

# North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes Partnership Communications Plan

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## Vision

Convergence of military readiness, working lands and waters, and conservation for prosperity, health, and security of all

## Mission

Through collaboration and innovation, Sentinel Landscapes will maintain and enhance working lands and waters, conservation, and military readiness for today and tomorrow

## Philosophy

- Employ a strategic approach taking into account science, economics, and policy to advance working lands, conservation, and national defense
- Make site-based conservation efforts in the context of sustainable landscapes and the Partnership's objectives
- Use cross-sector partnerships and collaboration to meet the Partnership's mission

## Challenge

Unplanned development and the encroachment of incompatible land uses are threatening the health of working lands and natural systems with the same force that it threatens the health of the military training network in eastern NC — not only the bases but also the ranges, test areas, and airspace they use.

## Priority Groups

*Who communications will be addressed to*

- Private landowners
- Academia
- Agricultural, forestry and natural resource agencies and organizations
- Conservation districts
- Economic development agencies and organizations
- Legislative
- Military
- Non-governmental organizations

## Perceived value or benefit

By working together beyond agency and organizational boundaries to link lands and missions, the partners can improve the economics around private lands and local markets so that land is maintained in forests and farms rather than converted to incompatible land uses thus benefiting working lands, conservation, and national defense. The Partnership is focused on cooperation to develop projects that achieve multiple benefits through leveraging of funding and stacking of incentives at the local, regional and state level.

## Communications/Marketing Strategy

*Determining the marketing mix strategy for eight priority groups for the NC Sentinel Landscapes Partnership*

**Table 1: Landowner communications strategy**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want private landowners in North Carolina to see maintaining their private lands for future generations as more important and valuable to them than selling their land for urban development.			
<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Provide a means for landowners to maintain their current working and conservation lands so that the lands can be passed down to future generations</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding the right programs to manage land profitably</li> <li>• Having options that do not restrict development permanently</li> <li>• Understanding military procurement processes</li> <li>• Finding multiple markets for agricultural products</li> <li>• Understanding enrollment and bidding processes</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Farm and military tours</li> <li>• Extension efforts (e.g. workshops and meetings)</li> <li>• Other already developed programming which interfaces with priority group</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>Multiple options exist for landowners to maintain their lands including new partnerships with the military.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White paper</li> <li>• Articles</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Social media (e.g. educational videos and webinars)</li> <li>• Factsheets</li> <li>• Point of purchase displays</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Academia Communications Strategy**

**Key Message:** We want university faculty and staff to understand the role of extension for bringing together diverse stakeholder groups in order to promote the sustainability of rural landscapes.

<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Provide a means for academic institutions to institutionalize regional cooperation for the sustainability of working lands, conservation and national defense</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources and expertise.</li> <li>• Complexity of partnership and related coordination processes.</li> <li>• Lack of replicable model for planning and implementation</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Academic conferences</li> <li>• Workgroups and workshops</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>The Sentinel Landscapes model provides an overarching organizational infrastructure and mechanisms to encourage and enable communication and cooperation among all relevant agencies and organizations in each state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White paper</li> <li>• Academic Articles</li> <li>• Partnership Newsletters</li> <li>• Social media (e.g. educational videos and webinars)</li> <li>• Conference presentations</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Agricultural, forestry and natural resource agencies and organizations’ communications strategy**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want agricultural groups in North Carolina to see partnering as a means of providing additional benefits to their “customers” and as more important and valuable to them than solely working within their own organization.			
<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Connect private landowners with Sentinel Landscapes to provide added benefits for working lands</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive interests</li> <li>• Lack of sustainable funding</li> <li>• Perception of partnership</li> <li>• Inability to capture impact of program</li> <li>• Long-term leadership, working arrangement, and commitment</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email listserv</li> <li>• Already existing groups through meetings, workshops, etc. Existing groups may include: (1) NC Working Lands Group, (2) NC Farm Bureau, (3) NC State Grange, and/or (4) NC Forestry Association</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> <li>• Conferences</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>NC Sentinel Landscapes is a means for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of economically prosperous rural communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• YouTube videos, LinkedIn Forums, Webinars, etc.</li> <li>• Program website components (calendar of events, contact info, discussion forum, etc.)</li> <li>• White papers</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Articles (journal, magazine, newspaper)</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Strategic meetings with key decision makers</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Conservation districts communication strategy**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want soil and water conservation districts, the state conservationist, and other Natural Resources Conservation Service representatives in North Carolina to see initiating, delivering, and/or promoting programs that are not currently broadly available as well as encouraging land uses that meet Sentinel Landscape’s

