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FISH & WILDLIFE
ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit Application Form

Expires: September 30, 2007
OMB No. 1018-0094
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MO. DAY YEAR

OCT 23 2006

Return to:

USFWS/Ecological Services
P.O. Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

Type of Activity:

Native Endangered & Threatened Species
Scientific Purposes, Enhancement of Propagation or Survival Permits
(i.e., Recovery Permits) and Interstate Commerce Permits

Complete sections A. OR B. and C. on this page, plus the attached pages of this application. Application will not be considered complete without all sections. See additional instructions on attached pages.

A. Complete if applying as an individual				
1 a Last name <i>pt 139523</i>	1 b First name	1 c Middle name or initial	1 d Suffix	
2 a Street address (line 1) <i>app. 0073640</i>	2 b Street address (line 2)	2 c Street address (line 3)		
3 a City <i>B58 = E</i>	3 b Province	3 c State	3 d Zip code/Postal code	3 e Country
4 Date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	5 Social Security No	6 Occupation		7 a Home telephone number
7 b Work telephone number	7 c Fax number	8 E-mail address		9 County
10 List any business, agency, organizational, or institutional affiliation associated with the wildlife or plants to be covered by this permit (see C 1)				11 Doing business as (dba)

B. Complete if applying as a business, corporation, public agency or institution				
1 a Name of business, agency, or institution <i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>		1 b Doing business as (dba) <i>Ecological Services Field Office</i>		
2 a Street address (line 1) <i>2609 Anderson Ave.</i>		2 b Street address (line 2)		2 c Street address (line 3)
3 a City <i>Manhattan</i>	3 b Province	3 c State <i>KS</i>	3 d Zip code <i>66502</i>	3 e Country <i>USA</i>
4 Tax identification no		5 Describe the type of business, agency, or institution and provide state of incorporation <i>Kansas ES Field Office</i>		
6 a Principal officer (President, director, etc) Last name <i>LeValley</i>		6 b First name <i>Michael</i>		6 c Middle name or initial <i>J.</i>
7 Principal officer title: <i>Field Supervisor</i>		8 Home telephone number <i>[REDACTED]</i>		
9 Work telephone number <i>785-539-3474 x109</i>	10 Fax number <i>785-539-3474</i>	11 E-mail address <i>mike_levalley@fws.gov</i>		12 County <i>Riley</i>

C. All applicants complete	
1	Do you currently have or have you had any Federal Fish and Wildlife permits? (For simplification, all licenses, permits, registrations, and certificates will be referred to as a permit) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, list the number of the most current permit you have held. No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Have you obtained all required State, Federal, or foreign government approval(s) to conduct the activity you propose? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, provide a copy of the approval(s). Have applied <input type="checkbox"/> Not required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Enclose check or money order payable to the U S FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE in the amount of \$100 for a new permit/to renew an existing permit, or \$50 to make substantive amendments to an existing permit [50 CFR 13.11(d)(3)]. The attached pages provide information on who is exempt from paying the fee.
4	Certification: I hereby certify that I have read and am familiar with the regulations contained in Title 50, Part 13, of the Code of Federal Regulations and the other applicable parts in subchapter B of Chapter I of Title 50, and I certify that the information submitted in this application for a permit is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statement herein may subject me to the criminal penalties of 18 U.S.C. 1001
5	Signature (in blue ink) of applicant/person responsible for permit in Section A or B (no photocopied/stamped signatures) <i>Michael J LeValley</i>
6	Date (mm/dd/yyyy): <i>10/19/2006</i>

Option III. New Recovery Permit

A. Identify species and activity:

- 1.a. Black-footed ferret (*Mustela nigripes*); endangered
- 1.b. 40-60 ferrets per year over a 5-year period; animals less than 1 year old with an approximate 50:50 sex ratio
- 1.c. Request authorization to reintroduce ferrets onto private property in Kansas

