

# **CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AWARD**

**Cultural Resources Management - Installation  
MCRD, Parris Island SC**



**2000-2002**

## Introduction

### Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island

The primary mission of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island is to exercise operational control of enlisted recruiting operations in the 1st, 4th and 6th Marine Corps Districts and to provide reception, processing and training for enlisted personnel upon their initial entry into the Marine Corps. There are 2,007 active duty military, 800 civilian employees and approximately 4,800 recruits stationed at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island.

Parris Island is bounded on the east by the Beaufort River, on the west by the Broad River, on the north by Port Royal Island and on the south by Port Royal Sound. The Depot consists of 6,710 acres: 1,645 acres are improved, 5,065 are unimproved. The unimproved and improved areas contain 1,400 acres of managed forests and an additional 3,816 acres are wetlands.

## Background

### Program Summary

The Marine Corps Recruit Depot on Parris Island is one of the most historic sites in the United States. The base contains cultural resources dating back to at least 2500 BC. These resources are both archaeological and architectural in nature. The Assistant Chief of Staff G-4, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Officer (NREAO), exercises staff cognizance over the Depot's archaeological and historic resources management program. All official correspondence to state, federal and tribal authorities originates from this office. The NREAO is assisted in the accomplishment of specific tasks by the Public Works Branch, the Manager of Cultural Resources (Museum Curator), the Depot Archaeologist (Museum Assistant Curator) and the Natural Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Coordinator.

### Management of Cultural Resources

Because of the reorganization of the Depot's Public Works Division and the vacancy within the Public Works Planner office, the duties of initiating a cultural resources review has been shifted from the Depot Planner to the NEPA coordinator. By Depot order all activities that effect the human environment must pass through the NEPA Coordinator who then ensures that the proper review and compliance is carried out for actions that effect cultural resources. Since this occurs during an actions planning stage, the NEPA coordinator is able, at an early date in the process, to contact the Depot's Cultural Resource Manager and

Depot Archaeologist who can then began the consultation process with the necessary parties. The result of this interaction has been a smoother transition of information and coordination between the various Depot officers and has allowed the Depot to complete all necessary consultation without having an adverse impact on the completion of projects necessary for the efficient operation of the Depot.

### **Current Status of Cultural Resources Program**

**Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan:** In August 1999, the Legacy Resource Management Program of the US Army Construction and Engineering Research Laboratories (USACERL) and the Cultural Resource Program Manager for the Marine Corps, entered into an agreement that would develop for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island an Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP). It was planned that the resulting ICRMP, which would feature an electronic toolbox format, could then be used as a prototype for DoD installations. After review and alterations the Depot accepted the ICRMP. At the current time the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SCSHPO) and the American Indian tribes that claim an affiliation to Parris Island are reviewing the ICRMP.

**Historic Buildings and Structures:** On 16 March 2000, the *Historical and Architectural Documentation Reports for the U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina* was finished and approved by the SCSHPO. This survey completed the Depot's 110 requirements for an architectural survey of historic structures. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Construction Engineering Research Laboratories (USACERL) produced the document. Parris Island has 54 structures that are on or considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). All but two of these structures are within a historic district located in the Depot's Mainside area.

**Archaeological Resources:** Parris Island has completed all of its archaeological surveys in the depot's undeveloped areas. These surveys were funded by both the Depot and by the Department of Defense Legacy Program and were carried out in areas outside the rifle ranges and the developed area known as Mainside.

The Depot's most important cultural resource is the Santa Elena/Charlesfort archaeological site which consists of a French fortification of 1562-1563 known as Charlesfort and a Spanish colonial village that existed from 1562 to 1587. The site also includes significant prehistoric and later historic components. This area, located on the Depot's southern end by the golf course, is considered to be one of the finest Colonial European archaeological sites in the United States and has been named by

the National Park Service a National Landmark. Parris Island works closely with the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) for the excavation, investigation and protection of the Santa Elena/ Charlesfort site.

In the past three years the Depot has begun to implement its new master plan. This flexible document was created to modernize the base and direct traffic away from recruit training areas. Because much of the work will be located at the rifle range and Mainside, the Depot has undertaken additional archaeological surveys to clear these areas for new construction.

As of September 2002, 104 isolated archaeological finds and 104 archaeological sites, of which 24 have been identified as eligible or potentially eligible for the NRHP, have been located on the MCRD Parris Island. Through its cultural resources program the Depot, from FY2000 - FY2002, has evaluated 41 projects, of which 19 required fieldwork. Nine notifications requesting comment were sent to the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices of tribes that claim an affiliation with Parris Island. During this period the Depot expended nearly \$500,000 on archaeological projects. The number of known archaeological sites and isolated finds increased from 186 to 208. The number of eligible sites increased from 16 to 24 and the amount of cubic feet of archaeological artifacts increased from 758 to 880 cubic feet. All recovered artifacts have been recorded and conservation measures taken, and are stored either at the Parris Island Museum or the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology.

