



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 110
Lewistown, MT 59457



MEMORANDUM

Date October 31, 2006

To: Participants and Interested Parties

From: Randy Matchett, Wildlife Biologist, Charles M. Russell NWR, Lewistown, MT

Subject: Fall 2006 black-footed ferret spotlight survey results from UL Bend NWR:
 August 27 - September 6, 2006 totaled 22 (10 male, 12 female) with 4 litters, 12 kits (5 male .7 female).
 October 12 - 19, 2006 totaled 15 (6 male, 9 female) with 8 kits (3 male . 5 female)

Thanks much to the 17 people that helped out with this fall's capture and followup plague and CDV vaccine booster administration efforts. Spotlighting and capture efforts were conducted for a total of 17 nights with an average of 6 people looking each night. Weather was challenging, especially with snow and mud for the last half of the October effort. Monitoring this fall concluded data collection for experimental research efforts addressing the influence of enzootic plague on black-footed ferrets. Preliminary analyses are suggesting significantly higher ferret survival on colonies that were treated with Deltamethrin or for those receiving plague vaccinations than for animals experiencing neither a dusting treatment or plague vaccine. Hence, we attempted to vaccinate all residents with plague vaccine this fall in hopes of achieving survival rates that will hopefully provide for persistence of this small population.

Fifteen of 22 ferrets known present in September were re-caught in October. Neither the dam (4952F), or any of her 3 kits (452F, 453M, 454M), could be found during October on the Valentine prairie dog colony. Only 1 of 2 adult males from the Hawley Complex could be found in October. Eight of 9 kits in the Locke area were found again in October, but the 4 year-old male, 417M has not been observed since August.

The next survey will be during late March and early April, 2007. There are no plans to release any additional ferrets at UL Bend, but we will continue to monitor these residents. Thanks again to all of you who contribute your time, effort and enthusiasm to make these monitoring efforts successful.

Randy

UL BEND NWR BLACK-FOOTED FERRET POPULATION, PHILLIPS COUNTY, MONTANA

Totals: Kits released = 229 / Wildborn = 224

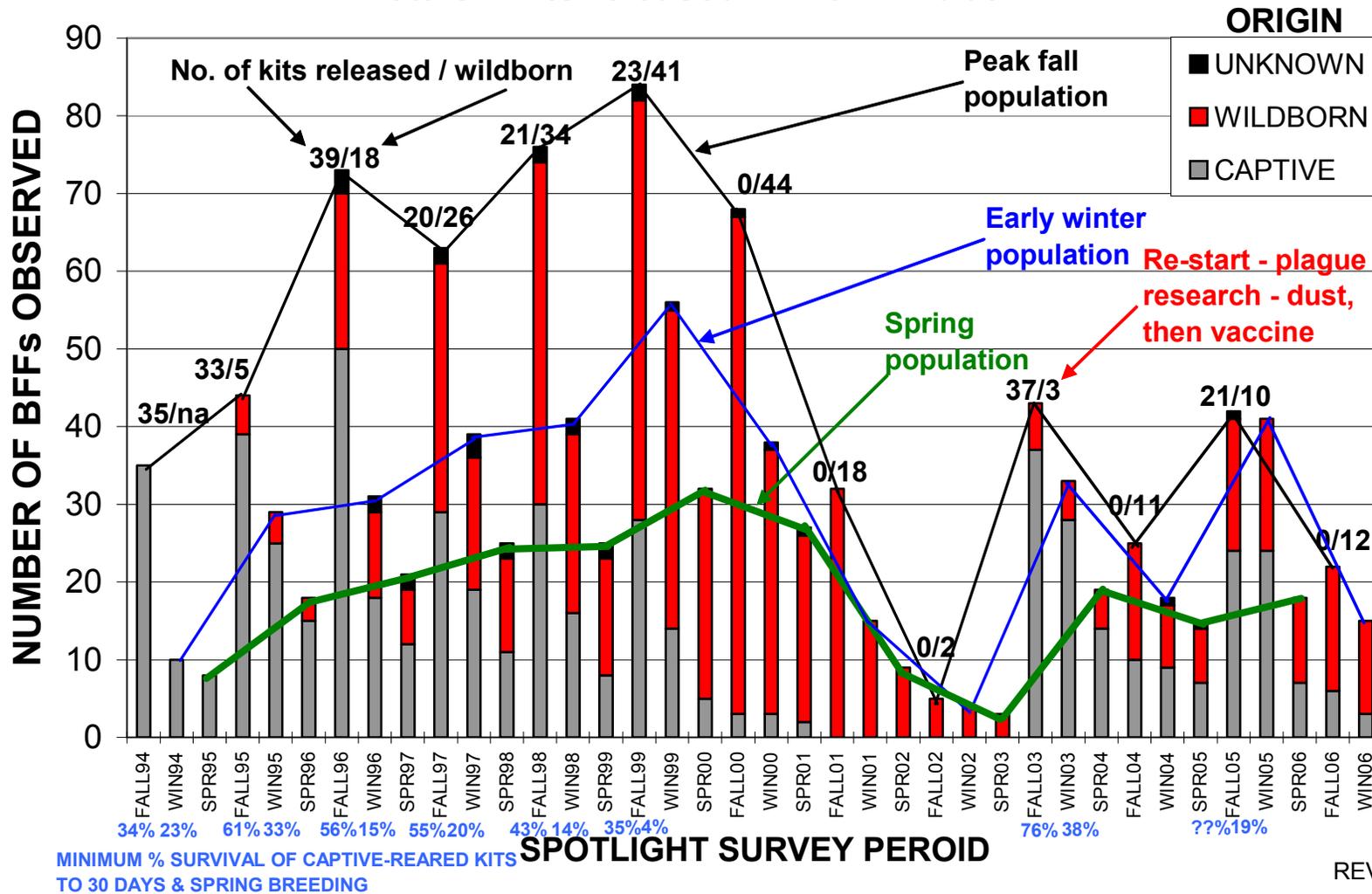


Table 1. Fall 2006 black-footed ferret observation details from surveys on UL Bend NWR.

PRAIRIE DOG COLONY	SEP. 2006 MALE	SEP. 2006 FEM.	SEP. 2006 TOTAL	OCT. 2006 MALE	OCT. 2006 FEM.	OCT. 2006 TOTAL	BFFs IN OCTOBER, 2006
S. Hawley	0	0	0	0	0	0	
N. Hawley	2	0	2	1	0	1	433M
Wilderness	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sagebrush	0	0	0	0	0	0	
BLM - N.	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hawley Subtotal	2	0	2	1	0	1	1 (1.0)
Small	0	0	0	0	1	1	445F
Main Locke	3	5	8	1	4	5	444M, 427F, 438F, 4021F, 443F
South Locke	0	0	0	1	1	2	446F, 451M
Airport	1	4	5	1	1	2	447F, 450M
Legg	1	0	1	1	1	2	420M, 449F
222	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Locke Subtotal	5	9	14	4	8	12	12 (4.8)
Core Total	7	9	16	5	8	13	13 (5.8)
Valentine	3	3	6	1	1	2	4960M, 4961F
Long-X	0	0	0	0	0	0	
416	0	0	0	0	0	0	
417	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Valentine Subtotal	3	3	6	1	1	2	2 (1.1)
Grand Total	10	12	22	6	9	15	15 (6.9)