B. Identify location of the proposed activity:

1. Kansas, Logan County, on the following properties:
The Nature Conservancy: W/2 S14, E/2 S15, E/2 & SW/4 S22, S25, S26, S27, S28, S29; N/2 & SE/4 S32, S33, E/2 S34 (less a tract along W side), & a tract of 14.6 acres in NW/4 S34, W/2 S35, T13S, R33W; W/2 S2, E/2 & S/2 SW/4 S3 & a tract of 42.8 acres in N/2 SW/4 S3, W/2 NW/4 & SW/4 S4, S5, S8, S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S20, S21, E/2 & NW/4 S22, S23 NW/4 S24, NW/4 S25, T14S, R33W.
Larry Haverfield: S21, S25, SW/4 S26, S27, N/2 S28, S33, S34, S35, S36 T14S, R35W; N/2 S1, S2, S3, S9 T15S, R35W.
Gordon Barnhardt: S/2 S1, SE/4 NE/4 & E/2 NE/4 NE/4 & E/2 SE/4 & NW/4 SE/4 & NE/4 SW/4 SE/4 S11, S12, NW/4 S13, NE/4 NE/4 & NE/4 SE/4 NE/4 S14 T15S, R35W.
Maxine Blank: S10, W/2 & NW/4 NE/4 & NW/4 NE/4 NE/4 & NW/4 SW/4 NE/4 S11, NW/4 & W/2 NE/4 & SW/4 SE/4 NE/4 S14, N/2 S15 T15S, R35W
Gene Bertrand: E/2 & SW/4 S27, SW/4 S28, E/2 S29, E/2 NE/4 S31, NW/4 & E/2 S32, S33, S34 T12S, R37W; NW/4 S3, S4, S5, E/2 S7, N/2 S8, S9, S10, S/2 NW/4 & S/2 S11, S14, NE/4 & N/2 SE/4 S15, T13S, R37W
2. See map in Figure 1
3. No aquatic species involved

C. Describe the proposed activity:

- 1.a. Ferrets would be reintroduced by the Service on suitable habitat of each cooperating landowner's prairie dog colonies. Provided habitat conditions remain stable and captive ferrets are available for this project, from 40 to 60 ferrets (with an approximate sex ratio of 50:50) would be released, divided between two or more of the cooperating properties. Captive animals selected for release would be as genetically redundant as possible with the captive population. All released animals would be marked with passive integrated transponder chips (chipped) and

some may be fitted with radio transmitters. Captive-raised ferrets would be released directly into targeted prairie dog complexes at 18 weeks of age or older. Releases may occur in the fall or early winter when juvenile black-footed ferrets in the wild typically become independent, exhibit dispersal behaviors and are more capable of killing their own prey, avoiding predators, and adjusting to environmental conditions.

Release techniques will be patterned after successful procedures used at other reintroduction sites. All captive raised ferrets will be adequately “preconditioned” prior to release in the wild. Preconditioning is the process by which ferrets are allowed to live in large outdoor pens which have prairie dog burrow systems. Ferrets are either born in pens or are transferred to pens between 60 and 90 days of age. Ferrets exposed to “natural” burrow systems and live prey survive in the wild at significantly higher rates than do ferrets released directly from indoor cages.

Released ferrets will be placed in separate burrow systems within contiguous prairie dog colonies. Because all animals may not reach the proper age for release at once, black-footed ferrets may be released sequentially over a period of 3-8 weeks. Translocated ferrets would have minimal holding periods between capture and release. Initial releases will occur in fall or early winter when ferrets are at a suitable age for release.

Because mortality of released animals can be high, multiple releases over successive years will likely be necessary to establish a population. In the future, some ferrets may be radio-collared to determine dispersal and short term survival, but this is not expected to be a primary means of monitoring. Spotlight and/or snow track monitoring may begin as soon as ferrets are released and would continue for several years, anytime from late summer through winter.

- 1.b. Smaller ferret reintroduction sites like these present additional challenges but the Service believes sufficient ferrets exist in captivity and other reintroduction sites to warrant attempts at these smaller prairie dog complexes. This particular reintroduction site offers the significant advantages of being outside the active plague zone and offers the opportunity to work closely and develop cooperative partnerships with willing private landowners. The ferret allocation process along with the annual site evaluations allow the Service sufficient mechanisms to ensure any ferrets delivered to these smaller sites are surplus animals and that if such ferrets are lost entirely, such losses would not compromise the continued existence of ferrets.

The Service and cooperating agencies would continue to seek advice and test alternative release and management strategies and may make adjustments in the ferret reintroduction as warranted. In subsequent years, alternative reintroduction

techniques could be tested as deemed necessary by the Service and cooperating agencies.

- 1.c. Yes, this project may result in injury and/or death to ferrets reintroduced from captivity into the wild. No animals will be removed from the wild. Research from past reintroduction sites estimates approximately 12% loss of individual animals is possible, resulting in the potential death of 5-7 ferrets annually, depending on number of animals in the reintroduced population. Ferret handling techniques will be patterned after other successful reintroduction efforts, especially in South Dakota, and losses are anticipated more from predation and accidental deaths on roadways.
- 1.d. The Service will sign cooperative agreements with each landowner on whose land ferrets will be reintroduced, to specify the requirements of the landowners and the Service, and fully describe the legal ramifications to cooperators and neighbors.
- 1.e. No ferrets will be maintained in captivity, other than the transport of animals to the reintroduction sites, and subsequent possible temporary capture and handling for the purposes of annual monitoring. No similar activities have ever been conducted in Kansas. Disposition of any ferret carcasses will be at the discretion and approval of the National Ferret Recovery Coordinator.

