

SENTINEL LANDSCAPES WORKSHOP

June 14-16, 2017 | New Orleans, LA



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Hosted by the Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee
Executive Summary

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The Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee (FCC) hosted its first national workshop, which brought together key stakeholders and practitioners from the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. The purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum in which to share best practices and lessons learned across the current Sentinel Landscapes and to allow representatives from the partner Federal agencies to respond to challenges that each Landscape faces in working towards its goals and priorities. The workshop was intended to help form relationships and establish an ongoing dialogue between the current Landscapes that will allow for the continued exchange of information and, as a result, the further development of the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership.

Workshop attendees included representatives from the various partner organizations and entities involved in each of the current six Sentinel Landscapes:

- Joint Base Lewis-McChord Sentinel Landscape (WA)
- Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape (AZ)
- Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape (MD, DE, VA)
- Avon Park Air Force Range Sentinel Landscape (FL)
- Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (MN)
- Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape (NC)

Additional attendees included agency representatives from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Defense (DoD), and the Interior (DOI) at the national, regional, and state levels as well as representatives from proposed Sentinel Landscapes that applied for designation in the 2017 application process.

The workshop was organized around four main sessions: (1) **Sharing the Sentinel Landscape Story**, (2) **Partners and Programs**, (3) **Filling up the Toolbox**, and (4) **What Next? How to Keep Your Landscape Moving Forward**. Sessions included presentations from attendees, facilitated discussions, and small group exercises. The workshop culminated in a set of report-outs from each of the six Sentinel Landscapes as well as the Federal agency representatives identifying the next-steps and resulting actions that each would undertake as a result of the event (*see table on page 2*). Each Sentinel Landscape and the FCC were asked to meet following the workshop and submit a report summarizing the primary resulting actions to Jake Bradt (Bradt_Jacob@bah.com) by July 21, 2017.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY BY SESSION

Session 1: Sharing the Sentinel Landscape Story

Representatives from each Sentinel Landscape shared their partnership's story, presenting on the partners, goals and accomplishments of their Landscape as well as the challenges that their partnership currently faces. Attendees then discussed the presentations in a small group setting, highlighting those characteristics that make each Landscape unique and identifying patterns across all six Landscapes. The groups noted that the Landscapes are distinct in their issues and priorities; scale; setting; and challenges, which leads to significant differences in terms of how each is organized and operates. Attendees noted a number of similarities across the Landscapes: each of the Landscapes has developed some sort of governance structure, which, in some cases, is formally codified; there is demand across the board for support for on-the-ground coordination and additional capacity; the Landscapes are still all mostly focused on easements as the primary tool for achieving their goals; and there is a lot of interest in developing a common easement template that merges partner requirements. Attendees remarked that each Landscape strives to be greater than the sum of their parts. The groups also noted questions that they had, both for other Landscapes and the Federal Coordinating Committee (FCC). The FCC addressed several of these questions during Session 4.

Session 2: Partners and Programs

Representatives from the Sentinel Landscapes presented six case studies that highlighted innovative approaches to meeting their partnership's goals. The six case studies were as follows: USFWS-U.S. Navy MOU (Middle Chesapeake), Avon Park RCPP Project (Avon Park Air Force Range), USFS Forest Legacy Proposal (Fort Huachuca), North Carolina Landowner Survey (Eastern North Carolina), Veterans Conservation Corps-Center for Natural Lands Management Internship Program (Joint Base Lewis-McChord), and the De-listing of the Lesser Long-nosed Bat (Fort Huachuca).

Session 3: Filling up the Toolbox

This session explored the development of a suite of benefits, services, and incentives to recognize and engage landowners in Sentinel Landscapes. The goal of the session was for each Sentinel Landscape to have a start on an initial strategy for landowner engagement and the larger group to have a list of Federal opportunities that may be helpful as each Sentinel Landscape explores new landowner engagement strategies. Mr. Bruce Beard (Texas A&M) presented on the need for a defined recognition and incentive strategy for landowners in each of the Sentinel Landscapes. Mr. Beard suggested a number of potential benefits, services, and incentives that may appeal to landowners who are not interested in easements, to include monetary and non-monetary incentives such as signage, letters, or certificates recognizing participation; special Sentinel Landscapes coins; annual VIP events and base tours; and other perks for participation. Mr. Beard also discussed the notion of "staying power," or institutionalizing the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. Attendees then broke out into groups by Sentinel Landscape and groups of pre-assigned Federal representatives to discuss the ideas that Mr. Beard presented.

Session 4: What Next? How to Keep Your Landscape Moving Forward

Participants explored and identified those actions and efforts that the Sentinel Landscapes and Federal Coordinating Committee would like to undertake based on their takeaways from the Workshop. Each Sentinel Landscape and the Federal representatives reported on their key takeaways and next steps from the Workshop to the larger group (***see table on next page***). Before adjourning, the group discussed ideas for how to best continue the dialogue started at the workshop, to include: creating a Sentinel Landscapes listserv; starting a Sentinel Landscapes webinar series; reporting on success stories and case studies; creating a central repository of resources and documents; hosting annual, in-person meetings of representatives from the Landscapes and Federal agencies; having site visits to each of the Landscapes; and maintaining and sharing a contact list of partners engaged at each of the Landscapes. The group then received a post-Workshop assignment.

