

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.	INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLANS (INRMP).....	1-1
1.1.1.	Regulatory Requirements and Legal Authority	1-1
1.1.2.	Guidance and Required Elements.....	1-2
1.1.3.	Natural Resource Management Drivers	1-3
1.1.4.	Purpose of Camp Pendleton’s INRMP	1-4
1.2.	INRMP COORDINATION, EVALUATION, AND UPDATES	1-6
1.2.1.	Reviews and Updates.....	1-6
1.2.2.	Evaluation.....	1-8
1.2.3.	Public Comment	1-8
1.2.4.	Resource Agency Coordination.....	1-9
1.2.5.	ESA Section 7(a)(2) Consultation.....	1-9
1.3.	MILITARY NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP.....	1-9
1.3.1.	History of Military Natural Resources Management	1-10
1.3.2.	Emergence of Ecosystem Management Philosophy	1-11
1.3.3.	DoD Policy and Programs	1-13
1.3.3.1.	Ecosystem Management.....	1-13
1.3.3.2.	General Conservation Management	1-14
1.3.3.3.	Natural Resources Management.....	1-14
1.3.4.	Marine Corps Environmental Policy and Programs	1-15
1.3.5.	Camp Pendleton’s Ecosystem Management Philosophy	1-16
1.4.	NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT GOALS	1-18
1.4.1.	DoD Goal.....	1-18
1.4.2.	Marine Corps Natural Resource Goals.....	1-18
1.4.3.	Camp Pendleton Natural Resources Management Program Goals	1-19
1.5.	NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	1-19
1.6.	RELATIONSHIP OF THE INRMP TO EXISTING PLANS AND ORDERS.....	1-20
1.7.	NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND PROJECT FUNDING	1-20
1.8.	RECENT LEGISLATION AFFECTING NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS	1-21

FIGURE

Figure 1-1.	Threatened and Endangered Listed Species on Federal Lands	1-9
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTEGRATED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLANS

In recognition of the fact that military lands contain significant natural resources, Congress enacted the Sikes Act in 1960 to address wildlife conservation and public access on military installations. The Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. § 670-670f), as amended, requires the Secretary of Defense to carry out a program to provide for the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources on military installations in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the state fish and wildlife agencies. The 1997 amendments to the Sikes Act require the Department of Defense (DoD) to develop and implement an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) for each military installation with significant natural resources. INRMPs are prepared in cooperation with the USFWS and the state fish and wildlife agencies, and reflect the mutual agreement of these parties concerning conservation, protection, and management of fish and wildlife resources on military lands.

INRMPs provide for the management of natural resources, including fish, wildlife, and plants. They incorporate, to the maximum extent practicable, ecosystem management principles and provide the landscape necessary for the sustainment of military land uses. INRMPs allow for the multipurpose use of resources, including public access necessary and appropriate for those uses, provided such access does not conflict with military land use requirements. Consistent with the use of military installations to ensure the readiness of the Armed Forces, the purpose of INRMPs is to provide for the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources on military lands.

INRMPs assist installation commanders in their efforts to conserve and rehabilitate natural resources consistent with the use of military installations while ensuring the preparedness of the Armed Forces. INRMPs are intended principally to guide the effective management of an installation's natural resources, so as to ensure that its lands remain available and in good condition to support the installation's military mission, and with "no net loss" in the capability of military installation land to support the military mission of the installation. To ensure frequent and continued use of land for military training, now and in the future, management programs and actions in INRMPs must ensure natural resource utilization is: 1) sustainable; 2) in accordance with laws and regulations; and 3) optimally integrated with existing military installation plans and mission requirements.

1.1.1. Regulatory Requirements and Legal Authority

The Sikes Act requires the Secretary of each military department to prepare, implement, review, and revise INRMPs for each military installation unless exempted due to the absence of significant natural resources. Each INRMP is to include all elements of natural resources management applicable to the installation, including compliance with the terms and conditions of relevant Biological Opinions (BOs).

Unlike several other laws (e.g., Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended [ESA] and Clean Water Act [CWA]), which only require military installations to protect sensitive biological resources, the Sikes Act requires each installation possessing significant natural resources to prepare and implement an INRMP that supports the mission of the installation and complies with the suite of federal laws governing natural resources management and protection (e.g., ESA and CWA). Thus, an INRMP reflects an installation's programs and intent to comply with other federal and state laws, most notably laws associated with environmental documentation, endangered species, water quality, and management of wildlife in general.

1.1.2. Guidance and Required Elements

The following documents were used in the development of this INRMP: 1) The Sikes Act, *Updated Guidance on Implementation of the Sikes Act Improvement Act* of 10 October 2002 (U.S. DoD 2002); 2) *OSD Supplemental Guidance for Implementation of the Sikes Act Improvement Act* of 1 November 2004 (U.S. DoD 2004); 3) *OSD Supplemental Guidance for Implementation of the Sikes Act Improvement Act* of 5 September 2005 (U.S. DoD 2005); 4) Marine Corps Order (MCO) P5090.2A (Environmental Compliance and Protection Manual, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps [HQMC] 1998); and 5) the *Handbook for Preparing, Revising and Implementing Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans on Marine Corps Installations* (HQMC 2006). Together, they provide detailed guidance on and identify required elements to be included in the preparation and update of INRMPs.

As defined by the Sikes Act, natural resource management programs on military lands should be consistent with the use of those lands to ensure the preparedness of the Armed Forces and should provide for:

- The conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources.
- The sustainable multipurpose use of the resources, which include hunting, fishing, trapping, and non-consumptive uses.
- Public access to military installations to facilitate the use of these resources, subject to safety requirements and military security.

The Sikes Act further states that (§ 670a(b)), "Consistent with the use of military installations to ensure the preparedness of the Armed Forces, each [INRMP]... shall, to the extent appropriate and applicable, provide for:

- Fish and wildlife management, land management, forest management, and fish- and wildlife-oriented recreation.
- Fish and wildlife habitat enhancement or modifications.
- Wetland protection, enhancement, and restoration, where necessary for support of fish, wildlife, or plants.
- Integration of, and consistency among, the various activities conducted under the plan.
- Establishment of specific natural resource management goals and objectives and timeframes for proposed actions.

- Sustainable use by the public of natural resources to the extent that the use is not inconsistent with the needs of fish and wildlife resources.
- Public access to the military installation that is necessary or appropriate subject to the requirements necessary to ensure safety and military security.
- Enforcement of applicable natural resource laws (including regulations).
- No net loss in the capability of military installation lands to support the military mission of the installation.
- Such other activities as the Secretary of the military department determines appropriate.”

