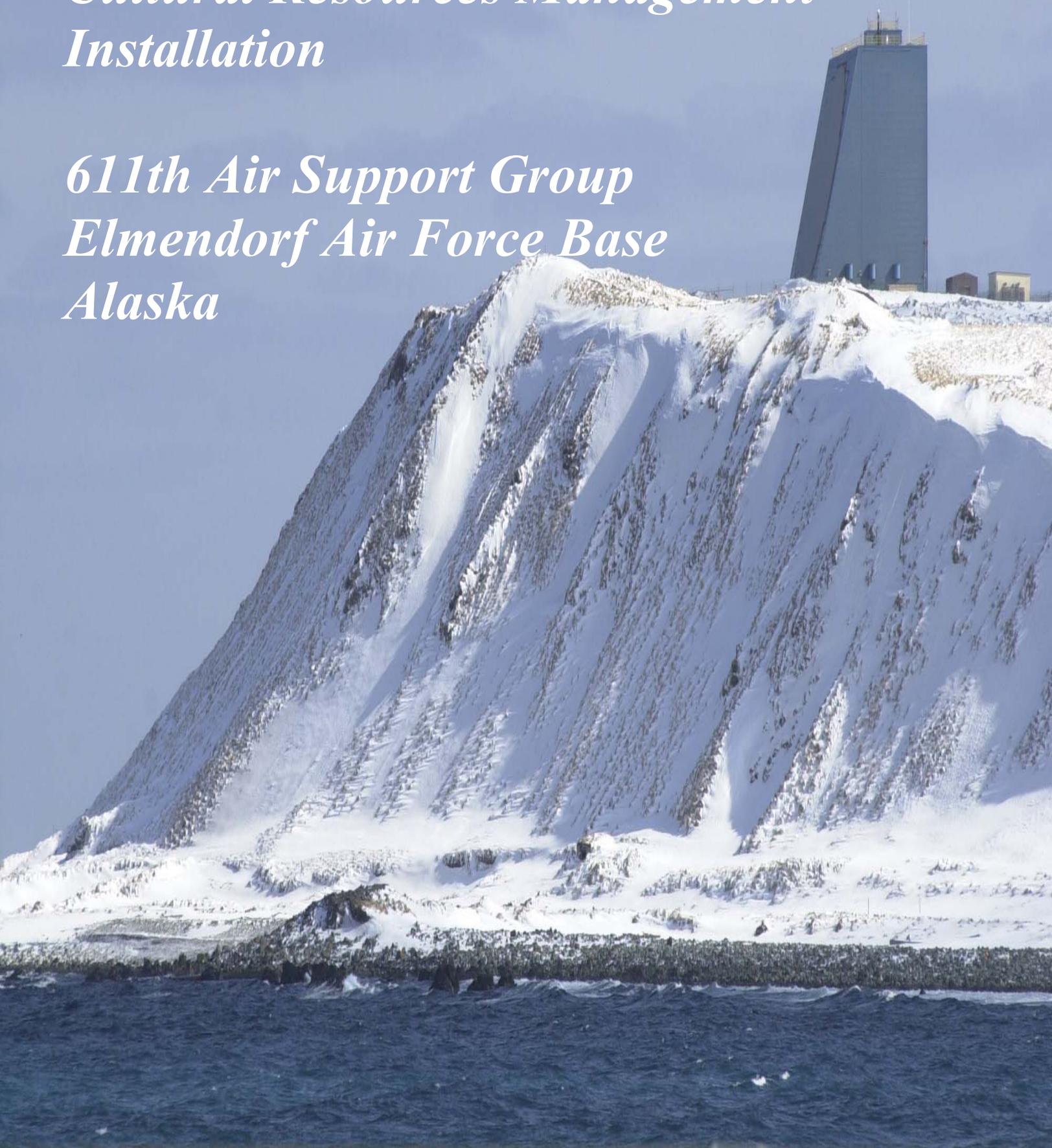


*Secretary of Defense 2002
Environmental Award
Cultural Resources Management –
Installation*

*611th Air Support Group
Elmendorf Air Force Base
Alaska*





SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD



CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - INSTALLATION
611TH AIR SUPPORT GROUP, ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, ALASKA

