



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

January 2010, Issue 19

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

USARAK Welcomes New Commander — Major General William J. Troy

information courtesy of the Public Affairs Office

On September 11, 2009, Major General William J. Troy assumed command of U.S. Army Alaska.



Major General Troy was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Infantry upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1975.

He is a graduate of the Infantry Officer Basic Course, the Armor Officer Advanced Course, the British Army Staff College, the U.S. Naval War College and the U.S. Army Ranger School. He earned masters degrees in Systems Technology from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School and National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College.

Most recently he served as Vice Director for Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment, J-8, The Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.

MG Troy's awards and decorations include two Legions of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals, the Defense Superior Service Medal, three Meritorious Service Medals, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

MG Troy and his wife, Paula, have been married for 31 years and have two adult sons, Will and Garrett.

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Property News

According to the Memorandum of Agreement between the Air Force and the Army, some outlying properties currently in the Fort Richardson inventory will be transferred.

Tok Fuel Terminal, Sears Creek Station, the Whittier-Anchorage pipeline, the Gulkana Army Site, and the Eklutna Mountain Glacier Site will transfer. Seward Recreation Site will transfer to Fort Wainwright.

Any land holdings left at the Eklutna Dispersal Site will also transfer, although most or all of that property has been reverted to BLM and conveyed to Eklutna, Inc.

USAG FWA and FRA Celebrate National Native American Heritage Month

The garrisons at Forts Richardson and Wainwright observed November as National Native American Heritage Month with respective observances.

For Fort Richardson, an event was planned at the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Attendees were invited to view the exhibits and sample a variety of Native foods.

The Fort Wainwright event included a speaker and dance group. The 9th Army Band played welcoming music and the National Anthem to start the event. Ms. Joy Shockley Huntington of Tanana Chiefs Conference Cultural Programs at the



Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitor Center spoke about Alaska Native culture in general and about being a Koyukon Athabascan woman.



Following the educational and entertaining talk, members of the Pavva Inupiat Dance group performed several songs in the Inupiat and Yupik traditions. All were invited to participate in their final dance after a little instruction.

After the performance, USAG FWA commander Colonel Timothy Jones and USARAK deputy commander Colonel Edward Daly thanked the presenters for coming to Fort Wainwright and sharing their knowledge and skills.



Barbed Wire Removed at Gerstle River Training Area

This fall USAG FWA contracted with the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District (SDSWCD) to remove wire and other debris from Gerstle River Training Area. SDSWCD hired a crew to cut and bail wire, pull fence posts, and remove gates and other fence components in an effort to remove hazards to humans and wildlife utilizing the area.

In total there were 44,334 feet of barbed wire (concertina and straight), 2,812 feet of chicken wire, 1,293 feet of concertina razor wire, 93 fence posts, and assorted gates removed from the property. The wire alone accounted for 6.64 tons of debris being removed.

The project ended for the season in October 23, but should resume again in the spring to remove more materials once funding is secured.

Additionally, the project facilitated the development of new wildlife habitat (see next column).



Wire Removal By-product?

Wildlife Habitat!

As a result of the barbed wire removal project at Gerstle River Training Area, a large amount of brush was removed that had been entwined in the concertina and fence wire.

In order to supplement the habitat of small animal populations that may have been disturbed from the brush removal, natural resource staff constructed eight brush piles for grouse, rabbits, porcupines, and any other small animals that might need cover.

It was noted that grouse had been wintering in the fence lines. The cut brush created edge habitat and the brush piles re-created the required protection for various species.

Creation of such piles for the fostering of wildlife is a common practice in the resource management world. Prescribed methods of construction were used, creating sturdy natural structures of reclaimed, native materials. For more information on the practice of building brush piles, see the following websites:

www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/wabrush.asp
www.besmart.org/hazwaste/resident/leaves/brush_pile.html
extension.umd.edu/publications/pdfs/FS599.pdf

Therese Deardorff Succeeds Gary Larsen as FRA Conservation Chief

If you formerly used Gary Larsen as a contact for Fort Richardson conservation issues (natural resources, cultural resources, or NEPA), he has been succeeded by Therese Deardorff.

Therese is a long-term FRA Environmental employee and can provide you with the same service that Gary did. She can be reached at Gary's old number, 907-384-3074.

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. Contributed by Carrie McEnteer, USAG FWA and FRA NEPA Branch Chief

Aviation Stationing EIS – USAG FWA is pleased to announce that the Record of Decision (ROD) for *Stationing and Training of Increased Aviation Assets within U.S. Army Alaska* was approved on October 13, 2009. The ROD identified the Aviation Task Force as its selected alternative. The final decision makes the temporary stationing of the aviation units (equipment and personnel) in Alaska permanent. In total, growth at Fort Wainwright will encompass approximately 2,000 Soldiers, family members and civilian support personnel. The ROD also finalizes the decision to construct several aviation support facilities at Fort Wainwright over the next five years. USAG FWA would like to thank the Upper Tanana region tribes for their participation in this three-year NEPA process. The final decision ultimately represents the best option to support local integrated Army training while continuing to foster training land sustainability goals.

Resumption of Year-Round Firing Opportunities at Fort Richardson EIS – USAG FRA anticipates releasing this Draft EIS for review in January 2010. Tribes will have 60 days to submit comments, as well as have the opportunity to attend meetings in February / March 2010 to gather information and present comments. USAG FWA and FRA's Native Liaison will provide specific details to tribes as they become available. The Army would also like to extend its appreciation to the Native Village of Eklutna and its Cultural Committee for their input during a review of a preliminary draft of the EIS.

