

CAMP RIPLEY SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

Minnesota | est. 2016



Located along the northern stretch of the Mississippi River, Camp Ripley is the primary winter training site for the U.S. National Guard, supporting units from Minnesota and six neighboring states. Camp Ripley provides the largest block of controlled airspace in the Midwest, which services active and reserve components from every branch of the Armed Services and many state and federal agencies.

As a premier U.S. National Guard post, Camp Ripley supports ground vehicle maneuver training, as well as live-fire artillery and bombing training that ranges from small arms to large-caliber weaponry. About a third of land surrounding the base is in small private holdings of 60 to 100 acres. These properties, which are mainly used for agriculture or recreation, protect the quality of water entering the Mississippi River for local communities and downstream cities. They also contribute to the longevity of Camp Ripley by allowing the installation to conduct winter training activities with limited restrictions. However, development pressure from population growth is increasing. The goal of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape—which Minnesota state law first recognized in 2015—is to combine conservation easements with sustainable management practices to protect Camp Ripley’s mission and enhance natural resources in the region.

Before the federal designation of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape, partners had already facilitated the protection and enrollment of thousands of acres bringing the total protected acres within the landscape to over 50,000 acres. This accounts for 65% of the desired end state of 78,000 acres protected.

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY ENHANCES WATER QUALITY

Water health is a top priority for the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. The landscape straddles 50 miles of the

Figure 1: Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Map

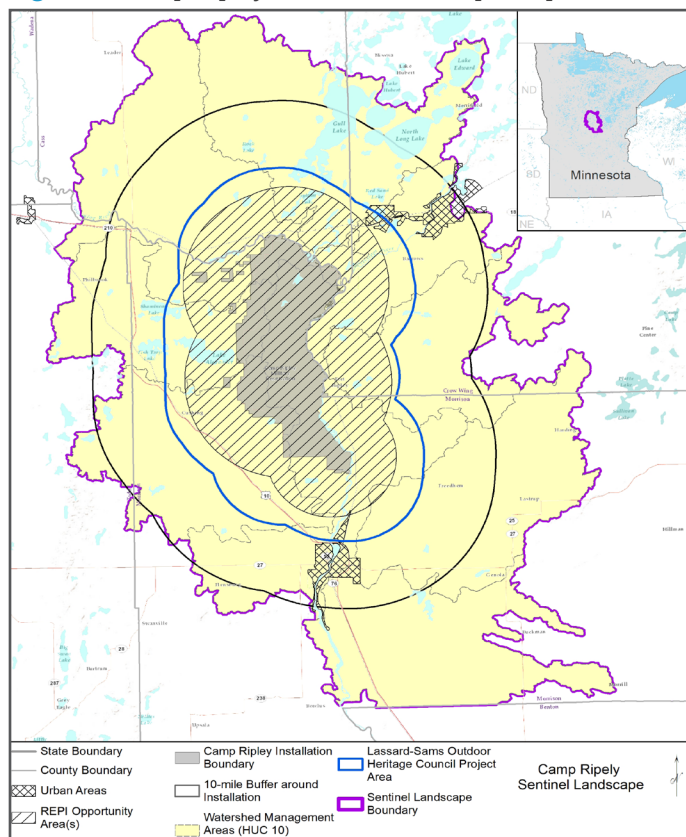


Table 1: Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Footprint Details (from year established through fiscal year 2020)

