UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

2027

PROSPECTUS FOR CATTLE GRAZING

ON DEER HUNT RANGE ALLOTMENT

APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST

FLORIDA

BID AWARD (OPENING)
DATE: December 15, 2026

SUBMIT BIDS TO:

Arvind Bhuta, District Ranger

APALACHICOLA NATIONAL FOREST

57 TAFF DR
CRAWFORDVILLE, FL 32327-2138

DEER HUNT ALLOTMENT GRAZING PROSPECTUS AND BIDDING INFORMATION

Introduction

This prospectus provides information to qualified individuals interested in bidding on the available cattle grazing allotment, the Deer Hunt Range Allotment (DHRA), administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), United States Forest Service (USFS), National Forests in Florida's (NFFL), Apalachicola National Forest (ANF; Figure 1). All facilities and lands associated with this Prospectus are owned and controlled by the United States and administered by the USDA-USFS. If this Prospectus conflicts with the Term Grazing Permit (TGP), the TGP has precedence over this Prospectus. Prior to submitting a bid, it is strongly recommended that prospective bidders:

1) carefully read the entirety of the following:
    a. this Prospectus
    b. applicable grazing permits
    c. example allotment management plans
    d. example allotment maintenance requirements
    e. example permittee instructions
2) attend the scheduled allotment showing or conduct their own site visit to inspect the property themselves
3) inspect the fencing, gates and cattleguards

Copies of the above documents are available upon request from and inquiries can be made to ANF's Biological Technician, **Renee Ripley** at **850-447-0322**.

Terms of Grazing Permits Offered

A TGP will be issued to the qualified high bidder allowing for an authorized maximum grazing capacity of 56 Head of conventional cattle or 77 Head of Florida Cracker cattle (cow/calf pairs) within the designated grazing boundary as described in this Prospectus. This maximum grazing capacity is inclusive of nursing calves. A 90% minimum of the stocking rate of either category will also be considered. For more information on Florida Cracker Cattle, please consult the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service website on the Characteristics of Cracker Cattle (https://tinyurl.com/3bc3bvns). The annual grazing season will be from March 1st through February 28th unless otherwise stated in the TGP and in accordance with FSM2231.03(1), the TGP resulting from this advertisement will be issued for a ten-year period from March 1, 2027 to February 28, 2037. The current stocking rate is based on current conditions. If onsite conditions improve through repeated growing-season prescribed burns and/or active forest management, then the stocking rate will be reassessed. The DHRA has the potential to be expanded up to 100 Head which is the maximum amount set in the 1996 Environmental Assessment for the Briar Patch, Deer Hunt, Gregory Mill, and West Prong Allotments Grazing Permit Issuance (1996 GPI EA).

Upon expiration of the TGP issued under this Prospectus, a new Prospectus may be issued and the grazing boundary may again be made available for public bidding. However, if the permit remains in good standing, the permit holder may be provided the opportunity to retain their permit through matching the qualified highest bidder as provided for in 36 CFR 222.54 and FSH 2209.13, 81.42(e). The permit will be issued in accordance with FSM 2200 and the terms and conditions, Parts 1, 2, and 3.

Minimum Qualifications

Eligibility for a grazing permit requires that the successful bidder is a U.S. citizen and owns or has legal right of use of the base property necessary to adequately care for the permitted livestock should it become necessary to remove them from ANF lands during the grazing period. The base property shall have the necessary facilities, such as fences, water, and forage to handle the permitted livestock. To exercise permit use, the permittee will:

1) furnish all evidence of ownership as requested by the USFS.
2) ear tag or brand sufficiently all their livestock to be distinguished from other livestock in the area
3) only graze livestock that is owned by the permittee as specified in the Permit Application and Bid Form.
4) possess the ability to adequately care for and control the livestock placed on ANF lands

Allotment Location, Description, Conditions, and Improvements

The DHRA is located approximately fifteen miles south of Bristol, FL in Liberty County, north of the Wilma community. It is bordered to the east by State Road 65, to the north by Forest Roads 108 and 112, and to the southwest by County Road 12. It has 14,113 gross acres within the allotment of which 8,234 acres are suitable for grazing (see attached maps for location and allotment boundaries). The DHRA has been vacant since January 2023.

