

Fort Huachuca

THE SENTINEL LANDSCAPES PARTNERSHIP

Through the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership, the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, and the Interior are working with a variety of partners to align resources and implement a comprehensive, multiple-tool approach to promoting and sustaining compatible land uses in a manner that protects nearby military test and training needs while benefiting ALL partners and landowners.

THE FORT HUACHUCA SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

The Army's Fort Huachuca is home to the premier restricted military airspace for unmanned aircraft system training in the western U.S. and also supports training for personnel from the Air Force, Marine Corps, and U.S. Border Patrol. The remote, arid, and unique landscape surrounding the post near the Sonoran Desert is perfect for its electronic test mission, creating an electromagnetically quiet area for the Buffalo Soldier Electronic Test Range.

Within this region a variety of local, state, and federal partners are working to reduce land and water development while preserving native grassland and ranches. Providing incentives and technical assistance to private landowners helps sustain a local way of life and ensures availability of scarce groundwater resources for the entire region. The Sentinel Landscape partners aim to prevent the drilling of up to 1,475 new wells to preserve water necessary for Fort Huachuca's operation and the continued health and existence of species on and off post. In addition, protected lands buffer over 160,000 annual air operations and reduce proliferation of electromagnetic interference for 800 square miles of air space.



The unique natural landscape around Fort Huachuca creates an electromagnetically quiet area for the Buffalo Soldier Electronic Test Range; preventing development of up to 1,475 new wells on these lands conserves groundwater resources and grassland for cattle grazing. (Photo courtesy of the Arizona Land and Water Trust)

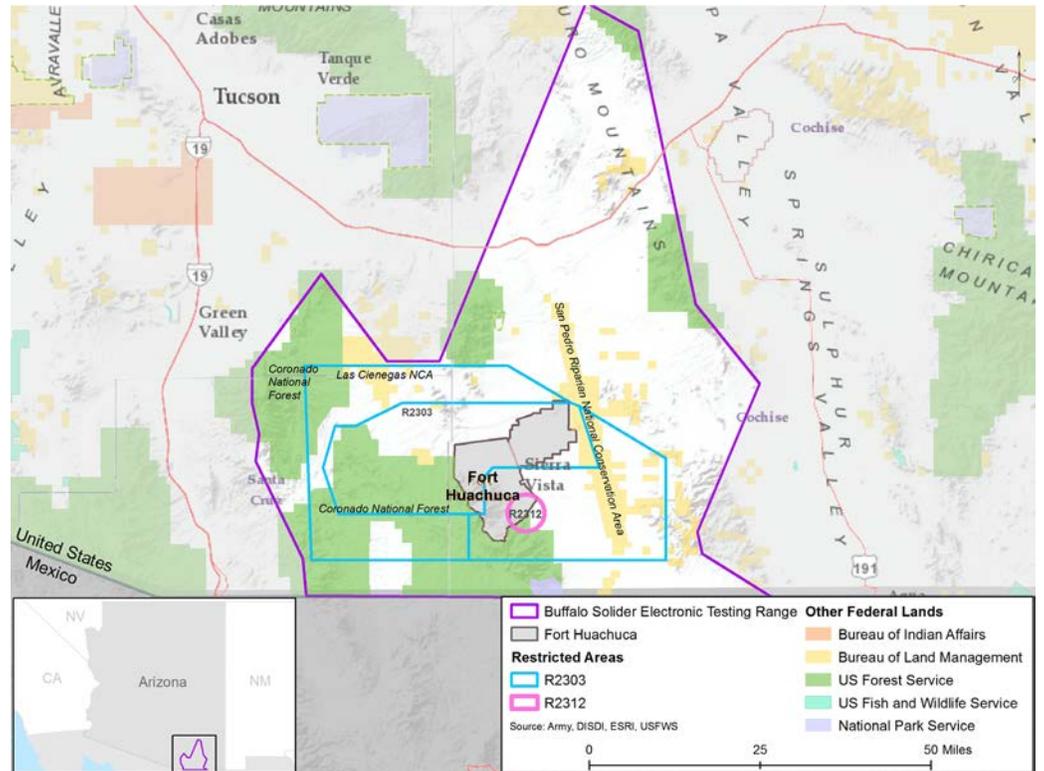
BENEFITING WORKING LANDS

The Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape is home to a rich agricultural heritage where working ranches and forests are also key to grassland and watershed protection in a drought-prone region. Water from the Babocomari River and the Upper San Pedro River watersheds is critical to Fort Huachuca, local agriculture, and numerous threatened and endangered species. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Arizona Land and Water Trust are leading efforts to assist private landowners in retaining 5,000 acres of productive and viable working farm and ranch lands that help to sustain Arizona's food and fiber production and environmental quality. Additionally, funding, outreach, and technical assistance from the U.S. Forest Service and state and private forestry will help maintain working forests that enhance vital sources of water.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Sentinel Landscape Partnership will play an active role in efforts to protect grassland and forest habitat, the species that rely on those habitats, and the water resources Fort Huachuca, wildlife, and the region need. In particular, USFWS will provide technical assistance and support for wetlands restoration and the reintroduction of sensitive and protected species, as well as and regulatory compliance assistance for partner projects—including conservation credits for Fort Huachuca’s land and water

Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape



protection and management efforts. Meanwhile, the U.S. Forest Service is seeking to improve watershed conditions and address critical forest resource issues identified in Arizona’s State Forest Action Plan.

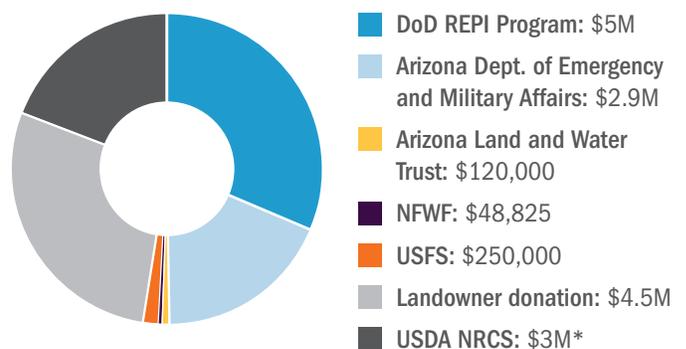
LOOKING FORWARD

The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership agencies will continue to support the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape with ongoing technical assistance and funding through the NRCS–Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, support for buffer lands through DoD’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program, and other efforts at improving the availability and quality of surface and groundwater. Together, they are ensuring that Fort Huachuca, private landowners, and endangered species can continue to call southeastern Arizona home.

PARTNERS:

- ★ Department of Defense
- ★ Arizona Land and Water Trust
- ★ Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs
- ★ U.S. Forest Service
- ★ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- ★ U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ★ Bureau of Land Management
- ★ National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Figure 1 Committed Sentinel Landscape Funding



*Includes dedicated funding from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program over Fiscal Years 2015-17.