



EPLUS PRIMARY ZONE

Initial Application and Agreement

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025 License Year



The Elk Private Lands Use System (EPLUS) was created in recognition of the important benefits that private lands make to elk populations and hunting opportunities in New Mexico. Through EPLUS the Mexico Department of Game and Fish distributes a portion of the State's elk hunting opportunity to qualifying private landowners. EPLUS is authorized and regulated by:

- Chapter 17 – Game and Fish and Outdoor Recreation: 17-1-14, 17-1-26, and 17-3-14.1 NMSA 1978
- Title 19 – Natural Resources and Wildlife: 19.30.5 NMAC

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. Before you complete this application, please visit the Department's website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us to confirm your ranch is within the Primary Zone by using our interactive Elk Management Zone Map.
2. If your ranch splits multiple elk management zones you need to complete a separate application for the acreage in each zone.
3. Decide who will be the Authorized Ranch Contact (ARC) for the ranch. This person will be responsible for managing the EPLUS account. See the Assignment of Authorized Ranch Contact form for more information.
4. The ARC will need to fill out this application and submit all applicable ownership records listed on the Required Documentation page. Incomplete submittals will slow down the review process and can result in the application being rejected.
5. The ARC will need to obtain a personal Customer ID Number (CIN) by creating an account on the Department's website at <https://onlinesales.wildlife.state.nm.us/>. If you already have a personal CIN then you do not need to create another account.
6. Application deadline: January 5, 2024. Must be submitted or post marked by deadline; late applications will not be accepted.
7. Confirmation of receipt emails will go out by January 31 including a general timeline for the review process.
8. Regional Review Committees will meet in April for ranch evaluations to determine which ranch's meet the minimum participation requirements for the program. More information about the participation requirements can be found on the Department's website.
9. Any property that is within a subdivision, village, or town that does not allow hunting or restricts the discharge of all types of hunting equipment will automatically be disqualified for the program.
10. This application and agreement will not become effective until the Department has determined that the ranch qualifies for the program.
11. A final email will be sent in late May – early June to let applicants know if the ranch qualified for the program.
12. Qualifying ranches will automatically be included in the authorization allocation process. Authorizations are issued in June.
13. Ranches that do not meet the minimum participation requirements will not be eligible for EPLUS for the current license year. Landowners may file an objection and the department will re-evaluate the ranch. Successful objections will not be enrolled until the next license year.

AUTHORIZED RANCH CONTACT INFORMATION (see page 3 for more information):

Name (first, m, last):		
Mailing Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Primary Phone:	Alternate Phone:	
Landowner List Phone*:	Email:	
Customer ID Number (CIN):		

*Phone number published on the Department's website for hunters to call regarding elk authorizations. Primary phone will be used if no number is provided.

RANCH INFORMATION

Ranch Name:	Deeded Private Acres*:
Nearest Town or City:	Game Management Unit:

* Number of acres listed on the property tax records from the county. DO NOT include public lease acres (e.g. USFS, BLM or SLO).

For Department Use Only	Date Received:
Game Management Unit _____	Ranch # _____

For more information, please visit our website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us. If you need help completing this application, call toll-free 1-888-248-6866. Hours: Monday through Friday 8 AM – 5 PM

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation and proof of ownership is required to be submitted with this application. All copies must be clear, legible, and identical to the original document. Incomplete or illegible applications will be rejected.

[Check all boxes as they apply to your application.](#)

