



Wildlife Management Division

E-PLUS 19.30.5 NMAC

**State Game Commission Meeting
November 30, 2018
Roswell, NM**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nine Public Meetings

- Raton, Socorro, Ruidoso, Espanola, Quemado, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Roswell and Las Cruces
- 455 attendees signed up

Written Comments

- 263 submissions

Major Comments

- Overall Support of Proposal (60)
- Oppose Proposal (5)
- Oppose OTC (9)
- Minimum Acres (4)
- GMU 12 COER (32)
- Unit Wide Maps (11)
- No E-PLUS (3)
- Not related (29)

INTRODUCTION TO EPLUS

- E-PLUS was developed in 2005 to:
 - Recognize, “Landowners who provide meaningful benefit to elk and accept elk on their properties and all elk hunters who wish to recreate on deeded lands or public lands within New Mexico’s exterior boundaries.” (19.30.5.2 NMAC)

Propose to Define MEANINGFUL BENEFIT (Inside COER):

- Guidelines developed by the Department and adopted by the Commission
- Properties will be evaluated to ensure they make a Meaningful Benefit according to guidelines



Propose to Define MEANINGFUL BENEFIT (Inside COER):

Determining “meaningful benefit”

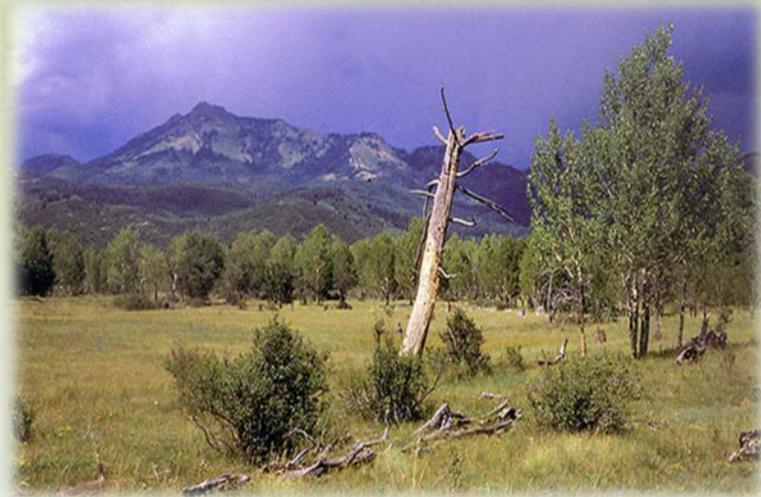
- Biologically founded
- Simple/Consistent
- Defendable
- Captures intent of the rule
- Recordable (create form)



SCORING SYSTEM

Forage: (Including agriculture)

- 0 = No meaningful forage is available or forage is in the form of a lawn or lawn shrubs, gardens, flowers or other ornamental plantings. (Extremely rocky terrain; sandy, bare soils; thick timber with no understory)
- 1 = Marginal forage is available. (Sparse bunchgrasses, scrub habitat, moderately timbered areas with some forage potential)
- 2 = Moderate forage is available. (Open upland grasslands or open savanna-like forest/woodland, dense bunch grass)
- 3 = Substantial forage is available. (Grass meadows, bottomlands and riparian areas)
- Forage Score: _____



SCORING SYSTEM

Water: (Water should be located on a property where it is readily available for use by elk.)

- 0 = No water is available for elk use. (Includes a water hydrant near or attached to a building or utilization of an exposed or manual hose system)
- 1 = Some water is available throughout at least one season by natural sources or by an established system that can be turned on or off.
- 2 = Water is available throughout at least any two seasons on a consistent basis.
- 3 = Permanent, year round water is available.
- Water Score: _____



SCORING SYSTEM

Cover:

