

Spring 2018
SERPPAS Steering Committee Meeting
March 6, 2018 10:00 am – March 7, 2018 11:30 am
Atlanta Airport Marriott Gateway
Atlanta, GA
Summary

Agenda

March 6	Topic	Lead
10:00 – 10:30	Welcome Process Review and Introductions	Co-Chairs: Steve Friedman, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and Ryan Orndorff, DoD Natural Resources Program Nancy Walters, Facilitator
10:30 – 11:30	SERPPAS Draft Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Review the draft objectives for each focus area and get feedback and approval from the Steering Committee. ❖ Handouts: SERPPAS 2018 – 2020 Strategic Plan Roadmap and Draft Objectives, Draft Fact Sheets. 	Addie Thornton, SERPPAS Coordinator
11:30 – 12:45	Lunch	
12:45 – 1:30	The Role of Private Forestry in Accomplishing SERPPAS Objectives	Jimmy Bullock, RMS
1:30 – 2:45	The State of Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast: Updates and Progress from North Carolina, Florida, and Georgia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Handouts: FL, GA, and NC Sentinel Landscapes Fact Sheets. 	Tim Beaty, Army Fort Stewart (GA SL); Buck McLaughlin, U.S. Air Force (Avon Park AFR); and Mary Lou Addor, NC State University (ENC SL)
2:45 – 3:15	Networking Break	
3:15 – 4:15	Military Wildland Fire Challenges and the Value of Inter-Agency Burn Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts: NC, FL and GA Sentinel Landscapes Fact Sheets 	Kevin Porteck, AFCEC, Joel Godfrey, AEC and Randy Tate, LLA
4:15 – 4:55	Principals Meeting Theme and Structure – <i>Managing Risks for a Resilient Southeast</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review logistics, schedule of events and purpose/goals • Handouts: Draft Principals Meeting Logistics and Eglin AFB Tour 	Addie Thornton, SERPPAS



March 6	Topic	Lead
	Agenda, Principals Meeting Panel Proposals	
4:55 - 5:00	Closing Remarks & Adjourn Day One	

March 7	Topic	Lead
8:00 – 8:10	Welcome Back	Co-Chairs
8:10 – 9:10	Insights from DoD Leadership and Discussion Feedback from Military Leadership on SERPPAS engagement, strategic plan and upcoming Principals meeting	Ryan Orndorff, DoD OSD
9:10 – 9:40	Networking Break	
9:40 – 11:20	Focus Area Pitch for the Principals Meeting	Work Group Leads, SERPPAS
11:20 – 11:30	Wrap up and Adjourn	Co-Chairs

Participants

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Addor	Mary Lou (Lou)	North Carolina State University
Beard	Bruce	Natural Resources Institute, Texas A&M University
Beaty	Tim	Fort Stewart, U.S. Army
Bullock	Anita	Office of Economic Adjustment, Department of Defense
Bullock	Jimmy	Resource Management Services
Costanzo	Bridgett	VA NRCS
Darden	Tom	Darden Consulting
Davenport	Marge	USGS
Davis	Scott	Environmental Protection Agency
Dillman	James	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Durbrow*	Rick	EPA Region 4
Durig	Brock	Navy Region Southeast
Farrell	Charlie	South Carolina Military Task Force
Fawcett	Jennifer	North Carolina State University
Foskey	Karen	OPNAV N45
Friday	Paul	Marine Corps Installations East
Friedman	Steve	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Gillam	Rick	Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4
Godfrey	Joel	Army Environmental Command
Hall	Bryan	South Carolina Army National Guard
Harris	Mike	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Hosford	Robert	North Carolina Department of Agriculture
Khoury	Chris	Booz Allen Hamilton
Jester	Cynthia	Army REEO
Lowder	Chester	North Carolina Farm Bureau
MacLaughlin	Charles 'Buck'	Avon Park Air Force Range
Martin	Mallory	South Atlantic LLC
Mattox	Matt	Army Environmental Command
Meier	Bill	MCI East
Neale	Barbara	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Nicholson	John	North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality
Nix	Andrew	Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Orndorff	Ryan	DoD Natural Resources Program
Porteck	Kevin	Air Force Civil Engineer Center
Prosser	Ken	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Reed	Kay	U.S. Forest Service
Rimer	Linda	Environmental Protection Agency
Sabo	John	Florida Forest Service
Sanders	Buford	Georgia Forestry Commission
Scalise	Col. Michael	MCI East

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Scanlon*	Rhiannon	DoD Siting Clearinghouse
Schock	Andrew	The Conservation Fund
Stine	Bonnie	Florida Forest Service
Tate*	Randy	Longleaf Alliance
Thornton	Addie	SERPPAS
Walters	Nancy	Facilitator

