



# U.S. ARMY GARRISON FORT WAINWRIGHT QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES

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This is a quarterly update on United States Army Garrison Fort Wainwright activities and issues of interest to federally recognized tribes in Alaska.

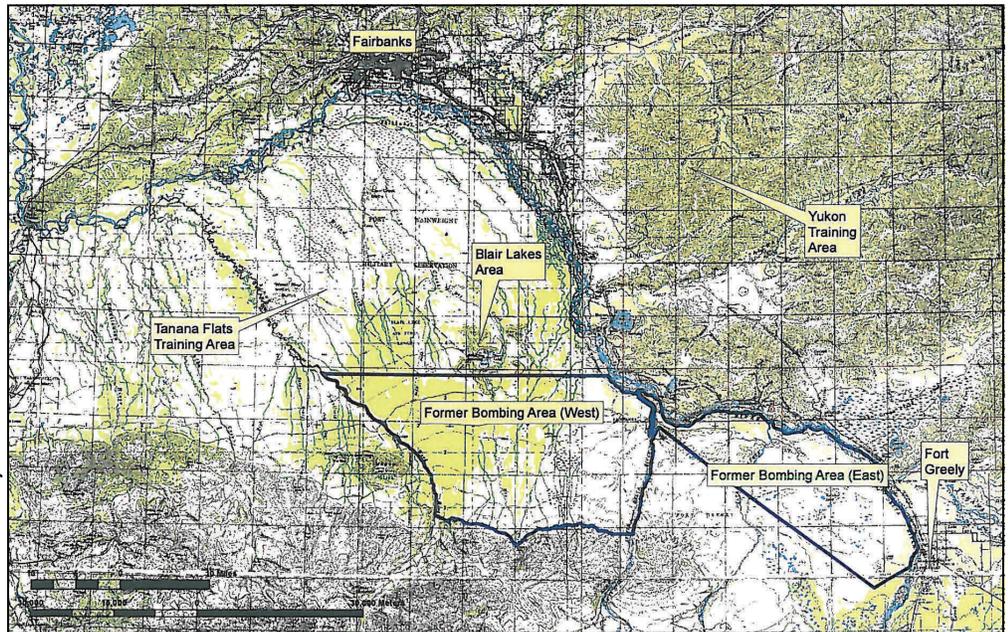
## USAG FWA Seeks Input from Land Users

In mid-December, local tribes received a letter and survey from USAG FWA requesting information from land users about observations they may have of past military activity on lands between Tanana Flats Training Area and Donnelly Training Area near Delta Junction. Between 1942 and 1973, the Army used this land as a bombing range, but the land is now primarily owned by the State of Alaska.

This area is now being addressed by the Department of Defense's (DoD) Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) for investigation. An important component of that investigation includes gathering information from individuals who may access the area. Land users who have used that area for recreation, hunting, or transport may have observed debris, craters, or other evidence of military use.

The DoD established the MMRP under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program to address munitions response to sites where unexploded ordnance, discarded military munitions, and munitions and explosives of concern may present a potential hazard to human health or the environment.

The map (above right) shows the areas under investigation. If you have any observations regarding this area and objects or ground disturbance on the land, please contact USAG FWA and share your information. Input from land users will help expedite a thorough process to address these concerns. Please contact the USAG FWA Native Liaison, Elizabeth Cook at [elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil) or 907-361-3002.



## Army Participates in Tribal-Military Leader Meeting

Alaska Native leaders from across the state met with the top military leaders in Alaska February 10 in Anchorage to hear the current state of the military in Alaska and to discuss issues of concern to the Native community. This was the seventh Tribal-Military Leader Meeting, an Alaskan Command-sponsored event that brings this group together for a day of formal presentations, lunch, tours of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson facilities, and a closing reception with entertainment.

From U.S. Army Alaska, the commanding general's Chief of Staff Colonel Tom Roth presented information about the Army's current state and future plans, its environmental clean-up actions, and current contracts.



