



New Mexico Department of Wildlife
EPLUS PROGRAM FACT SHEET



The EPLUS program was created in recognition of the important benefits that private lands make to elk populations and hunting opportunities in New Mexico. The program gives hunters and landowners a way to work together to effectively manage and hunt elk on private lands.

HOW IT WORKS:

The state is divided into three different elk management zones.

In the **Primary** and **Special Management Zones**, landowners receive private-land elk authorizations from the Department which can be used by hunters to buy private-land elk licenses. In the **Secondary Management Zone** landowners receive a ranch code which can be used by hunters to buy over-the-counter private land elk licenses.

LANDOWNERS:

The application and qualifications are different for each elk management zone. Landowners should first locate which elk management zone their property is in before applying for the EPLUS program. A map of the elk management zones is available on the Department's EPLUS webpage at: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/hunting/maps/eplus/>. Applications for the different management zones are also available at the same link.

Primary Management Zone

- Properties in the Primary Zone must have regular elk use and qualify according to the current EPLUS Participation Guidelines (available on the EPLUS webpage), which involves a habitat evaluation.
- New applications are available in September and are due by January 5th each year.
- Landowners have the option to sign a Ranch-only or Unit-wide agreement.
 - A **unit-wide** authorization allows a hunter to buy a unit-wide private-land elk license. Unit-wide hunters are allowed to hunt legally accessible public lands, unit-wide private ranches and other private property with written permission within the same GMU.
 - A **ranch-only** authorization allows a hunter to buy a ranch-only private-land elk license. Ranch-only hunters are restricted to private land within the ranch for which the authorization was issued.
- Elk authorizations are assigned to properties through an acre-based allocation system in each Game Management Unit (GMU).
- Unit-wide season dates follow corresponding elk draw hunts for the same GMU, bag limit and sporting arm type.
- Ranch-only season dates vary by GMU. Consult the Hunting Rules and Information Booklet for specific season dates.
- Authorizations are issued to landowners in June and are available online or by mail.

Special Management Zone

- GMU 55A and GMU 54 west of NM State Road 199.
- Properties must demonstrate occasional elk use to qualify.
- New applications are available in April each year with no deadline.



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- All agreements are ranch-only. Ranch-only authorizations are valid for deeded acreage of the ranch for which they were issued and other private deeded land within the same GMU with written permission from the landowner.
- Elk authorizations are negotiated on a ranch-by-ranch basis.
- Season dates: Archery - Sept. 1-24; Rifle - Any 5 consecutive days Oct. 1-Dec. 31.
- Authorizations are issued to landowners in June and are available online or by mail.

Secondary Management Zone

- Landowners must provide proof of ownership in the Secondary Zone.
- New applications are available in April each year with no deadline.
- Successful applicants will receive a ranch code.
- The ranch code allows hunters to purchase an over-the-counter private-land elk license that is valid for the deeded property of the landowner within the Secondary Zone and other private deeded land within the Secondary Zone with written permission of the landowner.
- Season dates: Archery - Sept. 1-24; Rifle - Any 5 consecutive days Oct. 1-Dec. 31.
- Ranch codes can be renewed online by landowners starting April 1, and over-the-counter licenses go on sale July 1.

HUNTERS:

- Hunters may use the EPLUS Primary and Special Zone landowner lists (found on the EPLUS webpage) to find landowners who have been issued authorizations. These lists are normally updated each year in June.
- The Department does not have a landowner list for the Secondary Zone. Hunters must search out participating landowners on their own to obtain Ranch Codes. Licenses within the Secondary Zone must be accompanied by written permission from the landowner.
- Any arrangements between hunters and landowners for elk authorizations or hunting leases are a private matter. The Department is not a party to these communications, will not act as a go-between, and is not responsible for resolving disputes.
- The Department publishes an interactive unit-wide map on the EPLUS webpage to help elk hunters locate unit-wide ranches in each GMU for the current season. The unit-wide map is updated each year in early August.
- No public lands may be hunted using ranch-only private-land elk licenses.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Email: dgf-eplus@dgf.nm.gov

Phone: EPLUS Manager 505-476-8033, EPLUS Clerk 505-476-8121

EPLUS Webpage: <https://wildlife.dgf.nm.gov/hunting/maps/eplus/>

Landowner Login and Online Licensing: <https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us/>