This list demonstrates that Congress intended for natural resources management and INRMPs on military installations to support and be consistent with the mission of the installation, provide an opportunity to the public to have access to installation natural resources when not in conflict with mission or security requirements, and participate, as appropriate, in regional ecosystem initiatives.

The Sikes Act also requires that INRMPs be implemented. “Implementation” anticipates the execution of all “must fund” projects and activities in accordance with specific time frames identified in the INRMP. “Must fund” projects and activities are those that are required to meet recurring natural resources conservation management requirements or current compliance needs. Not all projects listed in an INRMP are necessarily “must fund.” INRMPs also include projects and actions that, based upon the availability of funding, also would (further) enhance an installation’s natural resources.

As defined in OSD Policy memo, dated 10 October 2002 (*Updated Guidance for Implementation of the Sikes Act Improvement Act*), an INRMP is considered implemented if an installation:

- Actively requests, receives, and uses funds for “must fund” projects and activities.
- Ensures that sufficient numbers of professionally trained natural resources management staff are available to perform the tasks required by the INRMP.
- Coordinates annually with all cooperating Resource Agency offices.
- Documents specific INRMP action accomplishments undertaken each year.

1.1.3. Natural Resource Management Drivers

Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Pendleton (hereafter referred to as Camp Pendleton, or “the Base”), like all military installations, has needs or “drivers” that must be satisfied for the installation’s mission to continue without disruption. Common with other federal agencies are legal or regulatory drivers, such as the Federal ESA and CWA that require compliance to ensure continuance of the military mission. Unique to Camp Pendleton are a myriad of installation-specific drivers that are defined by the Base’s mission, land uses to support the mission, geographic location, and natural resources affected by the mission. Identification of the *primary* drivers at Camp Pendleton provided the basis for establishment of natural resources management goals and objectives, and the goals of individual management programs.

As the Marine Corps' premier training facility on the west coast, the overarching natural resources management driver is the stewardship of Base lands and resources to ensure usable land, airspace, and sea space remain available for the continuance of training. Such assurance requires: 1) beach access for amphibious landings; 2) open space and a variety of vegetation types for personnel and wheeled and tracked vehicle maneuvers; 3) firing ranges and dedicated impact areas for the receipt of ordnance; 4) airspace that can accommodate hazardous live fire training, close terrain flying, take-offs and landings, heavy lift operations, etc; and 5) flexibility to alter resource utilization to accommodate changing mission objectives.

Stewardship is defined by Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 4715.3 as “the management of resources entrusted to one’s care in a way that preserves and enhances the resources and their benefits for present and future generations.” As Camp Pendleton’s *primary* natural resources management driver, sound stewardship management to ensure long-term sustainability of the Base’s military mission includes the need to:

- Maintain sufficient natural areas and varied vegetation for sound and realistic training, as well as sensitive species.
- Monitor and deter mission encroachment, both internally and externally.
- Manage all real property assets, real estate agreements, and military and nonmilitary activities, to ensure all land use activities are compatible with the mission and the needs of sensitive natural resources.
- Minimize wildfire frequency on Camp Pendleton to ensure human safety, protect property (on and off Base), ensure maximum available usage of training land for its intended use, and minimize land degradation and/or habitat type conversions.
- Prevent, where feasible, degradation of the land and associated sensitive resources to ensure realistic training and military readiness.
- Ensure military trainers can develop their tactical decisions by the application of sound military doctrine, and not restrictions and prescriptions to avoid impacts to protected areas.
- Ensure compliance with the ESA, and other applicable federal natural resource regulations such as the CWA, Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), through avoidance and minimization of impacts to sensitive species and their habitats on Base.
- Mitigate unavoidable impacts to regulated natural resources off Base whenever feasible.
- Maintain a level of involvement in regional ecosystem initiatives to ensure Camp Pendleton does not become more of an “ecological island” and the last bastion of many endangered and threatened species.

1.1.4. Purpose of Camp Pendleton’s INRMP

The Camp Pendleton INRMP provides the foundation of ecosystem management goals and objectives to direct management and stewardship of the lands entrusted to the Marine Corps by the American people. This INRMP documents and assists the development, integration, and coordination of natural resources management aboard Camp Pendleton. Further, it describes Camp Pendleton’s natural resources management programs and how

those programs provide for: 1) the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources; 2) the sustainable multipurpose use of the resources, which include hunting, fishing, trapping, and non-consumptive uses; and 3) public access to military installations to facilitate the use of these resources, subject to safety and military security requirements. In addition to describing natural resources management programs, this document is intended to accomplish the following:

- Provide baseline information and conditions that support daily decision-making and compliance with regulatory and planning processes, such as those required by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), ESA, and CWA.
- Identify, document, and facilitate the organizational capacity, support, and linkages necessary for successful implementation and administration of the INRMP and management of Camp Pendleton's natural resources.
- Integrate the various natural resources management programs on Base to reduce overlap and redundancy, improve management effectiveness, and ensure that Camp Pendleton lands remain available and in good condition to support its military mission.
- Show the interrelationships between current and proposed components of natural resources management (e.g., vegetation, wetland, fish and wildlife, hunting and fishing), mission requirements, and other land use activities.
- Establish natural resources program management goals, objectives, and actions that will be implemented during the duration of the plan and provide time frames for proposed actions.
- Identify lower priority projects that may be done if needed funding becomes available.
- Establish a process for the periodic review, update, and reporting of program goals, objectives, and projects within the INRMP.

This INRMP is intended to integrate natural resources conservation and management efforts in support of land use and military mission requirements and responsibilities aboard Camp Pendleton. This INRMP reflects Camp Pendleton's approach to natural resources management and stewardship, and summarizes baseline information and agreements through which compliance with regulatory and planning processes, such as those required by the Sikes Act, NEPA, ESA and the CWA, is accomplished. This INRMP also fulfills other responsibilities with regard to DoDI and Department of Defense Directives (DoDD), as well as Department of the Navy (DoN) and Marine Corps policies for natural resource planning, conservation, management, and rehabilitation in support of the Base's military training mission.

