



Prairie Dog Research and Status Updates





Prairie Dog Research and Status Updates

Follow up from March 2017 Meeting:

- Review Great Western Relocation Site, prepare dusting plan, and prepare the site for approval of future relocation projects, and continue to survey and access the Great Western prairie dog habitat and population
- Prepare vegetation survey to research and determine the viability of re-vegetation with prairie dog habitat
- Investigate the current CPW prairie dog vaccination study
- Investigate the possibility of future relocation sites
- Develop recommendation on possible increase of penalties for prairie dog policy violations
- Evaluate pressurized exhaust as a method of prairie dog control
- Provide prairie dog education and outreach to public



Policy Purpose and Goals

- To preserve prairie dogs and other wildlife in Broomfield, while limiting constraints on property rights, private development rights, and use of City-owned lands to meet other societal needs.
- To ensure humane treatment and minimize the loss of wildlife.
- To strike a balance between differing attitudes, visions, and the needs of the community.
- The Policies also reflect the small geographic size of Broomfield.
- Designed with foresight that public land would not be able to accommodate all prairie dogs displaced from public and private land.

Policy Designed to Achieve Balance of Differing Viewpoints

Survey of Residents, from Policy:

- Morally opposed to killing wildlife etc.
- Enjoy watching prairie dogs
- Enjoy watching raptors and other species in prairie dog towns
- Appreciate local history of prairie dogs
- Appreciate importance to ecosystem
- Key to preservation of raptors
- Concerned that control may harm other species
- Concerned about health impacts of disease
- Concerns about impacts to landscape/vegetation
- Concerns for range/livestock and potential livestock injuries
- Concerns of using open space for prairie dogs instead of other incompatible uses
- Concern with costs to taxpayers



When Does the Policy call for Live Relocation?

-When a property with an established colony needs to be removed for development or a land use change.

When Does the Policy call for Donation to a Wildlife Recovery Program?

-When a property with an established colony is being removed for development, and relocation is not possible.

When Does the Policy Allow for Lethal Control?

-When an established colony is being removed for development, and neither relocation or donation to wildlife recovery are possible
(this option has not been exercised)



When Does the Policy allow for Pro-forma extermination?

-Pro-forma lethal control is allowed in the Policy for situations where prairie dog migrate into new areas of unsuitable habitat. Types of unsuitable areas include ballfields, playgrounds, private yards, landscaped areas, agricultural fields, livestock ranges, trails, or areas where there is a health/public safety concern.

-Pro-forma lethal control is not allowed for the removal of an established prairie dog colony.

-Broomfield manages prairie dogs on all (public and private) sites through the Policy.



Current Prairie Dog Habitat on Broomfield Open Space

- Great Western - 150 acres
- Ridgeview - 36 acres
- Lac Amora - 14 acres
- Broomfield County Commons - 35 acres
- Willow Run - 5 acres
- West Midway Area/Rock Creek - 2 acres
- Anthem Ranch Western Greenbelt - 22 acres