INTRODUCTION

The 611th Air Support Group (611 ASG) is headquartered at Elmendorf Air Force Base (AFB), Alaska. As a component of Pacific Air Forces, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and 11th Air Force (11 AF), the mission of 611 ASG is to provide surveillance radars, arctic infrastructure, including airfields, communications, and worldwide ready Expeditionary Aerospace Force warriors for homeland defense, decisive force projection, and aerospace command and control in Alaska. The 611 ASG provides safe, efficient, environmentally sound, and durable facilities to strengthen operational readiness and optimize mission support throughout *remote* Alaska. The 611 ASG plans and executes comprehensive installation maintenance and development resistant to the harsh arctic environment, while ensuring effective property management, setting the standard for environmental stewardship. The group develops dynamic and innovative partnerships and programs that promote sensitivity to both the environment and mission support.

General Billy Mitchell said “Alaska is the most central place in the world.” Over the years, the military implications of that statement have led to significant historical and cultural ramifications and protection in our quest: “Top Cover for North America.”

The 611 ASG is responsible for the largest and most geographically dispersed “cumulative base” in the Air Force, covering over 570,000 square miles. In terms of real property, it consists of more than 1,319 facilities and 37,490 acres. Replacement value is estimated at \$3.4B and a radar value at \$452M. The sites managed by the 611 ASG include two Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), one Air Station (AS), 18 remote radar sites, and 21 inactive sites. The 611 ASG directly supports the mission of the Alaskan Command, 11 AF, and Alaskan NORAD. This support ensures Alaskan warfighters have continuous mission-ready FOBs, reliable radar coverage, flexible communications, and wing readiness for protection along the entire Pacific Rim. The group is comprised of over 500 government and contractor personnel.

The 611 ASG encounters and manages numerous cultural resources and Native issues, including National Register (NR)-eligible historic structures and archaeological sites, consultations with Alaska Native tribes, Native graves, traditional use areas, repatriation efforts, and curation activities. Execution of these activities is accomplished through the 611 ASG’s six, Cultural Resource Management Plans (CRMPs). Installations are located throughout Alaska, adjacent to many remote Native communities and the state’s 229 federally recognized tribes. The



Historic Cold War Era F-15 intercept of Soviet Bear Aircraft



age and are associated with coastal and interior riverine lifeways.

Immigrants and a Rapidly Changing World

About 250 years ago, new groups of immigrants began to visit the most north-west parts of the American continent to exploit natural resources. The Russians came in search of sea mammal furs. Visitors from the U.S., Canada, and California came for resources and trade. Coastal natives were introduced to people from all over the world as American companies came to harvest whales for oil

following information provides a summary of historical themes related to 611 ASG land areas.

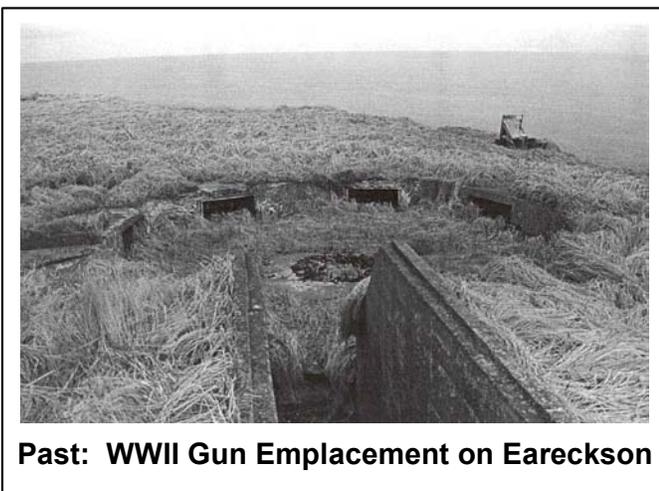
The Early Years

People have lived in Alaska for more than 11,000 years. Approximately 9,000 years ago, people settled the south coast from the central Aleutians eastward to southeast Alaska. Extensive settlement of northern Alaska’s coast was in progress nearly 4,500 years ago. Alaska exhibits an extensive cultural diversity because of varied histories and challenges of living in northern environments. Coastal inhabitants learned to live on resources provided by the sea, as well as terrestrial animals and plants. The people of interior Alaska fashioned ways of life centered on rivers and harvesting foods over vast geographical areas. Prehistoric sites on 611 ASG lands date from 300 to 3,500 years in

and baleen. The American period, beginning in 1867, brought the U.S. Army and a burst of intensive exploration for gold and other minerals. Christian missionaries arrived with the Russians and Americans and had astounding effects on the lives of Alaskan Natives. Several 611 ASG sites are associated with the themes of mining, trade, and sea mammal hunting. During the 1930s, federal New Deal programs brought more people to Alaska for employment opportunities not available in the U.S.

