

Rayonier Wildlife Management Journal

Volume I

Issue I

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The Time is Near to Renew Your Rayonier RLU

In 2007 Rayonier began using the Orbis online system to manage our Recreational License Units (RLUs) in Alabama. The website located at WWW.RAYONIERHUNTING.COM has been a success. With over 500 hunting clubs in Alabama alone, the administrative burden lifted by online renewal has been immense. The benefit has also been passed on to you, our valued customer through easy renewal, additional maps of the RLU, and hopefully, easier contact with Rayonier.

Starting April 17, 2008, the website will also include our properties listed in other southeastern states where RLUs are available. Coincidentally, this will be the day that we begin renewals for currently licensed RLUs for the 2008 – 2009 hunting season. The renewal period will run from 4/17/08 thru 5/31/08. During the first two weeks of the period, club presidents will need to log onto the site and select whether to renew your RLU, or to forfeit the RLU. Assuming that you renew the RLU, you will then be able to print out the license agreement to begin having it signed by all club members. You will have the remaining time to get your club's signatures on the agreement and mail it to the Alabama Resource Unit office located at:
603 A West Bypass
Andalusia, AL 36420
You will want to mail the payment for your RLU to:
Rayonier EFR
Attn Misc. Income Clerk

P.O. Box 728
Fernandina Beach, FL 32035
Ensure that your check is made out to **Rayonier Forest Resources L.P.** and that you enclose the invoice that will print out with your agreement. The final day to receive the payment and signed agreement is May 31, 2008. Please prepare early to meet this deadline. Should you have questions call Jeremy Tankersley at (334) 427 – 9676 ex.26.

Rayonier Has a New Personnel Structure in Alabama

In October 2006, Rayonier Southeastern Forest Resources (SEFR) began developing a plan to evolve into a structure that could remain competitive in the changing marketplace in which we operate. In a process that took over one year of preparation, employees participated in focus groups to assess the needs of the business. On January 1, 2008, the new structure became effective.

The result, Rayonier SEFR is no more. It has been replaced by Rayonier Eastern Forest Resources (EFR), a name that reflects much more than just the fact that we now own property from Florida to New York, and west to Texas. The EFR name represents an organization that is determined to be world class. To do this we are developing a new culture, and you, our valued customer will be a primary beneficiary.

One of the initial changes that many of you may have already noticed, is that hunting licenses now are handled by a single person for the entire resource unit. The role is Resource Development Manager, and the contact person is Jeremy Tankersley. I (Jeremy Tankersley) will be the main point of contact for your RLU. While this may seem a little less personable than before when you could just stop by and talk to Wayne Foley, Benny Mattox, or Johnny Fuqua regarding your lease; you will have a central point where the information delivered and decisions made are consistent across our land base in Alabama. You are still welcome to call or email with any questions regarding your RLU. You can even stop by my office in Andalusia if you want. I am here to serve you, and ensure that you are satisfied, if at all possible, with the area you hunt.

The Alabama Resource Unit contacts for hunting related issues are as follows:

Jeremy Tankersley – Resource Development Manager , Johnny Fuqua – Covington County Unit, Wayne Foley or Phillip Smith - Brewton/Monroeville Unit, Benny Mattox - Greenville Unit, Jeff Ledbetter – Resource Unit Leader

Rayonier

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Resource Development Manager

Eastern Forest Resources

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We hope to improve your experience, and create more opportunities for you, as we evolve into the world class organization that Rayonier EFR will become.

Warm Season Food Plots are an Important Part of Developing a Quality Deer Herd on Your RLU

Nutrient demand is high during late spring and the summer. This time is often forgotten by hunters who plant cool season plots annually to attract deer during hunting season. While it is important to provide for feeding during hunting season, it is certainly more beneficial for you to develop a year round food plot program that provides for the needs of the deer on your RLU.



Figure 1. This photo shows heavy usage on this plot by bucks that are actively growing antlers in mid-summer. Photo taken from <http://www.mitchellforestry.com/wildlife.html>

Consider for a moment the happenings in the life cycle of a deer during the months of May – August. Does are beginning to have fawns in late June and into July. Bucks are putting on new antler growth from very early in May thru late August.

During this time high protein diets are a necessity. Much of the natural growth in the environment will provide adequate protein sources in most cases during this time. However, to develop a deer herd that is of very high quality, a proper food plot is almost a necessity in every situation.

The first step in developing a food plot program on your RLU is to determine how many acres you require, and how to distribute them. The optimum level of food plot acres is from 2-5% of your total land area. Any number of acres will noticeably improve your deer herd to some degree. Plots should generally be between ½ acre and 3 acres.

