

# Guidance for Fiscal Year 2017 Sentinel Landscapes Application Process

*Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee (SL-FCC)*

This document is intended to provide guidance to applicants for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Sentinel Landscape designation process. The process and timeline; minimum requirements; and evaluative criteria for the FY17 application process are outlined herein. Please visit [www.sentinellandscapes.org](http://www.sentinellandscapes.org) for more information about the FY17 application process and the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership (SLP).

## BACKGROUND: PARTNERSHIP GOALS

Sentinel Landscapes are working or natural lands important to the Nation's defense mission—places where preserving the working and rural character of key landscapes strengthens the economies of farms, ranches, and forests; conserves habitat and natural resources; and protects vital test and training missions conducted on those military installations that anchor such landscapes.

The U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Defense (DoD), and the Interior (DOI) established the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership (SLP) in 2013 as a nationwide Federal, local and private collaboration dedicated to promoting natural resource sustainability and the preservation of agricultural and conservation land uses in areas surrounding military installations. The Partnership coordinates and focuses resources from USDA, DoD and DOI and seeks participation and support from state and local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and individual landowners. Agencies from the three Departments facilitate the activities of the Partnership at the national level through the Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee (SL-FCC). This Partnership generates added value through collaboration over and above what individual agencies and entities can accomplish on their own. A cornerstone of the initiative is to target those projects that exemplify alignment, coordination and complementary investments by Federal and non-Federal partners in a strategic, deliberate manner.

## BENEFITS OF DESIGNATION

The designation of a Sentinel Landscape has a number of benefits for the anchor military installation(s) and the conservation and working lands—and local communities—that fall within the landscape associated with the installation's mission footprint. Though no dedicated funding necessarily accompanies designation, individual partner agencies may choose to provide program-specific funding or give priority consideration in existing funding processes to landowners within a designated landscape. Participating agencies may give priority consideration to landowners within a Sentinel Landscape through actions that include:

- ★ Revising funding and award guidance to recognize the benefit of the Sentinel Landscape designation, where appropriate;
- ★ Providing appropriate priority consideration for landowners within Sentinel Landscapes under existing funding guidance; and
- ★ Encouraging landowners and other eligible entities within designated Sentinel Landscapes to apply for Federal assistance under the guidance and timelines of each of the individual Federal landowner assistance programs identified as aligned with the SLP.

The Sentinel Landscapes designation brings a number of additional benefits.

- ★ A designation will lead to improved recognition at the local, state and national levels for projects within the Sentinel Landscape. The SLP provides a framework to identify and market projects using a prominent national designation.
- ★ The Sentinel Landscapes designation can improve communication and coordination between partner agencies and organizations and local communities, which can lead to greater landowner participation in existing voluntary conservation programs. Additionally, the leveraging of a wide array of interests within a defined landscape, including national security, conservation, and working land interests, broadens the spectrum of willing landowners with which participating entities are able to engage.



- ★ The increase in coordination across different resource priorities within a Sentinel Landscape provides an opportunity for participating agencies and organizations to develop new technical and financial assistance options tailored for local needs.

The Sentinel Landscape designation provides local partnerships with an organized framework for the exchange of ideas and lessons learned with other Sentinel Landscapes nationwide. Local partners within a Sentinel Landscape may also elevate problems that they encounter in meeting their goals to the SL-FCC, which will support collaborative efforts within designated areas.

## FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS AND KEY CRITERIA

To be considered for designation, a landscape must possess the following fundamental components:

- ★ An anchor military installation with a military mission that benefits from compatible land uses outside of the installation's boundaries;
- ★ A defined landscape associated with the anchor installation where Federal, state, local, and private programs and efforts can be coordinated to support voluntary conservation and landowner involvement; and
- ★ Articulated goals and outcomes that promote and sustain compatible land uses for military operations while providing tangible benefits to conservation and working lands within the defined landscape.

Highly competitive applications will show evidence of advance planning, proactive engagement, and compatible management strategies. Additionally, competitive applications will include information on the current and desired end states within the proposed landscape. This includes:

- ★ Clear and, if possible, quantifiable goals and desired outcomes;
- ★ Metrics for measuring accomplishments against objectives in targeted locations within Sentinel Landscape boundaries and an explanation for how these were developed;
- ★ A compelling case for how the Sentinel Landscape designation will assist the proposed local partnership in meeting its goals;
- ★ A description of the current land uses and land ownership status within the proposed landscape, using quantitative descriptions if possible; and
- ★ Any demonstrated past, on-the-ground success in areas related to the goals of the local partnership.

The SL-FCC will view as highly competitive applications that demonstrate promising strategies to:

- ★ Finance habitat preservation to support farming, ranching, and forestry;
- ★ Maintain or improve financial and environmental sustainability of agricultural operations;
- ★ Conserve threatened, endangered, or at-risk species; or
- ★ Preserve open space and wildlands for recreation, watershed protection, and habitat preservation.

Strong applications will include effective communication and engagement strategies and will demonstrate collaboration across a number of boundaries at the Federal, state, and local level. These applications will:

- ★ Incorporate strategies for outreach and communication to attract landowners within the proposed Sentinel Landscape;
- ★ Contain institutionalized processes for recognizing landowners who voluntarily elect to participate in any program that will ensure continued land uses that are compatible with the military mission;
- ★ Demonstrate formal state collaboration that includes consideration of state benefits, services, or incentives to complement Federal assistance to landowners;
- ★ Show evidence of formal engagement with Federal agencies at the local level; and
- ★ Describe the proposed means of providing capacity to the partnership to implement these strategies and meet its goals.

