

**WILD HOPE**  
***America's BFF***

	<b>TIME CODE</b>	<b>VIDEO</b>	<b>AUDIO</b>
1.	01:00:00;20  01:00:06;17  01:00:12;13	<b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> 2:00am  <b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> Fort Belknap Reservation MONTANA	<b>TEVIN MESSERLY:</b>  Ferrets, they really need someone to take care of 'em. Conservation wise we need to save these animals.
2.	01:00:23;23	<b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> You see that over there?	<b>DAWN THOMAS:</b>  You see that over there?
3.	01:00:32;23		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  I think recovering ferrets, recovers something in ourselves. Bringing a piece of the prairie puzzle that's been missing for many, many years back into place.
4.	01:00:44;20		<b>WES SCHILLING:</b>  I just like being part of something that's bigger than myself. Something that helps us bring back a species that was almost extinct.
5.	01:00:57;14  01:01:01;13	<b>GRAPHIC: TITLE</b> WILD HOPE America's Black Footed Ferrets  America's BFF	<b>TITLE</b> America's Black-footed Ferrets  America's BFF

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6.		ACT ONE	ACT ONE
7.	01:01:09;22  01:01:23;10  01:01:23;11  01:01:28;07	<b>GRAPHICS ONSCREEN:</b> paradise  <b>GRAPHICS ONSCREEN:</b> prairiedise  <b>LOWER THIRD:</b> KRISTY BLY Biologist	<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  The prairie ecosystem, It's teaming with wildlife, from pronghorn to bison, swift foxes, burrowing owls. The grasslands to me are “prairiedise.” The whole ecosystem works together to support what is the heart of North America and the bread and butter basket for our country.
8.	01:01:37;03		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>BUT BENEATH WAVES OF PRAIRIE GRASSES, LIES AN UNLIKELY STORY OF EXTINCTION, RESILIENCE AND SECOND CHANCES.</b>
9.	01:01:47;22		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  We call 'em the masked bandits of the prairie.
10.	01:01:52;03		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>AT THE HEART OF THAT STORY: TWO ONCE ABUNDANT ANIMALS WITH DEEPLY INTERTWINED HISTORIES: THE PRAIRIE DOG— AND THE BLACK-FOOTED FERRET.</b>  <b>THE BLACK-FOOTED IS THE ONLY FERRET NATIVE TO NORTH AMERICA.</b>
11.	01:02:11;03		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  Black-footed ferrets are really cool, rowdy prairie

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			predators. And they are an integral part of the ecosystem to balance that delicate dance that keeps predator prey cycles in check.
12.	01:02:24;09		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>THEIR PRIMARY PREY IS THE PRAIRIE DOG A GROUND-DWELLING RELATIVE OF THE COMMON SQUIRREL.</b></p>
13.	01:02;33;10		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>Prairie dogs are the Chicken McNuggets of the prairie. They feed everything.</p>
14.	01:02:37;23		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>A SINGLE BLACK-FOOTED FERRET CAN EAT OVER 100 PRAIRIE DOGS A YEAR.</b></p> <p><b>BOBCATS, SWIFT FOXES, AND BIRDS OF PREY EAT THEM TOO. BUT BEFORE THEY BECOME DINNER, PRAIRIE DOGS SERVE ANOTHER IMPORTANT FUNCTION IN THE ECOSYSTEM.</b></p> <p><b>THEY ENGINEER MULTI-CHAMBERED BURROWS MEASURING UP TO 14 FEET (4.27m) DEEP AND 100 FEET (30.48m) LONG.</b></p> <p><b>THESE BURROWS ARE OFTEN DUG CLOSE TO THEIR NEIGHBORS, CREATING PRAIRIE DOG TOWNS THAT CAN SPAN THOUSANDS OF ACRES.</b></p>
15.	01:03:10;11		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>Out here on the prairie, shelter's found below ground, so animals like tiger salamanders, swift foxes, even rabbits, black-footed ferrets, rely on the burrow systems of prairie dogs for survival. Without the prairie dog in that ecosystem, nothing else exists.</p>