Camp Pendleton's INRMP provides technical guidance to persons planning and/or preparing installation approvals, management actions, orders, instructions, guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures, and other plans, for integrating natural resource management efforts into the Base's planning and decision-making processes. It is not intended, however, for use by military personnel operating in the field. Field operations and activities are directed to adhere to guidelines, plans, orders, or other approvals that have been developed using this INRMP and have already had environmental compliance review, and where applicable, regulatory approvals and/or permitting (e.g., Base Order P3500.1,

Base Range and Training Regulations). This INRMP does not dictate land use decisions, but rather provides important information to support sound land use and natural resources management decisions. National Historic Preservation Act requirements are not addressed in this INRMP. Cultural resources management issues (archaeological and historical) are addressed separately within Camp Pendleton's *Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan* (ICRMP).

1.2. INRMP COORDINATION, EVALUATION, AND UPDATES

1.2.1. Reviews and Updates

Section 101(b)(2) of the Sikes Act [16 U.S.C. 670a(b)(2)] states that each INRMP “must be reviewed as to operation and effect by the parties thereto on a regular basis, but not less often than every 5 years.”

The requirement to “review” the INRMPs “on a regular basis, but not less often than every 5 years” does not necessarily mean that the INRMP is required to be revised and republished every 5 years. The Sikes Act specifically directs that the INRMPs be reviewed “as to operation and effect,” emphasizing that the review is intended to determine whether existing INRMPs are current and are being implemented to meet the requirements of the Sikes Act, and contribute to the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources on military installations.

These reviews must be performed by the Base, USFWS, and CDFG. This means that no less frequently than every 5 years, all three parties to the INRMP must complete a review of the INRMP. Although not expressly required by the Sikes Act, the outcome of this joint review will be documented in a memorandum or letter summarizing the rationale for the conclusions the parties have reached. This documentation will be jointly executed to reflect the parties' mutual agreement and be added to the INRMP as part of Appendix A.

Although the Sikes Act specifies that a formal review must be completed no less often than every 5 years, DoD guidance specifies that INRMPs shall be reviewed annually with the cooperation of the USFWS and State fish and game agencies. Camp Pendleton, USFWS, and CDFG have agreed to meet annually to review the INRMP. These annual reviews will facilitate “adaptive management” by providing an opportunity for the parties to review the goals and objectives of the plan and management programs, as well as the schedule for undertaking proposed actions. These annual reviews are required to ensure the INRMP 1) accommodates changes in the military mission and natural resources management objectives; 2) incorporates lessons learned from Base projects, regional activities, or scientific studies; 3) incorporates agreements with regulatory agencies; and 4) ensures the continued usefulness of this plan. Additionally, the annual review is required to verify that:

- Current information on all conservation metrics is available.
- All “must fund” projects and activities have been budgeted for, and implementation is on schedule.
- All required professionally-trained natural resources positions are filled or are in the process of being filled.

- Projects and activities for the upcoming year have been identified and included in the INRMP.
- All required federal, state and installation coordination has occurred.
- All significant changes to the installation's mission requirements or its natural resources have been identified.

To accomplish these annual reviews, Camp Pendleton's Natural Resources Department will coordinate the review, evaluation and update of Camp Pendleton's INRMP. The Natural Resources Department will obtain input and guidance from individuals representing other departments and critical interests of Camp Pendleton to ensure the INRMP reflects involvement of a cross section of land users and land managers at Camp Pendleton. Additionally, development, evaluation and updates are coordinated with the staff of the USFWS and the CDFG.

During the first quarter of each fiscal year, Camp Pendleton will initiate the annual review through a process of:

- Reviewing and updating natural resources management goals and objectives.
- Reviewing and documenting the activities and actions required and taken during the previous fiscal year.
- Reviewing and documenting changes made to proposed actions as a result of adaptive management and revise implementation schedules and priorities.
- Identify additional actions required or desired.
- Scheduling and conducting the Annual Metrics Review with USFWS and CDFG and submitting the results to HQMC.

During the second quarter of each fiscal year, Camp Pendleton, the USFWS and CDFG will meet to:

- Review any issues identified during the Annual Metrics Review.
- Identify and review "must fund" actions for the current fiscal year.
- Review new projects, data, understanding of natural processes and species, and lessons learned from completed and ongoing projects.
- Review and update sections of the INRMP in accordance with the revision schedule agreed upon between Camp Pendleton, the USFWS, and CDFG.

Although not required by the Sikes Act, these less formal reviews will be documented through an exchange of letters or a jointly executed memorandum. These documented annual (or otherwise) reviews may be useful in developing the *ex parte* reports required by Section 101(f) of the Sikes Act, as well as expedite, or in appropriate cases substitute for the more formal 5-year reviews (provided these "regular" reviews are reasonably comprehensive and the written documentation evidences the parties' mutual agreement).

Following completion of each review, a brief report summarizing the results of this review effort, including a synopsis of any significant changes to the Base's INRMP program, will be prepared for the Commanding General (CG). Copies of this review report will also be

distributed to any other Camp Pendleton staff organizations having a land use management role on the Base.

1.2.2. Evaluation

The formal HQMC Environmental Compliance Evaluation Program (ECE) assesses and evaluates the implementation of the INRMP. The ECE requires an onsite evaluation every three years by an independent team established by HQMC, an annual review and validation of a Plan of Action and Milestones (POA&M) that follows up formally on any deficiencies identified during the HQMC ECE, and an annual Self-Audit Program administered by Camp Pendleton.

The effectiveness of Camp Pendleton's natural resources management program and INRMP will be determined by several factors. These include the annual review and tracking of actions, evaluation of measuring and monitoring of species populations, habitat quantity and quality, and ecosystem health values (developed as part of the Riparian Ecosystem Conservation Plan [RECP], both on Base and regionally). The above factors will then be compared against established goals and commitments (including any established species population goals). Initially, threatened and endangered species and habitat goals (established in consultation with the USFWS) in the Camp Pendleton Estuarine and Beach Ecosystem Conservation Plan (Appendix B), Riparian Ecosystem Conservation Plan (Appendix C), and the Listed Upland Species Management Program (Appendix D) will be used to determine effectiveness. As Camp Pendleton further refines its ecosystem based management approach, additional measures of success may be added.

1.2.3. Public Comment

The Sikes Act mandates, "each military department shall provide an opportunity for the submission of public comments on [the INRMP and on] changes to cooperative plans." Members of the public, advocacy groups, and interested citizens are afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the INRMP on an ongoing basis. Copies of the INRMP are placed in libraries in San Clemente, Oceanside and Fallbrook, and the current version of Camp Pendleton's INRMP is maintained on the Base's website (www.pendleton.usmc.mil) for public review, with an invitation to provide comments. Changes and updates developed during reviews will be posted to the website as they are developed and identified for ease of review by interested parties. The website will provide interested members of the public information on how and where to submit their comments. No specific deadlines are established, so members of the public will have the opportunity to submit comments at any time. Comments received will be reviewed during annual reviews. During the 2006 update of this INRMP the public was invited to comment on the draft update. Copies of the draft were placed in libraries in San Clemente, Oceanside and Fallbrook, and on the Base's website for public review. Notices were placed in local newspapers, and 96 letters were sent to organizations and agencies notifying them of the availability of the draft for review and comment. Public comments and responses to comments are provided in Appendix (E).

