



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

September 2007

Historical Happenings

Notes on Cultural Resource Management in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Historical Happenings provides information on the USFWS Cultural Resources Management program. Information comes from sources such as the Regional Historic Preservation Officers, websites, new sources, as well as other cultural resource management professionals.

Issues are also available on the USFWS Cultural Resources website <http://historicpreservation.fws.gov>. Submissions are encouraged and can be made via email. Please contact Eugene Marino at Eugene_Marino@fws.gov for submission guidelines.

FWS Regional News:

Washington Office—The 2007 Preserve America grants applications are available. Applications will be available from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation website (http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Browse_All_Programs&CONTENTID=6417&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm) and on the FWS Cultural Resources website (www.historicpreservation.fws.gov). Applications can be submitted through mid-November 2007. For more information contact Eugene Marino.

Washington Office—The 2007 Cultural Resource training at NCTC was well attended with good feedback. Participants were exposed to detailed information on the FWS Cultural Resource program and its responsibilities for NHPA compliance, management of Museum Collections, and Tribal consultations for cultural resource issues.

Region 1—The Corn Creek Railroad Tie Cabin

One of the unique historic buildings within the roughly 800 acres of the Corn Creek Dunes National Register Archaeological District on the Desert National Wildlife Refuge is a 15'x 26' cabin made of railroad ties. The tracks for the Las Vegas & Tonopah Railroad (LV&TRR) (1905-1918) were only two miles from the Corn Creek Ranch (now the Corn Creek Field Station). The LV&TRR ceased operations in 1919 and the tracks were torn up and stacked at regular locations along the old railroad bed. The Corn Creek Ranch owners used the discarded ties to build this cabin as well as for other buildings, fences, and a myriad of other uses.

Unlike a log cabin, the railroad ties are stacked rather than notched at the corners and spikes secure the ties together. The building was originally used as a residential cabin and a 1936 photograph depicts it with an attached carport also built of ties. The cabin has been used by the FWS for storage since it purchased the ranch in 1939.



The Railroad Tie Cabin in 1936

The use of this unique construction material represents a vernacular architectural style directly associated with Nevada's historic development and reflects the brief period when railroad speculation and construction was following the booming mineral discoveries in Southern Nevada. Using railroad ties was a practical solution for building materials in a desert environment.

A Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act grant is funding the restoration of this unique building on the refuge. The interior was full of a Big Horn Sheep Skull collection that became a haven for rodents.

Transferring skulls, removing the celotex wallboards and sanitizing the cabin was the first fun step.



In process of cleaning out the cabin in January 2007

Exterior repairs have included the removal of a later wood shingle roof, replacement of deteriorated RR-ties (along the foundation), leveling and improving the foundation-footing by adding additional footing stones, and replacing the eaves and original corrugated metal roof. Interior repairs will include repairing broken window panes, doors and the tongue and groove flooring that rested on railroad ties.



Replacing foundation ties



Volunteers mucking out washed-in silt (woke up 1 snake)

The interior will be furnished with materials to provide the public with a view of the cabin's function as a residence when it is completed this Fall. Removing slope wash soil and constructing a railroad tie retaining wall around the back sides to hold the silt back will also occur. The cabin will be one of the focused stops along a formal visitor trail to be built soon.



The cabin exterior is completed; the interior and the landscaping will be completed in the Fall of 2007

Region 7—Search for Japanese MIAs on Attu Island.

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) sent a small team of Japanese and U.S. specialists to Attu Island, Alaska, in search of information which may lead them to remains of missing Japanese soldiers.

With support from the Department of Defense, the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the team of five Japanese and three Americans arrived for a four day mission. The team is investigating potential loss or burial sites where the remains of Japanese soldiers may be found. The team's findings will be evaluated by the U.S. and Japanese governments to determine if follow-on excavations are called for.

