

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between the
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
and
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
establishing a
SENTINEL LANDSCAPES COORDINATING COMMITTEE

This is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Interior (collectively, the “Parties”).

BACKGROUND:

Sentinel Landscapes are places where preserving the working and rural character of our private lands is important for both national defense and conservation priorities. Rural working forest, agriculture, and other lands can provide many important public benefits: watershed protection; habitat for species of conservation concern; opportunities for outdoor recreation; open space and wildland preservation; biodiversity protection; commodity production; and the maintenance of a rural way of life. In addition to those benefits, certain working and natural lands are also situated geographically to protect the military mission from incompatible development. Through the Sentinel Landscapes partnership, the Parties will work together in overlapping priority areas near military installations to help landowners make improvements to the land that benefit their operations, enhance wildlife habitat, and enable the Department of Defense’s training missions to continue.

PURPOSE OF THIS MOU:

To establish a mutually beneficial partnership among the Parties to coordinate the delivery of Federal programs to optimize the benefits of Federal assistance to landowners whose working and natural lands also serve to protect the military mission.

GOALS:

The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership will plan and execute mutually beneficial programs, projects, activities, and strategies to: preserve, enhance, or protect habitat, working lands, and associated agricultural and forest production in the vicinity of military installations; reduce, prevent, or eliminate restrictions that inhibit military testing and training; and forestall incompatible development in the vicinity of installations.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SENTINEL LANDSCAPE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

There is established a Sentinel Landscape Coordinating Committee to facilitate interaction among the Parties. The Committee shall be comprised of one or more senior-level officials representing each of the Parties.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE:

- Determine needs and identify opportunities for both public and private sector programs, services, incentives, and other measures that would encourage private landowners to engage in forest and land management activities that effectively contribute to the sustainment of military installations, ranges, and airspace, particularly through the voluntary perpetuation and expansion of private working lands.
- Determine whether sufficient administrative discretion exists within the framework of existing program authorities to support the goals of the Sentinel Landscape Partnership, and identify any additional authorities thought to be needed.
- Jointly designate Sentinel Landscapes and facilitate actions that can demonstrate the advantages and efficiencies of the Parties working together for the mutual benefit of conservation, working lands, and national defense, including through innovative partnerships such as the State forestry Agencies' Forest Opportunities for Resource Conservation and Environmental Security (FORCES) initiative.
- Promote successful tools and approaches to benefit other designated Sentinel Landscapes.
- Facilitate coordination between the Parties and appropriate State agencies in developing, revising, and implementing state action plans (e.g., State Forest Action Plans, State Wildlife Action Plans) for consistency in considering and designating Sentinel Landscapes.

COMMENCEMENT AND TERMINATION:

This MOU shall take effect beginning on the day after the last Party signs. This MOU may be extended or amended upon written request of any Party and subsequent written concurrence of the others. Any Party may terminate this MOU at will upon written notice to the other parties; otherwise this MOU will be in effect until January 1, 2019.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES:

The Parties shall manage their own activities and use their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing the goals and objectives of this MOU.

This MOU is not intend to, and does not create, any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

PRINCIPAL CONTACTS: The principal contacts for this MOU are:

Department of Agriculture: Jim Barresi, Acting Director of Cooperative Forestry
U.S. Forest Service

Richard Sims, Northeast Regional Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Department of Defense: Kristin Thomasgard, Program Director
Readiness and Environmental Integration Program

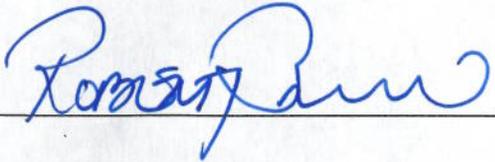
Department of the Interior: Paul Souza, Deputy Assistant Director
Ecological Services Program
US Fish and Wildlife Service

NON-FUND OBLIGATING DOCUMENT:

Nothing in this MOU shall obligate the Parties to obligate or transfer any funds. Specific work projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, or property between any of the Parties will require execution of separate agreements and shall be contingent upon the availability of funds. Such activities must be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority; this MOU does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such agreement must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.

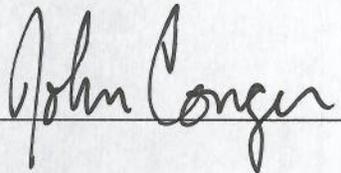
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the written date below.

Department of Agriculture
Robert Bonnie
Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment



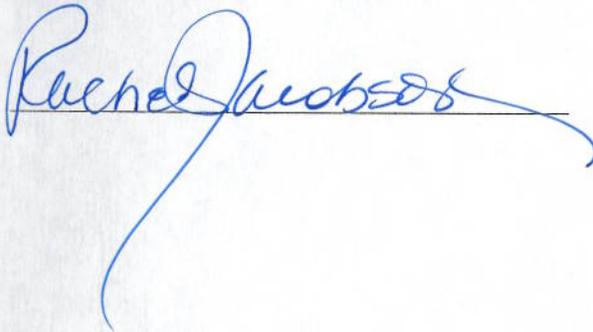
DATE: 12/9/13

Department of Defense
John Conger
Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Installations and Environment



DATE: 12/13/13

Department of the Interior
Rachel Jacobson
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks



DATE: NOV 29 2013