



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

At the 2005 White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation, the Secretary of Defense stated that the readiness of our nation's armed forces depended upon Cooperative Conservation. The Department of Defense (DoD) is steward of approximately 30 million acres of our nation's lands, and these lands are vital to sustaining military readiness. Much of this land is undeveloped and in a natural state, and DoD is required by law to have conservation programs to protect these lands. DoD's mission is military readiness, and the Department protects its lands because these lands support the mission. DoD lands, along with the air space above and adjacent sea space, are where the men and women of our military services train for warfighting and test the equipment they will use in combat. The conservation of these training and testing lands is essential to DoD's national security mission.

The quality and integrity of DoD's lands can not be maintained in isolation, and like other Federal land management agencies, the Department is cooperating with other organizations to conserve our nation's lands. Cooperative Conservation provides DoD with tools that are used to avert land use that is incompatible with military readiness activities. DoD's lands are protected from spatial encroachment and incompatible land use by working with other organizations to create conservation and other types of buffers. Additionally, Cooperative Conservation allows DoD to partner with state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens to ensure that military lands do not become the last remaining refuge for threatened and endangered species.

Role of DoD on the Interagency Executive Task Force

The Assistant Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health represents DoD on the Interagency Cooperative Conservation Task force Senior Policy Team. DoD is represented on the Interagency Cooperative Conservation Task Force Executive Team with two staff-level members; one from Army Civil Works and one from the Department's Range Sustainment Initiative. Additionally, these two DoD offices also have representatives at the functional-level Interagency Cooperative Conservation Team (ICCT). Human resources staff from DoD's Personnel office provide human capital management expertise on the interagency working group on Cooperative Conservation competencies.

Implementation of DoD Cooperative Conservation Actions

As one of the lead agencies designated in Executive Order 13352, DoD continues to support the principles of Cooperative Conservation through actions that also support the military readiness mission. DoD specific actions include implementing legislative authority to work with non-DoD organizations on conservation projects, and to create a work force that has the knowledge and skills to form conservation partnerships.

Human Capital and Cooperative Conservation Competencies

Successful Cooperative Conservation depends on individuals and teams with the right set of skills for collaboration and partnering with state and local governments, non-governmental

organizations and individual citizens. To that end, DoD's Conservation Committee has endorsed the eight Cooperative Conservation competencies identified by the ICCT and the working group of Deputy Chief Human Capital Office staff from the five agencies tasked in E.O. 13352.

The DoD Conservation Committee is comprised of the senior natural resource management staff from the four military services. The committee is supporting engagement with the DoD environmental training centers to determine if current curricula provide the necessary skills for Cooperative Conservation and, if not, how to integrate the eight competencies into existing training. DoD natural resource managers are also very interested in using interagency training opportunities for the eight competencies.

The Conservation Committee identified eight occupation series that fit under the broad natural resource management functional area. The DoD range sustainability staff have also identified seven additional series that are currently, or have the potential to be, responsible for implementing projects under REPI. These fifteen occupation series include about 10,000 positions or approximately 1.5% of the DoD civilian workforce. The next step will be determining which of these positions require the Cooperative Conservation competencies.

Collaboration and partnering are not unique to the practitioners of Cooperative Conservation in DoD. The competencies selected for Cooperative Conservation are also integral to all DoD human capital lifecycle and competency efforts. The goal of DoD's Total Force Competency Initiative is to strategically manage the Total Force through common competencies.

Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative

The Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) takes advantage of a relatively new authority (10 USC, Sec. 2684a) Congress enacted in 2002 authorizing DoD to partner with state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations to acquire from willing sellers conservation easements on private lands. REPI serves to forestall incompatible land use and protect high-value habitat so that DoD retains the discretion to use military lands free of encroachment-related restrictions and environmental constraints. With REPI agreements and funding DoD can cost-share the acquisition of conservation easements creating "win-win" situations for all partners.

REPI projects are selected for funding on the basis of a number of criteria, including: military utility, and training and testing value; potential for limiting incompatible development and protecting high-value habitat; and the level of participation and contributions from other project partners. In FY 2005, REPI funding was used for the first time on the following projects to cost-share the long-term protection of land: Fort Carson, Colorado; Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina; Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; US Army Garrison Hawaii; Army National Guard Camp Ripley, Minnesota; La Posta Mountain Warfare Training Facility (Navy), California; and Navy Outlying Landing Field, Whitehouse, Florida. Though the funding was from FY 2005, some of these projects did not reach final agreement until 2006 because it takes time to build successful Cooperative Conservation partnerships.

