

EPLUS

Elk Private Land Use System



INTRODUCTION - Current Status

Over 4000 private properties participating in the EPLUS program statewide

13,000 Licenses sold through EPLUS

PMZ – Primary Management Zone
SPZ – Special Management Zone
SMZ – Secondary Management Zone

2019 EPLUS Enrollment	
PMZ Base Active Ranches (30%)	773
PMZ SCR Active Ranches (70%)	1780
Total PMZ Active Ranches	2553
SPZ Total Active Ranches	771
SMZ Total Active Ranches	790
Total EPLUS Active Ranches	4114

INTRODUCTION – EPLUS Rule

- EPLUS 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)
- November 2018 new EPLUS Rule adopted.

ISSUES WITH PREVIOUS SYSTEM

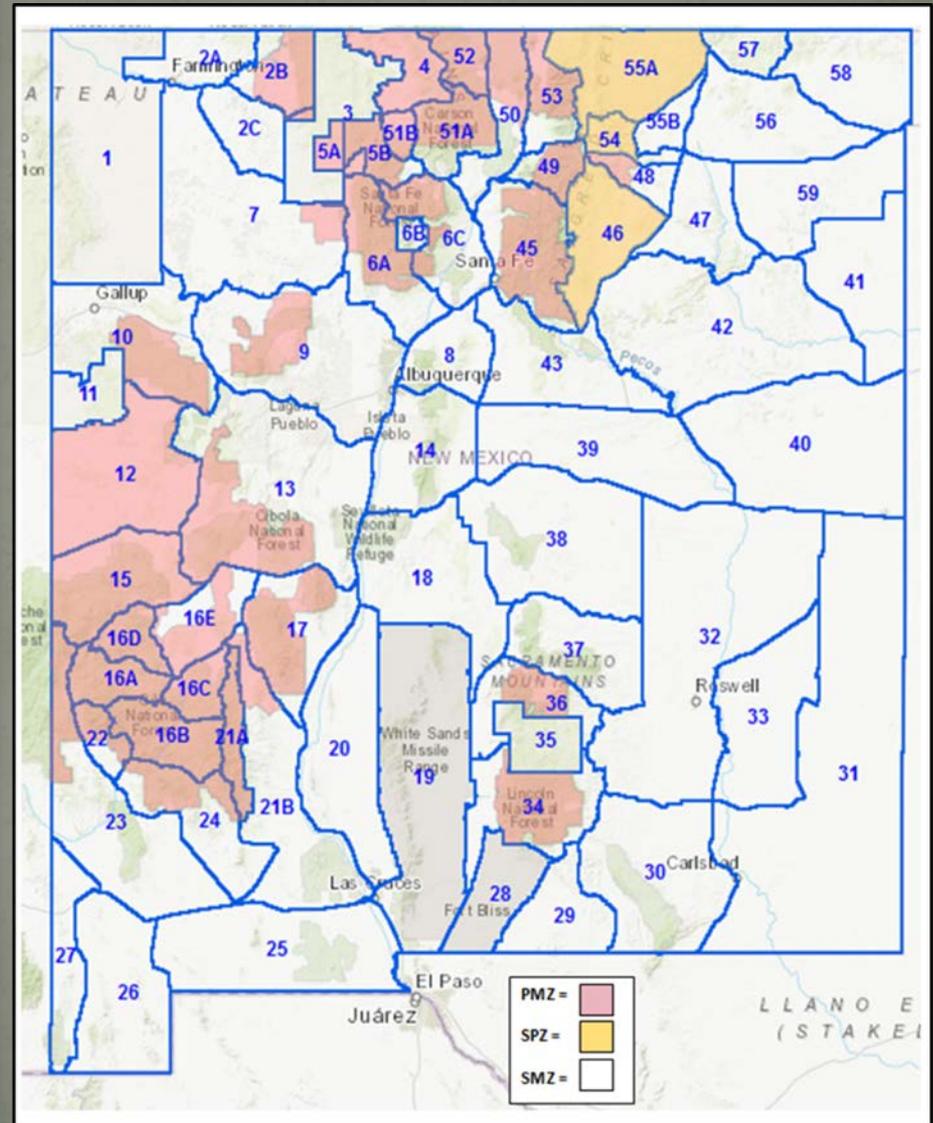
- More properties competing for a limited resource
- Annual new applications were increasing (350+/yr.)
- Increase in smaller properties enrolling
- Unconverted and Bonus authorizations going to base properties that may not use them

