

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

*Ms. Karlene B. Leeper
611th Air Support Group
Elmendorf Air Force Base Alaska*



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
 ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD
 CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – INDIVIDUAL
MS. KARLENE B. LEEPER

611TH AIR SUPPORT GROUP, ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, ALASKA

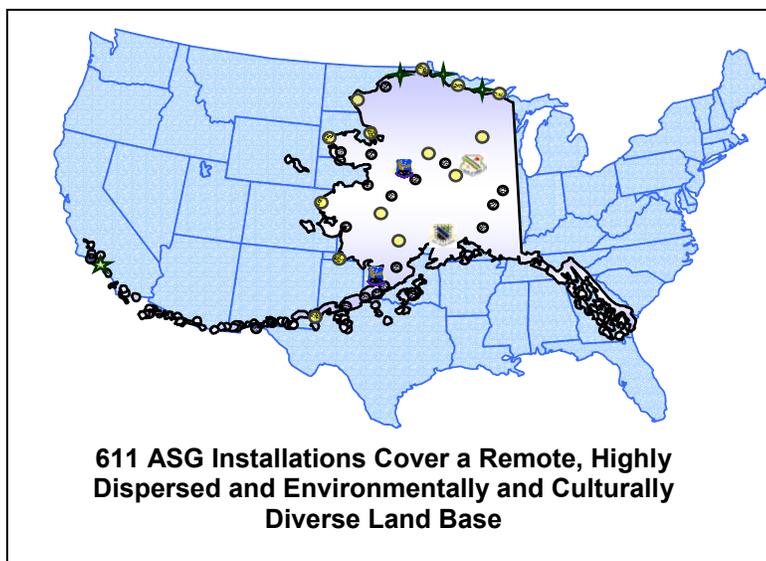
BACKGROUND

As Cultural Resources Manager for the Environmental Planning Section of the Environmental Flight under the 611th Civil Engineer Squadron (611 CES), 611th Air Support Group (611 ASG), 11th Air Force (11 AF), Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), United States Air Force (USAF), Ms. Karlene B. Leeper is the *single* cultural resources personnel *solely* responsible for 40 *installations* scattered over 570K miles.

Ms. Leeper graduated from Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, New Hampshire, in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, and in 1999 with a Master of Arts in Anthropology from Binghamton University, New York. She continues to further her knowledge and skills with continuing education throughout the United States and in Alaska. Ms. Leeper has worked as an archaeologist with the National Park Service (NPS) in Alaska, and as an archeologist in the northeast United States and California.

The 611 ASG is headquartered at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. As a component of PACAF, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), and 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.

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 Alaskan Command, 11 AF, and Alaskan NORAD. This support ensures Alaskan war-fighters 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 400 government and contractor personnel.

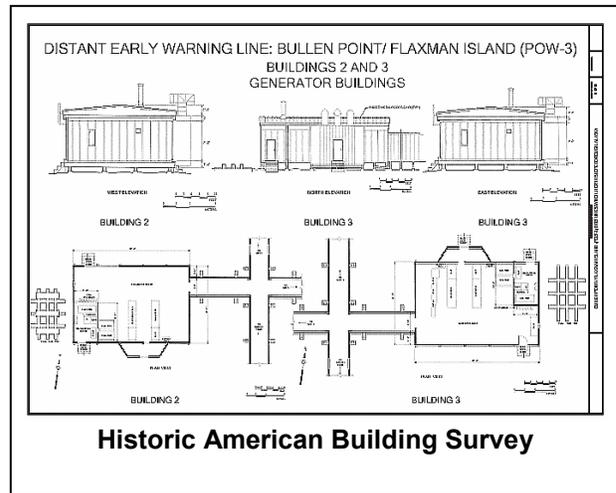
The 611 ASG, with Ms. Leeper as its lead, manages numerous cultural resources and Native issues, including National Register (NR)-eligible historic structures and archaeological sites, consultations with Alaska Native tribes, Native graves, traditional use areas, repatriation efforts, and curation activities. Execution of all these activities is accomplished through 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.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The cultural resources program ensures the 11 AF and its customers consider effects on historic properties as it conducts its daily business. The 611 CES is proactive and able to identify and evaluate important historic properties long before an action takes place. Integration of historic preservation early in the planning process is the key to completing cultural resource projects and consultations before work begins. Laws of particular importance that Ms. Leeper works with *daily* include the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and EO 13007 on Sacred Sites.

