



## United States Department of the Interior



### U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge  
44843 County Road 19  
Odessa, Minnesota 56276

Date: January 22, 2022  
To: Interested Cattle Grazers  
Subject: 2022 Refuge Grazing Units

Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge will be allowing cattle grazing on two units of the Refuge beginning in 2022. Grazing unit descriptions, requirements, and maps follow below along with a bid application. Cooperators are responsible for following all terms and conditions identified in the requirements and regulations.

Permittees will be selected based on receipt of sealed high bid for each of the grazing units. Sealed bids are due at the Refuge office no later than **4:00 pm, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022**. Due to the office remaining closed due to COVID policy, a box will be placed in front of the office for bid collection. Bids may also be mailed to the refuge office.

Please call the Refuge Biologist Brandon Semel (320) 273-2191 ext 2508 or Refuge Specialist (320) 273-2191 ext 2504, if you have any questions about the units or bidding process.

Sincerely,

Josh Bauer  
Wildlife Refuge Specialist

## Unit 1 Grazing Requirements-2022

**Objectives for grazing:** To reduce smooth brome dominance on prairie habitats, to reduce expected sweet clover following burn in 2021, and to stimulate establishment of native vegetation.

### **Location Description:**

Available grazing acres: 305. The unit will be subdivided into four smaller subunits (paddock separation shown is flexible) and cattle will be required to be moved between the units throughout the grazing season as habitat conditions warrant.

**Vegetation:** The unit is comprised mostly of upland vegetation, including cool season grasses such as brome and Kentucky bluegrass, and warm season grasses such as big bluestem and switchgrass.

**Water:** Cattle may utilize wetlands located on the unit as a water source. Water availability should be sufficient within the unit for the duration of grazing, however, water availability is not guaranteed. If wetlands are not suitable or sufficient for cattle watering, the cooperators will be required to haul water to the site. If supplemental water is needed, watering locations and delivery method will need to be approved by Refuge staff.

Cattle will need to be excluded from a small, wet area on the north end of the unit (<2 acres).

**Gates:** Three existing. Gate locations shown on map.

**Grazing Period:** May 15-August 13, 2022 (approximate dates). The exact beginning and end dates are to be determined by Refuge staff based on weather and habitat conditions. Contract will be for two years, with approximately the same grazing dates each year.

**Stocking Rate:** approx. 1 AUM/acre

260 AU/year

260 AU/3 months = 87 AUMs

Total AUs (two year period): 520

Actual stocking rate may be adjusted (increased or decreased) as habitat/forage conditions warrant, based on weather, period of growing season, and/or animal performance. Any changes to stocking rate will be determined by the Refuge Manager. Permittee is required to provide a minimum of 87 Animal Unit Equivalents to graze this unit.

### **Animal Unit (AU) Equivalents:**

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Mature cow    | 1.00 |
| Cow-Calf pair | 1.20 |
| Bull          | 1.50 |

### **Fencing Required:**

The cooperator is responsible for maintaining all fencing for this unit, including the existing boundary fence. The cooperator will be required to provide the materials and labor to install all temporary and electric fencing, including paddock fencing. Cooperator is responsible for supplying a power source for an electric fence. All electric boundary fences for these units must have high-tensile strength wire (no barbed wire). All temporary fencing will be removed by the Permittee at the end of the 2 year grazing term.

-Repair and maintain 4,880 ft. of permanent boundary fence (4 strand smooth wire) on the south, east, and west end of the unit. This fence is in excellent condition and should require little maintenance.

-Install and maintain 1,075 ft. of temporary boundary fence.

-Install and maintain 1,510 ft. of temporary interior fence separating paddocks.

## **Unit 2 Grazing Requirements-2022**

**Objectives for grazing:** To reduce smooth brome dominance on prairie habitats, to reduce expected sweet clover following burn in 2021, and to stimulate establishment of native vegetation.

### **Location Description:**

Available grazing acres: 470. The unit will be subdivided into three smaller subunits (paddock separation shown is flexible) and cattle will be required to be moved between the paddocks throughout the grazing season as habitat conditions warrant, as determined by Refuge staff.

**Vegetation:** The unit is comprised of upland vegetation, including cool season grasses such as brome and Kentucky bluegrass, and warm season grasses such as big bluestem and switchgrass, as well as some cattail-dominated wetlands.

**Water:** Cattle may utilize wetlands located on the unit as a water source, however, water availability is not guaranteed and may not be sufficient throughout the grazing period. If wetlands are not suitable or sufficient for cattle watering, the cooperators will be required to haul water to the site. If supplemental water is needed, watering locations and delivery method will need to be approved by Refuge staff.

**Gates:** Two existing. Gate locations shown on map.

**Grazing Period:** May 15-August 13, 2022 (approximate dates). The exact beginning and end dates are to be determined by Refuge staff based on weather and habitat conditions. Contract will be for two years, with approximately the same grazing dates each year.