World War II

This period had an enormous effect on the cultural life, population, economy, and infrastructure of Alaska. Alaska, and especially the western Aleutians, possessed strategic military importance because of their proximity to Japan. Military construction increased early during the war throughout southern Alaska and the interior at Galena and Ladd



Field. The 611 ASG continues to manage World War II - related resources at Eareckson AS and Galena Airport.

Cold War

Soon after the end of WWII, defense concerns in western North America changed from a focus on Japan to one on far eastern and northern parts of the Soviet Union. Thus, emphasis changed to air defense in western Alaska and polar areas. Air Force bases in the Aleutians, with the exception of Shemya Island, were soon closed. The Alaska NORAD Region controlled Aircraft Control & Warning (AC&W) and Distant Early Warning (DEW) radar installations, two Nike Hercules air defense missile battalions, and six fighter interceptor squadrons. Between 1958 and 1961, Alaska's radar system tracked 17 Soviet aircrafts. Between 1961 and 1991, 306 successful air interceptions were flown against Soviet aircraft.

BACKGROUND

Cultural Resources Management Plans

The 611 ASG manages 41 geographically dispersed and culturally diverse sites throughout Alaska. Whereas other installations throughout the Air Force and the Department of Defense (DoD) has developed one Integrated CRMP (ICRMP), the 611 ASG has completed six. Eareckson AS, Galena Airport, and King Salmon Airport each has their own ICRMPs. An innovative "systems" approach was implemented in the development of the six CRMPs for 41 installations, saving time, effort, and approximately \$1M. The ICRMP for the DEW System covers seven sites, the AC&W serves 10 sites, and the White Alice Communications (WACS) focuses on 18 sites, 10 of which are co-located at AC&W sites.

Agreements

To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the 611 ASG executed a number of Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (AK-SHPO), the Advisory



**Kalakaket Creek WACS, Deactivated in 1978,
Transmitted Alert Warnings to Scramble
Fighter Interceptors**

Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), federally recognized tribes, and other interested parties. Because a number of NR-eligible structures will be demolished as part of the DoD unique Clean Sweep remediation program, MOAs are being implemented for Cold War era sites. An especially complex MOA for the DEW system involves approximately six tribes, six Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations, the AK-SHPO, possibly the ACHP, and municipal governments on the North Slope of Alaska. The National Science Foundation (NSF) funded a project at the Cape Lisburne Long Range Radar Site (LRRS) that looked at archaeological, paleoclimatological, and traditional history. Effects of the project were mitigated in a MOA that was negotiated and partnered with the 611 ASG, University of Colorado, AK-SHPO, the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE), and five Native entities from Point Hope. A MOA with the Loudon Tribal Council of Galena guides the government-to-government relationship between the Alaskan Command (ALCOM), the 611 ASG, and the tribe. This was the first MOA between a DoD agency and an Alaska Native tribe, setting the stage for future consultation and cooperation.

Organization and Staffing of the Cultural Resource Program

The 611 ASG is the Air Force's voice for all cultural resource issues in Alaska, including the 11th Air Force commander's close-hold experts. Cultural resource management activities are located

within the Environmental Planning Section, Environmental Flight, 611 ACS at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. The 611 ASG employs a professional archaeologist and a full-time Native Liaison who facilitates consultation with approximately 50 tribes. Also, an 11 AF historian provides expert assistance on military history in Alaska, and cultural resource studies are implemented through cooperative agreements with the University of Alaska and the Department of Energy (DoE). The 611 ASG has staff with expertise in Cold War military history, engineering, architecture, and archaeology. The 611 ASG also draws on AFCEE for expertise in history and archaeology and has more cooperative agreements with the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) and the Colorado State University’s Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML).

