



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Fort Niobrara/Valentine NWR Complex
39983 Refuge Road
Valentine, NE 69201

March 28, 2018

Dear Sir(s) or Madam;

The U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service is offering to the highest bidder the opportunity to graze cattle on the West River portion of Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is located approximately 4 miles east of Valentine, Nebraska.

To be eligible to bid, you must be a private individual or small business entity. The minimum bid is \$32.60/AUM. Grazing conditions, requirements, area map and other information about the grazing program are enclosed. If you are interested in bidding, the enclosed bid form and Special Use Permit Application ([FWS Form 3-1383-C](#)) must be completed and received at the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge office no later than 1:00 p.m. on Friday, April 20, 2018. Incomplete information will result in rejection of your bid. Be sure to mark your envelope as indicated on the bid form. Enclose the completed bid form and Special Use Permit Application.

Bids will be opened at 1:00 PM on Friday, April 20, 2018 at the Fort Niobrara NWR office. Your attendance is welcome, but not required.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 402-376-3789 ext. 200 or 402-322-0818 cell phone.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Hicks
Project Leader
402-376-3789 Office
402-322-0818 Cell

Attachments: Bid package



**2018 Grazing Bid Invitation and Plan
West River Pasture
Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge**

Eligibility To Bid: Bidder must be a private individual or small business entity.

Bidding: Sealed bids are made on the attached bid form. The minimum bid is \$32.60/AUM. Bidders must also complete a [Form 3-1383-C, Special Use Permit \(SUP\) Application](#). Sealed bid opening will be 1:00 PM, Friday, April 20, 2018 at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge. All bids and SUP applications must be received at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge by that time. A hand-delivered bid and SUP Application will be accepted at the Fort Niobrara refuge office but it must be sealed in envelope and marked as indicated on bid form. Bids will not be accepted via FAX or Email because they cannot be considered sealed prior to the bid opening. The Fish and Wildlife Service reserves the right to refuse any or all bids.

Location: Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge is located approximately 4 miles east of Valentine, Nebraska. A map is attached showing the location of the unit to be grazed.

Grazing Period: Grazing period will be for six weeks (1.5 month) only. Permittee may start grazing as early as April 21 and must be out by June 15, 2018.

Description of Unit: This is the portion of the refuge lying west of the Niobrara River and generally south of Cornell Dam to the refuge's southern boundary. The total unit is approximately 504 acres. Access to the unit is from Highway 12 which lies adjacent to part of the grazing unit. The unit is divided into three adjacent areas by fencing. The north portion, HU 24, is approximately 85 acres, the center portion, HU 31a, is approximately 129 acres and the south portion, HU31 is approximately 290 acres.

Grazing Rotation: The purpose of this management action (cattle grazing) is to use and stress cool season invasive grasses. Refuge management calls for the HU 24 to be grazed first, then HU 31a, then HU 31. The cattle will be moved from north to south as the grasses are used up. The permittee may be asked to move cattle back into one of the first two units should the cool season grasses come back strong before the cattle are removed from the refuge.

Fencing: Currently the fence is in fair to new condition. New fence was recently installed along a portion of the Niobrara River side of the unit and along Highway 12. The Permittee is responsible for containing livestock within unit boundaries. This is to be accomplished by Permittee repairing the existing barbed wire perimeter fence or Permittee installing electric fence. If repair to the existing permanent fence is performed by the Permittee, the Fish and Wildlife Service will supply/replace the materials used. **Labor for fence repair and/or electric fence labor and materials are covered by Permittee, so bid accordingly.**

Water: Portions of all three units are marshy and should provide water. Additionally there is a windmill and tank in HU 31. The windmill will be in working order. Bidder may make other provisions for water. **No deductions will be made for water supply so bid accordingly.**

Number of Animals to Graze: Our goal is to have this unit grazed by cattle at a rate of approximately 0.33 animal units (AU) per acre for six weeks. A combination of animals may be used to meet the required Animal Units. **The minimum required Animal Units is 100 and the maximum allowed is 168.**

168 Animal Units equates to:

168 cows (1 AU/cow)
140 cow/calf pairs (1.2 AU/pair)
240 yearling cattle (0.7 AU/yearling)
336 weaner calves (0.5 AU/weaner)
112 bulls (1.5 AU/bull)

Grazing fee calculation: The final grazing fee will be calculated by multiplying the $\$/\text{AUM}$ bid X the number of animals used X the Animal Units per animal X the length of the Grazing Period.

Example:

$\frac{\text{Bid } \$55.00}{\text{AUM}} \times 140 \text{ cow/calf Pair} \times \frac{1.2 \text{ AU}}{\text{Pair}} \times 1.5 \text{ Month} = \$13,860.00$

Winning Bid: The Special Use Permit to graze animals on the refuge will be issued to the bidder with the highest $\$/\text{AUM}$ bid. For example someone bidding $\$50.00/\text{AUM}$ would be outbid by someone bidding $\$55.00/\text{AUM}$. If there are matching high $\$/\text{AUM}$ bids, the winning bidder will be selected from those by the highest number of Animal Units offered up to the maximum allowed. If there are still matching high bids, the winning bidder will be determined at a public drawing. The winning bidder must graze the bid number of animals. The SUP is not transferable, and no privileges contained in the permit may be sublet or made available to any person or interest not mentioned in the permit.

