



PRESERVING THE MILITARY TRAINING MISSION



MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER • Twentynine Palms, California



The Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center is the Marine Corps' premier live-fire, combined-arms and maneuver training facility, providing realistic training that is not available anywhere else in the world. Military operations at the Combat Center involve complex training with realistic environments so Marines can "train as they fight and fight as they train." Each year, more than 50,000 active-duty and Reserve service members train aboard the 1,190-square-mile base. Training at the Combat Center is conducted 350 days a year through formal schools and exercises.

To preserve training opportunities and be a good neighbor, the Combat Center's leadership works closely with the surrounding communities to address factors that could degrade the military mission, and affect the quality of life for local residents.



Challenges facing the Combat Center

Challenges to sustaining military readiness and training at the Combat Center include population growth and development adjacent to the base. Any factor that could negatively impact the Marine Corps' ability to conduct critical training, or that reduces realism and safety, or limits the application of new technologies, is carefully considered for mitigation to ensure that the Marine Corps can continue to provide a world-class training environment that prepares Marines to succeed in combat.

Challenges include, but are not limited to:

Protected natural resources Land use

Noise Airspace use Water supply and quality

Safety and security Dark sky preservation

Cultural resources

Compatible development

Certain types of land use and development can impact the base's ability to carry out its training mission by limiting access and use of ranges and airspace, driving threatened and endangered species into training areas, and causing competition for natural resources. For example, incompatible residential development near the base can result in residents experiencing unexpected dust or noise generated by military activities, while renewable energy projects can create obstructions that interfere with military airspace, radar or other technologies.

Night skies

San Bernardino County's desert and mountain regions are renowned for their pristine night skies and stunning celestial bodies. In addition to enhancing both lifestyle and the tourism economy in the local area, dark skies are a requirement for critical night-time training activities at the Combat Center. Light pollution from increasing population growth and development can jeopardize this significant resource that is not only important to the local community, but to the base's mission.

Conservation and wildlife management

The Combat Center is home to desert wildlife and fragile habitats. The base is committed to being a good steward of the Mojave Desert ecosystem, and partners with other agencies to preserve, protect and promote the viability of these resources for generations to come — not only on the base, but on surrounding lands. These efforts not only benefit the local community by preserving the unique desert ecosystem but by preventing training lands from becoming habitats of last resort for species, which could curtail training activities.

For more information on the Combat Center's military training mission, please visit 29palms.marines.mil