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16.	01:03:29;19		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>WITH THIS OUTSIZE INFLUENCE ON THEIR ECOSYSTEM, PRAIRIE DOGS ARE A KEYSTONE SPECIES ON THE GRASSLANDS.</b></p> <p><b>BUT EARLY EUROPEAN SETTLERS SAW THEM AS VERMIN— OCCUPYING LAND THAT COULD BE USED FOR AGRICULTURE AND COMPETING WITH CATTLE FOR GRASS.</b></p> <p><b>SHOOTING PRAIRIE DOGS WAS COMMON AND IN 1915, THE GOVERNMENT STARTED A WIDESPREAD POISONING CAMPAIGN.</b></p> <p><b>TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THE PRAIRIE WAS HIT BY A NON-NATIVE DISEASE CALLED SYLVATIC PLAGUE.</b></p>
17.	01:04:03;17		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>Sylvatic plague can kill an entire prairie dog colony within a matter of weeks. It can also kill black-footed ferrets.</p>
18.	01:04:10;23 01:04:12;10	<p><b>GRAPHIC:</b> Map of shrinking grasslands in North America</p>	<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SHRANK THE GRASSLAND BY MORE THAN HALF, AND THE DEADLY COMBINATION OF PLOWING, POISON AND PLAGUE WIPED OUT 95% OF PRAIRIE DOGS.</b></p> <p><b>WITHOUT THEM, THE PRAIRIE ECOSYSTEM COLLAPSED.</b></p>
19.	01:04:29;21		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>When we lost that prairie ecosystem, we lost ferrets too and that was pretty dire.</p>

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20.	01:04:38;01		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b> WHERE ONCE THERE HAD BEEN A MILLION OR MORE FERRETS, BY THE 1950'S NOT ONE COULD BE FOUND.</p> <p>OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS, THE SPECIES TEETERED ON THE BRINK. OCCASIONALLY SPOTTED, THEN PRESUMED EXTINCT.</p> <p>UNTIL 1981, WHEN A RANCH DOG IN WYOMING BROUGHT HOME A FERRET – AND REVEALED A SMALL POPULATION HANGING ON IN THE WILD.</p> <p>CONSERVATION EXPERTS WERE MOBILIZED, AND A RESCUE EFFORT FOR THE SPECIES BEGAN.</p>
21.	01:05:16;01		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>They captured 24 animals out of that population to bring into captivity and thankfully it was successful.</p>
22.	01:05:25;09  01:05:49;11	<p><b>LOWER THIRD:</b> ELIZABETH ANN First Cloned Ferret</p>	<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p>U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE, THE SMITHSONIAN ZOO AND ZOOS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA, URGENTLY JOINED FORCES TO START A BREEDING PROGRAM.</p> <p>RESEARCHERS CRYO-PRESERVED GENETIC MATERIAL FROM FOUNDER FERRETS, AND EVEN CREATED THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL CLONE OF A U.S. ENDANGERED SPECIES, NAMED ELIZABETH ANN.</p>



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24.	01:07:02;22		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>BUT TWO YEARS LATER, A NEW WAVE OF SYLVATIC PLAGUE HIT THE RESERVATION, WIPING OUT THE FERRETS AND MOST OF THEIR PRAIRIE DOG PREY, ONCE AGAIN.</b></p> <p><b>ANOTHER 13 YEARS WENT BY BEFORE NEW TOOLS TO MITIGATE SYLVATIC PLAGUE, INCLUDING VACCINES, MADE ANOTHER REINTRODUCTION ATTEMPT POSSIBLE.</b></p>
25.	01:07:31;04		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>All right.</p>
26.	01:07:33;17		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>THE TRIBES APPROACHED THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND TO HELP WITH THE EFFORT. BIOLOGIST KRISTY BLY ANSWERED THE CALL.</b></p>
27.	01:07:42;06		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>The purpose is to line the inside of every prairie dog burrow in this colony to mitigate plague to advance ferret recovery.</p>
28.	01:07:52;01  01:08:09;13	<p><b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> 2013</p>	<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>THE TEAM DUSTS EACH <i>PRAIRIE DOG</i> BURROW WITH A WATERPROOF INSECTICIDE THAT KILLS THE FLEAS THAT CARRY THE DISEASE.</b></p> <p><b>WITH REGULAR DUSTINGS, THE PRAIRIE DOG POPULATION REBOUNDED, AND THE GRASSLANDS WERE ONCE AGAIN READY FOR THE MASKED BANDITS' RETURN.</b></p>

