



### CANNON AIR FORCE BASE

#### Cannon Air Force Base (AFB) is home to the 27<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing (SOW).

The base's location also makes it the western home of the Air Commando and other U.S. Special Operations Command components. The base and associated Melrose Air Force Range provide training for DOD and international coalition forces in Strike, Intelligence-Surveillance-Reconnaissance, Mobility, Battlefield Support, and Special Tactics and ground force missions.

Access to potable water at Cannon AFB is critical for mission sustainment. However, the water levels of the Ogallala Aquifer, Cannon AFB's best source of potable water, have

been declining with a drastic reduction over the past 15 years. Based on current trends and water usage, the Ogallala Aquifer is predicted to be depleted in about 10 years, which could negatively impact the important missions currently executed at Cannon AFB. To mitigate water resource challenges on-installation and in the surrounding communities, Cannon AFB will acquire conservation easements within the Paleo channel to manage and conserve water pumping at irrigation wells in the area. By protecting this area from being developed and encouraging water conservation methods, this project will enhance drought

resilience and ensure a drought or other unforeseen events do not leave the water authority without a water supply. The project will also improve and restore rare and declining habitats, such as the Playa Lake which provides ground water recharge.

The sustainable management of irrigation wells and protected lands will lessen stress on the aquifer, increase the longevity of water resources in the area, and promote sustainable land management practices on surrounding agricultural lands thereby supporting the local agricultural economy. This project will also work to secure and sustain water resources for nearby impacted communities, cities, and townships along with Cannon AFB.

#### BENEFIT SUMMARY

##### COMMUNITY

- Protects water resources
- Supports wetlands and natural resource conservation
- Protects local economy

##### MILITARY

- Protects the base's critical missions for the foreseeable future
- Avoids disruption to air and cyberspace mission capabilities
- Reduces risk of training limitations from prolonged drought events

#### FAST FACTS THROUGH FY 2024 | Project Status: In Progress

Authority	Transactions	Acres Protected, Managed, or Improved	Total Funds Expended
10 U.S.C. § 2684a	4	5,264	\$5.4 million

Subtotals may not sum to combined totals due to rounding



The New Mexico landscape provides an optimal training environment for aircrews operating aircraft such as the MC-130J Commando II (top) and unmanned aerial vehicles such as the MQ-9 Reaper (bottom). Airmen and women of the 27<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing are able to test and train on these aircraft and others at Cannon AFB.

#### KEY PARTNERS

- Central Curry Soil/Water Conservation District
- Curry County
- National Center for Appropriate Technology Soil for Water
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- New Mexico Associates of Conservation Districts
- New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
- New Mexico Office of the State Engineer
- New Mexico State Land Office
- Ogallala Land and Water Conservancy
- Playa Lakes Joint Venture
- Private Landowners
- Texas Agricultural Land Trust
- The Conservation Fund
- Thornburg Foundation
- U.S. Air Force
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

#### CONTACT

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