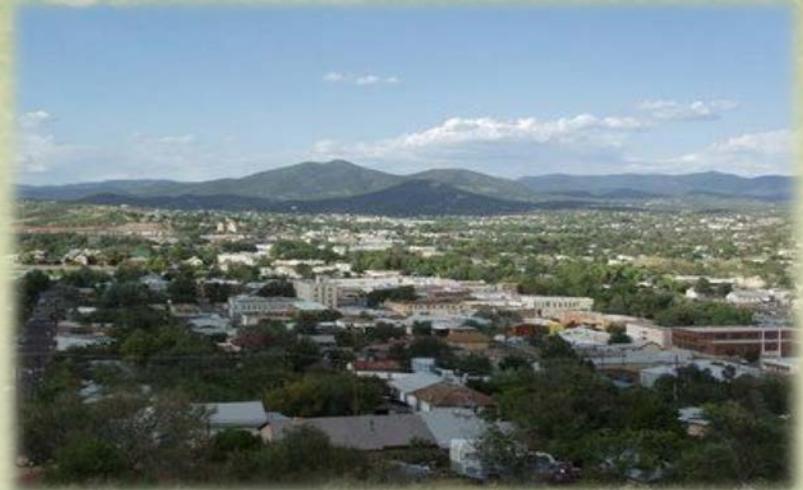
- 0 = No meaningful cover is provided on the property. (Or cover is compromised by houses, buildings, driveways and/or other disturbances)
- 1 = Poor cover components are provided on the property. (Thin cover or small areas of cover)
- 2 = Good cover components are provided on the property.
- Cover Score: _____



SCORING SYSTEM

Surrounding Area:

- 0 = Surrounding area is encumbered with human activity, highly developed with houses/buildings and vehicular byways seriously altering or inhibiting elk use and/or travel.
- 1= Surrounding area has low human activity with low numbers of buildings or vehicular byways and having some impact on elk use and travel.
- 2 = Surrounding area is remote and unencumbered by human activity having no impact on elk use and travel.
- Surrounding Area Score: _____



SCORING SYSTEM

Agriculture: (Bonus)

- 0 = No agriculture - Native grasses; unimproved pasture grasses; routinely unharvested or un-grazed with minimal harvest opportunity.
- 1 = Agriculture – Marginally productive, dry/unirrigated type or routinely harvested crop.
- 2 = Agriculture – Productive, maintained (irrigated, cultivated, fertilized, etc.), yearly harvestable crop.
- Agriculture Score: _____



SCORING SYSTEM

Added Bonus: (For considerations not captured elsewhere.)

- 0 = No special considerations.
- 1 = Special consideration exists.

(The “Added Bonus” category may also be awarded for a property’s proximity to habitat features nearby [generally within ½ mile] but not actually on the property being evaluated. A combination of considerations may be utilized including increasing an area’s ability to be accessed and hunted.)

- 1 = Additional considerations exist.

An additional bonus point for other meaningful benefits. This may include large blocks of contiguous habitat that may be important for seasonal elk use or population management (i.e. winter range, calving areas, migration routes, etc.). This point may also be awarded for increased access for hunting.

- Added Bonus Score: ____ (not to exceed two)



RECOMMENDED SCORE

Department recommends to the Commission a property habitat score of 7 as a minimum score for participation in E-PLUS.