REPORT OUTS AND KEY ACTION ITEMS BY GROUP

<p><i>Joint Base Lewis-McChord Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt strategies and actions to be able to manage regulatory/policy uncertainties. • Expand the current group of partners and identify additional sources of funding. • Need support in two main areas: staff capacity and regulatory/policy influence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific regulatory/policy areas where the partnership requires support: the IMCOM ACUB internal audit and ESA Section 6 grants. • Key challenges moving forward: successfully matching NRCS and ACUB funding and being able to implement long-term goals.
<p><i>Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distill specific priorities for each of the Landscapes working groups into a strategic implementation plan. • Primary area requiring support: staff capacity/coordination. This individual will help in developing an implementation plan. • To the FCC: what do you need from the Landscapes to be successful? • Key challenges: consistent funding and leadership from the decision makers on the national leadership teams. The role of state lands in the Landscape is also a significant issue to address.
<p><i>Middle Chesapeake Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a landowner survey similar to the ENCSL landowner survey. • Strengthen relationships with each of the states within the Landscape. • Identify and define specific performance metrics that align with clearly delineated priorities. • Need support ensuring consistency of funding. Achieving consistency across the different Military Services is also important. • Key challenge: lacking land trust partners. Will focus on expanding existing group of partners.
<p><i>Avon Park Air Force Range Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codify the APAFR Sentinel Landscape through an MOU of some other vehicle. Establish a working agreement that guides partner involvement. This process will require landowner input. • Work to define and fund the coordinator position. • Share the NRCS-USAF common easement template with the Partnership. • Need state and local agency buy-in; continue to meet with them and share enthusiasm. • Biggest challenge: moving beyond easements.
<p><i>Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the delivery system for funding and technical program assistance; want to make funding application consistent across the Landscape. • Landowner coordination: keep working on marketing and media; working with partners to address and target tiers of audiences. • Clarification of the Sentinel Landscape program long-term: plan to take new tools and ideas home and develop some sort of long-term plan. • Support needed from FCC: Federal recognition of the importance of states in these partnerships – helps locally with their state engagement. • Two key challenges: marketing and capacity.
<p><i>Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on broader landowner recognition and communication outside of priority areas. • Reconnect with partners and address changes in leadership and restructuring of state government. • Need support in developing a common funding agreement (i.e., a means of sending funds into one place so that you don't have to have separate funding agreements). • Key challenges moving forward: shifting the partnership into the new governance infrastructure; ensuring clear and open communication with state agencies; and developing a central fund into which to move funds from the Military Services.

*Applicant
Sentinel
Landscapes*

- Important to maintain communication with partners leading up to and after designation decisions.
- Looking for opportunities to send additional information to the FCC.
- Continuing to clarify partner roles and seek new partners.
- Seeking a better understanding of the needs of the landowners within each of the applicant Sentinel Landscapes (e.g., through a survey such as the one used in the Eastern North Carolina Sentinel Landscape).
- Key areas needing support: need for creative financing solutions for large scale projects for land and non-land projects; and addition of other partners at the Federal level (e.g., NOAA, NPS, etc.).
- Would like to have an opportunity to share feedback with the FCC on the application process.
- Look forward to getting feedback from the FCC on the applications.
- Challenges moving forward:
 - Inconsistency of funding: funding smoothing as something that the FCC can address.
 - Disconnect between partners at the local level and partners involved with the FCC.

*Federal Agency
Partners*

- Focus on engaging leadership: do not have senior leadership in place at the Federal agencies yet; need to work collaboratively in the FCC to identify opportunities to brief and inform new leadership.
- Develop opportunities to target support to the veteran community: convene stakeholders at the state-level to better identify these opportunities.
- Develop guidance on funding timelines for the various programs involved. This will allow the FCC to map out timelines and be thoughtful about how these programs impact the Landscapes.
- Define the FCC's "contract" with the Landscapes: what do we owe to you and what are we asking from you?
 - Communicate the benefit of the Sentinel Landscapes designation to the Landscapes.
- Identify and leverage the flexibility of Federal programs. In many cases, there is significant flexibility in terms of how the Federal agencies implement programs. The ultimate example of institutional flexibility (brought up by Landscapes) is allowing for the pooling of funds.
- Facilitate continued exchange of information and communication between the Landscapes and the FCC. Need to provide access to all templates, MOUs, charters, etc. to all Landscapes because many challenges that Landscapes identified have been solved before. Increase communications regarding administrative problem solving.
 - Identify a means of institutionalizing information exchange within the Partnership (e.g., a listserv, community of practice, etc.).
- Will continue to engage additional partners at the Federal level, to include FSA and other USDA/DOI agencies, as well as agencies outside of the three signatory Departments.
 - Cultivate partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), foundations and other stakeholders.
- Create a nationwide communication/branding strategy to engage the general population and new political leadership.
- Develop an action plan or long-term strategy for the FCC to guide the Partnership.
- Key challenges moving forward:
 - New/changing leadership
 - Budget uncertainty
 - Long-term planning