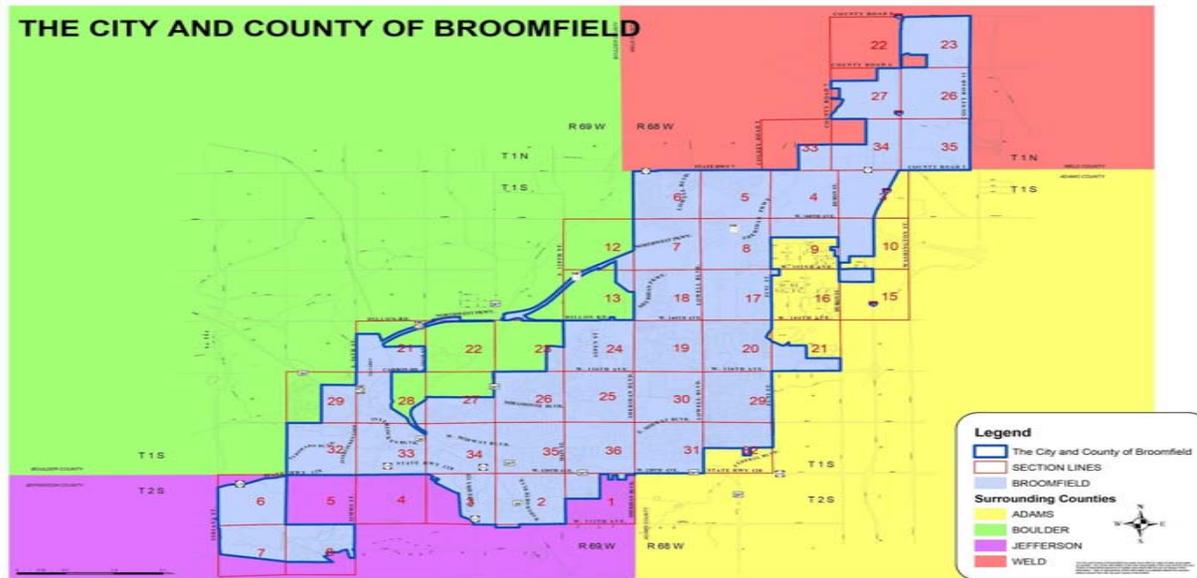
Acres Total: 264 acres



Senate Bill 99-111:

Prohibits the relocation of prairie dogs across county boundaries without approval from the Board of County Commissioners. CPW also requires a permit for them.

Broomfield County (in light blue):





