

**Executive Summary for Camp Lejeune's
2007-2011 Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan
(INRMP)
Final – November 2006**

Background:

Camp Lejeune's first INRMP was approved November 2001. Since that time Camp Lejeune has made significant progress in the following areas: increasing its Red cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) population from 67 to 78 active clusters; increasing prescribed burning to over 20,000 acres/ year; initiating mechanical mid-story control on approximately 600 acres/year; restoring longleaf pine on approximately 400 acres/year; minimizing forestry site preparation impacts; reducing RCW restrictions on military training; commercial production of timber products; completing a study of the effect of military training on RCWs; restoring wetlands in the Greater Sandy Run Mitigation Bank; restoring and stabilizing hundreds of acres of eroded landing zones; maintaining an active game program; and cooperating with regional conservation partners to prevent encroachment.

The following factors prompted Camp Lejeune to begin revision of its INRMP in November 2004: the revised US Fish and Wildlife Service RCW Recovery Plan issued in 2003; the new Congressional authority to preclude critical habitat on military installations; and the completion of the study of military impacts to RCWs.

Plan Highlights:

Cooperative Preparation and Public Comment- in accordance with Sikes Act requirements, this plan has been prepared in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the state fish and wildlife agencies and must reflect the mutual agreement of those agencies wherever practical. Discussions with the cooperating agencies began in November 2004 and have continued through a Preliminary Draft INRMP (July 2005), a Draft INRMP (January 2006), a Pre-Final INRMP (May 2006) and to the present Final edition.

The public was given an opportunity to comment on the Draft INRMP and the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) from January 5 through February 6, 2006. The documents were made available on line and in local libraries, with notices published in the local newspaper. Comments received from State and Federal agencies are in Appendix A of the INRMP. No comments from individuals were received.

The Camp Lejeune Conservation Working Group, with representatives invited from all major stakeholder departments was formed in 2004 to help scope and coordinate the development of the INRMP.

Mission Drivers- in accordance with HQMC guidance, mission drivers were identified to serve as the basis for developing INRMP objectives and actions. The following mission drivers were identified:

- 1) *Preserve the integrity of the amphibious maneuver areas, including Onslow Bay, New River, and the adjoining training areas and airspace of Camp Lejeune.*
- 2) *Preserve the integrity of Camp Lejeune as a combined arms training base by ensuring the continued viability of its impact areas and associated training ranges.*
- 3) *Enhance future training uses of the Camp Lejeune ranges, training areas and airspace by fully integrating the Land Use Master Plan and Range Transformation Plan.*
- 4) *Ensure Camp Lejeune supports all required military training activities while complying with the Endangered Species Act, and other wildlife requirements.*
- 5) *Ensure Camp Lejeune supports continued military training use of the New River and Onslow Bay by complying with the Clean Water Act.*
- 6) *Ensure the viability of New River Air Station as an aviation facility through the elimination of bird and wildlife strike hazards to aircraft while complying with the Endangered Species Act and other wildlife regulatory requirements.*

Natural Resource Objectives- specific objectives were developed for each of the following natural resource management areas:

Threatened and Endangered Species
Species at Risk and Natural Communities
Migratory Birds
Forest Management
Forest Protection
Wetlands Management
Soil Conservation/Land Management
Wildlife and Fisheries Management
Public Access, Outdoor Recreation and Law Enforcement
Regional Conservation
Conservation Outreach/Education

Action, Measures of Success, and Funding-153 actions and their respective “measures of success” were developed for the various natural resource management objectives and mission drivers. Actions were divided into two funding categories: class

0/1 –“must fund” to support conservation requirements, subject to availability of funding; and class 2/3- not required but desirable. All actions in this INRMP are subject to available funds.

Critical Habitat- in accordance with recent Congressional authority, the INRMP places high priority on providing an exemption from any threatened and endangered species critical habitat designation for Camp Lejeune. In order to provide this exemption, the INRMP must satisfy the US Fish and Wildlife Service criteria: the INRMP must provide a benefit to the species; the INRMP must be effective; and the INRMP must provide assurance of implementation.

A major emphasis was placed on providing the critical habitat exemption for Onslow Beach and the forested training areas of the base.

RCW Military Restrictions- reducing military training restrictions due to Red cockaded woodpeckers (RCW) was a major goal. This plan provides an incentive based program that decreases the number of restricted areas as the number of RCW active clusters increases. With implementation of this plan no new RCW restricted areas will be established in High Use Training Areas; and the number of restricted areas base wide will decrease and is not expected to return to current levels.

Onslow Beach- a major emphasis was placed on ensuring the continued viability of Onslow Beach as the Marine Corps premier amphibious training area. The NC Wildlife Resource Commission has expressed concerns about recreational impacts to water birds at Onslow Beach, and has requested that the INRMP prohibit pedestrian impacts. In response, this INRMP identifies an action to post water bird nest sites on the southern end of the beach to discourage pedestrian impacts.

All other issues regarding Onslow Beach are consistent with established Base Orders and US Fish and Wildlife Biological Opinions regarding protected species and off road recreational vehicles.