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REPI Monthly Newsletter | April 2022 Edition

Please see below for exciting news and announcements relevant to the REPI community! If you would like to have an announcement or photo featured in next month's newsletter, reach out to us at osd.repi@mail.mil.

Message from the Director



Dear REPI Partners and Stakeholders,

We've had an exciting and productive start to 2022. Since the beginning of the year, the REPI team has been diligently working on many projects. We're eager to

share the latest developments, plus what's new on the horizon.

First, I am pleased to wish you all a very happy Earth Day from the REPI office! This year's Earth Day could not be more fitting as the Department of Defense continues advancing efforts to tackle the climate crisis and increase military installation resilience to extreme weather events. The REPI program is contributing to the Department's national security priorities by providing installations and communities with key tools and resources needed to protect natural environments vital to military missions.

REPI honors the mission of Earth Day by harnessing the power of partnerships to accelerate land conservation, develop innovative natural infrastructure solutions, and support species protection. The program is always expanding the diverse set of local, state, federal, and private partners we work with to protect and restore critical habitats, improve community resilience to climate change, and sustain military testing and training capabilities. This month, we saw the combined benefits of partnerships at White Sands Missile Range in Southern New Mexico. There, the New Mexico Land Conservancy and the Department of Defense completed one of the nation's largest conservation easements: the Armendaris Ranch. This project protects over 313,000 acres of habitat and the Army's testing and training operations at White Sands Missile Range.

On this Earth Day, we would like to recognize the role the Military Services and partners play in combining shared goals to advance

Releases New At-Risk Species Finder

- **Upcoming REPI Virtual Events**
- **REPI in the News**

climate adaptation, promote conservation, and restore our shared environments.

Best,
Kristin Thomasgard
REPI Program Director

New Sentinel Landscapes to Strengthen Military Readiness and Address Climate Change Impacts

Together with the REPI office, the **Sentinel Landscapes Partnership** was thrilled to announce the three new areas designated as sentinel landscapes, where natural and working lands thrive alongside military installations and ranges. The Sentinel



Landscapes Partnership, comprised of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense, and Department of Interior, is excited to welcome these new landscapes and support their partners with mitigating climate change impacts and improving sustainable land and water management practices around military installations.

The newly designated sentinel landscapes include the Camp Bullis Sentinel Landscape in Texas, Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape, and Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape. These landscapes play a critical role in strengthening the nation's military readiness while addressing natural resources concerns like climate change. Read more about the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership's goals and objectives in the 2022 Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and U.S. Forest Service [here](#).

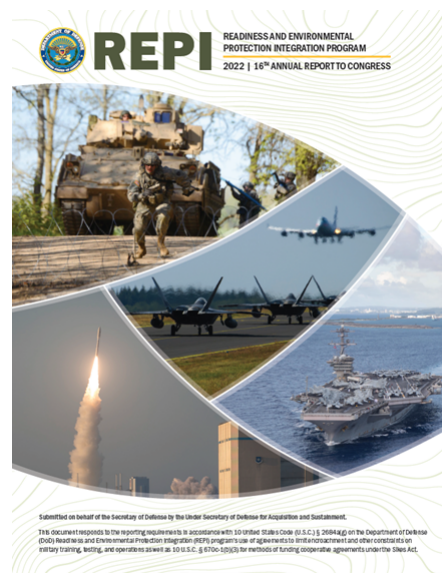
In March, the REPI Office continued its 2022 webinar series and hosted the first Sentinel Landscape Webinar of the year. The webinar highlighted the newly designated sentinel landscapes, what makes them unique, their history, their priorities, and how they embody the mission of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. Through fiscal year 2020, the seven existing sentinel landscapes have permanently protected over 515,000 acres of land within sentinel landscapes and enrolled an additional 2.7 million acres of land in technical assistance programs. If you couldn't participate in this webinar, you can view the recording on [REPI.mil](#).