County

Weld County

Adams County

Jefferson County

Boulder County

Denver County

Broomfield County

Size

4,017 sq. miles

1,184 sq. miles

774 sq. miles

740 sq. miles

155 sq. miles

34 sq. miles

Broomfield County Commons Management Master Plan

1 Agricultural Fields

OPPORTUNITIES

- PRESERVE AGRICULTURE
- RESTORE NATIVE OR NONNATIVE GRASSLAND
- EXPERIENCE VIEWS

2 Le Gault Reservoir

OPPORTUNITIES

- CREATE OPEN WATER ENVIRONMENT
- PRESERVE INTIMATE EXPERIENCE OF NATURE

3 The Meadow

OPPORTUNITIES

- PROVIDE UNIQUE TRANSITION LANDSCAPE
- INTEGRATE WATER QUALITY WITH NATURAL SYSTEMS

4 Channel Corridor

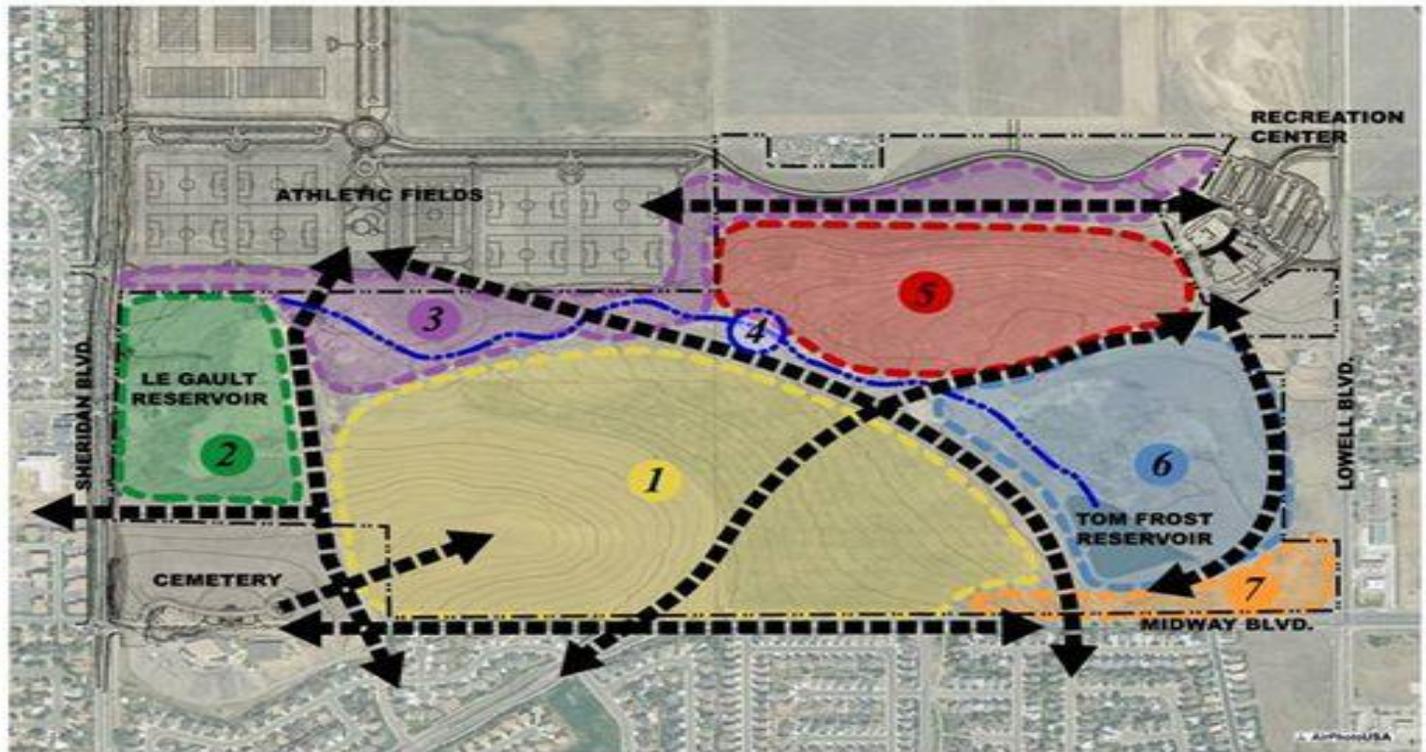
OPPORTUNITIES

- ENHANCE LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY
- ENHANCE HABITAT

5 Southfacing Upland

OPPORTUNITIES

- RESTORE NATIVE OR NONNATIVE GRASSLAND
- MAINTAIN PRAIRIE DOG COLONY



6 Tom Frost Reservoir

OPPORTUNITIES

- ENHANCE RESERVOIR EDGE
- ENHANCE FISHING ACCESS / PUBLIC USE
- RESTORE VEGETATION
- ENHANCE WETLAND COMPLEX

7 Gateway

OPPORTUNITIES

- CREATE "FRONT DOOR" TO OPEN SPACE
- RESTORE VEGETATION
- DEMONSTRATE SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES



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Update on Colony at Lowell and Midway