Participated Remotely*

Action Items

Task	Responsibility
SERPPAS Coordinator compiles a ‘Briefing Packet’ for the Steering Committee members to use and reference for their briefing assignment. This packet will be sent in the first week of April.	SERPPAS Coordinator
Steering Committee members brief their Principals on the final draft SERPPAS 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, and communicate any feedback to the Coordinator prior to the Principals Meeting. (Deadline: April 27)	SERPPAS Steering Committee Members
Draft SERPPAS Commander’s Guide prior to the Principals Meeting, and to include in the briefing materials.	SERPPAS Coordinator/ DoD Steering Team Leads
Draft updated SERPPAS Fact sheets, prior to the Principals Meeting and to include in the briefing materials.	SERPPAS Work Group Leads/SERPPAS Coordinator
Refine and finalize Strategic Plan draft objectives.	SERPPAS Work Group Leads/SERPPAS Coordinator
Finalize and distribute SERPPAS Principals meeting website.	SERPPAS Coordinator
Register for the SERPPAS Principals meeting.	All
Prepare sessions for the Principals Meeting Agenda	Work Group Leads/SERPPAS Coordinator
Send letter from DoD Principal Co-Chair to the Assistant Secretaries of the Military Services and SERPPAS State Principals, invitation to 2018 SERPPAS Principals Meeting.	DoD Steering Committee Co-Chair

Summary by Agenda Topic

Welcome, Process Review, and Introductions (Ryan Orndorff, Steve Friedman, and Nancy Walters)

- The SERPPAS Steering Committee Co-Chairs, Ryan Orndorff and Steve Friedman, welcomed attendees to the Spring 2018 SERPPAS Steering Committee meeting at the Atlanta Airport Marriott Gateway hotel.
- The Co-Chairs explained that the primary goal for this meeting is to prepare for the upcoming Spring 2018 SERPPAS Principals meeting at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, including finalizing the SERPPAS Draft Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2020. The Co-Chairs thanked Colonel Scalise for his attendance at this meeting, and for providing the Steering Committee with an operator’s perspective. Finally, the Co-Chairs emphasized that SERPPAS needs to demonstrate how it can support the development and sustainment of resilient DoD installations that will support the Secretary of Defense’s priorities in the National Defense Strategy, including restoring readiness and building a more lethal force.
- Nancy Walters, the Meeting Facilitator, provided meeting process instructions and expectations, and explained how the Steering Committee planned to accomplish the meeting goals. She also introduced Addie Thornton, the SERPPAS Coordinator, to present on the SERPPAS Draft Strategic Plan for 2018 - 2020.

SERPPAS Draft Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020 (Addie Thornton)

- The primary goal for this Steering Committee meeting was to review and approve the draft objectives for each focus area in the SERPPAS Draft Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2020. The SERPPAS Coordinator, Addie Thornton, presented each focus area’s objectives to the Steering Committee for discussion, feedback, and approval. Following the review of the focus areas’ objectives, the Co-Chairs tasked the Steering Committee to brief their Principals on the draft Strategic Plan prior to the Principals meeting in May, so that the Principals come to the meeting fully prepared to approve the plan. If Principals have additional feedback on the Strategic Plan prior to the Principals Meeting, Steering Committee members should relay that feedback directly to the SERPPAS Coordinator. Steering Committee feedback on the focus areas’ objectives in the draft Strategic Plan are summarized in the table below.

Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast	Lead: Ryan Orndorff
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Feedback</i>
1. Use the SERPPAS network to share information, resources, and lessons learned of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership, as well as demonstrate the value and purpose of these partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Sentinel Landscapes will be the focus here, but progress on these goals don’t have to be restricted to the formal Sentinel Landscapes process. • Work with other regional organizations, i.e. the Western Regional Partnership (WRP), to share information and lessons learned.
2. Integrate other SERPPAS focus area objectives into implementation strategies for Sentinel Landscapes in the region, to create more conservation opportunities that support the natural resource and military missions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall goal is to define the total mission footprint for the Southeast, including all DoD installations, and to address all of their priority issues.