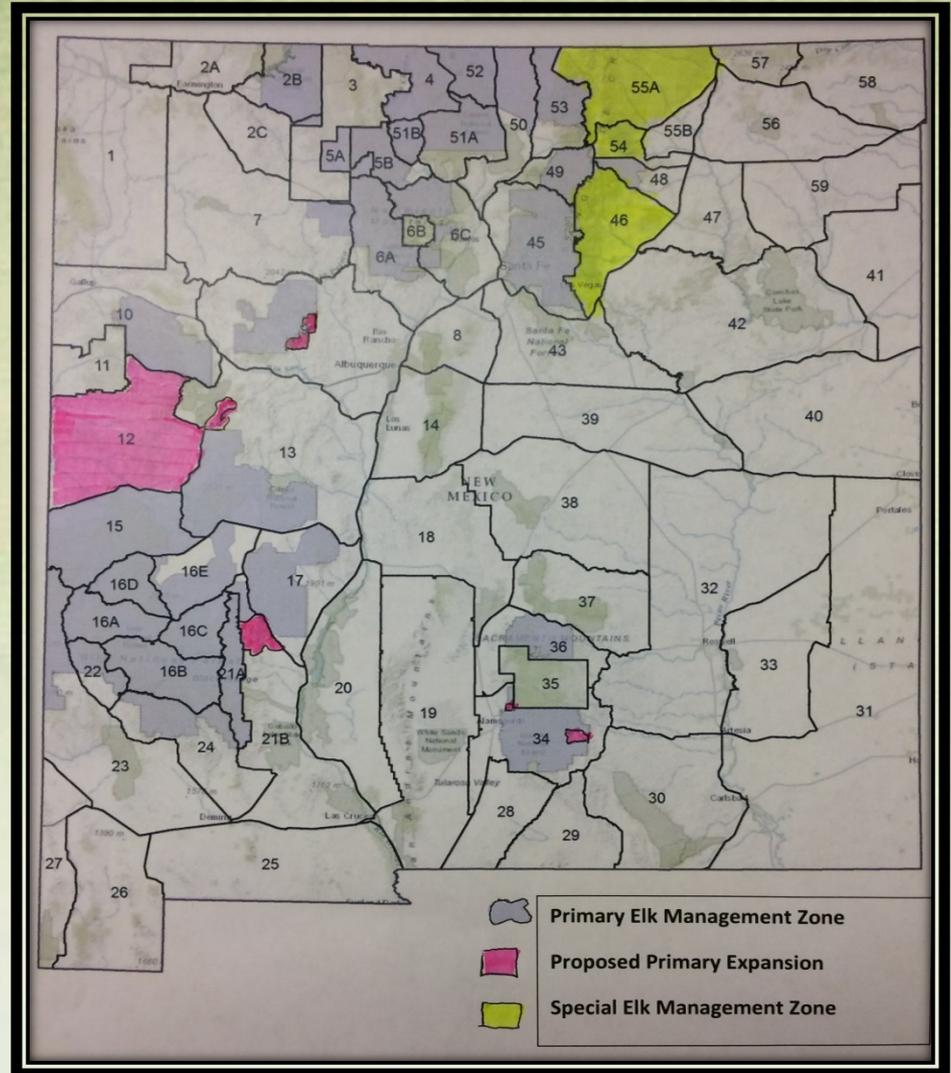
APPEAL/REVIEW PROCESS

- Landowner receives DNQ letter and Objection Form
- E-PLUS Manager reviews objection
- Officer/Biologists makes on-site visit

- Landowner requests Division review
 - WMD Chief/Asst. Chief reviews to assure guidelines were properly followed and applied
- Director makes determination on Division review.
- Landowner can appeal final Department decision to Commission.

Proposed Elk Management Zones

- **Primary Elk Management Zone:**
 - Where license numbers are set by Commission
 - Harvest objectives are biologically determined
 - Distribution of tags strictly regulated
- **Special Management Zone:**
 - Largely or completely private.
 - Don't fit into the formula based license allocation process
 - Other special management considerations may exist
 - Managed on a Ranch-to-Ranch basis
- **Secondary Elk Management Zone:**
 - License numbers not set on private land



Proposed Changes for Primary Zone (Currently defined as “inside COER”)

- Utilize habitat scoring tool to screen properties
- Implement scoring process retroactively
- Allocate Unconverted Rate and Bonus through SCR properties first



- Eliminate draw history system
- Weight SCR draw based on property habitat score
- All acre alterations are subject to re-evaluation
- Expand Primary (COER) Zone boundaries in Units 9, 13, 21B and 34
- Include GMU 12 as Primary (COER) Zone

Proposed Changes Secondary Zone

(Currently defined as “outside COER”)

- Make tags available OTC for private land through registered landowners
- Private land tags transferrable with written permission
- All tags either-sex or antlerless

- Consistent season dates and weapon type across the Secondary Zone
 - Sept. 1-24 Archery
 - Oct. 1-Dec. 31 Rifle
 - Any 5 days
- Exceptions on a case by case basis

Questions?



