



# The Shortgrass Prairie Review

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring/Summer  
2004

## A Personal Note From Our President

A special thanks to all who have supported Prairie Preservation Alliance (PPA) in your own special ways! It's exciting to realize that we have been working and speaking for the inhabitants of the shortgrass prairie for more than a year. It's you and your support that have made this vision a reality.

PPA is a local grassroots organization. We believe that the shortgrass prairie is worth preserving because it's ranked as one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world, 10 acres is lost to development every hour, less than two percent is protected, and the prairie is our home!

We are dedicated to the preservation and restoration of

the shortgrass prairie through education, land acquisition, policy change and species management.

We plan to publish The Shortgrass Prairie Review quarterly to share our accomplishments as well as our plans for the future. In this first edition, we are proud to introduce our board of directors and advisory board. Subsequent newsletters will also include a section for guest articles. I invite you to share your prairie-related experiences, projects, scientific studies, poems, and short stories with us. We will be pleased to include them in the guest section.

In this newsletter we'll give details of our June 5<sup>th</sup> fundraiser at the Mercury Café in Denver, but I want to take

this opportunity to extend a personal invitation to each of you. Without your continuing support, the shortgrass prairie, with her incredible array of grasses, wildflowers, birds, and animals, will have one less advocate. And since less than two percent of this ecosystem is protected in Colorado, every advocate is vitally important.

In addition to our quarterly newsletter, we plan to send a monthly progress update by email. This will be a simple and timely way of sharing our successes and challenges. If you would like to receive this update, please email us at [info@prairiepreservationalliance.org](mailto:info@prairiepreservationalliance.org) and ask to be added to our email list.

It will be a great help to us if you will share your suggestions on how to make the newsletter more informative and more entertaining. After all, the newsletter is produced to help you, our most important asset, remain informed and up-to-date.

Judy Enderle  
President  
Prairie Preservation Alliance

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# Kennedy Recreation Complex

## Proof That Soccer, Golf and Prairie Can Coexist

After months of digging, assembling panels, erecting gates and silt construction barriers, landscaping, clearing trash, trapping prairie dogs, and coordinating the many other facets of the project, our mighty team of volunteers succeeded in implementing a solution that assures that prairie dogs, rabbits, and associated wildlife at Kennedy are safe. These native prairie species now have a home free from disturbance where visitors from the nearby golf course and soccer fields have the opportunity to view a functioning ecosystem. It's not uncommon to observe a coyote searching for lunch or a bald eagle soaring above in hopes of catching a prairie dog off-guard. Forty-four prairie dogs were trapped from soccer field areas and released into one of the 19 manufactured burrows—their new homes. Tall vegetation was clipped to allow the prairie dogs to see predators. A metal fence was constructed and black silt barrier material was erected to contain the prairie dogs in their new habitat. Trash

pick-up and seeding along barriers are in progress and long-term maintenance will continue as needed.

The project began as a vision in the PPA boardroom 18 months ago. Kennedy Soccer and Golf Complexes are north of I-225 across from Cherry Creek State Park in south Denver. Our vision was presented to the Denver Parks and Recreation Department. They immediately agreed to work with us to achieve the goal. Many volunteers from the community—dedicated individuals, grade school through high school students, office work groups, and members of the Denver Sheriff Department's Juvenile Work Program—all gave their time and expertise to establish a partnership that resulted in the accomplishments we see today.

A BIG THANKS to all who contributed to the success of this project!!!

Sandy Nervig  
Project Manager



*Above: The barrier on the west side of the site was constructed with the help of Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse. Below: Prairie dogs look on as their new homes are created.*



## A Special Thanks to Dedicated Kennedy Volunteers

PPA would like to thank the many volunteers who helped make this project such a success!!

Sandy Nervig, Project Manager, put countless hours into making the Kennedy Project a success. Whether it was working with the City and County of Denver, scheduling volunteers, or trapping dogs, Sandy deserves to be commended.

Thank you also the rest of the volunteers who used their free time to make a difference for the prairie!!