Committees and Boards

The Environmental Protection Committee (EPC), chaired by the 611 ASG Commander, provides primary oversight of all environmental programs, including the cultural resources program. Cultural and environmental planning issues are highlighted at EPC meetings so that commanders at all levels consider the environment in all decision-making activities. The Facilities Board (FB) also coordinates with cultural resources planning to ensure projects do not conflict with historic properties and sites. Chaired by the 611 ASG Commander, the FB determines the need for continued use of existing structures. Consultation with AK-SHPO is initiated when plans for renovating or demolishing historic buildings are considered.

The 611 ASG uses 12 Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs) to interact with Alaskan Native tribes on a regular basis. The RABs resolve issues ranging from the effects of contamination and subsistence issues to Air Force aircraft overflights.

The nation’s only Cold War Working Group transitioned to the Alaskan DoD Cultural Resources Working Group, which is co-chaired by the AK-SHPO and the 611 ASG Deputy Com-

mander, and administered by the 611 ASG Cultural Resources Manager. The group facilitates open discussions regarding all cultural resource issues in Alaska, and is a one-of-a-kind organization “teambuilding” between all Alaskan DoD cultural resource managers and state and local agencies.

The 611 ASG developed new methods to interact with the Alaskan tribes and participated in a Cross Cultural Communications initiative, which includes TCC, its member tribes, and DoD agencies (i.e., ALCOM, U.S. Army, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [COE]). The forum provides for consistent and meaningful communications about mitigating impacts to protected Indian lands, rights, and resources in interior Alaska.

Major Resource Features

Prehistoric Archaeological Sites. Archaeological sites have been found at Tin City, Cape Lisburne, and Barter Island LRRSs. These sites are all Thule Eskimo sites and located in coastal northern Alaska. Seven sites at Eareckson AS on Shemya Island are remains of ancient Aleut settlements. Through the diligent efforts of the Cultural Resource Manager, prevention of serious damage to prehistoric settlement from the airfield drainage project at Cape Lisburne was averted. Also, a critical sewer line project and missile defense activities at Eareckson



Representatives from the Aleut Corporation and the Russian Orthodox Church Repatriate Remains on Eareckson AS

AS were not hampered by the discovery of a new archaeological site.

Alaskan Native Grave and Cemetery Sites. There are small cemeteries at Eareckson AS, Oliktok LRRS, and Cape Lisburne LRRS. Single graves are evident at Kotzebue LRRS and Point Lonely Short Range Radar Site (SRRS). The first ever repatriation of human remains and funerary objects to the Aleut Corporation was accomplished without incident, and consultation was established to develop a plan for future inadvertent discoveries.

Native American Traditional Use Areas. Formal documentation of sites having traditional importance to Alaska Native tribes has begun. The 611 ASG is aware of several sites throughout our Area of Responsibility (AOR). Cape Romanzof is the site of a traditional Yupik fish camp. The Tin City area is popular for fishing, hunting, reindeer herding, and berry collecting. Two archaeological sites at Eareckson AS are sites of special traditional importance to Aleut Corporation shareholders, with study underway. Also, a study of subsistence resource use on 611 ASG lands throughout Alaska is ongoing.

Immigrant Exploration, Settlement, and Mining. Several 611 ASG radar sites show evidence of early immigrant activities such as trading and mining. Tin City and Indian Mountain LRRSs are on the site of historic mining districts. The early 20th century trading posts, include Cape Lisburne, Barter Island, and Tatalina.

World War II Structures. Eareckson AS is the



Birchwood Hangar at Eareckson Air Station

home of a WWII era Birchwood Hangar. Though most WWII related structures at Eareckson AS have been demolished, the runway is historically important because of its use by bomber aircraft in the Aleutian campaign during WWII.

Cold War Systems. A great challenge to the cultural resources management staff is the sensitive recordation and conservation of highly technical sites of Alaska’s Cold War systems. Four of the 10 AC&W sites are NR-eligible, as are seven DEW sites, 18 WACS sites, and districts at King Salmon and Galena FOBs.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Outstanding Program Features

Consultation with Alaska Natives. Alaska is the home of 229 federally recognized tribes belonging to six major cultural groups—Inupiaq, Yupik, Aleut, Athabaskan, Tlingit, and Haida. The installations of the 611 ASG are located throughout remote Alaska. Unit members routinely work with about 50 tribes on issues related to environmental restoration, installation operations, subsistence, and conservation issues. The Cultural Resources Manager worked closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to ensure that cemetery protection during a sensitive restoration project was accomplished. Also, on-site consultation with tribes and interested parties in five North Slope villages associated with the NR-eligible DEW system completely in step with local issues, with skillful presentations at tribal offices, and RAB. A Native Liaison Advisor in the 611 ASG makes recommendations to the 611 ASG Commander and staff on Alaska Native policy and issues.



