

Wyoming ARNG Camp Guernsey

Cultural Resources Management, Installation

INTRODUCTION

Located in east-central Wyoming along the historic Oregon Trail, Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center is the Wyoming Army National Guard's (WYARNG) premier training facility and the centerpiece of the WYARNG's cultural resources management (CRM) program. With 65,454 acres classified as a Maneuver Training Center-Heavy, the primary focus of Camp Guernsey is to provide a major training area for Wyoming Army and Air National Guard units as well as active duty Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. The training site is also one of only five Air Force-designated regional training centers in the country and houses a Department of Defense (DoD) Joint Training and Experimentation Center for robotics research and development in unmanned air- and ground-based vehicles. Rolling hills, tablelands, and rough, broken terrain characterize the general area and as a result, Camp Guernsey has become known as an ideal location for military training because it shares similarities with the terrain in Afghanistan.

The town of Guernsey has a population of approximately 1,100 with Camp Guernsey employing 123 federal military technicians and state of Wyoming civilian personnel. With multiple units from all branches of the military services concurrently reliant on Camp Guernsey for training, stewardship of cultural resources is critical to mission readiness. All of Camp Guernsey's lands were or are currently being surveyed for cultural resources. Nearly 1,000 sites have been documented, including prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, several Native American traditional cultural properties, nationally significant Oregon Trail resources, historic homesteads and the New Deal-era Camp Guernsey Cantonment Historic District. The entire facility and all acres of Camp Guernsey's military training lands are covered under the WYARNG Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) for 2009-2013.

JUDGING CRITERIA

-  Program Management
-  Orientation to Mission
-  Technical Merit
-  Transferability
-  Stakeholder Interaction

On this page: From left, Pfc. Brian Ortiz and Cpl. Christopher Klemme with the Wyoming Army National Guard's 960th Brigade Support Battalion, work through close quarters combat exercises. (Photo by Brandon Quester/Public Affairs Specialist, Wyoming National Guard)

BACKGROUND

Camp Guernsey’s CRM program, housed within the environmental section of the WYARNG Construction and Facilities Management Office (C&FMO), ably meets the challenge of balancing Camp Guernsey’s cultural wealth with mission goals. The cultural resources manager works directly with environmental professionals, contract archaeologists and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technicians. Environmental personnel coordinate daily with Camp Guernsey range control, Integrated Training Area Management, master planning, real property, engineering and command staff to ensure coordination of mission goals and operations with environmental sustainability. Camp Guernsey’s initial ICRMP was prepared in 2004, and the comprehensive revision was completed in-house by the WYARNG cultural resources manager in 2009. Over the past two years, the Camp Guernsey CRM staff accomplished a number of program milestones, most notably: the successful completion of a DoD Legacy Resource Management Program funded project; increased preservation of Oregon Trail historic sites; preparation of a historic context and public education component for historic homesteads and ranching sites; and implementation of a Native American ethnographic study and traditional cultural properties survey.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The CRM office developed the concept of shared resource stewardship with both internal and external stakeholders to encourage interest and participation above and beyond the required regulatory compliance process. In every respect, Camp Guernsey excels at balancing the WYARNG mission with an appreciation of state history. For example, one unique CRM project involved identifying the descendants of homesteading families, collecting oral histories and documenting the history of late 19th and early 20th century dry-land farming in the region. Interpretive signage and an educational Web site were developed as part of this project so this important time in Wyoming’s history can be shared with Camp Guernsey personnel, troops training on the lands and the general public.

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 Wyoming Army National Guard, Camp Guernsey

DRY LAND FARMING

Making the Desert Bloom

“Dear old Uncle Sam offers these fine lands to the man who will roll up his sleeves and spit in his hands.”
(Guernsey Gazette, October 24, 1913)

In the late 1800s, unusually heavy rainfalls and the encouragement of western railroads lured settlers to the semi-arid western plains. Here in the Camp Guernsey area, only a few year-round streams could be used for irrigation, and much of the land was cut by the steep canyons and draws of the Harville Uplift. Believing that “rain follows the

plow,” settlers in this area had to rely on a new type of agriculture known as dry land farming to raise their crops.