ISSUES WITH PREVIOUS SYSTEM

- Many marginal properties were in the program (not providing “meaningful benefit”)
- Encouraged splitting properties
- Long wait for SCR properties to get tags
- Special/Secondary Zone unconverted rate was high

Created Elk Management Zones

- **Primary Management Zone:**
 - Where license numbers are set by Commission
 - Distribution of tags strictly regulated
- **Special Management Zone:**
 - Largely or completely private
 - Managed on a Ranch-to-Ranch basis
- **Secondary Elk Management Zone:**
 - License numbers not set on private land
 - Register Ranch – Ranch Code
 - Licenses Over-the-Counter



PRIMARY ZONE Operation

- Ranches apply through EPLUS
- Ranches evaluated by participation guidelines
- Licenses divided by Public/Private Split
- Private licenses allocated through acre based formula

- Option to sign up as Ranch-only or Unit-wide
- Ranches can join to form Co-ops
- License numbers evaluated on 4 year cycle



CHANGES FOR PRIMARY ZONE

- Implemented scoring process retroactively
- Allocated Unconverted and Bonus authorizations through SCR properties first

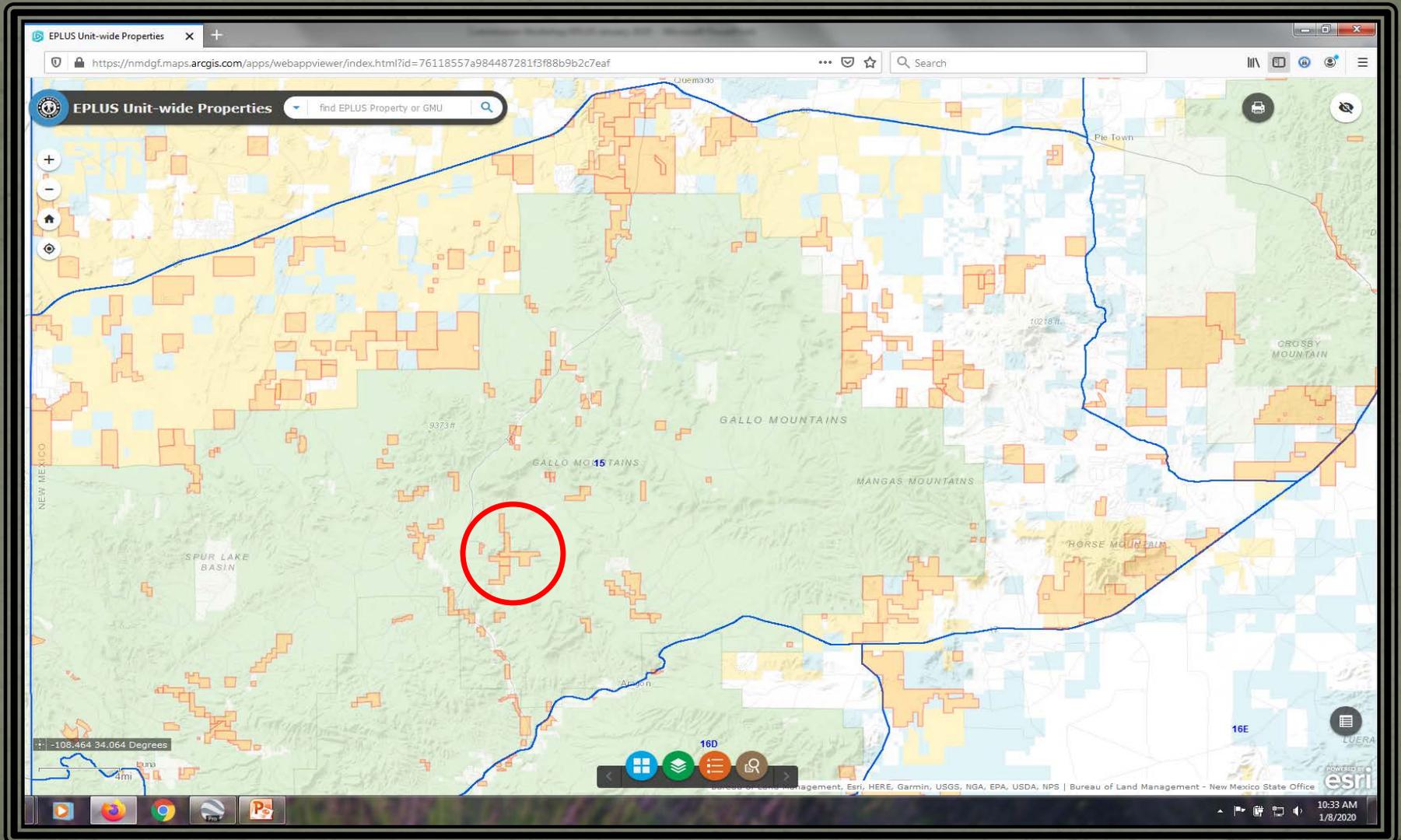


- Eliminated draw history system for SCRs
- Implemented random, weighted SCR draw based on property habitat score
- All acre alterations are subject to re-evaluation
- Expanded Primary Zone boundaries in Units 9, 13, 21B and 34
- Included GMU 12 as Primary Zone

PMZ RANCH DOCUMENTS AUDIT

- Ranch Files needed updated
 - Confirm ownership
 - Confirm location
 - Confirm Authorized Ranch Contact
 - Prepare for Unit-wide ranches to go online
- 964 Updated Documents Requests sent from 2018-2019
- 870 responded with new documents
- 94 Ranches pending removal
- Accurate Unit-wide ranch boundaries now on file

UNIT-WIDE RANCHES ONLINE (PMZ)



UNIT-WIDE RANCHES ONLINE - PMZ

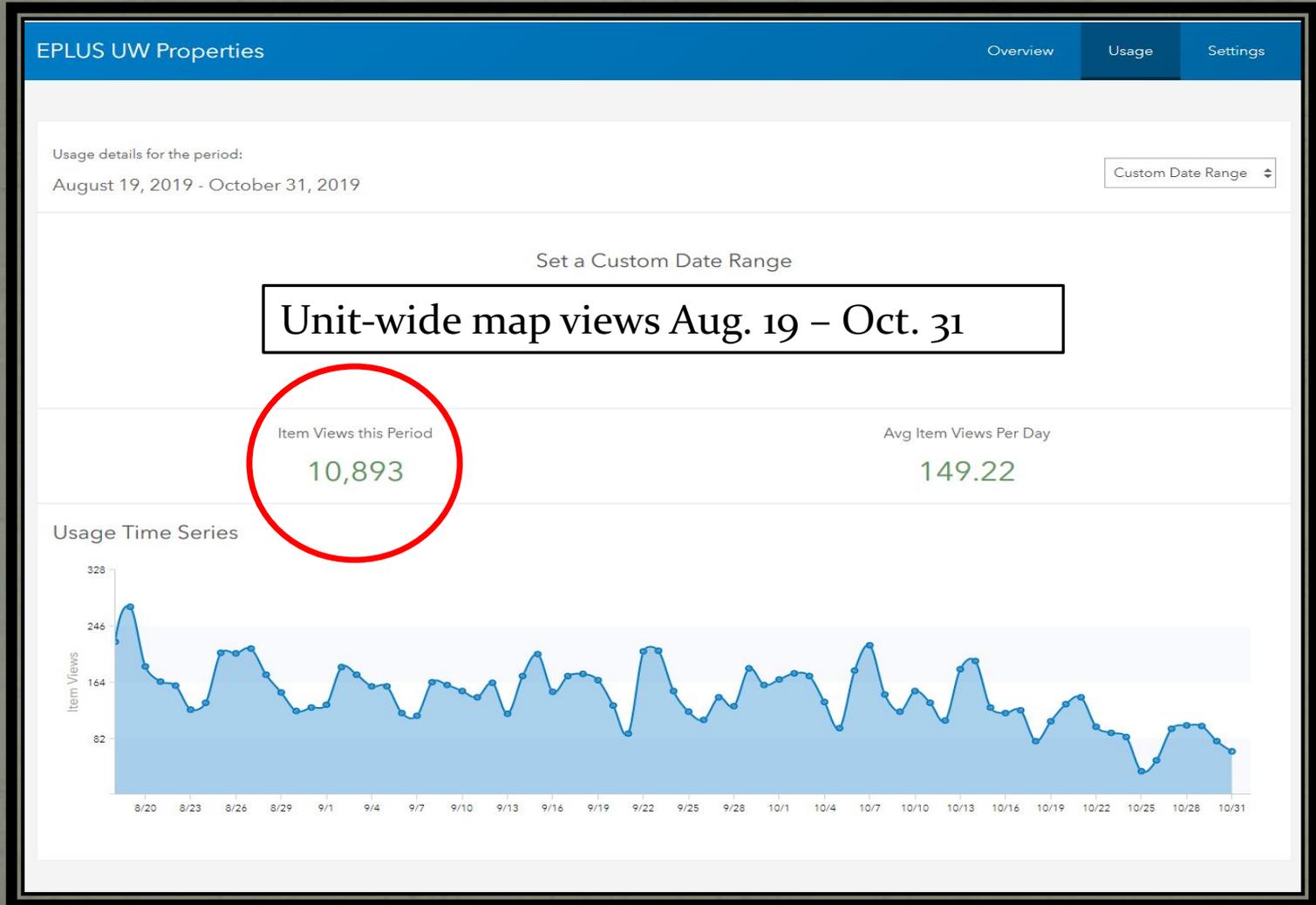
The screenshot displays the EPLUS Unit-wide Properties web application. The browser address bar shows the URL: <https://nmdgf.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=76118557a984487281f3f88b9b2c7eaf>. The application header includes the EPLUS logo and a search bar with the text "find EPLUS Property or GMU".

