

2022 Secretary of the Navy Environmental Award Nomination Naval Air Station Fallon

Cultural Resource Management – Large Installation

INTRODUCTION

Installation History

Naval Air Station Fallon's (NAS Fallon) Cultural Resource Program has made significant strides in managing cultural resources within the installation's boundaries. Located in the High Desert of Nevada's Great Basin and currently spans 240,000 acres, NAS Fallon represents 3 percent of the Navy's land holdings in the United States. The installation's mission is to contribute to all phases of naval aviation and naval special warfare training 90 days before deployment. More than 1,400 military and civilians provide the most realistic training available for carrier air wings, consisting of more than 60 aircraft and associated support crews of 1,000 to 1,500 personnel. Military personnel from the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Nevada Air National Guard also train at NAS Fallon.

The installation was established as part of the Army Air Corps' Western Defense Program in 1942. The Defense Program's goal was to establish inland fighter bases to counter a successful Japanese west coast invasion. Contemporary sources repeatedly cited Fallon's dry and clear climate as a desirable characteristic for flying warplanes compared to military bases in coastal California that tended to be foggy. With the defeat of the Japanese Fleet at the Battle of Midway in June of 1942, the base's primary mission changed to training, servicing, and support to air groups deploying for combat training, which remains one of its primary missions. In 2009 the training of Navy Special Operations personnel was added to its mission.

Approximately 97 percent of NAS Fallon's land holdings have been left undisturbed and are home to sizeable prehistoric habitation and smaller resource procurement camps that first border Lake Lahontan and, more recently, Carson Lake.



Prowlers Over Dixie Valley

NAS Fallon currently contains six Native American sensitive sites associated with traditional cultural practices. Areas directly bordering NAS Fallon's Training ranges include remnants of Pony Express Stations and the California Emigrant National Historic Trail. NAS Fallon Main Station contains multiple features associated with the Newlands Irrigation System National Register Historic District, which was constructed in the early 1900s as part of a national effort to entice settlement in the interior west of the country.

Installation Cultural Resource Policy

The NAS Fallon Cultural Resource Program manages the resources located on the installation consistent with federal regulation, Department of Defense (DoD), and Navy goals. These goals consist of managing and maintaining cultural properties to preserve historical, archaeological, architectural, and cultural values and results in sound and responsible stewardship. To meet DoD and Navy goals, the cultural resource program at NAS Fallon has developed and implemented several initiatives: 1) Long term planning; 2) Understanding of installation and tenant missions and objectives; 3) Coordination and consultation; and 4) Innovation.

BACKGROUND

Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan

The NAS Fallon Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) was signed in 2013. It remains up to date on current cultural policies at NAS Fallon. An additional update of the document is planned for after few major initiatives are completed. The ICRMP will be updated to reflect the pending final decision by Congress regarding the modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex, and after the installation has the opportunity to develop access and NAGPRA Agreements with the tribes and cultural resource management responsibilities associated with the Range Training Complex are finalized between the Bureau of Land Management.

NAS Fallon Cultural Staff and Responsibilities

The NAS Fallon Cultural Staff consists of Mike Baskerville, Archaeologist; Chris Powell, Contract Archaeologist; Kish La Pierre, Native American Tribal Liaison; and Toni Burton, Tribal Coordinator.

Mike Baskerville and Chris Powell conduct field inventories, document, site, conduct background research, right report and conduct the more routine consultations with the Nevada State historic Preservation Office and local historical interest groups. Additionally, they manage the cultural GIS system, and paper and electronic records. Kish Lapierre sets the agenda for Tribal consultation and is responsible for developing program direction and agreements. She also insures that the installation is following through on its agreements. Toni Burton acts as the coordinator between the tribes and the Navy. She is responsible for insuring ongoing coordination between instillation staff and Tribes on various efforts of mutual interest.

Cultural Team Training

Team training has been impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic and Installation responsibilities, however during this award period Kish Lapierre



SEAL'S Training with Mark19

attended the NAVFAC Presentation Course and Mike Baskerville started a Master's Program to earn an advanced degree in History with a focus on Military History. This will assist the installation with consultation efforts related to historic period properties located on the installation and the region.

