



August 24, 2021

Public Comments Processing  
Attn: FWS-R2-ES-2020-0123  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB/3W  
5275 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

Electronically submitted to: <http://www.regulations.gov>

**RE: Revision of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Black-Footed Ferrets (*Mustela nigripes*) in the Southwest**

**Docket Number: FWS-R2-ES-2020-0123**

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation (AZSFWC) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife conservation, habitat work, youth recruitment and retention, as well as educating outdoor enthusiasts on issues important to their passions. AZSFWC consists of 38 member, affiliate, and associate groups that reach across the spectrum of hunting, angling, shooting, outdoor recreation, and businesses from across Arizona. Our member groups represent more than 16,000 people from Arizona.

After reviewing the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and supporting documents, we are pleased to support the proposed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) rulemaking concerning the nonessential experimental population of the black-footed ferret. We appreciate USFWS efforts to re-establish ferrets into historical range, as well as the strong partnership with the Arizona Game and Fish Department in this endeavor.

AZSFWC and 24 of our Member organizations (list attached) believe expanding the area where ferrets can be released is an important step toward recovery of this endangered species. We appreciate the flexibility afforded under the proposed Rule particularly with private landowners. We see an incentive based approach much more viable than a punitive approach to this recovery. The Aubrey Valley success is an example.

AZSFWC also notes and supports the provision in the EA (p. 16) stipulating that "*Management of ferret reintroduction sites would not prohibit lethal control or shooting of prairie dogs.*"

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this rulemaking. We look forward to a successful recovery effort for this charismatic, keystone predator in Southwestern grassland ecosystems.

Yours in conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Unmacht", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jim Unmacht  
Executive Director

AZSFWC Support for Revision of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Black-Footed Ferrets - 8-24-21

Arizona Sportsmen for Wildlife Conservation  
PO Box 75731 New River, AZ 85087



**AZSFWC Member Organizations Supporting Revision of a  
Nonessential Experimental Population of Black-footed  
Ferrets in the Southwest**

Anglers United  
AZ Antelope Foundation  
AZ Bass Nation  
AZ Big Game Super Raffle  
AZ Bowhunters Association  
AZ Deer Association  
AZ Elk Society  
AZ Houndsmen Association  
AZ Outdoor Adventures  
AZ Outdoor Sports  
AZ Predator Callers  
AZ State Chapter of NWTf  
AZ State Chapter of SCI  
Ben Avery Clay Busters  
Christian Hunters of America  
Mohave Sportsman Club  
Outdoor Experience 4 All  
Southern AZ Quail Forever  
Southwest Wildlife Foundation  
SRT Outdoors  
The Bass Federation of AZ  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
Valley of the Sun Quail Forever  
Yuma Valley Rod & Gun Club