



The Importance of Good Record Keeping & a Quality Annual Report

**David Riley
Staff Biologist
Plateau Land & Wildlife Management**

Wildlife Management

- Activity based
- Need to be able to show you have been active
- Not meant to be more difficult or costly than Ag
- Appraisers job is a little more difficult – no animals to look at
- You can make it easier by doing what's expected and keeping good records



General requirements & expectations

- 3 of 7 practices at the very minimum – more is always better
- Proof of meeting required intensity – acreage, number, frequency
- Activity was done in the year for which it is being requested – annual report and 10-year activities
- Show that you have been active in your management – you or someone (Plateau, tenant, etc.)
- This proves that you deserve the 1-D-1 valuation – it is important

Why is it important to keep good records?

- Your property tax valuation can depend on it
- It can be hard to catch up, in both compliance and management goals
- Reassurance of knowing if you're on the right track
- It can be all the Central Appraisal District (CAD) ever sees – paints a picture
- More and more CADs are requesting annual reports of activities

Property tax comparison

*Actual client comparison per HCAD

21 acre property in Northern Hays County

- Market value: \$383,320.00
 - 2.5% tax rate: \$9,583 annual property tax
- Appraised Ag Value: \$1,260.00
 - 2.5% tax rate: \$31.50 annual property tax
- \$9,551.50 annual tax savings

What the CAD expects & how they inspect

- Annual reports
- Site inspections
- Plan updates



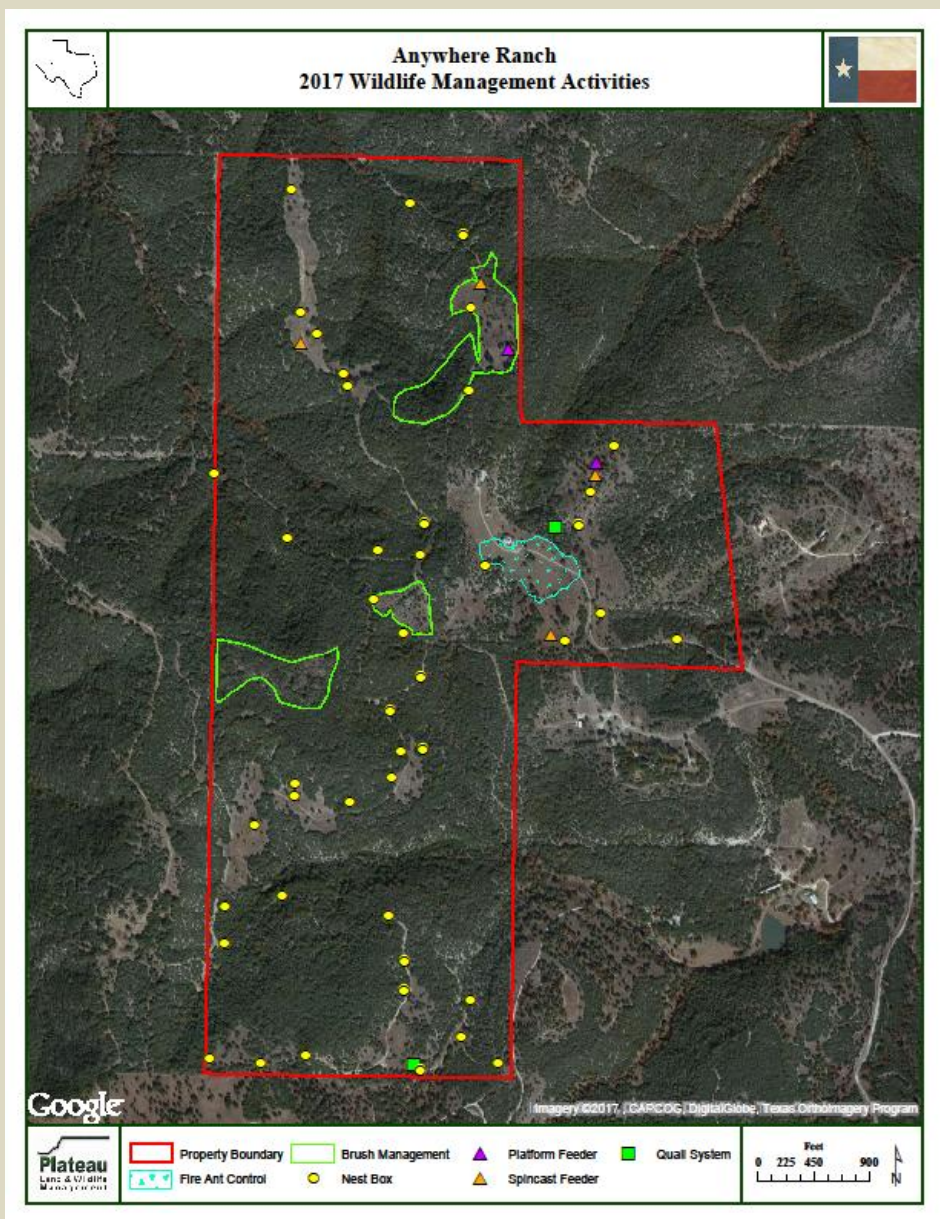
Tool of the trade

- Wildlife Management Plan – tells me how to do all of this and lets the CAD know what I'm doing
- GPS – good, but not a must
- Camera/Phone/Tablet – pictures help tell the story
- Maps – always helpful
- Log Book – for notes
- Calendar – more notes
- Folder – receipts, reports

