

FISCAL YEAR 2005 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
US ARMY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS NOMINATION



FORT STEWART AND HUNTER ARMY AIRFIELD
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
MANAGEMENT TEAM
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



SUSTAINING
THE ENVIRONMENT
FOR A SECURE FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield's (HAAF's) award-winning Environmental Sustainability Management team leads a comprehensive program focused on the key goals of environmental stewardship and supporting military readiness.

BACKGROUND

Fort Stewart is the home of the 3rd Infantry Division (ID) and serves as the US Army's premier power projection platform on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. Through intense, year-round training on seven drop zones and seven tank and armored fighting ranges, two airfields and one landing strip, the 3rd ID, the "Rock of the Marne," is among the best-equipped divisions within the US Army. The installation is the Army's largest east of the Mississippi River, covering over 279,000 acres of southeast Georgia. The Fort Stewart community consists of approximately 20,000 Soldiers, 27,000 military family members and 3,800 civilian employees.

**FORT STEWART/
HAAF MISSION:**
Provide the nation with a trained, equipped and ready fighting force, composed of Active and Reserve Components. Deploy them rapidly anywhere in the world in support of National Objectives.

The Environmental Sustainability Management (SM) team strives to sustain the training readiness mission of the 3rd ID while remaining committed to environmental stewardship. The goal of the team is to ensure Soldiers of the future have the land, water and air resources they need to train; a healthy environment in which to live and the support of the local community. At one time, a compliance approach drove the installation's environmental program, but today the program is proactively managed to work toward environmental sustainability. By planning for the future and forging strong relationships throughout the installation, community and the regulatory arena, the program is exceeding all legal requirements and preserving the environment for future generations.

TEAM MEMBERS

The Environmental SM team, under the Directorate of Public Works, consists of dedicated, passionate and experienced employees in each of the Environmental Division's three branches: Environmental Compliance, Fish & Wildlife and Forestry. Each member plays a crucial role in the success of the Sustainability Management Program:

Tressa Rutland is the chief of the Environmental Compliance Branch. She manages the environmental compliance program areas, including air, drinking water, stormwater, wastewater, underground storage tanks, aboveground storage tanks, environmental cleanup and restoration, National Environmental Policy Act, cultural resources, wetlands, erosion and sedimentation control, noise, Resources Conservation & Recovery Act, hazardous material and waste management, asbestos, lead-based paint, solid waste, recycling, and training and awareness/outreach programs that include a multi-discipline combined budget of approximately \$16 million.

Tim Beaty is the chief of the Fish & Wildlife Branch and also manages the installation's Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) and Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) programs.

Tommy Hilliard is the chief of the Forestry Branch. He manages the prescribed burning and reforestation of over 270,000 acres of military lands and is responsible for maintaining and constructing more than 400 miles of forest access roads.

George Harris is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Section Leader. He is responsible for all NEPA regulatory filings. Other duties include wetlands, surface mining inspections, cultural resources, noise and erosion control on training lands.

Veronica Frazier is the Sustainability Management System (SMS) Coordinator and leads the cross-functional Installation Sustainability team charged with overseeing the installation's SMS implementation effort, in addition to her daily responsibilities as an Environmental Protection Specialist.

David Hodges is the Waste Management Section Leader. He manages the installation's solid waste and operations for the Fort Stewart/HAAF's Recycling Convenience Centers and the Fort Stewart Processing Station. He manages contractors and the program budget, maximizes recycling revenues and educates Soldiers, personnel, and tenants regarding mandatory recycling requirements.

AWARDS AND SERVICES

Fort Stewart/HAAF's Environmental SM team is a recognized leader in global citizenship and sustainability values. The team has received over 17 honors in the past 10 years in various areas of environmental quality. During the previous two fiscal years, the program received a Secretary of the Army Environmental Award in Natural Resources Conservation (Individual) and was the first runner-up for the Secretary of the Army Environmental Award in Natural Resources Conservation (Large Installation).