Ms. Leeper is actively working on the following plans and studies:

- CRMPs: Six plans, divided by historic function category, Aircraft Control & Warning (AC&W) (10 sites), Distant Early Warning (DEW) (seven sites), White Alice (17 sites), Galena Airport, King Salmon Airport, and Eareckson AS.
- Cultural resource status updates, including new discoveries, modifications, and demolitions (e.g., Eareckson AS human remains discovery in Jul 02).
- Integrating historic preservation process with 611 CES \$1 billion Operations and Maintenance



- nance program.
- *Historic Building Inventory and Evaluations* (written in categories similar to CRMPs): Providing historic information on buildings, including NR eligibility, which helps with project planning.
- *Archaeological Surveys*: Providing advance knowledge of areas for project execution
- *Traditional Cultural Properties Inventory and Evaluations*: Providing information on traditional and historic sites important to Alaska Natives and the local community.
- *Mitigation Studies and Products*: If a 611 ASG project will have an “adverse effect” on historic properties, the 611 ASG consults with the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (AK-SHPO), Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), tribes, and others to come up with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA stipulates actions and projects carried out to help preserve the history of the affected historic property. NAGPRA plans involve tribal consultation and set protocols for treatment of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Ms. Leeper is the 11th AF, PACAF, and U.S. Air Forces number one cultural resources program manager.

Overall Cultural Resources Management

Ms. Leeper implemented a creative systems approach in the study and recordation of Cold War

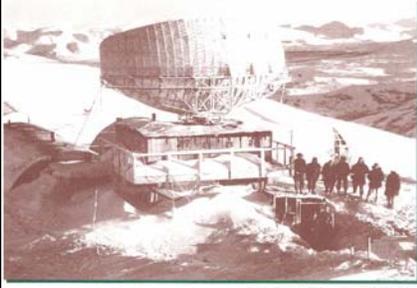


DEFENDING ATTACK FROM THE NORTH:
Alaska's Aircraft Control and Warning Radar System
During the Cold War

The Aircraft Control and Warning (AC&W) network was one of the first technological defense systems deployed by the United States during the Cold War. Constructed in Alaska in the early 1950s, it was a critical component of U.S. strategic defense against the threat of Soviet bombers attacking North America over the arctic region. With installations located as close as 45 miles from the Siberian border, the establishment of radar warning stations in Alaska presented a major deterrent to Soviet attack from the north.

The AC&W system has often been overshadowed by the more famous Distant Early Warning, or DEW, Line. Many historical accounts fail to mention the

AC&W system at all; others confuse it with the interim Lashup system deployed after World War II. However, in 1996, the Air Force and the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office formally recognized the historical importance of the AC&W system and entered into an agreement along with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to record the system's history and remaining facilities. This booklet presents the history of the system and was compiled from a variety of sources, including recently declassified military histories and interviews with veterans and long-time contractors at the AC&W installations.



The first year the radar were activated, they operated, without protective covers, which complicated maintenance and occasionally interfered with radar performance from conditions such as ice loads. Once a radome was designed that did not interfere with the transmission and reception of radar signals, these problems were solved, and all radar installed after 1952 had protective radomes.

Photo: Elmendorf Air Force History Office Archives

Recordation of Alaska's Aircraft Control & Warning (AC&W) Radar Systems During the 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. 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.

