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State-wide Conservation Forum to Facilitate Cooperative Conservation

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE LEGACY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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REPORT OSD61T1

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MARCH 2007

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State-wide Conservation Forum to Facilitate Cooperative Conservation

OSD61T1/MARCH 2007

Executive Summary

This Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Legacy Program project provided for a conservation forum at the state-wide level in Virginia on December 14, 2006 at the Pocahontas State Park in Chester, Virginia. The purpose was to launch regional conservation partnerships in support of the Governor's land conservation initiative and military compatible land use and conservation buffers addressing both land protection and restoration. At the forum's conclusion, commitments were made by the forum attendees for three follow-on regional forums to explore specific conservation partnerships in the Northern Virginia area that includes Fort A.P. Hill, Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren, and Marine Corps Base Quantico; the south-central region that includes Fort Pickett; and the Tidewater region that includes Fort Eustis, Fort Story, Langley Air Force Base, and the Oceana Naval Air Station. These specific partnership meetings expect to explore details of regional compatible land use planning and encroachment and other factors that can affect the military's ability to continue to execute training and testing requirements at facilities in Virginia. Further, state and federal officials agreed to continue dialogues at the policy level to determine other areas of coordination and partnership.

Virginia has significant military locations for all Services, and increased activities as a result of base realignment and closure. Associated realignments will increase joint training and testing requirements and the need for coordination among and between Services and with other agencies and conservation organizations. The forum included an educational component that allowed state agencies and local conservation organizations to explain objectives and focus areas, and provided an overview of Department of Defense (DoD) and Service-specific processes to address encroachment with compatible land use planning.

Specific follow-on actions and recommendations are for the OSD Legacy Program:

- ◆ Establish a mechanism for continued communication among forum participants regarding future events, common objectives, and opportunities, with links to existing systems and partnership networks.

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- ◆ Identify specific opportunities for partnerships in the South-central, Northern Virginia, and Tidewater regions, including military locations for all Services not in attendance.
 - ◆ Add an additional overlay of DoD areas of concern to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation geographic information system to identify common priority areas where the DoD could partner with the state and other partners to preserve them.
 - ◆ Continue state and DoD cooperation to ensure that national security considerations are included in criteria for land conservation priorities and funding.

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Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank the Legacy program office, especially Peter Boice and Pedro Morales, for supporting this project to initiate a conservation forum for Virginia. Jan Larkin at the Office of the Secretary of Defense also provided leadership and support throughout the process. The success of this initial project in Virginia paves the way forward for future proposals that support similar conservation forums in other states with critical land training and testing assets for all military services.

The forum co-sponsors, Harry Gregori from the Virginia Sustainable Future Forum, Joe Maroon from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Grace Bottitta from Ducks Unlimited provided countless hours and advice in structuring the forum, identifying the appropriate attendees, and managing the forum process. Without the insightful assistance of these professionals, the forum would not have had the cross-organizational and enduring impact. Second, Lieutenant Colonel Joe Knott from Headquarters, Department of the Army; Alan Zusman from Headquarters, Department of the Navy; Bruce Jackson from Headquarters, United States Marine Corps; and Lynne Engleman from Headquarters, Department of the Air Force provided valuable assistance with protocol and contacts for installations in Virginia. Laura Rodman from the Army Environmental Command's Northern Regional Environmental Office and Chris Porter, DoD Regional Environmental Coordinator, also provided assistance with installation and other local contacts. Finally, we thank the nearly 100 professionals who spent the day at Pocahontas State Park to learn about the military compatible land use and conservation buffer program and made a commitment to continue exploring partnerships at the regional level to address both land protection and restoration.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As modern American landowners, military installations can no longer focus internally on their own needs. The effects of military actions (noise and dust) travel across the fence line and activities outside the fence line (e.g., environmental regulations, population growth, and incompatible land uses) impact mission activities within it. This is an interdisciplinary issue that requires coordination and awareness across functional areas to resolve. To address encroachment and incompatible land use issues, the Army and Marine Corps have used a cooperative approach to regional conservation through conservation forums. Conservation forums provide the method towards initiating these conversations, engaging in productive dialogue, and establishing long-term partnerships to achieve compatible land uses and natural resource sustainability. Conservation forums are regional gatherings of diverse organizations focused on land and natural resource conservation as a mutual interest. They are led by a state agency or non-governmental organization, and are open to all interested federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. The forums can mature into chartered partnerships with formalized charters agreed to by all participants to outline their purpose and govern activities. The conservation forum approach also supports the President's cooperative conservation initiative as outlined in Executive Order 13352.