In July 2005, the team's environmental quality efforts were a major contributor to

Fort Stewart/HAAF's winning the Army Communities of Excellence Award and the Commander in Chief's Award for Installation Excellence for the second consecutive year. Both honors were awarded to Fort Stewart/HAAF for superb performance using its resources to sustain the mission, increase the productivity of its workforce and enhance the Fort Stewart/HAAF community's quality of life.

Fort Stewart's environmental stewardship successes were profiled on the Turner South Network's program *The Natural South* in FY 2004.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Program Management

Over the past two fiscal years, the Environmental SM team used a proactive, collaborative and forward-

thinking approach to environmental stewardship.

Mission Focused

Fort Stewart/HAAF personnel approach their environmental stewardship responsibilities in cooperation with the long-term goal of environmental sustainability. Sustainability is a concept that recognizes responsible environmental management is in the long-term best interest of the Army. It encourages an inclusive approach that takes into account the Army's needs today, such as the need to train forces and test weapons, while proactively managing environmental resources so they are viable for long-term use.

Successful Integration of Environmental Management Systems (EMSs)

Presidential Executive Order 13148, *Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management*, required federal facilities to create and implement an EMS before December 31, 2005.

An EMS provides a framework that enables an organization to reduce its environmental impacts, increase operating efficiency and integrate environmental responsibilities into operations. The Army requires EMSs to fully conform to the ISO 14001 standard by September 2009 and recommends integrating them with sustainability into a Sustainability Management System (SMS). An SMS is an EMS that balances environment with mission and well-being to support the military's long-term ability to train and deploy combat-ready Soldiers.

The installation charged the Installation Sustainability Team with creating and implementing an integrated SMS. The team first developed an Installation Environmental Policy, which predicates environmental resources management on the primacy of the military mission and the necessity of military readiness while protecting the environment and being good neighbors.

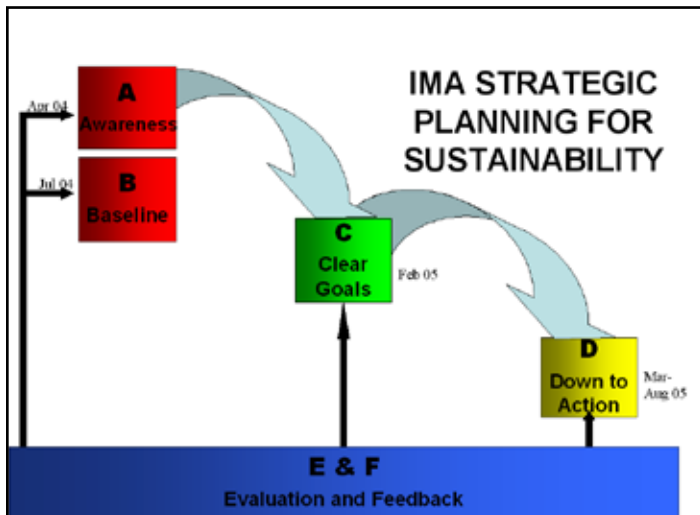
“Fort Stewart’s environmental program and staff continued to function as one of the premier environmental organizations within the Installation Management Agency (IMA) Southeast Region Office (SERO).”
 - Mr. Robert Mlakar
 EPAS Program Manager,
 IMA SERO



A key success factor of the SMS was the involvement of key stakeholders in the planning process to ensure environmental challenges are addressed in concert with mission concerns. In FY 2004, the team hosted local government officials, regulatory and pollution prevention agencies, Army agencies, Fort Stewart/HAAF Directorates, private contractors and other agencies at two sustainability workshops to evaluate the current environmental conditions at Fort Stewart/HAAF and identify environmental challenges to installation sustainability.

In February 2005, the team hosted 138 stakeholders at a Sustainability Summit attended by representatives from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, US Environmental Protection Agency, IMA and the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management. The group toured Fort Stewart’s cantonment and training areas to view wetland and range training areas, threatened and endangered species habitats, low-water crossings and other areas to increase awareness of sustainability efforts already underway at the installation.

