C.01 INTRODUCTION

This Appendix contains selected notes and research collected for this report for a portion of the compatibility issues as report background. It does not constitute a comprehensive study of each issue but useful information that goes beyond what was needed within the main body of the report.

C.02 AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION, AND INSTALLATION BUFFERS

CORE ASSUMPTIONS GUIDING RESEARCH

1. The military installations, agricultural producers, and conservation professionals have a mutual interest in stewardship of the rural landscape.
2. Military missions within this region include flight training in airspace at various elevations above rural agricultural lands and it is important for these existing compatible land uses to continue.
3. Rural land owners and users have an interest in forming partnerships that will help preserve existing agricultural and natural landscapes that they value.
4. Local governments have an interest in strategically preserving open space for recreational purposes, and other public interests.

SUMMARY

A majority of the land within the Joint Land Use Study region can be characterized by agricultural or natural land uses. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Forest Service (USFS), Colorado State Land Board, and the Department of Defense (DoD) are the primary owners and managers of government-owned land with the rest owned by private land owners, namely ranchers. These vast undeveloped landscapes provide a variety of topography on public lands (BLM and USFS) used for High Altitude Mountain Environment Training (HAMET) training by military units based at Fort Carson and from other installations all over the country. Most of the remaining landscapes are below airspace that is used to varying degrees by the Air Force Academy, Peterson AFB, Fort Carson, and Schriever AFB, and may have designated Military Operating Areas (MOAs). Where possible, installations also seek partnerships with land owners in close proximity to the installation boundary to preserve buffers from development, where the core method is to maintain the existing agricultural uses or preserve natural habitat since they are considered to be land uses that are compatible with military operations.

Multiple tools are available to facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships between government agencies, private property owners, and conservation organizations to preserve rural landscapes, bolster rural economies, and support military operations. Sections of the JLUS will identify the common interests of rural land use stakeholders, including military installations, and recommended strategies and programs that can be utilized to achieve these common goals. To study these issues, the JLUS Policy Committee approved
creation of the Conservation and Agricultural Working Group on April 27, 2017. The JLUS was intended to cover compatibility issues related to conservation and agriculture including open space preservation, wildlife habitat and corridors, riparian habitat, wildfire, land use goals shared by the agricultural community and military installations, cultural landscapes, and similar topics. This group will review current programs and action taken by installations and stakeholders.

**PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY AND RURAL STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION ON COMPATIBLE LAND USE**

Fort Carson has been utilizing the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) Program in partnership with individual landowners, Walker Ranch (in Pueblo County), the Nature Conservancy, El Paso County, and other partners. We understand that the Air Force installations in our region have been looking into ways that the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program could be utilized. The following programs and partnerships are described using excerpts from each respective website to provide an overview of the program.

**EXCERPTS AND NOTES FROM WEBSITES**


   The Department of Defense (DoD)'s REPI Program is a key tool for combating encroachment that can limit or restrict military training, testing, and operations. The REPI Program protects these military missions by helping remove or avoid land-use conflicts near installations and addressing regulatory restrictions that inhibit military activities. The REPI Program is administered by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

   A key component of the REPI Program is the use of buffer partnerships among the Military Services, private conservation groups, and state and local governments, authorized by Congress at 10 U.S.C. § 2684a. These win-win partnerships share the cost of acquisition of easements or other interests in land from willing sellers to preserve compatible land uses and natural habitats near installations and ranges that helps sustain critical, at-risk military mission capabilities. For more information on REPI buffer partnerships, review the primer here.

   REPI also supports large landscape partnerships that advance cross-boundary solutions and link military readiness, conservation, and communities with federal and state partners through a common, collaborative framework. The Western Regional Partnership (WRP) and Sentinel Landscapes Partnership are other programs can work in concert with REPI among DoD and the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior.

   The evaluative process for funding REPI buffer projects starts with the Services submitting proposals to the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the annual buffer project funding process. OSD uses tailored qualitative and quantitative criteria to evaluate the proposals and works with the Services to take into consideration the value and priority of the missions being protected. OSD also encourages proposals that provide multiple benefits to the community and environment and strengthen partner cost-sharing. OSD works to ensure that the REPI Program supports the Department's Better Buying Power initiatives for affordable programs by increasing innovation and delivering better value to the taxpayer and warfighter.


