

# FORT HUACHUCA SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

Arizona | est. 2015



It is easy to find unconventional partners working together in rural southern Arizona, home to the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape. The region's long history of cattle ranching, remote location, and unique high-altitude and mountainous geography has created an environment where local stakeholders collaborate to solve shared problems. This tradition continues today as Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape partners strive to tackle critical regional issues such as water conservation, long-term agricultural viability, habitat restoration, and military mission protection.

The Army's Fort Huachuca features the premier restricted military airspace for unmanned aircraft system training in the Western U.S. and supports operations for the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, and Border Patrol. Funding acquired through the DoD REPI Program has helped the Army conserve 13,857 acres within Fort Huachuca's Buffalo Soldier Electronic Test Range, decreasing the probability of incompatible development within the range complex and beneath the installation's restricted airspace. Additionally, partners used funds from the Arizona Military Installation Fund and private organizations to preserve local wetlands, which in turn created 4,371 acre-feet of water savings for Fort Huachuca and significantly lessened the burden on groundwater within the Upper San Pedro River watershed.

Figure 1: Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Boundary

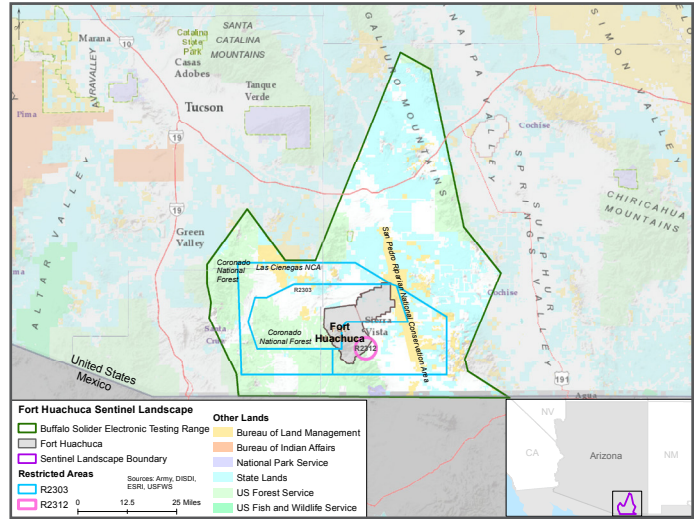


Table 2: Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Footprint Details (acres)

<b>Total Protected Acres:<sup>10</sup></b>	12,447.4
<b>Total Enrolled Acres:<sup>11</sup></b>	254,804.6
<b>Active Base Area:</b>	81,172.1
<b>Total Sentinel Landscape Area:</b>	1,680,895.0