The DHRA perimeter has approximately 20 miles of fencing that the awarded bidder will maintain or repair. Initial repairs made by the awarded bidder at the beginning of the permit on perimeter fencing, cattleguards, and gates will qualify for full Fee Credit. After these initial repairs, the permittee is responsible for continued maintenance and repairs of all fencing, gates and cattleguards. The Fee Credit may be applied however the amount of available Fee Credit will be determined by the value of the successful bid and may not be sufficient to cover the full cost of any reconstruction. Some sections of fencing will need repair. In addition to the perimeter fencing, there is also interior fencing along Forest Road 141 which is in disrepair. There are 11 cattleguards and 26 gates, some of which may be in poor condition, installed on public access roads (See Figure 2 for locations). The DHRA has no corral facilities within it and none will be constructed unless requested and approved by the District Ranger. The permittee will be required to furnish their own corral gates or temporary holding pens for catching livestock which will be closely coordinated

with the USFS to prevent resource damage.

Historical forage production in the DHRA is low. Forage plants are dominated by *Aristida* species (Wiregrass and Three-Awns) comprising 70 to 80% of available forage; *Andropogon* species (Bluestems) 10-20% and *Panicum* (Panic grasses) 5-10%. The 1996 GPI EA authorized an upper limit forage utilization rate of current annual growth rate for key grass species at 40%, key forb species at 20%, and key shrub species at 20%. Plants toxic to livestock may occur within the DHRA boundary and the USFS **IS NOT** responsible for livestock poisoning and loss related to it.

The DHRA grazing capacity was calculated using StockSmart (https://www.stock-smart.com). It is a web-based decision tool used in calculating stocking rates and was based on a comparison of conventional cattle and Cracker cattle and their grazing utilization rates (see tables below).

Stocksmart Scenario Inputs		
Forage Data	*Rangland Production Monitoring System: Mean Production Years 2019-2024*	
Breed	Conventional Cattle	Cracker Cattle
Type of animals	Cow/Calf Pair	Cow/Calf Pair
Average weight (lbs)	1,000	750
Average calf weight (lbs)	300	300
Grazing period (days)	365	365
Total number of animals	150	150
Harvest coefficient (%)	40	40
Shrub utilization (%)	5	30
Max Canopy Cover (%)	80	80
Canopy Cover Assumption	1,000	1,000

Stocksmart scenario outputs:							
	Acres	**150 Animal Grazing Duration (days)**	**365 Day Stocking Rate**	**AUM (annual)**	**Available Herbs (lbs annually)**	**Available Shrubs (lbs annually)**	**Total Available Forage**
Conventional Cattle	14,904	135	56	677	523,172	4,727	527,899
Cracker Cattle	14,904	189	77	707	523,172	28,364	551,536

General Operational Considerations and Requirements

Fee Credit

The Fee Credit system reimburses grazing permit holders for required range improvements that are beyond routine pasture management or maintenance. In short, the annually assessed grazing fee will be reduced by the amount of Fee Credit allowed. A separate Fee

Credit Agreement (FCA) must be developed in writing prior to any work being performed and will become a part of the TGP. An example of a Fee Credit project would be (but is not limited to) new fence construction. Fee Credit will **NOT** be granted for projects like routine fence or other structural improvement maintenance, improvements that are for the sole purpose of permittee convenience, or other routine livestock management practices.

General Permit Requirements

General Permit Requirements are required of all TGP holders on an annual basis. A Bill for Collection will be issued by the USFS prior to the start of each grazing season that specifies livestock kind, number, and class allowed to graze, the period of use, the grazing allotment, and the grazing fees. This bill must be paid prior to the release of any livestock onto USFS lands. At least 90% of the permitted livestock must be released on the permitted area to validate the grazing permit. All livestock must be marked or tagged as specified in the grazing permit. No livestock will be released until the permit is approved, the bill for collection has been paid in full, and notification is received from a USFS representative.

The permittee will manage livestock in accordance with the Allotment Management Plan (AMP) and all provisions set forth in Parts 1, 2, and 3 of the TGP. Grazing is implemented as directed by the AMP and Annual Operation Plan (AOP). The AMP specifies how to manage and protect rangeland resources to achieve a given set of objectives over a ten-year period. The AOP is prepared yearly and provides adaptive management direction reflecting the current allotment condition and vegetation trends. Permit terms and conditions are based on the allotment resource conditions at the time of issuance and are designed to be adaptive. Existing permits can be canceled, in whole or in part, for noncompliance with the terms and conditions if the permittee refuses to accept modification of the terms and conditions (36 CFR 222.4). An example grazing permit is available upon request.

