



## 2014 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team Award Eglin Air Force Base, FL, Natural Resources Team

Each year since 1962, the Department of Defense has honored individuals, teams, and installations for their outstanding achievements and innovative environmental practices and partnerships that promote the quality of life and increase efficiencies without compromising mission success. A panel of judges with relevant expertise, education, or experience from Federal and state agencies, academia, and the public evaluated each of the nominees to select winners 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 system acquisition. As structured since Fiscal Year 2009, some of the awards within these categories are on a two-year cycle with large/small and non-industrial/industrial installations competing in alternate years.

### **About the Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team Award Category**

In 2014, the Natural Resources Conservation area, the oldest of the six subject areas, covered small installations (10,000 acres or less) and individuals/teams. The individual/team award recognizes efforts to promote the conservation of natural resources, including the identification, protection, and restoration of biological resources and habitats; the sound long-term management and use of the land and its resources; and the promotion of the conservation ethic. Providing enhanced quality of life for installation personnel and visitors (e.g., outdoor recreation and environmental beneficial landscaping) are also factors in this award category. The 2014 winner of the Natural Resources Conservation, Individual/Team award is Eglin Air Force Base, Natural Resources Team.

### **About Eglin Air Force Base, Natural Resources Team**

The Natural Resources (NR) Team at Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida consists of 32 professional Biologists, Foresters, Forestry Technicians, Fire Management Specialists, and Fire Ecologists. The NR Team is responsible for managing a unique group of distinct and bio diverse natural community types, the largest forested military reservation, and vast water ranges while enabling essential Department of Defense missions. The NR Team is responsible for long-range resource planning, program direction, coordination, and evaluation for Eglin AFB's natural resources programs. The NR Team also provides the expertise and supervision for managing all aspects of the program, as well as managerial planning for the interrelated forestry, timber sale, fire control, fish and wildlife, invasive species, erosion control and outdoor recreation programs. The NR Team and their support staff carried out these programs which maximized the use of Eglin AFB's 464,000 acres of land and 120,000 square miles of water ranges to maintain mission readiness while ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.



*In 2012 and 2013, volunteer program run by the Eglin AFB Natural Resources Team provided 11,289 hours on threatened and endangered species projects such as native tree planting (pictured here), cleanup of illegally dumped debris, and stream erosion control projects.*

Some of Eglin AFB NR Team's accomplishments include:

- Completed the first-ever programmatic consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). The consultation covers all Eglin AFB's actions taken affecting the RCW and will save time and effort by eliminating specific consultations while putting the endangered RCW on a firm path to recovery at Eglin AFB.
- Restored 12,200 acres of longleaf pine habitat through logging operations by removing 150,000 tons of invasive sand pine. In addition to reducing invasive species, this also improved the habitat for the endangered RCW.
- Hosted interagency prescribed fire experiments, which allowed more than 100 renowned fire scientists to use Eglin AFB's forest to fully instrument and measure fires in a controlled environment. These experiments are not only a model for multi-disciplinary fire research but also provided data to improve wildland fire operations on Eglin AFB.
- Teamed with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to create a Black Bear Management Plan and the first Black Bear Management Unit in the state. The plan set the strategy to maintain a sustainable black bear population throughout Florida. These cooperative efforts resulted in removing the black bear from the state's endangered species list and increasing Eglin AFB's flexibility in using its property for missions.
- Identified "mission avoidance zones" where turtles are less likely to be impacted by test and training missions. The Eglin AFB NR Team tagged 30 threatened loggerhead sea turtles with satellite transmitters to better understand the loggerhead turtle movements. The data were used to determine where loggerhead turtles were less likely to be impacted by test and training activities. Effectively demonstrating reduced impacts to the turtles also resulted in cost savings and reduced time for Eglin AFB for National Marine Fisheries Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service consultations.



*Eglin AFB Natural Resources Team biologists tagged sea turtles with satellite transmitters to identify areas where turtles are less likely to be impacted by missions during the nesting and non-nesting seasons.*

The Eglin AFB NR Team offered long-range solutions that ensured regulatory compliance while maximizing the use of land and water ranges to maintain mission readiness.

**Past Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards  
Natural Resources Conservation Category Winners**

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| <b>2013</b> - Naval Base Coronado, California  | <b>1996</b> - Marine Corps Base Hawaii  |
| <b>2012</b> - U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii, Oahu Army Natural Resource Team,                    | <b>1995</b> - Naval Air Warfare Center, Patuxent River, Maryland                  |
| <b>2011</b> - Eglin Air Force Base, Florida  | <b>1994</b> - Eglin Air Force Base, Florida                                       |
| <b>2010</b> - Fort Custer Training Center, Michigan Army National Guard                      | <b>1993</b> - Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant, Minnesota                        |
| <b>2010</b> - Mr. Stephen M. Seiber, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida                           | <b>1992</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina                      |
| <b>2009</b> - Camp Ripley Maneuver and Training Center, Minnesota                            | <b>1991</b> - Fort Belvoir, Virginia  |
| <b>2008</b> - Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, California                                  | <b>1990</b> - Fort Sill, Oklahoma   |
| <b>2008</b> - Fort Indiantown Gap Training Center, Pennsylvania Army National Guard          | <b>1989</b> - F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming                                 |
| <b>2007</b> - Arnold Air Force Base, Tennessee   | <b>1988</b> - Goldwater Air Force Range, Arizona                                  |
| <b>2006</b> - Minnesota Army National Guard Natural Resources Conservation Team, Camp Ripley | <b>1987</b> - New Boston Air Force Station, New York                              |
| <b>2006</b> - Marine Corps Base Hawaii   | <b>1986</b> - Beale Air Force Base, California                                    |
| <b>2005</b> - Fort Drum, New York  | <b>1985</b> - Robins Air Force Base, Georgia                                      |
| <b>2004</b> - Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi   | <b>1984</b> - Fort Huachuca, Arizona  |
| <b>2003</b> - U.S. Army Intelligence Center and Fort Huachuca, Arizona                       | <b>1983</b> - Indian Island Annex, Keyport, Naval Engineering Station, Washington |
| <b>2002</b> - U.S. Army Transportation Center, Fort Eustis & Fort Story, Virginia            | <b>1982</b> - Fort McCoy, Wisconsin   |
| <b>2001</b> - Naval Weapons Station Charleston, South Carolina                               | <b>1981</b> - Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pennsylvania                                  |
| <b>2000</b> - U.S. Army Training Center & Fort Jackson, South Carolina                       | <b>1980</b> - Fort Huachuca, Arizona  |
| <b>2000</b> - Hawaii Army National Guard   | <b>1979</b> - Naval Air Station Chase Field, Texas                                |
| <b>1999</b> - Camp Ripley, Army National Guard, Minnesota                                    | <b>1978</b> - Fort Sill, Oklahoma   |
| <b>1999</b> - U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Belvoir, Virginia                                     | <b>1977</b> - Griffiss Air Force Base, New York                                   |
| <b>1998</b> - Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia                                     | <b>1976</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina                      |
| <b>1998</b> - Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia  | <b>1975</b> - Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana                                 |
| <b>1997</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California                                   | <b>1974</b> - Fort Campbell, Kentucky   |
| <b>1997</b> - Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head, Maryland                            | <b>1973</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina                      |
| <b>1996</b> - Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida  | <b>1972</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California                        |
|  | <b>1971</b> - Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida                                     |
|  | <b>1970</b> - Camp Pickett, Virginia  |
|  | <b>1969</b> - Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina                      |
|  | <b>1968</b> - Red River Army Depot, Texas   |
|  | <b>1967</b> - Fort Rucker, Alabama  |
|  | <b>1966</b> - Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Virginia                            |
|  | <b>1965</b> - Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida                                     |
|  | <b>1964</b> - Eglin Air Force Base, Florida                                       |
|  | <b>1963</b> - Fort Knox, Kentucky   |