The map shows several ranches highlighted in orange, including ranch 15-20961. A popup window titled "(1 of 2) oplus_uw_properties: 15-20961" is open, displaying the following details:

gmu	15
ranch_number	20961
UnitRanch	15-20961
RanchName	SKOUSEN
Contact	JEANETTE HEAP
Address	BOX 990 ST JOHNS, AZ 85936
Phone	(575) 533-6515
ElkAcre	2,240
Status	UW
MB	3
A	3
ES	0
ESBow	2
Zoom to	

The map interface includes navigation controls (zoom in, zoom out, home, location), a scale bar (0.6mi), and a coordinate display showing -108.603 33.994 Degrees. The bottom of the screen shows a Windows taskbar with various application icons and a system tray with the time 12:00 PM and date 1/8/2020. The application is powered by Esri.

UNIT-WIDE RANCHES ONLINE - PMZ



EVALUATION:

EPLUS ELK RULE (19.30.5.7 NMAC)

Now contains two separate requirements:

1. That the property demonstrates **regular** elk use and;
2. That the property provides meaningful benefits to elk as determined by appropriate department staff and in accordance with Commission approved guidelines.

Defined ELK USE

Property must show evidence of regular elk use.

- Regular elk use should be consistent and predictable, and associated with seasonal use of the property.
- Not rare, sporadic, or unpredictable transitory elk use.



Defined MEANINGFUL BENEFIT :

Properties are evaluated to ensure they provide Meaningful Benefits:

- Guidelines were developed by the Department and adopted by the Commission



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:

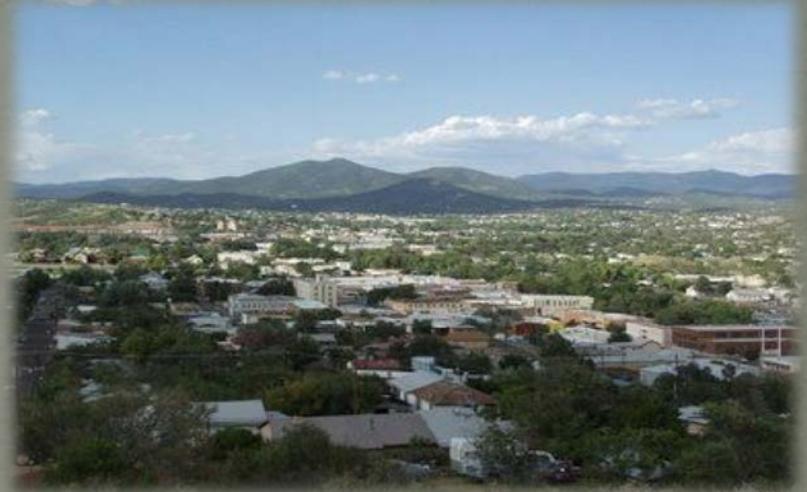
- 0 = No meaningful cover is provided on the property. (Or cover is compromised by houses, buildings, driveways and/or other disturbances)
- 1 = Poor cover components are provided on the property. (Thin cover or small areas of cover)
- 2 = Good cover components are provided on the property.
- Cover Score: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



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:

0 = No agriculture - Native grasses; unimproved pasture grasses; routinely unharvested or un-grazed with minimal harvest opportunity.

