



# *DoD Southwest Region Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species (TER-S) Workshop*

Project #  
07-377

## **Background:**

The Department of Defense (DoD) is steward of nearly 30 million acres of land as well as substantial waters and air space used for training Military Service personnel and testing their equipment. In the southwestern United States, the military manages vast areas of land and resources within its installations boundaries. These areas, which provide often unique habitat for a great diversity of plants and animals, are critical assets for military testing and training. To facilitate the recovery of listed and at-risk species, and to mitigate against the need for new listings, increased attention must be given to the management of threatened, endangered, and at-risk species (TER-S) from both an ecosystem and cross-boundary perspective. This workshop was cosponsored with the DoD's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) and Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP) to ensure coverage of the full research-demonstration-management continuum.

## **Objective:**

The specific objectives for the Southwest Region TER-S Workshop were to: 1) assess TER-S management needs within a regional context, with an emphasis on system-level and cross-boundary approaches; 2) assess these approaches maintaining common species while recovering TER-S populations; 3) assess current understanding of the ecology of arid and semiarid ecosystems—in terms of understanding the dynamics of highly variable and unpredictable environments that are subject to long-term drought—and how that affects management approaches; 4) examine the current state of the practice within DoD for such holistic approaches; 5) identify gaps in knowledge, technology, management, and partnerships that, if addressed, could improve implementation of system-level and cross-boundary approaches; and 6) prioritize DoD investment opportunities to address these gaps.

## **Summary of Approach:**

To help prepare participants, DoD commissioned a series of white papers, and provided these to participants prior to the workshop. The workshop itself consisted of plenary presentations summarizing the sponsoring programs, DoD's Western Regional Partnership, and the white papers; a field tour of Fort Huachuca; two days of concurrent breakout group meetings; and a final session to synthesize outcomes.

Session topics included: 1) TER-S Management: Understanding Patterns of Rarity within an Ecological

System Context; 2) Ecological Processes and Their Variability in Space and Time; and 3) Monitoring, Management, and Coordination Across Boundaries. During discussions, participants identified issues related to ecological systems, infrequent large-scale disturbance events, maintaining connectivity amidst land-use and climate change, impacts from upland restoration, and fire effects and dynamics, as well as opportunities to strengthen DoD partnerships with federal and state agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations throughout the region.

## **Benefit:**

By considering workshop recommendations, Legacy, SERDP, and ESTCP can help address regional ecological threats by targeting program resources to conservation-related research, demonstration, and management efforts that support species and habitat protection goals, while maximizing training and testing flexibility.

## **Accomplishments:**

Workshop outcomes identified priority regional research and management needs, including fire-related issues, impacts from climate change, invasive species, and habitat fragmentation. Participants also recognized the need for additional information on system linkages, range limiting determinants, and indicators. For more information on the *Southwest Region TER-S Workshop*, please visit [www.serdp.org/tes/Southwest/](http://www.serdp.org/tes/Southwest/).



Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cyanthus latirostris*)  
– Photo by L. Peter Boice

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