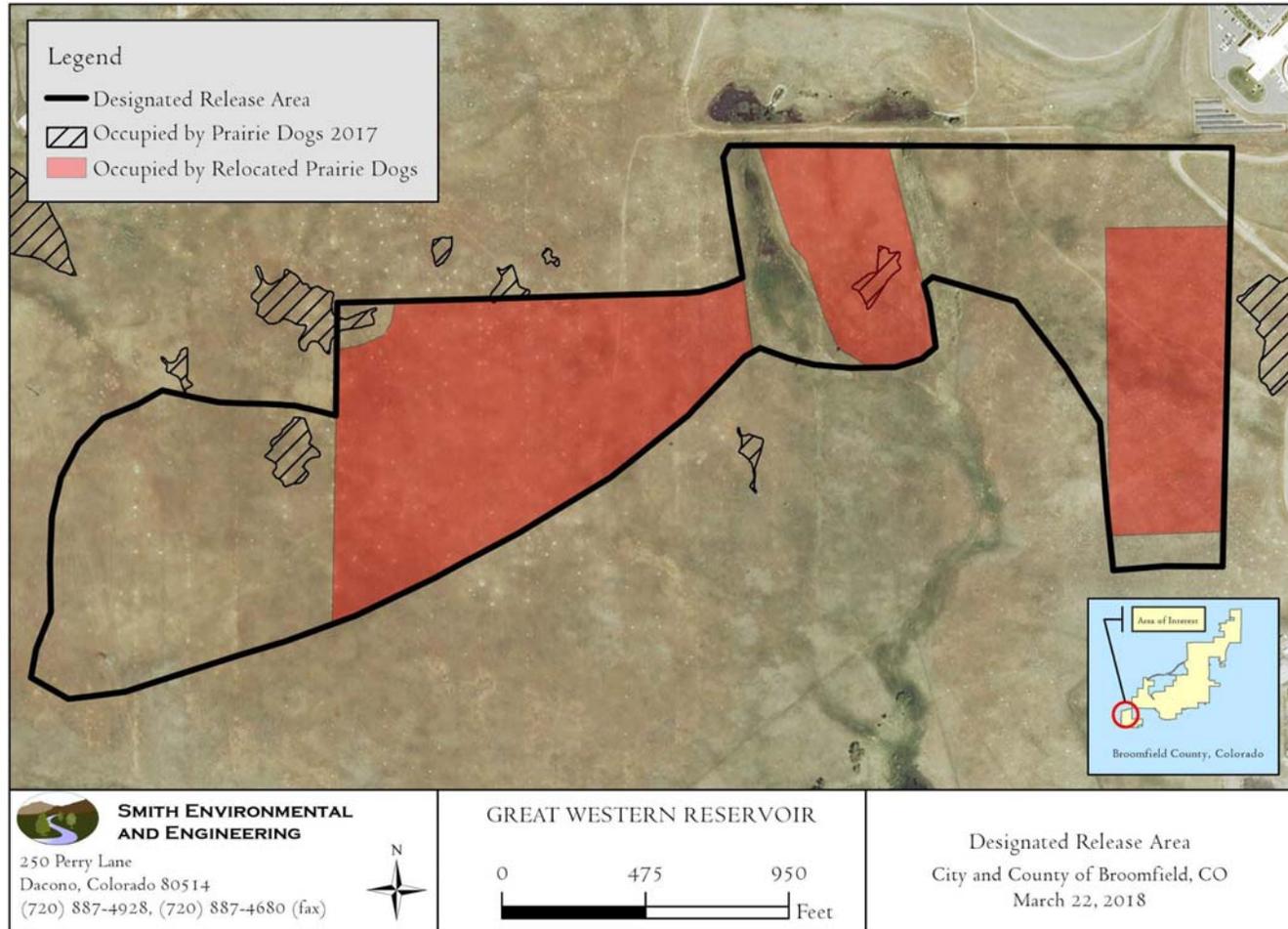


Review of Great Western Reservoir Relocation Site

- Plague Event in 2016-2017, almost complete die-off
- Dusting program in October of 2017
- Received CPW approval for relocation to Great Western in November 2017.
- Relocation Projects began in late 2017
- Since CPW approval, three prairie dog relocations have taken place, with 412 prairie dogs captured and relocated to Great Western, to date.
- Population and Habitat Survey will take place in August/September
- Since 2002, Broomfield has performed 17 prairie dog relocations, moving 1,475 prairie dogs.



Prairie Dog Research and Status Updates Great Western Reservoir Relocation Site





Review of Great Western Reservoir Relocation Site Current Relocations

- Hoyt and Midway site, location of proposed pedestrian bridge crossing (110 prairie dogs relocated to date)
- North Park private property site (265 prairie dogs relocated to date)



Updates Vaccination and Vegetation Studies/Research

Prairie Dog Vaccination Study

- Broomfield met with CPW staff to inquire about possibility of using prairie dog vaccination treatments at Great Western.
- The vaccine is only being applied for research purposes at this time, and is not commercially available. Great Western is not a candidate for the vaccine at this time

