



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

Fall 2015, Vol. 13/No. 3

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

Command Changes for the Army in Alaska

Major General Bryan Owens assumed command of U.S. Army Alaska on July 10, 2015 following his assignment at European Command as Director, J3.

Prior to that, Major General Owens served as the DCOS OPS, HQ, Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, the DCG OPS (South), 25 ID in Iraq, Commandant of the United States Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. He has also served as the Chief of Staff for the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant through the ROTC Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he graduated in 1983. He holds a Master of Science degree from Central Michigan University and a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the United States Army War College.

Major General Owens has commanded Airborne Infantry units at the company, battalion, and brigade levels. His service as a staff officer includes tours as a battalion XO and a S3/G-3 at battalion, brigade, and division levels along with joint tours in USEUCOM, USPACOM and The Joint Staff in the Pentagon. Other tours include those in West Berlin, Germany; the Republic of Korea; Saudi Arabia/Iraq; Hawaii; Kosovo; and numerous stateside posts.

Duty in Operations JUST CAUSE, DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, JOINT GUARDIAN, AMERICAN ASSIST (New Orleans post hurricanes Katrina and Rita), and IRAQI FREEDOM three times have given Major General Owens experience in joint and combined operations and warfighting.

Major General Owens' awards and decorations include the Combat Infantryman Badge (2nd award), Expert Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, Master Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Legion of Merit (1 OLC), Bronze Star Medal (3 OLC), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medals (2 OLC), and the Joint Service Commendation Medal (1 OLC).



At Fort Wainwright, Colonel Sean C. Williams assumed command from Colonel Sidney 'Cape' Zemp on July 7, 2015.

Colonel Williams graduated the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1995, earning a Bachelor of Science degree with a focus on Life Sciences and being commissioned a Second Lieutenant. He holds Masters degrees in Security Studies, Theater Operations, Strategic Operations, and Business Administration.

Colonel Williams served in Germany with deployment to Bosnia during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. He served as Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, Special Operations Command Europe and participated in Operation NOBLE ANVIL.

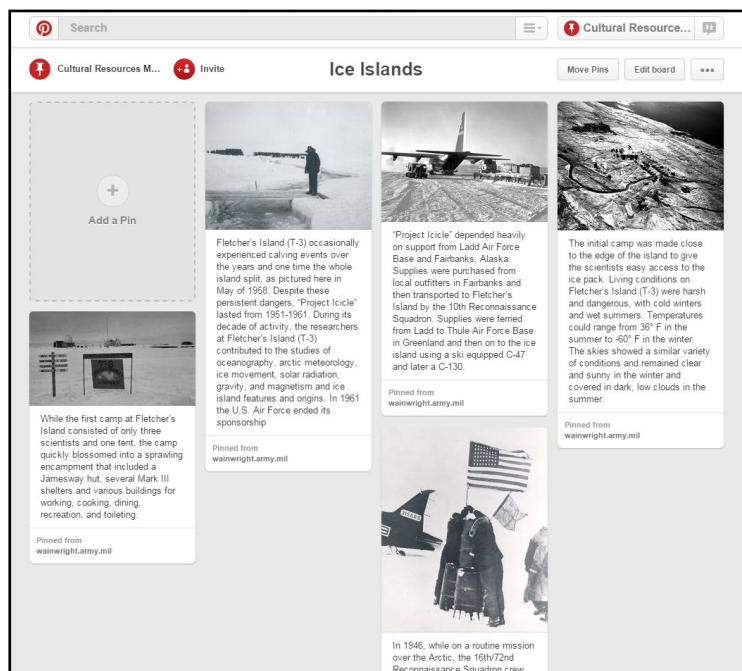
Colonel Williams completed Special Forces training in 2001. He deployed in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Arabian Peninsula.

He commanded the Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne to lead advisor teams with the Afghan Uniformed Police in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. He has served as Deputy Executive Officer to the 38th Chief of Staff of the United States Army, and most recently completed the Senior Service College through the Advanced Strategic Leadership Studies Program at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

His decorations include the Bronze Star (5 OLC), Meritorious Service Medal (3 OLC), Joint Service Commendation Medal (1 OLC), Army Commendation Medal (2 OLC), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Services Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (1 star), Iraq Campaign Medal (5 stars), and NATO Campaign Ribbon with Service Star.

Colonel Williams and his wife Erin have two children, Brady, 8, and Maggie, 5. The Williams are originally from Pennsylvania. This is their first assignment to Alaska.

Cultural Resources Shares History through Pinterest



The USAG FWA Cultural Resources Management section launched a Pinterest page this summer to share more of Fort Wainwright's fascinating history with others globally. Each board is focused on a topic that relates to some aspect of the military, architecture, Cold War, or World War II history.

Staff member Amber Phillippe is creating the boards and states, "Pinterest provides a great platform for us to increase our public outreach. Every couple of weeks we can upload a selection of photos, with accompanying information, from the cultural resources collection and potentially reach thousands of people through the sharing of information. Pinterest also allows us to link back to our own website and to direct people to more complete information than the 500 Pinterest allows."

See the Fort Wainwright boards at www.pinterest.com/fwacultural. The USAG FWA Environmental Division website also contains all the cultural resources management publications and other information. It can be found at <http://www.wainwright.army.mil/env/default.html>

Ladd's First Mission: Cold Weather Testing

Cold weather equipment testing has always been a military mission in Alaska. Known as the "Cold Nose Boys," Cold Weather Test Detachment personnel tested clothing, supplies, and equipment. The diverse Alaskan landscape provided the ideal proving ground for a wide variety of planes, gear, and food rations.