In 2006, DoD supported 20 REPI Cooperative Conservation projects representing a three-fold increase over the previous year's activities. FY 2006 REPI projects also had a threefold increase in funding over FY 2005. Six examples of DoD REPI Cooperative Conservation projects completed 2006 are presented.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CASE STUDIES



CAMP LEJEUNE NORTH CAROLINA



1,000 Acres near Camp Lejeune Saved from Development

Purchase buffers noise from Marine training, adds state wildlife land



DoD partnered with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to preserve over 1,000 acres of land adjacent to a high-activity training area. The new buffer land protects nearby communities from noise and serves as a recreation area for hunting and fishing.

The Department of Defense (DoD) and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission partnered to create a 1,062-acre buffer zone near Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. The buffer prevents commercial development around sensitive training grounds. As a result, the installation may continue its training while lessening the noise impacts on surrounding communities. The new buffer land also serves as a key area for habitat and recreation.

"This effort is a real 'win-win' for the Marine Corps and the State of North Carolina."

William G. Ross, Jr.
Secretary

NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources

KEY FACTS

Mission: Major base for Special Forces and amphibious assault training

Area Conserved: 1,062 acres

Challenge: Residential home development in areas subject to high noise levels during military training

Project Cost: \$5 million

Action: DoD partners with NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) and Marine Corps to purchase 1,062 acres of land.

Partners: North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and DoD

Accomplishments:

- Military training areas buffered
- Airspace corridor enhanced
- State hunting and fishing areas created
- State wildlife preserves enlarged

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The Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI), DoD's conservation buffer program, enables the military to partner with state and local governments or non-governmental organizations to create conservation buffers that prevent development incompatible with military missions and preserve natural habitat.



CAMP RIPLEY MINNESOTA



Conservation Easements Provide Camp Ripley Noise Buffer

The Department of Defense (DoD) partners with state & non-government organizations to protect land and military training activities



Noise caused by military training prompted the DoD to partner with the Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy to buffer a key military installation and ensure communities bordering Camp Ripley aren't disturbed by training activities.

Conservation easements on more than 4,600 acres were purchased by a partnership that included DoD, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and The Nature Conservancy. These easements led to the formation of a noise buffer zone by preventing development on three parcels of bordering lands. The noise buffer land now serves as a key area for habitat and recreation.

"These buffer projects represent an extraordinary win-win partnership bringing together federal, state, local, and non-profit groups to achieve their mutual interests."

Peggy Booth

Community Assistance Manager
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

KEY FACTS

Mission: Military training site

Area Conserved: 4,659 acres

Challenge: Residential home development in areas subject to high noise levels during military training

Project Cost: \$10.8 million

Action: The partnership acquired \$10.8 million in conservation easements from neighboring land owners to preserve 4,659 acres of buffer land

Partners: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, and DoD

Accomplishments:

- Military training capability preserved
- Incompatible development prevented
- Threatened and endangered species habitat enlarged

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FORT RILEY

KANSAS



New Partnership Saves Land next to Fort Riley from Development

Army training sites buffered, Kansas prairie land preserved



The purchase of a conservation easement on ranch land next to Fort Riley is part of a national partnership between DoD and USDA to work together to conserve agricultural lands adjacent to military installations.

The Department of Defense (DoD), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Kansas State Conservation Commission and Kansas Land Trust partnered to purchase a conservation easement on 269 acres of prairie grassland northeast of Fort Riley. The land, which will continue to be used by its owner as a ranch, will buffer the installation from future development that could threaten military training activities.

"This partnership will allow us to continue to train the way our country expects us to."

Maj. Gen. Carter Ham
Commanding General, Fort Riley

KEY FACTS

Mission: Army installation that conducts live fire training

Challenge: Increasing encroachment of residential and commercial development upon military training

Action: DoD, the Kansas Land Trust, the Kansas State Conservation Commission, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are partnering to conserve land near the installation

Accomplishments:

- Incompatible development prevented
- Military training capability protected
- Agricultural land preserved

Area Conserved: 269 acres

Project Cost: \$322,000

Partners: Kansas Land Trust, Kansas State Conservation Commission, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and DoD

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The Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI), DoD's conservation buffer program, enables the military to partner with outside stakeholders to promote land conservation that supports military missions and the natural habitat.