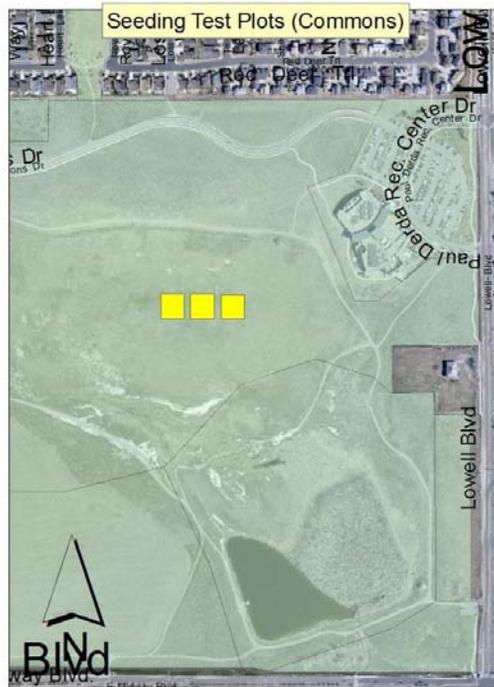
Vegetation Plot Study

- Developed test plot sites at Great Western Open Space, Lac Amora Open Space, and the Broomfield County Commons Open Space
- Broomfield staff consulted with local grassland experts to develop seed mix.



Prairie Dog Research and Status Updates

Vegetation Survey and Research



Seeding Test Plots (Commons)