- 1 = Agriculture – Marginally productive, dry/unirrigated type, occasionally to 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.
- 1 = Additional considerations exist.
- Added Bonus Score: _____
(not to exceed two)



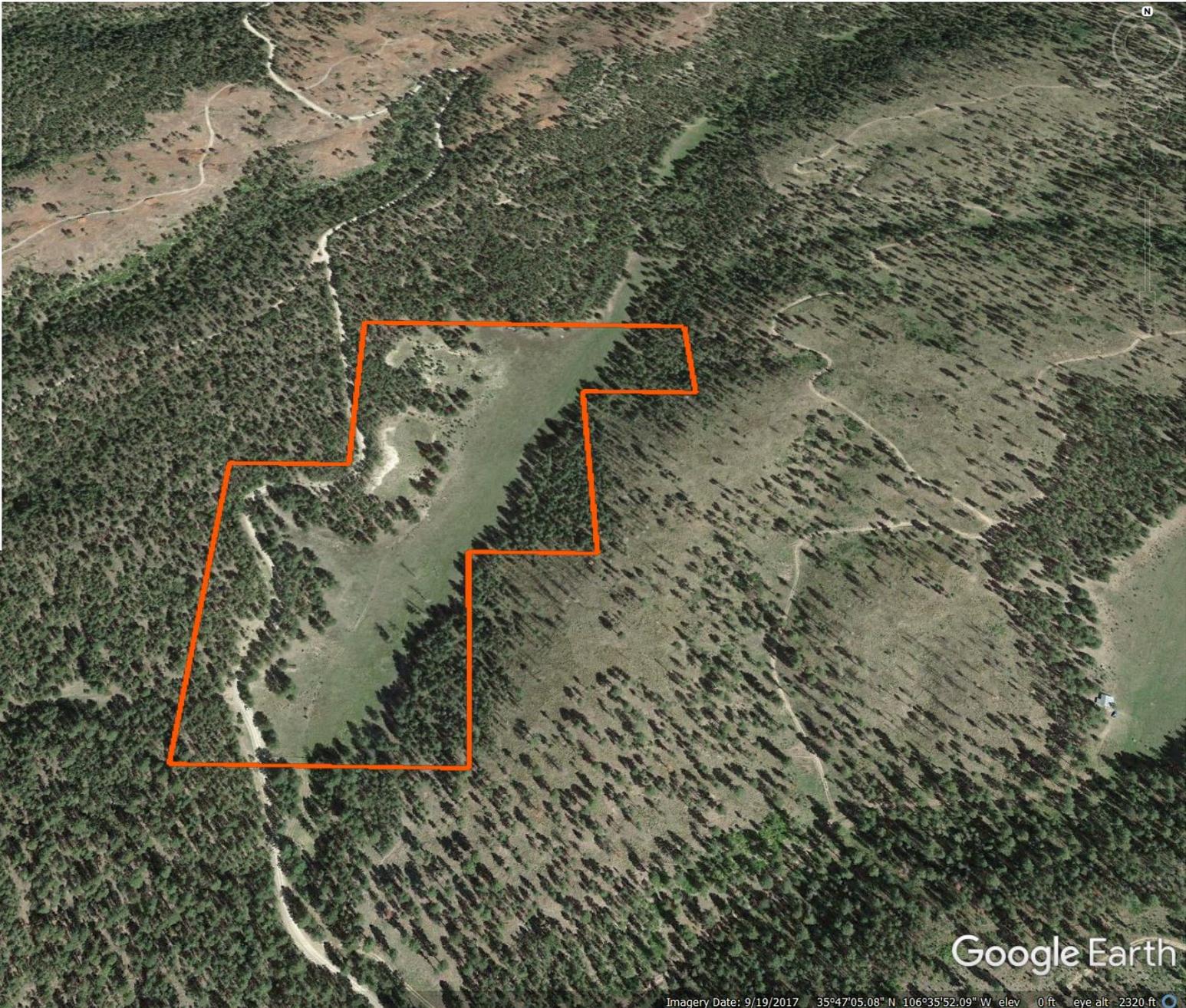
ACRES: 17

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



ACRES: 27

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



Google Earth

ACRES: 11

CATEGORY	SCORE
FORAGE	1
WATER	0
COVER	1
AREA	2
AG	0
BONUS	0
TOTAL	4



ACRES: 5

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



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Google Earth

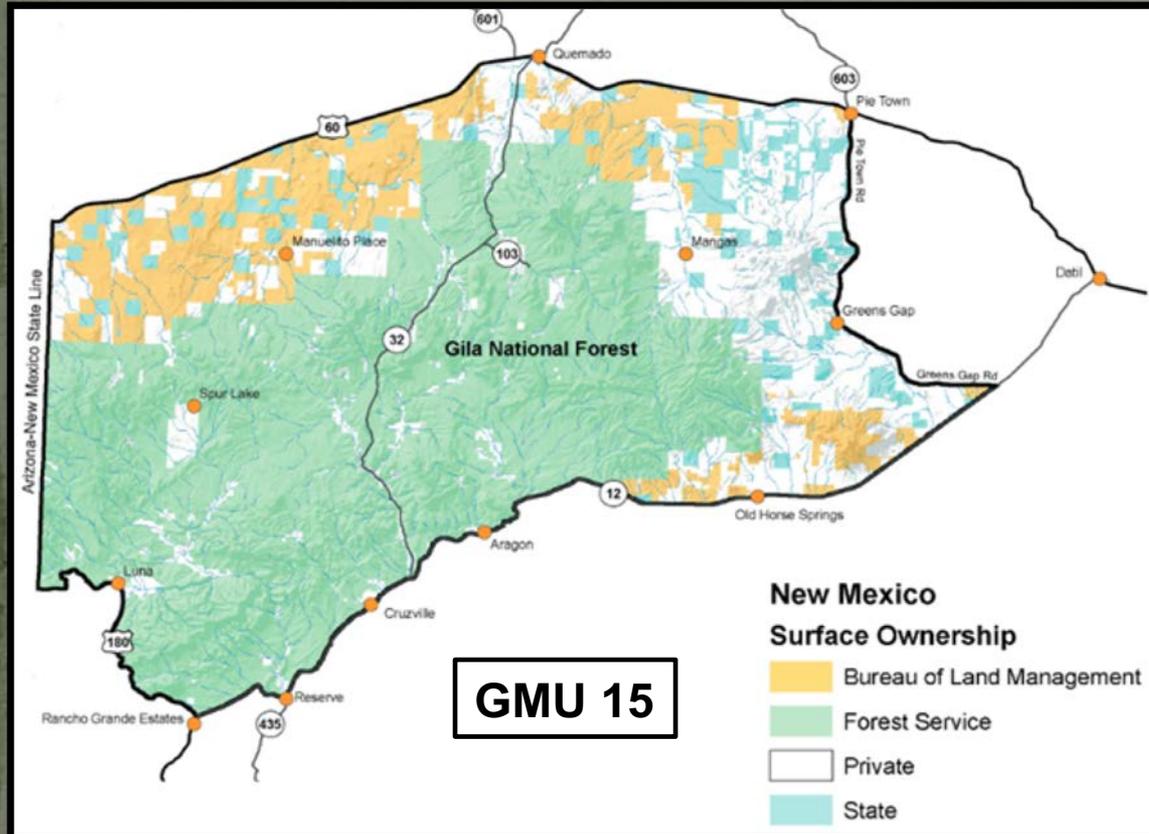
APPEAL/EVALUATION PROCESS

- Initial Re-evaluation
- Division evaluation
- If ranch still does not qualify landowner may request a Commission evaluation
- Commission evaluation is final

2019 Review Process All Ranches Reviewed in PMZ (3000+)

Ranches Disqualified	820
Ranches Objections Filed	336
Ranches Re-Qualified on Review	116
Total Ranches DNQ	704
Ranches Filing Division Evaluation (to date)	22
