

Army Compatible Use Buffer: Cooperative Recovery of ESA-Listed Species in the Vicinity of a Military Installation

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Why is the US Army paying their own ecologist to work in prairies outside JBLM?

Encroachment on Military Installations

Definition

Any external factor inhibiting military readiness, over which DoD has (apparently) little or no control

Major Types of Encroachment

- urban growth around military installations
- endangered species populations/habitat on military installations
- unexploded ordnance and munitions constituents
- competition for radio frequency spectrum
- protected marine resources
- competition for airspace
- air pollution
- noise pollution



Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative

10 U.S.C. § 2684a (2003)

Agreements to limit encroachments and other constraints on military training, testing, and operations

Authorizes cooperative agreements between military services and Federal/state/local government and conservation NGOs

Acquire interest in land adjoining or near military installations to:

Prevent incompatible land uses next to installations

Reduce negative effects of candidate/listed species

If necessary, fund management of natural resources on acquired lands



Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB)

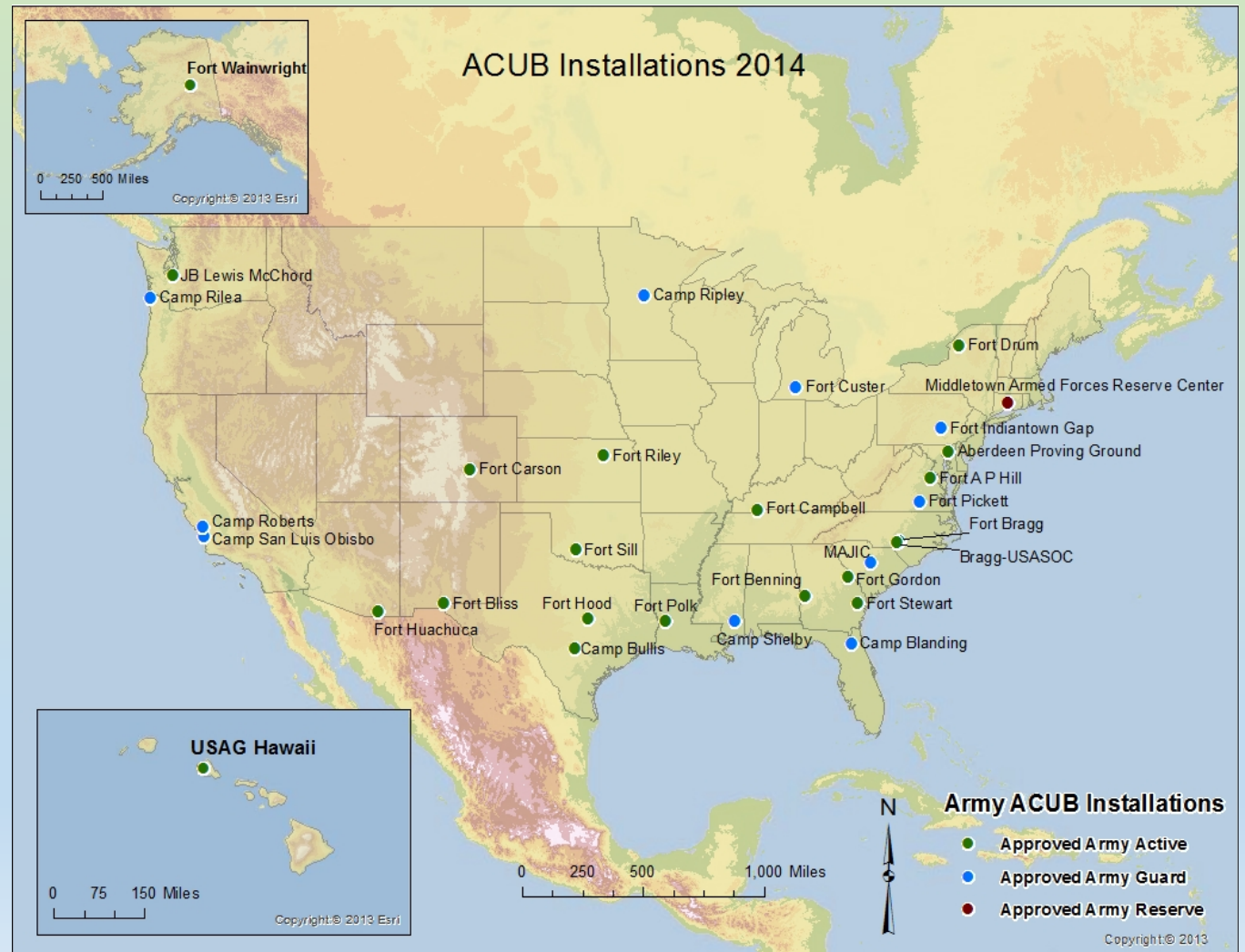
Army's implementation
of REPI

As of end of FY 2014:

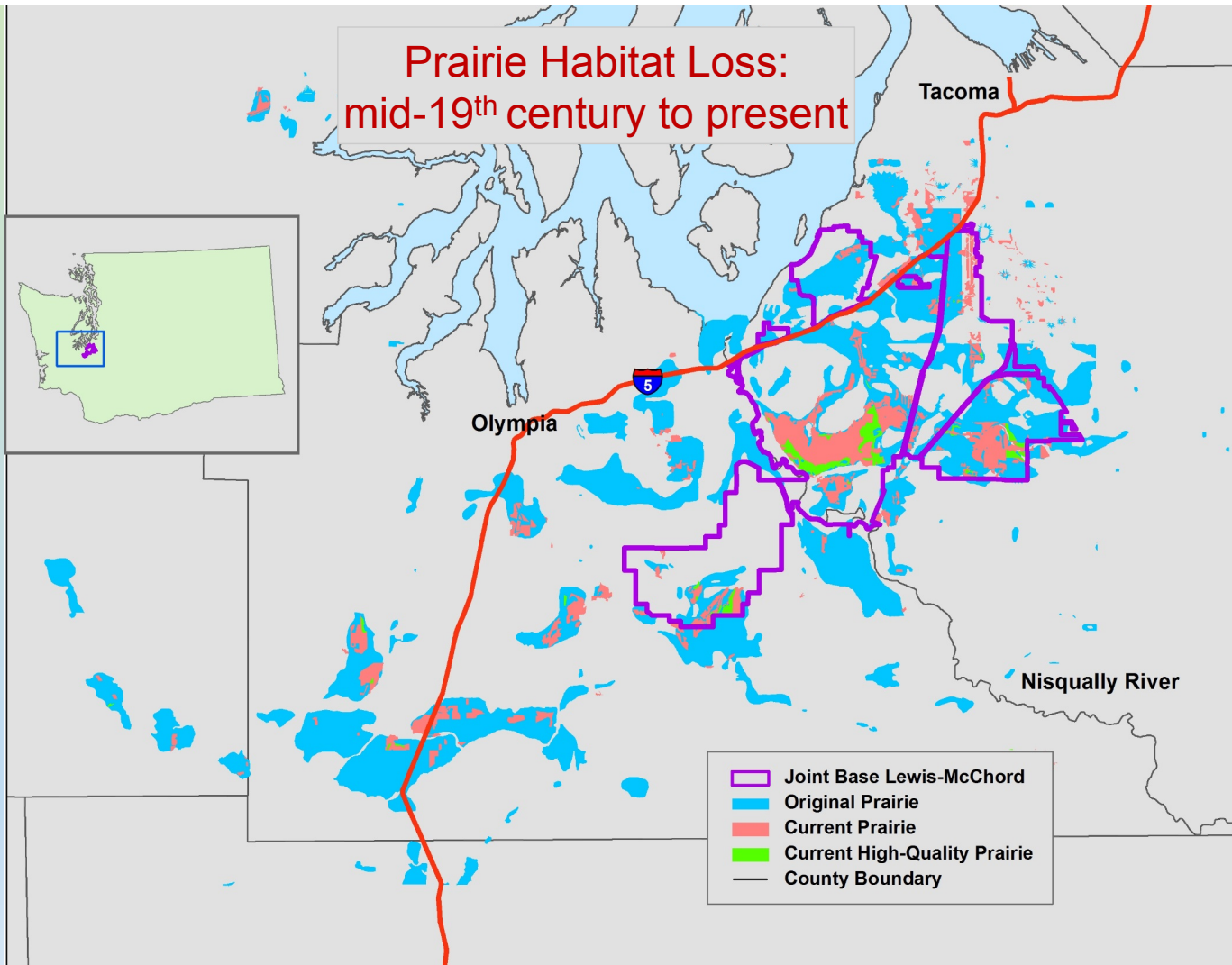
249,440 acres
protected

27 Federal/state/local
government and NGO
partners

\$352 million DoD/\$302
million partner funding



Prairie Habitat Loss: mid-19th century to present



Causes of Prairie Habitat Loss

Land-Use Conversion Invasion

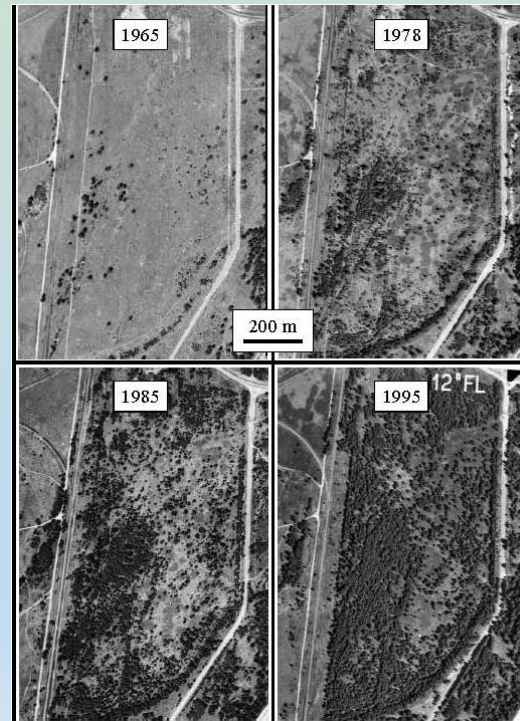


agriculture



urban/suburban

Forest



Causes of Prairie Habitat Loss

Habitat Degradation



non-native plants



grazing



off-road vehicles



loss of fire

Prairie-Dependent Species Listed Under the ESA



Taylor's checkerspot
(endangered)



streaked horned
lark (threatened)



Mazama pocket gopher
(threatened)

Most of the remaining habitat and populations are on JBLM
So the Army bears most of the burden for recovery

Effects of Listings On Military Training

Listing Restrictions Imposed by USFWS Affect:

When, where, how much, what type of training
Especially on occupied and priority habitat

Open (Prairie) Lands

Off-road maneuver
Firing ranges
Helicopter landings
Parachute drops



Airfields

Air Force transport jets
Helicopters



JBLM's Encroachment Strategy

Is Proactive

- Raise the Baseline Status of the Species Before Listing
