

Defense *advocate*

Gov. Kaine announces new "Eagle Award"

On December 4 Gov. Tim Kaine announced the creation of the Virginia DoD Eagle Award

Program. Gov. Kaine says the award "will help recognize the military for its exemplary stewardship of the natural resources entrusted to its care and encourage their future safeguard."



The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality worked with the Department of Defense (DoD) to develop this program, the first of its kind in the nation.

More than 20 military installations in Virginia are eligible for recognition under the program. Each installation will be evaluated by DoD personnel and staff from Virginia's natural resource agencies on seven performance measures. Environmental Scorecards can be submitted annually to the state for evaluation, and those installations that demonstrate the greatest environmental stewardship will qualify for an award.

Submission will be accepted starting next month, and the first round of awards are expected in July.

Joining the governor for the announcement were Principal Deputy to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment Alex A. Beehler and Rear Adm. Mark S. Boensel, Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, headquartered in Norfolk.

During the announcement, Fort A.P. Hill's participation in the DoD's conservation easement program was mentioned, which is a partnership with The Nature Conservancy that is partially supported by a VNDIA-administered state grant.

While most installations already gather the information that will be used for the program, Rear Adm. Boensel says that having a state award will encourage the installations to do even more. "The military tends to be competitive," he said, "so we're looking forward to it."

Carrier home porting update

The Navy published a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on November 21, 2008 for Naval Station Mayport that recommends that a nuclear powered aircraft carrier be home ported at Mayport as the preferred alternative. Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter will make a final decision after a mandatory 30-day public comment period ending December 22, 2008.

Virginia's leadership has taken issue with the Navy's preference, citing the potential \$500 million price tag and calling it "ill-timed, ill-advised and not supported by economic logic or strategic logic." Gov. Kaine's office, with the support of agencies including VNDIA and the Hampton Roads Military Federal Facilities Alliance, will submit comments on behalf of the Commonwealth further outlining its concerns with the Navy's FEIS.

Coming Events

December 8

[Fort Monroe FADA Meeting](#)

Fort Monroe, Va.

Contact: FMFADA, (757) 637-7778

January 8-9, 2009

[NGA Mission Growth Working Group](#)

Atlanta, Ga.

January 21, 2009

[VNDIA Annual Meeting](#)

Richmond, Va.

Contact: Patrick Tremblay, (810) 545-5716/
ptremblay@YesVirginia.org

March 11, 2009

[Virginia Military Advisory Council](#)

Fort Lee, Va.

Contact: Office of Commonwealth Preparedness,
(804) 225-3826

Fort Pickett means training

Fort Pickett, near Blackstone in Nottoway County, performed more than 845,000 man-days of training last year, a majority for National Guard and Reserve soldiers. Active-duty Army, Marines, Navy and Air Force also train on the 41,000-acre installation's many ranges, along with Virginia State Police and other law enforcement agencies.

In addition to live fire, aviation, riverine and airborne ranges, the fort is one of the nation's premier technical and tactical water and petroleum training sites, providing essential training for logistics and transportation units based at Fort Lee and Fort Eustis. This unique training includes five sites for Army ROWPU (Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit) operations, and extensive construction areas for both water and petroleum pipelines.



Army soldiers extinguish a burning helicopter during a training mission at Fort Pickett. DoD photo

This year the post began a conservation easement program through the Army's Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program. One hundred twelve acres near the installation have limited development through an easement held by the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation, and 2,000 more acres are expected to be added soon.

Last month the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a list of thirteen "Urgent Issues" needing the attention of the president-elect and congress during the transition and the first year of the new administration.

These include several defense-related items: Defense Readiness, Defense Spending, Protecting the Homeland, and the relationships with Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Surface Transportation, of significant concern to Virginia as the DoD increases its investment here, is also on the list.

GAO "Urgent Issues"

A new GAO transition website provides more detail on the thirteen "Urgent Issues" and other transition challenges. <http://www.gao.gov/>



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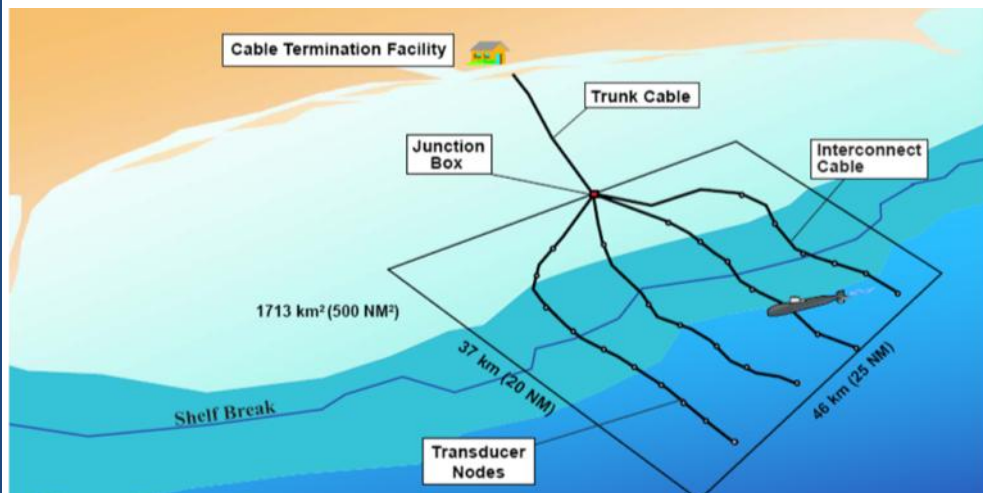
Potential undersea range in Virginia

The Navy plans to build an undersea warfare training range (USWTR) in the mid-Atlantic that will incorporate sonar use. A 500-square-nautical-mile area about 35 miles off of Virginia's Eastern Shore is one of the alternatives, along with sites off North and South Carolina and Florida, the current preferred alternative. A final EIS is expected in the spring of 2009.

More information can be found at <http://projects.earthtech.com/uswtr/>.

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A Navy graphic shows the concept behind the undersea warfare training range.