Next, the Summit attendees jointly developed 25-year environmental sustainability goals and then broke them down into short-term objectives and targets. Most importantly, the goals and objectives developed by the stakeholder group were then incorporated into the installation’s Garrison Strategic Plan that the Environmental SM team is committed to working toward.



The Environmental SM team met the requirements of EO 13148 and conformance with the ISO 14001 standard in September 2005. This is a huge accomplishment that jumpstarts the installation’s continuing effort to improve environmental conditions at Fort Stewart through sustainability.

Technical Merits

Hazardous Materials Management

The team implemented a Hazardous Materials Management Program (HMMP) to enhance safety by properly disposing of or consolidating the storage of excess hazardous material and hazardous waste in unit areas. Nearly \$2 million of excess material was recovered; hazardous waste was reduced by \$24,000 on average per Unit of Action; \$200,000 was saved through shelf life extensions; and \$442,000 was saved through the collection and re-issue of serviceable product.

To further the goals of the HMMP, the Environmental SM team developed “Operation Clean Sweep.” This one-time initiative capitalized on the realignment of Fort Stewart’s units to purge outdated, unusable, unutilized or contaminated hazardous material and hazardous waste from maintenance facilities. The team brought hazardous material handlers to the customer to implement the program. Nearly 250,000 pounds of excess materials were captured and properly disposed. An additional benefit of the initiative was the identification of deficiencies in operating practices that were corrected by focusing resources on those areas.



Materials recovered during Operation Clean Sweep in April 2005.

Operation Clean Sweep led to a successful EPA inspection that identified only minor deficiencies

Pollution Prevention

Under the guidance of the SMS, pollution prevention plays a vital role in guiding Fort Stewart/HAAF’s environmental stewardship. The Environmental SM

team guided the \$3.5 million rehabilitation of the Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP). The IWTP was constructed prior to the enactment of many of the modern, more stringent environmental regulations and had several structural deficiencies. The IWTP allows Fort Stewart to complete its industrial mission in an environmentally responsible manner. The industrial system starts in the motorpools at the washracks and maintenance bays, conveying oil entrained wastewater to the plant through a network of pipes and lift stations for treatment through a physical separation and removal process prior to its discharge. The cleansing process protects the environment and the endangered species habitats that exist within the installation's waterways. Completion of the projects at the plant ensures that the facilities and infrastructures are in place to handle byproducts of training readiness.

Environmental Planning

Through Fort Stewart/HAAF's robust environmental planning efforts, the team seeks to anticipate pending environmental obstacles to mission activities. This allows the team to proactively mitigate impacts to minimize mission impact. One example of this strategy is the optimal siting of the Digital Multi-Purpose Range Complex. As initially proposed, the project would have significantly depleted the installation's wetland bank. A multidisciplinary team developed a mitigation strategy to reduce this impact, enabling the division to justify the development of an Environmental Assessment versus an Environmental Impact Statement. The solutions proposed saved \$14 million in potential mitigation costs and more than one year in project execution time.

Research and Technology

The Environmental SM team was instrumental in the development of the Environmental Information Management System (EIMS), a data-mining tool designed to access the Installation Restoration Program data records and maps of both Fort Stewart and HAAF. It enables the user to integrate dynamic data sources representing a wide range of data types (e.g., environmental, sampling, geographic). The Fort Stewart/HAAF EIMS gives the user precise control over the kinds of information he wants to see or correlate. This functionality

allows an EIMS user to review construction projects to ensure that the site selected does not overlap into known contaminated areas, if the area is in a flood plain or other environmentally sensitive areas ensuring that the land is protected and that decisions regarding sustainable use are quickly made.

Military Readiness

Encroachment is an increasing problem for military installations. Put simply, encroachment is the rapid development outside an installation's fence line by surrounding communities that negatively impacts military readiness. The Fort Stewart/HAAF team undertook a variety of efforts to address this issue in a manner that benefited the environment.

