



DoD Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

What is DoD PARC?

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) program launched in 2009 to provide leadership, guidance, and support for the conservation and management of amphibians and reptiles on DoD lands in ways that help sustain the military's testing, training and operational mission activities. DoD PARC is voluntary, proactive, and non-regulatory, and consists of military and civilian personnel.

DoD PARC Mission Statement

In support of military readiness, DoD PARC strives to sustain amphibian and reptile populations and their habitats through proactive management, conservation, stewardship, outreach, and partnerships.



Gopher Tortoise. Picture by: Caitlin Snyder

DoD PARC Program Goals

- Provide sound, science-based strategies, tools, and information for managing amphibian and reptile populations that can be incorporated into existing natural resources and land management programs.
- Reduce or eliminate population declines of both common and at-risk species, thus helping avoid or minimize Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listings and critical habitat designations.
- Provide outreach tools to the military community, natural resources managers, and other partners to promote collaborative efforts that increase understanding of mission and conservation compatibility.
- Promote awareness, involvement, communication, and coordination both within DoD and among national, regional, and local experts to achieve DoD mission and stewardship goals.



Eastern Spadefoot. Picture by: Justin Sweitzer

How DoD PARC Benefits the Military Mission

DoD PARC enhances military readiness by promoting healthy landscapes that support long-term testing and training requirements. In addition, the Program increases the effectiveness of resource management on DoD lands through the development of proactive, science-based conservation and management strategies and tools such as *The Strategic Plan for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and Management on Department of Defense Lands*, a photo website, the Natural Resources webinar series, and updated amphibian and reptile species lists (see Accomplishments below).

DoD PARC increases communication and partnerships among the DoD community, facilitates collaborative implementation of guidance and problem solving, and saves money by sharing costs across the Military Services. The Program helps to conserve the nation's biodiversity heritage by developing partnerships that work across boundaries to help in preventing population declines of common, at-risk, and federally protected species, thus avoiding new restrictions on current and future missions.

Accomplishments

The Strategic Plan for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and Management on Department of Defense Lands – This plan, which DoD released in 2015, describes strategies and priorities to inform and enhance DoD's natural resources management activities, and is intended to help natural resources managers better address the conservation and protection of amphibians and reptiles and their habitats; help Commanders comply with the ESA and the National Environmental Policy Act; and help Commanders and resource managers achieve mission objectives.



DoD PARC Photo Website – This [photo website](#) serves as a platform to share pictures of herpetofauna and their habitats for use in presentations, Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans (INRMPs), posters, pamphlets, and signs. Group members have added more than 1,200 pictures to the website, representing over half of all the amphibian and reptile species found in the U.S. The photo website was used to produce two posters: *Venomous Snakes on Navy Shore Installations* and *Venomous Snakes on Marine Corps Installations* as well as numerous educational snake pamphlets and signs.

Webinar Series – Begun in 2013, this online webinar series provides an opportunity for group members to learn and share ideas on herpetofauna research, management, and conservation on DoD lands. Lectures are conducted approximately monthly using the Defense Collaboration Services (DCS) software. To join the listserv for lecture announcements, please email Chris Petersen.

Updated Amphibian and Reptile Species Lists – As of 2015, there are updated herpetofauna species lists for over 150 military installations, all of which have INRMPs. The updated lists identify those species that are confirmed or have the potential to be present at a particular military installation. Species lists are peer-reviewed by state biologists or a regional expert, and are updated yearly to ensure installation biologists and senior leadership have current and accurate information.

Herpetofauna Library – In partnership with the National Military Fish and Wildlife Association–Herpetofauna Working Group, DoD PARC members compiled approximately 200 herpetofauna reports, surveys, and inventories conducted on DoD lands. Reports are summarized in a spreadsheet that allows users to find documents based on Military Service, installation name, species, or key word. The intent of this project was to compile and summarize existing herpetofauna reports, surveys, and inventories for all Military Services into a single source so users can more easily find data regarding studies on military lands.

History of the National PARC Program

The National PARC organization began in 1999 in response to growing evidence of declining amphibian and reptile populations. PARC is a coalition of federal and state agencies, tribes, organizations, and industry groups. PARC’s mission is to conserve amphibians, reptiles, and their habitats through proactive and coordinated public/private partnerships. The program connects and complements existing efforts at local, state, regional, national, and global scales. For more information on PARC, please visit: <http://www.parcplace.org>.

In 2012, DoD signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PARC to continue their long-term commitment to support amphibian and reptile conservation and management. The purpose of the MOU is to provide a framework for collaboration among DoD and the other signatories to address the long-term health of amphibians and reptiles.

For more information on DoD PARC, please visit us at:

<http://www.dodnaturalresources.net/DoD-PARC.html>

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