The New Mexico Land Conservancy and The Department of Defense Conservation Easement



The New Mexico Land Conservancy and the Department of Defense (DoD) recently acquired one of the nation's largest conservation easements at Armendaris Ranch in southern New Mexico. This easement adds 313,058 acres to the White Sands Missile Range Western Call Up Area, a fully instrumented open-air range that is critical to DoD's testing mission, making it the largest acreage acquisition in REPI and Army Compatible Use Buffer Program history. The easement will protect critical airspace that, if encroached upon, could compromise important long-range weapons testing and training operations for F-22 and F-16 pilot training. Preventing development on this land will ensure realistic training environments for 100 percent of the military's Remote Pilot Aircraft and preserve prehistoric archeological sites. [Read the official press release](#) to learn more about the groundbreaking conservation easement.

Now Available: 2022 REPI Report to Congress



The **2022 REPI Report to Congress** is now available! The 16th annual report summarizes the program's key achievements through the end of fiscal year 2021, highlighting successful regional climate resilience initiatives and showcasing REPI projects across the country. Since its inception, the REPI program has protected 830,000 acres of land at 118 locations across 35 states and territories.

Download the 2022 Report to Congress along with updated fact sheets [here](#).

2022 REPI Challenge Proposals

The REPI program is thrilled to have received 17 full proposals for the **2022 REPI Challenge**. The primary focus of this year's REPI Challenge projects will help make key mission capabilities of strategic importance to the Department of Defense more resilient to climate change and severe weather events (e.g., coastal, and inland flooding, sea-level rise, drought, increased wildfires, thawing permafrost). Of the total \$40 million available, up to \$25 million may be allocated toward these climate-resilient projects. The remaining \$15 million may be allocated toward projects promoting land conservation or management activities that limit incompatible development or relieve current or anticipated environmental restrictions. The REPI office is reviewing the proposals, and final funding decisions are expected by early May.

New South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative



The South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI), overseen by the DoD's Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability, aims to protect over 1 million acres of salt marsh along the East Coast from North Carolina to Florida. SASMI uses a voluntary, collaborative, and non-regulatory approach that complements each state's existing programs to conserve the South Atlantic salt marsh. Last month, the SASMI hosted its first-ever collaborative, cross-disciplinary workshop, which brought together local, state, and federal interests, scientists, non-governmental organizations, coastal communities, and public and private landowners. The workshop focused on developing and implementing an integrated, coordinated, and focused regional conservation plan. Stay up to date on the Salt Marsh Initiative here, [South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative](#).

White House CEQ Announces America the Beautiful Challenge

The White House Council on Environmental Quality announced the America the Beautiful Challenge on April 11, 2022. Managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the initiative will streamline the federal grant application process by offering states, Tribes, territories, local groups, and non-governmental organizations the opportunity to apply for multiple grant programs through a single application. This includes \$25 million of funding from the Department of Defense through the REPI program to support Sentinel Landscapes and promote military installation resilience. The REPI office will distribute the \$25 million over five years and start contributing funds in fiscal year 2023. This increased access to federal funding will help REPI's local partners continue to collaboratively advance conservation and climate adaptation goals that are key to sustaining military missions and national security imperatives. The request for proposals for the America the Beautiful Challenge will be issued in early May, with proposals submitted by the end of July and funding awarded in November 2022. To learn more, [read the official press release](#).

NFWF 2022 National Coastal Resilience Fund Request for Proposals

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) recently released the 2022 National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) Request for Proposals (RFP). NFWF plans to award up to \$140 million in funding this year through the NCRF by making investments in planning, designing, and restoring natural and nature-based solutions. These solutions will

help protect coastal communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural hazards and enhance habitats for fish and wildlife. For fiscal year 2022, the REPI program will provide up to \$15 million in REPI funding to NFWF for this effort and will assist in the NCRF proposal review process.

Full proposals are due by end of May 2022. While federal agencies, including DoD installations and ranges, are not eligible applicants for the National Coastal Resilience Fund, the REPI program strongly encourages partners to work closely with the Military Services if a project supports military missions. [Click here](#) to learn more about the National Coastal Resilience Fund 2022 RFP.