Jani Isenhardt, Sisley Aragon-Milroy, Susan, Bill and Amy Lee, Madalynn Neu, Paula Martin, Bryon Shipley, Mariosa Donisi, Randy Hirata, Tina Donisi, Steve

Thilker, Sarah Hoffman, Kerry McNabb, Jennifer Piche, Beth Chorbajian and Andrew, Rachel Weintrob, Chris Stevenson, Ellen P. Belef, Joyce and Walter Spita, Paula Boltz, David Krall, John Stidman, David V. Lee, Fabiola Mansfield, Diraz



*Volunteers are welcome at any age!*

Dittberner, Joanna Barbaran, Rick Machle, Amy Collona, Mara and Melissa Aguilar, Maribel Huerta, Danny Griffiths and Julie Paterson.

Special Thanks to:

Denver Deputy Paul Ortega and his Denver Sheriff's Juvenile Work Program teenagers;

Vicki Vargus-Madrid, CDOW District Wildlife Manager;

Scott Harvey for his flea dusting equipment;

Field Supervisor Jim Kellner, and his staff at the City and County of Denver Department of Parks and Recreation.

# Rosamond

## Nature in the Midst of Urban Development

If you drive by Rosamond at the intersection of Quincy and Tamarac, just to the north of DTC, all you see are some weeds and prairie dogs. You might say to yourself, “What do those dogs have to eat?” But all of that is about to change!

PPA, Denver Natural Areas, Esco Associates, Inc. (vegetation specialists), the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), Mountain Spirit Studio (landscape planning), Colorado Wildlife Heritage Foundation (funding), private donors, and



volunteers have joined forces to transform Rosamond into an inviting natural area.

During the last year, Seth Magle, a graduate student at Colorado State University, has been studying the dispersal rate of prairie dogs in the urban setting. Most of his data comes from the colony at Rosamond. Seth trapped and collared members of the colony and tracks their movements with telemetry. Seth assures us our barrier system will not skew his data.

Over the course of the next year, native vegetation—grasses, shrubs, wildflowers, and trees—will be reintroduced. The drainage ditch will be enhanced with bushes to encourage coyotes, foxes, and other predators to visit. The addition of trees will provide perching and nesting sites for raptors. The prairie dog colony will comprise a large portion of the food supply to sustain the ecosystem and help it thrive. A barrier system will be constructed to contain the prairie dogs. Benches will invite visitors to sit and view Colorado wildlife going about their daily lives. A memorial pavilion will

honor the memory of Jenny Slater, a wildlife officer for the CDOW who devoted her life to the prairie and its inhabitants. Interpretive signs will help visitors to understand the importance of the prairie through the plants, animals, and birds who make it their home.

The challenge with this project is providing a home for wildlife, a viewing area for visitors, and a memorial site, so that each of these components is given the importance it deserves.

PPA encourages you to visit Rosamond when you have the opportunity. But beware! You may find yourself captivated by the site. Come prepared to roll up your sleeves and help with the creation of this unique island of nature once you arrive.

Call Judy, 303.359.4167 or PPA, 303.638.4672 to schedule time to volunteer at Rosamond.

Judy Enderle  
Project Manager

*A volunteer examines a prairie dog.*

## Thunder Basin National Grassland Needs Prairie Dogs

In order to reintroduce the black-footed ferret, North America’s most endangered mammal, 5000-acre prairie dog complexes must exist. Thunder Basin National Grassland would be a perfect setting for the ferret, except for one disturbing piece of information: most of the prairie dogs in the grassland were lost to plague in the recent past. Jack F. Cully, associate professor at Kansas State University, is studying

the effects of plague in Thunder Basin, and welcomes the idea of relocating prairie dogs there.

With the help of the Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife Services (FWS), Wyoming Game and Fish Department (G&F), and property owners in the region, PPA is working to move prairie dogs to Thunder Basin. The project has been fraught with unfortunate occur-

rences—Jack’s research grant was not renewed, the prairie dogs earmarked for relocation abandoned the area, and G&F didn’t know how to approve a request to live trap and relocate since they had never been asked to do so.

Recently G&F appointed a “Shortgrass Prairie Ecologist” to their staff. With his help, PPA will continue to address the need to preserve

colonies on private land while augmenting wild populations, which will aid in the eventual reintroduction of ferrets. The importance of this project is obvious: to succeed in restoring large parcels of shortgrass prairie while protecting individual colonies and ensuring the future of native species is nothing less than magnificent!

