

May 26, 1953

Col. D. M. Dunn, Commanding Officer  
Ft. Huachuca Military Reservation  
Ft. Huachuca, Arizona

Dear Col. Dunn:

At the suggestion of Governor Pyle and Game and Fish Commission Chairman Jack Mantle, resulting from Governor Pyle's telephone conversation with you on this date, we wish to hereby apply for a lease on that portion of the Huachuca Military Reservation formerly held by deed by our department, which you are presently considering for our lease, consisting of some 7,000 acres of grassland and 15,000 acres of mountainous terrain, lying south of the 13,000 acres on the reservation covered by a lease pending between the Secretary of the Army and the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, file reference SPDEM 601.1, dated February 14, 1951. See map attached.

This may be considered supplemental to our written request to you dated October 23, 1952, delivered to Post Engineer Col. Draper during our visit to Huachuca for the purpose of arranging for a lease agreement supplemental to the above mentioned original lease.

In applying for a lease on the southern portion of Fort Huachuca we wish to point out our extreme interest in again acquiring the use of this historic area for a continuing wildlife research and investigation program. As you know, when Huachuca was abandoned by the army the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, after considerable negotiation, acquired the area early in 1949 for the above purpose. Subsequently, a buffalo herd has gained considerable attention, locally and nation wide, but our primary purpose was not, and is not, for this purpose.

Ft. Huachuca played an important role in the pioneering of the Southwest not only from the standpoint of the early settler but from the early nature explorer as well. In its early history it was host to many biologists. Some of them were military officers whose curiosity led them to investigate the flora and fauna of the country. Through the years since then the area has continued to claim the interest of nature students because of the varied species, both plant and animal, found in its varying habitats from rolling

Col. D. M. Dunn  
May 26, 1953  
Page Two

grassland to high, rugged mountain peaks. The Huachuca Mountains eventually became known as one of the most important natural areas of the southwest and nationally still holds that distinction.

As land use progressed in the early days throughout the southern part of Arizona and the southwest great changes occurred in the vegetal cover. The grass stands were virtually eliminated in the desert shrub type and vastly altered in the higher desert grassland. The habitat of wildlife correspondingly changed. Those pressures of cover and forage reduction, of hunting and of human habitation, have influenced the range and populations of our present wildlife throughout the southwest.

On Fort Huachuca, however, military activity since 1887 has prevented livestock grazing in the degree surrounding ranges have received. Thus the flora on the area more nearly approaches that of the southwest before settlement by man. It follows, then, that wildlife now on the area find a habitat more similar to that enjoyed by game species when their populations were more abundant.

Today the Arizona Game and Fish Commission is charged with the responsibility of maintaining and restoring the state's wildlife for present and future generations. This effort involves certain specialized studies to better understand some of the basic problems in the management of game animals and a number of academically trained wildlife biologists are employed for this purpose. Increased wildlife populations throughout Arizona today and recognition of the necessity of sound range management wherein wildlife populations are concerned bear out the merit of this policy.

After the acquisition of Fort Huachuca in 1949 a specialized wildlife study was inaugurated there for the purpose of studying various phases of game relationships and tolerances to habitat. Information gathered by comparing over a period of time the reaction of various resident species on the Fort lands with their reactions on lands grazed in varying intensities off the Fort was to be used to determine the game species that can be managed to produce a harvestable surplus in southern Arizona under present land use practices, and what management practices can be used on a given species to maintain it and to produce a harvestable surplus. Findings would be applicable throughout the southwest.

To that end the wildlife study project progressed for two years until the accelerated national defense program necessitated the reactivation of Fort Huachuca and a curtailment of the wildlife program. During the two years a complete inventory of the Huachuca range was made which will serve as a permanent record of plant and animal species on this unique area in the year 1950. Antelope and wild turkey, formerly native to the range, were reintroduced and the antelope have already spread to a considerable portion of its former range in southern Arizona as a result. Two species of quail, which are thought to have been native, were added to the resident scaled, Mearns' and Gambel's quail to provide five different species of quail on the limited but diversified range. A buffalo herd was established and the grassland

Col. D. M. Dunn  
May 26, 1953  
Page Three

served as a haven for most of two other state owned herds in northern Arizona when unprecedented drought conditions necessitated removal from their home ranges. A firm basis for a long term comparative study of the habits and requirements of wildlife species on and off the area was begun.

We are enclosing a binding of a series of reports covering the two year's investigation work to permit you to further evaluate the seriousness of our wildlife program on Huachuca. The great interest in Huachuca as a historic wildlife area is evidenced by the fact that requests for this book has come from all parts of the nation and some foreign countries until it is out of print and a new edition is contemplated. We would like to call your attention particularly to the introduction and to the fact that all but two of the 19 game species on the cover are to be found on Huachuca's few thousand acres.

We are enclosing also a booklet, "The Economic Aspects of Wildlife in Arizona". Expenditure comparisons are made on pages 18 and 19. The great aesthetic and recreational value of wildlife is generally recognized but few realize that expenditures resulting from wildlife play such an important part in the economy of the state.

Upon reactivation of the Fort in 1951 it was fortunate that the military command recognized, and has continued to recognize, the values that are certain to come from the wildlife studies inaugurated and have permitted some of the program to be continued. As a result it will not be difficult to reactivate the wildlife research investigations and it is to that end that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and its personnel respectfully request a lease agreement on the area formerly held by that agency. Of additional importance is supplemental range for the existing buffalo herd which will permit more adequate rotation of grazing and much better land use practices.