mission as a sustainable strategy to advancing their mission of natural resource conservation and as more important and valuable to them than promoting single mission objective.			
Product	Price	Place	Promotion
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Provide private landowners in eastern North Carolina options for conservation</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local politics</li> <li>Lack of resources (time and cost constraints, competition)</li> <li>Prioritization of staff</li> <li>Sustainability of Sentinel Landscapes</li> <li>Access to local landowners</li> <li>Lack of leadership and trust</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email listserv</li> <li>Media outreach</li> <li>Extension efforts (e.g. workshops and meetings)</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Program Website</li> <li>Other already developed programming which interfaces with priority group</li> <li>Conferences</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>NC Sentinel Landscapes partnership has the ability to contribute over the long-term toward the natural resource conservation mission by complimenting already existing conservation efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informational presentations</li> <li>Program website components (calendar of events, contact info, discussion forum, etc.)</li> <li>Resources and tools for marketing/engagement</li> <li>Marketing pamphlets</li> <li>Fact sheets</li> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>White papers</li> <li>Educational programming (i.e. webinars, classes, non-formal)</li> </ul>

**Table 5: Economic Development Agencies and Organizations**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want economic development agencies and organizations to see the collaborating with partnerships that maintain Sentinel Landscapes as a high priority for ensuring the economic prosperity of the state and as more important and valuable than promoting urbanization and other incompatible land uses.			
Product	Price	Place	Promotion
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Provide support to projects that encourage the preservation of qualifying agricultural, horticultural, and forestlands to foster the growth, development, and sustainability of working and conservation lands</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lack of economic profitability of working lands</li> <li>Limited job creation.</li> <li>Minimal interest in maintaining working lands that provide commodities.</li> <li>Securing government policy changes at all levels that will allow working lands</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email listserv</li> <li>Media outreach</li> <li>Extension efforts (e.g. workshops and meetings)</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Program Website</li> <li>Conferences/Symposiums</li> <li>Trade shows</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>Economic development agencies and organizations have the ability to contribute over the long-term toward both natural resources and economics by joining Sentinel Landscape efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informational presentations</li> <li>Newsletters</li> <li>Fact sheets</li> <li>Marketing materials</li> <li>Journal articles</li> <li>Newspaper articles</li> <li>Sentinel landscapes press release</li> <li>Facebook posts</li> <li>Twitter news related tweets</li> <li>Business cards</li> </ul>

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**Table 6: Non-governmental organizations communication strategy**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want non-governmental organizations to see collaborating with partnerships that maintain Sentinel Landscapes as [a high priority towards maintaining economically viable working lands and natural resources] and as more important and valuable to them than single objectives.			
<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
<p><i>Behaviors</i></p> <p>Provide support to projects that encourage the preservation of qualifying agricultural, horticultural, and forestlands to foster the growth, development, and sustainability of working and conservation lands</p>	<p><i>Perceived barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population increase resulting in increased land transition use away from agriculture, forestry and military training capabilities.</li> <li>• Securing government policy changes at all levels that will allow working lands to compete economically.</li> <li>• Convincing entities that the North Carolina Forestry Association working lands trust is a good investment in the future of our natural resources across the country.</li> <li>• Getting the full support of the forest and farm products industry</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message channels to disseminate information include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email listserv</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> <li>• Extension efforts (e.g. workshops and meetings)</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Program Website</li> <li>• Other already developed programs (examples include NC East Alliance, NC Agriculture Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, North Carolina Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation, Environmental Defense Fund) which interfaces with priority group</li> <li>• Conferences/ Symposiums</li> </ul>	<p><i>Message and format</i></p> <p>Non-governmental organizations have the ability to contribute over the long-term toward both natural resources and economics by joining Sentinel Landscape efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational presentations</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Marketing materials</li> <li>• Journal articles</li> <li>• Newspaper articles</li> <li>• Sentinel landscapes press release</li> <li>• Facebook posts</li> <li>• Twitter news related tweets</li> <li>• You Tube “marketing/educational videos</li> <li>• Linked-in discussion forum</li> <li>• Business cards</li> </ul>