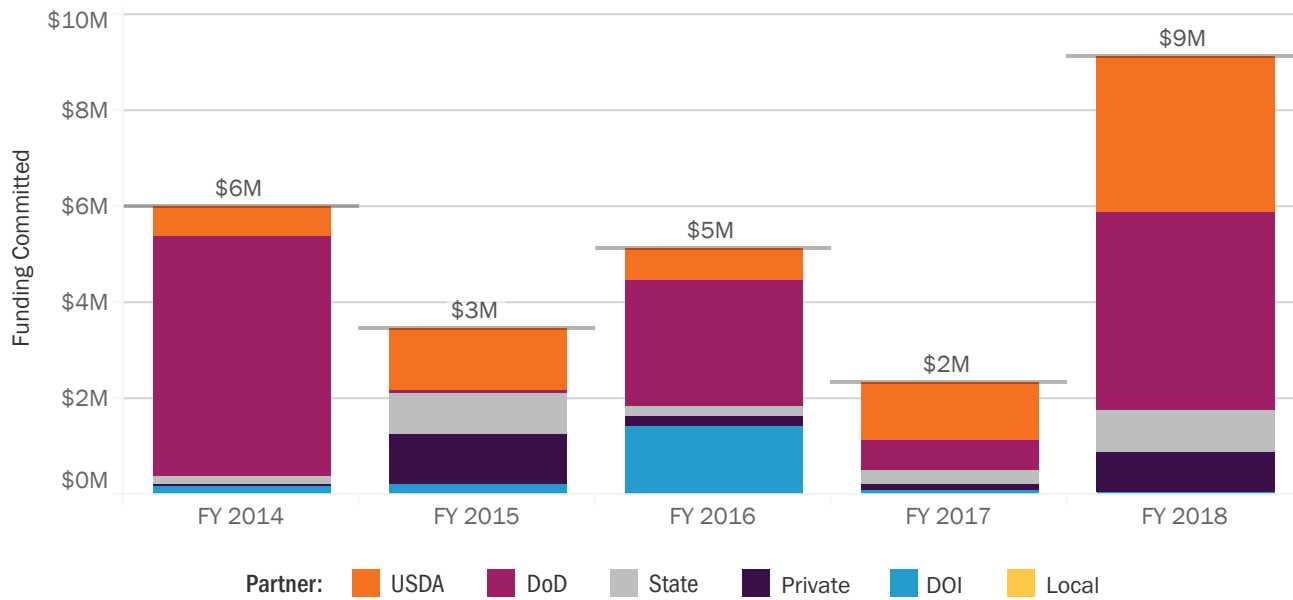
Table 1: Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner in Millions

Partner	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
USDA	\$0.6	\$1.3	\$0.7	\$1.2	\$3.3
DoD	\$5.0	\$0.0	\$2.7	\$0.6	\$4.1
State	\$0.2	\$0.9	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$0.9
Private	\$0.0	\$1.1	\$0.2	\$0.1	\$0.8
DOI	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$1.4	\$0.1	\$0.1
Local	\$2.7	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0

<sup>10</sup> Represents total acres protected through projects administered by sentinel landscape partners since FY 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Represents total acres enrolled in state and federal conservation programs since FY 2014.

**Figure 2:** Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner



A dismounted tester and a Humvee with the SRW-A radio mounted inside collect evaluation data on the radio with the Huachuca Mountains in the background. The radio is part of a vendor qualification event at the U.S. Army Electronic Proving Ground, the Army's designated developmental tester for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems that include radio and military telecommunications. (Photo by: Capt. Ray K Ragan (ATEC))

Outside of the installation, the Huachuca Mountains rise almost 4,500 feet above the desert floor and dominate the arid, remote landscape. The Coronado National Forest manages most of the mountain range, which offers terrain similar to current conflict zones. In 2018, Fort Huachuca partnered with the USFS Sierra Vista Ranger District office, an active participant in the sentinel landscape, to conduct a Joint Operational Integration Assessment on 14,000 acres of USFS-managed land. The no-impact exercises allowed Soldiers and Marines to perform signals intelligence collection and active electronic warfare operations in a realistic combat environment. The USFS has also helped Fort Huachuca implement prescribed fires on base.

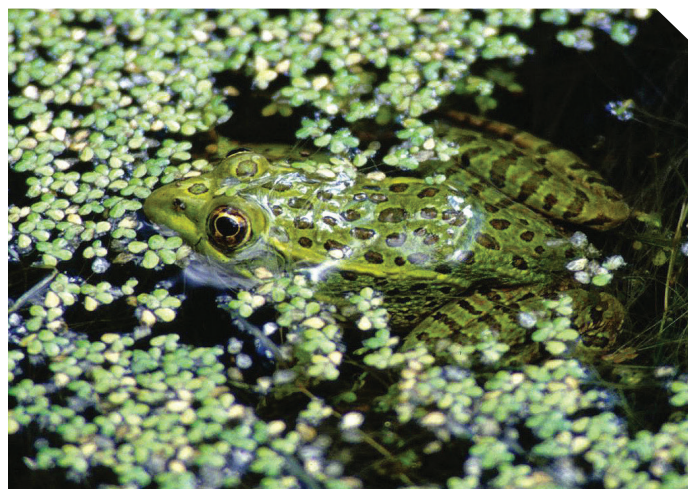
Since 2015, Fort Huachuca and USFS crews have administered over 14,000 acres of prescribed fire, significantly contributing to fuel reduction, habitat improvement, and wildfire mitigation in the region.

The Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape partners are committed to preserving southern Arizona's wealth of biodiversity. For example, USFWS-led partnerships across the landscape contributed to the delisting of the lesser long-nosed bat from the ESA—making it the first bat in history to be removed due to recovery efforts. At the time of its initial listing in 1988, fewer than 1,000 of the nectar-feeding bats existed in the region. Today, there are an estimated 200,000 bats at 75 roosts throughout the Southwestern U.S. and Mexico. To ensure that the lesser long-nosed bat continues to thrive following its delisting, USFWS is working with partner organizations and private landowners to increase the accessibility of food and resources for the bat.

USFWS and Arizona Game and Fish Department have undertaken similar measures to restore habitat for the Chiricahua leopard frog, a species federally listed as threatened. By working with private landowners to improve ponds and livestock tanks, the partners hope to relocate the frogs to recovery units within the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape. This relocation would not only benefit the Chiricahua leopard frog, but also ensure that Fort Huachuca continues to have the flexibility necessary to support its national defense mission.

**Table 3: Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Goals and Progress**

Goal	Progress
<p><b>Goal #1</b> Strengthen mission sustainability at Fort Huachuca by protecting the annual dispatch of over 160,000+ sorties from the R-2303 Military Airspace and preserving the diverse capabilities of the Buffalo Soldier Electronic Testing Range</p>	<p>Sentinel landscape partners permanently protected 13,857 acres under the R2303 Military Airspace using funding acquired through the DoD REPI Program.</p>
<p><b>Goal #2</b> Protect historic and economically important ranches and farms that sustain Arizona’s food and fiber production and contain rare, native grassland habitat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ NRCS has administered conservation measures on over 245,000 acres of working lands within the sentinel landscape.</li> <li>★ NRCS approved a 2016 RCPP project proposal submitted by the Arizona Land and Water Trust committing ACEP funds for conservation easement acquisition and EQIP funds for implementation of conservation practices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal #3</b> Restore critical natural resources and wildlife habitat that will benefit imperiled species and improve the region’s water quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Sentinel landscape partners installed 29 watering facilities and 30 miles of wildlife friendly fencing through the 2014 Farm Bill.</li> <li>★ Sentinel landscape partners permanently protected 8.7 acres of wetlands, 478 acres of upland, and 1 mile of stream habitat that will directly benefit the Chiricahua leopard frog, Northern Mexican garter snake, Sonoran tiger salamander, Gila topminnow, and Huachuca water umbel.</li> <li>★ USFWS and Arizona Game and Fish are collaborating to monitor grassland species in order to establish metrics for evaluating grassland health.</li> <li>★ Sentinel landscape partners restored 141 acres of grassland and prairie dog habitat within Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal #4</b> Conserve “forested” lands and lands adjacent to or within Coronado National Forest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Sentinel landscape partners have treated 300 acres within the Coronado National Forest with mastication and 14,000 acres of forested land with prescribed fire.</li> <li>★ Sentinel landscape partners completed pollinator planning on 326 acres within the watershed surrounding Coronado National Forest and established 1.8 acres of wetlands.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal #5</b> Protect water quantity and quality in the Upper San Pedro River watershed by preventing new well drilling and promoting efficient water technologies on agricultural lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Funding acquired from the Arizona Military Installation Fund was used to create 4,371 acre-feet of water savings for Fort Huachuca.</li> </ul>



*The Chiricahua leopard frog, a federally listed threatened species.  
(Photo by: Jim Rorabaugh/USFWS Sycamore Canyon, Arizona)*