   The U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense and the Interior announced a new initiative in 2013 — the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership, a nationwide federal, local and private collaboration dedicated to promoting natural resource sustainability in areas surrounding military installations. The Partnership
identifies opportunities that benefit national defense, local economies and conservation of natural resources. Where shared interests can be identified within a landscape, the Partnership will coordinate mutually beneficial programs and strategies to preserve, enhance or protect habitat and working lands near military installations; reduce, prevent or eliminate restrictions that inhibit military testing and training; prevent incompatible development near our military facilities.

Sentinel Landscapes are working or natural lands important to the nation’s defense mission — places where preserving the working and rural character of key landscapes strengthens the economies of farms, ranches and forests; conserves habitat and natural resources; and protects vital test and training missions conducted on those military installations that anchor such landscapes.

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3. Western Regional Partnership - http://wrpinfo.org/

The Western Regional Partnership was established in 2007 when the Department of Defense partnered together with representatives of Federal agencies and State and Tribal leadership in the States of Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. The WRP was expanded in 2015 to include the State of Colorado.

The mission of WRP is to provide a proactive and collaborative framework for senior-policy level Federal, State and Tribal leadership to identify common goals and emerging issues in the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah and to develop solutions that support WRP Partners and protect natural and cultural resources, while promoting sustainability, homeland security and military readiness.

The WRP region contains significant military assets, federal and Tribal lands, infrastructure systems such as energy and transportation, and wildlife ecosystems; making WRP valuable in leveraging resources and linking efforts to help partners share best practices. The goals of WRP are to:

- Serve as a catalyst for improved regional coordination among State, Federal and Tribal agencies
- Address common goals, identify and solve potential conflicts and develop solutions that protect our natural and cultural resources, while promoting sustainability and mission effectiveness
- Provide a forum for information exchange, issue identification, problem solving and recommendations across the WRP region
- Adopt strategic priorities at the annual Principals' meeting
- Leverage existing resources and linking of efforts to better support key projects
- Identify geospatial requirements and leverage existing tools and resources to support WRP priorities.


The ACUB program supports the Army’s mission to fight and win the nation’s wars. Winning wars requires a trained and ready force. Trained and ready Soldiers require land for maneuver exercises, live-fire training, equipment and Soldier skill testing, and other operations. Training restrictions, costly
workarounds, and compromised training realism can result from incompatible development surrounding the installation (external encroachment) and from threatened and endangered species on the installation (internal encroachment). Title 10, Section 2684a of the United States Code authorizes the Department of Defense to form agreements with non-federal governments or private organizations to limit encroachments and other constraints on military training, testing, and operations by establishing buffers around installations. The Army implements this authority through the ACUB program, which is managed overall at Army Headquarters level by the office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (OACSIM). Active Army cooperative agreements are managed by USAEC (a subcommand of Headquarters Installation Management Command [IMCOM]) and Army National Guard Directorate ACUB cooperative agreements are managed by the Army National Guard Environmental Programs Division.

The ACUB program allows installations to work with partners to encumber off-post land to protect habitat and buffer training without acquiring any new land for Army ownership. Through ACUB, the Army reaches out to partners to identify mutual objectives of land conservation and to prevent development of critical open areas. The Army can contribute funds to the partner’s purchase of easements or properties from willing landowners. These partnerships preserve high-value habitat and limit incompatible development in the vicinity of military installations. Establishing buffer areas around Army installations limits the effects of encroachment and maximizes land inside the installation that can be used to support the installation’s mission.

C.03 STORMWATER - MONUMENT CREEK WATERSHED RESTORATION MASTER PLAN

At the meeting on February 25, 2016, the JLUS Policy Committee approved the efforts of the Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Master Plan (MCWRMP) stakeholder group that was already underway as the official JLUS Monument Creek Working Group. JLUS staff attended the monthly meetings until the master plan with formal recommendations was completed on November 1, 2016. The Master Plan, through its strategies, is focused on the following objectives:

- Improve health and safety
- Improve water quality
- Improve wildlife habitats
- Improve stream bed and bank stability
- Improve fisheries
- Improve general creek health
- Reduce flooding magnitude and incidents
- Reduce sedimentation
- Improve access and visibility

The Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District managed the project with Matrix Design Group as the contractor. This Master Plan was drafted with input from dozens of community stakeholders and the public and the USAF Academy was a partner in funding this project along with El Paso County, Colorado Springs, and Colorado Springs Utilities. The process included two rounds of public open houses and a public comment period so these strategies have been vetted through a public process. The resulting recommendations support a collaborative and regional approach to addressing stormwater issues by prioritizing projects within the Monument Creek watershed of which a large portion would occur within drainages that impact the USAF Academy.