Ranches Re-Qualified on Div. Evaluation	4
Ranches Seeking Other Options	8
Ranches Not Responding to Div. Evaluation	9
Ranches Filing a Commission Evaluation	1
Total Ranches DNQ After Current Evaluations	700

PRIVATE LAND LICENSES – PMZ GMU ACRE CALCULATION EXAMPLE



Private Acres	235,684
Public Acres	812,455
Total Acres	1,048,139
% Private Acres	22%
% Public Acres	78%
Unenrolled Deded	40,656
Enrolled Deded	195,028

2019 GMU 15	MB	ES	A	TOTAL
Total by Rule	923	769	641	2333
Public (78%)	720	600	500	1820
Private (22%)	203	169	141	513

PUBLIC/PRIVATE SPLIT

- Varies from Unit to Unit in the PMZ

5B	226,414	
PRIVATE	12,718	5.62%
PUBLIC	213,696	94.38%

13	909,096	
PRIVATE	358,544	39.44%
PUBLIC	550,552	60.56%

21B	170,823	
PRIVATE	104,286	61.05%
PUBLIC	66,537	38.95%

STATEWIDE SPLIT PMZ		
Private	3,411,303	26%
Public	9,928,611	74%

BASE vs SCR ALLOCATION

- Base/SCR properties are determined through the acreage based allocation formula
- Base/SCR cutoff varies from unit to unit
- The average SCR cutoff is 810 acres statewide
- The SCR cutoff ranges from 200 acres up to 4000 acres statewide