Conservation forums have launched successful partnerships in several locations. The public-private cooperative partnership concept related to military compatible land uses originated in the 1990s at Fort Bragg in the Sandhills region of North Carolina. This area is dominated by a long leaf pine ecosystem that is home to the red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), an endangered species. After significant training restrictions were imposed in the early 1990s, Fort Bragg, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the state, and other regional partners began to look for solutions to halt RCW habitat decline. As the different organizations communicated with each other, they came to a common conclusion that public lands alone cannot achieve species recovery. The joint solution included continued environmental stewardship on public lands and expanding habitat acreage on private lands using easements to secure and restore the habitat. In 1995, the Army entered into a cooperative agreement with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to identify and acquire private land or development rights from willing sellers for conservation. In 2000, the Sandhills Conservation Partnership was formally established. Since then, conservation forums have initiated partnerships with Marine Corps and Army installations in South Carolina, California, and Hawaii.

VIRGINIA'S NEED FOR A CONSERVATION FORUM

Virginia was selected for a state-wide conservation forum due to the presence of significant military assets with activities and operations that cannot be duplicated at other locations, and significant potential for increased mission requirements. Without immediate coordination of conservation efforts, access, capability, and capacity at these military installations can be permanently lost. Virginia is also at a critical juncture with state targeted conservation efforts. An investment at the state-wide level to coordinate conservation activities can provide the necessary impetus to activate a sustained effort towards cooperative conservation and sustainability.

Specifically, eastern Virginia continues to experience intense development pressures from the Washington, DC, area and throughout the I-95 corridor. The state-wide growth rate was 14 percent in the last decade, with many counties reporting growth rates in excess of 50 percent over the same period. As rural and forested lands are converted to residential and housing land uses, critical habitat is fragmented or destroyed and essential natural resources are lost. The state of Virginia is particularly interested in supporting compatible land use activities, and the legislature recently provided matching funds to support buffer activities at Fort A.P. Hill. The installation is cooperating with three local conservation organizations on a comprehensive buffer program. Quantico Marine Corps Base is also interested in executing buffer projects. A state-wide conservation forum in Virginia can assist in coordinating conservation efforts in the Fort A.P. Hill-Quantico area, and also establish priorities for the larger region from the DC beltway to Norfolk, including the lower Chesapeake Bay.

MEETING LOGISTICS

Sponsors

The Virginia Conservation Forum was conducted under a Legacy Resource Management Program contract. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Virginia Sustainable Future Forum, and Ducks Unlimited provided in-kind contributions to assist with forum planning, logistics, and execution.

DOD LEGACY PROGRAM

The Legacy Program was established by Congress to provide the Department of Defense (DoD) with an opportunity to enhance the stewardship of natural and cultural resources on more than 25 million acres of land under DoD jurisdiction. The Legacy Program allows the DoD to determine how to incorporate better the stewardship of irreplaceable natural and cultural resources into the military mission.

VIRGINIA SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FORUM

The Virginia Sustainable Future Forum represents a large network of various public and private organizations throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia that are partnering to advance sustainable solutions for the environment, business, and communities in Virginia. The Forum sponsors a biennial summit to encourage an interchange of ideas across diverse sectors and on topics ranging from energy efficiency and security, healthy buildings, air quality, land use, and water resources.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

The DCR works with Virginians to conserve, protect, and enhance their lands and improve the quality of the Chesapeake Bay and Virginia's rivers and streams; promotes the stewardship and enjoyment of natural, cultural, and outdoor recreational resources; and ensures the safety of Virginia's dams. DCR is the primary agency responsible for ensuring the Commonwealth achieves the Governor's objective to permanently protect 400,000 acres of land for conservation purposes by 2010.

DUCKS UNLIMITED

Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. In July 2006, Ducks Unlimited signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Army to facilitate local and regional partnerships that will enable conservation of natural resources and priority waterfowl habitats around Army installations while protecting Army installations' ability to properly train Soldiers.