FORT SILL OKLAHOMA



Public/Private Partnership Secures Conservation Land near Fort Sill

Artillery Training Site Buffered, Ranch Lands Preserved



The 300-acre Ryder Ranch became the first conservation easement purchase of a projected 20,000 acre buffer zone around Fort Sill's training areas. A partnership including DoD, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, State of Oklahoma, Comanche County, a local land trust and a willing property owner made it possible.

A recently signed cooperative agreement enables the Department of Defense (DoD) to contribute funds to a local land trust for the purchase of conservation easements on properties surrounding Fort Sill. The first purchase, which took place in July 2006, protected a major artillery training site and ensured preservation of a local cattle ranch as part of a noise buffer zone between the installation and the growing community.

"By partnering with the Army on this effort, we will preserve up to 20,000 acres of open lands and natural resources."

Robert Gregory
Director, Land Legacy

KEY FACTS

Mission: Military site for U.S. Army and Marine Corps artillery training

Challenge: Urban encroachment; noise from training and installation operations

Action: Conservation easements along the installation's southern border are being purchased

Accomplishments:

- Incompatible development prevented
- Critical military training area protected
- Ranch and farm lands preserved

Area Conserved: 300 acres

Project Cost: \$2 million for first 720 acres

Partners: U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Land Legacy land trust, State of Oklahoma, Comanche County Industrial Development Authority, and DoD

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LA POSTA MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING FACILITY CALIFORNIA



Land next to Mountain Warfare Training Area Saved from Development

Unique La Posta training facility preserved, wildlife habitats protected



The terrain within the La Posta Mountain Warfare Training Facility replicates the environment found in parts of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Korea—making it a vital training location for U.S. troops. By acquiring buffer land, this area can remain available for training while also preserving natural habitat.

The Department of Defense (DoD) entered into an agreement with the State of California and The Nature Conservancy to purchase 320 acres of buffer land bordering the Navy's La Posta Mountain Warfare Training Facility. Because of this effort, the Navy can continue training in the unique mountain region while protecting important wildlife migration routes.

"This buffer zone initiative will preserve this vital training resource that would be impossible to duplicate anywhere else."

Captain Townsend G. Alexander
Commanding Officer
NAB Coronado, CA

KEY FACTS

Mission: Naval special warfare training facility with a unique, natural, mountainous environment

Challenge: Local zoning regulations permitted residential development in locations bordering live-fire training areas of the facility

Action: DoD, the State of California, and The Nature Conservancy partnered to purchase three parcels of land

Accomplishments:

- Critical military training area protected
- Wildlife migration routes enhanced
- Live-fire mountain warfare training to continue unrestricted

Area Conserved: 320 acres

Project Cost: \$960,000

Partners: DoD, the State of California, The Nature Conservancy

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U.S. ARMY GARRISON, HAWAII
OAHU, HAWAII



Six Groups Partner to Buy 1,875 Acres in Waimea Valley from Developer

Pristine Hawaiian land preserved, Army training area buffered



A cooperative conservation partnership enabled the Army to protect lands from development next to a key training installation in Hawaii while preserving open space of cultural, archaeological and botanical significance.

The Department of Defense (DoD) entered into a partnership with the City and County of Honolulu, the State of Hawaii, the National Audubon Society and the Trust for Public Land to purchase 1,875 acres of land in Oahu, Hawaii. The purchase prevented residential development that could have restricted training. The new buffer preserves the island's pristine Waimea Valley as a cultural resource and open space with significant historical and natural value.

"This historic agreement will allow us to preserve one of the most pristine and treasured [areas] on Oahu for future generations."

Mufi Hannemann
Mayor of Honolulu, Hawaii

KEY FACTS

Mission: Base of operations for 70,000 Army personnel across the Pacific

Area Conserved: 1,875 acres

Challenge: Potential development threatened to restrict training activities and destroy valuable open space in Hawaii's famous North Shore

Project Cost: \$14.8 million

Action: DoD and partners conserved 1,875 acres of undeveloped land bordering sensitive training area of US Army Garrison, Hawaii

Partners: DoD, City and County of Honolulu, State of Hawaii, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, National Audubon Society, and the Trust for Public Land

Accomplishments:

- Military training area protected
- Land with significant cultural, historical, archaeological, and botanical value preserved

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