

# SPRING MESA RANCH

3,173± ACRES

CALLAHAN COUNTY, TEXAS

\$23,500,000



  
HORTENSTINE  
RANCH COMPANY

(214) 361-9191  
[www.hrcranch.com](http://www.hrcranch.com)



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**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:** Nestled among the high hilltops of the Callahan Divide, Spring Mesa Ranch is a legacy property, offering breathtaking landscapes, first-class accommodations, and a rich frontier history. Named after the mountain peak that rises 2,182 feet within its borders, this ranch has been meticulously restored to reflect the look and feel of a Texas cattle ranch from the 1840s. A large-scale cedar removal and native grass restoration program has brought the owner's vision to life, creating some of the most scenic and productive wildlife habitats and rangelands in the region.

The land features 38 earthen stock tanks, the headwaters of Brushy and Cottonwood Creeks, seven miles of all-weather caliche roads, excellent fencing and cross-fencing, cattle pens, and nine pastures. Atop the hills, a skeet shooting pavilion and a sanctuary with a prominent cross offer breathtaking views. Upon entering through the main gate, a private all-weather rock road winds through the foothills, revealing the magnificent hilltop residence—an 8-

bedroom, 8-bathroom home with 10,401 square feet of indoor living space, a swimming pool and outdoor entertainment area, all built with no expense spared.

East of the headquarters, the hill country style 'Happy House' sits in a majestic oak-covered setting, providing a serene retreat. Located on FM 2228, a ranch employee's manufactured home sits in a nice grove of oak trees. Both homes are in very good condition. Additional improvements include a 100' x 45' eight-stall horse barn with an office and a 60' x 60' shop with an apartment.

Once part of the historic 50,000-acre Cross Bar Ranch, Spring Mesa Ranch stands as a testament to vision, conservation, and Texas heritage. With its unparalleled natural beauty, modern amenities, and historical significance, this extraordinary property offers a rare opportunity for ranching, recreation, and the creation of a lasting family legacy.

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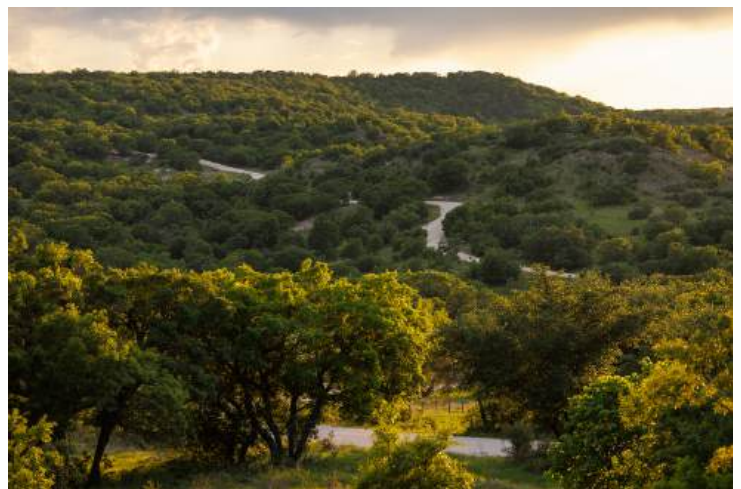
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**LOCATION:** Spring Mesa Ranch is located on the western edge of the Cross Timbers & Prairies Region of Texas, south of Interstate 20, between Putnam and Baird in east-central Callahan County, near the historic community of Admiral. It is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes from Dallas and 2 hours from Fort Worth. Nearby towns include Cross Plains (12 miles south), Baird (16 miles northwest), Cisco (25 miles northeast), Abilene (37 miles northwest), and Midland (186 miles west).

Physical Address: 7985 FM-2228, Baird, Texas 79504

**DIRECTIONS:** From Dallas and Fort Worth, take I-20 west for approximately 120 miles to Putnam, Texas. Just past Putnam, take Exit 313 to FM-2228 and turn left onto FM-2228. Travel south for approximately 11 miles to the ranch entrance on the right.

