

# Hollister Hills Grazing Lease



**San Andreas District  
Hollister Hills SVRA  
California State Parks**

# Hollister Hills Grazing Lease Process 2015-2020

## Introduction

Hollister Hills SVRA (the Park) first started a grazing program in 1994, after it was determined by park managers that grazing was the most appropriate tool to manage the newly acquired Hudner and Renz Ranches. Previous to state ownership these areas were grazed and farmed for the last 100 years. Grazing is not a typical management tool used by California State Parks making Hollister Hills an innovator in the Department for developing a successful, long term grazing program.

## Grazing Lease Details

The Park has about 1000 acres of grassland available to be grazed spread throughout the Renz and Hudner Ranches. Cienega road bisects the grazed areas, and there are grazing fields on both sides of the county road. There is also a historic barn and corral located on the north side of park. The lessee may use the corral for general ranching operations, but the barn is used by the park for storage. The grazing fields connect to active areas of the Park where Off-Highway Vehicle use is permitted year round. The lessee will need to ensure that cattle stay in the grazing fields and do not interfere with recreational opportunities. A map of the grazing area is included in Appendix A. There are new Multi-Use trails being developed in the grazing fields and the grazing lessee will need to have a plan to successfully incorporate their program into this changing use. There are approximately 19 miles of multi-use trails being cut throughout the grazing area, including 2 parking lots (Appendix B).

The purpose of the grazing lease is for Natural Resource Management. Profits generated by grazing are not a priority and the Department is much more interested in being a good steward of the land and meeting our Resource Objectives. The objectives are:

1. Enhance and restore native grasslands
2. Enhance and restore oak woodland habitat
3. Increase habitat diversity
4. Control the dominance of exotic annuals and invasive weeds
5. Protect wetland and riparian values
6. Reduce grassland fuel loading and wildfire potential in buffer areas adjacent to neighboring housing.

The park has developed a Grazing Management Plan that outlines a grazing capacity for each field (Appendix C). These capacities were written by academic experts at UC Berkley and are based on the best available science that looked at soil type, slope and rainfall.

The park does residual dry matter (RDM) monitoring each fall to see if targets are being met and will advise grazing lease holder on success. The table below shows how the park sets RDM

standards for each part of the grazing area based on woody cover and slope. When determining if a field is meeting the standard, the park uses any value between 100-200% of the calculated minimum RDM.

Table 1. Minimum RDM Standards (Bartolome et al. 2006).

Woody Cover (%)	Minimum RDM standard by percent slope (lb/acre)			
	0-10%	10-20%	20-40%	>40%
0-25	500	600	700	800
25-50	400	500	600	700
50-75	200	300	400	500
75-100	100	200	250	300

After each year's monitoring report is done, the lessee and park managers interpret the results and make appropriate plans to the next years grazing plan to best meet the projects objectives.

### Competitive Lease Process

The Department has full authority to execute a lease agreement which will lead to benefits for the park. Since this is public land and several parties have expressed interest over the years, the park is developing a competitive lease process. Any party wishing to graze at Hollister Hills will need to send in a resume that contains the following:

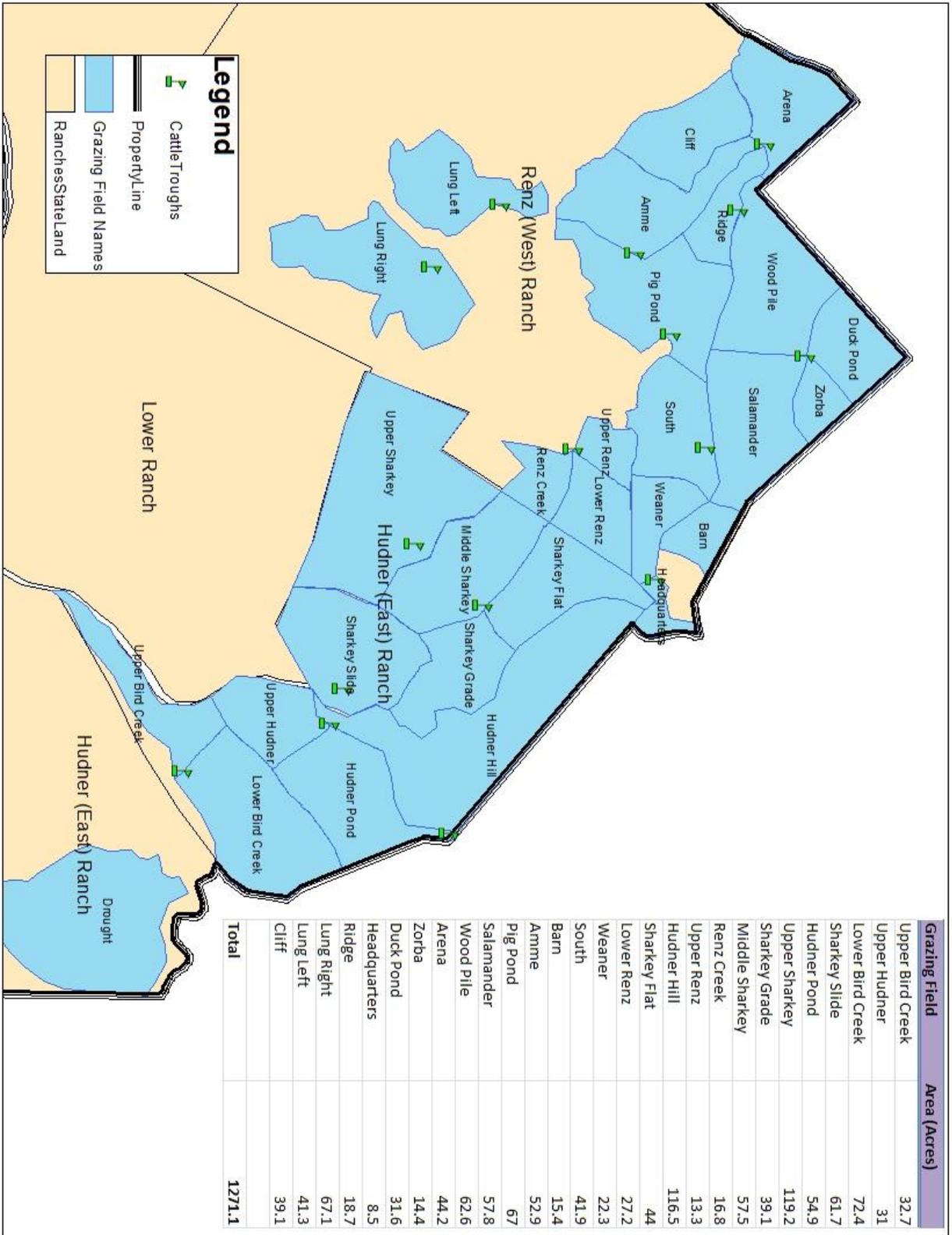
1. Cover letter detailing why you want to graze at Hollister Hills.
2. Full description of current grazing operation, past experience, including home base location.
3. Plan to successfully meet grazing objectives and capacities outlined in this document.
4. Plan to work within recreational opportunities being developed in the multi-use trails.
5. Plan how grazing operation will deal with drought years without damaging park resources.
6. Professional References

The grazing lease will be offered to the most qualified applicant as determined by a selection committee comprised of park staff. The term of the lease shall be for 5 years.

