

## Case Study: Using Planning Tools to Address Encroachment

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The number of plans available to installation commanders may seem like an alphabet soup of acronyms, but a few plans, in particular, can provide valuable guidance to those responsible for managing natural and cultural resources and encroachment threats: Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans (INRMP), Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plans (ICRMP), Joint Land Use Studies (JLUS), and Service-specific plans such as Range Complex Management Plans (RCMP), Installation Complex Encroachment Management Action Plan (ICEMAP), among others. Each of these planning tools can aid installations in achieving their missions by assessing their current and future requirements, threats to mission and community needs, and concerns that will impact the installation. This case study discusses how two installations Cape Canaveral Air Force Station and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms used these planning tools to help protect the military mission and conserve sensitive habitat.

### **INRMP**

Required by the 1997 amendment to the Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. § 670a-o), an INRMP is a roadmap to manage an installation's natural resources to ensure mission effectiveness. It is a comprehensive planning document that is integrated with other installation plans, such as the master plan and those for fire management, cultural resources, and outdoor recreation. Developed with input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state fish and wildlife agencies, and the general public, an INRMP contains, among other things, the legal requirements and biological needs of the installation's natural resources, management goals and timeframes, and projects to be implemented and estimated costs.

### **ICRMP**

Required by the 2008 Department of Defense (DoD) Cultural Resources Management Instruction (DoD Instruction 4715.16), an ICRMP is the foundation document for an installation's cultural resources management program. It too is a comprehensive planning document that is integrated with other installation plans, such as the master plan and range management plan. Developed with internal and external stakeholder input, ICRMPs list the relevant cultural resources, federal laws, executive orders, and regulations, provide Standard Operating Procedures for compliance with those laws, and list the proposed cultural resources actions for that installation for the next five years.

### **JLUS**

The Office of Economic Adjustment's (OEA) Compatible Use Program provides direct assistance to communities to help them work with the military to prevent and mitigate encroachment. Technical and financial assistance is available for state and local governments through the JLUS process to partner with the local military, federal agencies, residents, businesses, and landowners to plan and carry out strategies promoting compatible civilian use adjacent to installations, ranges, and military flight corridors. A JLUS results in a strategic plan and specific implementation actions to ensure civilian growth and development are compatible with vital training, testing, and other military missions.

Although as presented in this case study neither Cape Canaveral nor Twentynine Palms have participated in a JLUS, it is a valuable planning tool to use as part of your REPI buffer and overall encroachment mitigation efforts. More information about JLUS is available at [www.OEA.gov](http://www.OEA.gov).

### **Service Planning Tools: RCMP, ICEMAP, and Others**

The Services have a variety of planning tools specific to their installations, such as the Navy's and Marine Corps' RCMP. An RCMP is a strategic plan that assesses current and future training requirements, encroachment threats, range and training land assets, capabilities, shortfalls and includes recommendations for investments for future range use and encroachment mitigation measures. It is an essential tool for an installation commander to determine how to employ the range both today and in the future, and the RCMP's encroachment analysis is integrated into an installation's encroachment action plans.

This discussion of planning tools is not exhaustive, as there are many other useful Service-specific planning tools, and is limited to the examples at Cape Canaveral and Twentynine Palms. Installations should seek to coordinate tools such as the Air Force's ICEMAP, Encroachment Action plans, and others with their REPI partnerships efforts because better planning will lead to stronger REPI proposals and improved outcomes.

## Background

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Cape Canaveral Air Force Station is located on a barrier island on the central east coast of Florida. With approximately 8,500 acres undeveloped, the 15,800 acre installation is part of the Air Force Space Command's 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing and the primary launch point on the East Coast. Cape Canaveral also contains prime habitat for the Florida scrub-jay (classified as threatened under the Endangered Species Act), 81 documented archaeological sites, 12 Native American burial sites, five Man in Space Sites and 200 structures eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Home to one of the largest military training areas in the nation covering 935 square miles, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms lies 145 miles east of Los Angeles in the Mojave Desert. The installation hosts training for Marines on all aspects of combat except amphibious warfare, and 95 percent of Marines in theatre will train at Twentynine Palms. The area is also experiencing rapid population growth and development with over 75,000 additional residents expected to move into the area by 2023.