- Completed initial EPLUS Application and Signed Agreement.
- Current Recorded Deed(s) detailing legal descriptions and acreages for the property.
- Most recent property tax records from the county that account for all property included in the application.
- If the property is in a trust, in a LLC, or owned by any type of business entity, provide documents that clearly identifies who has been delegated the authority to represent the trust or business entity and bind it to a contractual obligation. Examples include: 1) Certificate of Formation, 2) Certificate of Incorporation, 3) Partnership Agreement, 4) Trust Agreement, etc.
 - Does Not Apply
- Properties in a village, town or subdivision:** If the property is located within a village, town or subdivision, provide an official, verified copy of the most recent rules or current ordinances that address hunting or the discharge of firearms or archery equipment from the village, town, or subdivision.
 - Does Not Apply
- * **A property location and boundary map**
 - The ranch location map should provide a general reference for where the property is located in relationship to nearby towns, landmarks, roads, etc. It should also reference the section, township, and range if it is not referenced in the boundary map.
 - The boundary map needs to show the official property boundaries, such as a parcel map from the county or a survey plat. *All copies must be a complete, identical, copy of the original filed in the County Recording Office – no parts should be cut out or missing.*
 - * Public leased lands are not eligible for enrollment in EPLUS, please do not add them to the acreage or include them in the boundary map.
- Assignment of Authorized Ranch Contact form(s) – must be notarized.** All persons listed on the recorded deed(s), including spouses, must agree to participate in EPLUS. A single Authorized Ranch Contact must be appointed to act as the representative for the property by submitting a notarized Assignment of Authorized Ranch Contact form (pg.4) from each owner and spouse noted on the deed. Please use a separate form for each owner. Make copies of the form as needed. *If the property is owned by a trust or business entity the person(s) who have been delegated the authority to represent the trust or business entity, and bind it to a contractual obligation, will need to sign the Authorized Ranch Contact form on behalf of the ownership.*
- Complete the attached Landowner EPLUS Habitat Description Form, providing a description of the elk use and habitat on the property. Including photographs will expedite processing.



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish EPLUS Assignment of Authorized Ranch Contact Form



(This is not an application for EPLUS)

PURPOSE OF FORM AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Landowners complete this form to designate one individual as the Authorized Ranch Contact (ARC) for your EPLUS ranch. The ARC will act as the liaison between the ranch and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department). This form is used to designate an initial ARC for a new EPLUS application or to change the ARC for an existing ranch.

Only one person may act as the ARC for a ranch. All landowners listed on the current recorded deed(s) must designate the same individual as the ARC. A separate form must be completed by each landowner. The Department will not accept the form unless signed and notarized.

RANCH INFORMATION

Select the Box that Describes the Reason for Completing this Form

- New Ranch or New Ownership** (must submit new EPLUS application with this form to establish new ranch account)
- Existing Ranch** (changing ARC for established ranch account/s). List GMU-Ranch Number/s for change: _____

Select the Box that Best Describes the Type of Property Ownership

Note: New Mexico is a community property state. All married persons must include ARC forms from their spouse, including sole ownership.

- Sole Ownership
- Joint Tenancy or Tenancy in Common
- Corporation, Partnership, LLC, Trust or Other Legal Non-Individual Entity

LANDOWNER INFORMATION

Landowners must complete this section with their own personal contact information. You will use the ARC Information section to assign the ARC.

- My name and/or spouse is on the deed **OR**
- I am signing for a non-individual entity (name): _____ Title: _____
If you are signing for a non-individual entity you will need to provide legal documents that show you are authorized to sign on behalf of the entity, if not on file.

My Name (first & last): _____ Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____
 Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

AUTHORIZED RANCH CONTACT INFORMATION

I am designating the following individual as the ARC for the ranch

ARC Name (first & last): _____ Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____
 Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____ Customer ID Number (CIN): _____

Landowner Terms of Agreement

I understand my responsibility for participating in EPLUS as stated in the Private Land Elk License Allocation rule (19.30.5 NMAC). I agree that the person I am designating as ARC may act on my behalf for the ranch. I understand that this form will remain in effect until I rescind it in writing. I understand that the Department will not change the ARC for the current license year after authorizations or ranch codes are issued.

X: _____ **Date:** _____

LANDOWNER SIGNATURE

Mail to: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish,
 EPLUS Program, 1 Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507. **OR**
Email to: dgf-eplus@dgf.nm.gov

Subscribed and sworn to before me in my presence	
Public Notary Signature [Seal]	Date

EPLUS Primary Zone Initial Application and Agreement (continued)

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

Select ONE ranch option:

PLEASE NOTE: The unit-wide option is not available for properties in Game Management Units (GMU) 4, 5A. Once the agreement is received in the Santa Fe office, no changes will be made to the unit-wide or ranch-only option selected for the current hunting season. Ranch options can be changed when the annual EPLUS Agreement is completed each year.

