



U. S. ARMY GARRISONS FORT WAINWRIGHT AND FORT RICHARDSON QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES

July 2009, Issue 17

This is a quarterly update on USAG Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson activities and issues of interest to federally recognized tribes in Alaska.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Continues to Develop

excerpted from an article by Public Affairs Office, FRA

Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson Army garrison are two of 26 Department of Defense installations directed by the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) law to merge into 12 joint installations. Joint-basing initiative assigns one service as the lead agency for each joint installation.

For Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), the Air Force was assigned as lead agency. The Army will be a tenant on the future joint installation. After the change, JBER will be commanded by an Air Force colonel with an Army colonel as a deputy.

Leaders at Elmendorf and Fort Richardson have been preparing for the joint base since 2006. JBER will begin initial operational capability in January 2010 and plans to be at full operational capability by October 1, 2010.

The greatest task has been drafting a memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the Army and Air Force. This MOA will define the installation support relationship and how the joint base will operate on a daily basis. As the installations share a common boundary, becoming a joint base will offer the opportunity to provide common installation support functions for all Airmen, Soldiers, and family members.

In April, there was a joint face-to-face meeting with representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of the Army and Department of the Air Force to go over the MOA and hammer out a consensus. This MOA will be signed by each service vice chief in August. The signed MOA will provide the groundwork necessary to begin combining the parts of each post that will create the joint base as a working facility by the January 2010 operational deadline.

As details are passed down to the staff level of the Army regarding how some elements of joint basing will function—which employees will convert from Army employ to Air Force employ, how contracts and G2G relations will be handled differently under Air Force management, etc.—we will do our best to inform you in a timely fashion so that you can plan accordingly.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Meets with Tribal Representatives

On a recent visit to Alaska, Tad Davis — Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) — met with tribes from around Cook Inlet to discuss tribal concerns over Eagle River Flats Impact Area at Fort Richardson.

Native Village of Eklutna hosted the meeting, which was also attended by representatives of Knik Tribe, Chickaloon Native Village and Ninilchik Village.

Current and—proposed—future Army activity at Eagle River Flats was discussed. Many questions were asked about aspects of the upcoming Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that addresses the training area. Mr. Davis was able to gather valuable input from tribal attendees and Fort Richardson environmental staff appreciated the knowledge and concerns tribal members shared. Partnerships for future collaboration on wildlife studies and EIS development were also discussed.

Mr. Davis works with key personnel in the Army, the Department of Defense, and Federal and state agencies in developing and advocating Army policies for sustainability, environment, natural resources, safety, and occupational health programs in accordance with presidential orders, public laws, state and local standards, Department of Defense directives and the Army mission.



Mr. Davis and tribal attendees. L-R: Rosie Choquette, Marc Lamoreaux, Tad Davis, Darrel Williams, Dorothy Cook, and Maria Coleman (not pictured Jolene Waskey and Jessica Dryden)

Haines RAB Meets

Members of the Haines Restoration Advisory Board met for their biannual meeting May 27, 2009, to discuss the Haines Fuel Terminal and related Haines-Fairbanks Pipeline mitigation projects. RAB members, Army environmental personnel, and others were given a report by the remediation contractor North Wind on the current status of related projects, including what monitoring activities were taking place this season and next season. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also reported on the status of related Haines-Fairbanks Pipeline projects.

RAB members were told about the joint basing change that will be finalized October 1, 2010, and how that will effect the management of the project. The North Wind contract will be taken over by the joint base and managed by Gary Fink of the Air Force. Mr. Fink was in attendance to address questions about the post-joint base era of the remediation.

Various topics were discussed by RAB members including the use of various equipment to determine the extent of contamination and issues involving future funding of the clean-up effort.

Archaeological Aide Training is a Success!

The Cultural Resource Management team and the Native Liaison organized and hosted the first *Introduction to Archaeological Fieldwork* class in Delta Junction April 24-26 and May 1-3. The class was an effort to train archaeological aides to assist archaeological technicians during fieldwork at Donnelly Training Area this summer.