## Understanding How Federal and State Laws Protect Cultural Resources

contributed by Julie Esdale, USAG FWA Archaeologist

Treasure hunting has become increasingly glamorized in the last few years in light of television programs such as *American Digger* and *Nazi War Diggers*. These shows go beyond examining small collections of arrow heads collected in childhood and show targeted destruction of historic sites to collect and sell artifacts for profit. Archaeologists call unauthorized excavation of archaeological and historic sites “looting.” Federal agencies report approximately 1,000 looting events every year in the US, and only 14% of cases are ever solved. In Alaska, ancient burials, historic cemeteries, and historic ship and aircraft wrecks are the most commonly targeted types of sites.

It is illegal to vandalize archaeological and historical sites on federal and state owned land. There are several laws that protect resources such as archaeological sites or historic buildings or cemeteries that apply depending on land ownership. On federally-managed lands such as Fort Wainwright, other Army-managed land, BLM-managed lands, and National Parks, sites are protected by three main federal laws: the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990.

The NHPA requires federal land managers to consider the effects of their projects on cultural resources. It requires them to identify where these resources are and to develop a plan to avoid sites or mitigate the effects of an activity on those sites. This law allows the Army and other agencies to fund research and data collection on sites located on their lands.

ARPA was designed to protect cultural sites on federal lands by requiring archaeologists to go through a permitting process and by providing criminal and civil penalties for the intentional destruction or looting of sites.

NAGPRA makes it a criminal offence to buy and sell Native American human remains and burial objects.

Alaska State law AS 41.35.200 makes it a criminal offense to excavate or vandalize any historic or archaeological resource on state land without a permit. Furthermore, it is illegal to possess, buy, transport, or sell artifacts and historic objects acquired in violation of this law. The Alaska criminal code provides protection for sites on private lands through trespassing.

It is unethical to dig up historical and archaeological sites. There are many costs to site looting, vandalism, and buying and selling of artifacts and historic objects, regardless of land status—sites sacred to Native Americans can be desecrated, important parts of our collective history and heritage can be lost, further destruction can be promoted, and tax payer funds are spent to assess and repair damage.

And excavating a site destroys it forever. When archaeologists excavate a site, they take care to preserve information so that a significant amount of the past is recorded and so that future scientific techniques may be able to recover more data as those techniques are developed. Archaeologists record information about the position and relationship of artifacts at a site in order to decipher the age of the artifacts, the activities of past people, and other clues from the soils and sediments about the environment people were living in. Archaeologists are required to carefully describe their work and disseminate the information to the archaeological community and to the public. In order to excavate a site, an archaeologist needs to meet high professional standards defined in federal law and apply for a permit through the land manager that lays out the excavation methods and ways to demonstrate the results of their search.

The penalties for looting and trading in illegal collections are severe. Under ARPA, first time offenders can be fined up to \$20,000 and imprisoned up to one year. Under NAGPRA, penalties for a first offense may result in a fine up to \$100,000 and a year in prison. A conviction of violating AS 41.35.200 is guilty of a class A misdemeanor and can be subject to a \$100,000 penalty of for each violation.

Protecting our heritage is everyone’s job. Educational efforts help protect cultural resources. Many agencies have engaged in activities to educate communities about their local cultural resources. For example, the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak has a partnership with families living and working near archaeological sites to conduct frequent evaluations of site conditions to protect sites from natural erosion or looting. The Fort Wainwright Cultural Resources Management program creates educational programming and gives presentations to the public and the Fort Wainwright community. All new Soldiers are informed about archaeological sites on training lands and ways to reduce their footprint when engaged in training activities.

If you see intentional damage to an archaeological site, contact officials immediately. Contact the land owner or the police authorities for that area. For more information about cultural resource laws, visit [www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/laws/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/laws/index.htm), [dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/](http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/), [alutiiqmuseum.org/education/programs/208-community-archaeology.html](http://alutiiqmuseum.org/education/programs/208-community-archaeology.html), and [www.wainwright.army.mil/env/CR.html](http://www.wainwright.army.mil/env/CR.html).



