



2017 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards Sustainability, Non-Industrial Installation Award

Each year since 1962, the Department of Defense (DoD) has honored installations, teams, and individuals for outstanding conservation achievements, innovative environmental practices, and partnerships that improve quality of life and promote efficiencies without compromising mission success. The 2017 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards cycle encompasses an achievement period from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2016 (Fiscal Years (FY) 2015-2016). A diverse panel of judges with relevant expertise representing Federal and state agencies, academia, and the private sector evaluated all nominees to select one winner 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 system acquisition.

About the Sustainability, Non-Industrial Installation Award

The Sustainability, Non-Industrial Installation award recognizes non-industrial installations that have made significant progress to prevent or eliminate pollution at the source, including practices that increase efficiency and sustainability in the use of raw materials, energy, water, or other resources. The sustainability award also recognizes energy efficiency and renewable energy practices, greenhouse gas reduction efforts, procurement of sustainable goods and services, and efforts to plan for climate change resilience. Sustainable practices ensure that DoD protects valuable resources that are critical to mission success. The 2017 winner of the Sustainability, Non-Industrial Installation award is *Eglin Air Force Base, Florida*.

About Eglin Air Force Base, Florida

Eglin Air Force Base (AFB) is positioned along Florida’s Emerald Coast and extends into the heart of the Florida panhandle. Eglin is the largest forested military reservation in the U.S. and the largest Air Force installation in the world, encompassing 464,000 acres of land and 120,000 square miles of water ranges. This extensive area supports essential defense missions and diverse ecosystems that provide sanctuary to 106 rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species. Eglin’s Environmental Management Division implements a holistic management approach to reduce risks, maintain compliance, and improve processes and programs to preserve and enhance a remarkable assemblage of biodiversity while supporting defense missions. The installation is responsible for the development, acquisition, testing, deployment, and sustainment of all air-delivered conventional weapons for the Air Force. Eglin AFB contains over 250,000 acres of open space available for its 11,000 military personnel, 9,500 civilian employees, 57,000 family members and retirees, and the general public to use and enjoy.



Master Planning and public recreation are cornerstones of Eglin’s installation policy. The main base facilities are all connected via a ten-mile biking/hiking/jogging trail, enabling base occupants vehicle-free green avenues between the dining halls, classrooms, hangars, hospital, offices, shopping, and recreational facilities.

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Major Accomplishments in FY 2015-2016

- Eglin AFB recycled or reused approximately 78 percent of the municipal solid waste it created, exceeding the DoD goal by nearly 30 percent. In addition, Eglin's exemplary waste management, reuse, recycling, and mulching program has saved Eglin \$3.5 million in waste disposal costs.
- The Environmental Management System Team adopted several Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) practices and procedures to decrease the number of reportable spills resulting from poor marina operations. The installation received a FDEP Clean Marina certification for these practices, which implement educational efforts to ensure marina users understand the most environmentally friendly method of marina operations. Since implementation, marina oil spills have been reduced to zero, and Eglin is one of only ten other marinas in Florida to receive the *Clean and Resilient* designation.
- The Eglin Forestry Team successfully created 3,000 acres of new longleaf pine habitat by planting a DoD record, 1.5 million longleaf pine seedlings in areas that were formerly degraded forest habitat. In FY 2016, this led to the installation surpassing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's goal to increase the red-cockaded woodpecker population above 450 potential breeding groups.
- Eglin AFB produced two artificial reefs from approximately 2,000 tons of concrete pieces that were originally targets on the Eglin range that outlived their usefulness. The *Concrete to Reefs* initiative is the result of a partnership between Eglin AFB, the Air Force Research Laboratory, and Okaloosa County. This effort saved Eglin more than \$60,000 in concrete disposal costs, and the reefs provide new habitat for a variety of aquatic species.
- To reduce Eglin AFB's potable water use, installation staff performed a leak detection audit on 120 miles of water distribution lines on base. This audit identified and enabled the installation to fix small leaks at hydrants and valves, saving approximately 10 million gallons of potable water per year. Eglin also removed irrigation from potable water mains on base, saving an additional 20 million gallons of potable water per year.



Eglin Air Force Base placed a major emphasis on the Air Force solid waste diversion goal and implemented various reuse and recycling initiatives. These efforts allowed Eglin to exceed DoD's Fiscal Year 2015 non-hazardous solid waste diversion goal by reaching a 78 percent diversion rate. This exceeded DoD's goal by nearly 30 percent during the award period.



Eglin personnel worked to become one of only 10 other Florida marinas designated as "Clean and Resilient." Marina oil spills have been reduced to zero since the Environmental Management System Team adopted Florida Department of Environmental Protection practices and procedures.