



2024 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards

About the Awards

The Department of Defense (DoD) established the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Environmental Awards to celebrate Military Service members and civilians for their exceptional commitment to protecting human health and the environment while advancing the military mission. Each year since 1962, the SecDef has honored installations, teams, and individuals for their outstanding accomplishments in innovative and cost-effective environmental management strategies that successfully support mission readiness. This year’s awards cycle encompasses an achievement period from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2023 (Fiscal Years [FY] 2022-2023).

Award Categories

Each Military Service and Defense Agency may submit one nomination for each of the nine categories that cover six subject areas: natural resources conservation, environmental quality, sustainability, environmental restoration, cultural resources management, and environmental excellence in weapon systems acquisition. As structured since FY 2009, certain awards are on a two-year cycle with large/small and non-industrial/industrial installations competing in alternate years, as shown in the table below. The 2024 SecDef Environmental Awards recognize achievements in the FY 2022-2023 cycle and are considered “Even FY” awards.

Cycle Begins in Even FY (e.g., 2022, 2024, 2026)	Cycle Begins in Odd FY (e.g., 2023, 2025, 2027)
Natural Resources Conservation, Small Installation	Natural Resources Conservation, Large Installation
Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team	
Environmental Quality, Non-Industrial Installation	Environmental Quality, Industrial Installation
Environmental Quality, Individual/Team	Environmental Quality, Overseas Installation
Sustainability, Industrial Installation	Sustainability, Non-Industrial Installation
	Sustainability, Individual/Team
Environmental Restoration, Installation	Environmental Restoration, Installation
Environmental Restoration, Individual/Team	
Cultural Resources Management, Large Installation	Cultural Resources Management, Small Installation
	Cultural Resources Management, Individual/Team
Environmental Excellence in Weapon Systems Acquisition, Individual/Team	Environmental Excellence in Weapon Systems Acquisition, Individual/Team

Award Eligibility

The information below outlines what constitutes large and small installations, non-industrial and industrial installations, and who is eligible for individual and team awards:

- **Large Installation:** A DoD installation with more than 10,000 acres, including leased, military-owned or administered outlying ranges, or training practice areas.
- **Small Installation:** A DoD installation with 10,000 acres or fewer, including leased, military-owned or administered outlying ranges, or training practice areas.
- **Non-Industrial Installation:** A DoD installation, including ranges, test centers, contracting and policy agencies/organizations/offices, and research and development centers.
- **Industrial Installation:** A DoD installation that has a primary mission of manufacturing, maintaining, rehabilitating, or storing military equipment such as depots, fleet readiness centers, air logistics centers, regional logistics/supply support centers, armaments plants, shipyards, and other manufacturing plants.
- **Overseas Installation:** An enduring DoD installation of all types (industrial and non-industrial) and sizes (large and small).
- **Individual Awards:** Nominees must be DoD civilian employees (including Intergovernmental Personnel Act [IPA] employees) or members of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- **Team Awards:** Nominees must include one or more DoD civilian employees (including IPA employees) or members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Other team members may be partner personnel from Federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies; academic institutions; or non-governmental organizations or DoD contractors and host nation employees.

Judging Process

A diverse panel of 47 volunteer judges with relevant expertise from Federal and state agencies, academia, and the private sector evaluated the 2024 nominees to select one winner for each of the nine categories. DoD recognizes each winner with a trophy, a certificate of meritorious achievement signed by the SecDef, a personalized congratulatory letter, and an honorary American flag that is flown over the U.S. Capitol on Earth Day and over the Pentagon on Memorial Day. The SecDef Environmental Awards exhibit inside the Pentagon will feature the winners' accomplishments for all Pentagon visitors to see. DoD recognizes honorable mentions with a certificate of achievement and a personalized appreciation letter.

Winner Achievements

The 2024 SecDef Environmental Awards winners represent excellence in innovative environmental leadership. Their achievements support DoD's ongoing commitment to sustain mission readiness through cost-effective environmental management. Although only formally recognized once a year by the SecDef, Military Service members and civilians continue their exceptional efforts every day to conserve our Nation's natural and cultural resources; protect human health; prevent or eliminate pollution at the source; clean up hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants, and munitions on DoD sites; and incorporate environmental requirements into weapon systems acquisition. Their remarkable efforts enhance the quality of life for Service members, their families, and local communities. All nominees exemplify DoD's environmental leadership both in the United States and overseas.