If no selection is indicated below the ranch will automatically be enrolled as unit-wide and your signature to this agreement will be taken as acknowledgement of the unit-wide conditions described below.

Ranch-Only:

If the ranch-only option is selected, elk licenses obtained with landowner authorizations will ONLY be valid for hunting on the deeded property within the ranch boundaries. This Agreement grants the property's properly licensed elk hunters, and/or guides and outfitters, the ability to access the ranch and hunt elk during their licensed hunt dates, including scouting up to two days immediately preceding the start of their hunt. Additional terms and conditions apply to private lands in GMUs 4, 5A; please see page 5.

_____ (ARC Initials) I understand and agree to the above obligations concerning the ranch-only option.

ARC Signature Required on Page 3

OR

Unit-Wide:

This option is not available for properties in GMUs 4 and 5A or outside the Primary Management Zone.

By signing the unit-wide option I hereby agree that: Unit-wide elk licenses obtained with landowner authorizations will be valid within the entire GMU for use on all private unit-wide ranches, other private land with written permission and any legally-accessible public lands where hunting is allowed. This Agreement grants any legally licensed elk hunters, their companions and/or guides and outfitters, the right to free and unrestricted access to the entire ranch, without charge or other consideration, for the purpose of hunting elk during their licensed hunt dates, including scouting up to two days immediately preceding the start of their hunt. Landowners and their employees may not interfere with elk hunters while on the ranch and elk hunters are not required to notify landowners or their employees before entering the ranch. All elk hunters legally accessing the property pursuant to this unit-wide agreement have permission to discharge firearms, crossbows, bows or muzzleloaders, only for the purpose of shooting elk, including within 150 yards of a dwelling or building as described in subsection 4 of section A of **30-7-4 NMSA 1978, Negligent use of a deadly weapon.** All other sections and subsections of 30-7-4 NMSA 1978 remain in effect and apply to all hunters. Vehicular access may be restricted on the ranch however; it must be equally restricted to all elk hunters, including hunters holding a license purchased with authorizations issued to this ranch. No elk hunter, including hunters holding a license purchased with authorizations issued to this ranch, may drive off- road on a unit-wide ranch except to retrieve legally harvested elk with permission of the landowner. Any violation of this agreement may result in the removal of this property from the EPLUS program for up to three years. I also agree to and understand that all unit-wide ranch boundaries will be available to the public on the Department website.

_____ (ARC Initials) I understand and agree to the above obligations concerning the unit-wide option.

ARC Signature Required on Page 3

EPLUS Primary Zone Initial Application and Agreement (continued)

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

THIS EPLUS Agreement is made and entered into by and between the NM Department of Game and Fish, hereinafter referred to as the "Department", and the party listed on page 1, hereinafter referred to as the "Authorized Ranch Contact", pursuant to 19.30.5 NMAC, Private Land Elk License Allocation. This Agreement shall be effective for the April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025 application period when signed and dated by the Authorized Ranch Contact.

The Parties Agree to the Following:

