

2021 Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program Challenge

Goal:

The Department of Defense's (DoD) Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program may provide up to \$15 million in FY21 funding for land conservation or management activities that limit incompatible development in the vicinity of DoD installations and ranges, maintain or improve military installation resilience, or relieve current or anticipated environmental restrictions in support of key capabilities identified in the National Defense Strategy. Additional consideration will be given to those projects that leverage multiple authorities to accomplish project goals. Selected projects will support the rebuilding of military readiness by protecting investments toward strategic power projection platforms deemed vital to the Department's establishment of an unmatched innovation base.

Background:

Since 2003, the REPI Program has helped fund cost-sharing partnerships between the Military Services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force), private conservation organizations, and state and local governments to maintain compatible land uses around DoD installations and ranges in support of military readiness (www.repi.mil). REPI has a long and successful history of partnerships around the country. The challenges of protecting areas necessary to optimally conduct military missions, though, continues to be threatened by incompatible development.

For this reason, the REPI Challenge was established in 2012 as a competitive process to seek projects that accelerate land conservation and military mission protection efforts through innovative partnerships and shared financing. Since 2012, REPI has offered between \$5M and \$15M each year for projects that incentivize new business practices, increase partner cost-share, and promote compatible land use around military installations and ranges at a larger scale. Nine years of the competition have resulted in more than \$73.3 million in REPI Program funds being leveraged with over \$300.1 million in partner contributions to protect over 532,000 acres at 22 locations nationwide.

The REPI Program's primary mission is to remove or avoid land-use conflicts near installations and address regulatory restrictions that inhibit military training, testing, and operations. The FY21 REPI Challenge is once again focused on supporting those key capabilities outlined in the National Defense Strategy. The 2018 National Defense Strategy articulates DoD's plan to improve military readiness by building a more lethal force, strengthening alliances and attracting new partners, and reforming the Department for greater performance and affordability. To address the scope and pace of our competitors' and adversaries' ambitions, DoD is investing in the modernization of key capabilities through sustained, predictable budgets. These investments to rebuild military readiness by, for example, accelerating and expanding planned fielding of modern cruise missile defenses, testing cutting edge unmanned aerial and underwater vehicles, and training and operating fifth-generation aircraft will require additional land, air, water and spectrum resources as well as generate noise and safety concerns. The REPI Program is a cost-effective tool available to DoD and our partners to protect these significant investments funded by taxpayer resources to ensure their viability for decades into the future. The unclassified synopsis of the National Defense Strategy can be found at: <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

Additional consideration will be given to those projects that leverage the REPI Program's authority to promote and maintain installation resilience, particularly in the areas of coastal resilience and addressing wildfire threats. Projects that demonstrate the ability to layer multiple DoD authorities (e.g., Sikes Act, Intergovernmental Service Agreements, off-site energy development) will also be given special consideration in the FY21 REPI Challenge.

2020 REPI Challenge Outcomes:

In 2020, the REPI Program awarded \$17.1 million in program funds to be coupled with over \$142 million in partner contributions to implement seven projects that limit incompatible development, enhance military installation resilience, and relieve current and anticipated environmental restrictions at locations that host key capabilities identified in the National Defense Strategy. By spreading funding across seven projects, the 2020 REPI Challenge will be able to contribute to initiatives benefitting 11 installations and their communities across the country. The locations include and their associated REPI Challenge funding include:

- Atlantic Test Ranges – Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD: 4,000 acres protected; \$3.0 million
- Fort Huachuca, AZ: 2,191 acres protected; \$2.1 million
- Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, NC: 2,100 linear feet of living shoreline created; \$1.0 million
- Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, GA: 16,082 acres protected; \$5.0 million

- Naval Weapons Station Earle, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, AEGIS Technical Representative, NJ National Guard Sea Girt, Warren Grove Gunnery Range, NJ: 1,600 acres restored to improve resilience; \$1.9 million
- Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, VA: 3.5 acres of shoreline restoration and stabilization; \$1.0 million
- Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA: 24,247 acres protected; \$3.0 million

2021 Award Criteria:

The primary focus of this year's REPI Challenge will again be to commit up to \$15 million for land conservation or management activities that limits incompatible development, enhances military installation resilience, or relieves current or anticipated environmental restrictions at locations hosting key capabilities identified in the National Defense Strategy. Competitive proposals will demonstrate actions that improve military readiness and build a more lethal joint force by protecting investments to assets and platforms in support of one or more of the following **key capabilities**:

- Fifth-generation aircraft training and development (e.g., F-35 mission sustainment)
- Nuclear Forces
- Space and cyberspace as warfighting domains
- Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (e.g., view angles of satellite terminals, effects on radar and sensing equipment)
- Missile defense
- Forward force maneuver and posture resilience (e.g., smaller, dispersed, resilient, adaptive basing that include active and passive defenses)
- Advanced autonomous systems (e.g., testing of deployment of unmanned aerial and underwater vehicles)
- Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, Amphibious Ready Groups, Marine Expeditionary Units, and Special Operations

Proposals also will be evaluated based on the following REPI Challenge criteria:

- Protect large parcels of land in priority areas already targeted by DoD installations in a manner that benefits the mission of the installation by protecting, sustaining, enhancing, or facilitating optimum range and installation operations.
- Attract at least a 1:1 match, with preference given to higher ratios, to include other federal, state, local, or private funds, in-kind contributions, bargain sales, technical assistance, land management and restoration activities, outreach and engagement, planning, etc.

