



**Mission** - *To provide coordinated, Department-wide, and partnership-based integration of military mission readiness with the conservation of irreplaceable natural and cultural resources.*

## HISTORY

**Program Establishment** – Housed within the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environmental Management and Restoration, the Legacy Resource Management Program (Legacy Program) was established by Congress through the 1991 Defense Appropriations Act, Public Law 101-511, Section 8120, with the defined legislative purposes *to identify, manage, inventory, conserve, restore and rehabilitate significant biological, geophysical, cultural, and historical resources existing on or involving Department of Defense (DoD) lands, facilities, and property.*



The Legacy Program was amended through the National Defense Authorization Act (Fiscal Year 1997), Public Law 104-201, Section 2694 of Title 10, *to enable the Secretary of Defense to conduct and manage coordinated conservation and cultural activities.* Eligible activities were specifically defined as:

- having regional or DoD-wide significance that involves more than one military department or involves a sentinel landscape,
- being necessary to meet legal requirements or support military operations, or that would contribute to maintaining or improving military installation resilience,
- being more effectively managed at the DoD level, and
- for which no executive agency has been designated responsible by the Secretary.

*These eligibility requirements for Legacy Program activities and projects are still in place today.*

## LEGACY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

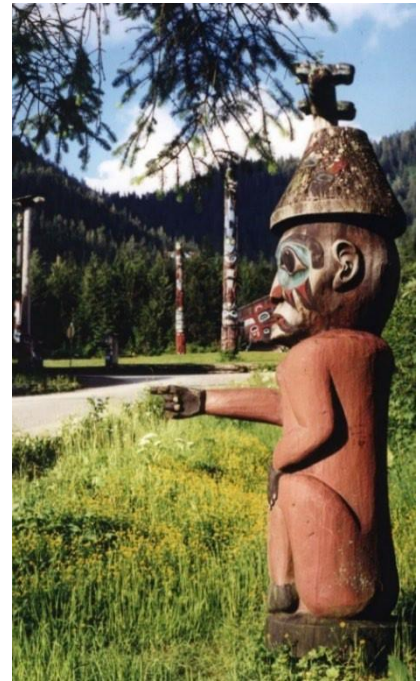
DoD conservation programs support the military’s combat readiness mission by ensuring continued access to the 26.9 million acres of military land, air, and water resources needed to accomplish vital testing, training, and operational activities. DoD invests significant resources to implement long-term conservation programs which, in turn, help sustain the Nation’s priceless natural and cultural heritage.



Many DoD lands have been sheltered from development pressures and large-scale habitat loss for decades. As such, these lands now provide habitat for over 500 federally-listed plant and animal species—55 of which exist *only* on DoD lands—and more than 500 additional “at-risk” species.

The Legacy Program is a 34-year-old strategic and competitive funding program that has served as a DoD conservation and stewardship program leader and an incubator of innovative DoD land management strategies and installation priorities. Since its establishment, the **Legacy Program has funded over 3,400 projects, totaling \$405 million, and has benefited over 300 military installations, worldwide.**

**Leadership, Stewardship, and Partnership** are the three principles that have guided the Legacy Program for the past three decades. By embracing a conservation *leadership* role through the Legacy Program, the Department serves as a model for respectful use of natural and cultural resources. Legacy *stewardship* projects and initiatives assist DoD in safeguarding its irreplaceable resources for future generations. And of equal importance and a key to the Legacy Program's success, is an emphasis on developing and maintaining *partnerships* with a broad network of cooperators: the *Military Services* and installation managers, Tribal Nations, universities and non-profits, state and federal agencies, regional, national, and international organizations, and the private sector. These partnerships—many of them sustained for decades—facilitate DoD's ability to cost-effectively tap available knowledge and expertise, pool existing and compatible resources, and achieve mutually-beneficial conservation goals.



## LEGACY PROGRAM STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

The Legacy Program invests in activities and projects that directly benefit DoD's mission and stewardship objectives. We are **not a grants program**. Rather, Legacy funds are executed on an annual basis, based on priorities identified in conjunction with the *Military Services* and through a variety of mechanisms including cooperative agreements, interagency agreements, military interdepartmental purchase requests, and contracts. (Legacy funding recipients are required to enter into bilateral agreements with DoD's contracting office.)

