



## Prairie Dog Removal

Prairie dogs typically inhabit the eastern third of Colorado, including urban areas. If a construction project will impact a prairie dog colony, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Contractor, Kiewit Meridiam Partners (KMP) will work closely with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to determine the most appropriate way to handle the prairie dogs. Live relocation is CDOT's preference; however, when live relocation is not possible due to inability to find a suitable relocation site or obtain a wild-to-wild permit from Colorado Parks and Wildlife, then CDOT will donate to raptor or endangered species recovery programs.

The removal of the prairie dogs will occur in various locations along Interstate 70 so expect to see trucks in the area as this activity continues. Live traps will be used in this process and will be monitored throughout the day to release any non-target wildlife from the traps. The prairie dogs will then be transported directly to the truck and, to reduce stress, humanely euthanized on site.

At the end of each removal process, the prairie dogs will be donated to the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (RMRP) in Fort Collins. The RMRP staff are licensed wildlife rehabilitators with permits from the State of Colorado and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. For 33 years RMRP has aided sick, injured and orphaned birds. This bird rehabilitation program currently:

- Admits about 300 raptors each year.
- Has eight staff members and nearly 140 active volunteers providing critical rehabilitative care.
- Contributes more than 44,000 volunteer hours per year, averaging more than 120 hours each day, an amount equal to 22 employees.
- Releases 80 percent of treatable birds back into the wild.