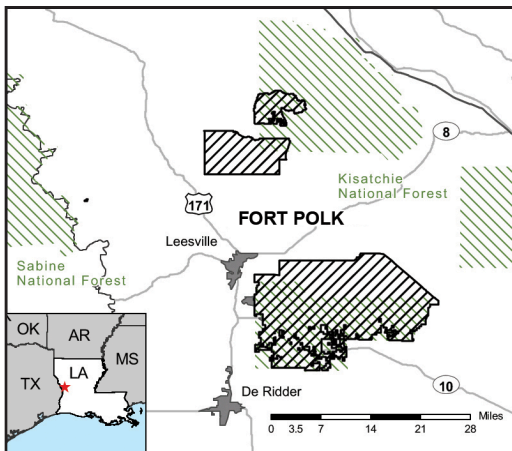




FORT POLK

Home of the Army's Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk is located primarily in Louisiana's Kisatchie National Forest in a special use agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.

The installation supports training for deploying units, including special operations forces, in contingency missions. The JRTC provides highly realistic joint operations exercises that are vital for supporting forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters.



Fort Polk's location and surrounding ecosystem are critical to a host of species, especially the Louisiana pine snake, one of the rarest snake species in North America, and the red-cockaded woodpecker. The loss of longleaf pine habitat across the Gulf coastal plains of the Southeast has put increased pressure on the installation to act as one of the last bastions of viable habitat. Protecting this habitat can help prevent the listing of the pine snake under the Endangered

Species Act, which has the potential to impose significant restrictions on land use and off-road vehicle movement on the installation.

Partnering with Fort Polk, with the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is The Nature Conservancy, who will leverage the REPI Program to acquire easements that will protect and expand the pine snake's habitat. The project also aims to sustain working forest lands and allow continued flexibility in the use and development of Fort Polk's land to meet its national defense mission.

BENEFIT SUMMARY

COMMUNITY

- Preserves working lands
- Provides habitat for rare and endangered species

MILITARY

- Preserves on-installation live-fire and maneuver training capacity
- Reduces lost training days and the need for workarounds that would reduce training realism or effectiveness
- Provides for future mission growth



A Chinook helicopter performing an exercise (top) and a Stryker vehicle firing a missile (bottom) at the Joint Readiness Training Center.

KEY PARTNERS

- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- The Nature Conservancy
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

CONTACT

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FAST FACTS FROM FY 2012 THROUGH FY 2024 | Project Status: Completed

Authority	Transactions	Acres Protected, Managed, or Improved	Total Funds Expended
10 U.S.C. § 2684a	5	1,555	\$5.0 million

Subtotals may not sum to combined totals due to rounding