<p>3. Leverage the ‘Power of SERPPAS’ to attract both financial and non-financial support to increase capacity for the implementation of Sentinel Landscapes designated in the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to define Sentinel Landscapes somewhere in the Strategic Plan, as well as define the work group and the regional coordinating role of SERPPAS between Sentinel Landscapes in the SE. • Suggest switching this objective with objective number 5, to improve the flow of the Strategic Plan. • It was pointed out that the currently designated landscapes struggle with finding funding for capacity and administrative tasks, and that should be a focus in this objective.
<p>4. Focus on promoting private landowner interests and explore ways to increase the number and type of compatible land use tools to offer landowners to conserve working lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify that ‘private landowner interests’ here refer to landowner interests in the context of Sentinel Landscapes.
<p>5. Develop a shareable mission footprint map of the Southeast to better understand the priority areas across the region and to promote collaboration among Sentinel Landscapes Partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners need to hear more from DoD on their current priority areas, particularly within designated Sentinel Landscapes. • This objective refers to the military mission footprint in the Southeast; it is not meant to define/restrict the boundaries of current Sentinel Landscapes. • Instead of referencing a map in this objective, talk about landscape modeling instead. There are sensitivities to developing and sharing a mission footprint map with DoD’s name on it; a broader modeling effort provides the flexibility to produce multiple mapping products, while allowing partners to identify priorities and parameters. • List this objective first, as it will define a mission area/footprint where the other objectives will focus on. • Might be able to leverage the REPI map web application (which will have a JLUS layer added in the next couple of weeks), as well as the map being developed by the SERPPAS Energy Work Group.
<p>Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species</p>	<p>Lead: Mike Harris</p>
<p><i>Objective</i></p>	<p><i>Feedback</i></p>
<p>1. Develop and implement programs to conserve at-risk and listed species through habitat and multi-species crediting strategies and other conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘on/off installation’ comment in this objective was designed to recognize that conservation which takes place off installations could have positive impacts on an installation.

efforts that provide direct benefits to military installations (both on and off installations).	For example, conservation work done off an installation which benefits an at-risk species has positive impacts for that species wherever it occurs in the region.
2. Support Species Status Assessments for those species, like the red-cockaded woodpecker, that have high potential to impact training and testing on military installations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to bring attention to the action of collecting the known species/habitats issues currently inhibiting testing and training from the military services to understand the species that are of most concern to take conservation action.
3. Emphasize and enable efforts to increase, enhance, and sustain ecosystems through the conservation and restoration of forest lands in priority landscapes that can be managed to provide habitat for priority species and that will contribute to a larger conservation goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term ‘priority landscape’ in this objective is meant to refer to landscapes impacting species of concern likely to have an impact on military installations or operations if they are listed. • Recommend expanding the scope of this objective by removing the term ‘forest lands,’ and instead referring broadly to lands in general.
4. Increase targeted habitat management for isolated wetlands to benefit at-risk species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant discussion items.
5. Develop and implement approaches to “avoid and minimize” impacts to at-risk species from emerging developments such as utility-scale solar facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species Work Group will coordinate with the Energy Work Group to work towards this objective.
Southeast Prescribed Fire Initiative	Lead: Jenn Fawcett
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Feedback</i>
1. Use a spatial analysis to identify and prioritize areas for prescribed fire treatments at the local, state, and regional levels considering the missions and objectives of SERPPAS partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To avoid confusion, recommend only referring to SERPPAS mission and objectives, in case the mission/objectives of SERPPAS partners don’t line up with SERPPAS’ mission/objectives. • It’s also important to clarify that this objective will apply to and inform all of the following Prescribed Fire objectives.
2. Encourage states to submit prescribed fire data to the existing efforts underway, as well as encourage and provide support for states to develop or improve their online information fire tracking and/or permitting systems to collect more consistent data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant discussion items.
3. Increase interagency cooperation in order to burn across shared boundaries in priority areas as identified by SERPPAS partners and others, and to share personnel, equipment, and resources on fires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to recognize the limitations of this goal- for example, the Army currently has a policy that specifically prohibits participation in an initiative such as this.
4. Encourage and support full-time prescribed burners within local, state, and federal agencies, whose primary responsibilities would be to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest highlighting the burden of insurance and liability when conducting prescribed burns.

conduct prescribed burns and associated fuels reduction work on non-available burn days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to re-word this goal slightly to make it accessible to non-burners. For example, either define or rephrase ‘non-available burn days’ to clarify what that statement means.
5. Review existing federal programs and identify opportunities to provide additional funding support for prescribed fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific reference to federal programs here can probably be deleted in order to broaden the scope of this goal.
6. Encourage and support the development, dissemination, and utilization of new relevant fire science and tools that foster collaboration among scientists and natural resource managers to increase the relevance and utility of new science and can positively impact regional prescribed fire management programs at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant discussion items.
7. Continue to conduct workshops and “Learn and Burn” field days to educate landowners and consultants about prescribed fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be too broad- suggest revising to make this specific to SERPPAS.
8. Minimize landowners’ risk of liability associated with prescribed fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to make sure this goal remains targeted to the SERPPAS region/mission. • Possibly add language or an action item on cost efficiencies, cost share programs, and costs to landowners. • Look into requiring prescribed burning on easements through government programs.
9. Explore the development of a comprehensive, accessible systems to inform private landowners of funding opportunities for prescribed burning that could also include a searchable prescribed burner exchange to allow landowners and prescribed fire contractors and consultants to connect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This objective seems closely tied to objective number 7- is there a way to combine these two? • Landowners in New Mexico and Texas have addressed liability and cost sharing issues in this way already. There may be an opportunity to share information and lessons learned. • Is this objective targeted enough towards specific landowners who could provide meaningful conservation benefits by taking advantage of these programs? • Would this be a good objective to drop? This, combined with the eight previous objectives, might be too much to accomplish simultaneously, given limited time and resources.
Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation	Lead: Barbara Neale
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Feedback</i>
1. Seek input from military services on baseline conditions and most significant risks that threaten mission sustainment at bases and ranges in the SERPPAS region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first action proposes a two-part program on risk. A panel with input from the military services is a good idea. The second panel on

