



## ARMY COMPATIBLE USE BUFFER PROGRAM

# ACUB

### FORT POLK ACUB



The Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program creates land conservation partnerships between the Army and outside organizations to protect land from development that is incompatible with the military mission.

#### INSTALLATION BACKGROUND

Fort Polk encompasses 100,000 acres on the west coast of Louisiana and serves as the Army's premier training center for contingency forces with a mission to train and deploy combat and combat support units. The Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) is located on Fort Polk and focuses on improving unit readiness by providing highly realistic, stressful, joint and combined arms training across the full spectrum of conflict. The JRTC is one of the Army's three "Dirt" Combat Training Centers used to train infantry brigade task forces and their subordinate elements in the Joint Contemporary Operation Environment. Approximately one-half of the 198,500 acres designated for training lands at Fort Polk are within the Kisatchie National Forest (KNF), which is owned by the Forest Service and used by Fort Polk under the terms of a special-use permit and operating plan.

Fort Polk houses a designated recovery population of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). The RCW requires mature longleaf pine forests for nesting and foraging. RCW population recovery and habitat management requirements challenge the installation's ability to utilize its lands for current and future mission requirements. The Louisiana Pine Snake (LPS) is also dependent on the habitat found in and around Fort Polk and is a candidate species for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). ESA listing of the LPS could pose additional regulatory restrictions on installation training operations and land use in order to protect the species and its habitat.

#### For more information

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## OBJECTIVE

Fort Polk's ACUB program strives to protect valuable habitat through the purchase of conservation easements on private lands adjacent to Fort Polk. The targeted buffer lands support Fort Polk and KNF RCW recovery and habitat management requirements by ensuring continuity of RCW and LPS habitat. Through the enhancement of endangered and candidate species management on lands adjacent to installation boundaries, the Fort Polk ACUB program is able to reduce the potential for restrictions on ranges and training lands.

## PRIMARY PARTNER: THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, LOUISIANA CHAPTER

The mission of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Louisiana Chapter of TNC will ensure that land protected through the ACUB program (specifically the long leaf pine ecosystem) is managed in perpetuity for the benefit of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and the Louisiana Pine Snake. For more information on the Louisiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, visit <http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/louisiana/>.

For more information on ACUB accomplishments,  
funding and other stakeholders  
please view the ACUB website at  
<http://aec.army.mil/usaec/acub/acub00.html>