Jim Werder  
Project Manager

# Colorado Department of Transportation and Prairie Wildlife

Members of PPA have been working on prairie dogs issues with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for several years. We are now facing new challenges—as if we need any more challenges when it comes to prairie dogs—with upcoming road projects that encompass areas from Wadsworth and C-470 circling around through Golden, Boulder, the Northwest Corridor, Pena Blvd, and I-70. What makes this so disturbing is knowing that without our voices, areas of virgin prairie and active relocation sites may be destroyed. This is especially true in the Northwest Corridor.

Progress has been slow with CDOT and TREX, although public pressure has forced them to provide non-lethal solutions for prairie dogs in the past. That is why it's essential that we get public input into the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) at this juncture, to pressure the agencies to include wildlife mitigation into the budgets for these projects. We are working with the environmental managers from Regions 4 and 6 as they calculate the number of acres that will be impacted by the five corridor projects. The number of acres impacted will be used by CDOT to find a common site for prairie dog relocation for these projects.

These projects are on a fast track—with Governor Owens' involvement—so we have little time to waste.

To get involved in these projects please contact the Director of CDOT and the appropriate environmental managers:

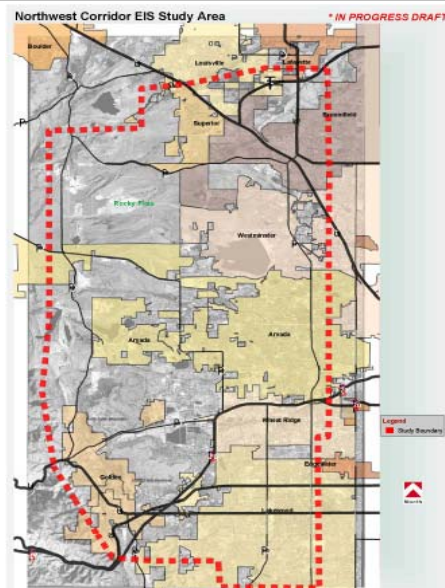
Tom Norton  
CDOT executive director:  
303-757-9201  
tom.norton@dot.state.co.us

Cindy Anolornetto  
Pena Blvd to I/25 Corridor  
303.294.9300 X211  
cynthia.anolornetto@dot.state.co.us

Sandi Kohrs  
US 36 Corridor  
303.370.2047  
sandi.kohrs@dot.state.co.us

Steve Sherman  
NW Corridor (Northwest Parkway to C470)  
303.757.2159  
steve.sherman@dot.state.co.us

Jim Paulmino  
4C70 from Wadsworth Blvd to I-25  
303.757.9965  
jim.paulmino@dot.state.co.us



For more details on the study area, go to [www.dot.state.co.us/NorthwestCorridorEIS/index.cfm](http://www.dot.state.co.us/NorthwestCorridorEIS/index.cfm)

Access the following website for a calendar of upcoming public meetings: [www.dot.state.co.us/CorridorCoordination/public/public.htm](http://www.dot.state.co.us/CorridorCoordination/public/public.htm)

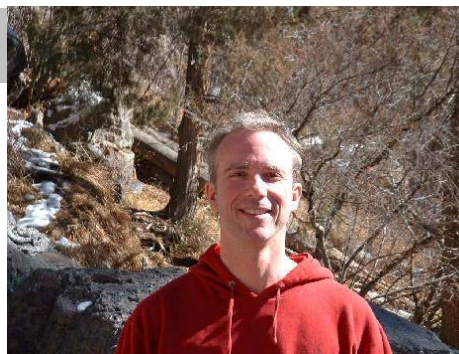
For further information or question contact Kerry McNabb at 303.690.8284 [kmcnabb@cyberconcorp.com](mailto:kmcnabb@cyberconcorp.com)

## Meet PPA's Newest Board Members and Advisors

### Animal Advocate Dan Hanley Accepts Position

A veteran of the US Navy, Dan Hanley hails from Norfolk, Virginia. A graduate of the University of Colorado at Denver (UCD), he is currently pursuing a political sciences degree graduate program at UCD. For more than 15 years Dan has been involved with human rights groups such as Amnesty International and International Campaign for Tibet. He has been active in the animal rights movement since 1994. He led the CU Dog Lab Campaign which fought to end

the killing of dogs to teach physiology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. He is a sales manager for Hyatt Hotels as well as the Development Associate for Rocky Mountain Animal Defense. He volunteers for Colorado AIDS Project and the food bank at his church, Metropolitan Community Church of the Rockies, where he is also a liturgist. Dan shares his home with dogs Moses and Miguel, as well as Lollipop the cat.