**ACCESS & ROADS:** Ranch has 2 miles of FM 2228 frontage and access by a roadway easement off CR461 (no roadway easements run through Spring Mesa). The property features 7 miles of interior all-weather caliche roads in excellent condition. The main home one-half mile from the entrance and is surrounded by a hog-proof fence. Both perimeter and interior fencing are in excellent condition, with interior cattle guards allowing easy travel throughout the ranch. Two gravel pits provide a convenient source of road base for maintenance.



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**HISTORY:** The current ownership acquired 441+/- acres in 2004, followed by additional land acquisitions, forming Spring Mesa #1 (the northern half of the ranch). Years later, an additional 1,587+/- acres were added, creating the southern half of the now 3,173+/- acre Spring Mesa Ranch. The land was originally heavily wooded with cedar, and native grasses were in poor condition. Under the vision of Texas oil and gas pioneer Dick Lowe and Dr. John Merrill, former head of TCU's Ranch Management program, the ranch underwent a careful transformation to restore and revitalize the ecosystem. Restoration efforts began with the end goal of "taking this ranch back to the 1800s." Through meticulous land management, invasive cedar trees were removed, revealing hidden springs, native grasses and hardwoods.

Once part of the vast 50,000-acre Cross Bar Ranch, Spring Mesa Ranch is steeped in history, with reminders of the past still scattered across the ranch. Notable historical features include:

- Harper House Remnants: Built by a family who purchased land in the 1890s. The original fireplace, chimney, and cistern remain.
- Old String Town Site: The original Cross Bar Ranch owner, Mr. Cordwendt, built 14 houses for his hired help. Though little remains, the old swimming hole/pond still exists.
- Cordwendt's Hand-Dug Water Well: A well dug by Mr. Cordwendt during his ownership.
- Hester Twins Gravesite (1895): The burial site of two young girls who succumbed to typhus while traveling by wagon.



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**MAIN HOUSE:** The primary residence is a Texas Hill Country-style masterpiece, originally built in 2005 as a family retreat. It underwent significant additions in 2008 and 2010, expanding into a 16,770+/- square-foot compound with 10,401 square feet of HVAC-controlled interior space and 6,369 square feet of outdoor patio and entertainment area. Designed by David Lewis Builders, the home is ideal for entertaining and relaxation.

The 8 bedroom/ 8 bathroom residence consists of three interconnected buildings under the same roof being further described as:

- East Building (2005): Features three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a full-size kitchen, a walk-in gun safe, a pool table, and an open living room with wood-burning fireplace. The upstairs includes a children's bunkroom, full bathroom, and loft-style living room.
- Middle Building (2008): Houses two guest bedrooms with full bathrooms, two half baths, a large kitchen with an island, an impressive fireplace centerpiece open on four sides, and two open living/ entertainment areas. A crow's nest at the top provides 360-degree views. Outdoor amenities include a swimming pool, outdoor kitchen, propane fire pit, and a golf driving range.
- West Building (2010): Serves as the master suite, featuring three bedrooms, three bathrooms, his-and-her full baths, large closets, a living area with a fireplace, a downstairs gun safe room, a sauna, and an outdoor elevator/lift.



The home water system is supplied by three wells with two buildings housing four large holding tanks and two top-tier reverse osmosis (RO) systems. There is also a 60,000 gallon in-ground cistern providing an additional source of water. Six generators provide backup power for the home.

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**THE HAPPY HOUSE:** Renovated in 2013 and a short drive from the main home, this two-story house features four bedrooms, three bathrooms, two porches, a balcony, and a wood-burning fireplace—all surrounded by mature oak trees. Nestled in a private and tranquil setting, the home is ideal for guests or a ranch manager and their family.

Combined with the main house, the property offers a total of 12 bedrooms, comfortably accommodating 25 guests.

**HOME FURNISHINGS:** The main house and guest house are sold fully furnished, excluding select personal items. The furniture is high quality, appliances are top of the line and this property is ready to use day one.