Primary airlift for the team was provided by the U.S. Coast Guard on a regularly-scheduled C-130 airlift mission from Kodiak to Attu Island. While visiting the island, the team is being housed at the long range navigation station where some Coast Guardsmen have volunteered to assist in the investigations. Attu Island is under the management and protection of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which administers the Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge. At the end of Alaska's Aleutian island chain, Attu is the westernmost point of land of the United States.

In June 1942, a unit of the Japanese Army occupied Attu, capturing and imprisoning many of its inhabitants. U.S. forces began action to recapture the small island in May 1943, where fierce hand-to-hand battles led to about 540 American and 2,300 Japanese deaths. It was the site of the only land battle in WWII in North America.

Shortly after the war, 235 sets of Japanese remains were recovered on Attu by U.S. forces and reburied at Ft. Richardson, near Anchorage, Alaska. The Japanese later disinterred those remains, cremated them as part of a religious ceremony and reburied them at the same location.

Region 7—Joint US Fish and Wildlife Service and Air Force Archaeology and Outreach on Shemya Island.

Shemya Island, 1400 miles west of Anchorage is near the western tip of the Aleutian Island Chain. In 1913 the entire archipelago was set aside and the Aleutian Islands Reservation was created by Presidential Executive Order in 1913 to protect sea mammals and seabirds. In 1980 the Aleutian Islands Reservation was combined with several other island refuges and renamed the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife refuge. During World War II the Imperial Japanese Army invaded and occupied Attu Island, west of Shemya, and Kiska to the east. As part of the offensive to retake Attu and shift the war to the Japanese homeland, US troops landed on Shemya and built runways to support heavy bombers. Since then the island has been an Air Force base

monitoring the nuclear testing programs of the former Soviet Union. In 2000 primary management of Shemya shifted to the Department of Defense but the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service retains underlying management responsibilities and the island is still part of the Alaska Maritime NWR. The island hosts a small population of contractors who run the radars, and maintain the support facilities for the Air Force. Depending on construction schedules there are about 200 people on the island.

Since 1989 FWS archaeologist Debra Corbett has been conducting research on Shemya. After 1994 the research, largely funded by the National Science Foundation with support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the French Polar Research Institute, grew into a multidisciplinary paleo-biological effort, leading to the reconstruction of the ancient environment as well as the human history of the island. The island is a far from ideal research target. World War II and Cold War construction has profoundly altered the island and every archaeological site has been severely damaged. Despite this the island has a few advantages for research. In contrast to the rest of the Aleutian Islands, the runway and modern infrastructure on Shemya make expedition logistics relatively easy. Second, the small size of the island allowed researchers to examine every known site and develop a picture of the social and economic history of the entire island. The NSF funded project ended in 2003 but the next year construction on Shemya located a prehistoric midden in the interior of the island and prompted a completely new look at the island.

In order to evaluate the site, Air Force archaeologist Karlene Leeper contracted with the Service for archaeological assistance. In 2005 a FWS crew of volunteers and student interns traveled to Shemya and excavated the site. Unfortunately it now appears that the deposit is fill; likely obtained from sites on the south side of the island. Our presence on the island attracted a lot of attention and we fielded a number of questions, mainly in the dining hall. Station Manager Wayne White suggested we give a presentation and ultimately we presented slide shows on the World War II bombing of Unalaska/Dutch Harbor by the Japanese, Aleut kayak technology, and the prehistory of the western Aleutians. Several people asked that we prepare exhibits for the several display cabinets in the main building. We promised a display for the next summer but they wanted one immediately. We took pictures of our excavations and then set up trays of screen samples showing the piles of bird, fish and mammal bones to be found in Aleut middens. A pile of basalt flakes and some hammerstones demonstrated the most common artifact types. We tried to emphasize the information we were recovering and downplayed finds of interesting artifacts. The display also had a panel discussing penalties for disturbing archaeological sites.

Other Agency News

NPS—Historic Preservation Grants Awarded by the National Park Service to American Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations

Washington, D.C. --- The National Park Service (NPS) recently announced the award of \$678,300 to 18 American Indian Tribes to support the protection of America's native cultures. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) authorizes grant assistance to American Indian Tribes, Alaskan Native Groups and Native Hawaiian organizations for cultural preservation.