Bullen Point SRRS Semi-Subterranean House



**Radar & Tram Tower at Cape Lisburne LRRS,
Site of National Register-Eligible
AC&W Installation**

Partnerships in Ethnohistory and Archaeology. Native traditional history experts and academic researchers provide support to archaeology and history projects at Cape Lisburne and Tin City LRRSs. This research improves our understanding of changes in climate and cultural adaptations throughout the past. The NSF awarded \$100,000 for the Cape Lisburne project. The Legacy project “Traditional Lands and Sacred Sites: Partnering with Alaska’s Tribes” teams cultural resources professionals at TCC, with tribal interns and traditional history experts in Alaska’s interior to identify places of history on DoD lands. Past team building and cooperation between the 611 ASG, AK-SHPO, tribes, and other federal land agencies will ensure the success of these projects. The 611 ASG employed and educated Alaska native history and culture interns and experts for the Legacy project, bringing stakeholder involvement and closer partnership with the community and local tribal experts.

Interagency Cooperation and Public Awareness. Staff participates in the Alaska Anthropological Association’s Public Education Committee with staff from the Interior Department, private industry, and AK-SHPO. These volunteers visit schools around the state to teach the importance of heritage preservation. The Cultural Resources Manager designed and presented a cutting-edge program on Traditional Cultural Properties and presented archaeology program to 6th grade stu-

dents for the Alaska Anthropological Association’s Education Committee during Bureau of Land Management’s “Outdoor Week.” The 611 ASG sponsored a “Prehistoric Hunting Technology Workshop” with the National Park Service that is open to the public. Posters produced for National Historic Preservation Week and brochures on cultural resources are popular with DoD agencies and the public. The 611 ASG coordinates and administers activities of the Alaskan DoD Cultural Resources Working Group for the myriad of DoD member and guest agencies. The 611 ASG Cultural Resources Manager edits the Alaska section of the Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter, and works closely with the AK-SHPO, tribes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, COE, and interested scholars to protect threatened archaeological sites at Eareckson AS and two remote radar sites. Co-managed cultural resource issues at Eareckson AS with the new mission bed-down of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) on Shemya Island, include the newly discovered archaeological site and the NR-eligible Cobra Dane Radar.

Program Objectives

Inventories and Evaluations. The program has completed inventories and evaluations of archaeological sites, WWII, and Cold War properties. The Minimally Attended Radar System of the late Cold War awaits inventory and evaluation. ICRMPs were completed for Galena Airport, King Salmon Airport, AC&W system, DEW system,



Elise Nash of Point Hope and Ilisagvik College Investigates the Prehistory of the Uivvaq Site at Lisburne

Eareckson AS, and WACS. A Legacy grant allowed the 611 ASG to inventory and evaluate traditional cultural properties on DoD land. MOAs regarding the effects of environmental restoration on FOBs and the AC&W system are complete and mitigation is almost complete. A MOA for the effects of environmental restoration activities on the DEW system is in progress, and a significant number of historic building and engineering recordations have been completed. This is an extremely challenging project—juggling interests of six federally recognized tribes, demolition, and continued use of highly technical historic facilities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Overall Cultural Resources Management

The 611 ASG implemented a creative systems approach in the study and recordation of Cold War radar communication systems and FOBs. This approach treats groups of properties having the same function as one, eliminating redundancy of recordation and treatment of historic properties when they are similar. Also, this approach saves money and results in an integrated understanding of technology and life in Cold War Alaska, assuring continuation and improvement of operational and environmental readiness.