*Dan Hanley enjoys the great outdoors.*

## Noted Author and Ethologist Mark Bekoff Joins PPA Board

Marc Bekoff is Professor of Biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and is a Fellow of the Animal Behavior Society and a former Guggenheim Fellow. In 2000 he was awarded the Exemplar Award from the Animal Behavior Society for major long-term contributions to the field of animal behavior. Marc is also regional coordinator for Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots program, in which he works with students of all ages, senior citizens and prisoners. He is a member of the Ethics Committee of the Jane Goodall Institute. He and Jane co-founded the organization Ethologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals: Citizens for

Responsible Animal Behavior Studies in 2000. Marc also is on the Board of Directors for The Fauna Sanctuary, on the Board of Directors of The Cougar Fund, on the advisory board for the Laboratory Primate Advocacy Group, and the Advisory Board for the conservation organization, SINAPU, and is part of the international program, Science and the Spiritual Quest II and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) program on Science, Ethics, and Religion. Marc's main areas of research include animal behavior, cognitive ethology (the study of animal minds), and behavioral



Mark Bekoff with his four-legged friends

ecology, and he has also published extensively on animal issues. He has published over 175 papers and 15 books, including: Encyclopedia of animal rights and animal welfare, The Smile of a Dolphin: Remarkable Accounts of Animal Emotions, and The ten trusts: What we must do to care for the animals we love, co-authored with Jane Goodall.



[www.prairiepreservationalliance.org](http://www.prairiepreservationalliance.org)

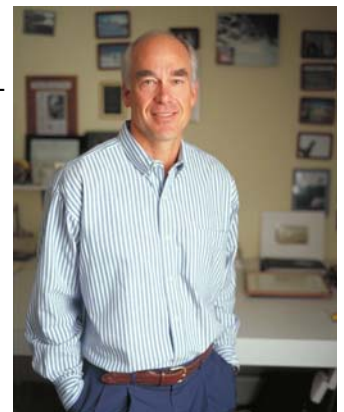
*Be sure to visit our website for more information about our organization as well as to shop! We offer a variety of beautiful, professional photographs, note cards, T-shirts, and even prairie animal puppets.*

## Fielder Joins Advisory Board

John Fielder is a nationally renowned nature photographer, publisher, teacher, and preservationist. In 1981, he founded Westcliffe Publishers, one of the nation's largest publishers of nature books and calendars. He is the photographer of 34 exhibit format and guide books, most about his home state of Colorado. His latest book is *Seeing Colorado's Forests for the Trees* (September, 2003). *Colorado 1870-2000* is Colorado's best selling title.

John has worked tirelessly to promote the protection of Colorado's open space and wildlands. His photography has influenced people and legislation, earning him the Sierra Club's Ansel Adams Award, the University of Denver's Daniel L. Ritchie Award, and the Distinguished Service Award from the University of Colorado.

He was an original governor-appointed member of the lottery-related Board of Great Outdoors Colorado, and speaks to thousands of people each to rally support for timely land-use and environmental issues.



John Fielder is a renowned photographer as well as being dedicated to prairie preservation.

Look for the biography of our t newest board member, Ken Keefover-Ring in our next newsletter!!

# PRAIRIE PRESERVATION Alliance

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## Another Way You Can Help

Visit your local Wild Oats Market and sign up for their e-script program. Once you register, part of the proceeds from your grocery bill will be donated directly to Prairie Preservation Alliance. It doesn't get much easier than this!!!  
Sign up TODAY!



Watch the mail for your invite  
PPA's annual Spring fundraiser is right around the corner!

Who: All those who care about preserving the prairie  
What: A fun-filled fundraiser benefiting PPA. We're pulling out all the stops with good food, live music, door prizes and an amazing raffle!  
When: June 5th 6:30-10  
Where: Mercury Café  
**Why: We want to make a differ-**

## You Can Make a Difference

Yes, I'd like to make a donation to PPA  
10  25  50  100  other   
 check  
 credit card (visa/mc)  
Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I'd like to receive monthly email updates  
*PPA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible.*