	resiliency should be distinctively separate from the DoD panel.
2. Provide information on knowledge, tools, and methods to assist in managing risk, especially regarding risks to the ability to utilize military lands for their intended purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant discussion items.
3. Set up a SERPPAS engagement process to discuss and understand the identified risks and relate them to the most significant risks that face natural resource conservation and working lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant discussion items.
4. Consider the development and implementation of value-adding, consensus-driven SERPPAS initiatives to assess and mitigate risks for which the partnership deems such action appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For these objectives (as well as each objective in the Strategic Plan), there needs to be a direct connection to benefits to the military mission. What specific issues are covered by this Work Group/focus areas that are not covered by the others?
Energy Development and Siting	Lead: Ron Tickle
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Feedback</i>
1. Promote and develop State-level siting processes for each SERPPAS Member.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word member should be replaced with 'State'.
2. Encourage States and military installations to pursue Compatible Use and Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) initiatives through the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can potentially be combined with objective three; and broadened to not specifically mention JLUS and OEA. The actions below can specifically mention these funding sources.
3. Mapping Effort: Develop State-level maps and a regional map for States, wind developers, and other members of the industry to identify areas of military concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word 'military' should be removed from this objective to make it applicable to all SERPPAS partners. Important to make sure that this mapping effort is not duplicated efforts already completed/underway by other groups.

Resources:

- [Strategic Plan Revision Road Map](#)
- Draft [Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast One-Pager](#)
- Draft [Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species One-Pager](#)
- Draft [Southeast Prescribed Fire Initiative One-Pager](#)
- Draft [Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation One-Pager](#)
- Draft [Energy Development and Siting One-Pager](#)

The Role of Private Forestry in Accomplishing SERPPAS Objectives (Jimmy Bullock)

- Mike Harris introduced Jimmy Bullock, of Resource Management Services, to speak about his work with the National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO), the SERPPAS Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species Work Group, and other forestry organizations.

- NAFO, the American Forest Foundation (AFF), and others are working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to implement a concept called ‘conservation without conflict.’ NAFO has a footprint of over 22 million acres across the Southeast, including 14 million acres within SERPPAS states, and 3.3 million within a 20-mile buffer of DoD Installations.
- NAFO members work proactively to conserve at-risk and listed species found in working forest lands; building off a model established by a USFWS pilot project centered on a couple of species (including the gopher tortoise) with an initial five companies. NAFO members collaborate with the USFWS to establish long-term trust and enduring policy through methods such as using third party certification as a tool for demonstrating certainty of management practices.
 - Forest certification provides certainty and accountability, though is not the right step to take for every private landowner.
- Efforts in the Southeast region are based on the premise that the best way to conserve species is to use paths/methods other than listing. These paths/methods include developing and implementing forestry best management practices focused on species conservation. NAFO is working with the University of Georgia to find links between forestry best management practices and species conservation, and will use these links to encourage further participation in these programs.
- What does success look like for this effort? For landowners, a success would be to have USFWS policies and actions recognize the benefits that active forest management has for at-risk and listed species. Additionally, the goal is to establish culture, policies, and practices rooted in trust, that favor proactive partnerships with private forestry for at-risk and listed species over regulatory efforts.
 - NAFO and their partners would like to see the benefits of forestry best management practices recognized in listing decisions, with special regulations promoting forest management on land where at-risk or listed species are present.
- For SERPPAS, NAFO’s initiative offers the opportunity to engage with large private landowners to advance mutual conservation interests.
 - Can leverage a mutual interest in species conservation to focus on developing conservation opportunities around military installations. Private forest lands surrounding installations can also provide buffer zones from incompatible development, as well as offer possible off-installation training opportunities.
- The AFF has identified eleven priority areas based on a number of factors, including market demand for wood and the prevalence of at-risk species. These priority areas include southwest Georgia, southwest Alabama, north Alabama, the Florida Panhandle, coastal North and South Carolina, and southeast Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, among others. The AFF has committed \$3.5 million to improve habitat for at-risk species in these areas, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has committed an additional \$4.5 million.
- The AFF also collaborates with the USFWS to distribute grants for family forest owners to improve habitat for gopher tortoise on their properties, as well as fund gopher tortoise surveying efforts.
- The Forest Landowners Association (FLA), an association of private landowners whose members actively manage their land with a sustainable approach while still generating an economic return, also work to implement conservation programs. The FLA currently has four primary conservation initiatives centered on at-risk species.
 - Habitat Restoration: FLA provides education and outreach to private forest landowners about longleaf establishment and enhancement. They also facilitate cost-share assistance for habitat restoration on private lands.

