



Stephanie Garcia Richard, Land Commissioner
State of New Mexico

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**State Land Office Signs Land Use Restriction
In Areas Adjacent to Fort Bliss Training Complex**
Restriction Aims to Protect Military Readiness

SANTA FE, NM – Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard has signed a Land Use Restriction or Condition (LURC) with the Compatible Lands Foundation in partnership with the Department of Defense. The LURC places a buffer zone around Fort Bliss Army Base to address incompatible planning and development in the vicinity of important military training operations. Fort Bliss is the Army’s largest installation for heavy armor tanks and other combat vehicles. Troops train in the area with helicopters, Humvees, and other large vehicles.

The restriction will prevent light pollution that can interfere with nighttime training operations and affect the readiness of Fort Bliss troops. The Compatible Lands Foundation paid over half a million dollars to the State Land Office in order to restrict the use of the land. The beneficiaries of the deal are New Mexico State University and public schools.

The Land Office will continue to manage and lease the 2,597 acres of state trust land in the buffer zone while focusing future revenue generating opportunities on solar energy generation and storage facilities, agriculture development and livestock grazing, rights-of-way easements, and mineral exploration. Planning for a solar energy project on the land is already under way.

“We have a responsibility to protect the safety of training operations for those that have signed up to defend our country. That is the purpose of this restriction, and it also gives us an opportunity to aggressively pursue renewable solar energy on the land within the buffer zone,” Commissioner Garcia Richard said. “This deal is a three pronged success; it prioritizes our troops and their readiness, helps us reach our goals for tripling renewable energy generation on state trust land, and will funnel over half a million dollars to NMSU and our public schools.”

Robert Gregory, the Executive Director for Compatible Lands Foundation, expressed his sincere appreciation to Commissioner Garcia Richard for the opportunity to partner with the New Mexico State Land Office in protecting Fort Bliss's military readiness and preserving New Mexico's beautiful landscapes and natural resources, while simultaneously increasing the availability of clean solar energy for its citizens.



Assistant Commissioner Craig Johnson and Commissioner of Public Lands Stephanie Garcia Richard

Oil, gas, and mineral production, ranching and farming, and commercial development on State Trust Lands support public schools, seven universities, New Mexico Military Institute, New Mexico School for the Deaf, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, three hospitals, correctional facilities, water conservation projects, and public building construction and repair. In fiscal year 2019, the State Land Office collected \$1 billion from lease payments, oil and gas lease sale earnings, rights-of-way, permits, interest, fees, and oil, gas and mineral royalties.