Prairie Dog Vegetation Plots
Lac Amora



Prairie Dog Vegetation Plots
Great Western

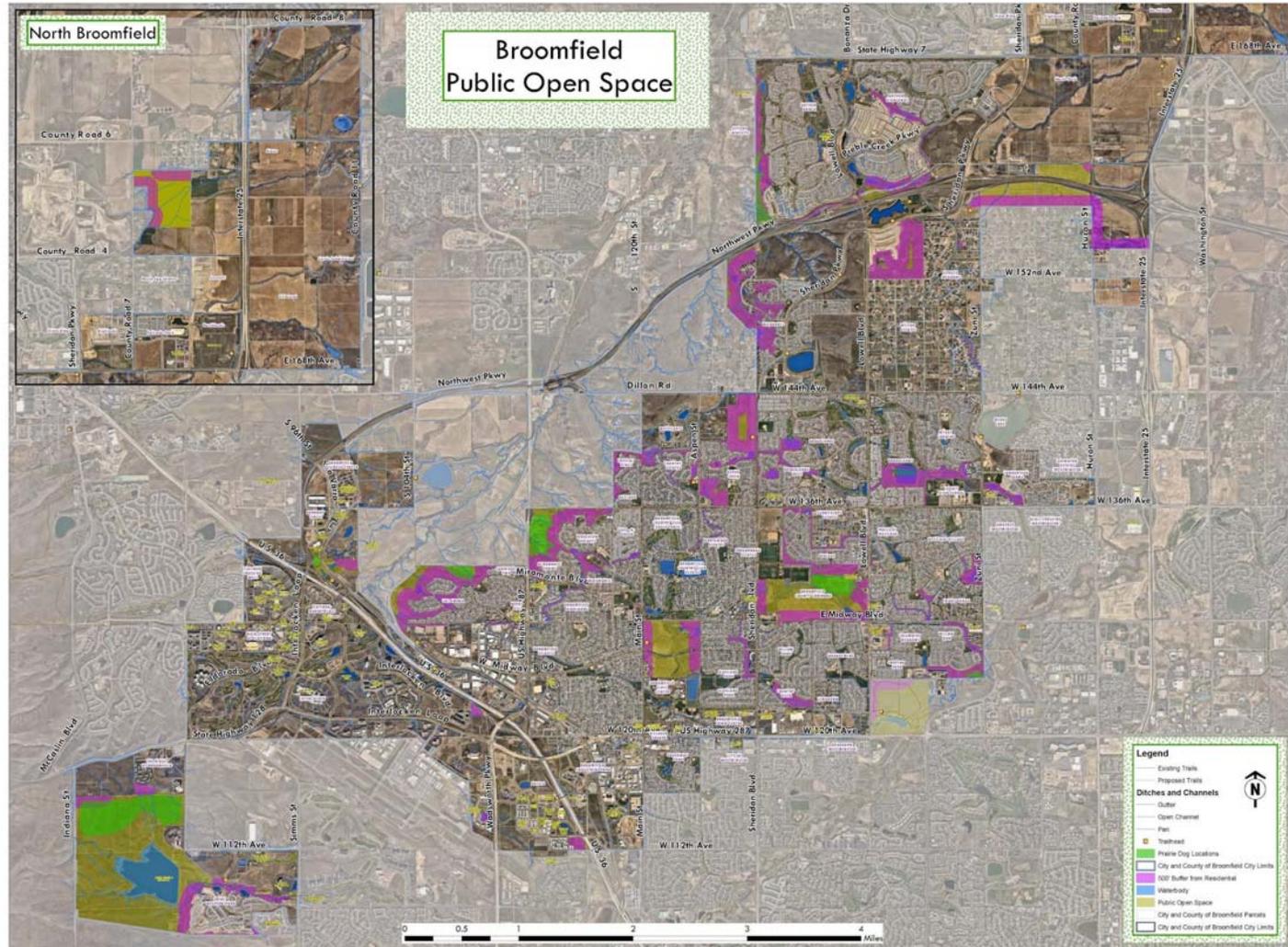


Habitat Improvement Projects at Great Western Open Space

- Large scale Volunteers For Outdoor Colorado youth project to remove Russian Knapweed
- Multiple goat herd grazing projects covering 150 acres
- Manual removal of invasive Russian Olive Trees and tamarisks
- Biological controls, via beetle releases, for removal of knapweed and toadflax
- Herbicidal weed treatments
- Shrub plantings and fencing on northern edge
- Development of comprehensive weed management plan
- Placement of large raptor perch
- Budgeted funds for restoration of vegetation



Review of Other Possible Relocation Sites in



OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS





Process for Prairie Dog Relocation Site Approval

- Habitat and Vegetation Review
- Size of Site
- 500' Setbacks/Proximity of Neighbors
- Review of existing wildlife and vegetation on site
- Public Notice, Comment, or Opposition
- Does not pose an unacceptable risk of disease, nuisance, or damage to landscaping of adjacent landowners
- Risk of adverse impact to high-quality native grasslands or other sensitive habitat types or species
- Approval of Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Approval from Broomfield City Council



Review of Penalties for Violations of Policy

- Penalties are set by Broomfield Municipal Code 1-12-020: ...Any person convicted of a violation shall be punished by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or by imprisonment not exceeding one year or by both such fine and imprisonment...
- Staff has worked with City Attorney's Office to propose a comprehensive update to all penalties which would address increases to fines/punishment.
- Changes must be made by ordinance and be formally approved by the City Manager's Office and Broomfield City Council.



Review of Penalties for Violations of Policy

- Out of 10 agencies surveyed in the Front Range area, the majority do not enforce a policy of prairie dog management on private development projects. Only 3 enforce a policy similar to Broomfield's.
- Of those that do enforce a policy, the required steps for management are relocation, donation, and then extermination.
- Actions taken against policy breakers ranges from a fine up to \$1,000 to an issuing of work stoppage.



Review of Pressurized Gas as an Alternative Control Technique

- Broomfield began using pressurized gas as a pilot project on several sites in 2017
- Broomfield will be expanding the use of pressurized gas in 2018, and attempting to phase out the use of aluminum phosphide.
- Review of other agencies generally show a transition to pressurized gas from other toxicants.
- Pressurized gas is more expensive than other techniques
- In some areas, pressurized gas cannot be used



Prairie Dog Education and Outreach

- Education at Broomfield Events
 - 34 Outreach/Education events in 2017
- Broomfield Nature Program - prairie dog outings and morning nature walks throughout summer
- Planned Open Space Speaker Series topic in Fall, 2018
- Coordination with the Boulder Prairie Dog Working Group and organizing upcoming meeting of Front Range Prairie Dog Working Group