1.2.4. Resource Agency Coordination

The Sikes Act (16 U.S.C. § 670a(a)(2)) states that the INRMP shall reflect the “mutual agreement” of the USFWS, the state fish and wildlife agency, and the DoD “concerning conservation, protection, and management of fish and wildlife resources.” The requirement for mutual agreement is further clarified by the distinction that “nothing in this subchapter enlarges or diminishes the responsibility and authority of any state for the protection and management of fish and resident wildlife (Section 670a(a)(4)(A)(ii)).”

Mutual agreement with the USFWS and the CDFG is met through the participation of these agencies in the review/update process, involvement throughout any revision development as noted above, and by signature to the revised document. Coordination with the USFWS and the CDFG is expected to continue indefinitely as the “review, planning, and revision dialogue” will be ongoing. These agencies will participate, to the extent practicable based on staffing availability, in an on-going review process by providing comments, recommendations and input on the status of regional processes, surveys and species.

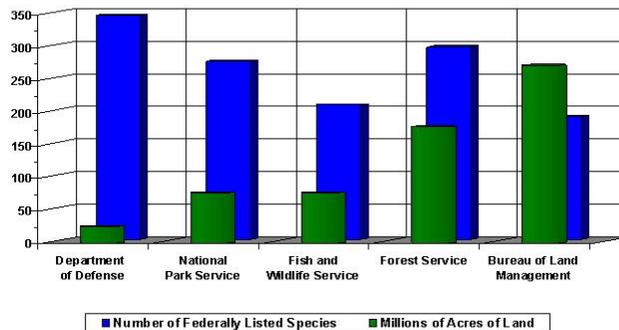
1.2.5. ESA Section 7(a)(2) Consultation

This INRMP reiterates the Base’s compliance with Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, as established through BOs issued by the USFWS for Camp Pendleton over the last several years, including the *Biological Opinion (1-6-95-F-02) for Programmatic Activities and Conservation Plans in Riparian and Estuarine/Beach Ecosystems on Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton* (the “Riparian BO,” USFWS 1995a) and the Programmatic Uplands Endangered Species Management Plan.

Many of the activities and actions proposed to be conducted as part of this INRMP come from programmatic management plans that have been consulted on under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA or are required as terms and conditions of existing BOs and, therefore, do not require additional Section 7 consultation. All other activities and actions have been and will continue to be evaluated for consistency with existing BOs. Any action outside of the scope of existing BOs will undergo separate evaluation on an action-by-action basis to determine if there are any adverse effects to listed species that would require a separate Section 7 consultation. Because of the process described above, a separate Section 7 consultation on this INRMP is not necessary.

1.3. MILITARY NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP

The DoD is a major user of land, sea, and air space. It is responsible for the stewardship of 25 million ac of land on more than 425 major military installations and is the



Source: T&E Species on CDD Lands; Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations & Environment) Conservation
 CWB Source: NatureServe and its Natural Heritage member programs. Copyright 2007 NatureServe



FIGURE 1-1. T&E LISTED SPECIES ON FEDERAL LANDS

smallest federal land management department in the U.S. DoD requires continued access to those lands and the air space above them to maintain mission readiness. Land is needed for deployment of weapon systems and combat training exercises. Marine and estuarine environments are needed to conduct training exercises, test vessels and submarine tracking equipment, evaluate missile weapon systems, and conduct trials on new ships. Airspace is needed to train pilots, and test aircraft and air-based weapon systems.

The specific landscapes and unique natural features of the land, sea, and air space used by DoD are crucial to military readiness. Varied training regimens and differing climatic, topographic, hydrologic, and biological settings prepare troops to operate equipment and carry out operational plans under conditions they may encounter in future conflicts. Natural areas, such as desert environments, are used for maneuvers that involve large, mechanized units; coastal zones and beaches provide the setting for missile launches and amphibious landings; forested areas are essential for small arms combat training; open fields provide areas large enough to accommodate air-to-ground bombing ranges; and coastal waters provide operational areas for continuous ship and submarine maneuvers. Stewardship through ecosystem management and conservation efforts will help to ensure that these training environments are not significantly degraded over-time and that DoD has continued access to all such areas to test, train, and develop readiness capabilities.

Many rich and varied natural and cultural resources are present on DoD installations, and DoD has an obligation to protect those resources for future generations. DoD lands and waters contain archaeological and historical sites, threatened and endangered species, marine mammals, Native American burial and sacred sites, historic buildings, and wetlands.

More than 252 installations provide habitat for at least one candidate or listed species. Approximately 320 different federally listed species are known to occur on at least one DoD installation. Military lands provide the highest known density of threatened and endangered species found on any federal lands (see Figure 1-1), and contain some of the finest remaining examples of rare native vegetation communities such as old-growth forests, tall-grass prairies, and vernal pool wetlands.

At one time, military land use missions were buffered by their remote locations. With continued population growth and development, many installations, including Camp Pendleton, are now located on the edge of densely developed urban areas where managers and trainers work with their new neighbors to lessen the impacts of surrounding development on the training mission and the remaining biodiversity. The biggest threat to biodiversity is loss of natural habitats. While the military mission requires the use of lands set aside for its purpose, that mission also requires that those lands remain open and in a natural state, which in turn supports the continued existence and conservation of habitats and the species (listed or not) that use those habitats.

1.3.1. History of Military Natural Resources Management

The 25 million ac of public land managed by the DoD includes national assets of unique ecological value and biological diversity. Since 1823, military forces have been called upon to oversee or manage public lands and natural resources, including lands set aside as

national parks (Leslie et al. 1996). Over the past four decades, the military has strengthened its commitment to natural resources management through adoption of both the philosophy and principles of ecosystem management, as described below.

Passage of the Conservation Programs on Military Reservations Act (Sikes Act) in 1960 (Public Law 86-797) provided the legal basis for wildlife conservation and public access for recreation on military land. The Sikes Act also authorized the collection of fees and the development of cooperative plans by the military, USFWS, and CDFG agencies. During this period, however, policies encouraged consumptive uses of natural resources, such as agricultural leasing mainly for grazing (Leslie et al. 1996). Revenues generated from grazing and other programs such as forestry and hunting and fishing programs became the major source of funding for natural resources management programs on DoD installations.

