

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY ALASKA (USARAK)**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

FOR

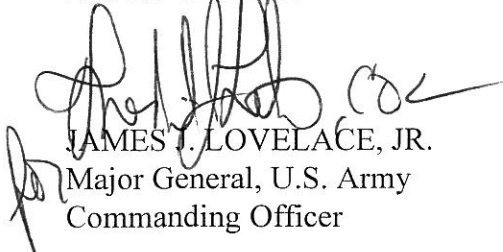
IMPLEMENTATION OF AN
INTEGRATED CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN (ICRMP)

AT

FORT WAINWRIGHT and FORT GREELY

OCTOBER 2000

APPROVED BY:



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1.0. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION.

1.1. Introduction.

This environmental assessment (EA) is prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), its implementing regulations published by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Department of the Army Regulation (AR) 200-2 "Environmental Effects of Army Actions." NEPA, 40 CFR 1500-1508, and AR 200-2 collectively establish a process by which the Department of the Army considers the potential environmental impacts of its proposed actions and invites the involvement of interested members of the public prior to deciding on a final course of action.

The U.S. Army Alaska (hereinafter USARAK) has identified a proposed action to proactively manage cultural resources on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely through implementation of the "Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan 2001-2005: Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely, Alaska" (hereinafter ICRMP). This EA will consider, compare and evaluate three alternatives. The first alternative is the "No Action" which would maintain the status quo: continued management without a recognized plan. The second alternative, which serves as USARAK's preferred alternative, is the promulgation and full implementation of the ICRMP establishing a uniform USARAK policy for comprehensive management of cultural resources on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely. The third alternative involves the promulgation and partial implementation of the ICRMP.

1.2. Installation Description.

Fort Wainwright is located near the city of Fairbanks in interior Alaska. The installation consists of the Main Post, the Tanana Flats Training Area (TFTA), and the Yukon Training Area (YTA) covering approximately 916,000 acres. The Main Post is two miles east of central Fairbanks on the Chena and Tanana rivers and is composed of approximately 4,800 acres of urban area, including the cantonment area, housing and the Wainwright Army Airfield. The TFTA occupies most of the land between the Wood and Tanana rivers, stretching 32 miles south of the Main Post. The TFTA contains approximately 650,000 acres of training and impact area. The YTA is a rectangular-shaped 390 square-mile (approximately 256,000 acres) parcel and is located 16 miles east-southeast of Fairbanks and immediately east and adjacent to Eielson Air Force Base.

Fort Greely is located approximately 100 miles southeast of Fairbanks, near the town of Delta Junction. The installation consists of the Main Post, two large training areas (West and East), and three outlying training sites (Gerstle River Test Site, Black Rapids Training Site, and Whistler Creek Rock Climbing Area). The Fort Greely Main Post lies between the East and West Training Areas and north of a transportation corridor for the Richardson Highway and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. Made up of mainly support buildings, approximately 1,800 acres of the Main Post (totaling 13,000 acres) are undergoing realignment as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure Act, as of 1995. The West Training Area is approximately 572,000 acres in size, and is bounded by the Richardson Highway to the east and the Little Delta River to the west. The East Training Area is located east of the Richardson Highway, and encompasses about 52,000 acres. The Gerstle River Test Site (approximately 19,000 acres) lies between Granite Mountain and the Gerstle River, about three miles south of the Alaska Highway. Black Rapids Training Site (approximately 2,800 acres) and Whistler Creek Rock Climbing Area (approximately 500 acres) are located along the Richardson Highway approximately 35 miles south of Fort Greely Main Post.

1.3. Purpose and Need.

The purpose of the proposed action is to develop a uniform USARAK policy for management of cultural resources on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely that ensures compliance with all applicable legal requirements including Federal statutes, regulations, Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda relating to cultural resource management (see Appendix for requirements).

There is regulatory need for USARAK to promulgate a uniform and up-to-date cultural resources policy. The policy is needed to address cultural resources management on a comprehensive basis, provide clear direction and guidance for compliance with all applicable legal requirements for all categories of cultural resources, and eliminate the present policy's ad hoc approach to management of cultural resources.

1.4. Objectives.

The objective of the proposed action is to provide a comprehensive and integrated approach to the broad spectrum of cultural resources management with an emphasis on compliance with a myriad of laws and regulations. In addition, the implementation of the provisions in the ICRMP will specify internal agency procedures, appropriate roles, and define responsibilities of USARAK officials in the cultural resources management process at all levels.