- Reduce the Impacts to Military Training Post-Listing

Occurs On- and Off-Base

- Conservation Actions On JBLM
- ACUB Program Outside JBLM

Is Based On Best-Available Science

- ACUB Proposals Receive Technical Review
- Basic/Applied Research Supported

JBLM's Encroachment Strategy

Is Collaborative

Initial Partners (2006)

- The Nature Conservancy
- Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Thurston County
- Wolf Haven International

Additional Partners (as of 2015)

- Center for Natural Lands Management
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- other state agencies, academia, land trusts, private landowners

JBLM ACUB Goals/Objectives

Goal:

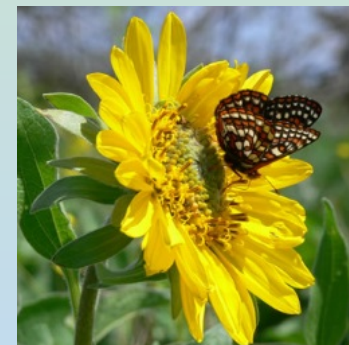
Reduce environmental encroachment (restrictions on training) on JBLM associated with the listing or potential listing of prairie species under the Endangered Species Act by supporting the conservation of these species on lands off the installation

Objectives:

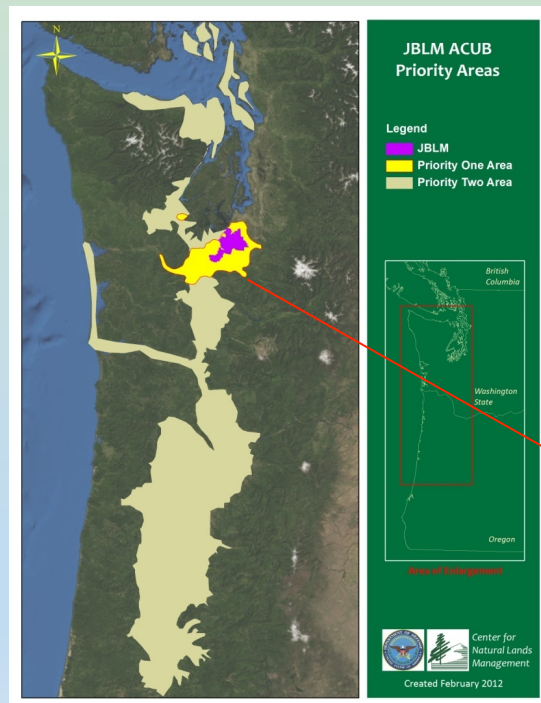
Acquire an interest in parcels containing existing or restorable prairie, primarily in the South Puget Sound region

