



ACUB

ARMY COMPATIBLE USE BUFFER PROGRAM



Conservation easements protect the habitat of the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program creates land conservation partnerships between the Army and outside organizations to protect land from development that is incompatible with the military mission. To date, over 120,000 acres of land have been protected at more than 20 installations since 2003.

BACKGROUND

The United States originally established military installations in rural areas far from population centers. However, as the Nation's population has grown, urban sprawl now abuts many installations. Noise, dust and smoke from weapons, vehicles and aircrafts prompt citizen complaints about military training. Commanders are frequently required to choose between being good neighbors and meeting training and testing requirements. In addition to noise and other mission-related activities that may cause citizen concerns, the presence of cultural and historic resources and the distribution of endangered species can result in training restrictions affecting military readiness. This is referred to as encroachment.

In North Carolina, in order to sustain its military mission and the natural environment, Fort Bragg partnered with the Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Environmental Command in 1998 to develop an innovative approach called the Private Lands Initiative. The primary purpose of this effort was to recover the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker, thereby reducing Army training restrictions.

Congress endorsed the Army's Private Lands Initiative approach and expanded its use with new legislative language in the 2003 National Defense Authorization Act. This provided the Department of Defense with clear legislative authority (10 USC §2684a) to partner with non-Federal governments or private organizations to establish buffers around installations. The Army implements this authority through the ACUB program, which is managed jointly at Army Headquarters level by the offices of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management and the Director of Training.

For more information

U.S. Army Environmental Command
Public Affairs Office
1-800-USA-3845 or 1-800-872-3845

email: imcom-usaecpublicaffairsoffice@conus.army.mil

<http://aec.army.mil>

How Does the ACUB Process Work?

The formalized ACUB process is initiated by an installation, but is reviewed, approved and funded centrally by Army Headquarters. This process includes the development of an installation proposal for addressing off-post buffering needs that will be met through land conservation by the partner. After approval of the installation proposal, the Army and the identified partner enter into a cooperative agreement that specifies the terms of how the partner will accomplish land conservation to benefit the Army mission.

For ACUBs, the cooperating partner purchases easements or fee simple property from a willing seller with funds contributed by the Army and other partners. These areas provide a natural buffer between military training lands and residential or commercial activities in perpetuity. The partner, not the Army, receives the deeded interest in the property and provides for long-term land management.

The end result is that the Army avoids suburban sprawl on installation borders, as well as other types of encroachment, which leads to greater training flexibility and continued environmental stewardship. The partner organizations also meet their objectives such as natural resource protection, establishment of hunting programs, agriculture, public recreation, cultural preservation and other Army compatible interests.

ACUB Partnership Objectives

- Conservation of natural resources
- Protection of other compatible land uses
- Sustain military training and testing

For more information on the ACUB program, go to <http://aec.army.mil/usaec/acub/>.



A neighborhood sits next to the installation fence line at Camp Bullis, TX.