Stakeholders addressing stormwater issues within the Monument Creek watershed should utilize the following recommended strategies that were derived from this plan:
1. Utilize the Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Master Plan to coordinate stormwater efforts with community partners and adjust project priorities as work is completed in the watershed.

2. Stabilize the creek and floodplain to reduce erosion and sediment transport using the projects and techniques identified within the Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Master Plan. Naturally filter runoff to improve water quality in the Creek, improve existing wetlands and create new wetlands in the floodplain.

3. Establish performance criteria that can be applied to the design of future detention, stabilization, habitat restoration, and sediment reduction projects in the Creek.

4. Stabilize eroding banks along the Creek that contribute large quantities of sediment downstream.

5. Restore, enhance, and conserve riparian vegetation to help stabilize the Creek and floodplain.

6. Through development of new stormwater management and land use regulations, encourage stormwater management standards and techniques to reduce runoff, peak flows and runoff volumes that result from development within the watershed.

7. The community and the US Air Force Academy share an interest in keeping the New Santa Fe Trail open to the public as much as is feasible. Coordination between community stakeholders and the US Air Force Academy is important in order to address trail access issues. The US Air Force Academy and the community share an interest in maintaining the safety and security of the installation.

C.04 NEW SANTA FE TRAIL WORKING GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES FROM APRIL 27, 2017

WORKING GROUP CORE VALUES:
- The community and the US Air Force Academy share an interest in keeping the New Santa Fe Trail open to the public as much as is feasible.
- Coordination between community stakeholders and the US Air Force Academy is important in order to address trail access issues.
- The US Air Force Academy and the community share an interest in maintaining the safety and security of the installation.

STRAATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
1. Identify the issues, priorities and needs.
2. Discuss and develop strategies corresponding to Core Values and priorities.
3. Stakeholders: Who needs to be involved and how?
4. Timeframe for strategies:
   - Short-term (1-2 years): Begin implementation as soon as possible or within the next two years
   - Medium-term (3-5 years): May take additional time to implement or second priority strategies
   - Long-term (5-10 years): More complex strategies with a long-term time horizon

PRIORTIES
- Trail security
- Trail user security and safety
   - Short-term: Adequate trail maintenance
   - Preservation of habitat
   - Quick and easy communication on trail status
      - Online/phone app
      - Some form of information available at trailhead
- Non-motorized connection along this corridor
   - Short-term: Identifying safe and optimal alternative routes
   - Long-term: Establish safe and optimal alternative routes
Compatibility Issue Background

- Increase access for residents within this corridor, particularly east side of I-25
- Identify actions to minimize non-security closures

PUBLIC INPUT FROM THE AFA AREA MEETING ON FEBRUARY 23, 2017:
The strategies below are in order of importance per citizen feedback (number of dots placed next to each strategy):

1. Establish safe and optimal alternative on-street and off-street routes, including a route with a natural character similar to the existing New Santa Fe Trail (12)
2. Create a major maintenance and improvement program to address trail sustainability and enhance security for the installation and users (12)
3. Create a way for trail users to receive communication on trail status (4)
4. Update existing wayfinding within this corridor (1)

SUMMATION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS
- The primary public sentiment is to keep the trails that are located on the USAF Academy open to the public.
- Communication related to trail status is the next most significant request of the public. The use of smart phone applications, website announcements, social media, and signage are methods to be considered as communication medium.
- Trail alternatives were emphasized, such as a parallel trail system along the east side of I-25; establishment of trail connections between The Shops at Briargate/Pine Creek drainage and Woodmen Road and a designated paved bicycle commuter trail that is allocated right-of-way.

Strategy 1: Create a way for trail users to receive communication on trail status.