## PROCESS AND TIMELINE

A partnership interested in requesting a Sentinel Landscape designation in FY17 must submit an application. Any entity whose mission aligns with or otherwise supports the goals of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is eligible to submit an application. Examples of eligible entities include but are not limited to: Federal agencies; state and local governments; Federally-recognized American Indian tribes; for-profit and not-for-profit organizations or associations with conservation, agricultural, or silvicultural missions; municipal water treatment entities; water irrigation districts; and soil conservation districts. The applicant must list all partnering entities in their final application and each of the partnering entities must submit a signed letter of commitment to ensure proper coordination. Letters of commitment shall follow the template provided by the SL-FCC. Eligible partners are not limited to the list of eligible applicants.

Applications must meet the minimum eligibility requirements defined by the SL-FCC in the previous section, **Fundamental Components and Key Criteria**. The SL-FCC will review applications for quality of content and award designations based on their competitive assessment of all eligible applications. The Sentinel Landscapes FCC will award up to three designations in 2017 by consensus of all participating agencies.

Applications must be submitted electronically using the application portal located at <http://sentinellandscapes.org/application>. **Applications must be received by the SL-FCC by 8:00 pm EDT on Thursday, 30 March 2017 to be considered for a Sentinel Landscape designation in FY17. Applicants will be notified of their final application status in July or August 2017.**

The SL-FCC will notify applicants selected for designation as a Sentinel Landscape via a letter of acceptance. This letter will stipulate that the designation is contingent on the development of a local partnership working agreement to further formalize the goals, objectives, and local coordination organization process and procedures of the partnership. This working agreement will build upon the application submitted for designation and will institutionalize a process for providing annual updates to the SL-FCC on accomplishments within the landscape.

Please submit any questions via the “[Contact](#)” portion of the Sentinel Landscapes website and specify those agencies on the SL-FCC to which you would like to direct your question.

# Fiscal Year 2017 Sentinel Landscapes Application Form

*Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee (SL-FCC)*

Please use the space provided below to answer the following application questions. If you require additional space for your responses, you may attach supplementary documents to the proposal in your final submission. When submitting your application through the online portal (<http://sentinellandscapes.org/application>), it is recommended that you not upload the Guidance section as this will limit the space available for other application materials in your combined submission.

## 1. Application contact

Name

Organization

Phone

Email

## 2. Landscape name

## 3. Anchor military installation(s)

## 4. Define the geographic boundaries of the landscape. Develop a single map delineating the boundaries of the Sentinel Landscape as defined. Attach the landscape map using the online application portal.

*Instructions: Describe the geographic or other boundaries that define the landscape in which collaborative planning occurs. The Sentinel Landscape should encompass the military mission footprint, plus any overlapping or reasonably proximate lands that are or may be of importance to other participating partners (e.g., priority areas for wildlife conservation or watershed protection; working lands eligible for landowner assistance programs; public recreation areas; etc.)*

5. Describe the key characteristics that define the landscape and describe what makes this landscape important.

*Instructions: Describe the shared vision within the landscape that represents a “win-win-win” situation for national security, working lands, conservation and other potential stakeholder interests (e.g., biological, cultural, socio-economic, etc.) that the collaborative plan will help to preserve.)*

6. Describe the current conditions of key indicators within the defined landscape, including quantifiable measures, if possible. Describe any previous or ongoing initiatives to protect resources within this landscape.

*Instructions: Describe the current land uses and land ownership status within the proposed landscape, using quantitative descriptions if possible. Include a description of the number of landowners and acres currently enrolled in conservation or agricultural programs.*

7. Describe the desired goals and outcomes of the Sentinel Landscape. Include quantifiable goals, if possible. Discuss how the designation will help to accomplish these desired goals and outcomes.

8. List the Federal, state, and local tools or programs that will be used to achieve the desired goals and outcomes within the Sentinel Landscape. You may visit the [Sentinel Landscapes website](#) for a non-exhaustive list of potential tools and programs. Please use the comment space to provide descriptions of the programs and tools listed, how they will be implemented, their current presence in the landscape, or any other information relevant to their role in achieving the partnership's desired end goals.

8-A program/tool:

8-A comments:

8-B program/tool:

8-B comments:

8-C program/tool:

8-C comments:

*Additional responses for Question 8 are continued on page 4.*



...Continued from page 3.

8-D program/tool:

8-D comments:

8-E program/tool:

8-E comments:

8-F program/tool:

8-F comments:

8-G program/tool:

8-G comments:

8-H program/tool:

8-H comments:

8-I program/tool:

8-I comments:

9. Identify the partners engaged in the Sentinel Landscape. Attach signed letters of commitment from each partner using the online application portal. Letters of commitment should follow the template provided by the SL-FCC.

9-A:

9-B:

9-C:

9-D:

9-E:

9-F:

9-G:

9-H:

9-I:

9-J:

9-K:

9-L:

10. Identify a process for coordination among partners. Discuss the proposed plan to provide the partnership with the capacity to coordinate achieving its goals.



11. Describe the partnership's strategy for communicating with local landowners. Discuss how the designation will improve the ability of the partners to engage with the local community and landowners.