Specific Permit Requirements

Additional operational requirements listed below will be the responsibility of the successful bidder and will be included in the TGP terms and conditions. These are annual requirements and must be met for permit compliance. Failure to maintain permit compliance may result in permit suspension, modification, or cancellation. These additional requirements will be at the expense of the successful bidder and should be considered part of the operational expenses when submitting a bid. The successful bidder will bear the **full costs** for all materials, labor, and equipment for this work unless specifically stated in the FCA.

Required Range Improvements

Upkeep and maintenance of boundary fence sections A, B, and C and the gates within each section are the responsibility of the permittee (see Figure 2). Section A consists of 7.02 miles of fence and gates from the intersection of FR 108 and CR 12 southeast to the intersection of CR 12 and SR 65. Section B consists of 5.59 miles of fence and gates from

the intersection of CR 12 and SR 65 northeast to the intersection of SR 65 and FR 112. Section C consists of 7.74 miles of fence and gates from the intersection of SR 65 and FR 112 west to the intersection of FR 108 and CR 12.

The successful bidder will perform an annual inspection of all structural improvements within the permitted allotment prior to March 1. They will perform all necessary perimeter fence maintenance to contain their livestock prior to release of any livestock onto the permitted boundary. The successful bidder is responsible for providing all labor, material, and equipment necessary to maintain all fences to an acceptable standard unless otherwise noted. Should existing fencing be deemed too deteriorated to be maintained, and replacement becomes necessary, Fee Credit would be allowed for the new construction. The successful bidder will be required to annually inspect and repair, as needed, all perimeter fencing and other structural improvements prior to the release of their livestock.

Liability

The USFS is in no way responsible for personal injury or property damage resulting from permitted livestock. Liability insurance for the permitted livestock is strongly recommended and may be required by state law. The permittee claims full responsibility for personal injury or property damage resulting from the permitted livestock in accordance with state law.

Other Considerations (e.g., Recreational or Allowable Use)

Other Considerations:

The TGP only conveys grazing privileges to the successful bidder. As with all USFS lands, the DHRA is open to the public for recreational use in accordance with USFS regulations and policies**. The acquisition of a grazing permit in no way limits the public's right to access these lands.**

- Hunters may actively use the pasture during various hunting seasons and operational problems may occur due to gates being left open or locks being cut off, damage to fencing, and/or harassment of livestock. Virtual fencing is highly recommended because of the issues that arise during hunting seasons however, Fee Credits are not currently available to permit holders.
- A section of the Florida Trail crosses the unit and may be used by hikers.
- Management or research activities on Threatened, Endangered, or Sensitive wildlife and/or plant species may occur and livestock may need to be restricted from impacting the locations where they occur. This may include the construction of pens for the purpose of holding relocated gopher tortoises prior to their release onto USFS lands. These pens may be fabricated of silt fencing or straw bales and it will be the responsibility of the permit holder to restrict their livestock from entering, trampling, or moving these pens for up to a year for each pen. Virtual fencing is highly recommended for these reasons as well.

- The allotment contains multiple USFS Burn Units and prescribed fire may be applied during the grazing period. Prescribed fire activities will be coordinated with the grazing permittee in advance.
- Activities related to timber management (pesticide application, timber harvest, road construction, etc.) may also occur within the allotment. Timber management activities will be coordinated with the grazing permittee in advance.
- Invasive plant species have been found within and surrounding the allotment. It is the responsibility of the permittee to prevent the spread of these species by ensuring that all equipment, vehicles, livestock, feed, and materials are weed free when they enter USFS lands.

Grazing Fees

The successful bidder will be billed for the initial grazing year per the bid submitted. In subsequent grazing years, 36 CFR 222.54(g) requires that the grazing fee for each competitively bid TGP will be adjusted annually using the current hay price index for the Florida Subregion. To establish the ***Base Grazing Value (BGV)***, the submitted bid will be divided by the ***2026 Bid Adjustment Factor***. The ***BGV*** will then be multiplied each year by the ***current year's Bid Adjustment Factor*** to determine the grazing fee for each of the subsequent years during the term of the grazing permit.

