PRIVATE LAND PRONGHORN RANCH-WIDE PROGRAM

The objective of the Ranch-wide program is to allow private landowners to enroll their private deeded and public leased acreage as one ranch and obtain pronghorn authorizations from the Department of Game and Fish (Department) that will be valid on the entire ranch, both private deeded and public leased acreage.

Recent changes to the pronghorn hunting rule have made private-land-only pronghorn hunting licenses unlimited and available to hunters over-the-counter (OTC). Those licenses are only valid on private deeded property where the hunter also has written permission from the landowner. OTC Private-land-only pronghorn licenses are never valid on public land.

Public draw pronghorn licenses will be administered through the Department's regular big game draw system. Hunters who draw a public pronghorn license will be able to hunt pronghorn on any legally accessible public land in the entire Game Management Unit (GMU), any ranch signed up as Ranch-wide and any other private land with written permission.

Because some private deeded ranches are interspersed with leased state or federal public land there is concern for trespass and access issues among both the private and public land hunters. The Ranch-wide agreement allows landowners to receive a negotiated number of pronghorn licenses valid within the entire ranch boundary, both private deeded and public leased, during any of the established public hunt dates. For ranches previously enrolled in APLUS this agreement allows landowners to maintain those original APLUS boundaries.

The tradeoff is that public draw hunters will also have access to the entire ranch (both private deeded and public leased acreage) during their assigned hunts. (Keep in mind that public draw hunters will have access to any of the accessible leased public land even if not enrolled in the Ranch-wide program.)

Public hunters also have the option of hunting all of the accessible public land in the entire GMU and other private land with written permission. This arrangement should adequately distribute hunters across the GMU and not concentrate hunters in one particular location.

The Ranch-wide agreement must be renewed annually if a landowner wishes to continue participation.

To be considered for participation, eligible properties must enroll the entire property (both private deeded and public leased acreage), and the property must contain pronghorn habitat and exhibit physical evidence that pronghorn are present at least occasionally as determined by the appropriate Department staff.

Landowners wishing to apply for the Ranch-wide program must submit proof of ownership in the form of property deeds, property tax records and official lease agreements to the Department. Properties that have previously been enrolled in the APLUS program may already have these documents on file with the Department and no further documentation may be needed.

The number of pronghorn hunting authorizations assigned to properties that qualify for the Ranch-wide program shall be a negotiation between the landowner and the Department. Ranch-wide agreements are based on a license year (April 1 – March 31) and the number of pronghorn hunting opportunities allocated to a property will be negotiated on an annual basis.

Pronghorn licenses purchased with a Ranch-wide authorization number are only valid within the boundaries of the enrolled ranch (both private deeded and public leased acreage) and are not valid on any other private deeded property or public land. OTC private-land only pronghorn licenses are not valid within the boundaries of a Ranch-wide ranch.

One of the authorizations issued under a Ranch-wide agreement will be valid for a free pronghorn license per 17-3-14 NMSA 1978.

For further information, please refer to 19.31.15.10 (B) NMAC Pronghorn Antelope Rule on the Department website (hunting page) at www.wildlife.state.nm.us. Please contact the Pronghorn Biologist at (505) 476-8042 if you have questions.

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