

Promoting Endangered Species Recovery

Georgia Ecological Services and the Army at Fort Benning

The Georgia's Ecological Service's West Georgia Sub Office

is stationed on Fort Benning Army Installation, in Columbus, Georgia. The relationship between the Service and Ft. Benning began in the early 1990's with a comprehensive endangered species survey initiative. Over the course of 15 years, the Service has partnered with Army and civilian personnel on the Installation to:

- Create strategic planning documents that integrate military training and endangered species management and protection,
- Provide technical support for endangered species management and land management, and
- Create and participate in partnerships designed to balance military training needs with internal and external encroachment challenges.

The Army's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

process is part of the Department of Defense organizational restructuring to meet 21st century challenges.

Currently, installation planning groups are attempting to provide new training opportunities within the bounds of a landscape already containing a myriad of activities:

- 73 conventional training ranges with support facilities,
- 35 drop zones, and
- A Digital Multipurpose Range Complex, Infantry Squad Battle Course, Infantry Platoon Battle Course, Combined Arms Collective Training Facility, and a Convoy Live Fire Exercise Range Complex.

The BRAC initiatives will compound the current infrastructure to include 16 new ranges, two maneuver corridors, and two vehicle training areas, in all totaling 17,300 acres.

Partnering for Recovery

within the confines of U.S. military landscapes has long been a deliberate and effective relationship with the Service. This is particularly true on Ft. Benning; specifically, related to recovering the endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCW).

In the early 1990's, the RCW population on Ft. Benning totaled 174 active clusters; today the Installation contains 253 active clusters. A byproduct of achieving recovery of the RCW would be simultaneously preserving and restoring one of the most threatened ecosystems in the U.S., the longleaf pine ecosystem.



Derrick Hamrick

Red-cockaded woodpecker

BRAC Initiatives have created:

- New private and public alliances,
- More deliberate recovery strategies,
- More effective and timely landscape restoration plans, and
- Creative planning alternatives designed to keep the current RCW population on Ft. Benning as one of the thirteen Primary Core Recovery Populations.

Contact Information

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