Examples:	**Year**	**Bid Adjustment Factor**
	2022	2.36
	2023	2.26
	2024	2.19
	2025	2.21
	2026	1.96

A bid of $10.00 per Animal Unit Month (AUM) submitted in 2022 would have a **BGV** of **$4.24** ($10 divided by 2.36).

Original Bid	**Year/BAF**	**Annual Fee Based on 2022 Bid Rate**
$10.00	2022/1.40	$4.24 x 2.36 = **$10.00**
	2010/1.49	$7.14 x 1.49 = $10.64
	2011/1.44	$7.14 x 1.44 = $10.28
	2012/1.42	$7.14 x 1.42 = $10.14
	2013/1.51	$7.14 x 1.51 = $10.78

As seen above, the first year is billed at the original bid amount. However, in subsequent years the grazing fee may be higher or lower than the original bid depending upon the BAF of the first and each of the subsequent years. Grazing fees are assessed by the Animal

Unit Month or AUM. One (1) AUM is equal to one (1) cow (with or without calf). For example, 50 Head of livestock grazing for a 12-month grazing season would equal 600 AUMs. (50 x 12 = 600). Payment will be made to the USFS. No livestock will be released onto USFS lands until notification of payment is received, the permit has been approved, and the permittee is notified by the USFS to proceed.

Bid Procedure

The attached application for a TGP **must be fully completed, signed and submitted with the bid form**. Failure to do so will result in an automatic disqualification of the submitted bid. All bids will be marked on the bid sheet provided and signed and sealed in an envelope when submitted. **UNSIGNED BIDS WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY DISQUALIFIED.**

Note: **All envelopes must be sealed and clearly marked on the outside with:**

"GRAZING BID ENCLOSED"

Failure to properly seal and mark the outside of the envelope may result in the bid being disqualified.

NOTE: A bid deposit of 10 percent of the total amount of the bid is required (36 CFR 222.54). Bid deposits can be made by Cashier's Check or Money Order made out to "USDA Forest Service." Bid deposits will be returned to all unsuccessful bidders. The bid deposit of the qualified high bidder will be applied to the annual grazing fee. To qualify, the bid must meet the minimum bid amount of $3.43 per AUM. The permit will be awarded to the qualified high bidder.

NOTE: The minimum bid is the 2026 non-competitive grazing fee established under 36 CFR 222.53 and FSM 2238.6 for the Florida Subregion. This fee amount is regional in scope and does not represent the true fair market value for the grazing allotments being offered in this Prospectus. **Estimated Market Value (Required):** The allotment included in this Prospectus was assessed in 2022 to the permit holder for the last year of his TGP at the Base Grazing Fee of $4.13/AUM. For comparison purposes, pasture fees in 2026 for private land in northwest Florida (as reported by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service) averaged $39.25/acre/year.

Upon opening the applicants' bids, the authorized officer shall determine whether each bidder meets the qualifications to hold a permit and shall refund the deposit to any applicant who is not qualified or who does not offer the high bid. If the USFS determines that none of the bids represent fair market value for the advertised grazing boundaries, the USFS reserves the right to reject the submitted bids and re-advertise under a new Prospectus. Bids will be accepted at the USFS office in **Crawfordville, FL** until:

December 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM, EDT

All bids received will be opened publicly immediately thereafter. Bids may be hand delivered or mailed to:

Arvind Bhuta, District Ranger
USDA-Forest Service Apalachicola National Forest
57 Taff Drive
Crawfordville, FL 32327-2138

If two individuals submit bids for differing numbers of livestock, the Apparent High Bidder will be determined by the total bid amount, not the per Head bid price. See the attached Bid Sheet to calculate the grazing bid.

BIDS FOR GRAZING USE IN EXCESS OF THE ESTABLISHED MAXIMUM GRAZING CAPACITY OR BELOW THE MINIMAL ALLOWABLE LIMIT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

THE USFS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EXTEND THE DATE FOR RECEIVING BIDS, TO REJECT ANY AND/OR ALL BIDS, AND TO WAIVE ANY TECHNICAL DEFECTS IN THE BIDS.

Permit Award

The high bidder for the DHRA allotment offered will be awarded exclusive authorization for that allotment through the issuance of a Forest Service TGP. All permit holders are expected to comply with all the terms of the permit and with this Prospectus. This Prospectus will be incorporated and made a part of the terms and conditions of all grazing permits issued.