Manage these parcels, jointly with currently protected (public or private ownership) prairie lands, for recovery of prairie species

Accomplish the above objectives through partnerships



ACUB Geographic Area



Conservation Actions

- Land Acquisition
- Habitat Restoration and Maintenance
- Increase Sizes and Numbers of ACUB Species Populations
- Planning
- Monitoring
- Research
- *Endowments*
- *Regulatory Relief*
- *Outreach and Education*



Changes to Original REPI Legislation

Authorize:

- Stewardship endowments
- DoD funds can match those of other Federal agencies

2013 REPI Challenge

Special Funding Pot Awarded to Several REPI Programs Each FY

Rewards Innovation in:

- Partnerships
- Funding Sources
- Securing Interest in Lands



Sentinel Landscapes

Purpose

Protect military readiness by conserving the landscapes that surround military installations

Joint Initiative of three Federal departments:

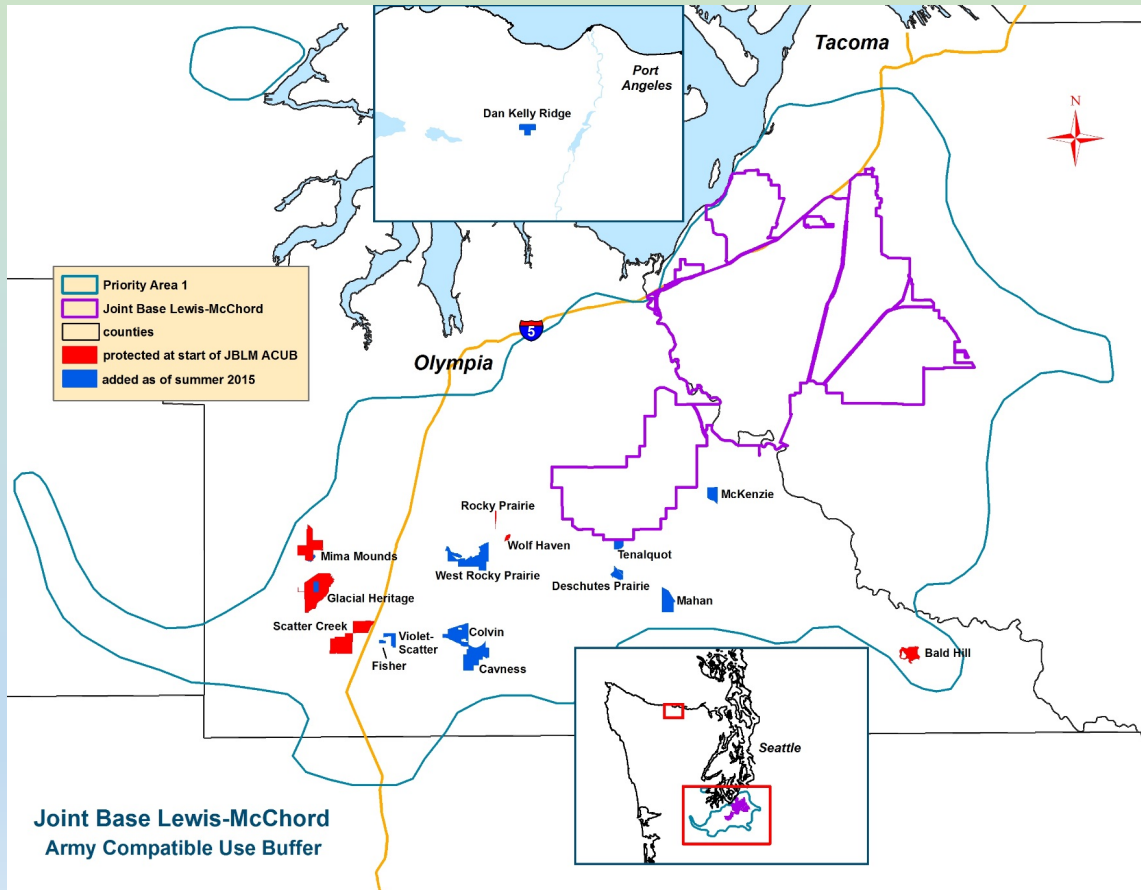
Defense— Use existing programs to acquire and restore habitat for listed species outside installations

Interior— Provide “regulatory certainty” for farmers and ranchers who agree to permanent conservation easements that benefit listed species and their habitats

Agriculture— Set up conservation easements and provide technical/financial assistance to improve listed species habitat quality on agricultural working lands