USAG Natural Resource Staff Observes Moose at Gerstle River Training Area

contributed by Elizabeth Neipert, Natural Resources Specialist, Donnelly Training Area

Environmental stewardship is a goal of the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army Garrisons at Forts Wainwright and Richardson (USAG FWA and FRA) achieve this goal through regular communication with stakeholders including local and tribal governments. During a quarterly meeting with the Upper Tanana Inter-tribal Coalition (UTIC) in 2006, there were discussions concerning wildlife anomalies reported by members of Healy Lake Village. Healy Lake is in close proximity to Gerstle River Training Area (GRTA) which is occupied and maintained by USAG FWA. Subsistence resources utilized by Healy Lake residents, such as moose, live near and travel through GRTA and tribal members had concerns of potential exposure to contamination. Once these issues were identified, USAG FWA partnered with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wild Service (USFWS) and initiated goals to identify wildlife anomalies that could be caused by potential contamination. In addition to the participation of other agencies, the expertise and knowledge of Healy Lake Village members was also utilized. This was a key element in the development of USAG FWA's goals to meet the overall objective.

This combined venture is currently in its third season of survey work. So far baseline surveys have been conducted on fish, aquatic insects, birds, and small mammals plus in-depth research has been done on potential contaminants. This past field season saw the initiation of a moose telemetry project in the GRTA and Healy Lake areas. A total of 42 bull moose were collared in the GRTA and Healy Lake vicinity. Hair samples were collected from these moose. An additional 20 cow moose will be collared in the spring. This portion of the project focuses on monitoring the seasonal movement of moose across the landscape over the course of one season and testing hair samples for the presence of perchlorates.

Aside from the telemetry project, U.S. Army Natural Resource personnel wanted to be able to investigate as many moose for abnormalities as possible. John Haddix, Natural Resource Manager for Fort Wainwright, created a motion camera study. The objective of this study was to remotely "capture" moose in pictures to allow for a large sample size. With this in mind, the camera was mounted on a tree facing a popular mineral lick within GRTA. The camera was set up prior to spring break-up and remained active until hunting season. Army personnel maintained the camera and collected the data weekly throughout the study period. The pictures that were collected were individually analyzed. Each moose "capture" was evaluated for visible abnormalities and was categorized by sex and age class as either bull, cow, yearling, calf, or unknown. The number of "capture" events was calculated by counting the number of moose in each picture. The total for the whole study was 11,743 capture events. Within these "captures" there were no obvious abnormalities detected. However this study also allowed for incidental data collection. Moose were not the only animals to utilize this specific area of GRTA. All pictures that were taken were categorized by species and were analyzed for abnormalities. Although no visibly anomalous wildlife was detected during this study, Army personnel ask to be notified of the date and location if any are observed by people in the field. When the final results of the entire project are complete, the findings will be presented and discussed at an UTIC quarterly meeting.



Alaska Forum on the Environment

Mark your calendars! The Alaska Forum on the Environment is scheduled for February 8-12, 2010 at the Dena'ina Convention Center in Anchorage. There will be a Tuesday roundtable listening session on remediation at federal facilities as well as great keynote speakers and many, many informative sessions addressing environmental issues of concern to us all — tribal and military, urban and rural.

Section 106 Undertakings

This is a quarter-to-quarter update of the undertakings being done by the Cultural Resource Management team in response to the National Historic Preservation Act's (NHPA) Section 106. Contributed by Lisa Graham, USAG FWA and FRA Cultural Resource Manager.

Fort Richardson (FRA) jurisdiction lands:

-- **Section 106 consultation** has been completed for: 1) power line installation and observation tower replacement at Baumeister Village and Cole Point; 2) upgrades to the Clunie Lake campground; 3) construction of a vehicle inspection station at the main gate; and 4) installation of a sewer line near the main gate. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with a finding of no historic properties affected.

Fort Wainwright (FWA) jurisdiction lands:

-- Numerous construction projects that require Section 106 consultation are scheduled within the **FWA cantonment**, including: installation of bird control measures; demolition of communications tower; determination of eligibility for school buildings; upgrades to Chena Elementary School building; EIFS installation on 3 company operation facilities; pedestrian bridge from barracks; roof replacements on buildings 2079 and 2080; and stairwell replacement and installation of overhang on building 1562.

-- Small **archaeological surveys** were conducted for: 1) upgrades to feeders 23 and 24 utility lines in the central portions of the post, and 2) installation of a fiber optic line at the main gate.

-- As previously reported, **archaeological surveys in the Yukon Training Area (YTA)** focused on areas being assessed for the development of gravel sources. The potential borrow pit at McMahan trench on the southern boundary of the Stuart Creek Impact Area is in the vicinity of prehistoric site XBD-00162; however, the proposed development will not affect the site. The second borrow pit location is at Firing Point 8 on the western boundary of the Stuart Creek Impact Area. A September 2009 archaeological survey of Firing Point 8 resulted in the identification of prehistoric site XBD-00364. USAG FWA is currently assessing the boundaries of the proposed development in order to determine potential adverse affects to the site.

-- **Archaeological surveys conducted at Tanana Flats Training Area (TFTA)** for an initial assessment of the Pacific Area Range Complex (PARC) project, originally reported 20 prehistoric sites being discovered. The number of newly identified prehistoric sites is now 34. Nine of these sites are located in the vicinity of the Blair Lakes, and 25 are located in a vegetated sand dune field in the northwestern portion of the range adjacent to the Wood River. There are currently no planned developments that will impact these sites. Further exploration and evaluation of these sites and surrounding areas is a major emphasis of fieldwork planned for the summer of 2010.

-- USAG FWA will soon finish the **Annual Report: Archaeological Survey and Data Recovery, Donnelly Training Area, Fort Wainwright, Alaska 2009**, describing the summer's fieldwork.

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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.