Farmers soon discovered that rain did not follow the plow. Drought-resistant plants were developed along with the “Scientific Farming System,” which used deep plowing, packed subsoil, and loose topsoil. Land was to be left fallow after every growing season, so that rain over a two-year period would be used for a single crop season.

Agriculture prospered during the war years of 1917 and 1918, and the innovation of gasoline tractors, combines, and trucks helped make dry farming more efficient. Still,



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Dry Land Farming, Oregon Pioneer, Wyoming State Archives, Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources

the same time that a drought hit. Farmers who took out loans during the good years to purchase equipment and more land were unable to survive the tough years and gave up their farms. But some operations persevered, like the Smith Ranch (below) north of Guernsey, producing wheat, oats, and barley, and some farmers also raised livestock to help ensure their continued success.



THIS PROJECT IS SPONSORED BY THE WYOMING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Educational signs at Camp Guernsey, such as this one, document the historic homesteads of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The creation of educational signs was part of an initiative to identify the descendants of homesteading families, collect oral histories and document the history of dry-land farming in the region.

The WYARNG ICRMP includes a detailed description of the Camp Guernsey installation, a historic and cultural context and an overview of inventory status, resource evaluation and compliance and management activities through 2013. The plan outlines six standard operating procedures (SOP) to assist all users of Camp Guernsey and provides basic guidance for the most common situations that have the potential to impact cultural resources. In addition, a seventh stand-alone SOP completed in 2008 presents a comprehensive plan for the protection of cultural resources in wildfire management including pre-treatment and fire prevention, fire suppression and post-fire rehabilitation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Overall Cultural Resources Management

The Camp Guernsey CRM staff successfully employs many initiatives to better utilize funds and reduce operational costs. The cost savings of completing the ICRMP by a qualified staff expert is more than \$70,000. Completing a GIS cultural resource database and map in-house saved approximately 270 job hours between 2008 and 2009; this eliminates the time-consuming task of plotting military activity requests on individual



cultural resource inventory maps and cross-referencing each cultural site with paper survey reports. The WYARNG also entered into a cooperative agreement with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Cultural Records Office to digitize nearly 20 years of inventory reports and site forms. These resources are now available online through a secure Internet Web site housed by the SHPO. This project was completed at a minimal cost to the WYARNG (\$20,000 vs. \$45,000 for a General Services Administration contract) and assists both agencies in CRM responsibilities.

Currently, 911 of 975 documented cultural resource sites at Camp Guernsey have been evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, leaving only 64 with undetermined National Register status. Of the 975 archaeological and historic sites, 190 are considered federally protected because of their National Register of Historic Places eligibility. An additional 122 sites contain features of interest and concern to Native American Indian tribes and therefore, are also considered protected under Camp Guernsey CRM.

The WYARNG C&FMO uses a Project Tracker system to assist in management of construction projects. The tracker system provides an easy-to-use spreadsheet of construction projects with funding and contract information, environmental review status, start date and estimated completion date. This management system allows environmental staff to integrate environmental requirements early in the planning process to ensure project sustainability and Section 106 compliance.

The installation's CRM program is proactive in seeking ways to expand and leverage environmental budget resources. The CRM office obtained DoD Legacy Project funds of \$44,400 to prepare an SOP to consider the effects of fire to Native American traditional cultural sites before, during and after wildfire incidents. The project, which provided a cost efficient approach in forward planning and prevention and is an example of proactive stewardship, was successfully completed in 2008. In 2009, the CRM office submitted an application to the Wyoming SHPO Historic Architecture Assistance Fund to obtain the services of a professional architect to recommend stabilization methods at a unique historic homestead



dugout structure in Camp Guernsey's North Training Area. The application was successful, and the SHPO provided \$2,500 to fund the architect.

Historic Buildings and Structures

Camp Guernsey has evaluated all buildings for historic and architectural significance, including their status under Cold War-era criteria. Real Property Historic Preservation Codes are current and accurate. A total of 37 buildings in the Camp Guernsey Cantonment Historic District are at least 50 years old, and 29 are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register-eligible historic district was constructed during the New Deal era with Works Progress Administration labor. The 75th anniversary of the New Deal took place in 2008, and the CRM office developed a presentation highlighting the locally quarried sandstone structures built during that period. An educational poster visually displays the differences in stone masonry techniques between the beginning of Camp Guernsey's construction in 1939 (using cut stone blocks carefully laid in horizontal courses) and construction after January 1941 (when random rubble stone was laid in irregular patterns to increase the speed of construction because of the threat of war).