The Legacy Program financially invests in following three programmatic categories:

**Essential Program Support** – The Legacy Program finances essential environmental and cultural program leadership and support services for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environmental Management and Restoration. This essential program support includes program administration by the Legacy Program Director and Deputy Federal Preservation Officer/Cultural Resource Program Lead, as well as technical and financial support services provided by contract personnel for the Legacy, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Wildland Fire, and Fire and Emergency Services programs.

**DoD's Sustained Initiatives & Collaborations** – The Legacy Program provides long-term, sustained funding to four DoD-wide technical, scientific, and data management support initiatives:

- DoD Partners in Fight (<https://www.denix.osd.mil/dodpif>) since 1997,
- DoD Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (<https://www.denix.osd.mil/dodparc>) since 2009,
- DoD Avian Knowledge Network (<https://www.dodakn.org>) since 2017, and
- DoD Partners in Preservation since 2022.

These initiatives provide: (1) scientifically and technically sound information and data; (2) consistent adoption and implementation of best management practices to improve conservation program and regulatory processes; (3) subject-matter expertise on conservation and preservation issues important to supporting DoD testing, training, and operational missions; and (4) the enhancement and sustainability of military lands through support for Service Branch natural and cultural resources managers and planners. The initiatives also provide a nexus to national and regional partnerships and collaborative efforts involving other federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academia.

Three additional, DoD-wide collaborations sustained through the Legacy Program are the National Public Lands Day (NPLD) partnership (<https://www.neefusa.org/npld>), DoD's membership in the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Network ([www.cesu.psu.edu](http://www.cesu.psu.edu)), and DoD's membership in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) (<https://www.nwcg.gov>). The Legacy Program joined the NPLD

partnership in 1999 and has funded more than 560 events on military installations, totaling over \$3 million. Since 2000, the Legacy Program has financed the Department’s annual CESU membership fees, which currently includes DoD membership in all 17 CESU regions. Finally, in 2023, the Legacy Program began supporting DoD’s participation in the NWCG, which provides national leadership to enable interoperable wildland fire operations among federal, state, local, Tribal, and territorial partners.

**Strategic Investments** – The Legacy Program works in conjunction with the *Military Services*, as well as other federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations and academia, to identify the most pressing current and future conservation challenges. These interactions allow the Legacy Program to strategically invest in targeted projects to support military mission readiness, more efficiently meet regulatory requirements, and improve the effectiveness of DoD conservation programs.

The Legacy Program funds natural and cultural resources and Native American Affairs projects on a Federal Fiscal Year cycle. Project solicitation and selection are guided by defined *priority topic areas*, which can be modified to address DoD’s existing or emerging resource management needs and challenges. The following are priority area investments for Fiscal Year 2024:

**Priority Area Investments:**

- Improving management and conservation of biodiversity, particularly DoD “mission priority species”
- Improving consultation and coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, Tribal Nations and Native Hawaiian Organizations, and inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in management programs
- Improving cultural resources management processes through enhanced environmental resilience, project management, and building energy efficiency.
- Improving techniques and approaches for resilient lands and ecosystem management.
- Improving wildland fire management and risk reduction.

**Cross Cutting Priority Investments:**

- Readiness and range sustainment
- Climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience
- Incorporating new or emerging technologies
- Improving data and information management
- Regulatory and management efficiencies.



## LEGACY PROGRAM COMMUNICATIONS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Please join the **Legacy Listserv**—our mechanism for sharing information among the natural and cultural resources communities. To be added to our mailing list, send a request to [marwa.m.rafiq.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:marwa.m.rafiq.ctr@mail.mil).

**Legacy Program Points of Contact:**

**Mike Langston, Ph.D.**, Program Manager [m-langston@usgs.gov](mailto:m-langston@usgs.gov)

**Marwa Rafiq**, Program Analyst [marwa.m.rafiq.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:marwa.m.rafiq.ctr@mail.mil)

**McKenna McMahon**, Program Analyst [mckenna.n.mcmahon.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:mckenna.n.mcmahon.ctr@mail.mil)

For more information, visit the Legacy Program **DENIX** page at: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/legacy>.