- Partnership and Collaboration: FLA holds Forest Forums to bring at-risk species stakeholders together, and Timber Talks to demonstrate forest management practices to agency officials, NGOs, and other stakeholders. There is an At-Risk Species Forest Forum planned for June 2018, in Georgia, and a Timber Talk field tour in Georgia also planned for June 2018.
- Conservation Tools: FLA makes use of voluntary conservation agreements and facilitates the use of conservation tools available to family forest landowners, and is planning a pilot program for multi-species Candidate Conservation Agreements in South Carolina.
- Preclude New Listings: FLA is working toward a common goal of precluding new listing of at-risk species through habitat restoration, partnerships, voluntary conservation, and species data collection. The goal is to facilitate the collection of data on private lands while maintaining landowner confidentiality and confidence, all while building relationships to increase shared knowledge and trust.
- The official ask of SERPPAS is to have a panel at the 2018 SERPPAS Principals meeting including NAFO, AFF, FLA and USFWS to further explore how to expand the role of private forestry in conservation of at-risk species to benefit military installations.

Resources:

- [Presentation: Conservation Through Collaboration: At-Risk Species Initiative](#)
- [Conservation Without Conflict Draft Purpose Statement](#)

The State of Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast: Updates and Progress from Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina (Tim Beaty, Army Fort Stewart (GA SL); Buck McLaughlin, U.S. Air Force (Avon Park AFR); Mary Lou Addor, N.C. State University (ENC SL))

- Ryan Orndorff congratulated the recently announced Georgia Sentinel Landscape partnership, and introduced Tim Beaty to provide an overview and updates to the group. The North Carolina and Florida Sentinel Landscapes partnerships provided their own updates during this session as well.
- Tim Beaty gave an overview of the installations involved in the Georgia Sentinel Landscapes partnership, as well as some background behind the partnership's formation. What started as an informal relationship between Fort Stewart and the Townsend Bombing Range, eventually grew to include the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the Conservation Fund, the United States Marine Corps, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, among others. These partnerships were then formalized under the umbrella of the Georgia Sentinel Landscape.
- The partnership developed four primary focus areas: developing REPI buffers for military installations; conservation of gopher tortoise and related species in the sandhills; preserving the Savannah River as a source of drinking water; and developing easement programs centered on farmlands and prime or unique soils.
- The partnership's short-term goals include appointing steering and executive committees; securing additional funding support; and hiring a partnership coordinator. It will also work to accelerate REPI conservation within the landscape, and to expand conservation easements along the Savannah River.
- Long-term goals for the partnership include: protecting at least 65 gopher tortoise populations; using REPI to protect installations and stay ahead of development pressure; and incorporate the goals of the Sentinel Landscape into county-level conservation plans.
- Buck MacLaughlin took over from Tim to introduce and provide updates on the Avon Park Air Force Range (AFR) Sentinel Landscape. Avon Park AFR hosts a wide range of different units, and therefore faces a variety of encroachment and sustainment issues. The designation of a national wildlife refuge

around Avon Park AFR, and the subsequent designation of the Avon Park AFR Sentinel Landscape has helped to relieve some of these pressures, but challenges remain.

- Avon Park's goals include: increasing conservation acreage; maintaining and enhancing habitat corridors; ensuring proper management of conservation lands; increasing the participation of willing land owners; streamlining the conservation easement acquisition process; continuing coordination with local governments; and increasing awareness among real-estate appraisers of the need for inclusion of ecosystem services.
- Avon Park has already experienced success, but now the challenge is to make the partnership more than the sum of its parts. Individual partnerships are beneficial, but broader, more over-arching progress needs to be made. Capacity is another challenge- Avon Park has submitted an application for funding for a coordinator position, which should help the partnership act more cohesively. One of the partnership's major goals is to work to streamline the conservation easement acquisition process; possibly by utilizing partnerships in the context of the Avon Park Sentinel Landscape to ease the management burden to landowners.
- Mary Lou Addor rounded out the Sentinel Landscapes discussion by providing an update on the Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape, which includes 33 North Carolina counties which also includes Dare County Bombing Range, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Fort Bragg, Camp Lejeune, and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.
- The North Carolina partnership that evolved into the Sentinel Landscape began in 2011, before it achieved formal Sentinel Landscape designation in 2016. The partnership now encompasses 33 organizations and agencies as it carries out its mission of maintaining and enhancing working lands and waters, conservation, and military readiness through collaboration and innovation.
- In the short term, the partnership seeks to increase awareness, understanding, and problem-solving ability among stakeholders in North Carolina (e.g. landowners, military, state natural resource and agricultural agencies, funding entities, and non-governmental organizations).
- Since 2011, what is now the North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes partnership has developed an all-Service military mission footprint map; established A Working Lands Conservation Trust; tested and validated innovative conservation concepts to achieve goals at a lower cost; and coordinated state and local programs to provide benefits to military training.
- Future strategic efforts for the partnership include the following:
 - Linking compatible resources: preserve compatible resource (land, water, air, and spectrum) uses for economic, social, and environmental benefits;
 - Reengage with partners and establish new partners: develop the Sentinel Landscapes partnership, its staying power, and the integration of respective programs;
 - Cultivate working relationships with the FCC: cultivate awareness and progress of the North Carolina Sentinel Landscape with the Federal Coordinating Committee (FCC);
 - Expand landowner opportunities, resources, and recognition: explore specific opportunities, resources, and recognition strategies in priority areas for landowners and communities across the Sentinel Landscape designated area; and,
 - Expand coordination and funding opportunities: generate funding opportunities, capacities, and linkages across the partnership for permanent and innovative funding strategies.
- SERPPAS is perfectly positioned to play the role of regional coordinator among these three and other Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast. SERPPAS can promote Sentinel Landscapes policies/initiatives from a regional standpoint, and can help to formalize discussions with and build relationships among all of the Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast region.