- Attract multiple and diverse partners who bring financial support and an increased constituency for REPI, including federal and state resources and assistance programs.
- Coordinate with multiple levels of government to foster effective delivery of local, state, and federal initiatives or programs focused on maintaining compatible land use, land or habitat management or conservation, sustainable management of working lands, or other such interests.
- Model promising strategies to finance conservation, including market-based incentives, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency revolving funds, and partnerships with private investors and landowners that could be extended to other locations.
- Leverage land protection or conservation programs managed by the Departments of Agriculture (primarily NRCS and USFS) and the Interior (primarily USFWS) to achieve large-scale land protection with significant conservation and working lands benefits to support the goals and objectives of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership.
- Leverage multiple DoD authorities to address encroachment impacts on military training, testing, and operations.
- Promote or maintain military installation resilience, particularly coastal resilience and/or mitigation of wildfire threats.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals contributing to identified goals and outcomes within designated Sentinel Landscapes. More information on Sentinel Landscapes can be found at: www.sentinellandscapes.org.

Who May Apply:

The 2021 REPI Challenge is open to any state government, political subdivision of a state, or private entity whose organizational purpose or goal is conservation, restoration or preservation of land and natural resources. See additional information in the “Eligibility” section below.

Geography:

The 2021 REPI Challenge is open to projects supporting military installations that host one or more of the key capabilities identified under the Award Criteria on page 3. Given this year’s emphasis on the National Defense Strategy, early and close coordination with your local installation or range is critical to ensure alignment of project objectives and strategic mission benefits. If you need additional information or suggestions about suitable locations, refer to the Contacts listed on page 6.

Process:

The first step in the 2021 REPI Challenge application process is to complete a pre-proposal. The purpose of the pre-proposal is to allow the 2021 REPI Challenge review team the opportunity to evaluate viable project concepts and provide feedback to applicants earlier in the application process. Applicants submitting the most promising projects in their pre-proposals will be invited to complete full proposals.

An essential part of the pre-proposal process is for the applicant to coordinate with the appropriate Military Services contact for the installation or range associated with your proposed project (see Service contact list below). The contacts may provide installation-specific information regarding mission capabilities, priority lands, incompatible development concerns, and natural resource management needs to better inform partners for potential projects. Pre-proposals that present projects not coordinated with the appropriate Military Service contact will not be considered.

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities will administer the 2021 REPI Challenge application process. The 2021 REPI Challenge pre-proposal form will be available at https://www.usendowment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2021-repi-challenge_pre-proposalform.pdf.

Timing:

For interested partners, the following estimated milestones apply:

- November 23, 2020: Pre-proposals are due by 8pm EST. Pre-proposals are required to be submitted via email to Peter Stangel at: peter@usendowment.org.
- December 21, 2020: All pre-proposal applicants will be notified regarding the status of their pre-proposal.
- March 22, 2021: Full proposals are due by 8pm EDT.
- May-June 2021: DoD announces REPI Challenge award recipients and obligates funding.

Ideally, the selected project would be executed within six months after funds are obligated to the successful applicant.

Eligibility:

Proposals may be submitted by eligible entities as described in [10 U.S.C. § 2684a](#): private conservation groups and state and local governments.

Note: Eligible entities that are not currently REPI Program Partners should be aware that if you are selected to submit a full proposal, you must begin negotiations with the appropriate Military Service to become a REPI Program Partner while your full proposal is

being reviewed. This will include negotiating a cooperative agreement or similar arrangement once you are selected to submit a full proposal. You will begin this negotiation without knowing the outcome of your 2021 REPI Challenge application. The 2021 REPI Challenge is designed to encourage conservation at a greater scale and to promote the use of new and diverse sources of funding. Innovative partnerships that bring new ideas to the REPI process are strongly encouraged. State and local governments, corporations, private investors, and conservation groups are welcome to participate in the 2021 REPI Challenge.

Funding:

The REPI Challenge attempts to award one or multiple projects up to a total of \$15 million. Funding is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Funds will be consistent with existing partnership agreements and support the purchase of conservation or other restrictive easements, fee interests in land, and/or natural resource management where such actions can be shown to benefit military mission activities. If an appropriate project is not forthcoming, potential funding will be redirected to other priorities.

Contacts:

Installation-specific questions on mission capabilities, priority lands, agreement areas, incompatible use threats, and natural resource conservation needs should be directed to the appropriate Military Service contact below:

- Army: John Housein, john.g.housein.civ@mail.mil
- Marine Corps: Col Matt Hakola, matt.hakola@usmc.mil
- Navy: Tony Danesi, tony.danesi@navy.mil
- Air Force: Shawn Rose, shawn.rose.2@us.af.mil

Questions on the REPI Challenge application process should be directed to:

Peter Stangel, U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities;
peter@usendowment.org; 404-915-2763

General questions on the 2021 REPI Challenge, or on engaging with other federal or state agencies, should be directed to osd.repi@mail.mil.

Resources:

- 2018 National Defense Strategy:
<https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>
- REPI Program website: www.repi.mil

- REPI Challenge fact sheets: <http://www.repi.mil/Buffer-Projects/REPI-Challenge/>
- Sentinel Landscapes Partnership website: www.sentinellandscapes.org
- REPI Webinar recordings archive:
<http://www.repi.mil/Resources/Webinars.aspx>

REPI Webinars are a valuable resource for learning about past REPI Challenge winners, Sentinel Landscapes projects, innovative finance techniques, and best practices.