

REPI Challenge yields more than \$24M for AF installations

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JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas (AFNS) --

The [Air Force Civil Engineer Center](#) helped secure more than \$24 million to protect mission readiness and the environment at three installations: [White Sands Missile Range](#), New Mexico; [Seymour Johnson Air Force Base](#), North Carolina; and [Tyndall AFB](#), Florida.

The funds were awarded in June as part of the Department of Defense's [Readiness Environmental Protection Integration Program](#)'s annual [REPI Challenge](#). Each year, the DoD offers funding for projects that demonstrate innovative approaches to protect the military mission and bring eligible partners to the table who can contribute funds to purchase land. This year's challenge yielded \$13.3 million from contributing partners.

At Tyndall AFB, a combined \$10 million will help shape the [Installation of the Future](#) and protect the base's fighter mission as it prepares for three [F-35 squadrons](#) arriving in September 2023 and \$5.25 million more from the Nature Conservancy. The project supports a multifaceted approach to improve the resiliency of the installation, including constructing up to 1,000 feet of living shorelines and 3,500 feet of submerged shoreline. Additionally, the project will create 1,500 feet of oyster reef habitat and protect or enhance the shoreline habitat next to Tyndall AFB's drone runway, a critical base operation.

The conservancy was the nominating partner and will serve with Tyndall AFB as the execution agent. The Air Force Civil Engineer Center's Installation Directorate will serve as management and program oversight.

"The Nature Conservancy is the backbone of how AFCEC and the Air Force will get the project done," said Shawn Rose, AFCEC REPI chief. "They are key to the entire project. Without the partner, we could not use REPI."

The REPI program is one installation support tool AFCEC is leveraging to help the **325th Fighter Wing** rebuild Tyndall AFB as an "Installation of the Future" after the installation suffered a direct hit from Hurricane Michael, a Category 5 hurricane, in October 2018 and caused more than \$3 billion in damage. Located on Florida's Gulf Coast, Tyndall AFB hosts fifth-generation aircraft training and development with direct access to training airspace over the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition to the 325th FW, the base is currently home to numerous U.S. Air Force organizations and units, including AFCEC's Energy, Operations and Readiness Directorates and the new Disaster Recovery Division that is leading rebuild efforts.

"The nature-based coastal resilience solutions will also improve water quality and overall ecosystem health and provide new habitats for local endangered species such as the southeastern beach mouse," said Jonathan Feldman, program management specialist with AFCEC's Installations Directorate.

The REPI program fosters multi-agency initiatives and collaboration to preserve compatible land uses near military installations and ranges. These efforts preserve and enhance DoD assets and capabilities in support of military readiness through the creation of unique cost-sharing partnerships with state and local governments and private conservation organizations.

REPI awarded \$15.6 million in program funds to be coupled with almost \$21.6 million in partner contributions to implement seven projects that limit incompatible development, enhance military installation resilience and protect local habitat to preserve and enhance key capabilities. By spreading funding across seven projects, the 2021 REPI Challenge contributed to initiatives benefiting 12 installations and their communities across the country.