

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

est. 2016



The Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape is home to five key military installations and ranges: Fort Bragg, Dare County Bombing Range, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Stations (MCAS) Cherry Point and New River, and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base (AFB). Behind agriculture, military-related activity is the second largest economic driver in the state. Following the creation of the Onslow Bight Conservation Forum in 2003, North Carolinians from defense, agricultural, and conservation communities have carried out collaborative, locally grounded projects that promote sustainable land management. Therefore, to many, the 2016 Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape designation, which encompasses nearly 11 million acres across a 33-county region, was a natural progression in what has been a fruitful and positive history of cooperation.

The Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape partners work to address priority encroachment concerns identified by the military, including restrictions related to species conservation. In 2015, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps partnered with USFWS, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to establish the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) Recovery and Sustainment Program Partnership (RASP). RASP seeks to enhance training flexibility and capacity at Camp Lejeune by conserving RCW habitats in the coastal region of North Carolina.

The objective of the partnership is to help Camp Lejeune reach and maintain its recovery goal of 173 RCW clusters. In 1996, Camp Lejeune supported 43 RCW clusters on base; today, due to partnership efforts, over 130 RCW clusters thrive with fewer restrictions on routine infantry training. Moving forward in support of critical range development requirements, RASP will target its resources towards preserving 60 RCW clusters across two protected properties that lie adjacent to the installation, the 13,000-acre Bear Garden tract and the 3,000-acre

Figure 1: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Boundary

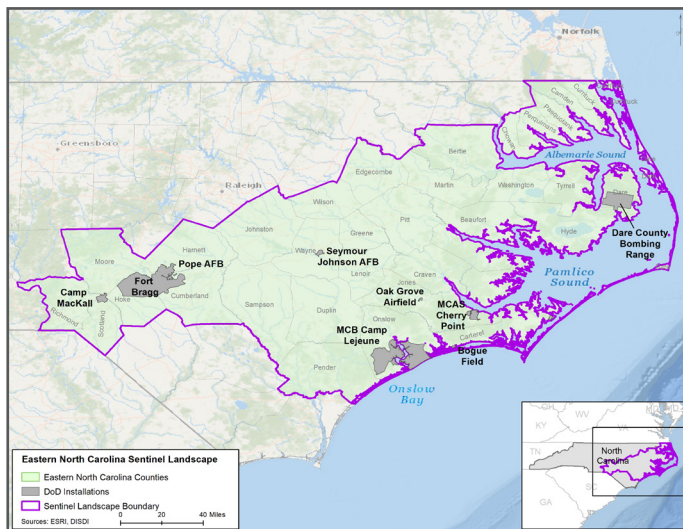


Table 1: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Footprint Details (acres)

Total Protected Acres: ¹⁸	49,400.2	
Total Enrolled Acres: ¹⁹	757,786.5	
Active Base Area:	MCAS Cherry Point	10,266.3
	MCB Camp Lejeune	54,964.2
	Dare County Range	46,625.2
	Seymour Johnson AFB	3,220.3
	Fort Bragg	152,837.4
	Total	267,913.2
Total Sentinel Landscape Area:	10,990,233.0	

¹⁸ Represents total acres protected by projects administered by sentinel landscape partners since FY 2015.

¹⁹ Represents total acres enrolled in state and federal conservation programs since FY 2015.