Growing public interest in natural resources, and a general shift in public policy toward “multiple use” of public lands and management for “sustained yield,” brought increasing pressure on natural resources management in the 1970s and 1980s (Leslie et al. 1996). In addition, a host of environmental protection statutes (e.g., NEPA, the ESA, CWA, Clean Air Act, etc.) added new requirements for DoD and other federal land managers. The introduction of new environmental cleanup and hazardous waste (HW) control requirements, (e.g., Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act [CERCLA] and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA]) gave rise to DoD’s multibillion dollar HW management and Installation Restoration (IR) programs.

During this time, DoD resource management programs were focused primarily on game and revenue generating programs (e.g., row crop agriculture, grazing, timber, recreational hunting and fishing, etc.). As the statutory drivers mentioned above began to establish federal agency responsibilities for species and resource conservation, the conservation value of DoD lands and biodiversity began to increase as did the numbers of federally protected species. DoD established a natural resources management program office, and many installations shifted natural resources managers into newly created environmental offices. This development strengthened Department-wide environmental research and management activities.

As the 1980s came to a close, DoD 4700.4 (Natural Resources Management Program) was issued, calling for development of INRMPs on military installations. These plans, which were intended to help balance competing interests, began to set the stage for a new approach to resource management on military installations.

1.3.2. Emergence of Ecosystem Management Philosophy

Throughout the 1990s, the military began to take stock of its natural resources management responsibilities and considered new approaches for improving program effectiveness. Initiation of strategic planning sessions resulted in new policy directives and instructions, funding priorities, strategic partnerships, resource inventories, and a transition to integrated planning. Military departments first completed audits of current programs and made commitments to complete biological resource inventories. Training for natural resources managers also improved (Leslie et al. 1996).

To ensure support of the military mission while managing natural resources, it was recognized that land management needed to be integrated with operational and training objectives. GIS technology greatly facilitated analyses of land condition and training requirements and became a useful and widespread tool. By this time, the military had also begun reaching out to others in the government and the private sector to provide additional expertise, and to help develop solutions to common problems. The USFWS, state fish and game agencies, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) were among the many organizations invited to serve as partners in developing new strategies for natural resources management on military lands (Leslie et al. 1996).

The emergence of a new philosophy and ethic was realized in 1994, when the DoD published its “Ecosystem Management Policy Directive.” This policy stated that military installations will use ecosystem management to: 1) restore and maintain ecological associations that are of local and regional importance and compatible with existing geophysical components (e.g., soil, water); 2) restore and maintain biological diversity; 3) restore and maintain ecological processes, structures, and functions; 4) adapt to changing conditions; 5) manage for viable populations; and 6) maintain ecologically appropriate perspectives of time and space (Leslie et al. 1996).

In 1995, the DoD, including as many as 60 military trainers/operators and natural resources managers, along with TNC, federal and state land management agencies, several private sector interest groups, and The Keystone Center engaged in a major national dialogue known as the Keystone Center 1996 to develop policy guidance for enhancing and protecting DoD lands in a way that was intended to be easily integrated with the military mission. The dialogue (often referred to as the Keystone Dialogue) revealed strong support by the DoD for biodiversity conservation on military lands and affirmed that conservation of DoD’s exceptional natural heritage is important to the military lands, for the following principal reasons (The Keystone Center 1996):

- Biodiversity conservation is essential to sustaining the natural landscapes required for the training and testing necessary to *maintain military readiness*. Managing for biodiversity can help ensure that lands and waters are maintained in a “healthy condition” and thereby facilitate greater flexibility in land use for military operations.
- Biodiversity conservation is a central component of ecosystem management, which has been embraced as DoD’s natural resources management strategy. Given DoD’s significant investment in conserving and protecting the environment, this strategy promises the greatest return on investment—*it is simply the right thing to do and the smart way of doing business*.
- Biodiversity conservation can *expedite the compliance process and help avoid conflicts*. Proactive management for biodiversity can provide greater certainty in mitigation for environmental impact assessment processes under the NEPA as well as consultation processes under the ESA. On a number of installations, conservation efforts have helped avoid the designation of critical habitat by showing that the military’s conservation plans provide adequate protection for habitat or have provided greater flexibility in training activities while meeting habitat protection requirements.

- Citizens demand that federal land managers demonstrate responsible stewardship of public lands. The practice of biodiversity conservation fosters good will within the communities surrounding military installations, which in turn, *engenders public support for the military mission*. A strong commitment to stewardship also tends to strengthen institutional relationships among government agencies that would have some involvement in the resolution of resource management or environmental protection issues.
- Biodiversity conservation is essential to ensuring the integrity of the natural environments that are home to our nation's soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines. By helping to maintain aesthetically pleasing surroundings and expanding opportunities for outdoor recreation, managing for biodiversity can *improve the quality of life of our nation's military personnel and their families*.

1.3.3. DoD Policy and Programs

1.3.3.1. Ecosystem Management

In its implementation of ecosystem management as a tool for conserving natural resources on military lands, the DoD established the following principles (U.S. DoD 1994):

- Ecosystem management is the basis for future management of DoD lands and waters. It will blend multiple-use needs and provide a consistent framework for managing DoD installations, ensuring the integrity of ecosystems.
- Ecosystem management is a goal-driven approach to environmental management at a scale compatible with natural processes, recognizes social and economic viability within functioning ecosystems, and is realized through effective partnerships among private and government agencies.
- Ecosystem management is a process that considers the environment as a complex system functioning as a whole, not as a collection of parts, and recognizes that people and their social and economic needs are integral parts of the whole.

The goal of ecosystem management, as established by DoD, is to ensure that military lands support present and future training requirements while preserving, improving, and enhancing ecosystem integrity. Over the long-term, this approach will maintain and improve the sustainability and biological diversity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems while supporting sustainable economies, human use, and the environment required for realistic training operations (U.S. DoD 1996).

DoDI 4715.3, the Environmental Conservation Program (U.S. DoD 1996) established the following principles and guidelines:

- Maintain and improve the sustainability and native biological diversity of ecosystems.
- Administer with consideration for ecological units and timeframes. Ecosystem management requires consideration of the effects of installation programs and actions at spatial and temporal ecological scales that are relevant to natural processes.

