

Florida is home to three Combatant Commands and over 20 bases that represent all branches of the U.S. military. The state also provides more than 180,000 square miles of [irreplaceable training grounds](#)¹ for U.S. pilots over the Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Climate change, however, poses clear risks to these security assets. Scientists and the Pentagon agree: climate change threatens Florida's military installations, and these risks are expected to worsen in coming decades. Florida's bases must prepare their infrastructure and personnel to maintain force readiness as these critical installations are increasingly threatened by climate change.

The military [ranks](#)² eight Florida bases as among the most threatened in the U.S. by climate change: [Air Force bases](#)³ Eglin, Hurlburt Field, Homestead, MacDill, and Tyndall, Patrick Space Force Base, Naval Air Station Key West, and the Marine Corps' Support Facility at Blount Island.

Climate-Related Threats to Florida Military Bases

Florida faces the following climate threats, according to a DoD [report](#)⁴ that analyzed military bases across the U.S.

- [Rising sea levels](#)⁵
- [Recurrent flooding](#)⁶
- [Extreme weather](#)⁷
- [Extreme heat](#)⁸
- [Drought](#)⁹
- [Wildfires](#)¹⁰



A Florida National Guard Soldier conducts a search and rescue mission amidst irregular flooding in Flagler Estates, Florida. Florida National Guard photo.

Environmental issues have historically garnered bipartisan support. Congress must take the climate threats to U.S. military installations in Florida seriously. Inaction, or action taken too slowly, will be costly in terms of dollars and compromise national security. Initial [measures](#)¹¹ taken by the Department of Defense must be expanded.

East Central Florida

East Central Florida and the Treasure Coast are home to key assets to U.S. national security, such as Patrick Space Force Base, NASA, and the Navy's Air Warfare Center, Ordnance Test Unit, and AUTC complex. Acute [shocks](#)¹² from threats like flooding, heat waves, and rising seas can detrimentally impede U.S. military readiness and operations at these key locations. Additionally, a regional [vulnerability](#)¹³ assessment showed that designated evacuation routes and major roadways are at risk.

Military installations in the region receive around [18.4](#)¹⁴ billion dollars, significantly stimulating the local economy. This interdependence extends to resilience to climate threats; neither the bases nor the city can be resilient unless both are. Coordinated partnerships between the public and private sectors are critical to the resilience of the region. Below are several federal programs available to offset the cost of resilience projects to local communities:

- [Defense Community Infrastructure Program](#)¹⁵ – \$50 mil/FY is available to empower communities that surround military installations to strengthen operational readiness by building or strengthening vital community infrastructure (roads, schools, etc.)
- [Military Installation Sustainability](#)¹⁶ – \$12 mil/FY for community vulnerability studies that are used to enhance or fortify infrastructure outside a military base.
- [Sentinel Landscape Program](#)¹⁷ – \$60 mil/FY to advance sustainable land practices around bases and to strengthen military readiness, conserve natural resources, bolster agricultural and forestry economies, and increase climate change resilience.
- [Defense Access Road Program](#)¹⁸ – \$20 mil/FY for public highway improvements. DAR empowers communities to mitigate risks to infrastructure posed by recurrent flooding and sea level fluctuation when continued access to a military installation has been impacted.
- [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities](#)¹⁹ – \$500 mil/FY for hazard prone areas. Supports communities through capability- and capacity-building to encourage and enable innovation, promote partnerships, and enable large projects.
- [Flood Mitigation Assistance](#)²⁰ – \$200 mil/FY for flood prone areas. Provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes and territories. It can also be used for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program.
- [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#)²¹ – \$34 mil/FY for flood protection for coastal communities through green infrastructure. Restored coastal ecosystems provide valuable habitat for fish and wildlife. These same wetlands, dunes, and coral reefs also offer flood protection for coastal communities by lessening wave energy and absorbing excess waters.

Endnotes

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