regulatory burdens for future generations of Utah farmers and ranchers.

Currently the Utah Prairie Dog Recovery Team is revising the recovery plan to recognize the contributions of private lands in species recovery.

#### ***For more information, contact:***

Utah Prairie Dog Outreach Coordinator  
Panorama Resource Conservation & Development Richfield Office  
340 North 600 East  
Richfield, Utah 84701  
435-896-8965 extension 100

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Native Species Biologist  
Keith Day, 435-865-6120

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Utah Prairie Dog Recovery Coordinator  
Elise Boeke, 801-975-3330

USU Extension  
Contact your local county extension agent or Utah's Extension Wildlife Specialist, Terry Messmer at 435-797-3975

NRCS  
Contact your local field office

Farm Services Agency  
Contact your local field office

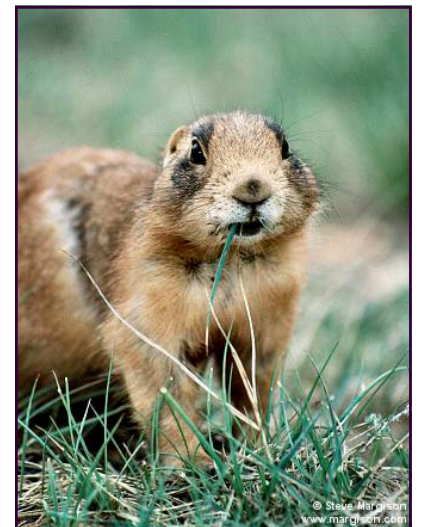
Environmental Defense Ecologists  
Ted Toombs, 303-447-7210

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#### **UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICES**

Terry Messmer Phone: 435-797-3975  
4900 Old Main Hill Fax: 435-797-3796  
Logan, Utah 84322 E-mail: TerryM@ext.usu.edu

## WHAT FARMERS AND RANCHERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT UTAH PRAIRIE DOGS



Utah prairie dog  
Photo by Steve Margison

# Economic incentives can increase agricultural profitability and recover the Utah prairie dog.

## Utah Agriculture & Prairie Dogs

Endangered species is one of the challenges that many Utah producers face. Species conservation can be costly. Many producers fear that the presence of an endangered or threatened species on their property could make it even harder to earn a living.

Over 70% of Utah prairie dogs live on private lands. Many farmers and ranchers view prairie dogs as pests. That doesn't have to be the case.

### Livestock grazing and prairie dogs can be compatible.

Practices like prescribed grazing, brush management, and grass restoration can benefit livestock production while improving habitat for wildlife. Your local County Extension Agent and Natural Resources



Conservation Service (NRCS) technician can help you develop a management plan that uses economic incentives to create a win-win situation on your property.

### Financial incentives to increase agricultural profitability

Many organizations can provide financial and technical assistance for practices that can help you achieve your land management goals while helping to provide habitat for the species (see Table 1).

### Assurance to ease your mind about volunteering to participate.

A Safe Harbor Agreement assures you that your voluntary efforts will not result in added regulations. By signing a Safe Harbor Agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) a landowner can also be assured that if prairie dogs increase on their land as a result of improvements, the future use of the land will not be jeopardized.

The agreement allows the landowner to continue using their land as

Table 1. Sources of funding available.

Action	Funding Source
<i>Management</i>	
brush management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDWR - LIP, ESMF</li> <li>• NRCS - EQIP, WHIP</li> </ul>
burning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USFWS -Private Stewardship Grants, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program</li> </ul>
reseeding	
fencing, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leopold Stewardship Fund</li> </ul>
<i>Incentive Payments</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDWR - LIP</li> <li>• NRCS - EQIP</li> <li>• National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Utah Prairie Dog mitigation funds</li> <li>• Leopold Stewardship Fund</li> <li>• National Wildlife Federation Species Recovery Fund</li> </ul>
<i>Conservation Lease</i> (5-, 10-, or 30-year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRCS -(GRP)</li> </ul>
<i>Conservation Easement</i> (perpetual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDWR - LIP</li> <li>• NRCS - FRRP, GRP</li> </ul>
<i>Technical Assistance and Outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UDWR staff</li> <li>• USFWS Partners for Fish &amp; Wildlife</li> <li>• USU Extension Service</li> </ul>

EQIP = Environmental Quality Incentives Program  
 ESMF = Endangered Species Mitigation Fund  
 GRP = Grasslands Reserve Program  
 FRRP = Farm and Ranchland Protection Program  
 LIP = Landowner Incentive Program  
 UDWR = Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
 USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 WHIP = Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

they wish, even if this destroys prairie dog habitat, as long as they agree to provide the habitat during the term of their agreement. Agreements are typically 15 years in length, with no restrictions on land use after that period.



### Here is what others are doing!

Here are 2 examples of how Safe Harbor agreements have worked for Utah landowners.

*Garfield County* — A local rancher wanted to control rabbitbrush and restore a degraded pasture by seeding native grasses and forbs, but did not have the thousands of dollars required. Because the proposed improvements would also provide habitat for prairie dogs, the USFWS offered to provide money and de-