### Staff Receives Award from High-Level Commander

As part of his tour of garrisons in the Pacific region, the commander of Installation Management Command, Lieutenant General David Halverson visited Fort Wainwright on December 5 to meet with leadership and officially present some awards to garrison leadership and staff. Installation Management Command (IMCOM) is the Army command that is responsible for the consolidated, standardized management of all installations and their support to Soldiers and their Families. Garrison commanders are the localized command representatives of IMCOM.

Those receiving awards from Lieutenant General Halverson included the staff of the cultural resources management section for their receipt of the 2014 Department of Defense Environmental Award in the category of Cultural Resources Management, Installation. This award recognizes Fort Wainwright's efforts to promote cultural resources including archaeological sites and historic built environments and cultural landscapes.

### Fort Wainwright Youth Learn NYO Games

Students living on Fort Wainwright enjoyed learning about and practicing Native Youth Olympic (NYO) sports during their spring break this year. The week-long event was held at the Youth Center from March 16 to 20. Teen and pre-teen boys and girls learned about and competed in the stick pull, leg wrestling, one-foot high kick, Alaskan high kick, seal hop, and wrist carry. They practiced and competed in elimination rounds for 3 days with finals on the fourth day. The winners received medals and all participants discovered how hard these events were and the strength that was needed.

The organizer, USAG FWA Academic Program Specialist Molly Moore-Dibb, was the perfect instructor, having been a NYO athlete herself during her youth. Molly grew up in village Alaska. She recalled her teen experience as a competitor in the scissors high-kick (which she says she was not very good at and was really really hard). She was happy, however, to be able to spend a week introducing Fort Wainwright youth to the NYO events.



### Fort Wainwright Celebrates Earth Day

The Fort Wainwright community observed Earth Day on April 22. Students from Arctic Light and Ladd Elementary Schools, youth from the Fort Wainwright Child Development Center, and home school students enjoyed activities and learning experiences at different stations around the Physical Fitness Center.

DPW Environmental Division staff taught students about migratory birds, composting with worms, how Inupiat people built *inuksuit* (extra, stacked-stone 'people') to help steer caribou for hunting, and how storm water and other run-off can effect water resources.

## Acquire Excess Governmental Property Through GSAXcess

When desks and trucks and snow shoes and other sundry items are rotated out of military use, they go to the Department of Logistics Agency's Disposition Services Facility (formerly the DRMO). Items are inventoried and demilitarized (when appropriate) and grouped for gift or sale to other governmental agencies, eligible non-profits, and (finally) the public through the General Services Administration (GSA) system.

Federally-recognized tribes, as recognized governmental entities, fit into this structure and are eligible to acquire equipment at free or reduced rates. There are a few hoops to jump through — tribes must get an approval letter from the BIA declaring them a recognized tribe and materials must be applied for via the GSAXcess system.

Multiple tribes in the Interior and the Tanana Chiefs Conference regularly use this system to acquire sorely needed materials for tribal governments. If you would like to investigate this system to see if there are things your village could use, start by contacting Norma Jean Dunne, the BIA Regional Awarding Official at 907-271-4170 or look at the inventory of items available at [gsaxcess.gov](http://gsaxcess.gov).

For detailed instructions on how to guide your tribe through the process, contact the USAG FWA Native Liaison Elizabeth Cook for a guidance document at [elizabeth.a.cook80.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:elizabeth.a.cook80.ctr@mail.mil) or 907-261-6323.

## USAG FWA Native Liaison Changes Jobs

In late February, the USAG FWA Native Liaison, Elizabeth Cook, was hired as the garrison's Cultural Resources Manager. She will continue to be the Native Liaison, managing the government-to-government relationships between the Army and federally-recognized Alaska Native tribal governments, but will also be leading the USAG FWA Cultural Resources section of that stewards the historic buildings and archaeological sites on Army-managed lands on behalf of the garrison commander.

Her new email address is [elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil) and her new phone numbers is 907-361-3002.

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\*OFFICIAL BUSINESS\*

This newsletter is sent to tribal leaders and second contacts of tribal government choice (tribal administrators, environmental directors, etc.) quarterly. Please contact us with updated information as your tribal government has elections, changes personnel, or changes address information. Changes can be sent to [elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil).