



DoD Species At Risk – AZ / NM Military Ranges

6-299

Background:

The Department of Defense (DoD) is concerned about the large number of species at risk (SAR) that occur on military lands, and the potential for conservation of such species in lieu of listing, which could further encroach on the military mission. Arizona and New Mexico include some of the largest military ranges and installations in the nation and include a high diversity of SAR on military lands. The DoD SAR – AZ/NM Military Ranges project was initiated through the DoD Legacy Program. We worked with multiple military ranges and Project Leadership Teams (Military, FWS, State) to focus on selected species, team development, brief habitat-based management reports for those species, and opportunities to further explore cooperative conservation with partners.

Objective:

The overall purpose of this project is to work with multiple military ranges and installations and Project Leadership Teams in Arizona and New Mexico, to focus on selected species at risk, team development, produce brief habitat-based management reports for selected species, and explore opportunities for cooperative conservation with partners. The project's outcome products included creating four permanent Conservation Partnership Teams for four military range clusters: 1) Barry M. Goldwater Range, Yuma Proving Ground and Marine Corps Air Station Yuma; 2) White Sands Missile Range, Fort Bliss, and Holloman AFB; 3) Camp Navajo and Naval Observatory Flagstaff Station; and 4) Kirtland AFB and New Mexico Army National Guard's Camel Tracks Training Range. Additional products include the brief habitat-based management reports for selected species and a series of four outreach posters. The high biodiversity of Arizona and New Mexico is reflected in the four areas that include the Sonoran desert, Chihuahuan desert, Coconino Plateau and mountain ranges of northern Arizona, and the southern Rocky Mountains – southern Colorado Basin area of northern New Mexico.



Dawn at Barry M. Goldwater Range

Summary of Approach:

The four Project Leadership Teams used the support of the two State natural heritage programs to review the science and management of selected species at risk and to develop brief habitat-based management reports. Arizona species were assessed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Research Branch. New Mexico species were reviewed by the Natural Heritage New Mexico program. Team development was important as well and each team decided to become a permanent Conservation Partnership Team to work on military lands and surrounding lands at a landscape level with partners in cooperative conservation and outreach. Team development was boosted by participation in two DoD INMRP – State Wildlife Action Plan Workshops held in Phoenix and Albuquerque in late 2006 and early 2007.

Benefit:

This DoD Legacy Program project contributes to sustaining the military mission on multiple military ranges and installations in the southwest, while contributing to the conservation of highly diverse species at risk as part of the military's stewardship of its lands. Cooperative conservation with partners benefits the military mission as conservation partnership teams can effectively strategize to support military readiness and landscape level conservation.

Accomplishments:

This effort culminated in a phase one level of developing key information on selected species at risk on military lands, developing permanent Conservation Partnership Teams in four focal areas of multiple military ranges and installations in the Southwest, and laying the groundwork for initial outreach and partnership opportunities at a landscape level. One team served as a catalyst to initiate the encroachment buffer conservation partnership for Camp Navajo, Naval Observatory Flagstaff Station, and State, Federal, and county and city partners.

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