**Stocking Rate:** approx. 1 AUM/acre

400 AU/year

400 AU/3 months = 130 AUMs

Total AUs (two year period): 800

Actual stocking rate may be adjusted (increased or decreased) as habitat/forage conditions warrant, based on weather, period of growing season, and/or animal performance. Any changes to stocking rate will be determined by the Refuge Manager. Permittee is required to provide a minimum of 130 Animal Unit Equivalents to graze this unit.

### **Animal Unit (AU) Equivalents:**

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Mature cow    | 1.00 |
| Cow-Calf pair | 1.20 |
| Bull          | 1.50 |

### **Fencing Required:**

The cooperators are responsible for maintaining all fencing for this unit, including the existing boundary fence. The cooperators will be required to provide the materials and labor to install all temporary and electric fencing, including paddock fencing. Cooperators are responsible for supplying a power source for an electric fence. All electric boundary fences for these units must have high-tensile strength wire (no barbed wire). All temporary fencing will be removed by the Permittee at the end of the 2 year grazing term.

-Repair and maintain 10,752 ft. of permanent boundary fence (4 strand, barbed wire with smooth wire bottom strand) on the north end of the unit. This fence is in excellent condition and should require little maintenance.

-Install and maintain 7,200 ft. of temporary boundary fence.

-Install and maintain 8,110 ft. of temporary interior fence separating paddocks.

**Grazing Bid Application 2022  
Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge**

I have read, understand, agree to, and will comply with the regulations, conditions and requirements for grazing and submit this bid accordingly.

I understand that successful bidders will be required to provide their Social Security Number at the time the permit is issued.

**NOTE: Bids are based on price per AUM not per acre.**

**Animal Unit (AU) Equivalents:**

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Mature cow    | 1.00 |
| Cow-Calf pair | 1.20 |
| Bull          | 1.50 |

**NOTE: NO DEDUCTIONS WILL BE GIVEN-BE SURE TO FACTOR IN FENCE MAINTENANCE AND LABOR COSTS TO YOUR BID.**

Unit 1 bid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per AUM; (requesting 87 AUMs for an estimated 3 months)

Unit 2 bid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per AUM; (requesting 130 AUMs for an estimated 3 months)

Signature of Bidder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sealed Bids must be received by 4:00 pm March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Please send or drop off to:**

Big Stone NWR  
44843 County Road 19  
Odessa, MN 56276  
320-273-2191

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

## Grazing Regulations:

1. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reserves the right to modify or terminate the permit if habitat conditions warrant.
2. Supplemental feeding is prohibited. Use of minerals (salt or protein) will be allowed. Permittee must provide product labeling to the Refuge Manager for approval prior to use. Minerals must be in a container that minimizes spillage and are easily moved and placed as required by the Refuge Manager.
3. All liability relating to livestock and livestock management to include all persons working for the Permittee, whether related, hired or as a partner, is strictly that of the Permittee as listed on the Special Use Permit (SUP). The Permittee must have/acquire liability insurance that covers the livestock being grazed on Service Lands. A copy of the liability insurance must be provided to the Refuge Manager.
4. The Permittee must be in compliance with the respective state and local livestock health regulations.
5. All equipment for grazing and fence construction must have prior Refuge Management approval. Equipment includes ATVs and UTVs and must be clean and free of invasive species plant material including seeds before entering any Refuge, Waterfowl Production Area (WPA), or Service easement. The Refuge Manager reserves the right to inspect and deny the use of any equipment/vehicle/horse etc. that appears to contain invasive species, plant material, or seeds.
6. The permittee will not use any pesticides (includes insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides) on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands.
7. Any livestock management action on Service land must be approved by the Refuge Manager. Branding and dehorning are prohibited.
8. Subletting is not allowed. As approved by the Refuge Manager, partnering with another rancher will be allowed should the number of livestock needed to achieve the desired outcome not be obtainable by a single rancher. If partnering is allowed, the initial Permittee will be solely responsible for the total payment, management, liability and all special conditions of the permit.
9. All fence maintenance is the responsibility of the Permittee. Any permanent fence constructed on National Wildlife Refuge System lands will become property of the Service. Disking and plowing are not permitted to prepare a site for fence installation. Mowing may be allowed, but must be approved by Refuge staff.
10. Permittee agrees not to interfere with small animal enclosures (0.25 acres/paddock) that will be used by Refuge staff to monitor impacts of grazers on vegetation.
11. Permittee is responsible for keeping the livestock in the specified cells and in the unit. **Permittee is responsible for any damage to surrounding crops or pastures caused by your cattle.** If cattle escape the pasture, permittee may be required to expand or reinforce fencing.