ACRES: 17

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	3
WATER	1
COVER	0
AREA	2
AG	2
BONUS	0
TOTAL	8



Google Earth

ACRES: 60

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	2
WATER	0
COVER	0
AREA	2
AG	1
BONUS	1
TOTAL	6

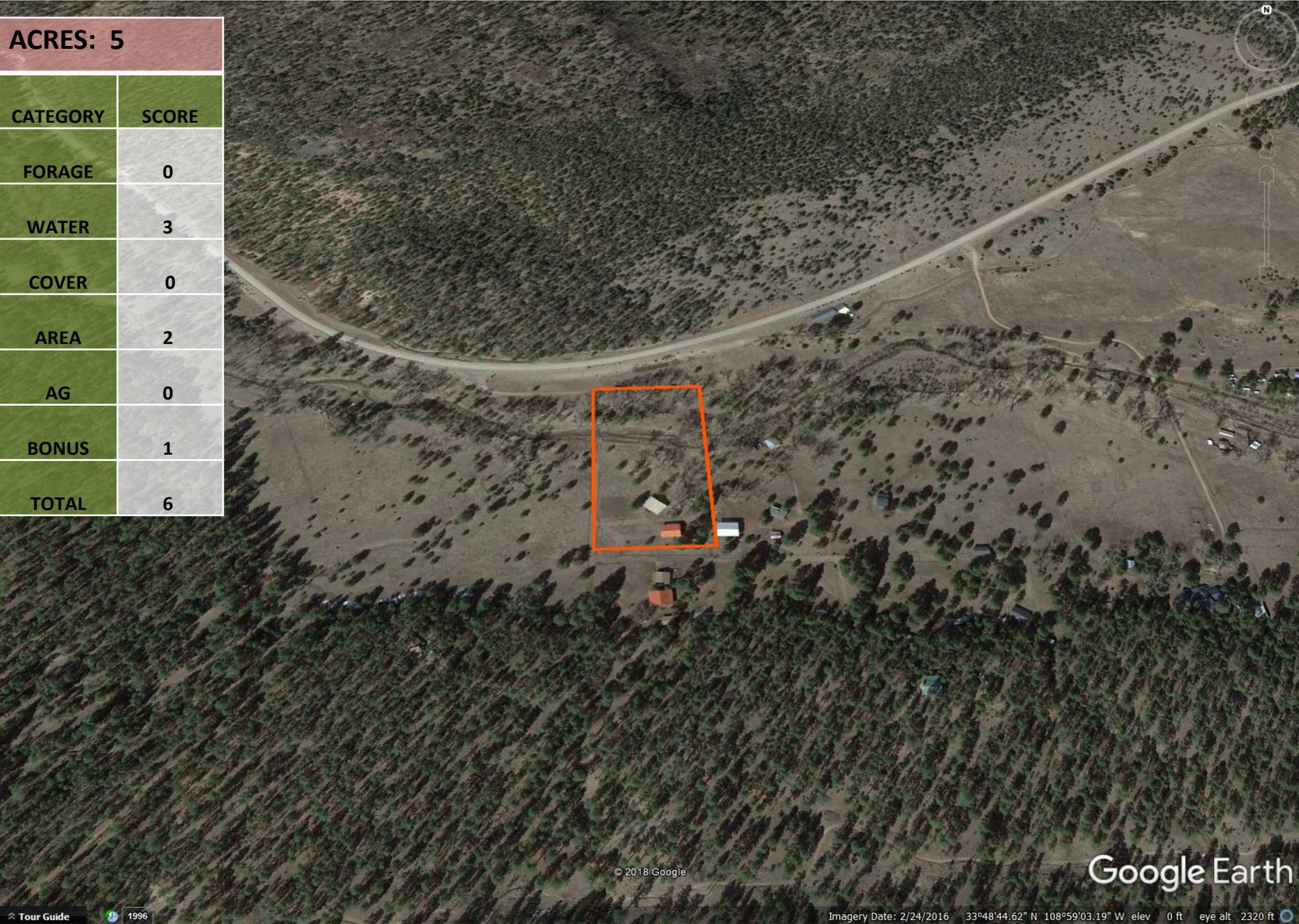


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ACRES: 5

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	0
WATER	3
COVER	0
AREA	2
AG	0
BONUS	1
TOTAL	6