## Challenge

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One of the few military installations untroubled by external encroachment pressures, Cape Canaveral struggles to balance mission fulfillment with preservation of habitat and cultural sites located onsite. With current launch areas vulnerable to sea-level rise, the Air Force needs to build new launch pads, mission support facilities, and related infrastructure away from the ocean and in prime scrub-jay habitat. To complicate matters, controlled burns in these areas continually reveal new cultural resources (archeological sites, historic homesteads, and early missile crash sites), which then stop habitat restoration or any potential construction. Also, because federal law requires two acres of restoration for every acre developed, Air Force planners found that they were severely limited in where they could plan and build new launch facilities.

With increased population pressures, in 2010 and 2012 Twentynine Palms faced serious problems, including increasingly disruptive light pollution and proposed housing developments under two critical helicopter flight paths. According to James Ricker, Assistant Chief of Staff for Community Plans and Public Affairs at Twentynine Palms, "The 2006 RCMP identified that encroachment would significantly degrade training capability and range sustainment (if no action was taken) at a time when training requirements were increasing."

## Solution

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Planners at Cape Canaveral used the installation's INRMP and ICRMP as the basis for their efforts to fulfill their mission without decimating scrub-jay habitat or destroying significant cultural resources. Each of the plans identified resources to be protected, management challenges, and existing and potential mission constraints. With that information and input from state and federal stakeholders, Natural Resource Manager Donald George and his team crafted a plan that documented current and future encroachment threats and strategies to mitigate those threats. These plans and strategies are captured in the installation's overall encroachment management plan, its ICEMAP.

As a result of the plan and using REPI funds, the Air Force partnered with the Brevard County Environmentally Endangered Lands program to purchase conservation easements adjacent to existing

scrub-jay preserves and Indian Mound Station Sanctuary. The Air Force is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a Recovery Crediting System to receive credits for off-base conservation of scrub-jay habitat, which will help the installation meet its recovery plan goals while also allowing it to build new launch facilities.

At Twentynine Palms, Ricker and his team identified severe threats to their training mission in their RCMP and began engaging with key local stakeholders and the community in general to mitigate those threats. First, they cut their own light use by 35 percent, which they highlighted in a poster designed to encourage residents to consider what they lose when they light up the night. As a result, the neighboring town instituted more rigid light pollution laws. Community engagement didn't stop with improved light ordinances; Marines at Twentynine Palms are regular volunteers for Earth Day activities, in schools, and other community programs.

The next challenge for Twentynine Palms was to prevent two major housing developments (over 1,700 homes) under key helicopter routes. With REPI funds, the installation partnered with the Mojave Desert Land Trust to purchase conservation easements on 1,581 acres of desert tortoise habitat, permanently preventing incompatible development in this critical region. In 2013, the installation hopes to complete another project to protect an additional 3,779 acres.

## Lessons Learned

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For George, there are both big and small lessons learned: "If you're a biologist like me, you need to get smart on real estate dealings, issues, language and processes for REPI purchases. I found it helpful to create a "flow chart" of action items and prioritize and sequence them. I also include at least one other in-house person in reviewing all actions or documents to ensure the program moves on in my absence. I'm also careful to archive all correspondence and activities related to the program." Finally, George recommends determining the long-term stability of your REPI partner before beginning any project and to build strong relationships with the in-house program managers responsible for crafting the plans.

For Ricker, the biggest lessons learned are to use the plans and engage with the community: "Don't let the plans sit still on shelves and get stagnant. It's important to partner with the local community and be a good neighbor. Be receptive to their issues and not just your own because communities have their own plans and dreams." He notes that the plans helped the installation become more connected with the community, which has been beneficial: "Without the community, we would never have been able to stop the proposed housing developments that would have severely impacted heavily utilized, designated helicopter routes between our installation and Camp Pendleton on the coast."

## Accomplishments

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- Over 323 acres of prime scrub-jay habitat permanently protected from development
- Over 39 acres adjacent to Indian Mound Station Sanctuary permanently protected from development
- Credit for conserved land to be applied to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, which will permit it to relocate launch facilities away from areas vulnerable to sea-level rise
- Strict new light pollution law in communities adjacent to Twentynine Palms, protecting night training exercises
- 1,581 acres of desert tortoise habitat permanently protected with an additional 3,779 acres to be conserved by the end of FY2013
- Important helicopter routes between Twentynine Palms and Camp Pendleton permanently protected from incompatible development
- Strong ties forged between Twentynine Palms and the local community