Historic Buildings and Structures

The 611 ASG completed inventory and evaluation of buildings and gravel structures at all stations of the LRRS and SRRS systems. A MOA for the effects of environmental restoration activities on the

DEW system and much of the historic building and engineering recordation of the system is complete. Six tribes, five RABs, AK-SHPO, and National Park Service (NPS) are consulting on the DEW system MOA. Improved Historic American Buildings Survey / Historic American Engineering Record drawings were submitted to NPS. An innovative

approach integrates the meaning of the DEW sys-

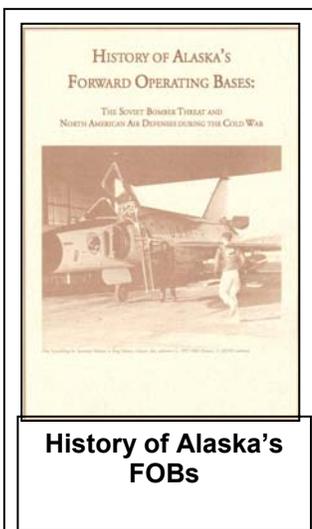


Point Hope Community Leaders & Elders and 611 ASG Meet for an Ethnohistory-Archaeology Project

tem to history and culture of local villages. A local historic chapel at Galena was saved from demolition by transferring it to the local community for public use.

Archaeological Resources

Archaeological surveys of 32 installations have been accomplished in partnership with DOE and AFCEE. The 611 ASG partnered with scholars from universities, the NSF, five Native agencies, AK-SHPO, and COE to implement an archaeology, paleoclimate, and oral history project at Cape Lisburne LRRS. The archaeological program at Tin City operates under an agreement with the University of Alaska and has the cooperation of the Native Village of Wales. The 611 ASG at Tin City leveraged opportunities to educate LRRS site workers, university students, and tribal members. The archaeological surveys support the Alaska Clean Sweep program and expertly assess damage to fragile North Coastal resources following a 50-year storm. In July 2002 a new archaeological site was discovered in a location never expected to contain artifacts at Eareckson AS. The 611 ASG Cultural Resources Manager, along with the COE, took the lead in identifying, testing, analyzing, and partnering with the regional Aleut Corporation to develop a plan for the repatriation of human remains. This facilitated completion of a project and development of new steps for subsurface excavation for homeland defense projects.



History of Alaska's FOBs



Native American Program

This program is implemented through many activities of the 611 ASG. The 611 ASG Native Liaison Advisor assists the commander and staff in consultations and policy. The Environmental Restoration Program meets with tribes and RABs, which have strong Alaska Native tribe

memberships, to review environmental documents and to assist with restoration projects. In many cases, the 611 ASG contracts with Alaska Native tribe companies for environmental services. Tribes participate in developing and executing MOAs under Section 106 of the NHPA. Tribal members also participate in cultural resources projects as interns and traditional history experts. Nine tribes, the Chevak, Hooper Bay, Paimuit, Scammon Bay, Iliamna, Kokanok, Igiugig, Pedro Bay, and Newhalen were consulted on the restoration activities at Cape Romanzof and Big Mountain sites, integrating Installation Restoration Program and traditional tribal corporation's ability to share knowledge and better understand Air Force practices. The close rapport established between the 611 ASG and nearly 50 tribes has led to open dialogue between the Air Force and increased trust levels. This was put to the test as the 611 ASG responded to the discovery of a Cold War mustard gas test kit at Tin City LRRS in June 2000. Effective communication prevented the occurrence of a public relations incident.

Curation

The 611 ASG is working to accomplish curatorial agreements for care of artifacts sensitive to the interests of tribes. This is a great challenge because rural villages would like to display collections in their communities, but lack facilities that assure proper security and environmental controls. Recent archaeological projects on lands of the 611 ASG have produced collections of artifacts from

the past 1,000 years of Inupiaq Eskimo prehistory that relate to the development of marine mammal hunting techniques in Arctic seas. Projects at Tin City and Cape Lisburne will create exhibits for schools and community centers in neighboring villages.