Attendees

Appendix A contains the list of forum attendees, who were invited based on recommendations from co-sponsors. Figure 1-1 shows the distribution of forum attendees from state agencies, non-profits, military headquarters, and military installations. Figure 1-2 shows the distribution of military installations in Virginia by region.

Location

The meeting was held at the Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield County, Virginia. Pocahontas State Park is under the authority of the DCR. The location provided a common ground for all stakeholders in Virginia to come together to discuss common interests in land and natural resources.

Figure 1-1. Virginia Conservation Forum Attendees

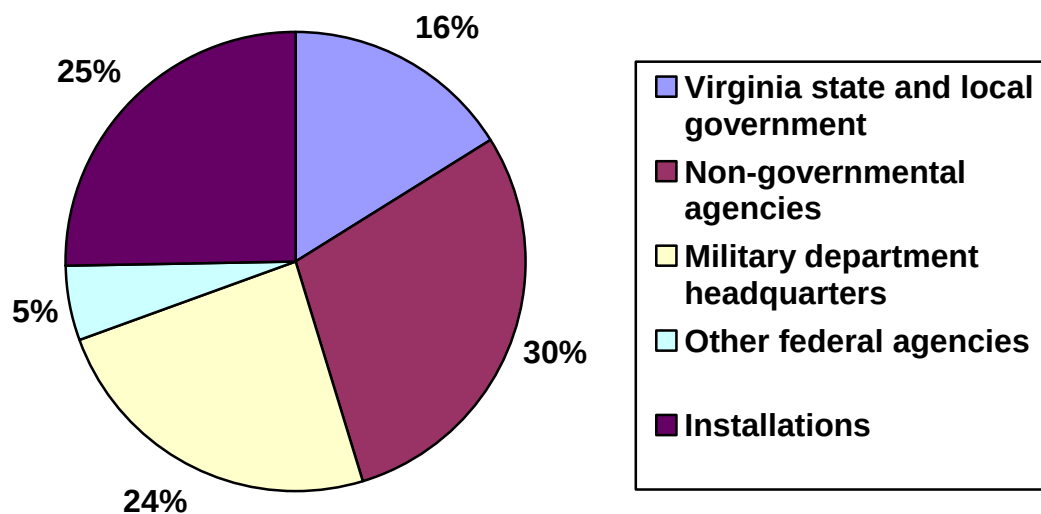
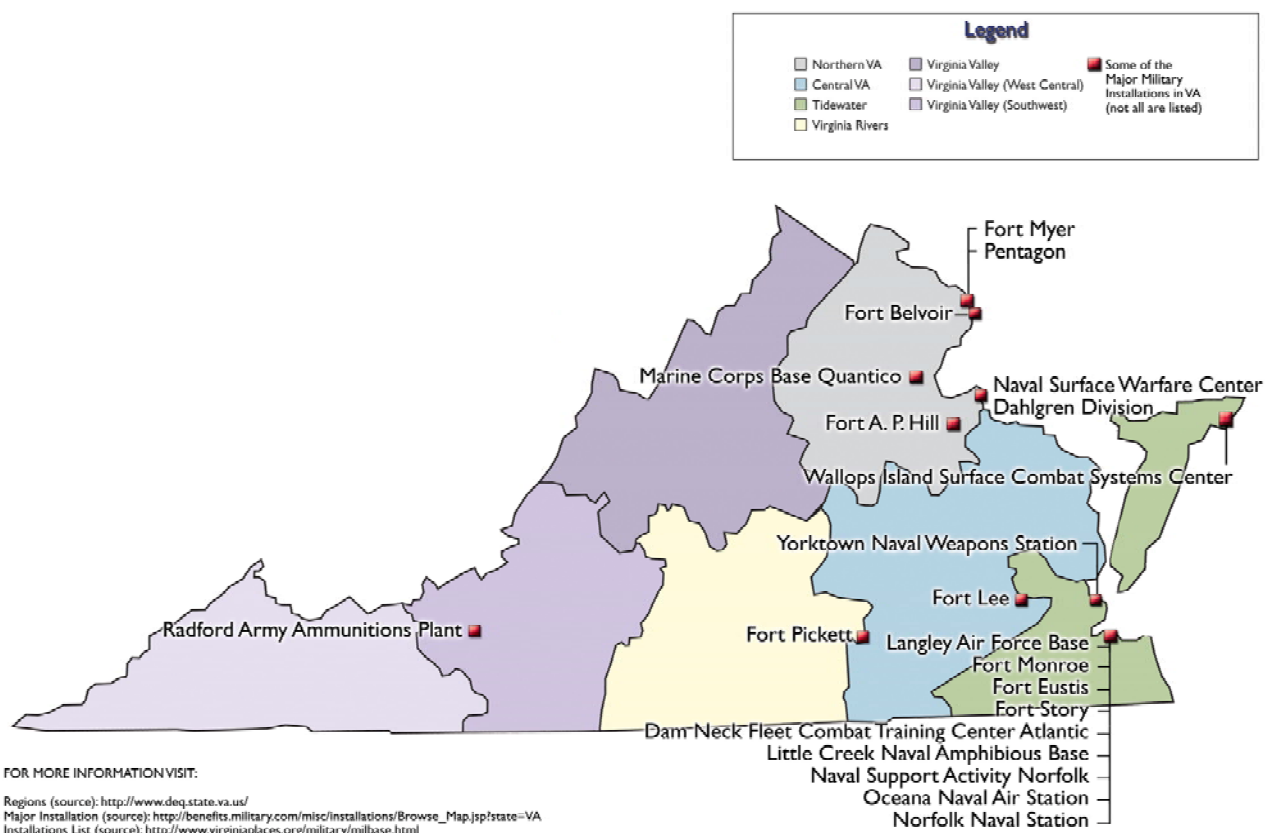