**EQUIPMENT:** In order to keep the property operational, the owner is including the following items:

- 2010 F250 King Ranch flatbed 4x4 truck
- Case backhoe
- 1984 Freightliner dump truck
- John Deere Z930A & Z930M zero turn mowers
- 24' Galyean Gooseneck cattle trailer
- 16' HD utility trailer (black) & 16' utility trailer (green)
- Protein feed trailer with delivery system
- Bobcat T740 skid steer plus attachments
- Bobcat E88 excavator plus attachments
- TC33D New Holland small tractor
- Mini van UTV
- 2021 Polaris Ranger 1000
- 12' four-wheeler trailer



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**BARN:** Built in 2017, this 100' x 45' horse barn features eight stalls, a wash bay with hot water, a manager's office, and a tack room. The manager's office is equipped with central heat, air conditioning, and internet service. A round pen, conveniently located adjacent to the barn, provides an ideal space for horse training.



**SHOP:** Built in 2005, this 60' x 60' structure includes a spacious workshop, indoor/outdoor equipment storage, a one-bedroom apartment with a loft, a walk-in game cooler and 20,000 gallon in-ground cistern. Just behind the shop, a dedicated shooting range offers a great setup for both pistols and rifles.

**CATTLE PENS & CATTLE FENCING:** The ranch is fully fenced and cross-fenced for cattle with two sets of steel cattle pens. Both perimeter and cross fencing are in excellent condition, with cattle guards allowing for easy travel between the nine primary pastures.

**SKEET SHOOTING PAVILION:** With stunning views, this pavilion is perfect for skeet shooting and/ or cooking out. The area is fenced separately and includes a covered grilling & picnic space.



**THE CROSS & REFLECTION AREA:** Erected in 2014, a monumental cross sits on a high ridge, surrounded by stone seats engraved with the names of the disciples. Offering breathtaking views of the valley below, this area was designed for quiet reflection and prayer.

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**SURFACE WATER:** Spring Mesa Ranch boasts abundant water resources, including 38 earthen stock ponds, 15 of which are spring-fed and stocked with fish. The stock ponds provide excellent water sources for cattle and wildlife while offering opportunities for fishing and waterfowl hunting.

**WATER WELLS:** The ranch is equipped with twelve (12) water wells, ensuring reliable water access across the property. Average well depth is between 100-200 feet producing 3-12 gallons per minute. In total, the ranch features five (5) electric wells and seven (7) solar wells, creating a robust and sustainable water infrastructure.

At the main house, three (3) wells supply water to four (4) large holding tanks—two with 10,000-gallon capacities and two with 3,000-gallon capacities. Water from these tanks is filtered through a reverse osmosis (RO) system to ensure high-quality drinking water. Water tanks and equipment are housed in two separate, insulated buildings.

Additional wells service different areas of the ranch:

- One well supplies the Happy House.
- Another well provides water to the shop and barn areas.
- The ranch manager's manufactured home has its own well.
- Seven (7) solar-powered wells provide water to livestock throughout the property.

The property also includes two large underground cisterns, one located at the main compound and another at the horse barn. All well locations are fenced and properly maintained, ensuring long-term sustainability and efficient water management.



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**TOPOGRAPHY:** The ranch features an impressive 401 feet of elevation change, ranging from 1,781 feet at its lowest elevation to 2,182 feet at its highest elevation. The headwaters of Brushy Creek and Cottonwood Creek originate on the property and views are spectacular.

**WIND FARM:** A wind farm is located northeast of Spring Mesa, with wind turbines being visible from a portion of the ranch. There are no other nearby wind farms and views in most directions remain unaffected.

**CEDAR ERADICATION & NATIVE GRASS RESTORATION:** A majority of the cedar was removed from the ranch after 3 long years of mechanical brush work. This is an impressive feat to accomplish on such a large scale. In addition to the cedar removal, native grass seeding and restoration has been completed. Massive amounts of manure were hauled in and spread in areas with shallow soil to prepare seed beds for native grasses to be planted. A variety of native grass seed was mixed with 15-15-15 fertilizer and spread on the hillsides resulting in diverse plant communities in different parts of the ranch. Grazing conditions and wildlife habitat have been highly improved as a result of these painstaking efforts. The quality of the native grasslands on this property are second to none.