Option	Base	SCR	Total
Ranch Only	476 (62%)	556 (31%)	1032 (40%)
Unit Wide	267 (38%)	1224 (69%)	1521 (60%)
Total	773	1780	2553

BONUS ALLOCATION

- Authorizations allocated to private deeded properties in each GMU/PMZ that are not enrolled in EPLUS make the Bonus pool
- Two Year unconverted
- Bonus authorizations go through the SCR draw first then back to base properties



INCENTIVES

- Issued in recognition of significant contributions to elk management.
- Describe elk management practices
- Competitive process



SECONDARY ZONE Operation

- Landowner verifies ownership in the SMZ
 - Ranch registers with DGF through online account and assigned ranch code
 - Hunters use ranch code to purchase licenses
 - Licenses Ranch-only but transferrable with written permission
- Consistent season dates and weapon type
 - Sept. 1-24 Archery
 - Oct. 1-Dec. 31 Rifle
 - Any 5 days
 - Season exceptions on a case by case basis

SPECIAL ZONE Operation

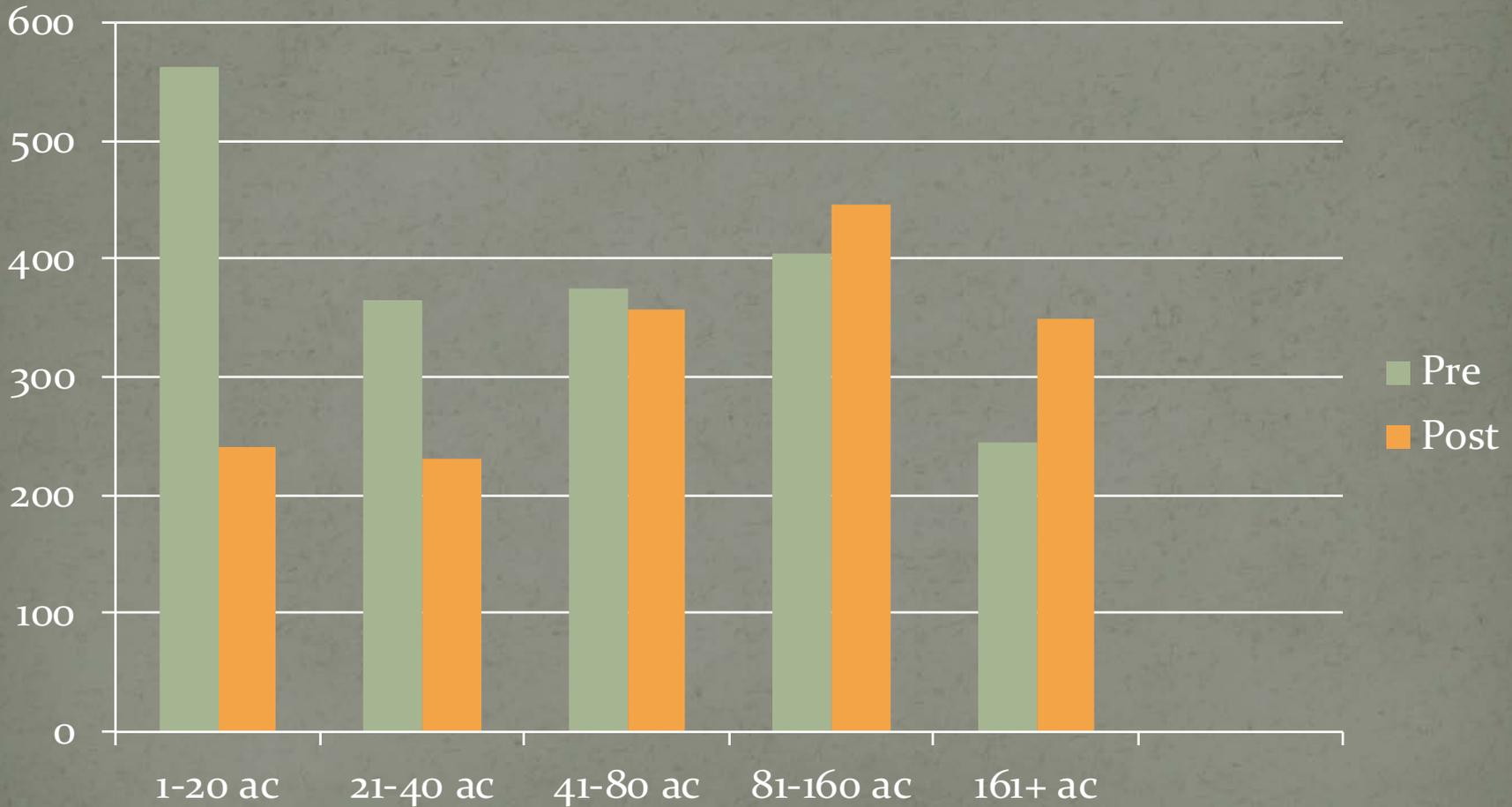
- Authorizations negotiated between biologist and landowner
- Tags transferable with written permission
- Consistent season dates and weapon type
 - Sept. 1-24 Archery
 - Oct. 1-Dec. 31 Rifle
 - Any 5 days
- Season exceptions on a case by case basis