Area Showing

The DHRA grazing boundary will be shown on **December 1, 2026**. **The showing will begin at 1300 hours or 1:00 PM Eastern Time**. The showing will begin with meeting the USFS representative at the intersection of Forest Service Road 108 and Liberty County Road 12 approximately fifteen miles south of Bristol, FL. For more information, contact:

Renee Ripley, Biological Technician
USDA Forest Service-Apalachicola National Forest
11152 NW SR 20
Bristol, FL 32321
Cell phone: (850) 477-0322
Front office: (850) 264-4997
Email: renee.ripley@usda.gov

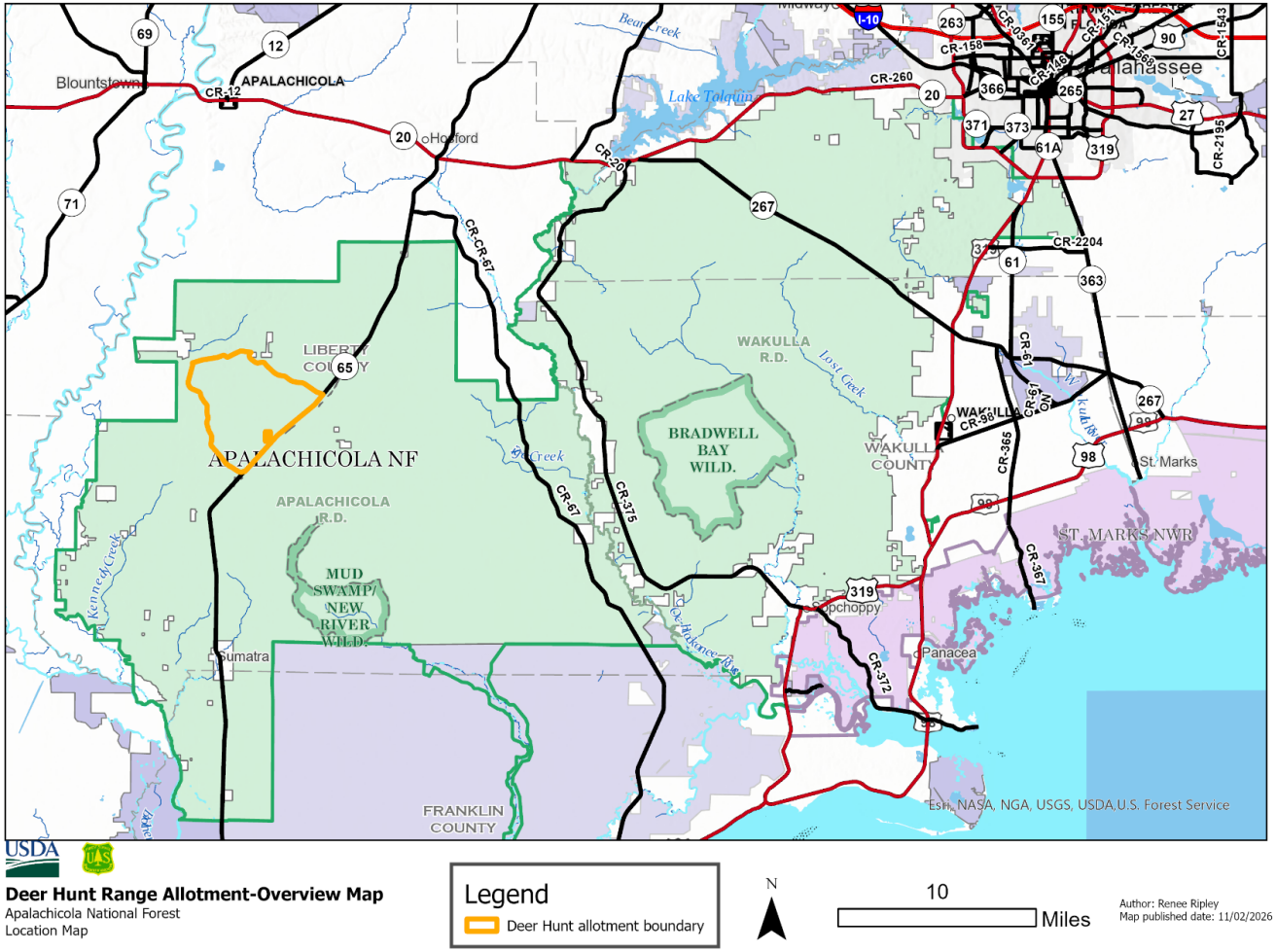


Figure 1. Apalachicola National Forest (ANF) map showing where the Deer Hunt Range Allotment (DHRA) is located. The range boundary is orange.

