

## Boulder Creek Commons Black-tailed Prairie Dog Removal Plan

The black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) colony located on the Boulder Creek Commons property is directly adjacent to the area identified in the 2006 City of Boulder Urban Wildlife Management Plan (UWMP) as part of the East Boulder Community Center Colony (Colony #13). The City's Management Classification/Action Plan for the private portion of Colony #13 is lacking and does not provide guidance; the portion of the colony that occurs on City of Boulder property was slated in 2006 for 'Near-term Removal'.

Since the Boulder Creek Commons property is not within the City of Boulder, the immediate removal of the prairie dogs is possible. If removal does not occur prior to annexation of the property, then removal can occur only after the property has been through the process outlined in the UWMP. This process can take up to 18 months to complete. Specifically, prairie dogs are regulated under a number of City Ordinances including Procedures for Obtaining Prairie Dog Lethal Control Permits (B.R.C. 6-1-36), Procedures Affecting the Relocation of Prairie Dogs (B.R.C. 6-1-37), and Fees and Requirements for Issuance of Prairie Dog Lethal Control Permits (B.R.C. 6-1-38). Additionally, in 2005 the City finalized the Wildlife Protection Ordinance (Chapter 1 of Title 6 of the Boulder Revised Code 6-1 B.R.C. 1981) which limits the use of lethal control on prairie dogs by requiring land owners to obtain a permit to kill prairie dogs on a site within the city. Prior to the issuance of a permit, the landowner must satisfactorily show that all non-lethal options are not feasible. The City developed a "Six-step" process which prioritizes the following for prairie dog management on a case-by-case basis:

- Step 1. Minimize conflicts with the wildlife through non-removal methods.
- Step 2. Remove animals on a portion of the site where conflicts are occurring.
- Step 3. Evaluate potential for relocation.
- Step 4. Consider animal recovery programs (ferret or raptor).
- Step 5. Evaluate trapping and individual euthanasia.
- Step 6. If earlier steps are not feasible and pesticides must be used:
  - Pay into City habitat mitigation fund
  - Post notice on property of pesticide application.

A cost estimate for the removal/relocation of the prairie dogs at the Project Site is not possible at this time. Typically trapping occurs for ten (10) days at a rate of \$1,500 -1,700/day. There is a five (5) day minimum for removal services. It is also required that prior to the removal of prairie dogs, a qualified biologist conduct burrowing owl surveys of the prairie dog colony per the Colorado Division of Wildlife Recommended Survey Protocol and Actions to Protect Nesting Burrowing Owls When Conducting Prairie Dog Control document.