

APPENDIX J

LRMP AMENDMENT FACTORS OF SIGNIFICANCE OR NON-SIGNIFICANCE

The following factors are to be used when determining whether a proposed change (Alternative 3 – Preferred) to a forest plan is significant or not significant, based on NFMA planning requirements.

- A. Timing.** Timing identifies when the change is to take place. The life of a Forest Plan is 10 years. The current LRMP was signed and began implementation July 31, 2002. The proposed management actions that are not currently described in the LRMP (i.e. rodenticide use) will be discussed in the Record of Decision for black-tailed prairie dog management on the Nebraska National Forest. This activity would likely begin in the late fall of 2005 and/or early 2006 and continue for the remainder of the Forest Plan period (2012).
- B. Location and Size.** Location and size defines the relationship of the affected area to the overall planning area. The NFS land planning area for the Nebraska National Forest is approximately 1,062,500 acres. The primary proposed management action in relation to the proposed changes to the LRMP involves rodenticide use in boundary management zone areas. This area equates to approximately 458,500 acres or 43 percent of the total NFS land area under Alternative 3 (preferred). It should be noted that the boundary management zones are not 100 percent occupied by prairie dog colonies. Approximately 11,970 acres or 2.6 percent of the boundary management zones are occupied by prairie dog colonies. The analyses of Alternatives 3 (preferred) assume all colonies within boundary management zones are eventually treated with rodenticide. In reality, many of these colonies would be treated with rodenticide but some would not because they are not encroaching or about to encroach on adjoining lands. Therefore, predictions of annual rodenticide use are considered maximums.
- C. Goals, Objectives, and Outputs.** The LRMP applicable goals, objectives, and outputs are reviewed to determine whether the proposed LRMP amendment alters the long-term relationships between the levels of goods and services projected by the LRMP.

<p>Goal 1: Ensure Sustainable Ecosystems</p> <p>Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands and watersheds.</p>		
<p><i>Appendix C Proposed LRMP Item Changes:</i></p> <p>#14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22</p>	<p><i>Goal 1.b: Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired non-native species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS).</i></p> <p>Objectives 2, 4, and 6 (summarized): Demonstrate positive trends in population, habitat availability and quality for threatened, endangered, sensitive species and MIS.</p>	<p>Under Alternative 3 (preferred) it is predicted black-tailed prairie dog management would result in an upward trend in prairie dog populations (FEIS Chapter 3, Table 3-12 comparisons of the 1996-97 acreages with the predicted acreages for 2012). The Biological Assessment and Evaluation process determined that there would be no adverse affect on any federally listed species population, and no adverse impact on any sensitive species population (FEIS Chapter 3, Section 3.7). Chapter 3, Section 3.8 determined the MIS populations and habitat are not impacted.</p>
<p>Goal 4: Effective Public Service</p> <p>Ensure the acquisition and use of an appropriate corporate infrastructure to enable the efficient delivery of a variety of uses.</p>		
<p><i>Appendix C Proposed LRMP Item Change:</i></p> <p>#16, 17, 23, 24</p>	<p>Public and Organizational Relations</p> <p>Objective 2: Work in cooperation with federal, state, and county agencies, individuals, Indian tribes, and non-government organizations for control of noxious weeds and invasive species and animal damage.</p>	<p>The revisions within the proposed LRMP amendment will not deter cooperative working relationships with federal, state, and county agencies, individuals, Indian tribes, and non-government organizations for control of noxious weeds, invasive species and animal damage.</p>

Management Prescription. The management prescription is reviewed to determine if the change is for a specific situation and whether or not the change alters the desired condition of the land and resources or the anticipated goods and services to be produced. The change of 5,130 acres of the Wall Southeast Geographic Area from Management Area 3.63 Prescription Allocation to Management Area 6.1 Prescription Allocation is specific in nature (see Appendix A, Maps 9 and 10). This change in land use allocation does not change the goods or services that otherwise would be produced. Black-footed

ferrets have not occupied this area. After coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it is mutually agreed that the area is now considered unsuitable for black-footed ferret recovery. This re-allocation will not threaten the black-footed ferret population thresholds and recovery efforts, nor will it alter the current livestock grazing activities and outputs.