GMU	% PRIVATE	%PUBLIC
46	100%	0%
54	89%	11%
55A	87%	13%

2018 vs. 2019 COMPARISONS



PRE AND POST RULE RANCH ENROLLMENT FOR SCRs



2018 vs. 2019 PMZ Licenses

Minus Unit 12

2018 Authorizations

- 8306 Issued
 - 24% Not Sold
- 6277 Sold
 - 24% Residents
 - 76% Nonresidents

2019 Authorizations

- 8491 Issued
 - 25% Not Sold
- 6347 Sold
 - 24% Residents
 - 76% Nonresidents

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
MB	15%	85%
ES	11%	89%
A	53%	47%

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
MB	13%	87%
ES	11%	89%
A	50%	50%

2018 vs. 2019 PMZ Licenses by ranch size

Minus Unit 12

2018	
1,000 – 5,000 ac.	
Sold	2,500
Not Sold	379
% Not Sold	13%
5,000 – 10,000 ac.	
Sold	780
Not Sold	262
% Not Sold	25%
10,000 + ac.	
Sold	831
Not Sold	998
% Not Sold	55%

2019	
1,000 – 5,000 ac.	
Sold	2,450
Not Sold	425
% Not Sold	14%
5,000 – 10,000 ac.	
Sold	720
Not Sold	383
% Not Sold	35%
10,000 + ac.	
Sold	907
Not Sold	1068
% Not Sold	54%

2018 vs. 2019 SPZ Licenses

2018 Authorizations

- 5746 Issued
 - 51% Not Sold
- 2929 Sold
 - 35% Residents
 - 65% Nonresidents

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
ES	10%	90%
A	24%	76%

2019 Authorizations

- 4342 Issued
 - 32% Not Sold
- 2944 Sold
 - 34% Residents
 - 66% Nonresidents

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
ES	14%	86%
A	20%	80%

2018 vs. 2019 SMZ Licenses

Minus Unit 12

2018 Authorizations

- 6995 Issued
 - 57% Not Sold
- 2979 Sold
 - 32% Residents
 - 68% Nonresidents

2019 Authorizations

- OTC Licenses
 - Point of Sale
- 3163 Sold
 - 31% Residents
 - 69% Nonresidents

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
MB	21%	79%
ES	25%	75%
A	48%	52%

Distribution of Licenses Sold		
Bag Type	Resident	Nonres.
ES	27%	73%
A	41%	59%

QUESTIONS



2018 vs. 2019 Unit 12 Licenses

2018					
	Resident	Non-resident	Sold	Not Sold	% Not Sold
All					
MB	37	283	320	217	40%
ES	23	100	123	232	65%
A	84	206	290	163	36%
Total	144	589	733	612	46%

2019					
	Resident	Non-resident	Sold	Not Sold	% Not Sold
Base					
MB	3	100	103	57	36%
ES	1	176	177	71	29%
A	30	145	175	129	42%
Total	34	421	455	257	36%
SCR					
MB	27	49	76	24	24%
ES	0	2	2	1	33%
A	0	0	0	2	100%
Total	27	51	78	27	26%

Public Draw Licenses				
	MB	ES	A	Total
2018	60	30	60	150
2019	593	224	428	1245