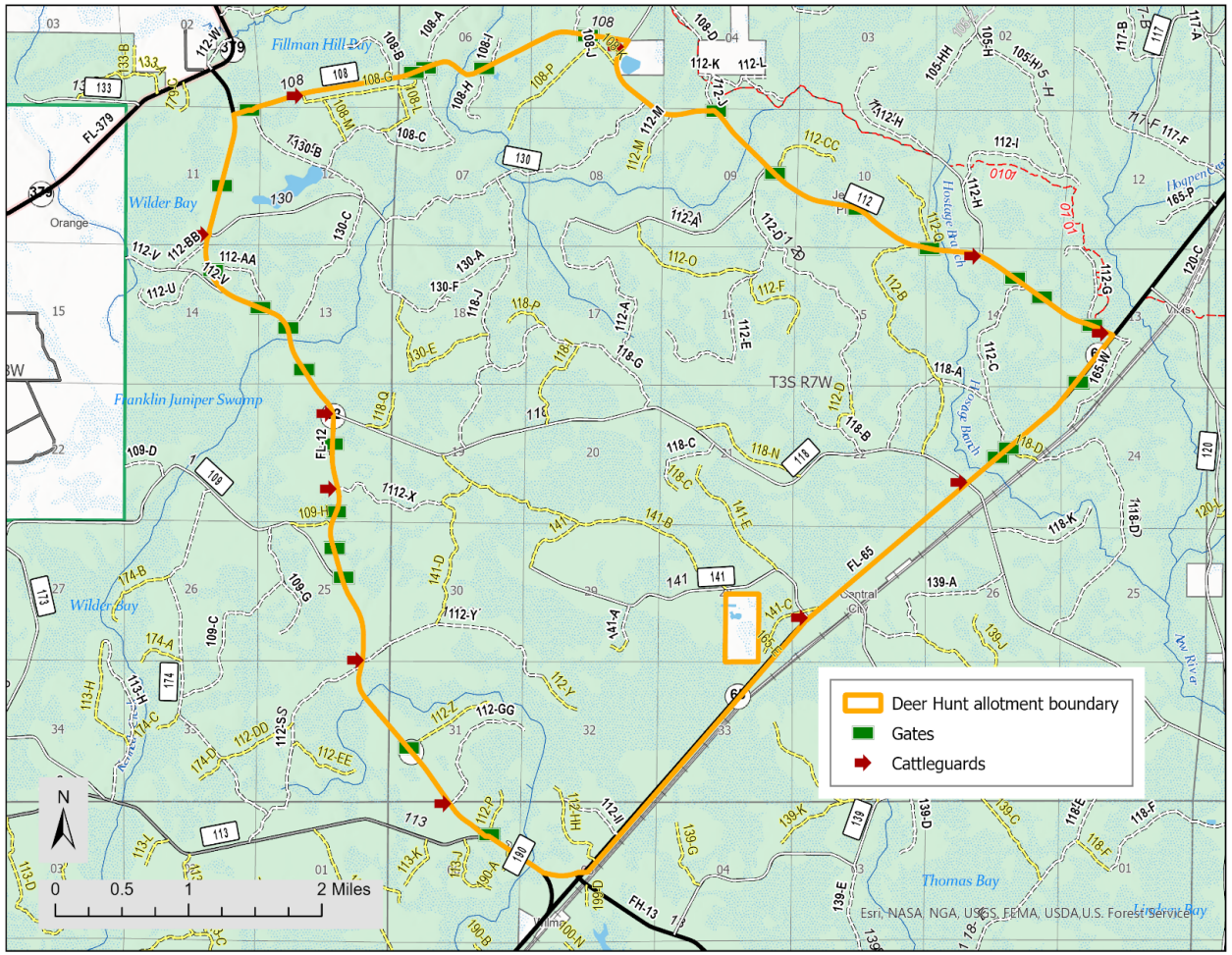


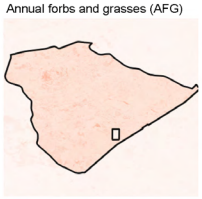
Figure 2. The Deer Hunt Range Allotment (DHRA) map showing DHRA allotment boundary, gates, and cattleguards.