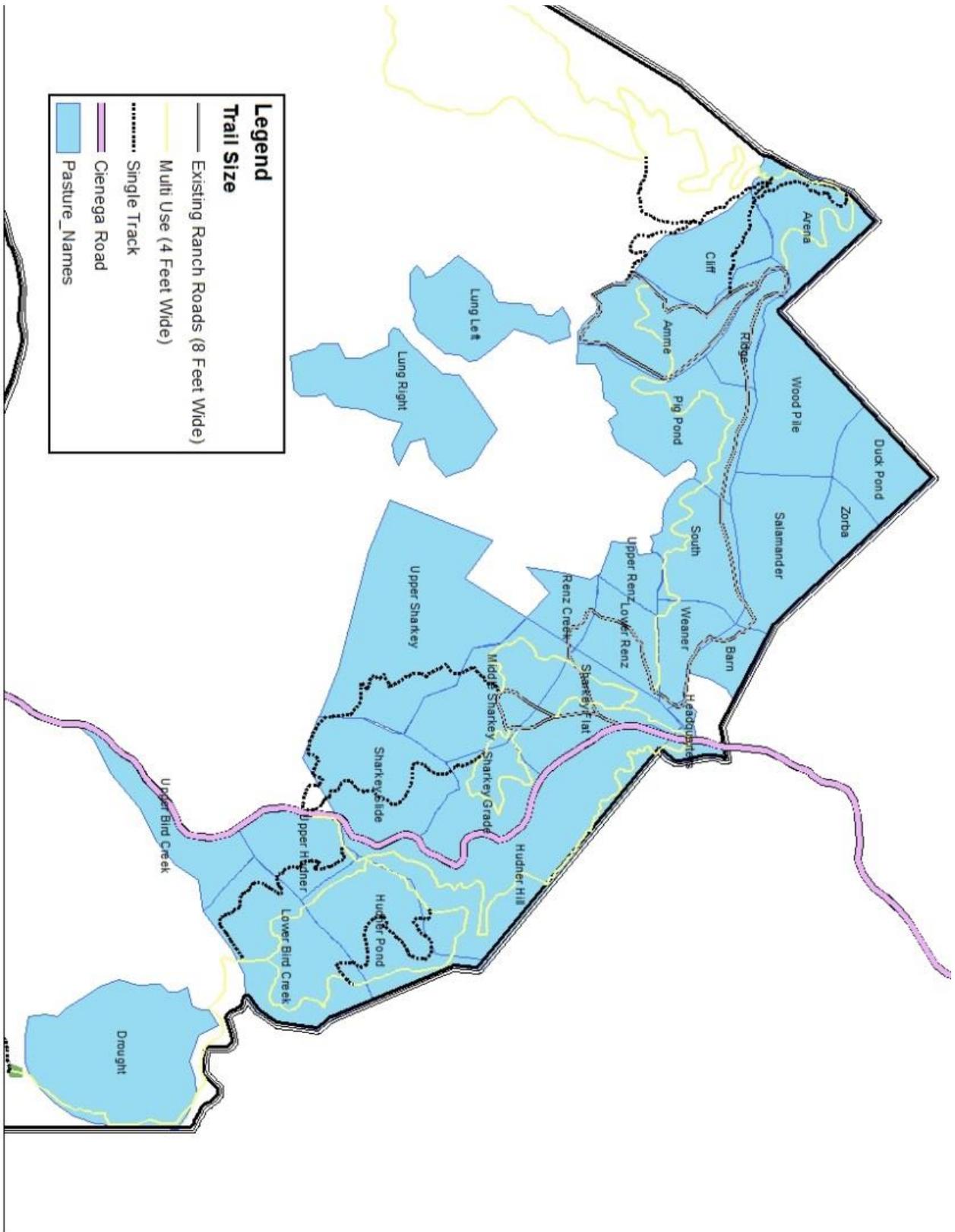
The deadline for applications shall be September 30<sup>th</sup> 2014.

Applications can be emailed or mailed to:

Wes Gray  
7800 Cienega Road  
Hollister, CA. 95023  
[wes.gray@parks.ca.gov](mailto:wes.gray@parks.ca.gov)  
831-636-2064



Appendix A – Grazing Fields



Appendix B – Non-Motorized Buffer Trail System

<b>Rain Fall</b>			
<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Unfavorable year AUMs</b>	<b>Average year AUMs</b>	<b>Favorable year AUMs</b>
Amme	14	49	91
Arena	8	30	57
Barn	3	9	16
Duck Pond	18	45	73
Hudner Hill	17	91	164
Hudner Pond	20	65	110
Lower Wood Pile	8	27	49
Lower Bird Creek	19	74	129
Lower Renz	9	28	47
Middle Sharkey	2	36	70
Pig Pond	7	46	86
Renz Creek	14	44	75
Salamander	23	72	121
Sharkey Flat	20	47	75
Sharkey Grade	0	16	33
Sharkey Slide	4	24	45
South	14	59	104
Steep Field	1	15	33
Upper Wood Pile	6	32	57
Upper Bird Creek	11	37	64
Upper Hudner	3	24	45
Upper Renz	5	23	40
Upper Sharkey	1	57	133
Weaner	22	43	64
Zorba	7	20	33
<b>TOTAL AUM</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>1014</b>	<b>1813</b>

Appendix C – Estimated Grazing Capacity in Animal Unit Months (AUM) for different rainfall years.