Building 301 is an excellent example of the unique historic stonework in Camp Guernsey's cantonment area constructed with locally quarried sandstone as a Works Progress Administration project in the New Deal era.

The Camp Guernsey historic district is managed in accordance with a Management Plan for Historic Properties and a Facilities Excellence Plan completed in 2007. Camp Guernsey has adapted several buildings in the historic district for reuse to meet the changing WYARNG mission. A



rehabilitation project at a WWII-era recreation facility and canteen remodeled the interior to become a state-of-the-art classroom facility. An interior rehabilitation project at another building changed its historic use as a latrine to a troop laundry. In 2009 a federally funded economic stimulus project was identified to upgrade the windows in 24 historic buildings at Camp Guernsey. Through sensitive project management, careful selection of replacement window material and close and constant coordination with the SHPO throughout the course of the project development, it was determined that the Camp Guernsey historic district and contributing buildings would not be adversely affected by the undertaking.

Archaeological Resources

Camp Guernsey is rich in prehistoric and historic period archaeological sites. The region has one of the highest prehistoric site densities in Wyoming. Indigenous people continuously visited and occupied Camp Guernsey lands for thousands of years. Types of prehistoric archaeological resources include rock shelters, open camp sites with teepee circles, ceremonial stone rings and alignments, stone procurement quarries, lithic artifact scatters and Native American pictographs and petroglyphs. Types of historic archaeological sites include mid-19th century Oregon Trail sites and structural remains of late 19th and early 20th century homesteads and ranches, as well as trash dumps and artifact scatters, mining prospect features, railway features, a packing plant, stone quarry, copper smelter and a Civilian Conservation Corps golf course segment.



Camp Guernsey has many sites associated with the nationally significant historic Oregon Trail, including wagon trail ruts and swales, potential emigrant grave sites, campsites and pioneer inscriptions. In June 2009, local and regional wagon train enthusiasts conducted a reenactment of emigrants traveling along the Oregon Trail across Camp Guernsey lands. Camp Guernsey supports members of the Oregon-California Trails Association to place trail markers along ruts and swales to delineate trail segments on the landscape. Recognizing the importance of the “Warm Springs” site noted in emigrant diaries and journals, Camp Guernsey has designated the area as “foot traffic only” so its historic character can be retained. CRM and natural resource staff are planning projects to manage and interpret the springs through funding sources such as the State of Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and National Public Lands Day Legacy awards.

In 2008, Camp Guernsey began a 100 percent cultural resource inventory of the recently acquired 22,000-acre Gray Rocks Ranch adjacent to the South Training Area. The survey is essential for the WYARNG’s strategy of proactive protection of significant archaeological and historic sites through advance avoidance measures.

Native American Program

The WYARNG Native American program began in 2003. The CRM office now conducts annual consultation meetings with 18 participating tribes including the Blackfeet, Southern Arapaho, Southern Cheyenne, Cheyenne River Sioux, Chippewa Cree, Comanche, Confederated Salish and Kootenai, Crow,

Eastern Shoshone, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux, Kiowa, Northern Arapaho, Northern Cheyenne, Northern Ute, Oglala Sioux, Rosebud Sioux, Shoshone-Bannock and Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate. Meetings feature program updates, information sharing, discussions of management recommendations, project reviews and site visits. The 2009 tribal consultation meeting included a field trip,



Camp Guernsey’s Oregon Trail resources provide a unique opportunity for public interaction and education. Trail reenactments, like the one pictured above, are conducted across Camp Guernsey lands.

led by representatives of the Northern Cheyenne and the Rosebud Sioux Tribes, to two 19th century Indian Wars battlefields. This field trip provided a unique opportunity for both tribal and military representatives: *“Today we have an opportunity to stand on common ground. These battlefields are sacred to both the U.S. Army and the numerous tribes that fought for this land. It is a great privilege for me to learn from my brothers and stand on this sacred ground together, as friends,”* WYARNG’s MAJ Samuel House. The WYARNG encourages all deploying military personnel to attend Native American consultations because of the similarities between formal consultations and advisor or mentor missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.