12. Livestock watering will generally be provided via existing wetlands. During dry periods when wetlands do not contain water, supplemental watering will be allowed. Any methods and locations of supplemental watering on Service lands must be approved by the Refuge Manager.
13. The Permittee must notify the Refuge Manager of deceased livestock. Deceased livestock must be removed from Service lands within 48 hours of discovery unless other arrangements have been approved by the Refuge Manager.
14. Following the completion of the final year of the permitted grazing season, removal of all temporary fencing and other equipment provided by the permittee is required. Failure to remove materials within 1 month after the completion of the final grazing season will result in a monetary fine and potential loss of consideration for future grazing permits.
15. The Permittee agrees that the special use conditions specified above are in effect during the first year of operation. If this permit is for more than one year the conditions may be altered or modified annually, following the first year of operation. Changes in the permit must be made prior to the grazing season by an addendum, which is attached to and becomes part of the agreement.
  - i. The Service must provide the permittee those changes to the permit prior to February 1<sup>st</sup> by a written addendum.
  - ii. The permittee then has until February 28<sup>th</sup> to accept or turn down those changes.
  - iii. If the changes are agreed upon by the permittee, the addendum is signed and attached to the SUP and becomes part of the permit. If the changes are not accepted, the selection process will begin again.
16. Cooperators must be able to respond in a timely manner in case of issues.
17. Permittee must provide a tax identification number or SS# for billing purposes.

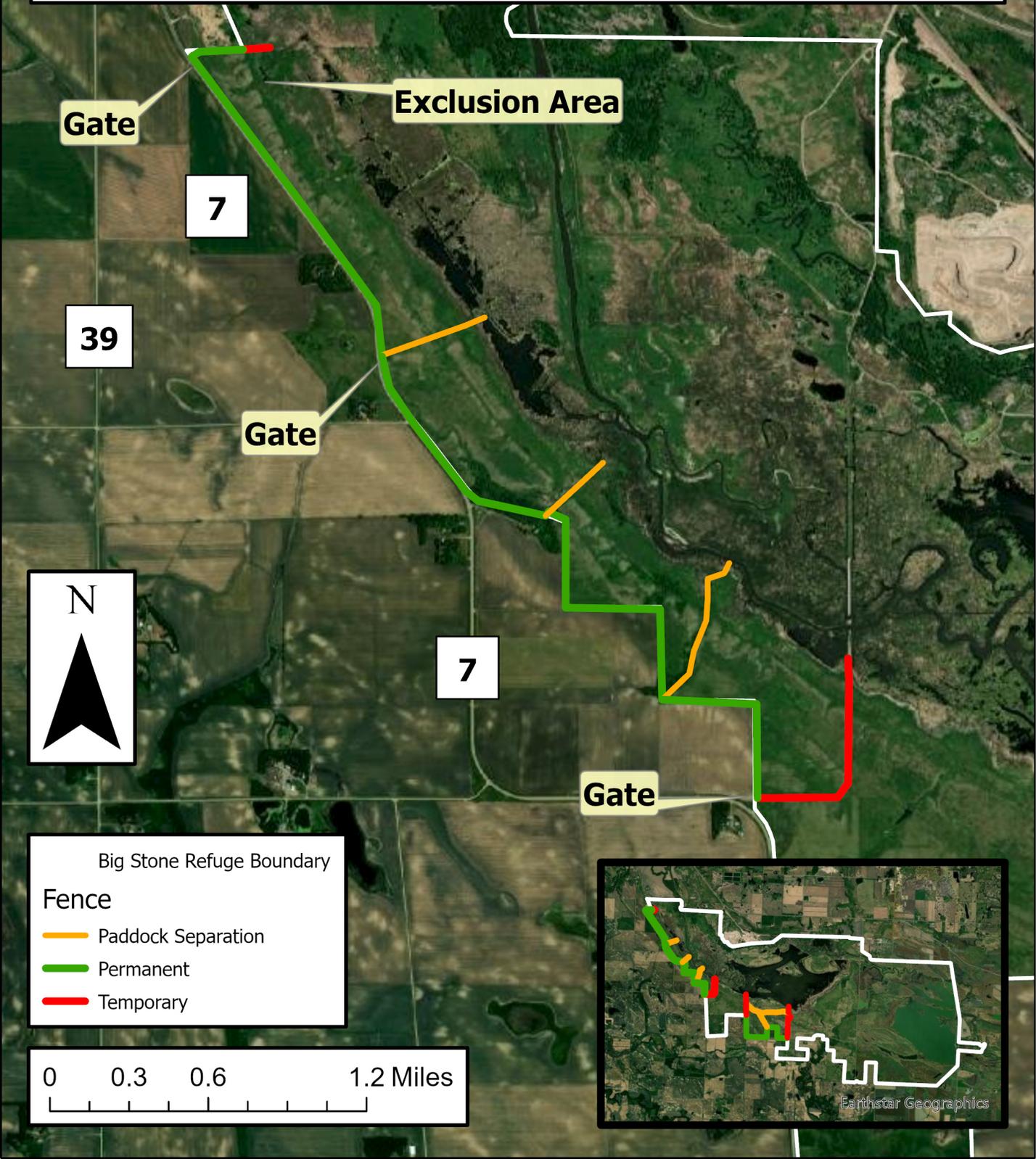
I have read the above grazing regulations and understand failure to comply could result in revocation of grazing privileges.