**CATTLE:** Native rangeland is in excellent condition with estimated carrying capacity of one animal unit per 25-35 acres. An older coastal Bermuda field is located on the north end, but is not being actively tended to for hay production or livestock. Ranch is lightly stocked with 40-50 head of longhorn and corriente cattle.

**VEGETATION:** The vegetation is diverse, with tree cover primarily consisting of live oaks, post oaks, mesquite, elm, hackberry, blackjack oak, sumac, shin oak, and lacy oak, along with other native species. Red oaks are abundant in certain areas, displaying magnificent bright red foliage in the fall. There is very little cedar and mesquite compared to other area ranches.

The ranch supports a variety of forbs and browse, which contribute to the wildlife habitat. Each spring, a vibrant display of wildflowers blankets the landscape, enhancing the ranch's natural beauty. With exceptional wildlife habitat and well-maintained pastureland, the ranch is kept in prime condition and not overgrazed.

Native grasses include Little and Big Bluestem, Switchgrass, Texas Wintergrass, Dropseed, Indiangrass, Wilman Lovegrass, Haskell and Sideoats Grama, Perennial and Annual Rye, Illinois Bundleflower, Green Spangle Top, Klein 75, Plains Bristle Grass, Smooth Brome, Buffalo Grass, and Blue Grama.



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**WILDLIFE:** Spring Mesa Ranch is a low-fenced wildlife paradise, offering exceptional habitat and prime hunting opportunities. The property has been lightly hunted and the hunting rights are not leased. Hunting is reserved for family and friends, ensuring a well-preserved game population.

The ranch operates under the Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP) through Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) with approximately 60 MLD tags issued for the 2024-2025 season. A year-round feeding program supports a high-quality native whitetail deer population, with bucks scoring in the 150 B&C class.

The property features eleven (11) strategically placed feed stations, each with high-quality feed pens. These stations are equipped with free-choice protein feeders, broadcast corn feeders, and elevated, enclosed deer blinds positioned 100-150 yards away for optimal hunting conditions.

The careful management of soil, water, and vegetation has fostered an ideal environment where wildlife thrives. The ranch is home to Whitetail deer, Rio Grande turkey, dove, and Bobwhite quail, along with feral hogs and predators such as bobcats, coyotes, and foxes. Additionally, a small number of Blackbuck antelope and Fallow deer can be found on the property, some these are of trophy caliber.

## UTILITIES:

- Electricity: Taylor Electric Cooperative
- Internet: HughesNet
- TV: DirectTV
- Propane: WTG Fuels Inc.
- Backup Power: Six generators for home and one for a water well



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## NEAREST AIRPORTS:

- Abilene Regional Airport (ABI): Located approximately 19 miles west of Baird in Abilene, Texas, this public airport offers commercial flights, primarily connecting to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.
- Gregory Simmons Memorial Airport (CISCO, TX): Situated about 25 miles east of Baird in Cisco, Texas, this public-use airport serves general aviation and offers facilities for private and small aircraft operations.

**EASEMENTS:** This is a very clean ranch. There is no active oil or gas production on the ranch. All previous production sites have been properly plugged, leaving no visible above-ground obstructions. An old 4-inch steel pipeline runs through a small portion of the property having little impact. A more recent pipeline easement with three larger underground pipelines cross the northern end of the ranch and run parallel to each other. Electric power lines are located on the other side of FM 2228, keeping the road frontage on Spring Mesa unobstructed.

**MINERALS:** No mineral rights.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT:** Cross Plains ISD.

**PROPERTY TAXES:** 2024 taxes were \$50,738.01. Property is agriculturally exempt.

**CONCLUSION:** Spring Mesa embodies conservation, land management, history and high quality improvements. This is a turn-key opportunity you can utilize immediately while building your own legacy. Land and improvements are reasonably priced making this a solid investment.