Figure 1-2. Locations of Installations in Virginia



Chapter 2

Presentations

Morning presentations set the stage for small afternoon group discussions related to specific regional partnerships at military installations. Appendix B contains the forum agenda.

L. PRESTON BRYANT, VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Bryant provided background information regarding historical growth trends in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the constitutional imperative to protect natural resources. The state's population has doubled since 1960, with 25 percent of all development occurring over the past 15 years. In support of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement objectives to protect 20 percent of the watershed, Governor Kaine has set forth an increased goal to protect 400,000 acres of land by 2010. Almost 66,000 acres have already been preserved.

There is no dedicated revenue source to support the goal's objectives. Mr. Bryant described state incentives, conservation easements, and other tools to facilitate private landowner cooperation and private organizational contributions towards that goal. Incentives include educational materials regarding land protection, density credits to developers for open space dedication, and Virginia's land conservation tax credit. The Governor's objective is broadly supported as the centerpiece of his environmental agenda, and will provide benefits including protecting water and air quality, limiting sprawl, controlling transportation requirements, and improving air quality.

The DCR is developing a geographic information system (GIS) model to identify priority lands that should be purchased for conservation. The model looks at ecological importance, cultural assets, vulnerability, forestry economics, recreation, farm land, and water quality. An additional overlay of DoD areas of concern should be added to the GIS to identify common priority areas where the DoD could partner with the state and other partners to preserve them.

ALEX BEEHLER, ASSISTANT DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Mr. Beehler explained that the DoD presence in Virginia will continue to grow due to increased utilization of key military locations and other land assets. To carry out present and future missions, the military will require more natural resources and a long-term plan to accommodate growth. Mr. Beehler provided the Fort Bragg example where lawyers, trainers, and natural resource professionals were able to find a solution to training restrictions caused by RCW habitat.

Based on this model of partnering with conservation organizations and state agencies to acquire easements on private property and permanently protect off-post habitat, Congress provided buffering authority in 2003 and has been providing appropriations for this purpose since FY04. Since 2005, the DoD Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) has received \$65 million to leverage other funds for conservation. REPI is DoD's conservation buffer program that enables the military to partner with state and local governments or non-governmental organizations to create conservation buffers that prevent development incompatible with military missions and preserve natural habitat. DoD is looking for joint efforts with other organizations and agencies and has recently entered into a MOU with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be able to leverage Farm Bill funds towards agricultural preservation.