Background: Trail users experience challenges with getting information on trail status regarding when there will be closures (planned or unplanned). There is a need for integration of information from all trail administrators associated with not only the New Santa Fe Trail, but for trails that feed into it. An overall integrated information system would benefit use in this corridor by using some form of central online information center (potentially a website run by Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments or a dedicated regional trails website) and using a phone app. There are trail apps already available so stakeholders could identify and designate use of an app if it adequately serves the needs of users. Signage associated with Strategy #2 could also provide information on alternative routes and utilize variable message boards.

Which stakeholders need to be involved (public/trail users, installation, government, developers) and what is the role of each stakeholder in implementation?

Stakeholders that should be included are El Paso County, City of Colorado Springs, Monument, the AFA, trail user organizations, and Homeowner Associations. For some of the online tools, there would be an opportunity to collaborate with a private entity or public educational institution like UCCS (e.g. State had an app building competition) to develop these online tools or phone applications. There are existing open source software tools where information could be posted within an existing trail application.

When should it be implemented?

Short-term: As soon as practicable

Strategy 2: Update existing wayfinding within this corridor.

Background: In many cases it can be difficult for trail users to navigate trails that are created and maintained by multiple jurisdictions, or to determined alternate routes while using the trails.
Additional signage and methods for providing information while on the trail is needed to notify trail users about closures, hazards, and alternate routes.

Which stakeholders need to be involved (public/trail users, installation, government, developers) and what is the role of each stakeholder in implementation?

All trail administrators including Colorado Springs, El Paso County, the AFA, Monument and Palmer Lake.

When should it be implemented?

Short-term: Immediate need for current users and current trail network; Long-term: Coordinated plan for wayfinding to ensure safe and optimal re-routing when trail closures/maintenance occurs.

Strategy 3: Establish safe and optimal alternative on-street and off-street routes, including a route that complements the existing New Santa Fe Trail.

Background: Local plans have identified potential routes and some work has been done to create new routes along existing roadways. However, there is a need to establish a designated alternative route or routes that will be safe and implementable in instances when the New Santa Fe Trail experiences closures due to security threats, flood damage, or maintenance. The working group recognizes that this alternative route could also accommodate new and existing trail users who live on the east side of Interstate 25 and would prefer an alternative that does not utilize the New Santa Fe Trail. Alternative routes could be established using public-private partnerships (P3) with developers for new resident amenities and office parks with employees that commute by bicycle. Further assessment is needed to understand potential users and could be opportunity driven as new developments are planned (user counts, origination and destination, current development that may generate additional users). To accomplish this goal, costs and funding opportunities (REPI, federal, GOCO) with need to be identified and coordinated between all stakeholders involved with this strategy. As part of creating a complete alternative north-south route on the east side of Interstate 25, stakeholders should consider a first phase for the southern portion of an alternative route that would divert trail users off of the southern half of the existing trail using the existing underpass, and take them east under the interstate to a new north-south trail through open space to specifically reduce security concerns related to the southern half of the existing New Santa Fe Trail.

Which stakeholders need to be involved (public/trail users, installation, government, developers) and what is the role of each stakeholder in implementation?

Trail administrators and planners from the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso, and Monument; the AFA, trail users and organizations; developers/companies may be able to dedicate portions/build to accomplish this goal.

When should it be implemented?

1. Short-term: Identify a preferred alternative trail route using existing routes identified in plans such as the Non-Motorized Plan.
3. Long-term: Create an alternative trail through public and private open space on the east side of Interstate 25.

Strategy 4: Create a major maintenance and improvement program to address trail sustainability and enhance security for the installation and users.

Background: Trail administrators and the AFA need to work together on creating a maintenance and improvement plan to ensure that the trail continues to be safe and secure for all users. This strategy would encourage partnerships between the AFA, trail maintenance administrators, and trail users to help identify maintenance problems, solutions, and funding sources. A potential component of this
could be creation of a “friends of the trail” group to help with regular trail maintenance and clean up. The AFA and partner governments would coordinate on facilitating security measures as needed. Strategy #1 could be utilized to report recurring maintenance issues and problem areas that need to be incorporated into this program.

**Which stakeholders need to be involved (public/trail users, installation, government, developers) and what is the role of each stakeholder in implementation?**

All trail administrators, the AFA, trail users, State (funding), other governmental entities that could assist with technical and financial assistance.

**When should it be implemented?**

Medium-term: As funding and staff time permits