DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0200

MAR 0 1 2004

2004 Earth Day Message

Our Army is serving a Nation at war. As part of the Joint Force our Army is committed to providing relevant and ready land power capabilities to the Combatant Commanders.

Soldiers and their leaders will always be the key components of successful land combat power. We train Soldiers, grow leaders, and forge them into cohesive units through hard, realistic training. Our installations provide the quality facilities, realistic ranges, challenging training, materiel support, and advanced technologies that prepare our Soldiers for the stark realities of the battlefield.

Our installations' capability to provide these resources is an indispensable contribution to the war effort. These resources include the environment---the land, air, and water of our installations and the neighboring communities. Installation resources enhance our ability to train, project power, and support our families.

Sound environmental stewardship contributes in many ways to mission accomplishment, and helps preserve our heritage as Americans. As part of Soldier readiness, we must sustain our environmental resources and use them wisely. The war mandates that we perform our duties with seriousness and a sense of urgency; our future mandates that we have the foresight to respect and protect our environmental resources.

Every April 22nd, our Nation celebrates Earth Day. Our Army Earth Day theme this year is "Preserving the Environment While Protecting Our Freedom." This twofold message recognizes the value of our environment and reminds us that we are the guardians of freedom.

The Soldiers Creed exhorts Soldiers' dedication to maintaining their arms, equipment, and themselves. Similarly, each of us must dedicate ourselves to maintaining the environment; it is an extension of our professionalism. Sound environmental stewardship helps keep the Army relevant and ready.

May God bless our Soldiers, families, civilians and veterans. And may God bless America.

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

R.L. Brownlee
Acting Secretary of the Army