Resources:

- [Presentation: Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes Partnership](#)
- [Presentation: Avon Park Air Force Range Sentinel Landscape](#)
- [Avon Park Air Force Range Sentinel Landscape Fact Sheet](#)
- [Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Fact Sheet](#)
- [Georgia Sentinel Landscape Fact Sheet](#)

Military Wildland Fire Challenges and the Value of Inter-Agency Burn Teams (Kevin Porteck, Air Force; Joel Godfrey and Matt Mattox, AEC; Randy Tate LLA)

- At the last Steering Committee meeting, some members described challenges they had in describing prescribed fire, and the benefits from prescribed fire, to their commanders or their communities. In response to this, the Prescribed Fire Work Group asked representatives from the Army, Air Force, and NGO community to speak on their experiences with prescribed fire, and the benefits that stem from it, as well as to highlight some of the challenges they face in increasing the use of prescribed fire.
- Jennifer Fawcett began this discussion by describing a new mapping effort under development in partnership with the South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC). The mapping tool overlays the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy blueprint (itself a rollup of mapping efforts undertaken by LCCs across the Southeast) with layers detailing all military training routes in the Southeast, areas of wildfire risk, and the boundaries of current Sentinel Landscapes in the region. Additional layers can be added as needed. The overlapping nature of these equities speaks to the opportunities the different SERPPAS Work Groups have to cooperate in accomplishing shared conservation goals.
- Kevin Porteck continued the discussion with an overview of the Air Force Wildland Fire program, which uses prescribed fire to maintain ranges and ensure they're fully available for military operations. The success that the Air Force has had with this program has resulted in less operational time lost due to state-wide fires and conditions. In 2017, the program conducted prescribed burns on approximately 108,000 acres at Air Force installations in the Southeast. This was accomplished through partnerships with various organizations, including with the USFWS, which was involved with every burn in some regard.
- The Air Force wanted to have a more centralized and unified approach to prescribed fire, which led to the establishment of the Wildland Fire Center in 2012. The Center's headquarters, located at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, now sponsors training programs for all the military services, and leverages partnerships with existing fire organizations in other branches of the federal government (i.e. USFS and USFWS) to accomplish their mission. The center also tracks Air Force wildland fire qualifications and manages wildland fire data, which it uses to contribute to the science of prescribed fire.
- Through this program, the Air Force has concluded that prescribed burning is the single most efficient method of habitat restoration and of guaranteeing uninterrupted access to mission landscapes. Prescribed fire creates a landscape that reduces the frequency and intensity of munitions-caused wildfires while maintaining the integrity of natural fire dependent ecosystems. In addition, prescribed fire helps to decrease liability claims against the Department of Defense for fires that have gone outside the boundary of military ranges. Liability costs stemming from such fires over the past several years have been significant.

