

**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
**MINNESOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD**



OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

VETERANS SERVICE BUILDING

**STATE OF MINNESOTA**

20 WEST 12TH STREET

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55155-2098

January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The Adjutant General

Honorable Governor Mark Dayton  
State Capitol

Honorable Julie A. Rosen  
Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Office Building, Room 3235

Honorable Richard Cohen  
Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Office Building, Room 2301

Honorable Bruce Anderson  
Senate Vets & Military Affairs Cmte  
Senate Office Building, Room 3209

Honorable Jerry Newton  
Senate Vets & Military Affairs Cmte  
Senate Office Building, Room 2411

Honorable Sarah Anderson  
House State Government Finance  
Committee  
583 State Office Building

Honorable Sheldon Johnson  
House State Government Finance  
Committee  
259 State Office Building

Honorable Bob Dettmer  
House Veterans Affairs Division  
565 State Office Building

Honorable Paul Rosenthal  
House Veterans Affairs Division  
209 State Office Building

**Report on Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL)**

1. This report is submitted to the Governor, and to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over military and veterans' affairs pursuant to Minnesota Statute 190.33, Subdivision 6.

2. **Designation of certain lands.** Camp Ripley was designated by the state of MN as a Sentinel Landscape on 11 May 2015. Camp Ripley was further designated by the US Department of Defense, US Department of Agriculture and US Department of Interior as a Sentinel Landscape on 12 July 2016. The purpose of this designation was to identify lands important to the nation's defense mission in an effort to preserve and enhance the relationship between willing landowners and Camp Ripley and to create incentives to encourage landowners' land management practices consistent with Camp Ripley's military missions. Individuals who own land which is deemed part of the sentinel landscape are provided the opportunity to participate, on a voluntary basis, in various programs designed to encourage land uses compatible with Camp Ripley's military missions.

3. **Establishment of coordinating committee.** On 23 Feb 2016 The Adjutant General (TAG) MG Richard Nash established a coordinating committee to address issues related to technical support services and appropriate financial assistance to landowners who voluntarily participate in the sentinel landscape program in sub-division 1.

a. The coordinating committee is comprised of the following individuals:

**Minnesota Department of Military Affairs (DMA):**

Major General Neal Loidolt, Deputy Adjutant General (Chair)

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA):**

Mr. Jim Boerboom, Deputy Commissioner

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR):**

Mr. Mark Hauck, Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Coordinator

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources:**

Mr. Bill Penning, Easement Section Manager

b. Auxiliary members of the coordinating committee are:

**Minnesota Department of Military Affairs:**

Colonel Scott St. Sauver, Garrison Commander

Mr. Don Kerr, Executive Director

Mr. Marty Skoglund, Environmental Program Director

Captain Seth Goreham, Deputy Environmental Program Manager

Mr. Jay Brezinka, Camp Ripley Environmental Supervisor

Mr. Jake Kitzmann, Natural Resource Manager

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture:**

Mr. Bob Patton, Supervisor of Energy and Environment

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources:**

Mr. John Maile, Wildlife Habitat Specialist

Mr. John Carlson, PFM Program Coordinator

Mr. Alex Brothen, Forester

Mr Keith Parker, Regional Director, Region 3

**Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources:**

Ms. Maggie Leach, Board Conservationist

Mr. Dan Steward, Watershed/Private Forest Management Program Coordinator

**United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS):**

Mr. Steve Karel, Sherburne/Crane Meadows Project Leader

Mr. Sheldon Myerchin, PFW-State Coordinator

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA):**

Ms. Cathee Pullman, State Conservationist

Ms. Lanette Dietrich, Assistant State Conservationist-Easements

Mr. Ryan Galbreath, State Resource Conservationist

Mr. Josh Hanson, District Conservationist (Morrison County)

**The Nature Conservancy (TNC):**

Mr. Todd Holman, Mississippi Headwaters Program Director

**Morrison Soil and Water Conservation District:**

Ms. Helen McLennan, District Manager

**Morrison County:**

Ms. Amy Kowalzek, Land Use Planner

**City of Baxter:**

Mr. Joshua Doty, Community Development Director

**Mississippi Headwaters Board:**

Mr. Tim Terrill, Executive Director

4. **Meetings.** The CRSL committee met four times in 2016, February, May, July, and September. All meetings were conducted in the Martin J. Skoglund Environmental Classroom. A recap of the discussion and accomplishments of the committee is described below. Each meeting began with an overview of accomplishments of the ACUB committee and provided an outline of current and future funding opportunities. Specific discussion related to partner programmatic priorities and definition of the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape (CRSL) footprint is outlined by month.

**a. 23 February 2016:**

- CRSL Committee was formally established.
- The ACUB program had completed 156 land transactions representing over 17,593 acres. There was also a significant number of landowners (210 landowners representing 26,500 acres) interested in participating in the program.
- Partners from the MDA and TNC provided agricultural program perspectives highlighting agriculture priorities which compliment those of the CRSL initiative.
- Preventing residential encroachment on working lands helps inhibit cost increases in public services. An overview was given of how agricultural protection achieves this making it important to and compatible with the CRSL.
- The “toolbox” available when conducting agricultural land preservation was discussed and the similarities of these programs to other conservation programs were highlighted.
- Pollinator initiatives undertaken as part of a federal and state collaborative effort were also discussed.
- Ground water trends in the proposed CRSL were discussed and nitrogen and phosphorous levels were proposed as metrics for gauging success of committee efforts.
- Extending the Sentinel Landscape foot print south along the Mississippi River would meet goals of all parties involved.
- Need to define measures of success in agricultural areas and define what this success “looks like” to the committee.