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		Fort Belknap Reservation, MT	
29.	01:08:15;00 01:08:16;13	<b>LOWER THIRD:</b> RANDY PEREZ Fort Belknap Tribal Council Member	<b>RANDY PEREZ:</b>  Today is a blessed day for the reservation and for the people that work so hard to bring an endangered species, a black-footed ferret back to the reservation here.
30.	01:08:31;01		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>THIS TIME AROUND, THE TRIBE WAS TAKING NO CHANCES WITH ANOTHER WAVE OF SYLVATIC PLAGUE.</b>  <b>THESE FERRETS AND PRAIRIE DOGS WERE NOT GOING TO BE LEFT TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES – BUT DUSTING ALONE WAS NOT A VIABLE LONG-TERM SOLUTION.</b>
31.	01:08:47;02		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  Sylvatic plague is the single largest threat to the recovery of black-footed ferrets today. If you think about covering all this area on foot, all these burrows, it can take weeks to do that. We need to scale up our ability to protect them from plague in ways that are more cost efficient and labor friendly.
32.			<b>ACT TWO</b>
33.	01:09:15;04		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF IDEAS. EXPERTS ARE DEVELOPING A HOST OF CREATIVE STRATEGIES TO FIGHT PLAGUE IN BOTH FERRETS AND PRAIRIE DOGS.</b>

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			<b>FIRST, FLEA KILLING AGENTS DISGUISED AS THE PERFECT SNACK FOR A PRAIRIE DOG.</b>
34.	01:09:30;13		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b> Peanut butter flavored “fipbits”, is what we call them.
35.	01:09:35;05		<b>NARRATOR:</b> <b>USING ATVS, FIELD TEAMS CAN TREAT ABOUT 50 ACRES (4046.86 square meter) PER HOUR. AND AREAS INACCESSIBLE BY ATV ARE HANDLED BY BAIT-LOADED DRONES THAT CAN DROP A PELLET A SECOND.</b>  <b>“FIPBITS” HAVE THE POWER TO PROTECT PRAIRIE DOGS FROM PLAGUE FOR UP TO TWO YEARS – AND THE PELLETS WILL SOON BE USED AT PRAIRIE DOG TOWNS AROUND BLACK-FOOTED FERRET SITES ACROSS NORTH AMERICA.</b>  <b>BECAUSE WHEN YOU SAVE THE FOOD, YOU TAKE AN IMPORTANT STEP TO SAVING THE FERRET.</b>  <b>BUT THE TEAMS ALSO NEED TO DIRECTLY PROTECT THE FERRETS THEMSELVES.</b>
36.	01:10:24;22		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  We want to make sure that all wild born ferrets are also vaccinated against plague.
37.	01:10:33;18		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>AT FORT BELKNAP, THEY ESTIMATE THERE ARE PERHAPS 20 WILD-BORN KITS AND EVEN MORE UNVACCINATED ADULTS OUT ON THE PROWL.</b>

