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Incoming
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From: Ingrid Wieser
To: OGMCOAL
Date: 10/7/2009 11:23 AM
Subject: Fwd: Re: Burrowing Owls/White tailed Prairie dogs
Place: OGMCOAL

Emery Deep task # 3411. Thanks

>>> Anthony Wright 10/7/2009 9:41 AM >>>
Ingrid,

Nicole Nielsen, our new energy biologist, will take the lead on UDWR's response. I have discussed this with her, and personally, I think off-site mitigation is the best way to address the issue. I don't think closing burrows or putting in artificial ones will be an effective way of addressing it. Nicole will be in touch with Nathan and I will ask her to keep you in the loop too.

Tony

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>>> Ingrid Wieser 10/7/2009 7:49 AM >>>
Tony and Leroy-

I wanted to fill you in on an issue that is going on at Emery Deep. (I spoke briefly with Tony already regarding the burrowing owls). However, there is an application in currently in which emery will be undermining about 120 acres on which is a significant active white tailed prairie dog colony with at least one burrowing owl pair. A number of issues have arisen trying to formulate a plan to avoid disturbance. (the mine cannot, of course, mine during the non-closure period).

Just to give you some background, the type of mining is room and pillar mining which is considered to have relatively less subsidence related damage than other methods. However, the mine will be removing the "pillars" thereby creating more subsidence than the traditional room and pillar method (however there is no way of knowing the extent of the subsidence). So, Nathan Darnall (USFWS) has suggested that the permittee go in to the colony prior to March 1st and collapse all burrows and place artificial burrows in a nearby area that will not be subsided. The prairie dogs will be hibernating in a few weeks so if it is the agreement of all parties to collapse the burrows, then this will need to occur very soon. Do either of you think that it would be a big deal to force the prairie dogs to move to an alternate location at this time of year? Or my other thought is would they just end up redigging the burrows now and collapsing them before March 1 would be useless? My thoughts are that we do not have great deal of information regarding burrows and subsidence. There may be no affects to the burrows, and moving the entire population would be a greater disturbance. Please let me know your thoughts. We can set up a conference call if we need to. Nathan will be out of town for the next four weeks but here this week. Thanks for your help.

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