Defense Community Infrastructure Program Given Major Boost to \$90 Million in Budget

Investment in infrastructure near military installations is of continued importance to Congress. This is evident in the recent funding increase



for the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation's Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP). In fiscal year 2022, the DCIP program will distribute up to \$90 million for infrastructure projects that support installations and defense communities. These projects will address the critical off-base infrastructure needs, enhance the military quality of life and improve installation resilience.

To learn more about DCIP's grants process and programs, [sign up here](#).

Association of Defense Communities National Summit – REPI and FEMA Climate Resilience Townhall

Last month, the REPI program hosted a Climate Resilience Townhall at the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) National Summit with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The ADC National Summit aims to advance policies and ideas that address key challenges facing installations and the communities, including military installation resilience. REPI and FEMA showcased opportunities to apply for funding through the REPI program and FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program and highlighted the ability to use REPI funds as a non-federal match for the BRIC program. For the last BRIC application cycle, which closed on January 28, 2022, FEMA made \$1 billion available and received requests for \$4.16 billion from every state and territory. FEMA will review applications over the coming months with subject matter experts from other federal agencies, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and anticipates releasing a more detailed analysis of the applications after beginning the reviews.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Conservation Effort Releases New At-Risk Species Finder

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) continues to tackle conservation efforts by finding better solutions for conserving, recovering, and sustaining wildlife and its habitat in the southeast. The USFWS recently released the Southeast's At-Risk Species Finder, a tool developed to track the status and progress in evaluating at-risk species on the National Listing Workplan. This finder also provides the opportunities to explore other information on these species and promote collaborative, proactive conservation. To learn more about USFWS or the Southeast's At-Risk Species Finder, [click here](#).

Upcoming REPI Virtual Events

Engaging with Underserved Communities

Description: Participants will learn more about how the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is working with underserved landowners and communities to improve access to technical and financial assistance.

When: 1:00 PM ET, Wednesday, May 11, 2022

For detailed webinar descriptions and connection instructions, visit the [REPI website](#).

Complementary Federal Conservation and Resilience Programs

Description: Participants will learn about available opportunities with other Federal conservation and resilience programs for which REPI funding can serve as a cost-share. By leveraging multiple Federal programs, a REPI project can accelerate ongoing encroachment, conservation, and climate change adaptation efforts and foster new connections.

When: 1:00 PM ET, Wednesday, June 8, 2022

For detailed webinar descriptions and connection instructions, visit the [REPI website](#).

REPI in the News



DoD Program Protects Climate Landscapes and Military Bases

E&E News (Washington, DC) reports that the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership, a coalition of federal agencies, state and local governments,

and non-governmental organizations, are working to strengthen the nation's military readiness while addressing natural resources concerns like climate change. The partnership leverages funding and programs, strengthening military readiness, conserving natural resources, bolstering agricultural and forestry economies, and increasing climate change resilience. Over the past eight years, sentinel landscape partners have worked with private landowners to permanently protect over 515,000 acres of land and implement sustainable management practices on an additional 2.7 million acres around high-value military testing and training areas. This year, the partnership expanded by 50 percent with the addition of 12 million acres of new landscapes in Florida, Texas, and Indiana.

Fort Hood Wins National Conservation Award

Fort Hood Sentinel (Fort Hood, TX) reports that the National Military Fish and Wildlife Association recognized the Fort Hood Natural Resources Management Branch as an award winner for the Natural Resources Conservation Management Model Program category. This award acknowledges Fort Hood's efforts to strengthen military readiness and conserve and sustain plant species and habitats.

High-Ranking Defense Official Explains Why Salt Marsh is Critical for Military and Communities

The Pew Charitable Trusts (Washington, DC) interviewed Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environment and Energy Resilience Richard Kidd on his work with the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative

and REPI. The new initiative aims to protect shorelines, military installations, and wildlife by conserving a million acres of coastal habitat from North Carolina to northern Florida.

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