JOE MAROON, DIRECTOR, VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Mr. Maroon explained the DCR Conservation Lands Database is designed to catalogue all protected land towards the governor's objective of protecting 400,000 acres. There is ongoing debate over what can be considered permanently protected lands on DoD installations. Because of national defense requirements, land on military installations cannot be placed under permanent easement. Therefore, they are not eligible under the definitions for this database.

DCR is also having difficulties with landowner cooperation in signing up for the program due to the lack of a formal state funding source. As a result, the state may not be able to allocate money within the landowners preferred time frame. This requires the state to rely heavily on private organizations to act as a bridge between state agencies and landowners.

BRIAN SMITH, DUCKS UNLIMITED VIRGINIA

Mr. Smith provided an overview of Ducks Unlimited's programs, partners, and potentials for further work in Virginia. Ducks Unlimited focuses on wetland protection and restoration, and uses conservation easements, acquisitions, and partnerships to achieve these goals. Ducks Unlimited currently holds 3,000 acres in conservation easements. The Chesapeake Bay area is a priority, with efforts focused in Virginia on the Potomac and lower Chesapeake Bay based on waterfowl surveys. Maintaining or improving water quality and waterfowl habitat in the area will be challenging given the projected regional growth in human populations.

DAVID PHEMISTER, THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Mr. Phemister presented information regarding TNC concerns for migratory bird habitat on Virginia's eastern shore. A cohesive and broad-based partnership approach is necessary to address the rapidly-escalating land prices that are making conservation unaffordable. TNC has put together a successful partnership that has already protected over 600 acres with funds from more than 10 sources. Lessons learned through these partnerships include the need for a common vision, patience, and commitment to work together.

CHARLES MUNSON, DEPUTY TO THE COMMANDER, FORT A.P. HILL

Mr. Munson provided an overview Fort A.P. Hill's successful Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program. It is the first ACUB in the state. For most of its history, Fort A.P. Hill was located in an isolated, rural area of Virginia, far from development. The installation is a largely unfragmented forest with a number of exemplary natural communities. DCR has recently identified Fort A.P. Hill and the adjoining forested lands as one of only six large natural landscape cores of outstanding ecological significance (the highest ranking). Caroline and Essex counties were rural, sparsely populated areas, dominated by forestland and small farms. Both counties are experiencing significant growth. While this tremendous growth is occurring in close proximity to Fort A.P. Hill, it has not yet significantly affected the mission. However, continued development with incompatible activities may produce significant obstacles to future use of range and training lands at Fort A.P. Hill. While direct conflicts associated with encroaching development around Fort A.P. Hill pose the most immediate and tangible threat to training activity and capacity at Fort A.P. Hill, it is important to note that environmental degradation associated with land development outside the fence line can lead to additional training restrictions inside the fence line.

Fort A.P. Hill's comprehensive ACUB program will prevent encroachment that would disrupt, limit, or diminish training capabilities or flexibility as well as protect key natural habitats, ecological systems, and the associated flora and fauna.

The installation and its partners are creating a roughly 16,000 acre buffer zone located on the northeastern boundary of the installation, 8,300 acres along the southern boundary, and 11,000 acres on the western boundary. The ACUB helps to preserve the ecological integrity of the surrounding landscape to prevent operational restrictions likely to occur if Fort A.P. Hill becomes an island of quality habitat in an otherwise developed and fragmented landscape.

ROBERT UHRICH, OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT)

Mr. Uhrich explained the nature of encroachment pressures at Navy installations and the Navy's buffer tool, which is one of a broad range of compatible land use tools available. He presented information on the Navy's encroachment partnering program, whose focus is on leveraging and partnering with a range of eligible entities under the 10 U.S.C. 2684a authority. Through FY06, the Department of the Navy has protected 16,000 acres within long-term areas of influence. The goal is to manage growth and protect resources. The key to the program's success is active local command effort working with local, regional, and state conservators, local and state agencies, and community leaders to identify and pursue partnering opportunities.

ALICE HOWARD, MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT

Ms. Howard provided specific information on the Marine Corps Encroachment Control Plan for Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. The goal was to control development, not acquire more land. The installation participated in a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) with surrounding county governments to identify options and recommendations. Through the Encroachment Control Planning process, the installation targeted 3,000 acres for protection. The installation is currently working on a transfer of development rights program based on a previous model at Naval Air Station Fallon.

