



REPI Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program

2018 REPI CHALLENGE AWARDS

The **Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program** fosters multi-agency initiatives and collaboration to preserve compatible land uses near military installations that sustain DoD assets and capabilities in support of military readiness, allowing them to create unique cost-sharing partnerships with state and local governments and private conservation organizations.

The REPI Program has protected **over 516,000 acres of land** near **93 DoD installations** in **31 states** across the country through fiscal year 2017. Incompatible practices outside military bases can leave the military with significant management and recovery responsibilities for threatened, endangered, and other at-risk species. These management actions may diminish the DoD’s ability to use its land optimally to test, train, and operate. This requires DoD and its partners to approach REPI partnerships with flexibility and spur innovation in order to optimize tax dollars. Thus, the REPI Program designed the REPI Challenge, an annual competition that aims to:

 <p>Cultivate projects that conserve land at a greater scale and test promising ways to finance land protection.</p>	 <p>Help the REPI Program meet its ambitious goals with limited funding.</p>	 <p>Demonstrate benefits above and beyond normal requirements for REPI projects for important military missions.</p>	 <p>Harness the creativity of the private sector to access and leverage unconventional sources of funding and market-based approaches.</p>
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REPI CHALLENGE ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Seven years of the REPI Challenge have resulted in the following benefits at **12 locations**:

<p>\$42M in REPI funds</p>	<p>\$133M in partner contributions</p>	<p>118,000+ protected acres of working lands, habitat, and open spaces</p>
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2018 REPI CHALLENGE HIGHLIGHTS INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR AT-RISK SPECIES AND WATER SUPPLIES

This year, the REPI Challenge will award **\$4.8 million in program funds** and leverage **\$15.8 million in partner contributions** to two projects that leverage innovative species crediting approaches and protect critical DoD water supplies. Military lands host over 350 threatened and endangered species and over 500 at-risk species. Listing under the Endangered Species Act may apply environmental restrictions on an installation during critical testing, training, and operation activities. Species crediting approaches are an innovative tool that helps to deter this possibility.

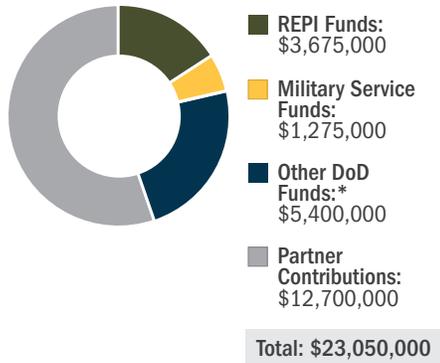
In addition to species crediting approaches, the REPI Program continues to explore opportunities to protect lands in watersheds that support the safe and adequate supply of water to DoD installations and ranges. Recent droughts and growing populations increase pressures on ground and surface water supplies for DoD installations that depend on the water to sustain their missions.



THE 2018 REPI CHALLENGE PROJECT AWARDS

Fort Benning

Fort Benning is the home of the Maneuver School of Excellence, which combines the Army's premier Infantry Training Center and the Armor School in one location. The installation encompasses over 182,000 acres of land and supports 86 live fire ranges, over 100,000 acres of maneuver training area, and a base population of over 44,000 people. With five types of infantry—mechanized, light, airborne, air assault, and ranger—the post is considered one of the country's most important Army installations.



**This multi-phase project leverages \$3.6 million in REPI Challenge funding with \$3 million in traditional REPI funding provided to the Army through standard DoD processes as well as potentially \$2.4 million from U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service's tentative purchase of easements on Army Compatible Use Buffer Program properties.*



7,051

Protected Acres

55%

Partner Cost Share

Upon receiving the REPI Challenge award, Fort Benning will partner with The Nature Conservancy and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to acquire the Hilliard Plantation, a 7,051-acre parcel of land that will increase the size of the installation's incompatible development buffer by 25%. The Hilliard Plantation lies directly adjacent to several of Fort Benning's high-value training ranges and has been identified as the largest and most important parcel within Fort Benning's Army Compatible Use Buffer Program.