Whereas other installations throughout the Air Force and Department of Defense (DoD) develop one CRMP, the 611 ASG, guided by Ms. Leeper, has completed six. Eareckson AS, Galena Airport, and King Salmon Airport each has their own CRMP. Ms. Leeper implemented an innovative systems approach in the development of six CRMPs for 41 installations, saving time, effort, and approximately \$1M. The CRMP for the DEW System covers seven sites, the AC&W covers 10 sites, and White Alice Communications (WACS) focuses on 18 sites, 10 of which are co-located at AC&W sites.

Historic Buildings and Structures

Ms. Leeper completed inventory and evaluation of buildings and gravel structures at all stations

of the Long Range Radar Site (LRRS) and Short Range Radar Site (SRRS) systems. A MOA for 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 Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs), AK-SHPO, and the National Park Service (NPS) are consulting for the MOA DEW system. Improved Historic American Buildings Survey/ Historic American Engineering Record drawings were submitted to NPS. An innovative approach integrates the meaning of the DEW system 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 the Department of Energy and the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE). Ms. Leeper improved the 611 ASG program by using archaeologists with Alaska expertise to increase effectiveness and cost efficiency, and partnered with scholars from universities, the National Science Foundation (NSF), five Native agencies, the AK-SHPO, and Corps of Engineers (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



New Archaeological Site in the Interior of Shemya Island, Eareckson AS



**Slate Projectile Points from the Uivvaq Site
Date to Thule Times and are Associated
with Lifeways of Early Inupiaq Mariners**

of the Native Village of Wales. Ms. Leeper at Tin City leveraged an opportunity to educate LRRS site workers, university students, and tribal members and completed archaeological surveys for 32 remote installations supporting the Alaska Clean Sweep program. The surveys expertly assess damage to fragile North Coastal resources following a 50-year storm. A new archaeological site was discovered in a location never expected to contain artifacts at Eareckson AS in July 2002. Ms. Leeper took the lead in identifying, testing, and analyzing, partnering with regional Aleut Corporation, to develop a plan for repatriation of human remains. This facilitated completion of a critical sewer line project and new methods for subsurface excavation to expedite homeland defense projects.

Archaeological sites have been found at Tin City, Cape Lisburne, and Barter Island LRRSs. These sites are all Thule Eskimo sites and are located in coastal northern Alaska. Seven sites at Eareckson AS on Shemya Island are the remains of ancient Aleut settlements. Through Ms. Leeper’s diligent efforts, prevention of serious damage to prehistoric settlement was averted from the airfield drainage project at Cape Lisburne..

There are small cemeteries at Eareckson AS, Oliktok LRRS, and Cape Lisburne LRRS. Single graves are evident at Kotzebue LRRS and Point Lonely SRRS. Ms. Leeper accomplished the first-ever repatriation of human remains and

funerary objects to the Aleut Corporation, and is establishing plans for future inadvertent discoveries.

Native American Program

This program is implemented through many activities of Ms. Leeper and the 611 ASG. 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. The close rapport established between Ms. Leeper and 611 ASG staff, with nearly 50 tribes, has led to open dialogue and increased trust levels with the Air Force. Effective communication prevents the occurrence of public relation incidents.

Alaska is the home of 229 federally recognized tribes belonging to six major cultural groups — Inupiaq, Yupik, Aleut, Athabaskan, Tlingit, and Haida. The 611 ASG installations are located throughout remote Alaska. Ms. Leeper routinely works with tribes on issues related to conservation. She works closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to ensure that cemeteries are protected during sensitive restoration activities are accomplished. Ms. Leeper also conducts onsite consultations with tribes and interested parties in five North Slope villages who are associated with the NR-eligible DEW system, in step with local issues, with skillful presentation by Ms. Leeper at



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



tribal offices and RABs. A Native Liaison Advisor in the 611 ASG makes recommendations to the 611 ASG Commander and staff on Alaska Native policy and issues.

Ms. Leeper has begun documentation of sites having traditional importance to Alaska Native tribes. This is an enormous task given the 611 ASG 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.

To comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, the 611 ASG executed a number of MOAs AK-SHPO, ACHP, federally recognized tribes and other interested parties. Because a number of NR-eligible structures will be demolished as part of the Department of Defense (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, AK-SHPO, possibly the ACHP, and municipal governments on the North Slope of Alaska. The NSF funded a project at Cape Lisburne 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, 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), 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.

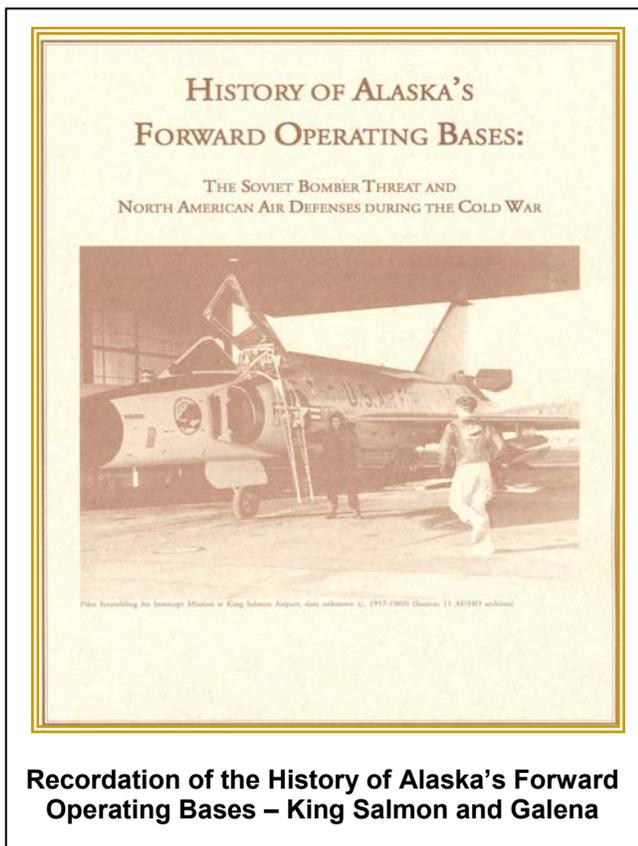
Curation

Ms. Leeper is working to accomplish curatorial agreements for care of artifacts sensitive to the interests of tribes and federal requirements. 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

Ms. Leeper continues to produce informative posters and brochures designed to promote public awareness on cultural and natural 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





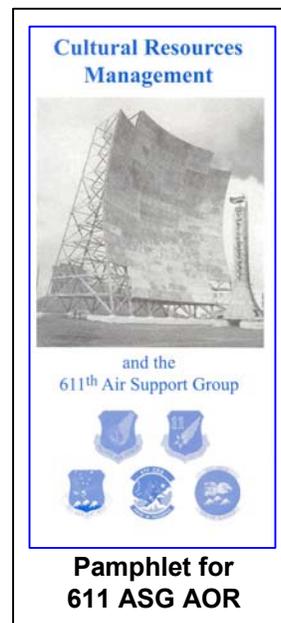
to maintain historic properties, while ensuring mission readiness. Ms. Leeper presents information on heritage and historic preservation projects to community members and students, and recently partnered with the COE to educate Eareckson AS workers about archaeological protection and public law. Also, 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” will be presented to Alaskan federal agencies.

Ms. Leeper 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. Ms. Leeper designed and presented a cutting-edge program on Traditional Cultural Properties, and presented a archaeology program to 6th grade students for the Alaska Anthropological Association’s Education Committee during the Bureau of Land Management’s “Outdoor Week.” The 611 ASG sponsors a “Prehistoric Hunting Technology Workshop” with the NPS that is open to the pub-