D. Identify the persons who will conduct the proposed activity:

Susan H. Blackford, Anthony K. Ifland, Paul G. Kramos, Michael J. LeValley, Michele D. McNulty, John F. Miesner, Daniel W. Mulhern, Michael. Y. Rich, and Vernon M. Tabor. Each person is a career Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, either in Ecological Services or in Partners for Fish and Wildlife; involved with habitat protection and species recovery. Technical assistance may be provided by other individuals with ferret experience, including personnel from other Service offices, Kansas State University, and NGOs, but will always be in conjunction with activities conducted by and under the supervision of permitted Service personnel.

E. Identify the location of the affected species:

Ferrets used in this experimental reintroduction will all be captive-born animals from the National Ferret Conservation Center in Wellington, Colorado.

F. Identify other permits required:

No other federal, state or local permits are required for the proposed activity.

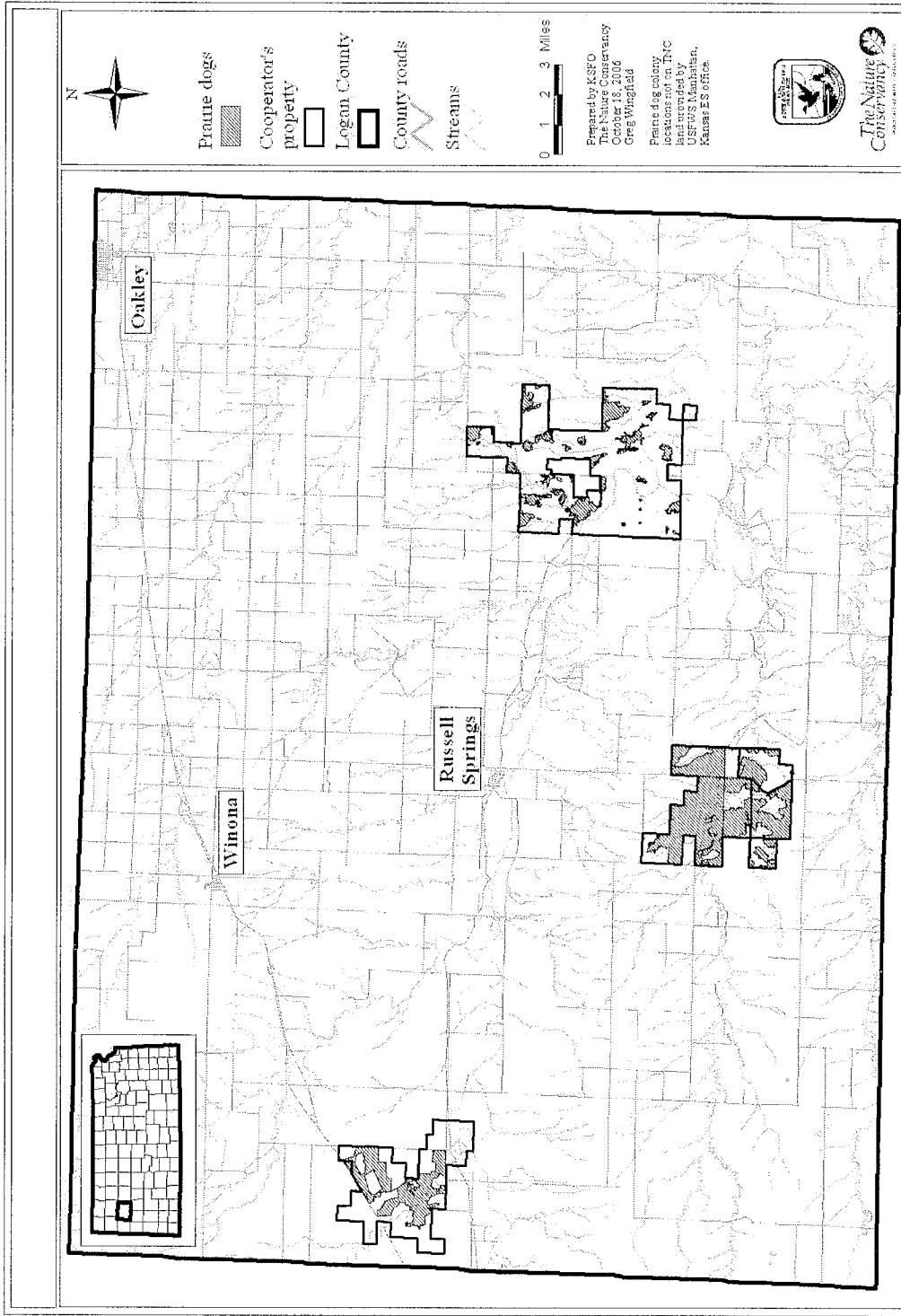


Figure 1. Properties proposed for experimental reintroduction of black-footed ferrets in Logan County, Kansas.