ED PINERO, FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXECUTIVE

Mr. Pinero provided lunchtime remarks shaping the historical context to the cooperative conservation imperative that has been recently emphasized at the federal level. This includes the issuance of the 2004 Executive Order, *Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation*, which directs federal agencies to implement laws relating to the environment and natural resources in a manner that promotes cooperative conservation, with an emphasis on involving local communities, and a 2005 White House Cooperative Conservation conference held in St. Louis, Missouri.

Chapter 3

Recommendations and Actions

In the afternoon, meeting participants divided into three small groups by region, consisting of the Northern, Tidewater, and South-central Virginia regions. Small groups allowed for effective close dialogue among state, regional, and military stakeholders whose common interests toward long-term partnerships can help achieve the state's land conservation goal. Each region identified common goals, tools, and actions required to establish long-term partnerships and land conservation initiatives on military and non-military properties. Each realized there are overlapping objectives, and further regional meetings can assist in articulating areas of interest for future partnering. Specific follow-on actions and recommendations for the OSD Legacy Program include:

- ◆ *Establish a mechanism for continued communication.* All groups requested assistance with continued communication and coordination of future meetings, conference, and partnership networks.
 - Coordinate with Paul Gilbert, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to facilitate the Northern Virginia meeting.
 - Coordinate with John Carlock, Virginia Planning Districts Association to host a follow-on Tidewater regional meeting.
 - Identify existing watershed roundtables that can partner with Fort Pickett ACUB.
 - Contact each regional group for continued partnerships and discussions.
 - Create a DoD Conservation Buffer Program organization point of contact database [to include state and local entities] and distribute to non-governmental organizations.
 - Develop and distribute a DoD Conservation Buffer Program newsletter.
- ◆ *Identify specific opportunities for partnerships.* Use the forum's momentum to identify specific opportunities for partnerships in the South-central, Northern Virginia, and Tidewater regions, including military locations for all Services not in attendance.
 - Identify existing conservation groups active in each region.
 - Determine key funding partners for projects.

-
- Initiate communication on conservation efforts with military locations that did not attend the forum including Fort Belvoir, Quantico Marine Corps Base, and Naval Station Norfolk.
 - ◆ *Add an additional overlay of DoD areas of concern to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation GIS.* The overlay will identify common priority areas where DoD could partner with the state and other partners to preserve them.
 - Develop a GIS overlay of organizations and installation priorities to identify overlapping priority areas for buffering.
 - Account for benefits from natural resources on DoD installations.
 - Identify areas for compatible growth (i.e., industrial and residential) outside and inside military installations.
 - Recommend target areas for Governor's land conservation funding based on risk to military installations based on results of overlay.
 - ◆ *Continue state and DoD cooperation to ensure that national security considerations are included in criteria for land conservation priorities and funding.* By continuing state and DoD cooperation, DoD mission and land conservation and restoration priorities are protected.
 - Determine the methodology for state credit for protected military land with permanent use restriction.
 - Provide central location for sharing military information in the region.
 - Approach state technical committee for Natural Resource Conservation Service prioritization flexibility to increase cost share rate where there is an overlap with military priorities.
 - Provide education and outreach to developers and communities to understand tax benefits of open space and conservation easements.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION—NORTHERN VIRGINIA

The discussion focused on partnership successes at Fort A.P. Hill; application of successful partnership elements at other military locations in the region; and other potential partners in the Northern Virginia region.

- ◆ *Fort A.P. Hill ACUB success story.* The Fort A.P. Hill team began the ACUB process by leveraging existing partnerships. The goal of the first meeting was to find common goals and objectives, starting with broad commonalities working towards specific land areas using GIS. The next

step was to identify the types of opportunities available for the overlapping areas (buffer, change zoning, etc.). Any plans for installation acquisition are identified prior to any ACUB approval to ensure they are separate actions. Fort A.P. Hill was concerned that many former land owners would be resistant to the ACUB since the installation is fairly new, established in the 1950s. But they supported the idea. During the process, the team discovered that the comprehensive plan was outdated. Fort A.P. Hill is working with Carroll and Essex counties on a JLUS.