South Puget Sound first designated landscape in nation
(2013)

Conservation Actions



Land Acquisition
Already in conservation
status
Newly protected
in fee
easement

Conservation Actions

Planning

Common Templates for:

- Restoration plans
- Prescribed burning
- Non-native plant control

Annual ACUB Strategy

Based primarily on Action
Plans developed by range-
wide species working
groups

Conservation Action Planning

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Stresses and Threats				Viability assessment for this target (double click here)			
South Puget Sound Prairies							
1	Upland Prairie Mosaic			← To change targets, (current target input)			
Entry Assistance OFF							
Stresses				Severity	Scope	Stress Rank	User Override
1	Altered composition/structure			High	Very High	High	
2	Habitat destruction or conversion			Very High	High	High	
3	Habitat fragmentation			High	High	High	
4	Lack of small scale habitat disturbance			Low	Medium	Low	
5	Alteration of natural fire regimes			Medium	Very High	Medium	
6	Hostile buffer/sink			Medium	High	Medium	
7	Depredation & parasitism			Low	High	Low	
8						-	

key attributes/threats/
stresses for prairies

Conservation Actions

Research

Fill information gaps in species life history, habitat requirements, and responses to management



lark predators



de novo restoration of pasture to native prairie



checkerspot larval food preferences

Conservation Actions



Bald Hill Natural Area Preserve

Endowments (non-wasting)

Fund management in perpetuity

Protect investment in these conservation-reliant species

Required by USFWS as part of species recovery

Special Challenge

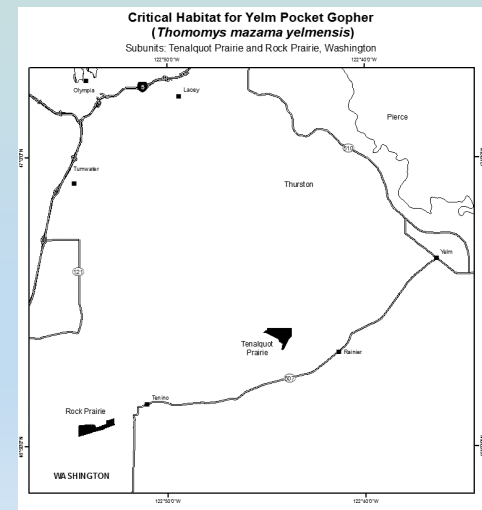
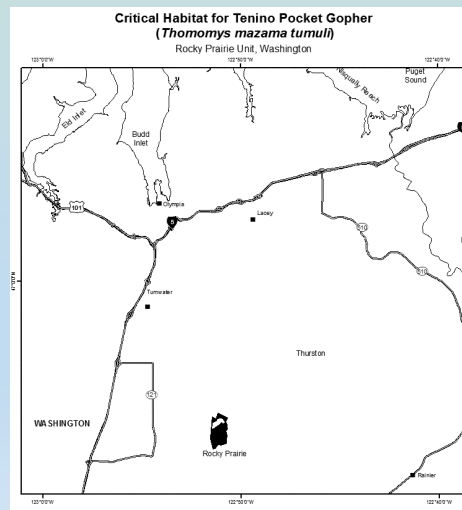
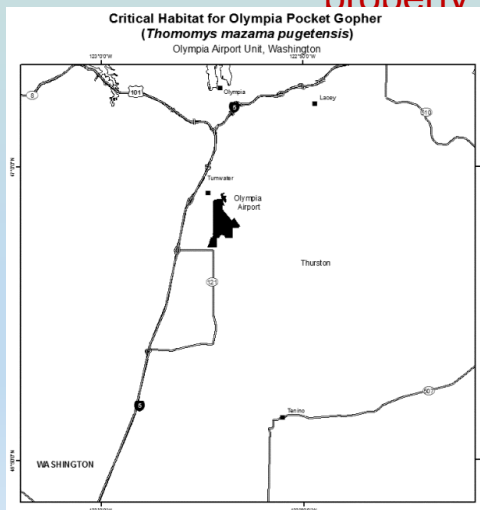
Four Subspecies of Gopher Listed

Olympia, Tenino, Yelm, Roy

Under ESA, must recover each subspecies separately

Designated geographic areas for each subspecies

JBLM responsible for Yelm and Roy subspecies (occur on our property)



Moolah

Total Funding 2006-2015 = \$36 million

Split equally between DoD and partners

Until recently, DoD funds focused on management support

Since 2013, several properties acquired with DoD funds



Thanks to
Our Partners



Center for Natural Lands Management



Don't forget
the volunteers!