1. The execution of this agreement is contingent on the property qualifying for EPLUS by meeting the minimum participation requirements as listed under 19.30.5.8 or 19.30.5.9 NMAC and that allocation(s) will be determined pursuant to 19.30.5 NMAC, as applicable to the allocation system used where the property is located.
2. Review Process: To ensure that the property is being fairly evaluated, the Authorized Ranch Contact may request a review of: A) participating acreage; B) elk contribution rating (ECR); C) ranch score; D) the Department's determination that the property does not meet the minimum requirements to participate; and/or E) other inactivation provisions. For further information, please refer to 19.30.5.8 NMAC and the Landowner's Right to Review provision, 19.30.5.12 NMAC.
3. Pursuant to 19.30.5 NMAC as amended, a landowner and/or Authorized Ranch Contact along with the ranch shall be inactivated for providing or permitting misrepresentation of the ranch's participating deeded acreage, ranch ownership or designated ARC, prohibiting access to other unit-wide or public draw hunting license holders, or violating Chapter 17 NMSA 1978 or State Game Commission rules involving licenses converted with the ranches authorizations, or being an accessory to the same, regardless of whether the violation occurred on or off the ranch, resulting in a violation(s) that accumulates 20 or more revocation points pursuant to 19.31.2 NMAC on any single individual. In addition, a landowner or ARC, along with ranch may be inactivated for breaching or violating any other condition of the EPLUS agreement. Inactivation from EPLUS and possible suspension from other Department sponsored programs maybe for a period of up to 3 years. Should a landowner or ARC have multiple properties in EPLUS, all properties maybe inactivated from EPLUS and disqualified from participation in department sponsored programs. If a ranch is signed up in a co-op, inactivation action(s) may be taken against the co-op in its entirety or individual properties participating that form the co-op. Pursuant to 19.31.2 NMAC as amended, a landowner's or Authorized Ranch Contact's privilege to participate in department sponsored programs maybe separately revoked or suspended due to the accumulation of administrative or criminal revocation points, as maybe currently sufficient by rule, within any consecutive three year period.
4. A ranch in which the landowner or Authorized Ranch Contact's ownership or any individual's legal authority to act on behalf of the landowner is unclear, suspect, or legitimately disputed by another person, shall be placed in review (subsequent agreements and authorization statements shall be suspended) until such time as rightful ownership or lawful representation is verified. Failure to provide documents proving ownership or legal representation within one year will result in the ranch being inactivated.
5. Private-land authorizations issued pursuant to 19.30.5.8(D) in the Primary Management Zone are unit-wide unless the Authorized Ranch Contact chooses the ranch-only option on the EPLUS Agreement.
6. The authorizations converted to licenses in GMUs 4, 5A are valid only on the deeded property for which the authorization was issued or any other private property within the GMU with written permission from the landowner or person in control of the land.
7. Ranch-only authorizations issued to Special Management Ranches (19.30.5.11 NMAC) are not transferable to other private property.
8. Landowner elk authorizations are used to purchase elk hunting licenses however, an elk hunting license will only be issued to individuals who fulfill all eligibility requirements and pay to the Department the appropriate license and stamp fees as listed in the current New Mexico Big Game Rules & Information Booklet.
9. Authorizations MUST be converted to licenses to be valid for hunting elk. An authorization statement or number does not constitute a legal license for hunting elk.
10. All licenses purchased within the Primary will follow the established hunt structure for each Game Management Unit as described in 19.31.14 NMAC and reflected in the current Rules and Information Booklet. Unit-wide licenses must match a corresponding Elk Draw Hunt Code for the unit, bag limit, sporting arm type and season date.
11. The Authorized Ranch Contact certifies that he/she will not discriminate against those with whom he/she negotiates use of the private-land authorizations on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or sexual orientation.
12. All EPLUS agreements become public knowledge. Contact information for the Authorized Ranch Contact and ranch boundaries of unit-wide ranches will be made available to the public, as well as information on any licensee purchasing the license.
13. Access to the property by Department personnel is necessary to collect biological data, conduct aerial and ground surveys, and enforce laws and regulations. Therefore, the Authorized Ranch Contact agrees to provide access (including vehicular access) by providing keys and/or combinations, if necessary, to locked gates for Department personnel to conduct official Department business for the above-mentioned purposes. For more information, Authorized Ranch Contact's should call their District Officer.

