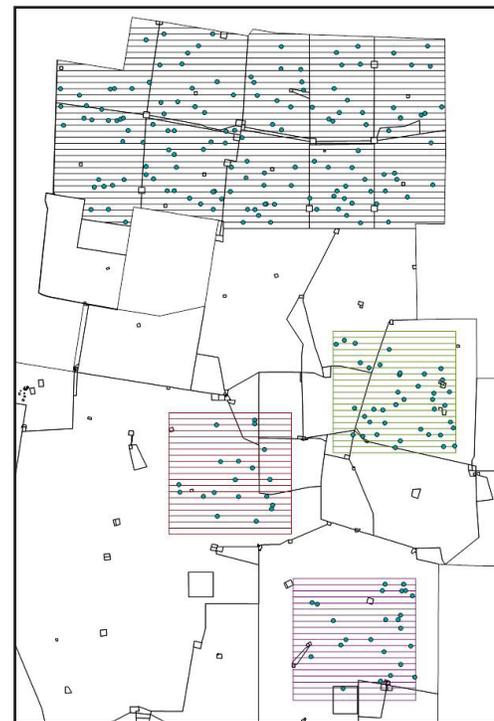


NORTHERN BOBWHITE ABUNDANCE IN THE COLORADITAS AREA

The South Texas Sand Sheet is a hotspot for northern bobwhite population abundance and quail management is a significant economic driver. Throughout the region, historic overgrazing by cattle has negatively impacted native rangelands and corresponding quail habitat. This has led some quail-focused landowners to remove cattle altogether, which often produces unintended negative consequences. The East Foundation believes that ranching and wildlife go together and that cattle grazing is an important part of land stewardship, particularly in this hyper-diverse region. We aim to demonstrate relationships between cattle management and bobwhite abundance through research.

- During 2014, estimated densities were 1 bobwhite per 5 acres in the Coloraditas and 1 bobwhite per 6.3 acres in the reference sites
- During 2015, estimated densities were 1 bobwhite per 2 acres in the Coloraditas and 1 bobwhite per 5 acres in the reference sites



Northern bobwhite coveys detected during aerial surveys on the Coloraditas Area and 3, 4,000-acre reference sites on the San Antonio Viejo Ranch, during December 2014.

As part of the Coloraditas Grazing Research and Demonstration Area we have initiated a project designed to monitor and compare quail abundance at 2 different cattle densities, under both continuous and rotational situations. Baseline data (from before the experiment officially begins, when cattle outfitted with electronic individual animal identification are reintroduced onto the site) are critical for making comparisons throughout the 10-year life span of the project.

We flew the Coloraditas and 3, 4,000 acre reference sites on the San Antonio Viejo Ranch to determine baseline quail abundance during December 2014 and 2015. We found:

- 139 and 435 coveys (mean covey size of 8.2 and 9 bobwhites per covey) in the Coloraditas during 2014 and 2015, respectively

The East Foundation is committed to conducting research that makes a difference. Data collected over the next 10 years in the Coloraditas Area will shed light on cattle management and bobwhite abundance at an operational-scale (4,600-acre treatment pastures). This is only one of the many big questions that will be addressed through the Coloraditas project.

Partners: Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute and Institute of Renewable Natural Resources