### **Program Accomplishments**

The major accomplishment for the Depot's Cultural Resource program that were completed in FY 2001 include the completion of an initial Conference with Native American Groups that have a cultural interest in Parris Island; the completion of an archaeological survey for the construction of a new Depot recycle center, and the completion of an archaeological survey of the Depot's rifle range. These accomplishments reflect the Depot's ability to properly manage its cultural resources, coordinate cultural resources with the management of the Depot's mission, coordinate activities within the Depot's sub-commands and other Marine Corps and Department of the Navy installations, and establish partnerships for collective funding to carry out required programs.

**Success Story #1:** Completion of Initial Consultation with American Indian Tribes and the completion of an interim Memorandum of Understanding.

In May 2002, the Depot, in order to meet its requirement to establish official relations with American Indian Tribes who claim cultural affiliation with Parris Island, contracted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collection (MXC-CMAC) to organize a consultation meeting. In order to save funds and to make the meeting more efficient for the government, the Depot invited the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and the U.S. Naval Hospital Beaufort to join in the consultation. The other bases agreed and the result was a meeting that not only consolidated the required consultation but also saved the Government the cost of three separate conferences. The result of the meeting was a discussion of Native American Graves Protection Act (NAGPRA), sacred sites, traditional cultural properties and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) with the end goal of drafting a Programmatic Agreement for Section 106 of NHPA and the drafting of an agreement for Section 3 of NAGPRA, Inadvertent Discoveries. The meeting resulted in the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between each installation and the interested tribal groups to handle the Section 106 of NHPA and NAGPRA Section 3, Inadvertent Discoveries, until a final Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) can be drafted and signed. The conference set the groundwork for future meetings where the MOA's will be finalized.

**Success Story #2:** Archaeological clearance for the construction of a Depot Recycling Center on Horse Island.

In April 2001, the Depot proposed the construction of a new recycling center on Horse Island, a small sea island located within the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. The placement of the new center on Horse Island would allow for a larger building that would provide more working and storage space. It would also conveniently position the center next to the Depot's landfill. Before the project could proceed beyond the planning stage the Depot had to complete an archaeological survey on a 7.6-acre tract on Horse Island to see if the proposed construction would impact on any archaeological resources. The work and reports were completed in January 2002. One site associated with an African-American slave occupation was discovered and was deemed eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. To protect this site the Depot's design team reoriented the proposed center carefully avoiding this highly important area.

Besides the advantages gained by a new, enlarged and more centrally located recycle center, the establishment of a new center will also lead to the dismantling of its current older

building that encroaches on an African-American cemetery. The removal of this building will then allow the Depot to more properly preserve and protect the cemetery.



Test pit showing human habitation on Horse Island during the survey for the recycle center.

**Success Story #3:** Archaeological survey of the Depot rifle range.

This work was required to implement the renovation of the Depot rifle range. Through consultation with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office the Depot, through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, was able to carry out a phase one archaeological survey of the area. This survey located 19 new sites and 7 isolated finds. In addition, the boundaries of a previously identified site were expanded. Of the newly located sites three were determined eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. With this knowledge the Depot began a phased renovation of the range area. This work included electrical upgrades to operate range targets, new snapping-in sheds for the firing orientation, new head facilities, improved roadways and drainage, the replacement of

utility lines, and the construction of storage sheds and range control rooms. All work was planned to avoid archaeological sites and was coordinated with the SCSHPO and interested American Indian tribes. The renovation greatly improved the efficiency of the range where permanent personnel re-qualify and where each year some 20,000 male and female recruits receive training on the M16A2 service rifle.



A Native American shard recovered during the rifle range survey.

### **Conclusion**

The past three years the Depot has continued to integrate cultural resources into its day-to-day operations. The Depot's cultural resource management team has continued to balance the historical importance of the island with its mission. Today, in the midst of a tremendous historical setting, Parris Island continues to train recruits and provides for the Depot's permanent personnel without disturbing the island's cultural resources.

Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island South Carolina  
Cultural Resources Management - Installation

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Summary Paragraph:

The major accomplishment for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island's Cultural Resource program consisted of the completion of an initial Conference with Native American groups that have a cultural interest in Parris Island; the completion of an archaeological survey for the construction of a new Depot recycle center, and the completion of an archaeological survey of the Depot's rifle range. These accomplishments reflect the Depot's ability to properly manage its cultural resources, coordinate cultural resources with the management of the Depot's primary mission of training recruits, and coordinate activities within the Depot's sub-commands and other Marine Corps and Department of the Navy installations to establish partnerships for collective funding in carrying out required programs.