Permittee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge

## Grazing 2022

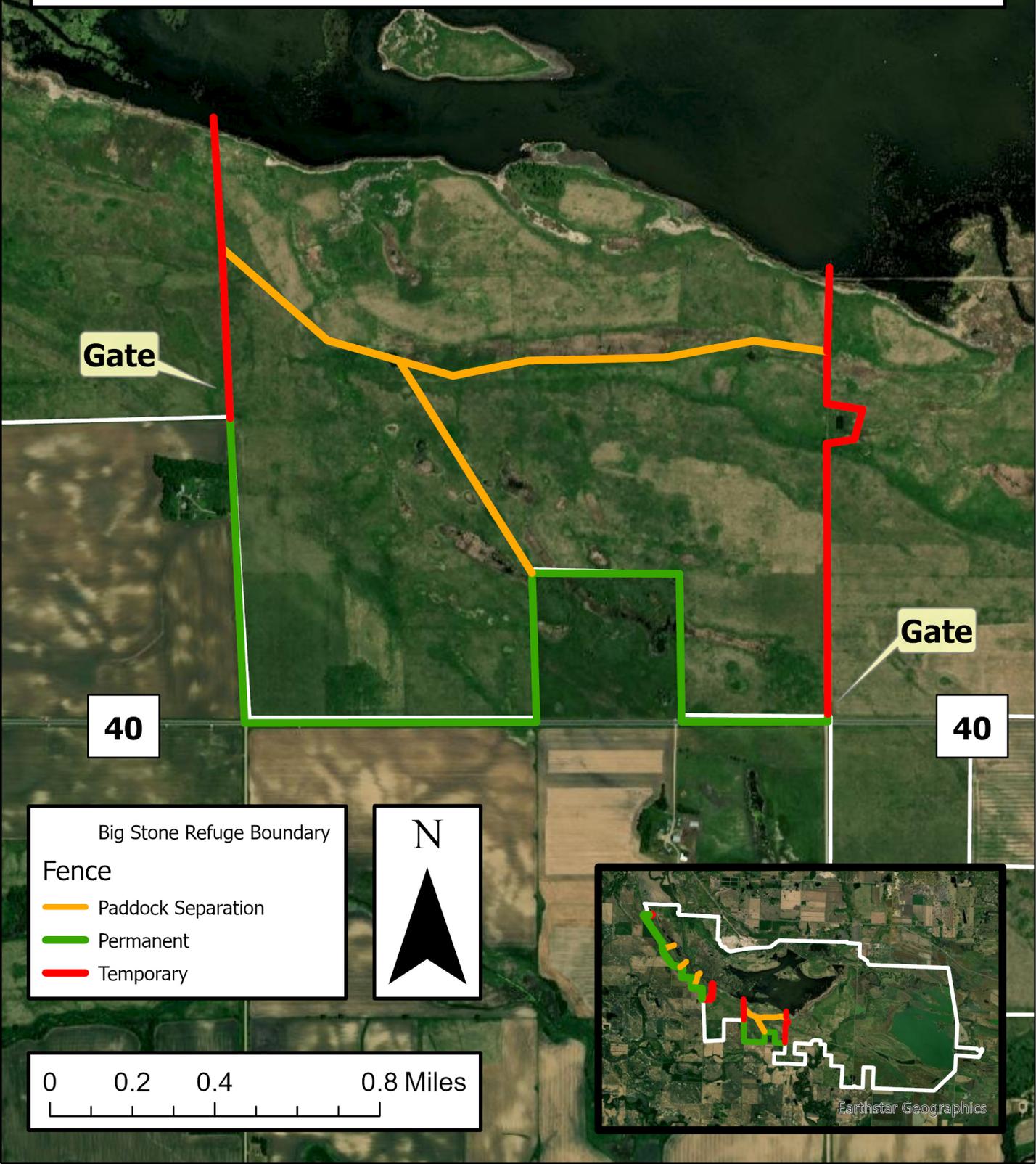
### Unit 1 - 305 acres



# Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge

## Grazing 2022

### Unit 2 - 470 acres



Gate

Gate

40

40

Big Stone Refuge Boundary

Fence

- Paddock Separation
- Permanent
- Temporary



Earthstar Geographics