- Support sustainable human activities. People and their social, economic, and national security needs are an integral part of ecological systems, and management of ecosystems depends upon sensitivity to these issues.
- Develop a vision of ecosystem health. Existing social and economic conditions should be factored into the vision.
- Develop priorities and reconcile conflicts.
- Develop coordinated approaches to work toward ecosystem health. Since ecosystems rarely coincide with ownership and political boundaries, cooperation across ownership is an important component of ecosystem management.
- Rely on best science and available data.
- Use benchmarks to monitor and evaluate outcomes.
- Use adaptive management. Ecosystems are recognized as open, changing, and complex systems. Management should be flexible to accommodate the evolution of scientific understanding of ecosystems.
- Implement through installation plans and programs. An ecosystem's desirable range of future conditions should be achieved through linkages with other stakeholders.

The DoD continues to shift its focus to provide for the protection of individual species through management of ecosystems. This approach requires land managers to form partnerships for information exchange, pool resources for conducting mitigation and studying natural resources, and collaborate to develop a shared vision for ecosystems.

1.3.3.2. General Conservation Management

All DoD conservation programs shall work to guarantee continued access to land, air, and water resources for realistic military training and testing while ensuring that the natural and cultural resources entrusted to DoD care are sustained in a healthy condition for scientific research, education, and other compatible uses by future generations.

The principal purpose of DoD lands and waters is to support mission-related activities. Those lands and waters shall be made available to the public for educational or recreational use of natural and cultural resources, when such access is compatible with military mission activities, ecosystem sustainability, and with other considerations such as security, safety, and fiscal soundness.

1.3.3.3. Natural Resources Management

Natural resources under the stewardship and control of the DoD shall be managed to support and be consistent with the military mission, while protecting and enhancing those resources for multiple use, sustainable yield, and biological integrity.

Biologically or geographically significant or sensitive natural resources (e.g., wetlands, forests, floodplains, watersheds, estuaries, riparian areas, coastal barrier islands, marine sanctuaries, critical habitats, and animal migration corridors) or species (e.g., threatened or endangered species, certain marine mammals, and migratory birds) shall be inventoried and managed to protect these resources, and to promote biodiversity.

Threatened and endangered species management and recovery efforts on DoD lands and waters shall comply with the ESA and other legal mandates. Procedures to comply with these mandates shall emphasize military mission requirements and interagency cooperation during consultation, species recovery planning, and management activities. Opportunities to conserve federally listed species, and the ecosystems on which those species depend shall be identified. The DoD shall accept an unequal or disproportionate burden for the conservation of threatened and endangered species only when it is required by legal authority, or it has been expressly determined that it is in the DoD's best interest.

1.3.4. Marine Corps Environmental Policy and Programs

The primary mission of the Marine Corps is national defense. In support of that mission, the Marine Corps is committed to protecting the environment and to conserving our natural and cultural resources. The following principles from the Marine Corps' Commanders Guide to Environmental Compliance and Protection direct Marine Corps environmental objectives and initiatives:

- Demonstrate leadership in environmental security: compliance, pollution prevention, conservation, cleanup, and technology.
- Protect human health and the environment during planning, acquisition, utilization, and decision making at all levels of command.
- Maintain access to training lands by effectively managing the natural and cultural resources under our stewardship.
- Promote aggressive environmental programs to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Integrate the pollution prevention ethic into all activities through source reduction, resource recovery, and recycling.
- Enhance outreach activities with local communities by openly addressing environmental issues.

The following three paragraphs are excerpts from the *Commanders Guide to Environmental Compliance and Protection* (HQMC DENIX website); Natural resources include: watersheds, wetlands, natural landscapes, soils, forests, and associated fish, vegetation, and wildlife. The variety of landscapes (e.g., desert, deciduous forest, high mountains) controlled by the Marine Corps allows Marines to train in the different environments that they may encounter under battlefield conditions. As a federal armed force, the Marine Corps acts responsibly in the public interest to restore, improve, preserve, and properly use natural resources. The focus of natural resources management must be long-term to ensure that these resources are available to support the Marine Corps mission. It is Marine Corps policy to incorporate ecosystem management as the basis for land use planning and management on Marine Corps installations. This approach takes a long-term view of human activities, considering military uses and biological resources as part of the same system. The goal is to preserve and enhance ecosystem integrity and to sustain both biological diversity and continued availability of resources for military and other human uses. Ecosystem-based management emphasizes multiple species and habitat conservation, the formation of partnerships to consider and manage cross-boundary ecosystems, the use

of the best available scientific information in decision-making, and the use of adaptive management techniques in natural resources management.

Land management practices and operations are integrated into the environmental campaign to ensure that conservation measures are considered in the development, design, construction and maintenance of military installations, and in the conduct of military operations and training. Installations that have suitable habitats for conserving and managing natural ecosystems must prepare, maintain, and implement an INRMP. The objectives of the INRMP are to:

- Conserve, develop, manage, and maintain land, grounds, and water areas under its jurisdiction, using proven scientific methods, procedures, and techniques per federal laws and Executive Orders (EO).
- Protect, conserve, and manage watersheds, wetlands, natural landscapes, soils, forests, fish and wildlife, and other natural resources.
- Manage natural resources to provide outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Provide for the optimum development of and access to land and water areas for military purposes, while maintaining ecological integrity.

1.3.5. Camp Pendleton's Ecosystem Management Philosophy

Camp Pendleton's overall approach to managing natural resources reflects the principles of ecosystem management, consistent with DoD and Marine Corps policy. Camp Pendleton's natural resource management approach seeks to balance the dual goals of maximizing land use for military readiness and maintaining native habitats. The overriding focus of Camp Pendleton's natural resources management is to develop, promote, and refine a comprehensive, ecosystem-based management program for resource conservation. Such an ecosystem-based approach is intended to facilitate maximum support of the Base's military training mission and infrastructure, while simultaneously promoting both the sustainability of native species and habitat diversity, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

With 16 federally listed threatened or endangered species known to exist on or use the Base, and numerous additional sensitive plant and animal species, Camp Pendleton recognizes the need for an ecosystem approach to natural resource management, as traditional species-by-species (and project-by-project) management is inefficient and impedes mission accomplishment. An ecosystem approach is more efficient and balances the needs of all ecosystem components (including mission, biological, economic, and human elements), provides comprehensive compliance with the ESA, and integrates both DoD and Department of Interior (DoI) guidelines. Camp Pendleton's strategy for natural resources conservation and management includes habitat enhancement (e.g., exotics control, erosion control) and the avoidance and minimization of adverse impacts through implementation of programmatic instructions (published rules and guidelines for land users on Base).