Maps

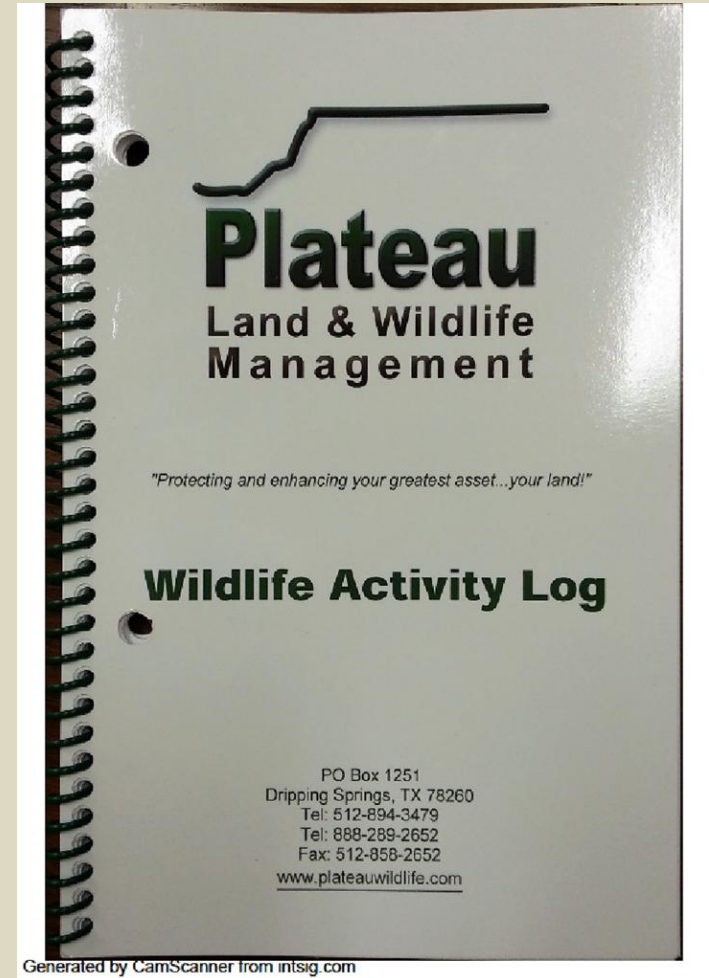
Maps are great tools to help identify what has been done and where.

Create a new map at the end of each year when there have been changes or a major project completed.



Matrix/checklist & log book

Wildlife Management Planning Matrix				Property:					
Target species:				Date:	County(ies):				
TREATMENTS	Cod e	Acre s	Notes (Raw, Species, Timing, Intensity, etc)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
1. Habitat Control									
a. Grazing Management									
b. Prescribed Burning									
c. Range Enhancement (Re-seeding)									
d. Brush Management									
e. Riparian Management and Enhancement									
f. Wetland Enhancement									
g. Habitat Protection for Species of Concern									
h. Prescribed Control of Species									
i. Wildlife Restoration									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
2. Erosion Control:									
a. Pond Construction and Major Repair									
b. Gully Shaping									
c. Streamside, Pond and Wetland Revegetation									
d. Native Plant Establishment on Eroding Areas									
e. Dike / Levee Construction / Management									
f. Establish Water Diversion									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
3. Predator Control									
a. Predator Management									
b. Imported Red Fire Ant Control									
c. Control of Cowbirds									
d. Grackle / Starling / House Sparrow Control									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
4. Supplemental Water:									
a. Marsh / Wetland Restoration or Development									
b. Well/Trough/Alley/Drill Overflow/Other Wildlife Waters									
c. Spring Development and / or Enhancement									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
5. Supplemental Food:									
a. Grazing Management									
b. Prescribed Burning									
c. Range Enhancement (Re-seeding)									
d. Food Plots									
e. Feeders and Mineral Supplementation									
f. Managing Tame Pasture, Old Fields, Croplands									
g. Transition Management of Tame Grass Monocultures									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
6. Providing Shelter:									
a. Nest Boxes, Bat Boxes									
b. Brush Piles and Slash Retention									
c. Fence Line Management									
d. Hay Meadow, Pasture and Cropland Mgmt. for Wildlife									
e. Half-Cutting Trees or Shrubs									
f. Woody Plant / Shrub Establishment									
g. Natural Cavity / Snag Development									
TREATMENTS									
Cod e	Acre s	Notes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		
7. Censuses:									
a. Spotlight Counts									
b. Aerial Counts									
c. Incidental Observations & Stands Counts									
d. Daylight Deer Herd, Wildlife Composition, Photo Stations									
e. Harvest Data Collection and Record Keeping									
f. Browse Utilization Surveys									
g. Endangered, Threatened or Protected Species									
h. Census and Monitoring of Game and Nongame Wildlife									