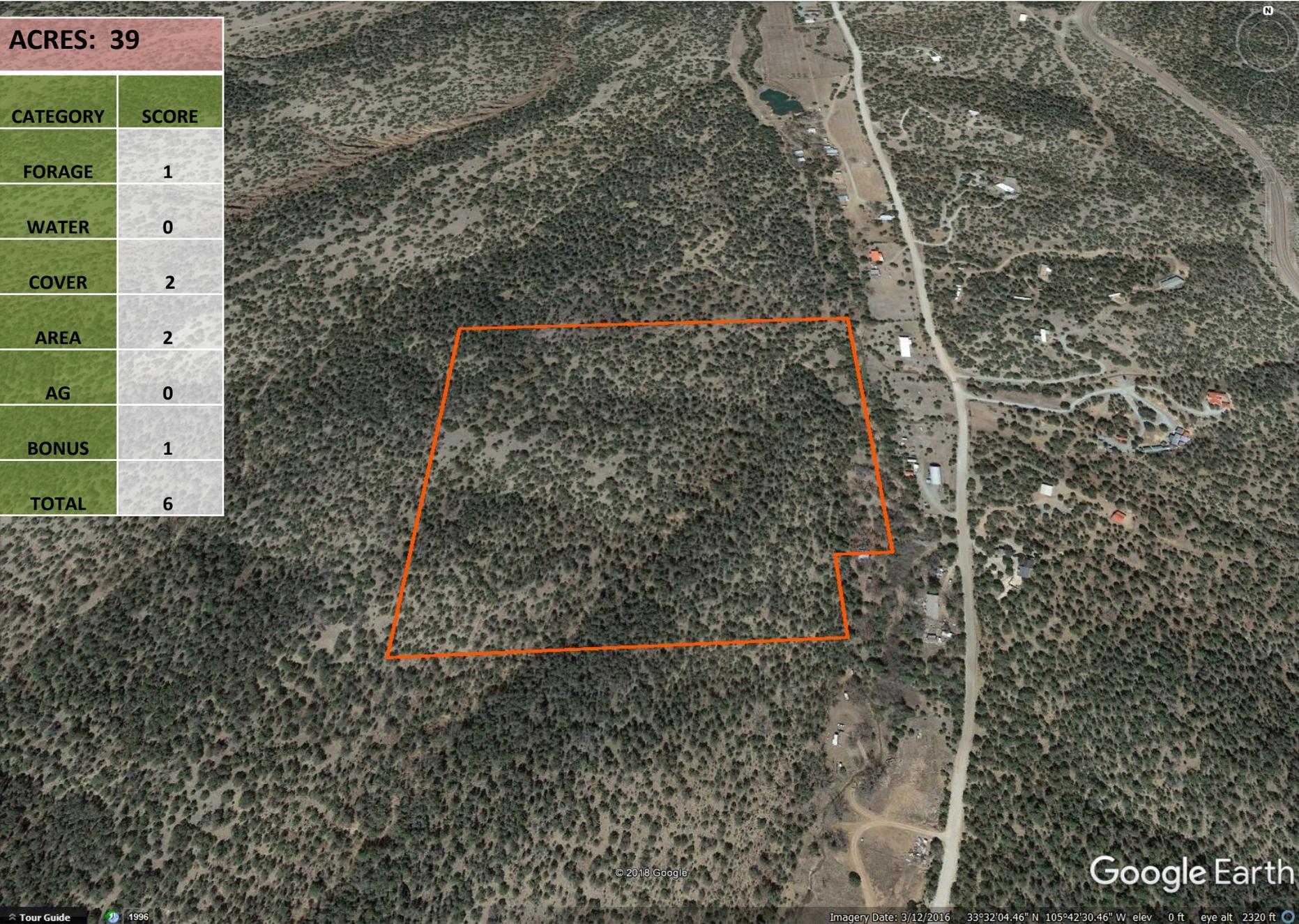


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ACRES: 39

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	1
WATER	0
COVER	2
AREA	2
AG	0
BONUS	1
TOTAL	6

