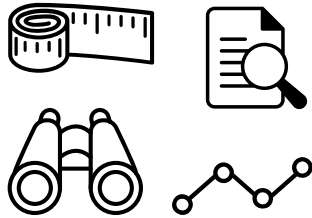


Colony Analysis



Assessment Stage

Prairie dog colony management may call for unique considerations to plan projects and approach solutions. Keep in mind, prairie dog behaviors differ among species and location within their range. A thorough assessment will better equip managers for a successful conservation plan.

Important Facts

- 1.** **What is it?** Colony analysis and behavior is an early-stage planning exercise that helps seek to understand species behavior and colony dynamics, such as occupied area, population size, historical presence, adjacent colonies, dispersal corridors, competing land uses, and reproduction and attrition rates.
- 2.** **Why should I use it?** This tool allows managers to more accurately predict behaviors to mitigate potential conflicts and informs which interventions could be most successful for the project's management goals.
- 3.** **How do I implement it?** A colony analysis can be performed by pairing GIS technology with on the ground analysis and historical records.

Assessment Examples

- Historical presence and occupancy
- Current colony size and occupancy
- Dispersal corridors
- Reproduction and attrition rates
- Vegetation
- Land use and ownership
- Plague presence and management
- Carrying capacity
- Adjacent properties and ownership
- Management objectives
- Which species of prairie dog

What is Conservation Behavior?

Similar to colony analysis, conservation behavior is another assessment tool that can prepare your project for success. Conservation behavior utilizes animal behavior to find solutions to conservation issues – including human-wildlife conflict.

Identifying Coterries (Family Groups)

Coterries can be identified with behavioral observation and on the ground analysis of grass runways, paths and spatial burrow dynamics.



Pro Tip! The time of year and temperatures greatly influences observations. Generally spring has a much higher population then late summer into fall due to natural attrition and predation.