Payment: Payment will be due upon billing. Typically we will have you pay 25% of the bill directly to the FWS. Portions of the remaining 75% may be paid directly to area suppliers, fence contractors, or others, as directed by the Refuge Manager. Materials purchased and work done will be used for the grazing program (i.e. fence materials, fence repair, wells, windmills, tanks, weed control, and other supplies). Any balance not used for these purposes will be billed to the Permittee.

Bidders are encouraged to visit the area before bidding. As this is a normally closed part of the refuge, please contact Refuge Manager Steve Hicks at 402-376-3789 Ext. 200 at the Fort Niobrara Refuge headquarters before going onto the refuge. If you have Questions about this bid process, please contact Mr. Hicks at 402-376-3789 ext. 200, 402-322-0818 (cell), or email steve_hicks@fws.gov.

Authorities:

- Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act (31 U.S.C. 6301–08)
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661–667e)
- Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 715)
- National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd)
- National Wildlife Refuge System Regulations, Economic Uses and Cooperative Land Management (50 CFR 29.1-2 (1960))
- Refuge Revenue Sharing Act (16 U.S.C. 715s)
- 505 Departmental Manual (DM) 2, Procurement Contracts, Grant and Cooperative Agreements
- Service Manual, 620 FW 2, Cooperative Agriculture Use

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number and information:**Cooperative Agriculture****Number: 15.681****Agency: Department of the Interior****Office: Fish and Wildlife Service**

The objectives for the use of cooperative agriculture in the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) are: Production or modification of specific cover types and/or growing methods that meet the life history requirements of species for which we have established objectives (e.g., waterfowl production); and Production of foods for wildlife species for which we have established objectives or maintenance, rehabilitation, or reestablishment of natural habitat.

Special Use Permit conditions:

1. Cattle must be checked regularly by the Permittee.
2. The number and type of livestock submitted in a bid form by a perspective bidder must be utilized in if he/she becomes the successful applicant. Changing numbers or type of cattle is not permitted unless approved by the Refuge Manager. Replacement of losses due to sickness or death of stock is encouraged.
3. Cattle left in a habitat unit beyond the prescribed length of time without Refuge Manager approval, will be charged at double the winning bid grazing rate.
4. Salt and mineral can be used to promote uniform grazing/livestock distribution in each unit. Supplement stations will be changed to avoid eat-outs or bare sand. Vehicle use in servicing supplement stations away from trails will be minimized. Supplement stations will be removed from the grazing unit within 10 days of livestock removal.
5. Water on this unit is in marshy areas and the one windmill and tank in HU31. Permittee is responsible for providing livestock water beyond what is on the unit naturally or at the windmill.
6. Permittees are encouraged to use horses or ATVs while checking or moving livestock on the Refuge. Use of 4x4 vehicles should be minimized. Motorized vehicles will be operated on established trails whenever and wherever possible.
7. All firearms carried in vehicles will be unloaded and cased or unloaded and stored behind the seat of the vehicle when these weapons are on the Refuge. Notwithstanding any other provision, persons may possess, carry, and transport concealed, loaded, and operable firearms within a national wildlife refuge in accordance with the laws of the state in which the wildlife refuge, or that portion thereof, is located, except as otherwise prohibited by applicable Federal law.
8. The names of any employees, associates or friends of the Permittee who are assisting with the management of the cattle must be made known to the Refuge Manager. Permittee will be responsible for informing these persons of the requirements of the Refuge and will be accountable for their actions while they are on the Refuge.
9. Barbed wire fence may need repair. Fence repairs are the responsibility of the Permittee. The Fish and Wildlife Service will supply or replace materials used to repair the existing barbed wire fence. The Permittee is responsible for the labor portion of the fence repair.
10. Permittee is responsible for all electric fence used. Electric fence will be removed within 10 days of cattle being moved off refuge.
11. Moving, sorting, salting and handling of cattle are solely the Permittees responsibility.
12. No cattle rubs may be placed on the Refuge and no sprays applied while cattle are on refuge lands.
13. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reserve the right to modify or terminate the SUP if habitat conditions warrant.
14. 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 SUP.
15. The permittee must be in compliance with the respective state and local livestock health regulations.

**2018 Grazing Sealed Bid Form
West River Pasture
Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge
(Please type or print)**

Name of Bidder _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Telephone Number _____

Cell Number _____

Email _____

My Bid Is: (A minimum bid of \$32.60/AUM is required)

_____ (example \$55.00/AUM)

I will use this many animals in this combination:

_____ cows (1 AU/cow)

_____ cow/calf pairs (1.2 AU/pair)

_____ yearling cattle (.7 AU/yearling)

_____ weaner calves (0.5 AU/weaner)

_____ bulls (1.5 AU/bull)

I have read, understand and agree to the terms of this Bid Invitation/Plan and Refuge regulations. The government reserves the right to adjust or halt use to protect the resource and to reject any and all bids.