**PRICE: \$23,500,000**

**BROKER & COMMISSION DISCLOSURE:** Buyer's Agent/ Broker must be identified upon first contact with Listing Broker/ Listing Agent and Buyer's Agent/ Broker must be present at the initial property tour in order to participate in the real estate commission. Commission splits will be at the sole discretion of Listing Broker.

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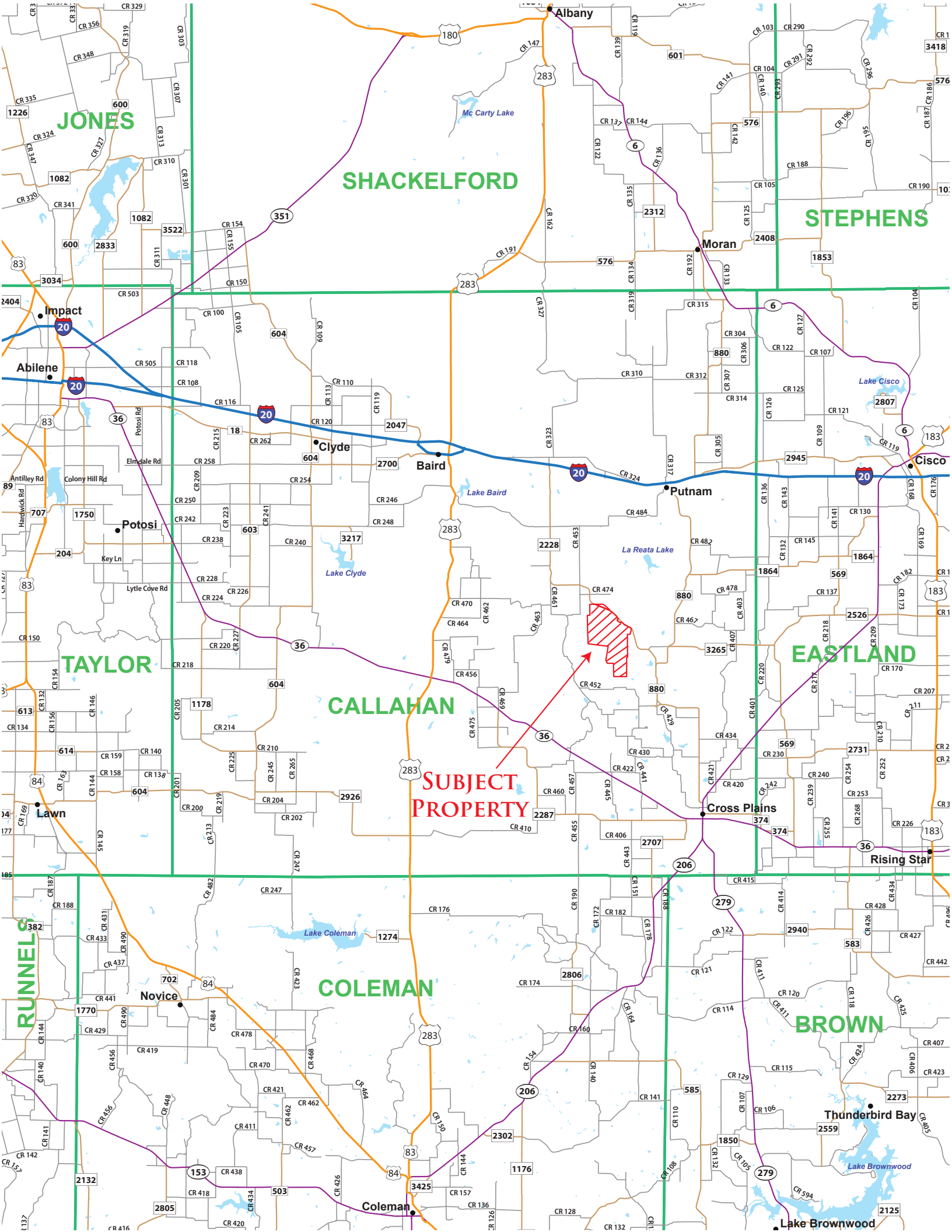