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			<b>VACCINATING THEM IS NO EASY FEAT.</b>
38.	01:10:48;01	<b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> 10:30 PM	<b>KRISTY BLY:</b> Wait, let's talk about who's going where.
39.	01:10:50;00	<b>LOWER THIRD:</b> TEVIN MESSERLY Wildlife Biologist  Fort Belknap Fish and Wildlife Department	<b>TEVIN MESSERLY:</b>  If someone could do this north side and then someone could split down the middle on the south side of the road.
40.	01:10:55;02		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  Okay, so a three-way. Black-footed ferrets are nocturnal and we must go out at night to look for them. Tonight, we have four teams out spotlighting and we have 3,500 acres (14.16 square kilometer) to cover. We have partnered with Aaniiih Nakoda College to help with monitoring this population of black-footed ferrets. We wanted to make sure that we had students learning and leading this project from the very beginning.
41.	01:11:30;16	<b>LOWER THIRD:</b> DAWN THOMAS Intern	<b>DAWN THOMAS:</b> Aaniiih Nakoda is the name of the two tribes that make up Fort Belknap. This is just my home, like this is where I'll probably always be. I guess just keeping it intact.
42.	01:11:49;15	<b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> 2:30 AM	<b>KRISTY BLY:</b> Finding ferrets involves spotlights mounted to the roof of a truck, looking for their notorious green eye shine.
43.	01:12:05;01	<b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b> You'll be able to see 'em between 2:00 to 5:00 am	<b>TEVIN MESSERLY:</b>  You'll be able to see 'em between 2:00 to 5:00 AM.

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44.	01:12:10;21		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>IF THEY'RE LUCKY.</b></p> <p><b>THE SPOTLIGHT ONLY WORKS IF THE FERRET IS LOOKING IN THEIR DIRECTION.</b></p> <p><b>THE FORT BELKNAP TEAM ALSO USE THERMAL CAMERAS, WHICH CAN DETECT THE HEAT SIGNATURE OF ANY WARM- BLOODED MAMMAL UP TO 1500 FEET (457m) AWAY.</b></p> <p><b>ONE IS MOUNTED ON A TOWER. THE OTHER GOES AIRBORNE.</b></p>
45.	01:12:36;14		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>We will be flying a drone mounted with a thermal camera, to see where ferrets are on the landscape.</p>
46.	01:12:48;00		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>TECHNOLOGIST SHAWN JEPSON CONTROLS THE TOWER-CAM WHILE ECOLOGIST JESSE BOULERICE GIVES THE TEAM A BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE PRAIRIE.</b></p> <p><b>THEY'LL SOUND THE ALARM THE MOMENT THEY SPY A FERRET.</b></p>
47.	01:13:04;06	<p><b>LOWER THIRD:</b> SHAWN JEPSON Technologist</p>	<p><b>SHAWN JEPSON:</b></p> <p>It sees heat instead of light and if a ferret sticks its head up, then we can see it.</p>

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48.	01:13:14;02	<p><b>LOWER THIRD:</b> JESSE BOULERICE Research Ecologist</p> <p>Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute</p>	<p><b>JESSE BOULERICE:</b></p> <p>Can usually tell 'em apart by their kinda their body movements. They sort of bound up and down like a big slinky.</p>
49.	01:13:28;13		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>FINALLY, THEIR FIRST FERRET OF THE NIGHT.</b></p>
50.	01:13:32;03		<p><b>SHAWN JEPSON:</b></p> <p>Oh, I see him. I see him.</p>
51.	01:13:42;07		<p><b>JESSE BOULERICE:</b></p> <p>We have a confirmed sighting on a ferret. I'll send you the coordinates.</p>
52.	01:13:51;09	<p><b>TEXT ON SCREEN:</b></p> <p>Let's hope it doesn't run. Trap, marker and reader... So this one is a pretty big burrow.</p>	<p><b>TEVIN MESSERLY:</b></p> <p>Now, let's hope it doesn't run. Trap, marker and reader. So this one is a pretty big burrow.</p>
53.	01:14:11;02		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>AS IF FINDING THE FERRETS ISN'T HARD ENOUGH, THE GROUND TEAM NOW HAS TO TRAP IT.</b></p>
54.	01:14:17;01		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>So, this time of the night, most of the Black-footed ferrets are hunting prairie dogs so they are coming away from their home burrows in search of food. Then</p>

