



Bobcat Ranch



Bobcat Ranch Grazing Lease Request for Proposals

Overview

Audubon California acquired the 6,800-acre Bobcat Ranch in 2007, as part of its ongoing effort to support and encourage the conservation and restoration of blue oak woodlands and rangelands in California. Our objective for Bobcat Ranch is for it to become the flagship demonstration site for the Audubon Conservation Ranching Initiative (ACR). The ACR Initiative is a market-based conservation approach that offers incentives for good grassland stewardship with a focus on bird habitat through a certification label on beef products. In 2020, Bobcat Ranch was the first property in California to become Audubon Conservation Ranching (ACR) certified. A key part of this certification is the development and implementation of a Habitat Management Plan that includes grazing as a management tool. Audubon recognizes that the successful execution of goals outlined in this plan requires a partnership with a grazing lessee capable of meeting those goals. As such, Audubon is seeking proposals for a one-season grazing lease of 3,640-acres at Bobcat Ranch.

In recent years, the Ranch has supported 175-250 cow-calf pairs for 6-8 months. Due to extreme drought and fire conditions, Bobcat Ranch is being offered primarily as winter/spring “finishing” grounds, and may be better suited to stocker-steer operations.

We anticipate that the grazing lease term will begin by or after January 3, 2022, and will extend through June 1, 2022. We anticipate signing a grazing lease by December 17, 2021. Audubon’s goal is to lease the ranch to the successful bidder for an additional two years based on the results of the initial lease and subsequent agreement of the parties. Once Audubon selects a candidate, Audubon will share our proposed grazing lease with the selected candidate so specific lease terms can be the negotiated, before December 17.

Eligibility Requirements

- Experience grazing cattle and own/manage sufficient land and equipment resources to accommodate the number of cattle utilized in the grazing management plan and the infrastructure and resources currently available at Bobcat Ranch.
- Ability to conduct weekly monitoring checks for animal health and welfare, condition and operation of pasture fence, range conditions, and infrastructure operation and have access to staff or partners who can assist in grazing moves and infrastructure maintenance (Audubon maintains staff on site, however, the responsibility of the grazing lease herd, cattle moves, and associated maintenance of related infrastructure is the responsibility of the Lessee during the Lease term)

- Currently enrolled in, certified under, or willing to enroll in the Audubon Conservation Ranching program
- Willingness, ability and commitment to fund maintenance of all perimeter and internal fencing, water troughs/systems, gates, corrals, etc. in an “as is” condition upon lease award. Some permanent infrastructure materials for maintenance use may be supplied upon request (ex. t-posts, fixed bracing, permanent gates, permanent water troughs).Willingness to consider partnering with Audubon on applications to existing funding programs (ie EQIP, Healthy Soils Program)
- A home operation within 75-100 miles of Bobcat Ranch, or staff/partners who would be primary site operators within 75-100 miles of Bobcat Ranch.

Submission Guidelines

Interested parties should submit a resume and summary of current and past operations, including scope and location. The information should be provided in narrative form and may be supported by photos, maps, website links, videos, and other documentation. Proposed grazing management plan for the Lease term should be developed following thorough review of the current Audubon Bobcat Ranch Habitat Management Plan (sent to eligible candidates following RSVP to the mandatory tour described below).

Items to be addressed in proposal should include:

- Rangeland infrastructure maintenance and construction experience (i.e. fencing/water systems/corrals)
- Proposed Grazing Management Plan for Bobcat Ranch (i.e. objectives/grazing methods, rotation, stocking rates, density, i.e. general grazing management plan for the Lease term)
- Weed and pest control practices
- Range monitoring (methods/history)
- Experience with wildlife management and conservation
- Bid expressed in Animal Unit Month value (ex. \$20/AUM)
- Experience with USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service contracts to implement conservation practices
- Experience with working with large, non-profit organizations, or similar entities

Interested parties should also submit:

- A current signed Financial Statement (Asset/Liability Balance Sheet) for any and all entities that will be signatory to the lease.
- A letter of reference from appropriate financial institution.
- Two additional letters of reference: one from current and/or recent lessors, and one from a ranch, partner organization, Resource Conservation District, or other applicable organization where the applicant has provided grazing services.

Mandatory Site Tour October 15th, 9 AM to 12 PM

If fully eligible and interested, please RSVP to the one-time site tour being offered on October 15th, 2021 from 9 AM – 12 PM.

RSVP to dash.weidhofer@audubon.org with:

1. Your full name(s)
2. Operation/Ranch name
3. Number of vehicles you will be bringing.

A 4wd vehicle will be required to join the tour. Invitation, directions and additional documents to follow RSVP. Tour will not be open to the public.

When and How to Submit Proposal

Following mandatory site tour, please send proposal in PDF form to: dash.weidhofer@audubon.org or by mail to:

Bobcat Ranch, 26968 County Rd. 34, Winters, CA, 95694

Submission deadline is November 1st, 2021, by 5 PM PST.

Any questions concerning the RFP process should be directed to: dash.weidhofer@audubon.org

Important Notes

Audubon values diversity in its staff, in the communities we serve, and in our business partners. Therefore, among the factors Audubon will take into account as it looks to hire the most qualified business for the job is whether the vendor itself has diversity goals in hiring, retention and promotion. We also welcome the opportunity to diversify our vendor base to include minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned, LGBTQ+-owned, and disability-owned businesses wherever possible. We welcome any information you can provide about your diversity practices.

If any of the application requirements are a barrier to applying please contact Dash Weidhofer to discuss accommodations.

Please visit the site below for a downloadable copy of the Bobcat Ranch Habitat Management Plan, and more information about Bobcat Ranch:

<https://ca.audubon.org/about-us/bobcat-ranch>

For more information about the ACR Initiative, visit the website below:

<https://www.audubon.org/conservation/ranching>