Site Characterization | 1986-2025
DEER HUNT

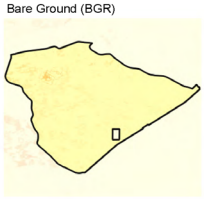
Ownership mask: None Landcover mask ☑

Current vegetation cover | 2025

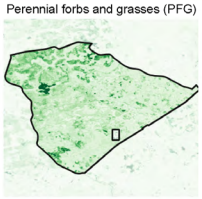
Annual forbs and grasses (AFG)



Bare Ground (BGR)



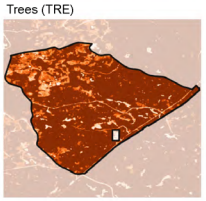
Perennial forbs and grasses (PFG)

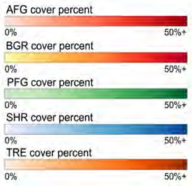


Shrubs (SHR)



Trees (TRE)





This report is produced by the ClimateEngine.org team at Desert Research Institute and uses Rangeland Analysis Platform v3 (USDA-ARS) and gridMET (UC-Merced) datasets. For more information, visit support.climateengine.org.

NOTE: This report should not be used in isolation from other lines of evidence.

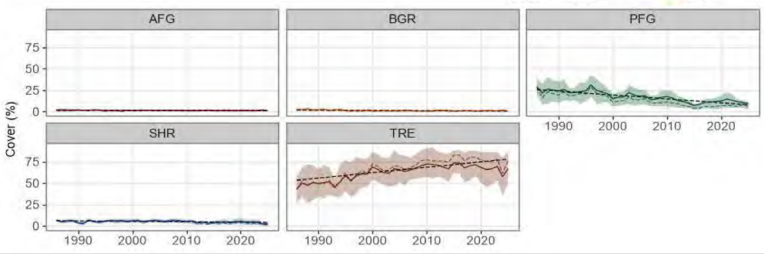
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The data in this report is current through the end of 2025

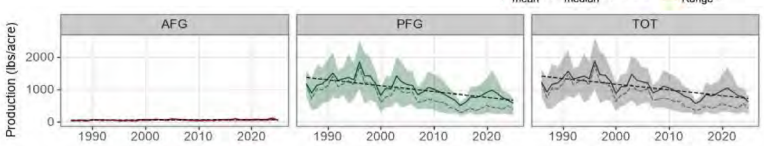
Vegetation condition and trend

Type	Current conditions | 2025 AFG	BGR	PFG	SHR	TRE	Trends^ | 1986-2025 AFG	BGR	PFG	SHR	TRE
Vegetation Cover (%)	0.99	0.44	8.98	2.18	66.66	-0.02	-0.03	-0.46	-0.05	+0.63
Vegetation Production (lbs/acre)	42.66	NA	560.6	NA	NA	+0.61	NA	-18.17	NA	NA

Vegetation cover timeseries | 1986-2025



Vegetation production timeseries | 1986-2025



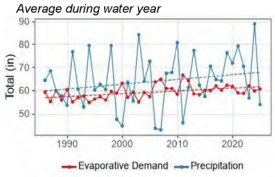
Climate and drought

Summary | 1986-2025

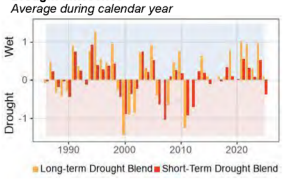
Annual precipitation
Average: 64.24 in
Trend^: +0.21 in/year

Annual evaporative demand
Average: 59.29 in
Trend^: +0.12 in/year

Water balance timeseries
Average during water year



Drought timeseries
Average during calendar year



^ Trends are calculated as Theil-Sen regression based on the spatial mean over the land unit during the period of record (1986-2025). Trends in vegetation cover will vary across the land unit and care should be taken when interpreting trend values. In the 'Vegetation condition and trend' table, trends are represented as change per year in the native units (e.g. for Vegetation Cover, % change/year).
^^ The interquartile range is the spatial 25th - 75th percentile.