Essential to ecosystem management is knowledge of the abundance, diversity, and status of resources both on and off Camp Pendleton. Development and maintenance of such inventories is aided by the use of GIS, Global Positioning System (GPS), and remote

sensing technology, combined with periodic monitoring and surveys. The routine collection of data and the application of state-of-the-art technology maximize the quality and quantity of information available to land managers, enabling adaptive management through the evaluation of potential impacts, biological trends, efficacy of management initiatives and identification of data gaps. Updated information and “lessons learned” are then incorporated into management protocols and programmatic instructions for users of the Base. This ability to evaluate land use compatibility and to adaptively manage resource utilization minimizes the dedication of Camp Pendleton lands for single species conservation, while maximizing land area available for training.

Camp Pendleton’s ecosystem management is intended to complement and support local and regional conservation efforts to conserve multiple habitats and species. Throughout the year, natural resources managers meet with Marines, civilians, and community groups to discuss the Base’s resources and conservation programs in an effort to promote ecosystem management principles. These meetings facilitate exchanges of approach and data sharing as well as support increased conservation awareness throughout the region, specifically with adjacent landowners. It is the Base’s intent to proactively manage activities, infrastructure development, and natural resources in a manner that both complements regional plans and initiatives and is consistent with the need to ensure training flexibility. Camp Pendleton supports its natural resources being a link in the region’s “matrix of biodiversity” and not an “island of biodiversity.”

Natural areas of Camp Pendleton, the County of San Diego, the City of San Diego, and the seven cities involved in the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) form the core of remaining open space in coastal southern California. While Camp Pendleton and the Marine Corps support regional conservation planning and management efforts, conservation of natural resources, particularly sensitive biological resources, at Camp Pendleton has been planned separately from other regional planning efforts due to the distinct differences in program objectives (use and maintenance of Base natural areas instead of establishment of preserves to mitigate for development), the scarcity of undeveloped, functioning coastal plains habitat/ecosystems, and the need to maintain *operational flexibility* and to avoid the creation of preserves on DoD lands that have been specifically set aside for military training. The Marine Corps believes that most military activities are, and will continue to be, generally compatible with the conservation of biological resources.

In considering participation in regional ecosystem conservation initiatives for resolving land use conflicts, the Marine Corps considers the following principles (Brabham 1995):

- The overriding mission of DoD is the protection of the national security of the U.S., and military activities on departmental lands are vital to fulfillment of that mission.
- Military lands cannot be used for the mitigation of impacts of non-department actions occurring either on or off of the installation that affect the environment.
- Military lands cannot be set aside as perpetual environmental preserves.
- While conservation is, and shall be, practiced on our installations, we must maintain the flexibility to adapt our defense mission to political and technological developments.

- The DoD's first priority shall be to integrate the management of natural and cultural resources with the military mission within the ecosystem supporting the installation.
- Such agreements, and their projects, will not detract from the DoD national security mission, now or in the future.

Camp Pendleton continues its efforts to practice responsible stewardship of its lands and natural resources, while maintaining an interest in regional conservation and management planning. Camp Pendleton is mindful of the regional conservation planning process that is ongoing, and has expressed concern to local agencies and jurisdictions about the effect regional development continues to have on natural habitats, not only off Base, *but on Base as well*. The Base wants to ensure that its training lands are viewed primarily in terms of their intended land use - that of military training - and that natural resources management efforts are designed to be in support of that military mission. Towards that end, Camp Pendleton is working to ensure that its land use planning efforts, and those of the region, are complementary, and together meet the region's species and habitat needs, so that Camp Pendleton's open spaces can continue to be used in support of the Base's mission, and not as a refuge of natural resources utilized to offset and justify regional developmental projects.

1.4. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT GOALS

Goals are general expressions of desired future conditions that represent the long-range aim of management (Leslie et al. 1996). Natural resources management goals have been established at various levels of command and are incorporated into the programs at Camp Pendleton. Goals that are specific to natural resources management, public access, and recreation programs are presented with the descriptions of those programs in Chapters 4 and 5.

1.4.1. DoD Goal

The goal of the DoD's conservation program is to support the military mission by: 1) providing for sustained use of its land, sea, and air resources; 2) protecting valuable natural and cultural resources for future generations; 3) meeting all legal requirements; 4) promoting compatible multiple uses of those resources; and 5) achieving efficiencies and other savings by partnering with interested stakeholders.

1.4.2. Marine Corps Natural Resource Goals

Marine Corps natural resources management goals are as follows (HQMC 1998):

- Preserve the Marine Corps mission access to air, land, and sea resources.
- Strengthen national security, by strengthening conservation aspects of environmental security.
- Preserve the opportunity for a high quality of life for present and future generations of Americans.

1.4.3. Camp Pendleton Natural Resources Management Program Goals

Identification of natural resources management goals was necessary to develop a natural resources management course of action. These goals determine management regimes and help set priorities. They are the standards by which the practicality and desirability of management actions are measured. Natural resources management goals fall within three broad categories: 1) goals that support mission requirements; 2) goals that ensure compliance with natural resources management and protection laws; and 3) goals for participation in regional ecosystem initiatives (HQMC 2006).

Natural resources management goals specifically adopted by Camp Pendleton are as follows:

- Manage Camp Pendleton's natural resources in a manner that accommodates ongoing and evolving military mission requirements and conserves and protects those resources in accordance with compliance requirements and stewardship principles.
- Encourage regional plans and incentives that address conservation of native biodiversity, ecosystem sustainability, and watershed management issues to help ensure and protect the long-term viability of both Camp Pendleton's military mission and its natural resources.
- Provide for multiple land uses that are compatible with the conservation of natural resources and training requirements.