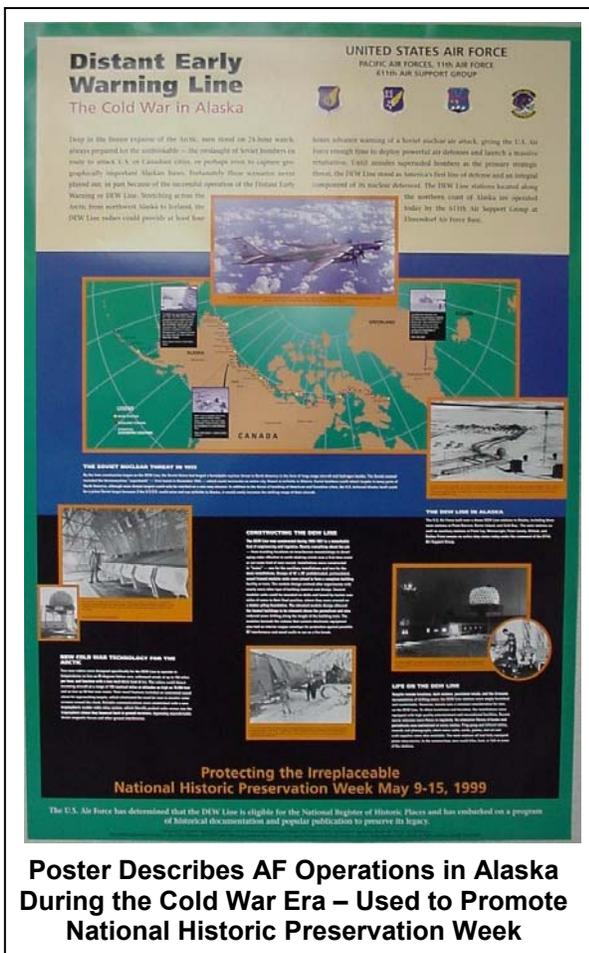
lic. Posters produced for National Historic Preservation Week and brochures on cultural resources are popular with DoD agencies and the public. Ms. Leeper coordinates and administers activities of the Alaskan DoD Cultural Resources Working Group for the myriad of DoD members and guest agencies. She served as editor for the Alaska section of the Society for Historical Archaeology Newsletter, and works closely with the AK-SHPO, tribes, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service USF&WS, COE, and interested scholars to protect threatened archaeological sites at Eareckson AS and remote radar sites. Ms. Leeper also co-managed cultural resource issues at Eareckson AS with the new mission beddown of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) on Shemya Island, including a newly discovered archaeological site and the NR-eligible Cobra Dane Radar.

Community Relations

Cultural resource 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’s perspective on history are very important, and awareness results in improved understanding and conservation practices. Ms. Leeper contributes cultural resources articles and updates to newsletters, bulletins, and newspapers to further relations with communities statewide.



Through the efforts of Ms. Leeper, 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. A Legacy project “Traditional



Poster Describes AF Operations in Alaska During the Cold War Era – Used to Promote National Historic Preservation Week

Lands and Sacred Sites: Partnering with Alaska’s Tribes” teams cultural resources professionals at Tanana Chiefs Conference (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 among Ms. Leeper, AK-SHPO, tribes, and other federal land agencies will ensure the success of these projects. 611 ASG employed and educated Alaska native history and culture interns and experts for the Legacy project, bringing stakeholder involvement and closer partnership with community and local tribal experts.

The nation’s only Cold War Working Group transitioned to the Alaskan DoD Cultural Resources Working Group, which is co-chaired by AK-SHPO and 611 ASG Deputy Commander and administered by Ms. Leeper. The group facilitates open discussions regarding all cultural resource issues in Alaska, and is one-of-a-kind organization “teambuilding” among all Alaskan DoD cultural resource managers and state and

local agencies.

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

Environmental Enhancement

Ms. Leeper 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 integrate 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 the remote Alaskan environment.