The class was held in cooperation with Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. and Tanana Chiefs Conference. The Partners provided the classroom facility and room and board for all those attending from out-of-town. TCC provided travel funds. Patti Picha, director of UAF's Career Services Department, spoke on employability skills.

The class was attended by 21 people, 14 of whom were from the Alaska Native community. Out of the class, nine were offered jobs and will hopefully receive the training they need this year to return to next year's field crews as experienced technicians.

The class was taught by Aaron Robertson, DTA archaeologist. Students learned the basic techniques needed to assist on an archaeological dig, background in Alaskan pre-history, and analysis skills for identifying artifacts.



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Notices

This block is provided as an easy-reference, quarter-to-quarter update of significant NEPA activity being managed by the USAG FWA and FRA NEPA staff.

Aviation Stationing EIS

The 45-day public comment period for the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Stationing and Training of Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska* ended on June 22, 2009. Thank you to all those tribal organizations that participated in the Army's NEPA process. The Army will identify a Preferred Alternative and publish the Final EIS in August 2009. The Army expects to make a final decision on the reorganization and increase of aviation assets in Alaska in September 2009.

Eagle River Flats EIS

The Army will soon publish a Draft EIS analyzing the restoration of year-round indirect live-fire opportunities at Fort Richardson. The Army has spent the previous two years engaged in study and analysis of two potential action alternatives: 1) utilization of the existing Eagle River Flats Impact Area and 2) the construction of an entirely new Impact Area at Fort Richardson. The Army anticipates releasing the Draft EIS in September 2009 followed by a 45-day comment period. Interested tribes will be provided with an opportunity to review the EIS and submit comments at a meeting likely to be held in October 2009. USAG FWA and FRA's Native Liaison will provide specific details to tribes as they become available. The tribes of Eklutna, Knik, Chickaloon, and Tyonek were invited to the initial EIS scoping meetings in August 2007. Comments collected included concerns over potentially harmful runoff from Eagle River Flats entering Cook Inlet; the possibility of locating targets away from areas that are too difficult to clean during remediation efforts; and potential impacts to the salmon restoration project on Moose Creek (i.e., potential impacts to salmon using Eagle Bay and the estuary area). In addition to these tribal topics on concern, the EIS will focus on potential impacts to/from munitions constituents, including white phosphorous, waterfowl, beluga whales, salmon, water quality and noise.

Environmental Stewardship through the Environmental Management System

thanks to Jeff Raun (EMS, FRA) and Dave Fish (EMS, FWA) for this contribution

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a way of doing business that allows the military to track its activities, products and services and account for, minimize, and mitigate impacts from those things on the environment. The Army's daily activities, e.g. small arms range training, drop-zone training, vehicle maintenance, etc., all have the potential to impact the environment. One role of an EMS is to identify and establish programs for dealing with those impacts.

For example, if spills at the motorpool are found to be a problem, the Army installation revisits existing Standard Operating Procedures or creates new ones as part of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to address the issue. Such a plan would include: the **objective**— reduce petroleum, oil, and lubricant spills at the motorpool; a **target**— decrease spills by 90% by FY2012 by implementing a comprehensive Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure training program; **performance indicators**— installation spill reports; and a **responsible party**— Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA) Coordinator on post.

Once in place the effectiveness of this plan would be audited annually to make sure the target is being met and the situation is being rectified. If the target is being missed, then the plan would adjust to continue trying to meet that target.

Although in its early stages, recycling is also part of the EMS way of thinking at FWA and FRA. One big success story in recycling at FWA and FRA is the recycling of brass from shell casings off the small arms ranges. USAG FWA and FRA bought two Safety Certification Units (SCUs) and one mechanical deformer to process small arms range brass (.50-cal and smaller). USAG FRA established a Qualified Recycling Program (QRP) to process the brass and sell it directly to a buyer. Proceeds are returned directly to the installations and can be used for three things: 1) paying for QRP operations; 2) implementing approved pollution prevention initiatives; or 3) supporting the installation's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs.