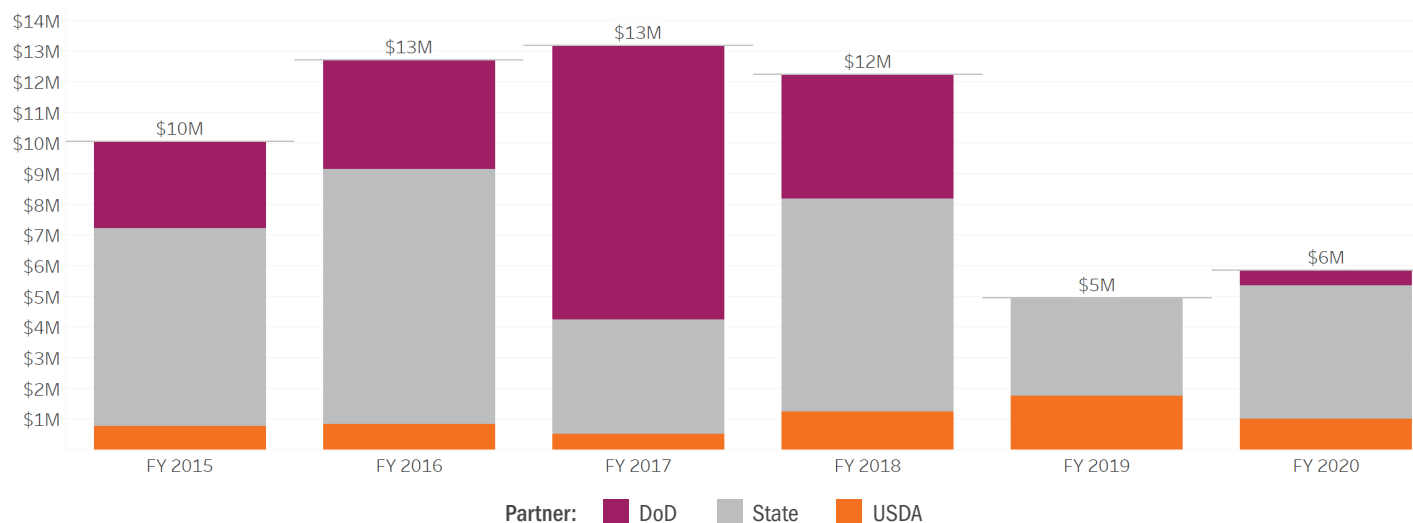
Total Protected Acres ¹	16,159
Total Enrolled Acres ²	75,120
Active Base Area	52,758
Total Sentinel Landscape Area	719,829

Mississippi River and encompasses the watersheds of four major tributary rivers. One way that partners enhance water quality is by ensuring that private landowners have the financial

¹ Protected acres are recognized as land acquisitions—fee simple or easement—that have completed the due diligence and closing actions necessary to obtain a real estate interest.

² Land is considered enrolled if the property owner voluntarily participates in a federal or state land-management program that provides financial or technical assistance to promote sustainable agricultural practices, restore imperiled species and their habitat, or preserve critical natural resources; or if a landowner or an organization receives a federal or state grant to conduct a conservation project on said property.

Figure 2: Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner



and technical means necessary to manage their woodlands sustainably. For Minnesotans, forests and water security are inextricably linked—75 percent of residents get their drinking water from forested parts of the state. Using funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District developed forest management plans for 70 private landowners across the sentinel landscape whose properties total 1,600 acres. Forest management plans are roadmaps that outline parcel-specific practices that help individuals meet restoration objectives. By creating these management plans, the conservation district enabled the landowners to qualify for incentive payments from the Minnesota Department of Revenue’s Sustainable Forest Incentive Act Program. Over its lifespan, the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act Program has had considerable success. More than 90 percent of participants decide to extend their contract with the state or place a conservation easement on their property. As a result, this effort will contribute to the longevity of working forests, enhance water quality for the Mississippi River, and increase the likelihood that the land surrounding Camp Ripley will be managed in a way that is compatible with the installation’s military mission.

PARTNERS PROTECT MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS

The Mississippi River originates in northern Minnesota and flows south for over 2,000 miles. For decades, the Mississippi Headwaters Board has worked to preserve the first 400 miles of the river, stretching from Lake Itasca to the southern border of Morrison County. Representatives from eight Minnesota counties formed the Mississippi Headwaters Board in 1980

to protect the remarkable recreational, ecological, and scenic value of the river’s headwaters. The Board carries out its mission by administering an ordinance that restricts land use in the river corridor. Recently, the Mississippi Headwaters Board voted to expand its geographic focus area within the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape. Protecting land within this landscape will not only support water quality in the Mississippi River, but also safeguard habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, sandhill cranes, and other species.

Key Partners

- ★ U.S. Army National Guard
- ★ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency
- ★ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
- ★ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- ★ U.S. Department of Defense, Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration
- ★ U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- ★ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
- ★ Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
- ★ Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- ★ Minnesota Department of Military Affairs
- ★ Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- ★ Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- ★ City of Baxter
- ★ Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District
- ★ Mississippi Headwaters Board
- ★ Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District
- ★ Sylvan Township (Cass County)
- ★ Great River Greening
- ★ The Conservation Fund
- ★ The Nature Conservancy