



The Power of Partnership - Townsend Bombing Range

Townsend Bombing Range serves as a model in partnering, bringing together many SERPPAS partners – the State of Georgia, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Georgia Forest Commission, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and The Nature Conservancy – to work towards the common goal of land conservation.

“Permanently preserving tracts of land of this significance is integral to creating a culture of conservation in Georgia, and this is an excellent example of the state partnering with the private sector, conservation community and the federal government to make that happen.” – Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue, September 2010.

Background

The need to preserve undeveloped land for the benefit of the military and the environment around Townsend Bombing Range in southeastern Georgia has served as a catalyst to bring together federal agencies with state and local partners.

The Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI), a program that provides funding for military installations to work with outside groups to conserve land that preserves the military’s ability to operate, test, and train, was key to the effort.

Townsend Bombing Range and the adjacent lands are recognized as globally significant conservation areas. Rare habitats include sand hills, wetlands, and longleaf pine forests. These habitats provide home to the gopher tortoise, the eastern indigo snake, and *Radford dicerandra*, a mint found in only two areas along the sand ridges.

Milestones

- ▶ The Townsend Wildlife Management Area contains a variety of critical wildlife habitats, buffers an important military installation and will provide recreational opportunities for hiking, boating and hunting. This includes:
 - The 11,000 acre Goodwood tract, which was acquired in 2006 with \$1.3 million in REPI funds (separate buffer project from the WMA).
 - The 4,162 acre Barrington tract which was acquired in 2008.
 - Approximately 19,000 acres in Long and McIntosh counties acquired in 2009 and 2010 that was previously owned by Rayonier Forest Resources and stretches for 20 miles along the Altamaha River.



F/A 18 aircraft from Beaufort over the target area at Townsend Bombing Range

Accomplishments

- ▶ Over \$6.6 million in DoD REPI funds, \$8.2 million in state funds, over \$10.0 million in Federal funds, and \$6.0 million from The Nature Conservancy have been dedicated to these conservation buffers since 2005.
- ▶ This property protects 120 rare or threatened and endangered species, including the swallow-tailed kite, Florida manatee, gopher tortoise and eastern indigo snake.
- ▶ Encroachment threats due to incompatible development or land uses eliminated with the partnering projects near or adjacent to Townsend Bombing Range.



Wide view of the target area at Townsend Bombing Range