It is planned to use the revenues from the FRA brass earnings to expand QRP operations to include general scrap metal, aluminum, cardboard, and paper.

Additionally, smaller recycling projects have included the aluminum can recycling operation at FWA and the office paper recycling project at FRA.

Red Flag Reminder

Please be aware that the Air Force will be conducting Red Flag exercises July 24 - August 7 and October 2 - 16.

Many and varied aircraft will be flying out of Elmendorf and Eielson Air Force bases and using established air spaces around the state within these date ranges.

For more information or to register a noise complaint, please call 800-JET-NOISE (538-6647) or 907-552-8153 (3rd Wing public affairs) or 907-377-1088 (354th Fighter Wing public affairs).

Army Educates Incoming Soldiers

Every month at Fort Richardson and Fort Wainwright, the Native Liaison presents Soldier education to the incoming Soldiers at *Newcomer Briefs*. These meetings are hosted by Army Community Service (ACS) departments and are designed to introduce Soldiers and their dependents to their new home in Alaska. Additionally, incoming Soldiers are supplied with the Native Liaison's brochure— *U.S. Army Alaska and the Alaska Native Community*— covering many of the same topics.

The Native Liaison's Newcomers presentation is entitled *Alaska Native Cultural Awareness* and introduces a handful of topics, including:

- Alaskan Native cultural diversity
- Subsistence and importance of the land to Alaska's Native population
- ANCSA
- Corporations vs. federally recognized tribes
- Historical contact between the Native community and the Army
- Tribal concerns (including contamination, debris, noise, access to lands, and Soldier respect for the land and resources)
- Land ownership within the State
- Doing research before using the land
- Learning more about Alaska Native culture

It is hoped that this orientation to the Alaskan cultural landscape will help Soldiers be more sensitive to the diverse cultures they encounter in their new home.

During the orientation, Soldiers are also encouraged to research details of land ownership before going out on trips; be well versed in regulations that govern activities on the land; and understand the values placed on the natural resources by the Alaska Native population. With this education, the garrison strives to decrease cases of potential negligent trespass and make the Soldiers it serves better neighbors to the Native community.

Digital copies of this and past newsletters are available at:
<http://www.usarak.army.mil/dpw/index.cfm?ageinfo=2003>

Section 106 Undertakings

The article is included as a quarter-to-quarter detail of the undertakings being done by the USAG FWA and FRA's Cultural Resource Management team in response to the National Historic Preservation Act's (NHPA) Section 106.

Fort Wainwright jurisdiction lands:

- The draft Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the **Aviation Stationing** undertaking that USAG FWA has developed with the SHPO, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, NPS, Tanana Yukon Historical Society, and Fairbanks/North Star Borough Historic Preservation Commission is currently being reviewed by the Army in preparation for signing by Colonel Jones.
- The summer field work for archaeological sites down range of the **Battle Area Complex (BAX)** at Donnelly Training Area began in early June. A tribal consultation meeting to discuss the analysis, monitoring, and data recovery plan was held on April 20 in Tok. A field trip to the area is being planned for late July/early August.
- **Archaeological surveys** throughout the Fort Wainwright cantonment, Tanana Flats Training Area, and Yukon Training Area are being done. These areas are under consideration for potential projects. Any cultural resource news from these surveys will be reported in upcoming newsletters.

Fort Richardson jurisdiction lands:

- The archaeological survey is complete for the **Baumeister Power Road** upgrades. Section 106 consultation will begin next month.
- The PA for the management of the **Nike Site Summit Historic District** was signed by Colonel Shutt on June 11.

Check out <http://www.usarak.army.mil/conservation/index.htm> for news and documents related to the environmental work going on at FWA, FRA or DTA.

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

We welcome corrected recipient information. Issues are mailed to tribal administrators and tribal leaders.

Please post these newsletters for your tribal and community members to share.

Thank you.