SHACKELFORD

STEPHENS

JONES

TAYLOR

CALLAHAN

EASTLAND

SUBJECT PROPERTY

COLEMAN

BROWN

RUNNELS

Abilene

Clyde

Baird

Putnam

Cross Plains

Novice

Coleman

Thunderbird Bay

Albany

Moran

Impact

Cisco

Rising Star

Lake Brownwood

Mc Carty Lake

Lake Baird

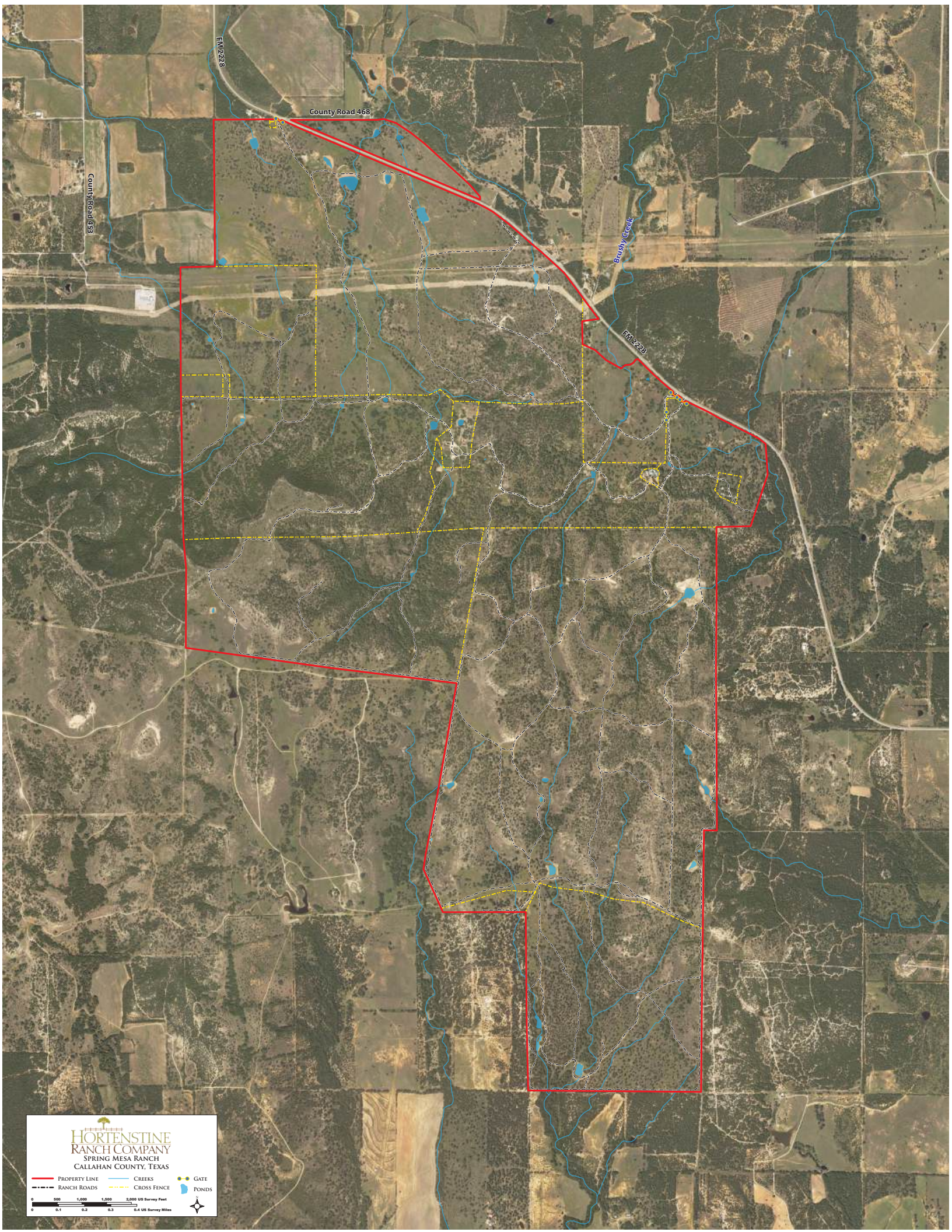
