



**Stephanie Garcia Richard, Commissioner of Public Lands
State of New Mexico**

**NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE
LUERA MOUNTAINS BACKPACK CAMPING PILOT PROGRAM –
BACKPACK CAMPING PERMIT POLICY**

Purpose

The overall goal of the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping Pilot Program is to provide an alternative dispersed camping option on New Mexico State Trust Land that allows hunters overnight backcountry access to an area rich in wildlife and natural beauty. This Backpack Camping Permit Policy describes the New Mexico State Land Office policy regarding the stipulations, issuance, and management of Backpack Camping Permits for the 2020-2021 Luera Mountains Backpack Camping Pilot Program.

Background

In March 2020, the New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO) and New Mexico Game Commission signed an easement agreement for 2020-2021 that provides access to 8.8 million acres of State Trust Land for hunters, anglers, and trappers who hold a valid New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) license. Section 11(e) of the agreement states that, on a pilot basis, backpack camping is authorized in specific areas designated by the Commissioner.

Subsequently, the NMSLO developed the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping Pilot Program (Pilot Program) to allow, manage, and evaluate backpack camping under the easement on designated State Trust Land in the Luera Mountains (GMU 16E; Catron County) during the 2020-2021 license year. This Program reflects recommendations received from NMSLO working groups comprised of sportspeople, agriculture lessees, and NMDGF. If the Pilot Program is successful, the NMSLO may expand backpack camping opportunities elsewhere on State Trust Land.

Definitions

A Backpack Camping Permit is an instrument issued under the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping Pilot Program that allows for temporary backpack camping on New Mexico State Trust Lands in specified areas.

Applicability

This policy only applies to holders of a valid NMDGF hunting license between August 17, 2020 through January 15, 2021, for the 2020-2021 season, during the dates for which their license is valid, inclusive of the 14-day advanced scouting period.

Policy

Backpack Camping Permits are required for all licensed hunters to backpack camp in the permitted area. Applications for Backpack Camping Permits will be diligently reviewed by the NMSLO.

A Backpack Camping Permit is NOT needed to camp in the existing Luera camping area on State Trust Land and identified under the easement. This camping area will remain open in 2020-2021 per the terms of the easement and managed as it has been in recent years. For more information about this camping area, go to <https://bit.ly/SLOHuntMap>.

The following describes the requirements for issuance of Backpack Camping Permits and the responsibilities of Permit holders:

- A. Backpack Camping Permit Applications may be downloaded from NMSLO's website (https://bit.ly/SLO_Hunt_Info) or obtained by calling 505-827-1245.
- B. Completed Backpack Camping Permit Applications may be returned to the email address provided on the application or mailed to the New Mexico State Land Office, 310 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. If applying via email, please submit application at least ten calendar days in advance of period of use. If applying via U.S. mail, please allow seventeen calendar days.
- C. Only holders of a NMDGF license for hunting within GMU 16E are eligible to apply for a Backpack Camping Permit.
- D. The NMSLO will issue 15 Backpack Camping Permits for the Luera Mountains Pilot Program on a first-come, first-served basis.
- E. There is no application fee for a Backpack Camping Permit issued under the Pilot Program.
- F. Backpack Camping Permits are valid for 14 consecutive days within the time period of August 17, 2020 through January 15, 2021. The 14-day period includes any advanced scouting period. Backpack Camping Permits state the dates during which the Permit is valid.
- G. Backpack Camping Permits are only valid for use on State Trust Land within the delineated boundary on the Backpack Camping map included with the Permit and as shown on the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping map attached this Policy. Backpack Camping Permittees are responsible for knowing their location and not trespassing on private property. Do not cut fences or deface or remove signs. Please close all gates passed through, regardless if they were open upon arrival.
- H. Backpack Camping Permit holders must carry a paper or electronic copy of the Backpack Camping Permit at all times and present their Backpack Camping Permit upon request to NMDGF staff, NMSLO staff, and/or a NMSLO agricultural lessee (NMSLO agricultural lessees are responsible for preventing trespass on the State Trust Lands they lease). Permit holders also must display a visible copy of the Backpack Camping Permit on the dashboard or windshield of their vehicle. Vehicles without the Permit will be considered to be parked overnight illegally on State Trust Land.
- I. A list of Backpack Camping Permit holders that includes email and cell phone contact info will be provided on a weekly basis to NMDGF staff and any relevant NMSLO agriculture lessees who lease State Trust Land included in this Pilot Program. Upon

approval of their Permit, Backpack Camping Permit holders will be provided with contact info for the abovementioned NMSLO agricultural lessees, along with guidelines that include helpful tips, dos, and don'ts to facilitate awareness and any communication that may need to occur between the multiple users of State Trust Land. Help foster good relations between sportspeople and NMSLO lessees.