**Table 7: Legislative communication strategy**

<b>Key Message:</b> We want legislators and local governments in North Carolina to see developing policies, laws, and/ or regulations that enhance the Sentinel Landscapes mission as a means to enhancing the prosperity, health and security of North Carolina and as more important and valuable to them than promoting the urban agenda without a connection to the rural agenda.				
<b>Priority Group</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
Legislative Representatives  Priority Segments:  1. General assembly 2. Legislative entities 3. Local elected official	<i>Behaviors</i>  Provide a solution for urban and rural communities to revitalize and maintain state and local economies and resources.	<i>Perceived barriers</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public perception</li> <li>• Desired land use change</li> <li>• Local policy</li> <li>• Politics</li> <li>• Competitive interests</li> </ul>	<i>Message channels to disseminate information; these include:</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local newspapers</li> <li>• Local public forums</li> <li>• Program website</li> <li>• Other already developed groups</li> <li>• Media outreach</li> </ul>	<i>Message and format</i>  We want legislative representatives to understand that Sentinel Landscapes delivers benefits to both rural and urban citizens so that they will develop laws and regulations to support working lands, conservation, and military readiness. We also want them to develop a framework for institutionalizing incentives for sustaining Sentinel Landscape efforts.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational presentations</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Program website components (calendar of events, contact info, discussion forum, etc.)</li> <li>• Marketing materials</li> <li>• Journal articles</li> <li>• Newspaper articles</li> <li>• Sentinel landscapes press release</li> <li>• Business cards</li> </ul>

**Table 8: Military communication strategy**

<b>Priority Group</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Promotion</b>
Military  Priority Segments:  1. Political leadership	<i>Behaviors</i>  Provide a concerned group of partners working together that provide	<i>Perceived barriers</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in leadership among all services</li> </ul>	<i>Message channels to disseminate information; these include:</i>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face meetings</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Conferences</li> </ul>	<i>Message and format</i>  The military must see the value of partnering with organizations, agencies, and landowners in eastern North Carolina to maintain their military footprint. They must

<p>2. Office of the Secretary of Defense Leadership 3. Base leadership 4. Council of mayors</p>	<p>necessary continuity to achieve mission sustainment, quality of life and community relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each branch works differently</li> <li>• Incompatible institutional policies</li> <li>• Difficulty in working through new channels efficiently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinars</li> <li>• Media Outreach (newspaper, journals, social media, online media, etc)</li> </ul>	<p>understand how natural resource conservation and working lands are compatible with military training and the value of providing resources to promote such activities. The military must also understand the value of developing policies that encourage maximizing economic interaction with local landowners to create a sustainable food and fuel infrastructure. It is important that the military understand the costs of certain practices to landowners in order to develop agreements that provide incentives for participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Newsletters (Natural Selections)</li> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Webinars</li> <li>• Program website components (calendar of events, contact info, discussion forum, etc.)</li> <li>• Journal articles</li> <li>• Newspaper articles</li> <li>• Formal conversations</li> </ul>
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## Campaign Implementation Procedure

*The steps needed to accomplish objectives and outcomes of mix marketing strategy.*

1. Identify audience's perceived benefits and barriers to participating in NC Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. Are there functions they would like that are not present? This step clarifies motivations to participation (or lack thereof) and provides a baseline for measuring communication campaign efforts.
2. Design messages and products to highlight benefits and offer ways to overcome barriers. (i.e. having difficulty learning how to provide products to the installation, have a YouTube posting to show how to do it)
3. Identify social networks used to transmit information. (i.e. landowner speaks with county Natural Resources Conservation Service representative regarding available incentives) )
4. Modes of communication most used within the social network by target audience. What are the best ways to disseminate information among the target audience? (i.e. word of mouth, e-mail, conferences, publications, social media applications, etc.)

5. Develop campaign including appropriate messages and products (identified in #1 & 2), delivered by appropriate social networks (#3), through appropriate modes of communication (#4).
6. Identify evaluation methods to measure objectives and outcomes (i.e. surveys and number of clicks).
7. Run campaign.
8. Evaluate campaign and compare results to baseline data.

## Model Replication

The North Carolina Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is a coalition of groups representing conservation, natural resources, and economic interests to address preservation on a landscape scale in association with military readiness. While the communications plan applies to eastern North Carolina organizations, partnerships, and geography, it is the intent of the plan to provide a replicable model for engagement and to inform the actions of other services and stakeholders across the country.

The communications plan identifies key stakeholder groups (priority groups) who can help transfer the collaborative partnership model to other services and States in MCIEAST Region. It provides a method for continuity of the program (procedures for implementing a marketing campaign) and a structure for an ongoing process to inform, educate, and promote Sentinel Landscapes, wherein needed resources can be sought and acquired. This framework is a key resource required for programmatic institutionalization and enhancement of compatible natural resource use in support of military readiness and at the same time enhancing the maintenance and improvement of natural resources, including agriculture and forestry lands (i.e., working lands).