Fort A.P. Hill has partnered with three significant organizations—TNC, the Conservation Fund, and the Trust for Public Land. This is different from most ACUBs, in which the installation signs a formal partnering agreement with only one partner. Fort A.P. Hill came to this conclusion by default. They wanted to make sure any potential land owner was not excluded because they were uncomfortable with the partner's mission. They wanted to leverage the partners' reputations and what they brought to the table.

The Fort A.P. Hill ACUB was successful due to:

- Leadership support.
- Identifying military and partners' priorities and where they overlapped.
- Not excluding any group who wanted to participate.
- ◆ *Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren.* Issues include firing weapons out into the Potomac and related noise impacts. The Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren was involved in the state's reality check exercise that tried to determine the environmental and ripple effects from development. Northern Neck Canal Conservancy and TNC might be potential partners.
- ◆ *Quantico Marine Corps Base.* Encroachment from development is the installation's largest concern. A conservation forum already exists in the area. The base is developing an Encroachment Control Plan. The next steps are to conduct surveys that document how the base impacts the community. Quantico Marine Corps Base will share the results with surrounding communities, planners, and potential partners. Potential partners include Prince William Park Service and the FBI. Quantico Marine Corps Base point of contact is Mr. Ken Oliver, Community Planning Liaison Officer, kenneth.oliver@usmc.mil.
- ◆ *Fort Belvoir.* The 2005 base realignment and closure (BRAC) decision will result in an increase of personnel and offices at the installation. Paul Gilbert, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, would like to speak

with Fort Belvoir about conserving land at the end of the airfield that is part of its flight path.

- ◆ *Department of Homeland Security buffer initiatives.* Homeland Security has some potential encroachment concerns that they may not have thought about. Caitlin Myers, Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, would like to work with Mount Weather to preserve property around them.
- ◆ The group expressed frustration in finding the appropriate person on an installation to talk to. The military needs to initiate discussions as a way to develop trust and initiate communications.
- ◆ JLUS results should specifically state where to develop or not to develop.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION—TIDEWATER REGION

Discussions focused around water quality. The Tidewater Region has a variety of stakeholders with goals and objectives depending on organizational mission. The U.S. Forest Service, for example, strives to keep working forests working in order to provide mutual benefits from forests to species and water quality. Other organizations work closely with partners to restore and protect watersheds like the Elizabeth, York, and James Rivers. The military protects training and testing areas by maintaining compatible land use (industrial and residential) and preserving critical habitat on and off the installation.

The Tidewater Region is interested in identifying tools that can help facilitate active participation and input from all regional stakeholders in order to identify buffers that can help each partner achieve its mission. Participants noted key programs to assist them in the future:

- ◆ *JLUS.* DoD policy enables compatibility between military installations and neighboring civilian communities by a joint compatible land use planning and control process conducted by the local community in cooperation with the local military installation. The JLUS program can provide opportunities to help facilitate communication between military and state and local government in the Tidewater region. The cities of Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, and Norfolk joined with the Navy and DoD in July 2004 to develop a JLUS. The recommendations contained in the JLUS allowed land between Oceana and Fentress which helps limit further development in elevated sound and accident potential zones.
- ◆ *REPI program.* The Defense Department's national REPI conservation buffer program helps preserve land around installations by providing funds, so that the installations can enter into agreements to acquire conservation easements. Under the REPI program, the Tidewater Region can work with military partners to identify priority buffer parcels as candidate sites for REPI funding.

- ◆ *MOU between Army and Ducks Unlimited.* The Army and the Ducks Unlimited signed an MOU agreeing to work together to fulfill the goals and objectives of the ACUB program by cooperatively developing, restoring, enhancing, and preserving wetlands and waterfowl habitat. Voluntary participation from both the military and stakeholder is an essential part of making this partnership a success. The Tidewater Region would like to participate in the ACUB program working with the Ducks Unlimited Mid-Atlantic office concerning partnership efforts in and around the Chesapeake Bay—specifically targeting priority buffer areas.
- ◆ *DCR.* The DCR website contains a database with points of contact and land conservation survey information that can be useful to the Tidewater Region in identifying buffer areas.
- ◆ *Virginia regional offices.* The Tidewater Region would like local access to land conservation and stakeholder information.
- ◆ *DoD regional environmental offices.* The Tidewater Region would like military outreach contacts and information.
- ◆ *Army GISR and DCR Land Conservation databases.* GIS databases can assist consolidation of military and regional land use GIS data for the purpose of identifying priority areas for buffers and partnerships.