1.5. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Formal Natural Resources management on Camp Pendleton was established in October 1968. Since that time Camp Pendleton's Natural Resources Management section has grown into the Natural Resources Department of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Environmental Security (AC/S ES). To ensure Camp Pendleton's military mission and environmental conservation and management programs are compatible and mutually supportive, multiple Base organizations have a role in managing, and supporting, Camp Pendleton's natural resources management programs. The AC/S ES provides the lead and overall coordination of environmental compliance and natural resources management aboard Camp Pendleton. This includes planning for, and coordinating the accomplishment of, established goals, objectives, and planned actions to support the military and stewardship missions. Technical guidance is routinely provided by the AC/S ES regarding: 1) soil and wetland conservation; 2) vegetation, fish and wildlife, and listed species management; 3) outdoor recreation; 4) cultural resources protection; and 5) GIS data management. The AC/S ES also provides technical environmental advice on both military and non-military NEPA documents, facility planning and military construction (MILCON) projects, maintenance activities, military operations, and other proposed actions that may affect natural and cultural resources. Information on the plants and wildlife present on Camp Pendleton is gathered, maintained, and disseminated by the AC/S ES. Site-specific data developed as part of projects and actions conducted by tenants, other Base organizations, or staff sections are reviewed for technical accuracy and incorporated with other data in support of that project, ongoing conservation programs, and future activities. The AC/S ES serves as the lead for

planning and resolving natural resource compliance issues such as wetland and endangered species regulatory requirements, and serves as Camp Pendleton's primary point of contact in dealing with regulatory agencies responsible for enforcement of environmental regulations including the ESA and CWA Section 404/401 requirements.

1.6. RELATIONSHIP OF THE INRMP TO EXISTING PLANS AND ORDERS

The INRMP is not intended to replace existing Base Orders, policy, range and training operations guidance, or other military management plans. Rather, the purpose of the INRMP is to document and assist, as required, in the development, integration, and coordination of natural resources management with other Base plans and programs. Where natural resource programs are currently not documented through formal planning efforts, the INRMP may serve as the means to formally establish such programs. Moreover, the INRMP is intended to facilitate the integration of existing natural resource management actions (plans and programs) with the primary military training and support mission of Camp Pendleton.

1.7. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND PROJECT FUNDING

Congress and the Secretary of Defense specify that all environmental requirements and costs must be tracked. Currently, the Marine Corps uses the Marine Corps Compliance Tracking System (CompTRAK) to fulfill that requirement. The primary functions of CompTRAK are estimating, prioritizing, tracking, and reporting for compliance and natural resources projects, planning annual budgets, and producing reports.

Camp Pendleton seeks appropriate funding for its natural resources management program and sets priorities based on the amount of funds actually received. "Must fund" INRMP Actions are those actions that Camp Pendleton commits to implementing during a specific fiscal year. Actions identified as "ongoing" are carried out each year, or as required. From a funding perspective, "must fund" actions are generally "Class 0" or "Class 1" budget projects. Class 0 projects are those needed to cover recurring administrative, personnel, and other costs associated with managing environmental programs that are necessary to meet applicable compliance requirements (federal, state, and local laws and regulations as well as EOs, and DoD policies), or that are in direct support of the military mission. Class 1 projects are those that must be done to achieve or maintain compliance, and therefore must be funded in the current fiscal year to sustain compliance, or to correct a noncompliant situation in the current fiscal year.

In addition to "must fund" actions, the INRMP contains other actions or projects that are desired, but not essential, that will further support the military mission, enhance the integration of natural resources management, or support stewardship of resources entrusted to the Marine Corps. These actions are generally Environmental Quality Class 2 or Class 3 budget entries. Class 2 projects are those that should be funded to remain in compliance with future deadlines given for compliance. Class 3 projects are those not explicitly required by law but support natural resource management goals and objectives.

Budget development and INRMP implementation are both continuing and interrelated processes. Natural resource funding requests support the INRMP planned actions and vice versa. While not all natural resources-related expenditures are identified within the INRMP (e.g., staff, supplies, and overhead funding), all planned actions within the INRMP *that require funding* should be incorporated into budget planning documentation (e.g., Program Objectives Memorandum and biannual budgets) and CompTRAK. As budgets are reevaluated and funding allocations change, so must INRMP planned actions, prioritizations, and implementation years be adjusted, reevaluated and possibly reprioritized. The tracking and monitoring of progress toward INRMP goals and objectives and the adaptive management of resources will require revisions/reprioritizations of INRMP planned actions and corresponding budget requests.

1.8. RECENT LEGISLATION AFFECTING NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Lawsuits, and changes to interpretation of existing laws, have altered how (those) laws have been enforced with regards to military readiness activities and how those laws affect and restrict those readiness activities. These lawsuits and changes to interpretation have added restrictions to, and in some cases stopped, ongoing military readiness operations. In an effort to return to/maintain historic capabilities, and to help ease the underlying causes of these changes, the DoD has requested Congress provide clarification, relief and new authorizations in areas where these lawsuits and interpretations have impacted military readiness operations. On 19 April 2002, DoD sent legislative language to Congress recommending clarifications to certain environmental statutes entitled “Readiness and Range Preservation.” These proposed clarifications were put together to help solve some of the training and testing issues impacting the military use of DoD’s operational ranges. These provisions were narrowly focused on readiness activities—the training, testing and operations related to combat—and not the wide range of DoD activities that do not relate to combat. Congress passed two National Defense Authorization Acts (Fiscal Years 2003 and 2004), which reduced limitations on military training. A brief description of these authorizations is provided below. More detailed discussions regarding these provisions and how they relate to Camp Pendleton wildlife management will be discussed in the following chapters.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 authorized, under Section 315, incidental take on migratory birds by members of the Armed Forces during a military readiness activity. The act also provides that, not later than one year after its enactment, the Secretary of the Interior shall exercise their authority under Section 704(a) of the MBTA to prescribe regulations to exempt the Armed Forces for the incidental taking of migratory birds during military readiness activities authorized by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of the military department concerned. The Authorization Act further requires the Secretary of the Interior to promulgate such regulations with the concurrence of the Secretary of Defense. A proposed rule has been developed in coordination and cooperation with DoD and the Secretary of Defense concurs (USFWS 2004a). The Defense Authorization Act for 2003 also provides DoD with certain new authorizations and regulatory relief relative to the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA).

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (Public Law 108–136) Section 318 amended the ESA to limit areas eligible for designation as critical habitat. Specifically, Section 4(a)(3)(B)(i) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(a)(3)(B)(i)) now provides that: “The Secretary shall not designate as critical habitat any lands or other geographical areas owned or controlled by DoD, or designated for its use, that are subject to an INRMP prepared under section 670a of this title [section 101 of the Sikes Act], if the Secretary determines in writing that such plan provides a benefit to the species for which critical habitat is proposed for designation.”

Also included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, Congress granted the authority to military departments to partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and state and local governments to acquire land adjacent or proximate to military installations, to prevent incompatible development and to preserve habitat that may eliminate or relieve current or anticipated environmental restrictions that could interfere with military training, testing or operations. A more detailed discussion regarding land acquisition to provide a buffer to the Base is provided in Section 2.5.4.3., Buffer Acquisition.