In closing we might point out that during the two year tenure of the Fort by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission considerable land improvement work was accomplished in the form of completely fencing the reservation, over half with page wire, additional watering facilities, cross fences, pastures, large corrals and the repair and maintenance of five dwellings subsequently used by military personnel. We are prepared to initiate at once through a Pittman-Robertson Fish and Wildlife Service project additional land improvement facilities such as wells, earthen tanks, fencing and any other developments where needed. Should the army wish, we would be glad to initiate any reasonable land management program you might recommend on the balance of the old military reservation area still held by deed by the State of Arizona and on the more recently acquired artillery range including development work needed, especially fencing, to improve the highly overgrazed artillery range to the northeast.

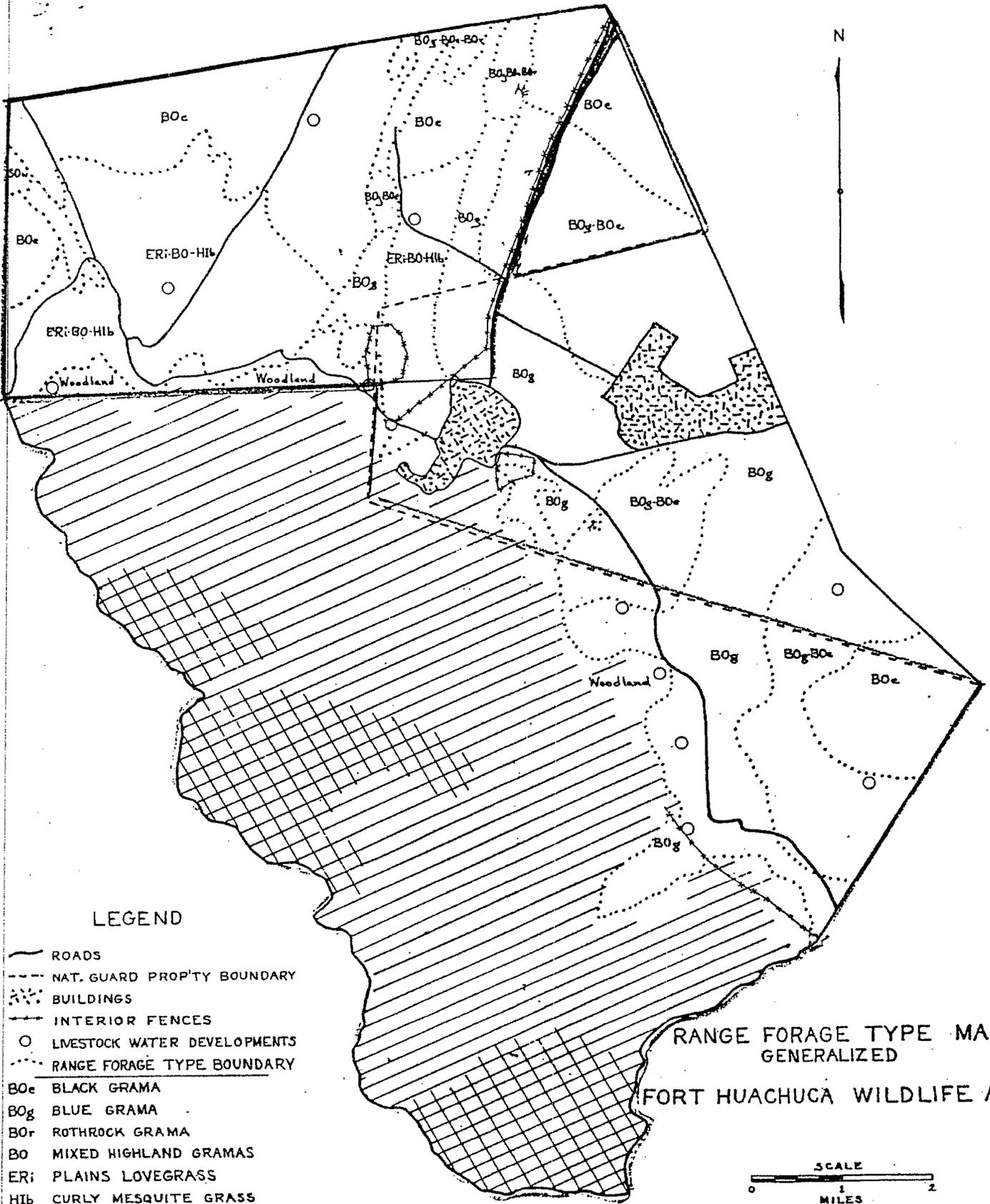
Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A. W. Yoder, Director

ONA:jvd

USFH-00001681



LEGEND

- ROADS
- - - NAT. GUARD PROP'TY BOUNDARY
- BUILDINGS
- INTERIOR FENCES
- LIVESTOCK WATER DEVELOPMENTS
- ..... RANGE FORAGE TYPE BOUNDARY
- BOe BLACK GRAMA
- BOg BLUE GRAMA
- BOr ROTHROCK GRAMA
- BO MIXED HIGHLAND GRAMAS
- ERi PLAINS LOVEGRASS
- HIB CURLY MESQUITE GRASS
- SOW SACATON
- ▨ MOUNTAINS (OAK WOODLAND)
- ▩ (CONIFER FOREST)

RANGE FORAGE TYPE MAP  
GENERALIZED

FORT HUACHUCA WILDLIFE ARE.



- ▨ Area of pending lease
- ▩ Additional area formerly held by deed by Arizona Game and Fish Commission

COMPILATION & DRAFTING - C. WALLS