

## Prairie Rattlesnake *Crotalus viridis*

**Habitat Preference:** Large open areas of grassland

### Threats:

- Disappearance of natural habitat
  - Conversion of prairie to cultivated ground.
  - Tree invasion will cause shade which will deter use by prairie rattlesnakes.
- Invasion of non-native plants.
- Over grazing will eliminate areas for prairie rattlesnakes to find shade during mid-day in the summer.



### Habitat Improvement Guidelines:

- Prescribed burns should be done in order to keep grassland habitat healthy. Avoid burning during snake's active period (late April through October).
- Remove encroaching woody species while snakes are inactive.
- Repeated haying will deter use by prairie rattlesnakes
- Mowing can create areas of open vegetation for basking but should be done while snakes are inactive. If mowing during the active period it is essential to keep the blade above four inches. Mow only during mid day when temperatures are above 85 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Grazing can be an important in keeping open areas for basking. Any grazing that takes place in an area of a known population of prairie rattlesnake should follow a grazing management plan.