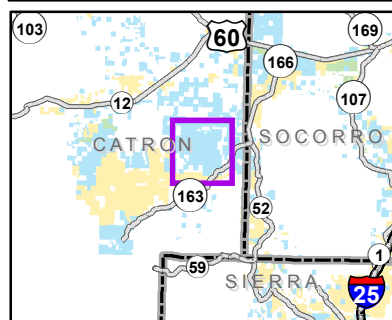
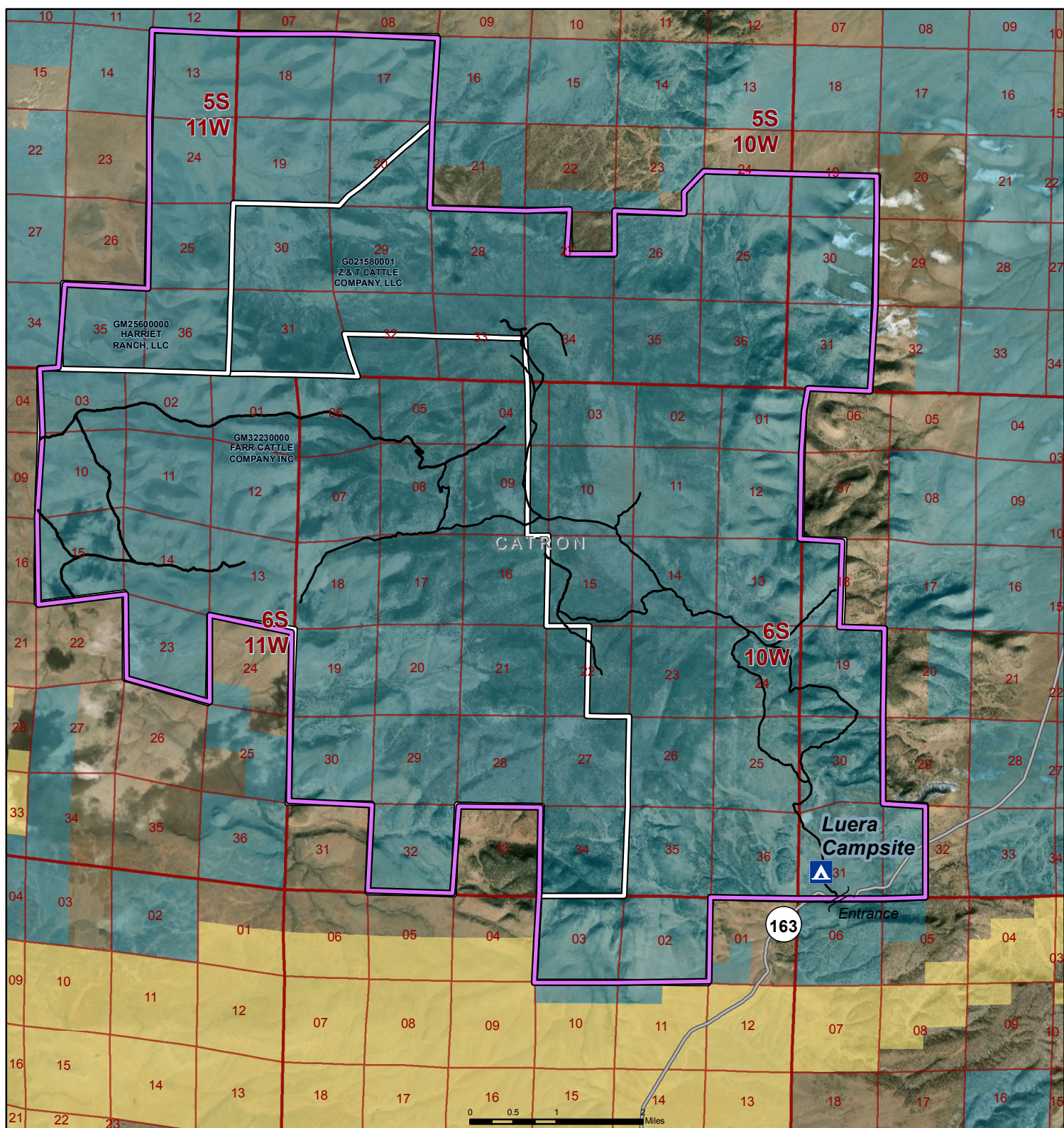
- J. Backpack Camping Permit holders must park within a two-car-width along established roads located on State Trust Land located on the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping map.
- K. Backpack Camping Permit holders must set up camp at least a quarter-mile away from their vehicle and a quarter-mile off of an established road as shown on the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping map.
- L. Backpack Camping Permit holders shall not camp within 200 feet of wetlands, including intermittent streams, and shall not camp within 300 feet of historical structures, archaeological resources, or ranching structures, including corrals and stock tanks.
- M. Backpack Camping Permit holders may take up to three (3) guests with them for the purpose of assisting with their hunt.
- N. Backpack Camping Permit holders taking pack animals into the Backpack Camping Area must park pack animal trailers at the southern entrance to the Luera Mountains Road, off Highway 163, as shown on the Backpack Camping Map. Note that surface water is scarce and often not available in this region. To inquire about current conditions, please contact the local please call the NMSLO District Resource Manager at 505-290-1281.
- O. Backpack Camping Permit holders must dispose of waste properly — Leave No Trace
 - 1. Pack It In, Pack It Out: remove all trash and garbage.
 - 2. Properly dispose of human waste:
 - a. Find a spot at least 300 feet from a water source;
 - b. Dig a hole 6 to 8 inches deep and bury human waste; and
 - c. Remove used toilet paper from State Trust Land.
- P. Fire policy
 - 1. Campfires are prohibited except as currently permitted by the New Mexico State Forester. It is the Permit holder's responsibility to obtain current information and to comply with any restrictions in place. Information is available by accessing www.emnrd.state.nm.us/SFD/Announcements.html or by calling the Fire Restrictions Hotline at 1-877-864-6985.
 - 2. The Commissioner reserves the right to impose restrictions more limiting, as warranted, than those from the State Forester (e.g., following county-mandated restrictions).
 - 3. If campfire restrictions are not in place, Permit holders must still use practices to prevent forest fires. These include, but are not limited to, never leaving a campfire unattended and ensuring it is dead out and cold to the touch before leaving the area.