Minimum requirements: must complete 3 of 7 activity categories

1. Habitat control
2. Erosion control
3. Predator control
4. Supplemental food
5. Supplemental shelter
6. Supplemental water
7. Census counts



**If you're going to do it,
record it.**

Habitat control

Game population management

Brush management

Riparian management



Documentation – you did it, be able to show it



Before



After

Harvest record + photos

[illegible]

extension.missouri.edu > natural resources > wildlife > conservation > g9483

University of Missouri Extension



Good records

- Before and after photos
- Calendar record showing when the work was done
- Receipts if someone else did it
- Map showing acreage treated
- Description of what was done and how it benefited your wildlife and fit your plan
- How did the wildlife on my property benefit?

Erosion control

Pond/tank construction

Streamside, pond, wetland re-vegetation

Dam construction/repair

10 Wildlife Management year activity **

** Enhanced recreational value

** Increased property value



Predator control

Feral animals (hogs, cats, etc.)

Imported Red Fire Ant control

Native predators (skunks, raccoons)



Imported Red Fire Ant treatment



“You’ve done nothing for this landowner if you didn’t record it properly.” – SP

A valuable lesson.

Hog traps



Supplemental food

Grazing management

Food plots

Feeders & mineral supplementation





Strip Discing

The “Disc”

- Opens bare ground and disturbs soil
 - Provides space for forbs (weeds) to grow
 - Food sources for all manner of wildlife and bugs





Supplemental shelter

Nest boxes, bat boxes

Brush piles & slash retention

Pasture management (strip mowing)



Supplemental shelter



Brush Pile Construction



Half cutting mesquite



Supplemental water

Wildlife rain collectors

Wells, troughs, windmill overflow

Spring development/enhancement



Census counts

Spotlight counts

Harvest data collection

Songbird count



Bird Surveys

Very well-accepted activity
from a compliance standpoint
for any size property and a
fun way to get involved

Done seasonally or annually
to provide a good representation
– scheduling winter surveys now

Data can be analyzed to establish
trends and provide feedback on
your management



Small Mammal Survey

Remote Camera Survey



Deer Surveys

- Start in August
- Spotlight surveys
- Remote camera surveys
- Aerial surveys
- MLDP permit time
 - Due Sept. 1
- Organized and useful



How good is your memory?

Utilizing photos for your records

- Taking photos of feeders, water sources and shelter activities every year
 - Even if nothing has changed
- Be sure to get photos for activities you may not be able to see in the future
 - Mowing, discing, brush management, etc.
- Take quality photos
- Be sure to organize photos by activity
- Game camera photos

Common issues

- Some CADs don't require an annual report or only request certain years
- CADs may want a certain document form filled out rather than a full report
- Include receipts that show what was purchased
- No documentation showing that activities were monitored/maintained throughout the year
- Including activities that aren't necessarily for wildlife management

Summary

- Record keeping is important – do it right to prevent further scrutiny and to get more out of your wildlife management
- It doesn't have to be burdensome, but it does have to get done
- If DIY – treat as if someone is paying you to do it
 - What kind of records would you keep then?
- You will get asked at some point
- Good record keeping, quality annual reports and keeping your plan up to date can be the difference between getting by and really enjoying being in wildlife management
- **Plateau can help**, and does for hundreds of landowners across Texas – if you don't want to have anything to worry about, Plateau is a sure bet



- Private company, est. 1997
- Founders helped establish WMV law
- Central Texas based
- Serving Texas landowners
- Staff wildlife biologists
- Trained, dedicated field technicians
- Registered property tax consultants

Plateau Land & Wildlife

IS PART OF

INTEGRATED LAND ADVISORS

LAW



REAL ESTATE



WILDLIFE

BRAUN & GRESHAM
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



PLATEAU
LANDGROUP



PLATEAU
EXCHANGE

Thank you!

Plateau Land & Wildlife Management

Working with you to protect and enhance your land!



David Riley
Plateau Staff Biologist
Annual Reports Administrator

(512) 894-3479
driley@plateauwildlife.com
plateauwildlife.com

