



2021 Conserving Biodiversity on Military Lands - A Handbook for Natural Resources

Project # 18-247

Background:

In 1996, a foundational publication titled “Conserving Biodiversity on Military Lands - A Handbook for Natural Resources Managers,” was delivered to the Department of Defense (DoD). The Nature Conservancy led the development of this handbook, and the focus and content was guided by a yearlong dialogue conducted by the Keystone Center that included experts from the military, academia, private environmental organizations, and other federal and state agencies. This dialogue targeted the development of strategies for enhancing biological diversity on military lands. In 2007, the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program funded NatureServe to lead an update to the original publication. This revision was informed by a three-day workshop with key military natural resource managers and conservation professionals from across the country, and by needs and opinions from military natural resource managers through interviews and an online questionnaire. The resulting 2008 revision was developed as an online resource. This handbook has been an essential resource for DoD installation natural resource managers and commanders, and has been used in training provided to DoD natural resource management staff.

Objective:

The 2021 update to the online version of the handbook titled “Conserving Biodiversity on Military Lands: A Guide for Natural Resource Managers” endeavors to present an updated overview of the subject of biological diversity on DoD lands, one that includes discussions of current scientific thought and information on the many topics of increased significance to DoD natural resource managers.

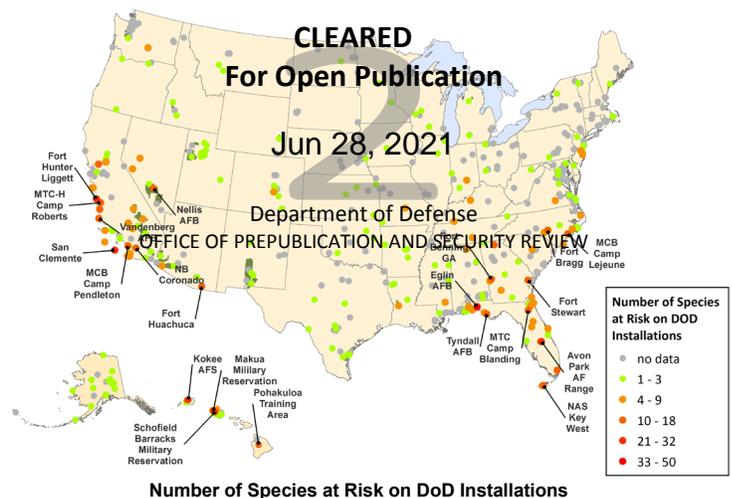
Summary of Approach:

For this 2021 update, NatureServe again facilitated a process to elicit inputs from DoD natural resource managers from all service branches and other conservation professionals via direct consultation or extensive online survey. Then NatureServe, in collaboration with other key partners including the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands, the National Wildlife Federation and others, reviewed these inputs and collaborated on updating existing content and the development of new content. This new version of the handbook encompasses the following significant revisions and updates:

- Adjustments to the emphasis put on various conservation and DoD policy topics in line with

trends in the field of conservation science and DoD policies and practices including an increased reference to climate change implications, ecosystem and landscape-scale conservation perspectives, and the central importance of Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans.

- A revised structure that presents a more logical and accessible presentation of information.
- An updated analyses of biodiversity status, distribution, and imperilment.



Benefit:

The environmental health of DoD lands is essential for realistic and sustainable military testing and training. This handbook has played an important role in guiding DoD natural resource managers in their critical role of maintaining the long-term sustainability of the many complex ecosystems on and around military lands. It is clear from our outreach to practitioners that an update to this handbook will serve as an important resource in understanding and successfully implementing DoD land management activities.

Accomplishments:

Production of the 2021 edition of the Conserving Biodiversity on Military Lands handbook including new chapters and organization of content, significant updates to previous material, and updated analyses.

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