4. In case of a fire emergency, please call 911.
- Q. Backpack Camping Permit holders must comply with the terms and conditions of:
1. their NMDGF license;
 2. the NMDGF 2020-2021 New Mexico Hunting Rules & Info publication, including the pages regarding State Trust Land, found at: <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/home/publications>;
 3. the White Peak Dispersed Camping Permit application, including the prohibited activities; and
 4. any additional terms and conditions the Commissioner may require related to the management of State Trust Land.
- R. Backpack Camping Permit holders are required to adhere to all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to those dealing with plant and animal species and cultural resources.
- S. A Backpack Camping Permit does not grant access to private lands nor grant a right to backpack on State Trust Lands other than those shown on the Luera Mountains Backpack Camping Map attached to the Backpack Camping Permit and to this Policy.
- T. Backpack Camping Permit holders must adhere to NMSLO rules regarding motorized traffic and only operate motorized vehicles, including Off Road Vehicles, on established roads.
- U. Regarding issues related to access under the easement, please call the NMSLO District Resource Manager at 505-290-1281, the local NMDGF Conservation Officer at 505-350-5507, or the local NMDGF Area Captain at 575-520-3327. Another way to report issues is to use NMSLO's Multiple-Use Incident Reporting Form that can be downloaded from our website at <https://bit.ly/MUIRform>.
- V. Backpack Camping Permit holders agree to complete and return a Pilot Program evaluation survey to NMSLO. We need and value Permit holders' input. Permit holders who do not comply may be ineligible for future Backpacking Camping Permits.
- W. The Backpack Camping Pilot Program will only be broadened in future seasons if it is determined to be successful this year. Please help by leaving no trace and respecting private property.



Stephanie Garcia Richard
Commissioner of Public Lands

7/23/2020
Date



Luera Mountain Backpack Camping Map



Existing Campsite

Area Roads

County Boundaries

Bureau of Land Management

State Trust Lands

Surface Estate

Both Estates

Backpack Boundary

Lease Boundaries within Backpack Area



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