Fort Benning will invest a portion of its REPI Challenge award in preserving at-risk species and their habitat on the Hilliard Plantation. The Hilliard Plantation is replete with fire-managed longleaf pine forests that can support a suite of imperiled species, including the gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker, southern hognose snake, Florida pine snake, eastern diamondback, and gopher frog. Protecting this land will enable Fort Benning and its partners to implement species-crediting strategies such as the Department of Defense (DoD) Gopher Tortoise Conservation and Crediting Strategy.

The purpose of the crediting strategy is to preclude listing the gopher tortoise under the Endangered Species Act, a decision that would deter Fort Benning's ability to effectively conduct its testing and training activities. Under the Strategy, Fort Benning will voluntarily preserve off-base gopher tortoise populations to generate 'conservation credits', which in turn can be used to compensate for impacts to the longleaf pine ecosystem on the installation if the species becomes Federally listed in its eastern range. The Strategy is predicated on the belief that proactive conservation is a cost-effective, long-term solution to the military's habitat-related training challenges. Fort Benning's decision to pursue credits for the gopher tortoise will ensure that the installation has the regulatory predictability it needs to carry out its national defense mission for the foreseeable future.



Las Cienegas National Conservation Area
(Photo by Bob Wick, BLM)

THE 2018 REPI CHALLENGE PROJECT AWARDS

Fort Huachuca

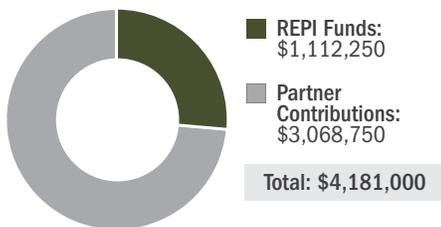
The Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape is a diverse coalition of federal agencies, state and local governments, non-governmental organizations and private landowners that leverage their resources to protect natural and working lands surrounding the installation. The purpose of the Sentinel Landscape is to advance conservation initiatives, bolster local agricultural economies, and promote development that is compatible with Fort Huachuca's mission-footprint.

1,150

Protected Acres

73%

Partner Cost Share



Located in the Sonoran Desert, Fort Huachuca is home to the premier restricted military airspace for unmanned aircraft system training in the Western U.S. and supports training for Air Force, Marine Corps and U.S. Border Control personnel. The arid, remote landscape surrounding the post is predominantly occupied by privately-owned ranches and native grasslands. However, mounting development pressure from urban sprawl and population growth threatens to undermine the installation's mission by encroaching into critical airspace, raising levels of electromagnetic interference within the Buffalo Solider Electronic Testing Range, and increasing competition for limited water resources.



The Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape partners, including Arizona Land and Water Trust and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, will use their REPI Challenge award to protect Fort Huachuca's water supply and promote compatible land-use surrounding the installation. A portion of the award will be used to establish a conservation easement on the Rose Tree Ranch, a 1,150-acre parcel of land located within the Babocomari River Watershed and the Sonoita Grassland Conservation Area. Permanently protecting the Rose Tree Ranch will reduce competition for water resources in the San Pedro River Watershed by curtailing drilling of over 200 new wells for housing developments. Furthermore, this project will ensure proper conditions for military testing and training activities by preventing development on nearby working lands.

In addition to protecting the Rose Tree Ranch in perpetuity, the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape partners will also work with Alyward McCoy Pilz (AMP) Insights to conduct a Water Supply and Use Assessment on the property. During the study, AMP Insights will carry out an analysis of groundwater levels and surface flows, a survey of current irrigation and stock water use, as well as a comprehensive review of historic pumping records and water rights. The completed assessment will enable Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape partners to identify water conservation opportunities on the Rose Tree Ranch that complement natural and working lands throughout the region.