Signature

Date

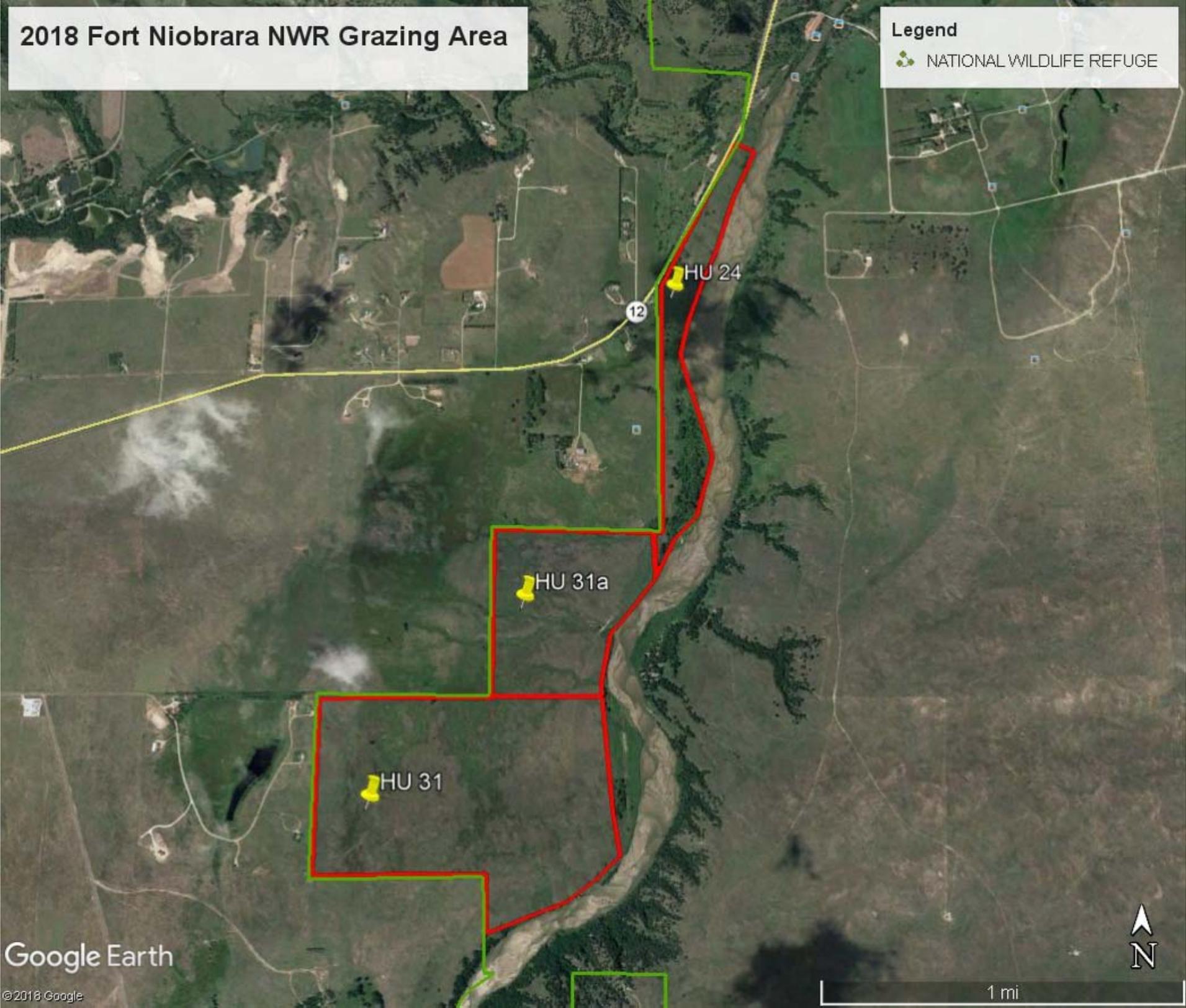
SEND BID TO: Fort Niobrara NWR, 39983 Refuge Road, Valentine, NE 69201

Mark envelope in lower left hand corner with: 2018 Fort Niobrara NWR West River Pasture Grazing Bid,

Sealed bid opening will be 1:00 PM, Friday, April 20, 2018. All bids and Special Use Permit Applications must be received at Fort Niobrara NWR by that time. Hand-delivered forms will be accepted at the Fort Niobrara refuge office but it must be sealed in envelope and marked as indicated above. Bids will not be accepted via FAX or Email because they cannot be considered sealed prior to the bid opening.

2018 Fort Niobrara NWR Grazing Area

Legend
🌿 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



Google Earth

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