

Military Program to Help Conserve Swath of Southern Indiana

A new initiative that aims to strengthen Indiana's military readiness will also help preserve and protect a large swath of southern Indiana around military installations.

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BLOOMINGTON, Ind. (AP) — A new initiative that aims to strengthen [Indiana](#)'s military readiness will also help preserve and protect a large swath of southern Indiana around military installations.

More than 3.5 million acres of southern Indiana — from just south of Indianapolis to near Jasper and from the [Illinois](#) border to near Madison — is now designated as the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape.

While the program's primary objective is to preserve and protect military mission readiness, operations, testing and training, it will also support agricultural and forest lands, promote watershed protections and ensure protections of threatened species.

Up until now Indiana groups, including land trusts, have worked with the U.S. Forest Service and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to protect and conserve small tracts of land.

But the new Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape, announced Tuesday, will combine the efforts of federal agencies, regional organizations, state officials and communities to educate farmers on soil conservation, and aid landowners in repairing eroding banks along streams.

“It’s no exaggeration that the Sentinel Landscape is one of the biggest conservation projects in Indiana’s history,” Christian Freitag, executive director of the Conservation Law Center and a professor of law at Indiana University, told The Indianapolis Star.

Indiana’s sentinel landscape, one of 10 such landscapes in the U.S., will help add land in public parks and forests across southern Indiana, and provide natural buffers around military installations.

That includes the Naval Support Activity Crane, which is near Bloomington and is the third-largest U.S. Navy installation in the world, and Camp Atterbury, an Indiana National Guard training site.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2022-02-20/military-program-to-help-protect-swath-of-southern-indiana>

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