Mission Enhancement

Ms. Leeper 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 U.S. Northern Command and MDA, requiring compliance with cultural re-



Point Hope Community Leaders & Elders with Ms. Leeper at Cape Lisburne Working on an Ethnohistory-Archaeology Project



A Conceptual Model of a Missile Defense Agency Radar Facility at Eareckson AS on Shemya Island, at the Tip of the Aleutian Chain. In the background is the NR-Eligible Cobra Dane Radar.

sources laws and other environmental and operational regulations. Without these ongoing efforts, continued expansion of new technologies would be incredibly difficult. An 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

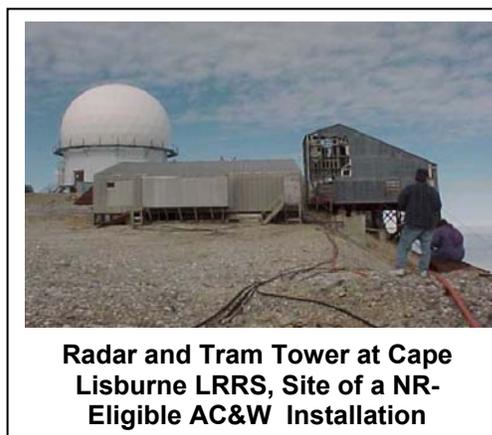
Ms. Leeper is constantly in contact with the AK-SHPO, ACHP, tribes, and community groups to ensure comprehensive and culturally sensitive inventory, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties. On the operations side, Ms. Leeper maintains close contact with installation program managers and contractors. Her first-hand knowledge of 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 effects of demolition projects at 40 sites.

Ms. Leeper has completed inventories and evaluations of archaeological sites—WWII and Cold War properties. CRMPs were completed for Ga-

lena Airport, King Salmon Airport, AC&W system, DEW system, Eareckson AS, and WACS. The Legacy grant allowed the 611 ASG to inventory and evaluate traditional cultural properties on DoD land. MOAs regarding effects of environmental restoration on the FOBs and AC&W system are complete and mitigation is almost complete. MOAs regarding the effects of environmental restoration on the FOBs and AC&W system are complete and mitigation is in progress. 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 recordation’s 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.



Cold War Era Cobra Dane Radar



Radar and Tram Tower at Cape Lisburne LRRS, Site of a NR-Eligible AC&W Installation

AWARDS & SERVICES

Ms. Leeper regularly receives letters of recognition from local commanders and organizations for her outstanding work on educating and promoting cultural resources in Alaska. Since arriving in 1999, she has won numerous awards in such a short timeframe, including:

- 2002 USAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Management Award
- 2002 USAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Individual Award
- 2002 PACAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Management Award
- 2002 PACAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Individual Award
- 2002 611th Air Support Group Civilian of the Year
- 2002 611th Civil Engineer Squadron Civilian of the Year
- 2001 Apr – Jun Elmendorf Air Force Base Civilian of the Quarter
- 2001 Apr – Jun 611th Air Support Group Civilian of the Quarter
- 2001 Apr – Jun 611th Civil Engineer Squadron Civilian of the Quarter
- 2000 DoD Special Recognition for Cultural Resources Management
- 2000 USAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Management Award
- 2000 PACAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Management Award
- 1999 PACAF General Thomas D. White Cultural Resources Management Award

Ms. Leeper has developed and delivered several professional presentations, including:

- “Rumors of Gold on the Kobuk River,” presented at the 24th Conference of the Alaska Anthropological Association, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada
- The Historical Archeology of McKinley Park Station, presented at the Conference on Historical and Underwater Archeology, Vancouver, British Columbia
- “Working with Alaska Native Tribes,” training for DoD Commanders in Alaska
- “Compliance with Cultural Resource Laws,” training for government and contract personnel on Eareckson AS, Alaska
- “Interior Alaska Tribes & the U.S. Military: Sacred Landscapes, Government-to-Government Consultation and Regulatory Compliance,” Annual Alaska Anthropological Association

Ms. Leeper’s service and accomplishments are well above her peers. She is a member of several professional organizations, including the Alaska Anthropological Association, the Society for Historical Archeology, and the Society for American Archaeology. Ms. Leeper has written over 50 reports on archeological sites and surveys in Alaska, New York, and California and is a respected expert throughout PACAF.

*Ms. Karlene B. Leeper -
Preserving the Past for
Future Generations*