Each agency was asked to identify priorities or interests, program areas, goals and outcomes complementary to the CRSL and provide pertinent shapefiles to illustrate these. This data was then input into maps to help define the footprint of the landscape.

**b. 3 May 2016:**

- \$3 Million in FY16 funding was committed from both National Guard Bureau (\$2 Million) and The Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program (\$1 Million).
- The 2016 REPI Challenge proposal was forwarded with 3 outcomes:

Federal Sentinel Landscape Designation  
Funding for land transactions  
Added capacity (CRSL coordinator position)

- The 2017 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) proposal requesting \$3 million for Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) projects was submitted. These projects focus on water quality protection and enhancement giving high priority to enrolled ACUB parcels and watershed protection.
- USFWS and DNR provided perspectives for wildlife and habitat priorities. The Ramsar convention was discussed, which is “an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.”
- The USFWS strategic plan was discussed highlighting the Mississippi as one of the three focus areas within region three. Wetland and prairie restoration are the focus of many efforts within the region. These efforts mesh well with the water quality emphasis which is being placed on many partner efforts.
- Prairie restoration and grassland enhancement was discussed and it was highlighted that new emphasis has been placed on pollinator friendly initiatives throughout the USFWS.
- The committee began to identify priority areas, programs and a CRSL footprint.

**c. 7 July 2016:**

- \$1.5 million from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) was allocated on July 1, 2016.
- Designation of Camp Ripley as a Federal Sentinel Landscape occurred on 12 July 2016.
- The Sentinel Landscape Coordinator position (Contract for Services) which was part of the REPI challenge proposal moved forward through contracting.
- The 2017 USDA Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) pre-proposal requesting \$3 million for CSP, EQIP and HFRP projects was submitted to NRCS.
- REPI and REPI challenge proposals were submitted for 2017 totaling \$8 million along with an FY 2018 call for funding request from LSOHC for \$3 million.
- DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife cited the need for substantial justification for the acquisition of new lands for the purpose of Wildlife Management Areas within the CRSL
- DNR Shallow Lakes Program (SLP) and some of the priority lakes which fall near the proposed boundary of the CRSL were mentioned as possible areas of emphasis for the committee. CRSL committee support for this program could be positive for getting shallow lakes officially dedicated within the program. This would add value to both the SLP and the CRSL given the community mission of both agencies.
- DNR Private Forest Management (PFM) program was discussed. The goal of PFM is to provide landowners with forest management planning, project planning, timber sale assistance and general advice on forest management. The program offers tax incentives for landowners through 2C and SFIA.
- Currently the DNR is seeking \$8 million in funds from the LSOHC to enroll 4 tracts of land into Forests for the Future.
- An overview was given for individual priority areas identified by partnering agencies overlaid within the proposed CRSL which is based upon the Camp Ripley Landscape stewardship plan and local watersheds.

- A section based footprint as opposed to a township based footprint would address implementation concerns of the watershed based footprint. This is likely to be used at finer scale during implementation.
- A package of maps was sent to committee members along with a proposed footprint for their review.

**d. 15 September 2016**

- The Sentinel Landscape Coordinator position (Contract for Services) which was part of the REPI challenge proposal was approved and TNC received the contract.
- The 2017 RCPP full proposal requesting \$4.2 million for CSP, EQIP and HFRP projects was submitted to NRCS. If funded, this partnership will provide funding to complete every planned but not yet applied practice which was identified by the NRCS throughout the CRSL.
- The CRSL project area (Figure 1) has been agreed upon by the committee members. This area encompasses 40 minor watersheds and 804,557 acres. This has then been divided into 8 Watershed Management Units (WMU). This foot print was derived from the Camp Ripley Landscape Stewardship Plan and was then modified to incorporate partner programmatic priorities.
- Two technical teams, protection and practices, have also been formed to address the day to day application of projects throughout the landscape. The protection team will largely carry on the work of the ACUB committee with the addition of partners from agencies new to the program. The practices team will address the implementation of management practices within the project area. This focus is new for our committee as we transition from ACUB into Sentinel Landscapes. The practices team will meet quarterly until the workload expands enough to justify monthly meetings. If funded, the RCPP application submitted in September will be the first step in starting the work of the practices team. These teams are coordinated by the contracted CRSL coordinator.

**5.** The committee will continue to use the public outreach methods in place for the existing ACUB program in coordination with the Camp Ripley Commander's annual public outreach activities closely synchronized with similar activities on behalf of the other partners in the effort. The next public meeting is scheduled March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Camp Ripley Hanger Conference Center.

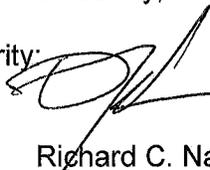
**6. Boundary Definition:** The coordinating committee, having received input from the director of the Department of Defense Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, the director of the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program, the commander of the Camp Ripley Training Center, the commissioner of agriculture, the commissioner of natural resources, the executive director of the Board of Water and Soil Resources, appropriate county commissioners from any county where designated lands are located, has identified the CRSL boundary as referenced in Figure 1 (page 6).



7. The point of contact for this report is the Executive Director of the Department of Military Affairs, Don Kerr at [donald.j.kerr2.nfg@mail.mil](mailto:donald.j.kerr2.nfg@mail.mil) or (651) 268-8913.

Sincerely,

For the Adjutant General, with delegated authority:



DONALD J. KERR  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard C. Nash  
Major General, Minnesota Army  
National Guard  
The Adjutant General