14. For properties in the Primary Management Zone, EPLUS Agreements must be post-marked, or received by the Santa Fe office by January 5, 2024. Agreements postmarked or received after this deadline will result in the Agreement being rejected and no authorizations being issued for the season. The Department is not responsible for postal service delivery delays or lost mail. Please allow sufficient time for mail service.
15. Once the Agreement has been received by the Department, no changes will be made regarding the unit-wide or ranch-only option for the current hunting season.
16. Upon the second consecutive year of non-receipt of the annual agreement by the January 5 deadline, the ranch will be inactivated from EPLUS and a new application will be required.
16. If interventions to eliminate the presence of elk are requested on this ranch, in accordance with 19.30.2 NMAC, the ranch shall be placed in review and the acreage where the intervention actions are to occur will be inactivated. If the intervention actions only apply to a portion of the ranch and the remaining acreage continues to provide meaningful benefit to elk the ranch may continue to participate with reduced acreage.
17. If a landowner or ARC takes action pursuant to 17-2-7.2 NMSA 1978 on this ranch, the ranch shall immediately be inactivated from EPLUS for a period of three years and all unconverted authorizations may be voided.
18. Proof of continued ownership/legal representation may be requested on a periodic basis as required by the Department. Failure to respond to the request by the required deadline will result in the Ranch being placed in review until the required documents have been provided and if after one year I have failed to comply with a required update, I understand the Ranch will be automatically inactivated.
19. It is the responsibility of the Authorized Ranch Contact to clearly communicate with any person to whom a private-land elk authorization is transferred or any member of an established co-op regarding said authorizations. These communications are considered 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.
20. Criminal trespass does not apply if a person is in possession of a landowner license transferred to them by the owner or person in control of the land (30-14-1-A(2) NMSA 1978).
21. The number and type of authorizations issued to my ranch is determined through an acreage-based allocation formula as described in 19.30.5.8(D). A set number of authorizations are not guaranteed from year to year.
22. All participation provisions of the EPLUS program are available at www.wildlife.state.nm.us or by calling any Department office.
23. I attest that the information provided in this Agreement is true and correct.

NOTE: *The sale of landowner authorizations may result in a Gross Receipts Tax liability. Contact a qualified tax professional if you have questions.*

X _____ Date: _____

Signature of Authorized Ranch Contact

NOTE: *Do not sign if you are not the Authorized Ranch Contact listed on page 1 of this Agreement. If you wish to change the Authorized Ranch Contact please visit our website at www.wildlife.state.nm.us or call us at 1-888-248-6866 to obtain an Authorized Ranch Contact form.*

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THIS INITIAL APPLICATION AND AGREEMENT ALONG WITH ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS BY THE DEADLINE LISTED ON PAGE 1.

MAIL APPLICATION PACKET TO:

EPLUS Manager
 NM Dept of Game and Fish
 Wildlife Management Division
 1 Wildlife Way
 Santa Fe NM 87507

Email Packet To:

DGF-EPLUS@DGF.NM.GOV



New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
EPLUS Habitat Description Form



The EPLUS rule requires properties in the **Primary Management Zone** to have regular elk use and provide meaningful benefits to elk as determined by appropriate department staff and in accordance with commission approved guidelines in order to be considered for participation. The complete guidelines and scoring criteria are available on the Department website.

Complete the form below providing a description of your property in each category. **It is very important that you submit a couple of photographs (no video) of each habitat feature and water source/system along with your application to ensure it is evaluated correctly.** Do not send pictures of elk, elk tracks or elk droppings.

This form must be completed and submitted along with the Initial Application Agreement. Applications that do not include a completed copy of this form will be rejected.

Elk Use: Your property must have regular elk use. Regular elk use should be consistent and predictable, and associated with seasonal use of your property. Rare, sporadic, unpredictable or transitory elk use that does not endure over time, does not fulfill the intent of the rule that elk use is regular.

Describe the elk use on your property, including the time(s) of year elk are on your property and how long the elk use persists during that time period and how many elk you would expect to see during that time period:

Forage: Check the box(s) below that best represents the forage on your property.

- Thin grasses exist throughout the property due to rocky terrain or sandy soils. Some woody shrubs, sage or other browse-type items are available.
- Some grasses are available in the understory of densely covered forest.
- Scattered bunchgrasses throughout the property mixed with scrub habitat containing sage and other plants.
- Scattered bunchgrasses mixed with woody cover such as pinon-juniper or pine species.
- Mainly open upland grasslands or open savanna-like forest/woodland with dense bunchgrasses.
- Grassy mountain meadows, damp or wet bottomlands and riparian areas with thick or lush grasses.
- Production agriculture with annually or routinely harvested crops. (Does not include any type of grazing, pasture land or food plots.)