Challenges discussed by Tidewater Region participants include:

- ◆ Improving the communication stream from the BRAC program managers to stakeholders and military installations.
- ◆ Identifying a mechanism for in lieu mitigation.
- ◆ Improving communication of information across DoD and non-governmental organizations by identifying one point of contact as the go to person for pursuing easements.
- ◆ Increasing conservation partnership funding.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION— SOUTH-CENTRAL REGION

The southside breakout group focused entirely on the issue of Fort Pickett and the creation of a buffer there. Dinwiddie County performed a JLUS in 1995 that concluded Fort Pickett was sufficiently rural and that encroachment was not a problem. However, the current number of smoke- and noise-related complaints now makes it clear that the installation's status as a live-fire facility render it incompatible with increased development. Fort Pickett is developing an ACUB proposal to address encroachment concerns.

Virginia Tech, Radford University, and New River Land Trust are all potential ACUB partners. Partnerships with Lynchburg and Longwood Colleges would make a great local statement, and the colleges could track the ecological benefits into the future. Quail Unlimited may also be interested in partnering, as the installation's switchgrass is ideal quail habitat. Participants will provide letters of support for Fort Pickett's ACUB, as well as provide editorial review of the proposal, in order to provide further justification from a conservation perspective. Fort Pickett's proposal could be strengthened by emphasizing the water quality protection benefits of a buffer. The Nottoway River is home to the endangered dog perch, and a buffer would provide habitat protection.

Fort Pickett will look for opportunities for creative partnerships and land exchanges to leverage money. Resources for identifying potential land owners and partners include local land trusts who know local landowners, Virginia's United Land Trust can identify and create partners, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Farm Bureau know land owners.

Appendix B

Agenda



VA Conservation Forum

AGENDA

December 10, 2006

Purpose
Initiate a state-wide conservation forum in Virginia to launch regional conservation partnerships in support of the Governor's land conservation initiative and military compatible land use and conservation buffers addressing both land protection and restoration.

Location
Swift Creek Dining Hall • Pocahontas State Park • 10301 State Park Road • Chesterfield, VA 23838-4713
(804) 796-4255

<i>Time</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
10:00 AM	Welcome to Pocahontas State Park, Chesterfield County, VA	Joe Maroon, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, State Parks Lane Ramsey, Chesterfield County Administrator
10:10 AM	Hosts' welcome to explain forum objectives, guidance and information	Harry Gregori, Virginia Sustainable Future Forum Grace Bottitta, Ducks Unlimited
10:20 AM	Land conservation in Virginia	L. Preston Bryant, VA Secretary of Natural Resources
10:30 AM	Legal authority for military conservation buffers and partnerships	Mr. Alex Beehler, Deputy Assistant Undersecretary of Defense for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health
10:40 AM	State-wide partnerships in Virginia	Joe Maroon, Director, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Brian Smith, Ducks Unlimited, Virginia David Phemister, The Nature Conservancy
11:00 AM	Military land conservation partnerships	Mr. Charles Munson, Deputy to the Commander, Fort AP Hill Air Force Overview, TBD Robert Uhrich, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Installations and Environment) Alice Howard, Marine Corps Base Beaufort
12:00 PM	Lunch and Networking. Remarks from	Ed Pinero, Federal Environmental Executive
1:15 PM	Small group discussion for Virginia regional partnership opportunities	Northern Virginia: Paul Gilbert, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Tidewater Region: John Carlock, Virginia Planning Districts Association Central Virginia: Bob Lee, Virginia Outdoors Foundation Southern Rivers: Bridgett Costanzo, US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Virginia Valley: Jay Gilliam, Foundation for Virginia's Natural Resources
2:45 PM	Breakout session reporting	Harry Gregori, Grace Bottitta
3:30 PM	Next steps and plan of action	Harry Gregori, Grace Bottitta
4:00 PM	Adjourn	

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THE VIRGINIA SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FORUM