"Moose" Holland (right) performs a ration test, 1948

USAG FWA Launches Project in Northway this Summer

This summer citizens of Northway Village and personnel from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game — in partnership with USAG FWA—began fieldwork to collect data toward the Northway Community Environmental Survey. The project, hatched from the government-to-government relationship between the Army and Northway, is designed to allow subject matter experts to assist the tribe with understanding what environmental clean-up projects have occurred in the community, what the outcomes of those projects were, and what else needs to be done. Additional sampling of some subsistence resources, including muskrats, Indian potatoes, and whitefish will assess whether those resources have been impacted by past activities in the area. These resources were determined, through conversations with an environmental toxicologist, to be the best representative and most heavily utilized resources that would be available for testing and indicators of potential environmental issues. Sampling began this summer and will continue this fall.

USAG FWA is pleased to be able to provide support to this project and work with one of its consulting tribes on this important project.



Artificial Structures Built for Cliff Swallows

Contributed by Aleya Brinkman, USAG FWA Wildlife Biologist

Three structures like this have been constructed on Fort Wainwright as a project to see if cliff swallows will use alternative nesting structures.

Every spring thousands of cliff swallows nest on Fort Wainwright building roofs, lights, overhangs, loading bays, and windows. The birds' excrement can quickly build to nuisance levels and mites from their



nests can infest nearby areas. Over the years people have become wise to preventing nesting by installing vinyl flashing and updating features such as smooth siding, reducing window insets, changing the shape of outdoor lights, and paving gravel parking lots – which the birds use for a mud source when it rains. However, cliff swallows nesting on Fort Wainwright's older buildings remains troublesome each summer.

Another serious problem with cliff swallows results when people deliberately knock down nests. The birds and their active nests are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which means that knocking down nests with eggs and nestlings could be considered a felony violation. Every year there are several reports of cliff swallow nests being knocked down on Fort Wainwright. As a result, the Environmental Division is investigating ways to mitigate violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and reduce negative human-wildlife interactions on Post.

During summer 2015, Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District installed the artificial nesting habitats that will be monitored annually to determine if they are being used and can actually draw swallows away from areas of repeat violations. The results from this study will be used to guide future swallow management on Fort Wainwright.

While cliff swallows are mostly considered an annoyance on Post, it is important to remember that they do provide one important and overlooked service – mosquito control! One cliff swallow can eat up to 1000 mosquitoes per day. In interior Alaska mosquitoes can carry tularemia, a severe infectious disease that causes skin ulcers, swollen glands, fever, and can be fatal to humans and animals. So remember that while their droppings can be unsightly, their pest-reduction services are invaluable.

Swallows Get Nesting Boxes, Too!

Contributed by Garrett Savory, USAG FWA Wildlife Biologist

On a cool and drizzly September 17, more than 60 volunteers and employees from USAG FWA, U.S. Army Alaska, Lend Lease, Mainscape, and Colorado State University teamed up to install 261 swallow nest boxes on Fort Wainwright Main Post and training areas.

The nest boxes will encourage both Tree and Violet-green swallows, which naturally nest in cavities of dead trees, to raise their young on Fort Wainwright lands. Although these swallows are abundant, their global populations have declined since the 1960s. Decreases in insect populations, i.e. swallow food, in parts of their range and loss of nesting habitat are likely responsible for the decline. The nest boxes will increase and replicate their nesting habitat. This fits Fort Wainwright's mission of being proactive in conserving natural resources, including songbirds like swallows.

Tree and Violet-green swallows migrate from their wintering grounds in the southern United States, Central America, and the Caribbean to breed in northerly locations, including Alaska. Once the swallows arrive in Alaska in May, they begin nest construction in cavities be it a tree or nest box. They typically lay four to six eggs which hatch after a two-week incubation period. Once chicks have hatched, both parents feed their young several thousand insects per day. The chicks increase their weight from 2 grams at hatching to 20 grams by the time they leave the nest in three weeks. Both adult and juvenile swallows continue to feed on insects in the area until they migrate south in August for the winter.

The nest boxes were placed near water bodies and clearings, places with plenty of insects, but few large dead trees with cavities. The wooden nest boxes were attached to T-posts and driven into soil, five feet off the ground.

The Environmental Division, with volunteers, will begin monitoring the boxes for swallow use next summer. Boxes will be cleaned out in autumn after migration.



COL Williams helps a volunteer set up a home for swallows.

Introducing Casey Woster, USAG FWA's New Architectural Historian

Casey states, "I was born and raised in Fairbanks, tailored my graduate studies so as to return to Alaska, and am proud to be working and living back in Fairbanks. I began work at Fort Wainwright as a Colorado State University (CSU)/CEMML employee on September 28.

I attended the graduate historic preservation program at Cornell University, completing coursework in 2013. I immediately returned to Alaska and have been involved in a number of architectural preservation projects and archaeological surveys over the following two years. Project work has taken me across Alaska, from Dutch Harbor to Point Hope and out to Kake in the Southeast. In the course of various projects, I have worked closely with different tribal organizations and have had the privilege of recording oral histories in Point Hope and Kake."

Casey joins the cultural resources management staff that includes Elizabeth Cook, cultural resources manager and Native liaison; Julie Esdale, archaeologist on staff since 2011; and the staff's other newest member, landscape historian Amber Phillippe. Although Amber has worked as a seasonal and student employee for CSU/CEMML at Fort Wainwright the last two years, she recently became a part of the permanent staff. She is currently working toward an interdisciplinary PhD based in the Arctic and Northern Studies Departments at UAF. Her dissertation explores the cultural history of alpine glaciers.



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 in personnel, or changes in address information. Changes can be sent to elizabeth.a.cook80.civ@mail.mil.

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