

Barbara Sugarman, M.S. Thesis Candidate



I am from sunny San Diego, California. I earned my undergraduate degree studying Forestry at Northern Arizona University; since then, I have lived in Colorado and Utah. I have always been interested in nature and wildlife since early childhood. As my education progressed, I fell in love with wildlife management, specifically conservation. My particular area of interest is in small mammals, although I also enjoy working with other animals. I primarily have experience working with various prairie dog species (*Cynomys spp.*), black-footed ferrets (*Mustela nigripes*) and American pika (*Ochotona princeps*). Previous to starting at Borderlands Research Institute, I worked at the Utah

Division of Wildlife Resources as a wildlife technician for two years, working towards the conservation of the federally threatened Utah prairie dog (*Cynomys parvidens*). In my personal life, I love to hike with my dog Champ, backpack in remote places, travel both domestically and internationally with my fiancé Patrick, and ski.

Thesis Project: Black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) restoration via translocation in the Trans-Pecos ecoregion

In the last 100 years, the prairie dog population has declined dramatically due to poisoning, shooting, sylvatic plague (*Yersinia pestis*), and loss of available habitat. As a result, many scientists and wildlife managers are researching how to restore this keystone species back into the ecosystem. Prairie dog translocation is a natural extension of this research, moving prairie dogs from a large, healthy colony, to an area that wildlife managers and landowners want to establish prairie dogs. The Borderlands Research Institute is working to fill the void of knowledge of how to successfully establish a prairie dog colony. The goal of this project is to successfully translocate prairie dogs and establish a colony that persists on the landscape. This project will assist wildlife managers with future successful translocations of prairie dogs and allow for the restoration of this amazing ecosystem engineer.



CONSERVING THE LAST FRONTIER