Further describe the type of forage available for elk and how many acres of your property are composed of forage. Do not include lawns or lawn shrubs, gardens, flowers or other ornamental plantings:

Describe the agriculture and include how many acres are in production agriculture and how often the crop is harvested:

Water: Check the box(s) below that best represents the water on your property. Water should be located on a property where it is readily available for use by elk.

- No water is available for elk use.
- Water is available from a tank near a dwelling or building fed by a hose and hydrant system or a tank that is filled by hauling water.
- Dirt tank that holds water temporarily during the year.
- Dirt tank that holds water year round.
- Natural spring or seasonal, intermittent stream that provides water occasionally.
- Natural spring or stream that provides reliable, year round water.
- Water is available occasionally by means of a stock tank with a well.
- Water is available permanently by means of a stock tank with a well.
- Water is available occasionally by means of a water catchment system with a storage tank and drinker arrangement.
- Water is available permanently by means of a water catchment system with a storage tank and drinker arrangement.
- Other water source.

Describe in detail the water source(s) indicated above. Be sure to include information such as: how many months water is available; how many water sources are on the property; how many gallons is the tank/storage/drinker; how many square feet is the catchment apron; how the well is operated (solar, electric, etc.) and; where the water source(s) is located (GPS coordinates or mark on a map) on your property:

Cover: Check the box below that best represents the cover on your property. Do not include cover that is compromised by houses, buildings, driveways and/or other disturbances.

- No meaningful cover is provided on the property.
- Sparsely scattered trees or shrubs around the property.
- Small areas of trees or shrubs exist providing some cover.
- Moderately covered with pinon-juniper providing some escape or hiding cover.
- Moderately covered with thick trees and overhead cover.
- Large areas of the property are covered in trees providing escape, wind break and overhead cover.
- Other

Further describe the type of cover selected and how many acres of your property are composed of cover. Include the species of woody cover provided.

Surrounding Area: Check the box below that best represents the “surrounding area” of your property. This includes dwellings, buildings and roads on your property as well as the general area around your property.

- Surrounding area has heavy human activity and is highly developed with houses/buildings and vehicular byways.
- Surrounding area has low human activity with low numbers of buildings or vehicular byways.
- Surrounding area is remote with little to no human activity.

Describe your property’s surrounding area. If the property is part of a subdivision provide the name of the subdivision:

Agriculture: Check the box that best represents agriculture on your property. Agriculture is a category to recognize production agriculture such as hay/alfalfa fields, grain fields or other row crops. These crops must be harvested to be considered. This category does not include any type of grazing, pasture land or food plots.

- No agriculture.
- Agriculture – Marginally productive, dry/unirrigated, occasionally to routinely harvested crop.
- Agriculture – Productive, maintained (irrigated, cultivated, fertilized, etc.), yearly harvested crop.

Further describe agriculture selected including how many acres are in agriculture, how often you harvest and, if irrigated, the source and frequency of irrigation:

Special Consideration: Special consideration may be given for a ranch's proximity to habitat features nearby [generally within ½ mile] but not actually on the property being evaluated. If you have Forage, Water, Cover and Agriculture on your property then check the box, "No special considerations". Only check the box, "Special consideration exists" if you don't have a habitat feature on your property but that feature is nearby. **EXAMPLES:** 1) There is no water on your property however a neighboring landowner has a reliable pond available for elk use ¼ mile from your property. 2) There is no cover on your property but there is significant thick timber within ½ mile of your property.

- No special considerations.
- Special consideration exists.

Describe the nearby habitat feature, how far it is from your property and where it is located in relation to your property:

Describe any additional considerations that are unique about your property that is not covered above:

NOTE: This portion of the application will aid Department staff when evaluating your property for inclusion into the EPLUS program. **Provide a couple of photographs (no video) of each habitat feature and water source/system.** Do not send pictures of elk, elk tracks or elk droppings. A local evaluation team will review your application and make the proper determination of your habitat according to the Commission approved participation guidelines.