The second step is to determine where you will place your food plots across the property. The ideal locations are those that are reasonably drained, have good access to bring in equipment, receive at least four hours of sunlight daily, and intersect changes in habitat, known as edge, where deer frequent. You also will want to distribute the food plots evenly, when possible, to maximize usage and accessibility.



Figure 3. Photo demonstrating a food plot designed to receive adequate daily sunlight. Photo taken from www.wonderlandpropertiesinc.com

The third step is to determine the needs of the site to maximize forage production. To do this, you will need to take soil samples from each site and have them tested by the local Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). This is a low cost investment that will create a great benefit. Next, you will want to take the recommendations of the soil test, and apply lime and fertilize for each plot as directed.



Figure 2. Example of a soil sampling tool needed to demonstrate the horizons of a soil. For best results contact your local NRCS office to get specifications needed for a soil sample. Photo taken from University of Tennessee publication "Growing and Managing Successful Food Plots for Wildlife in the Mid-South."

The fourth step is to determine what you will plant. This is probably the step where hunters make the mistakes that result in failing food plots. Plots must be prepared accordingly with the seed to be planted. Some seeds require settings of up to one inch, such as corn. Other smaller seeds, such as clover, need to be only covered by about ¼ inch of soil to allow germination.

There are many online resources to educate you on planting requirements for different plants. For most food plots; a disk, spreader, and cultipacker are the only tractor implements necessary to plant a successful plot. One important reminder is that soils along roads, turnarounds, and logging decks are often compacted and may need to be ripped before disking will be effective. Roads are often poor sites for food plots due to compaction, and ripping is usually not an option because of traffic needs and erosion potential.

A recommended food plot mixture for most RLUs in Alabama is listed below:

Iron-Clay Cowpeas – 20lbs/acre
Quail Haven Reseeding Soybeans – 10lbs/acre
Lablab – 6lbs/acre
Perdovik sunflowers – 5lbs/acre
With any type of legume, you should use a reseeding variety to prevent overgrazing damage. You also will want to build a cage somewhere in the plot to indicate the amount of grazing the plot is receiving.



Figure 4. Notice on this heavily over browsed plot how the cage demonstrates the potential of the plot were it not under such high grazing pressure. Photo taken from University of Tennessee publication “Growing and Managing Successful Food Plots for Wildlife in the Mid-South.”

Once you have planted your food plots, there is little you can do. The environment takes over and you can only hope that adequate rainfall is provided for your crop. The final consideration is when to plant your cool season food plots. You will want to stagger the timing of planting the cool season plots so that you do not leave the deer who have fed on your plots all summer without. Plan to leave about half of your plots in warm season cover, as we have been discussing, until the first frost. This will provide for an adequate amount of food to be on your property at all times since mast from hardwoods will begin falling at about the same time as you begin plowing some plots under to plant cool season crops.

Text acknowledgements:

The University of Tennessee Extension: “Growing and Managing Successful Food Plots for Wildlife in the Mid-South.”

New Opportunities are Available to Enhance the Habitat on Your RLU

Rayonier has previously only allowed a small percentage of acres to be planted in wildlife food plots. Generally, clubs were allowed to plant turn arounds, retired roads, logging decks, and small openings within plantations created by natural occurrence. We now would like to begin offering additional acreage to you for food plots. We believe that

planting food plots improves the habitat of our lands and adds value to the property, in addition to giving our customers a highly desired opening for hunting. The food plots will initially cost \$80/acre and the price will adjust annually based on the Producer Price Index (PPI) of lumber for the previous year. The base PPI will be 174.7. The formula for determining the annual rate per acre will be:
(\$80 x Avg. Lumber PPI for previous year) / (2007 Lumber PPI 174.7)

This formula will allow Rayonier to provide you with food plot acres at a fair price relative to our lumber market. The rate may increase or decrease based on the value of grade products growing on our land.

To set up an appointment to discuss adding additional food plot acreage please call Jeremy Tankersley at (334) 427 – 9676 Ex.26.

The Wrap Up

Please send me your feedback on the information contained in this journal to Jeremy.Tankersley@Rayonier.com

This is meant to be a service provided to you to add to the return on your recreational investment each year. Please send any suggestions for articles or subjects you would like to hear more about to me. I will research those topics and provide you with the information you need.

I would also like to invite any of you who are interested, to send in

articles that you have written (please acknowledge sources) to appear in the journal. Also we would love to see your pictures of wildlife or things you are doing on your club to improve habitat.