- Joel Godfrey and Matt Mattox, both of the Army Environmental Command (AEC), provided insight into the Army's approach to prescribed fire. The Army has used prescribed fire for many years as a silvicultural practice to manage timber resources for sustainable training and forestry management. This tool has also been strategically used to minimize the risk of wildfire impact to Army resources and private lands surrounding Army installations.
- The Army executes prescribed fire through the use of Integrated Wildland Fire Management Plans, as well as through the use of seasoned firefighters and other fire practitioners located on Army installations who have the experience needed to manage fire and conduct prescribed burns. Internal Army guidance is currently out of date, and the Environmental Program Division of ACSIM is working with Army Land Holding Commands to update this guidance.
- As a result of a Wildland Fire Working Group set up by the Army's Installation Management Command (IMCOM) in 2013, multiple challenges were identified with expanding the use of prescribed fire on Army lands, and developed actions to address these challenges, including:
 - Centrally-funded National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) training opportunities for Garrison personnel, and coordinating with the USFS and USFWS to develop training tracking mechanisms;
 - Applying a cross-directorate approach to appropriate funding sources for fire response and prescribed burning for facilities and ecosystems; and,
 - Improved program coordination and fire data management.
- The Army's prescribed fire efforts are still a work in progress, and it continues to coordinate with the Air Force to share information and lessons learned as it continues to develop its program.
- Randy Tate concluded the discussion by presenting on the Georgia Interagency Burn Team, which is a cooperative effort among federal and state agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations. The Team's mission is to provide the cooperators an opportunity to share equipment and personnel to achieve each cooperators' burn objectives. The goal is to ensure that fire is effectively applied to fire dependent habitats and to facilitate the cooperators' use of prescribed fire to maintain or restore wildlife habitats and fire-dependent ecosystems beneficial to endangered or threatened species.
- The Memorandum of Understanding governing the Interagency Burn Team, their third since the team was established in 2004, provides a mechanism for cooperators to work together to conduct prescribed burning in accordance with either the Georgia Forestry Commission or NWCG policies and procedures, and requires each cooperator to waive all claims against the other cooperators for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring in the consequence of conducting prescribed fire as part of this burn team.

Resources:

- [Presentation: SECAS Blueprint and Fire Risk Priorities Mapping Effort](#)
- [Presentation: Air Force Wildland Fire Program](#)
- [Presentation: IMCOM – Wildland Fire](#)
- [Presentation: Prescribed Fire Partnerships](#)

Principals Meeting Theme and Structure: Managing Risks for a Resilient Southeast: Sustaining Readiness, Natural Resources and Working Lands (Addie Thornton, SERPPAS Coordinator)

- Addie reviewed details on the location, lodging, transportation, and schedule of events for the May 2018 SERPPAS Principals meeting in Fort Walton Beach, hosted by Eglin Air Force Base, in Florida. She

also introduced the meeting's theme, "Managing Risk for a Resilient Southeast: Sustaining Readiness, Natural Resources and Working Lands".

- During last year's Principals meeting, the Steering Committee was charged with developing a new SERPPAS Strategic Plan centering on five focus areas: threatened, endangered, and at-risk species; prescribed fire; sentinel landscapes; coastal resilience and regional adaptation; and energy development.
- The goal for this meeting will be to officially introduce the new 2018 – 2020 SERPPAS Strategic Plan for review and approval by the SERPPAS Principals. Following this Steering Committee meeting, Addie will work with the SERPPAS Work Group leads to rework and finalize all Strategic Plan objectives and action items based on feedback from this meeting.
- Each Steering Committee member will be responsible for briefing their Principal on the draft Strategic Plan prior to the Principals meeting in May, and will communicate any additional edits/revisions to the plan to the SERPPAS Coordinator prior to the Principals meeting. Steering Committee members will also prepare their Principals to speak on their specific objectives within the Strategic Plan during a round robin session at the Principals meeting.
- The Steering Committee members can expect to see the briefing packet from the SERPPAS Coordinator in the first week of April.

Resources:

- [Presentation: 2018 Spring Steering Committee Meeting](#)

Day Two

Welcome Back (SERPPAS Steering Committee Co-Chairs)

- The Co-Chairs welcomed meeting attendees back for the second day of the meeting. After a brief re-cap of the previous day's sessions, Ryan Orndorff gave a presentation on insights from DoD leadership on current SERPPAS goals and initiatives.

Insights from DoD Leadership and Discussion (Ryan Orndorff, DoD OSD)

- Ryan Orndorff informed the Steering Committee that the new DoD Principal is Mr. Tad Davis, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment. He also serves as the DoD Principal for the Western Regional Partnership. Mr. Davis is focused on ensuring that SERPPAS remains focused on the Secretary of Defense's new priorities for the Department, specifically utilizing partnerships such as SERPPAS to help restore military readiness.
- Mr. Davis has already been briefed on the new SERPPAS Strategic Plan, as well as the current draft schedule for the Principals meeting in May. His goal for that meeting is to make sure SERPPAS is on track to support resilient installations in the Southeast that can support DoD's mission. Future challenges involve the fielding of new weapons platforms that may expand beyond the footprint of DoD's current range infrastructure. Mr. Davis is also focused on water and water resilience; prescribed fire issues; and threatened, endangered, and at-risk species issues. He's particularly interested in the progress made on species status assessments as well as the red-cockaded woodpecker. Given the Principals meeting

location, hurricane response and effects on infrastructure in the Southeast and the military's readiness mission may also be topics of discussion.

