

Get to know Camp Ripley: Here are the basics

By [Staff Sgt. Anthony Housey](#) on Mar 15, 2017 at 10:57 a.m.



1 / 2

CAMP RIPLEY—The training center 7 miles north of Little Falls, known as Camp Ripley, is a state-owned, 53,000-acre regional training center featuring numerous weapons ranges and state-of-the-art facilities to support the training requirements of military and civilian agencies.

Primarily the training site for the Minnesota National Guard, Camp Ripley first opened its gates for training in 1931 and is currently a valuable resource for military, law enforcement and state agencies to focus on training in a realistic environment.

According to the Public Affairs Office, Camp Ripley's 2016 Training Year oversaw approximately 254,000 man-days of military training and 60,500 training man-days for local and state interagency partners.

Camp Ripley also provided direct support to organizations deploying overseas or conducting training at other sites such as the 1st Armored brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division. Their rail movement of over 1,300 pieces of equipment for a training exercise in Ft. Irwin, Calif., was one of the largest movements to come out of Camp Ripley in several decades.

While maintaining a high training support rating, Camp Ripley also remains committed to the environmentally-sound stewardship of its training area and other areas throughout Central Minnesota. The 18 miles of undeveloped Mississippi River shoreline hold a significant precedence culturally and environmentally and are managed very successfully by the Minnesota National Guard's environmental teams.

In July of 2016, [Camp Ripley was federally recognized as a Sentinel Landscape](#), which is a conservation and encroachment effort that builds off of the Department of Defense's Army Compatible Use Buffer program. The partnership between State and Federal agencies, with like-minded goals, are to conserve natural habitat, maintain landscapes that contribute to national defense and prevent incompatible development that would inhibit training.

Camp Ripley will host an informational Open House 6 p.m. Thursday in the Hangar Conference Center on Camp Ripley to present possible options to local land owners, as well as answer any questions on the Sentinel Landscape Program.

Throughout the spring months, members of the Camp Ripley staff will speak in several communities around central Minnesota. Their update will help to explain the upcoming training calendar for Camp Ripley, as well as introduce community members to the normal operations cycle for training year. Each member of the staff will be available to answer questions, as well as collect the feedback from the community.

For opportunities to attend one of these community briefings, please check with your city or township offices as well as local VFW and American Legion Posts. For further questions please contact the Camp Ripley Public Affairs Office at 320-616-3122.

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