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			we set the live trap down into the burrow, and we keep it covered so that it seems dark like the extension of the prairie dog burrow. So, we're hoping that this is not his home burrow and he'll wanna come out very quickly.
55.	01:14:49;00		<b>NARRATOR:</b> <b>TONIGHT THEY'RE IN LUCK.</b>
56.	01:14:52;00		<b>TEVIN MESSERLY:</b> Grab the reader, and the other marker. Trap.
57.	01:14:55;11		<b>NARRATOR:</b> <b>WITH THE FERRET SAFELY IN THE TRAP, IT'S TIME FOR A HANDOFF.</b>
58.	01:15:04;08		<b>JESSICA ALEXANDER:</b> No she certainly does not.
59.			<b>ACT THREE</b>
60.	01:15:04;20		<b>NARRATOR:</b> <b>KRISTY AND BIOLOGIST JESSICA ALEXANDER PREPARE TO VACCINATE THE PATIENT AND IMPLANT A TINY TRACKER CHIP.</b>
61.	01:15:13;23		<b>JESSICA ALEXANDER:</b> There, now you're thinking about it. There she goes. I keep her covered just to keep her stress levels down.
62.	01:15:22;14		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b> You're at two and a half minutes.
63.	01:15:25;12		<b>JESSICA ALEXANDER:</b>

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			All right. She's on the mask. Kristy.
64.	01:15:28;03		<b>KRISTY BLY:</b>  Alright, I'm gonna give her the pit tag now.
65.	01:15:32;05		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>THE PIT TAG IS A TINY TRANSMITTER THAT GIVES EACH FERRET A UNIQUE ID NUMBER.</b>
66.	01:15:38;04	<b>LOWER THIRD:</b> JESSICA ALEXANDER  Wildlife Biologist  Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute	<b>JESSICA ALEXANDER:</b>  From now on we'll be able to follow her through her lifetime out here on the prairie.
67.	01:15:45;13		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>FINALLY, THE VACCINE.</b>
68.	01:15:53;21		<b>JESSICA ALEXANDER:</b>  I'm going to give her a dye mark here on her neck. This way the spotlighters will be able to see that she's already gotten all our vaccines and won't have to come back. Then, she's all done.
69.	01:16:12;00		<b>NARRATOR:</b>  <b>WITHIN MINUTES, VACCINATION IS COMPLETE, AND THIS YOUNG FEMALE FERRET IS AWAKE AND READY TO BE RELEASED.</b>
70.	01:16:21;01		<b>SHAWN JEPSON:</b>  And there it goes. Home sweet home.

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71.	01:16:27;05		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>THIS SEASON, THE TEAM VACCINATED 22 FERRETS AT FORT BELKNAP.</b></p> <p><b>ACROSS THE COUNTRY, SIMILAR PROGRAMS ARE HELPING WILD FERRETS THRIVE.</b></p>
72.	01:16:37;00		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>We estimate as of fall last year to be about 390 ferrets in the wild in North America.</p>
73.	01:16:45;13		<p><b>NARRATOR:</b></p> <p><b>BUT THIS ACHIEVEMENT GOES WELL BEYOND SAVING A SINGLE SPECIES.</b></p>
74.	01:16:50;19		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>When you bring ferrets back, you've got a functional prairie ecosystem that's been missing for many, many years.</p>
75.	01:16:58;13		<p><b>DAWN THOMAS:</b></p> <p>This is really good experience for me, working with the black-footed ferrets and it just gives you hope.</p>
76.	01:17:07;19		<p><b>KRISTY BLY:</b></p> <p>My biggest hope for this species is that they are recovered. We have the tools in order to do that, and we have the people committed to their recovery.</p>
77.	01:17:24;08	<b>GRAPHICS ONSCREEN: CREDITS</b>	
78.	<b>TRT:</b> 00:18:10;08		<b>OUT</b>

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