La Reata Lake

Lake Coleman

Lake Brownwood

Lake Cisco





FM 2228

County Road 468

County Road 453


Brushy Creek

FM 2228

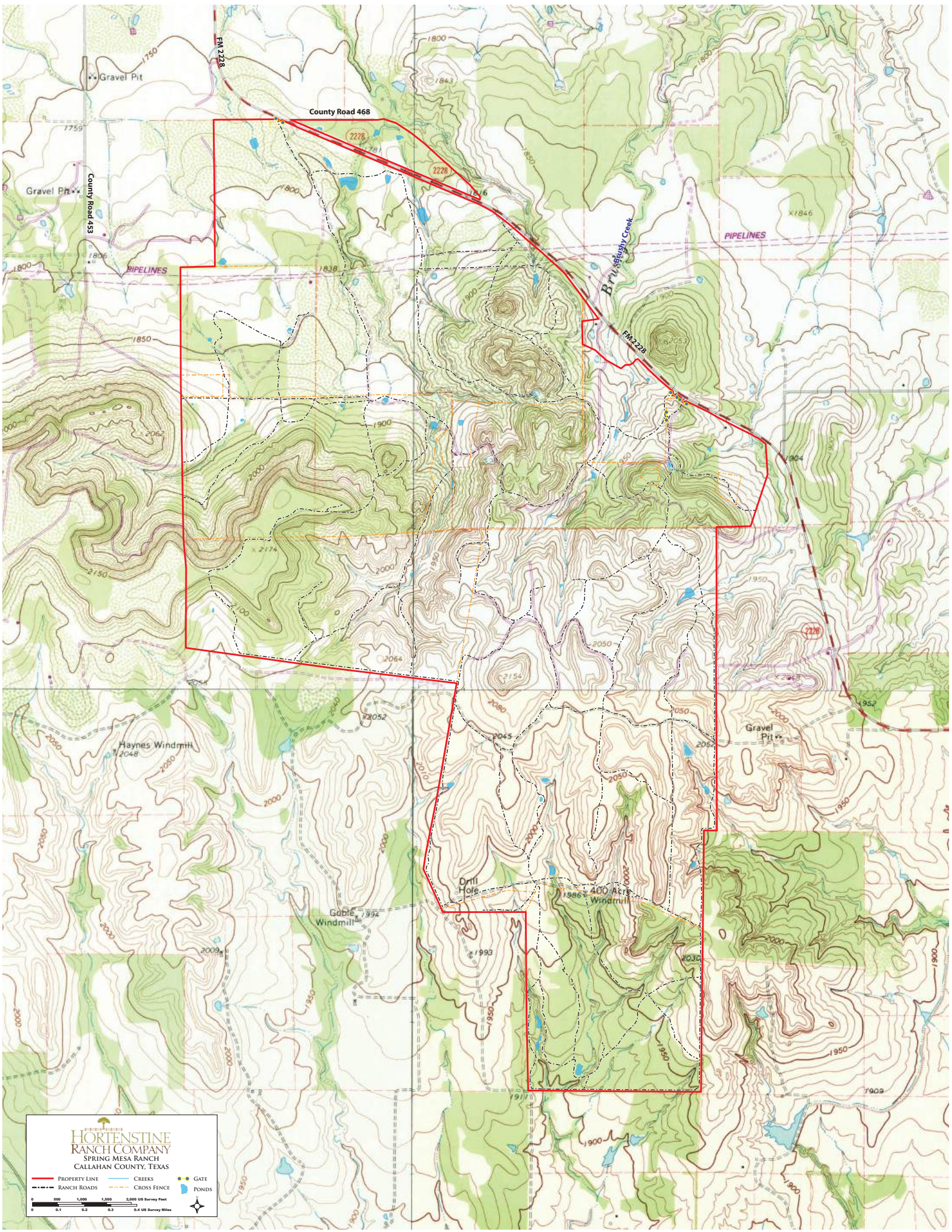
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— PROPERTY LINE    — CREEKS    ● GATE  
- - - RANCH ROADS    - - - CROSS FENCE    ■ PONDS

