

7th Army Training Command



FALL 2022 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW



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This Report

The quarterly rollup is designed to inform the local community of the environmental initiatives spearheaded by the 7th Army Training Command and the United States Army Garrison-Bavaria. The efforts of these commands ensure the training area remains pristine for numerous flora and fauna.

The report covers the period from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2022.

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Who We Are

For over 70 years, the U.S. Army has worked with our Allies and partners to protect and conserve the training area. 7th ATC provides large, diverse areas capable of providing complex and realistic training. These areas are also home to numerous plant, animal, and insect species that thrive throughout the biodiverse regions.

7th ATC's training areas are essentially islands protected from people, traffic, agricultural products, and encroachment. Our military training fulfills the needs of the environment in several surprising ways. Large formations require clear roads for movement and open fields for command areas. Animals use these spaces to hunt, graze, and ferry their young from place to place. Our need for wooded areas creates spaces for birds, reptiles, and various flora to thrive unencumbered. We need pristine spaces, and that consequently creates opportunities for our neighboring species to live. Our training effectiveness relies on the biodiversity in our training areas.

We are committed to being good stewards now and in the future. We don't just work with multinational partners to secure peace through arms, we also work with our partners to protect the environment for generations to come. Train to Win!



Vilseck High School Soil Lab

The solid ground we walk on every day is often dismissed without a second thought. But the ground is much more than just dirt. Much of what we see can be more accurately classified as soil, a mixture of sand, silt, and clay combined with gas, water, organic material, and living organisms. This natural combination forms the basis of our lives, from food production to water filtration to solid foundations for buildings. In October the Vilseck High School took a trip to the Rose Barracks Community Garden to examine soil components in a controlled environment.

“Part of the curriculum is to learn soil formation, composition, and properties,” said Michelle Dare, Vilseck High School science teacher. This relates directly to what can grow in an area, both as part of a natural biome and use in agriculture.”

While the garden plot is small, consistent crop rotation from the community means it contains a wealth of information on nutrient cycles and acts as a logical practical exercise in the student’s current lesson plans.

Classes like this are key to ensuring the USAG-Bavaria community maintains and continues to improve the U.S. Army’s stewardship of the land we live and train on. Throughout the course, students learn essential soil management techniques as well as the value of soil as a natural resource. These actions are mirrored on a larger scale through the Integrated Training Area Management program, part of 7th Army Training Command’s Training Support Activity Europe directorate, which maintains the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels training areas, among others.



USAG-B Environmental Division

The USAG-Bavaria Environmental Division conducts many events throughout the year that showcase the biodiversity of Bavaria. These include nature hikes, informational booths, classes, and visits to local points of reference. These events teach the importance of low-impact visitation to sensitive locations, along with treating American Soldiers, families, and civilians to the great nature opportunities at their duty station.

To keep up with available events, follow the DPW's Facebook page at @USAGEnvironmental and find out more about environmental initiatives at 7ATC's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter sites at @7thATC or www.7atc.army.mil/environment.



Stewardship of the Grafenwoehr Training Area

Booms and plumes of smoke interspersed with the chatter of automatic rifles and the whine of turbine engines exemplify the world-class training the Grafenwoehr Training Area (GTA) provides in the Bavarian Forest. The U.S. Army has controlled this plot of land since the end of World War II, training thousands of North Alliance Treaty Organization (NATO) Allies and partners in various methods of defense. From the outside, these violent scenes appear to reflect only destruction. In truth, the training conducted in the facilitates the continuation and proliferation of several rare species.

The requirements of military training in the GTA fulfill the needs of the environment in several surprising ways. Large formations require clear roads for movement, and open fields for command areas. Medium and large animals use these areas to hunt, graze, and ferry their young from place to place. The edges of these areas provide environments that are extremely useful for birds and reptiles to nest and launch their own hunting trips. Open areas provide space for several grasses and flowers to thrive, and the use of sheeps and goats to assist in maintenance provides both natural trimmings and fertilizer.

Cooperation between the U.S. and German authorities is the most important relationship in regard to the training area maintenance. The U.S. Army Garrison-Bavaria (USAG-B) Department of Public Works-Environmental Division (DPW-E), Range Control, and programs administered under Training Support Area Europe (TSAE) work in conjunction with the Bundesforst to adhere to legal guidelines and the units to provide a realistic training experience in an environmentally sustainable fashion. The efforts of these offices have greatly contributed to a training area that will remain a haven for numerous rare species for generations to come.



Credits

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Socials



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