- Mr. Davis has drafted letters to the military services and DoD Components requesting participation in the DoD-only panel during the Principals meeting. The primary function of this DoD-only panel will be for Mr. Davis to hear the main encroachment-related challenges facing each of the military services, and to explore what he and SERPPAS can do to help mitigate these challenges. He has also drafted letters to the SERPPAS State Principals to personally invite them to attend the meeting.
- The Steering Committee should ensure that the agenda for the Principals meeting is ready for Principal-level review, and focused on issues that resonate for all Principals. The agenda and meeting discussion needs to remain at a high level, and needs to stay connected to the objectives in the new Strategic Plan and how these objectives relate to and impact the military mission.

Focus Area Pitch for the Principals Meeting (Work Group Leads)

- Addie Thornton and Nancy Walters facilitated this section of the meeting, during which the SERPPAS Work Group leads discussed how their objectives in the Strategic Plan address the risks related to their focus area, and identified asks and decisions to pose to the Principals during the Principals meeting. They then solicited feedback from the Steering Committee to incorporate into their objectives/asks/decisions. Addie informed the group that she is developing fact sheets based on the objectives in the new Strategic Plan, as well as a Commander's Guide to SERPPAS, which will help communicate SERPPAS and its initiatives to unfamiliar officials/commanders/etc. Drafts of these will be completed sometime in late March/early April.
- The Sentinel Landscapes Work Group will provide a briefing on the Georgia Sentinel Landscape, and will potentially highlight one high-level success/innovation stemming from each of the Sentinel Landscapes in the Southeast. The goal for this discussion will be to ensure that SERPPAS and the Principals recognize the value and importance of designated Sentinel Landscapes, as well as to prompt discussion of how Sentinel Landscapes and other partnerships can help protect and sustain the military mission footprint across the Southeast.
- The Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species Work Group will discuss the successes they've had over the past several years, including the gopher tortoise crediting strategy and the developing red-cockaded woodpecker strategy focusing on Fort Benning. The primary challenge ahead for the group is the amount of additional species left to evaluate, and how to anticipate and mitigate conflicts related to these species before they happen.
 - As part of their presentation, the group plans to have a panel discussion with representatives from the forestry industry to discuss concepts for working together with the private sector to achieve conservation goals.
 - Specific asks to the Principals include obtaining their help on simplifying the easement process, as well as addressing the adjusted gross income limitations with Farm Bill programs. The group will also solicit feedback from the military services on how SERPPAS can work with them to mitigate the effect of threatened, endangered, and at-risk species on or adjacent to their installations in the Southeast.
- The Southeast Prescribed Fire Work Group will discuss the challenges that DoD is facing related to fire, and the importance of prescribed fire as it related to sustaining access to military training ranges as well as broader conservation goals. The group will reference the fire study conducted at Fort Benning, which explains how increased prescribed fire on the installation resulted in increased training flexibility. Additional issues to be discussed at the meeting include where prescribed burning needs overlap with

- REPI priority areas and existing Sentinel Landscapes; how to improve the current prescribed fire permitting system; and how to increase prescribed burns off military installations, particularly how to deal with barriers related to insurance and liability.
- Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation and Energy Development and Siting are relatively new, emerging concepts that SERPPAS is focusing on, and as such are not as developed as the other three focus areas. The Steering Committee will seek the Principals' input on these concepts during the Principals meeting, including feedback on what specific areas SERPPAS should be focusing on.
 - The Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation Work Group plans to have a panel discussion incorporating both the military and regional, non-military perspectives on relevant issues. This will provide the Principals with information and context to help them decide on the focus and direction for this work group.
 - Ron Tickle, of the DoD Siting Clearinghouse, will present to the Principals on the Energy Development and Siting Work Group during the meeting, including the group's current status and future direction. The discussion will focus on how the Work Group is working with SERPPAS states to incorporate military activities into energy siting regulations, as well as the growing challenges associated with the siting of energy projects.
 - The Steering Committee will work with the Work Groups and their leads to finalize the agenda for the Principals meeting and develop targeted asks to the Principals based on their objectives in the Strategic Plan.

Wrap up and Adjourn (SERPPAS Steering Committee Co-Chairs)

- Ryan Orndorff and Steve Friedman closed the meeting by thanking the attendees for their participation and feedback, and encouraging attendees to submit additional input and/or feedback on the Strategic Plan to Addie, if they have any. Addie thanked the Work Group leads for their input, and announced that the website for the Principals meeting will be going live before April 1, 2018. The registration process will be slightly different in that it will allow you to make payment ahead of time and all attendees are encouraged to do so. Attendees will be able to register for and find details on the Principals meeting on the website.

Resources

- [2018 SERPPAS Principals Meeting Logistics Sheet](#)
- Registration Website: <http://www.cvent.com/d/mtqgnv>