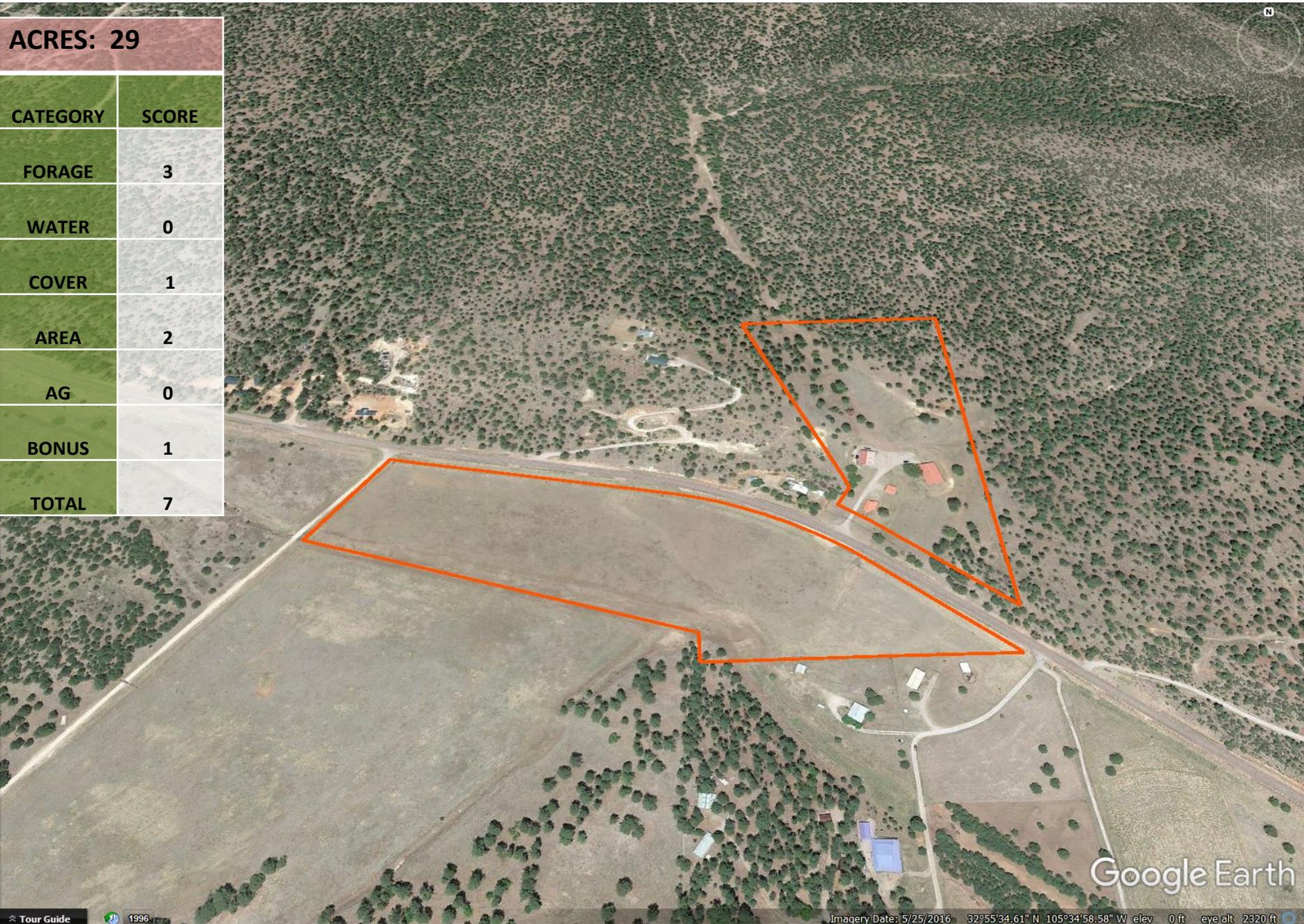


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ACRES: 29

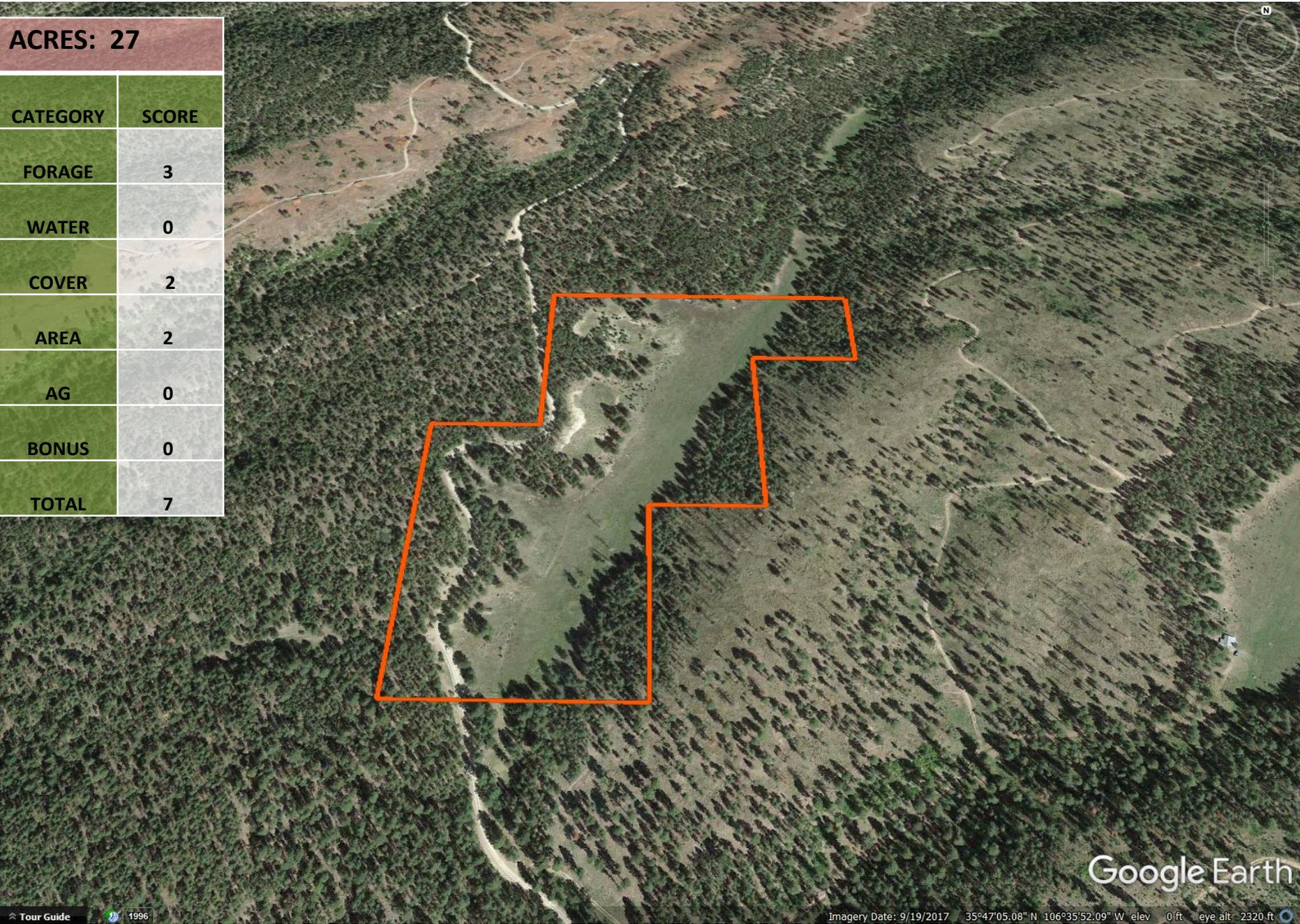
CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	3
WATER	0
COVER	1
AREA	2
AG	0
BONUS	1
TOTAL	7



Google Earth

ACRES: 27

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	3
WATER	0
COVER	2
AREA	2
AG	0
BONUS	0
TOTAL	7



Google Earth

Land Type Breakdown

Land Type	Acres	Percent
PRIVATE	866,183	57%
PUBLIC	647,187	43%
TOTAL	1,513,370	100%

Accessibility

Owner	Access Questionable	Accessible by Public	Total	Percent Accessible
BLM	12,638	336,193	348,831	96.37%
STATE	59,518	238,838	298,356	80.05%
TOTAL	72,156	575,031	647,187	88.85%