Cultural Resources Awareness and Education

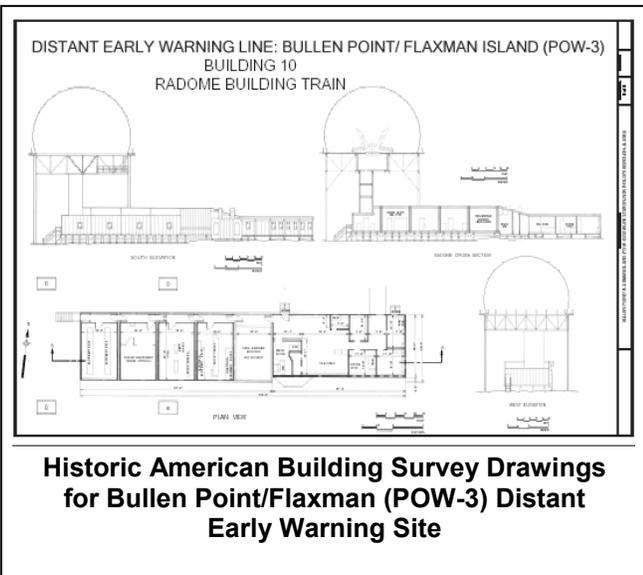
The 611 ASG continues to produce informative posters and brochures designed to promote public awareness on cultural resources under the 611 ASG's stewardship. Education of Air Force staff and the public helps protect irreplaceable resources managed by the 611 ASG. Commanders, employees, and contractors are instructed on ways to maintain historic properties while ensuring mission readiness. The 611 ASG Cultural Resources Manager presents information on heritage and historic preservation projects to community members and students, and recently partnered with the COE to educate Eareckson AS workers about archaeological protection and public law. Also, a government-to-government training project for Air Force employees and tribal members is under development, and a class titled "Maintaining Historical Buildings in Alaska" is to be presented.

Community Relations

Cultural resources posters and brochures stimulate public awareness. Community members are invited to installations to share information on history, cultural resources, and environmental issues. Community involvement is encouraged through RABs and tribal consultation. The community perspectives on history are very important and



A Conceptual Model of a Missile Defense Agency Radar Facility at Eareckson AS. In the Background is the National Register-Eligible Cobra Dane Radar



Historic American Building Survey Drawings for Bullen Point/Flaxman (POW-3) Distant Early Warning Site

awareness results in improved understanding and conservation practices. The 611 ASG Cultural Resources Manager contributes cultural resource articles and updates to newsletters, bulletins, and newspapers to further relations with communities state-wide.

Environmental Enhancement

The cultural resources program works closely with environmental restoration to ensure projects are executed and completed on time and comply with NHPA. Conservation and understanding of natural and cultural historical resources enhances employee morale and community trust. A draft document on “Subsistence Practices at Northern and Northwest Coast Alaska Radar Sites” was developed that better integrates resource management and environmental protection with local resources. Also, instruction was presented in cultural resource law to 611 ASG leaders and interested parties to ensure continued and uninterrupted enhancement of remote Alaska.

Mission Enhancement

The 611 ASG maintains liaison with other DoD agencies to coordinate cultural resources protection with mission activities. This becomes more challenging as mission activities increase with such agencies as the new Northern Command and the MDA, requiring compliance with cultural resources laws and other environmental and operational regulations. Without these ongoing efforts, continued expansion of new technologies would

be incredibly difficult. Aggressive cultural resources program produces professional credibility and local participation in resource management and mission-essential enhancements within time and budget constraints. Proactive management of highly technical Cold War Cobra Dane Radar upgrades in support of MDA ensures there will not be any adverse effects.

Cultural Resources Compliance

The 611 ASG Cultural Resource Manager is in continual contact with the AK-SHPO, ACHP, tribes, and community groups to ensure comprehensive and culturally sensitive inventory, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties. On the operations side, the 611 ASG maintains close contact with installation program managers and contractors. Their first-hand knowledge of the facilities assures proper project review and treatment of historic properties in concert with mission objectives. The historical resources of the Cold War are publicized through booklets and records. And, the Air Force is upgrading its missions throughout the AOR based on long-range research and documentation, to mitigate efforts of demolition projects at 40 sites.

SUMMARY

The 611 ASG manages numerous cultural resources and Native issues, including: National Register-eligible historic structures and archaeological sites, consultations with Alaska Native tribes, Native graves, traditional use areas, repatriation efforts and curation activities. Execution of all these activities is accomplished through the 611 ASG’s six CRMPs. Installations are located throughout Alaska, adjacent to many remote Native communities and the state’s 229 federally recognized tribes. Highlights of the 611 ASG program include: curation and preservation of historic sites and cultural resources, community relations and education programs, a strong Native American program, interagency cooperation, partnerships with Native history experts and academic researchers, and a close working relationship with Alaska Native tribes.