American Indian tribal representatives hold a prayer at Warm Springs in Camp Guernsey’s South Training Area during a 2008 tribal consultation meeting field trip. Native American consultation is a key component of Camp Guernsey’s CRM program.

Tribes enjoy great access to Camp Guernsey. The Northern Arapaho have a sweat lodge on the South Training Area to conduct tribal activities and to share traditional ceremonies with the WYARNG. A tribal monitoring program is in place for ground-disturbing projects; tribes visit on a rotating basis to participate in fieldwork and surveys. The WYARNG staff discusses availability of camping, hunting, plant gathering and cedar harvesting at all consultation meetings. Tribal representatives often say the WYARNG leads the way and is a model for other military installations and government agencies.

Because of the extensive number and types of cultural resources identified during archaeological

inventories, tribal representatives recommended a Native American ethnographic study and traditional cultural property survey of Camp Guernsey lands be conducted. The project was completed in 2008. Traditional cultural sites identified during the survey are now managed following recommendations provided by tribal participants.

Curation

The WYARNG has a long-standing curation arrangement with the University of Wyoming Archaeological Repository and Curation Facility, the federally designated repository for Camp Guernsey’s archaeological collections, pursuant to 36 CFR 79. The facility is in a state-of-the-art building constructed within the last five years and is administered by the Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist. The facility is open to researchers and Native American tribal representatives and has been visited in the past by tribal members. The WYARNG continues to offer tribal members the opportunity to visit the curation facility.

Through State of Wyoming interagency cooperative agreements, the survey section of the Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist has served for 20 years as the WYARNG’s principle contractor for archaeological inventory projects at Camp Guernsey. This has resulted in a smooth, seamless process for curating archaeological materials during each field season. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act inventories are complete, and no human remains or funerary objects were identified in the Camp Guernsey archaeological collections.

Cultural Resources Awareness and Education

Camp Guernsey CRM staff encourages education, communication and public awareness in several ways. Pocket-sized cards outline the types of cultural resources found at Camp Guernsey, the importance of protecting Camp Guernsey’s heritage and how users of the Camp can preserve its cultural sites. These cards are distributed to WYARNG personnel, troops training at the facility and the general public. A separate handout explaining proper procedures for protecting inadvertent discoveries is also available. It is provided to project managers, construction contractors and troop labor crews.

A video produced in 2007 by the WYARNG through a contract with the Oglala Lakota Tribal College TV Production Program is now an important part of the management strategy showing awareness of the importance of protecting cultural resources at Camp Guernsey. One segment of the video shows representatives from the Oglala Sioux and Eastern Shoshone Tribes describing how cultural sites are important to the tribes. Environmental staff includes the video in safety briefs provided to military units training at Camp Guernsey. Members of the 2-30 Mountain Infantry Battalion from Fort Polk, La., informed Camp Guernsey staff the video is useful to their cultural training for Afghanistan missions.



Camp Guernsey hosted interagency firefighting training events in 2008 and 2009, with more than 300 attendees from agencies across the state and region at each event. The CRM staff presented training briefs to bring awareness of cultural resource preservation issues to state foresters, fire incident commanders and others involved in fighting wildfires.

Community Relations

Several key communities surrounding Camp Guernsey gain both monetary and cultural benefits from their association with Camp Guernsey and its staff. Goshen County reaps an economic benefit of more than \$5.1 million from the National Guard, with approximately 90 Guard members and civilian personnel living in its communities. Platte County realizes more than \$7.2 million in economic impact and has approximately 123 Guard members and Camp Guernsey employees calling the county home.



With the proximity to Fort Laramie National Historic Site (approximately 15 miles), the WYARNG is very sensitive to the events that took place in conjunction with the Fort Laramie Treaties of the mid-1800s. A concerted effort is made to ensure park rangers are invited to WYARNG Native American consultations at Camp Guernsey, and likewise, CRM and tribal representatives have been invited to visit Fort Laramie.