Programmatic Agreement

The NAS Fallon's Programmatic Agreement (PA) with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was signed in 2011. The PA was extended in 2020 in order to provide the installation sufficient time to update policies that are currently being developed in association with the range training. The installation is currently in compliance with all agreements. Replacement of the PA is being worked on, and the installation has reached out to the Tribes, SHPO and Bureau of Land Management. The new PA represents a significant change in that for the first time the Section 106 process will be the same for Navy Fee Lands and withdrawn lands.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

The Installation manages information associated with inventories, prehistoric and] historic sites, and buildings. Information tracked includes age, artifact types, decade of construction and eligibility. This information assists in the management of cultural properties as it allows the cultural team to respond project reviews quickly and allows to be view how land use has changed over 12 millennia in response to fluctuations in both the natural and cultural environment.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Fallon Range Modernization Effort

Since 2016, NAS Fallon has been in the process of modernizing its ranges. In preparation for the release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) associated with the modernization, NAS Fallon conducted cultural inventories of 45,991 acres of public lands. The inventories documented 886 archaeological sites. They have substantially added to the archaeological record of Nevada and contribute significantly to the Navy mission, as they allow for flexibility in planning, and allow for a speedier stand-up of the new ranges. Beyond the inventories conducted for the EIS, the Navy is undertaking three additional cultural inventories beginning in October 2021. They are being undertaken in partial fulfillment of promises the Navy made to Nevada's Northern Tribes. The first project will consist of a 120,000-acre inventory of the proposed expansion, the Bravo-20 Training Area (TA). The second project will inventory 15 known sites important to Native American tribes and evaluate them as Traditional Cultural Properties. The final inventory will cover 145,000 acres in areas associated with the possible expansion of the Bravo-17 TA expansion. The inventories listed above will provide NAS Fallon with information that allows for planning flexibility and can reduce conflicts with Native Americans.

Native American Outreach

In 2016, consultation and coordination with the tribes and tribal interest groups began to expand with the initiation of the EIS process associated with the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization and cleanup of legacy ordinance located on the Walker Reservation. As a result of that effort, which concluded in 2020, NAS Fallon extended its consultation efforts to include fifteen federally recognized northern Nevada Tribes and coordinated with the Nevada Native American Commission and Nevada Inter-Tribal Council. During this period, NAS Fallon reached out to tribes with some interest 62 times

(individually) through a combination of e-mails, phone conversations, letter correspondence, and meetings. Consultation with Tribes that showed a greater interest in modernization occurred on average 137 times (individually) during this period. Consultation with the tribes was related to the purpose of the modernization, Native American sacred sites, impacts to resources, results of cultural inventories, and the development of a formal Native American Program, access, and the extension of the Installations Cultural Programmatic Agreement. All face-to-face meetings with local tribes were attended by senior installation staff. For more extensive discussions with all fifteen tribes, senior installation staff and Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest (NAVFACSW) and Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC) N45 environmental staff were present.

In December 2019, it was agreed that NAS Fallon would develop a Native American Program. The Program would consist of a Native American Liaison and a Tribal coordinator. Duties of the Tribal Liaison would be related to the overall management of the program, while the Tribal Coordinator would be responsible for supporting outreach to the tribes. In 2020, the Native American Program was implemented with the hiring of Kish La Pierre as the Liaison and Toni Burton as the Coordinator. Since it was stood up, the program has taken a central role in the development of an Access Agreement which outlines the Navy's responsibilities for providing access to sacred sites and other locations important to Native Americans, Tribal Council meetings. Additionally, the program has been involved in negotiations related to off-range ordinance issues that have impacted the Walker River Reservation and Native American involvement with the NAS Fallon Interagency Executive Committee. During award period, Kish and Toni have engaged the tribes 451 times on a variety of topics.



Projectile Points Bravo-16. Fluted Point is 12,000 Years Old

Community Engagement

In FY 2020, the NAS Fallon Interagency Executive Committee was formed to provide local, state, federal, and tribal agencies the opportunity to provide suggestions related to the management of cultural and natural resources. NAS Fallon Archaeologists' participation in these meetings provides briefings about ongoing projects and cultural resource management at the installation.



China Bowl with Blue Transfer Print Pagoda Scene

CONCLUSION

NAS Fallon is committed to protecting the cultural resources located on lands it manages. To this end, the Installation's Cultural Resources Program and its accomplishments are evidence of that dedication. The efforts and objectives of the cultural resource management team have significantly contributed to the goals and mission of NAS Fallon through increased efficiency and innovation.

In summary, during the review period, NAS Fallon:

- Completed 45,991 acres of inventory and documentation of 866 archaeological sites in support of the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Environmental Impact Statement.
- Stood up a Native American outreach program, that has improved relationships between NAS Fallon and 15 northern Nevada Tribes;
- Initiated 120,000 acre cultural inventory of expansion area associated with the Bravo-20 training areas (TA). The inventory will provide greater flexibility in range management and will allow for improved reaction time to training and mission changes;
- Documented 15 potential cultural and religious properties of significance, helping NAS Fallon to better understand Native American Culture, reduce operational impacts on local tribes, and improve existing relationships; and
- Conducted several hundred consultations with Native Americans in association with the FRTC Modernization, B-19 Legacy Ordinance Project, and projects needed to support installation mission.