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 US Survey Feet  
 0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 US Survey Miles







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0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 US Survey Feet  
 0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 US Survey Miles

↑ NORTH

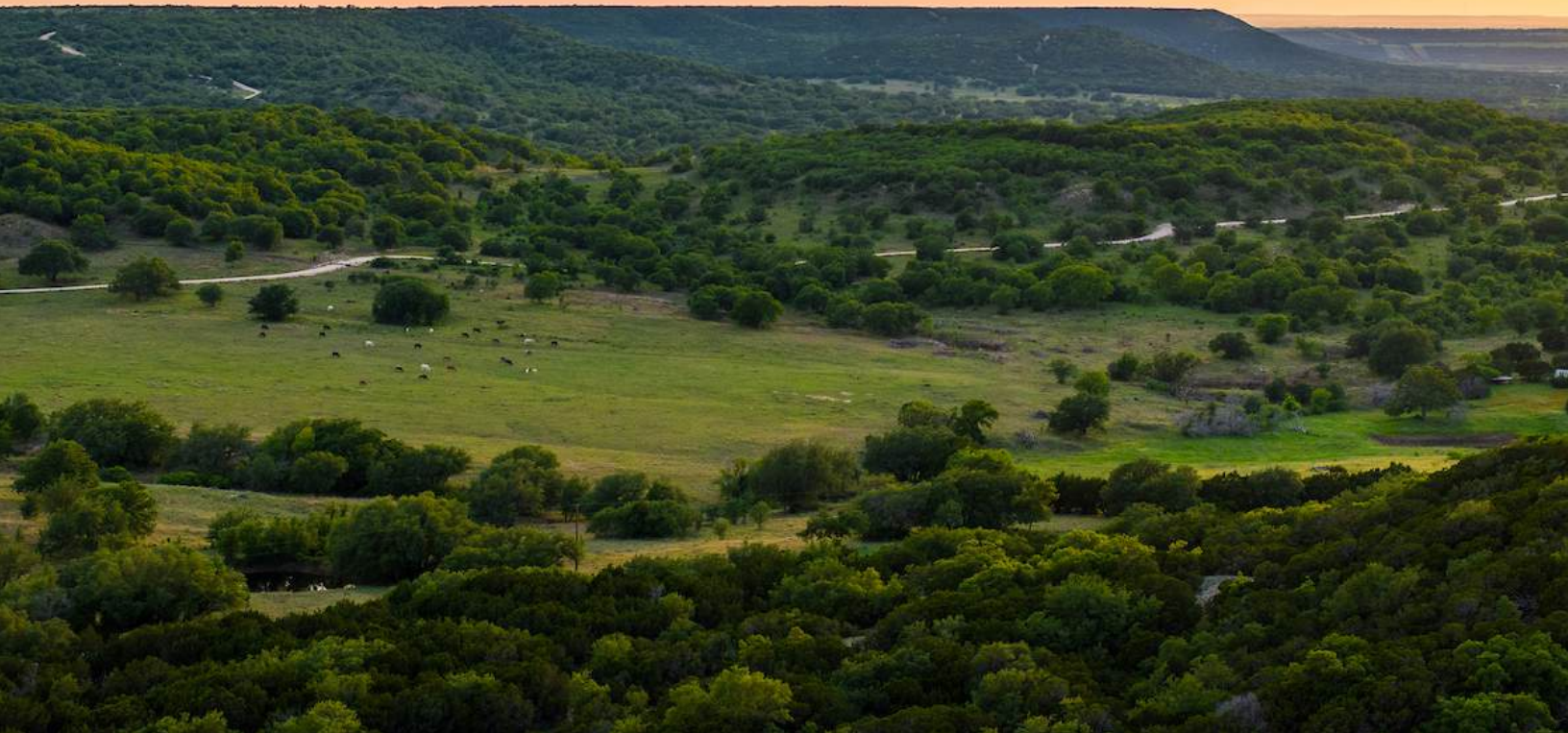


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