The WYARNG continues to partner with the town of Guernsey and the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources in public interpretation

“Wyoming ARNG takes its responsibility as stewards of their land very seriously, respecting the history and traditions of the Native American tribes and settlers who lived there before, and protecting that heritage for future occupants.”

- Sarah Killinger, Liaison to the Army,
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

and educational signs at the Guernsey Oregon Trail Ruts site. The public visitation to this well-known location contributes to the local economy.

The WYARNG cultural resources manager is a member of the Wyoming Archaeology Awareness Month Committee established by the SHPO. Camp Guernsey distributes archaeology posters and participates in other annual Archaeology Month events.

Environmental Enhancement

A number of projects have assisted cultural resource sustainment, including signage near significant cultural sites notifying users which types of military training activities are permissible and the placement of vegetation near a rock cliff with historic and prehistoric rock carvings. The vegetation provides a natural barrier and serves to protect the important cultural site.



The WYARNG C&FMO has accomplished a number of rehabilitation projects on the Camp Guernsey cantonment. Nearly every building contained asbestos floor tile, pipe wrap and plaster laced with asbestos fiber. Environmental staff at Camp Guernsey, certified in asbestos inspection, coordinates with CRM staff to ensure historic buildings are not adversely affected by remediation efforts.

Mission Enhancement

All CRM activities are coordinated with Camp Guernsey command staff to better support the goals of sustainable training. All lands have been or are in the process of being surveyed for cultural resources. By identifying the resources Camp Guernsey has well in advance, the CRM office helps military planners and project managers select project



locations and footprints avoiding resource issues. In this way, the CRM program directly contributes to ensuring training on Camp Guernsey is not threatened or interrupted. A WYARNG Intranet Web site contains Camp Guernsey cultural resource management plans, SOPs, design guidelines and preservation briefs for historic buildings, program announcements and more. This management strategy helps guarantee any WYARNG member can readily access cultural resource information.

The CRM office is firmly committed to sharing its lessons learned and management approach at Camp Guernsey throughout the military services and across agencies. The successful DoD Legacy project is among the most visible of these efforts. In the past CRM personnel have presented specific Camp Guernsey management strategies at the National Guard Bureau's National Environmental Workshops, the DoD Sustaining Military Readiness conference, regional historic preservation conferences and the Society for American Archaeology national conference.

Cultural Resources Compliance

External coordination helps Camp Guernsey maintain cultural resources compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 36 CFR 800 regulations and other federal laws and executive orders. The cultural resources manager is a former Wyoming SHPO employee, who provides effective insight into interagency coordination. Because of the WYARNG's positive reputation for stewardship, the SHPO is more of a partner in CRM than a regulatory oversight agency. Periodic meetings and field visits keep the SHPO aware of upcoming projects or issues as they arise. A SHPO staff member regularly attends Native American tribal consultation events at Camp Guernsey.

The foresight in the completion of cultural resource surveys conducted under Section 110 of the NHPA has allowed numerous construction and training projects to occur without mitigation efforts. In



Camp Guernsey is a preferred major training area for deploying combat units due to its similar landscape found in Afghanistan. Here, the WYARNG's 115th Fire Brigade has established a logistical supply area in the draw during an annual training period in June 2008.



2009, development began on a draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) with the SHPO to formalize the Camp Guernsey Cantonment Historic Properties Management Plan and Facilities Excellence Plan. The PA will serve to streamline the Section 106 process for federal undertakings in the historic district by identifying projects about which the WYARNG does not have to consult with the SHPO on a project-by-project basis.

Between 2008 and 2009, the WYARNG received \$815,000 from state and federal sources for cultural resource compliance. The CRM program allocated approximately 60 percent of these resources for inventory and site evaluations, while the remainder was used to assist in Native American tribal consultation and monitoring of significant cultural sites during construction.

CONCLUSION

As evidenced by its numerous accomplishments and achievements, Camp Guernsey's CRM staff overwhelmingly demonstrates dedication to balancing the installation's mission with the study and preservation of the area's cultural resources. Stewardship of the installation's cultural resources is critical to mission readiness, and the CRM staff works tirelessly to ensure compliance, Soldier training and the abundant cultural sites on Camp Guernsey lands remain a top priority.