National NAGPRA—Final Rule adds 43 CFR Part 10.13, Future Applicability. The new regulatory language was issued on Wednesday, March 21, 2007, Vol. 72, No. 54 beginning on page 13184. Specifies requirements for all New discoveries (after the NAGPRA prescribed dates). The rule went into effect on April 20, 2007

October 15-16, 2007: [Review Committee Meeting coming to Phoenix, AZ](#)

ACHP—Historic Preservation in Action—Read the *Case Digest*. The summer *Case Digest* publication is now available. Cases involving the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery, airport expansion involving the Taos Pueblo in Taos, New Mexico, security at Independence Hall, and more showcase the work of Section 106 practitioners and the ACHP in considering important historic resources throughout the United States.

http://www.achp.gov/docs/case_summer07.pdf

EPA—launches a new tribal portal website. The site offers information on EPA's tribal consultation program. See <http://www.epa.gov/tribalportal> for more information.

DoD—recently installed a new senior Tribal Liaison. Mr. David Sanborn will begin his duties on 1 September, 2007. Prior to this position, David served OSD as the DoD Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program (NALEMP) Project Manager. Additionally, Mr. Sanborn has extensive experience in working with Federally-recognized tribes on varied American Indian and Alaska Native issues. As Project Manager at the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, he worked with the Director of Public Programs in the development and planning of numerous project initiatives. These projects involved considerable consultation and coordination with Native American leaders in academia, tribal governments, policy advocacy, and other Cultural institutions. He also served as Project Coordinator for the National Native Languages Archive

Repository Project and the Seminars and Symposia Program.

Mr. Sanborn's contact information is David.Sanborn@osd.mil, 703 604 1926.

Legislative News

House Passes Energy Security Bill with Transportation Enhancements Program Protections

The House passed a revamped energy security bill (HR 3221) on August 4th which included a provision that would prevent states from making disproportional cuts to transportation enhancement funding in the event of a Federal rescission. This has been an issue in recent years as several states have reacted to rescissions by disproportionately cutting or eliminating transportation enhancements funding. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee chairman James Oberstar (D-MN) authored the enhancements protection language, which was included in an earlier incarnation of the energy security bill (HR 2701) approved back in June by the House Transportation Committee.

Training, Upcoming Events, Education, and Volunteers and Friends News

USFS—The Ouachita National Forest is once again partnering with Archeological Resource Investigations (ARI) to offer the 5-day advanced ARPA damage assessment class.

Ft. Smith, Arkansas October 22-26, 2007. Target audience is federal, tribal, state and local government agencies and federal, tribal, state and county prosecuting attorneys, contractors and anyone that has an interest and/or deals with ARPA.

Tuition is approx. \$750.00. Location will be in Ft. Smith, AR at the Holiday Inn City Center-Rogers Avenue. 1-800-465-4329

More information can be found at www.arinvestigations.net

Registration deadline for the class is September 21, 2007

Healthy Trail Partnerships –Healthy Trail Resources” the 11th Conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails

**September 7-11, 2007
Duluth, Minnesota**

“Healthy Trail Partnerships – Healthy Trail Resources” reflects how critical it is to keep our partnerships healthy, vibrant, respectful, and strong to enable us to successfully work together to keep our trail resources – natural, cultural, and human—healthy and well preserved. This theme will focus presentations and workshops on attitudes, methods, and approaches to successfully engage diverse communities and people of all ages in the joyful and healthful activity of sustaining the national scenic and historic trails and the resources that make them special places.

Read all about it here

http://www.nationaltrailpartnership.org/07_conf.asp

The next historic preservation conference for the National Trust for Historic preservation will be held the week of October 1st in St. Paul Minnesota. FWS has been invited to a panel discussion of cultural resource outreach activities along trails, roads, and byways.

Requests for Information