In 2003, the team was instrumental in initiating a JLUS in partnership with DoD and neighboring community governments. The JLUS will facilitate the communities' use of zoning authority to help direct growth to areas where it will be compatible with military training. The study was completed in 2005, and the guidelines developed by the JLUS team are already proving useful as regional planners and installation staff seek to provide for sustainable, compatible growth and prosperity for the installation and the region while serving as an aid in preventing encroachment that might otherwise hamper the military mission.

Fort Stewart/HAAF quickly emerged as a leader of the ACUB program, which was established in 2003 to encourage partnerships that create buffer areas around Army installations to limit the impacts of encroachment. ACUBs can also benefit species and habitat recovery.

The installation initiated an effective partnership with the Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, and the Georgia Land Trust to seek opportunities to partner with neighboring landowners and encourage them to continue to manage their land in a way that is compatible with the installation's training activities. The initiative has already attracted interest from local landowners. In 2005, the first ACUB conservation easement was signed, providing permanent protection to over 100 acres adjacent to the installation; several thousand acres more are in the works.

Knowledge Transfer

To share its strong abilities in forest management through prescribed burning, the team developed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Kings Bay Naval Base and Fort Stewart to conduct prescribed burning of 1,000 acres in FY 2005. The MOA exhibits the great partnership between the Army, Navy and Georgia Forestry Commission. The objective is to provide field assistance to the Kings Bay staff to facilitate prescribed burns at the Kings Bay Naval Base for the natural resource management program. The team also provided fire training to 60 Eighth US Army students stationed in Korea. The students consisted of Army Range Division contractors, Korean Service Corps and Korean structural firefighters.



Fort Stewart/HAAF is a recognized leader in prescribed burning. Here, they pass on their expertise to Soldiers in Korea.

Stakeholder Interaction

The team believes it is vital to proactively educate and involve the community in Fort Stewart’s environmental program. To promote awareness of the Army’s environmental stewardship responsibilities among Soldiers, the team used the installation’s intranet, newsletters and posters.

To encourage installation involvement in environmental successes, the Environmental SM team established a “Recycling Unit of the Quarter” award that rewards one unit from both Fort Stewart and HAAF for their outstanding recycling efforts during the quarter. Units are selected based on recycling performance, efforts to improve performance and education and outreach efforts.

The winning unit receives \$500, recognition in the *Frontline* – the installation’s weekly publication – and a coin plaque. The award is highly effective and resulted in increased Soldier participation.

The Fort Stewart environmental community is also dedicated to serving the public through volunteer efforts. For example, Fort Stewart/HAAF was the first Department of Defense (DoD)-certified affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, the nation’s leading community improvement organization focused on reducing waste, and beautifying communities. As an affiliate, Fort Stewart opens avenues to network with 500 communities and statewide affiliates programs, participate in public and private partnerships and receive free educational campaign materials for community activities.

Finally, the team seeks opportunities to give back to the communities that support its Soldiers and teach its neighbors about environmental management on the installation. The team participates in Earth Day, Read Across America Day, America Recycles Day, Native American Observance and many tours, speaking engagements and presentations to local schools, universities, civic and social organizations. Since October 2003, the team participated in or sponsored over 50 environmental awareness and outreach opportunities for Soldiers and their families, the local community, the environmental community and DoD, reaching an impressive 30,000 individuals.

“The public outreach efforts demonstrate that Americans owe a huge ‘thank you’ to the Fort Stewart environmental team. You are leading by example.”
 - Mr. Michael Bird, Federal Affairs Counsel, National Conference of State Legislatures

CONCLUSION

The Fort Stewart/HAAF Environmental SM team predicates environmental resources management on the primacy of the military mission and the belief that effective training can occur while protecting the environment and being good neighbors to the local community.

On the cover: Entrance to Fort Stewart, Georgia.