



EPLUS

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

November 30, 2018



PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

The following habitat scoring system will be used to evaluate a properties meaningful benefit to elk for newly applying properties or participating ranches as outlined in 19.30.5 NMAC and are approved by the state game commission.

Scoring is based on five specific components, including Agriculture, and an “Added Bonus” category. A separate score is given to the property in each of these categories. These scores are then totaled and the total score for the property determines its overall “meaningful benefit to elk” and ability to participate in the EPLUS program. A total score of 7 or more is required.

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 forage.)

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 with dense bunchgrasses.)

3 = Substantial forage is available. (Grass meadows, bottomlands and riparian areas)

Forage Score: _____

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, temporary, 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: _____

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: _____

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: _____

Agriculture: (Bonus)

0 = No agriculture - Native grasses or unimproved pasture grasses; routinely unharvested or ungrazed.

1 = Agriculture – Marginally productive, dry/unirrigated, occasionally to routinely harvested crop.

2 = Agriculture – Productive, maintained (irrigated, cultivated, fertilized, etc.), yearly harvestable crop.

Agriculture Score: _____

Added Bonus: The “Added Bonus” category is intended for any unique contribution that may not be captured or adequately recognized in the other specific categories. Up to two bonus points may be awarded to a ranch. A combination of considerations may be utilized including increasing an area’s ability to be accessed and hunted.

0 = No special considerations.

1 = Special consideration exists.

One added bonus point may be awarded for a ranch’s proximity to habitat features nearby [generally within ½ mile] but not actually on the property being evaluated.

1 = Additional considerations exist.

An additional added bonus point may be awarded 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)

DESCRIBE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION:

FINAL SCORE AND ASSESSMENT

Forage Score: _____

Water Score: _____

Cover Score: _____

Surrounding Area Score: _____

Agriculture Score: _____

Added Bonus Score: _____

TOTAL: _____

(Total score must be 7 or more to qualify)

Does the property meet the minimum requirements for meaningful benefit?

YES: ___ NO: ___



Approvals



Stewart Liley, Wildlife Management Division Chief
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish



Date



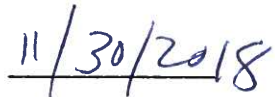
Michael B. Sloane, Director
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish



Date



Paul M. Kienzle III, Chairman
New Mexico State Game Commission



Date