Figure 2: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner

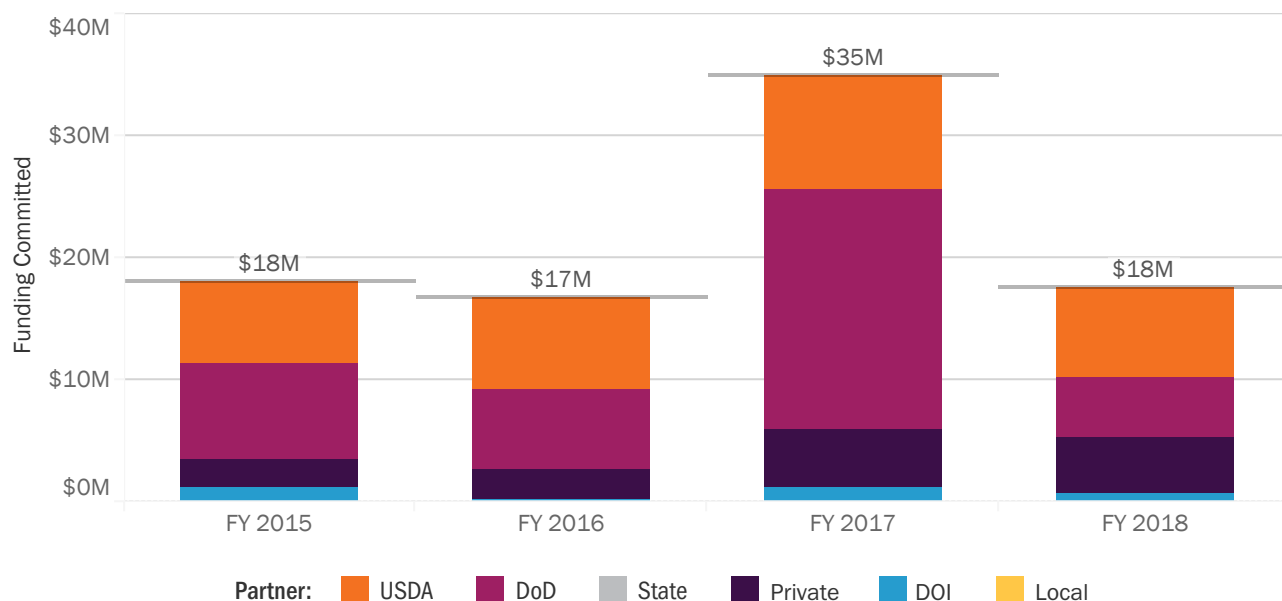


Table 2: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Total Funding by Partner in Millions

Partner	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
USDA	\$6.7	\$7.6	\$9.3	\$7.4
DoD	\$7.9	\$6.6	\$19.6	\$4.9
Private	\$2.4	\$2.5	\$4.8	\$4.7
DOI	\$1.1	\$0.1	\$1.1	\$0.6

Stones Creek Game land. The 60 clusters will count towards Camp Lejeune's ESA requirement, thereby alleviating training restrictions that Marine Corps Installations East currently shoulders. RASP is emblematic of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership's mission as it expands the landscape that is devoted to endangered species recovery while simultaneously strengthening the military's mission.

Protecting working lands that support agriculture and agribusiness is also a top priority for the Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape partners, as these industries contribute approximately \$87 billion annually to the state's economy.. In 2018, NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) awarded \$7 million in federal Agricultural Conservation Easement funding to help stand up the North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes High Priority Protect Program, a partnership between the Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and other sentinel landscape partners. Through this program, agricultural, conservation, and defense stakeholders work with willing landowners to place easements on properties

that defense communities have identified as high priority for protection.

In addition to protecting land through conservation easements, Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape partners are pursuing opportunities to acknowledge private landowners for their stewardship practices. In 2018, the North Carolina Forest Service collaborated with several other sentinel landscape partners to develop a landowner recognition and appreciation letter that will be distributed to individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to sustainably managing their working lands. By voluntarily implementing practices related to prescribed fire, wildlife restoration, and recreational management, these landowners have directly contributed to the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership's mission.

Table 3: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Goals and Progress

Goal	Progress
Goal #1 Restore habitat for the endangered RCW around Camp Lejeune and thereby alleviate environmental training restrictions on the installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The RASP partnership is helping Camp Lejeune meet its ESA-mandated recovery goal of 173 RCW clusters on base. In 2011, Camp Lejeune supported 100 RCW clusters; as of 2018, the installation supports 131 clusters. ★ The RASP partnership is expanding recovery efforts off base through the restoration of 60 RCW clusters across two protected properties adjacent to the installation. These efforts will count towards Camp Lejeune's ESA-requirement, thereby alleviating training restrictions.
Goal #2 Streamline the process to acquire a conservation easement for government agencies, private organizations, and willing landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Program Trust Fund collaborated with defense partners to develop a single easement template for the Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape that can streamline resources from multiple sentinel landscape partners. ★ The partners designed the template to reduce the anticipated easement acquisition timeline from 3-4 years to 1-2 years by having legal and logistical negotiations pre-approved by all potential funding resources.
Goal #3 : Improve the vitality of private working lands around the sentinel landscape's military installations and ranges	NRCS has administered conservation measures on over 178,000 acres of working lands throughout the sentinel landscape.
Goal #4 Communicate the value of Sentinel Landscapes to the publics of North Carolina and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AT NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY collaborated with sentinel landscape partners to produce and disseminate two publications that demonstrate the value of landscape-scale conservation. The publications are: the LANDOWNER GUIDE FOR WORKING LANDS CONSERVATION and ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP FOR SENTINEL LANDSCAPES: THE NORTH CAROLINA EXPERIENCE. ★ Sentinel Landscape partners conducted educational workshops about working land conservation with private landowners and piloted a Working Lands Outreach Program in five counties near MCIEAST.
Goal #5 Develop a conservation footprint in North Carolina that identifies lands that support wildlife, conservation, and military compatibility in the sentinel landscape	Sentinel landscape partners are working with the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability to develop a geospatial map that identifies overlapping interests between the military, conservation, and working lands in the Southeast region. The map will provide a visual model that enables the sentinel landscape partners to prioritize resources in the region.



This endangered red-cockaded woodpecker is feeding young at the nest, in a cavity of a longleaf pine. Active management and restoration of longleaf forests can help recover this species. (Photo by: John Maxwell, USFWS)



A route-reconnaissance team of cavalry scouts with the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team reacts to machine-gun fire during field training at Fort Bragg, N.C. (Photo by: U.S. Army, Sgt. Michael J. MacLeod)