1.5. Related Documents.

Army Regulation 200-4 requires each installation to prepare and implement an ICRMP. The "Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan 2001-2005: Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely" has been prepared to meet requirements set by AR 200-4 and the Draft Army Alternative Procedures to 36 CFR § 800. Implementation of the ICRMP by USARAK is the basis of this NEPA analysis.

The Military Lands Withdrawal Act (PL 99-606) required the Army to publish a Draft Environmental Impact Statement by November 6, 1998 for the continued use of withdrawn public domain lands on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely. The draft document was published in October of 1998 and the final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement was published in April of 1999. The draft and final documents contain detailed descriptions of the environmental setting of Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely and discuss the impacts of continued military operations on these lands.

Guidelines for preparing this EA are found within AR 200-2 (Environmental Effects of Army Actions) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 40 CFR, Part 1500, et seq. and 32 CFR, Part 651, et seq.

1.6. Interested Parties.

There are a number of organizations, both public and private, that have expressed interest in historic properties on Forts Wainwright and Greely. As interested parties, these may be concerned with the effects of Army undertakings on historic properties. Under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), these parties are given opportunities to participate in the Section 106 process. These organizations are identified below. However, this list should not be considered complete. It is likely that other organizations, not included here, will have interests in historic properties on Forts Wainwright and Greely.

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.
- Tanana-Yukon Historical Society
- Joint Fairbanks North Star Borough/City of Fairbanks Historic Preservation Commission
- Interior and Arctic Alaska Aeronautical Foundation

1.7. Decision to Be Made.

This EA, by setting forth and analyzing relevant environmental issues and impacts and considering the comments of the public, will provide the basis upon which USARAK will make a decision. USARAK will decide that either the proposed action will not present significant impacts to the human environment, in which case a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be issued; or, that the proposed action may present significant impacts, in which case USARAK will prepare and publish a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

2.0. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES.

This chapter describes the alternatives analyzed in this EA for the management of cultural resources on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely, Alaska.

2.1. Proposed Action.

The proposed action is the promulgation of USARAK's ICRMP for Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely to provide USARAK with a policy for comprehensive management of cultural resources on the two Forts. The proposed action defines roles and responsibilities for cultural resources management at all levels within USARAK. It also provides a rational, tiered, and uniform basis for addressing all applicable legal requirements and best management practices consistent with achievement of the needs, goals and objectives of USARAK's military mission.

2.2. Alternatives to the Proposed Action.

2.2.1. No Action Alternative.

The No Action Alternative is one of the alternatives to the proposed action considered in this EA. The No Action Alternative reflects the status quo. The status quo involves management of historic properties under overriding Department of the Army policy but no defined installation policy. Present practice does not address, prescribe or guide management of cultural resources under USARAK ownership or control. As a result, cultural resources are generally managed and administered on an ad hoc approach due to the dearth of specific agency policy that addresses all categories of cultural resources.

2.2.2. Full Implementation Alternative.

The Full Implementation Alternative, or the proposed action, is the second alternative addressed in this EA. Analysis of the current historic preservation program on Forts Wainwright and Greely shows that a number of actions must be taken during 2001-2005 to address concerns associated with various historic preservation laws. Action plans have been developed to assist the Installation Commander in achieving compliance with these laws. The implementation design ensures fiscal responsibility and compatibility with the military and environmental conservation and compliance missions of Forts Wainwright and Greely. In addition, achieving and maintaining compliance requires an understanding of how to follow various historic preservation guidelines, carry out certain preservation activities, and meet specific requirements. Guidance on how to implement the action plans and carry out preservation activities required by the standard operating procedures are included within the ICRMP. Under this alternative, the Installation Commander is responsible for ensuring compliance with historic preservation laws and implementation of the ICRMP. This will be done through his appointed Cultural Resources Manager (CRM). It is the CRM's responsibility to coordinate with users and interested parties to ensure compliance with historic preservation laws and regulations on Forts Wainwright and Greely.

2.2.3. Partial Implementation Alternative.

The Partial Implementation Alternative is the final alternative to the proposed action considered in this EA. This alternative action would be to implement only select portions of the ICRMP. There is a wide range of options involved with this alternative, ranging from implementation of some features of each major program to implementation of some major programs but not others. However, only certain aspects of Fort Wainwright's and Fort Greely's cultural resources would be managed under this alternative.

3.0. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

The proposed action is restricted to the implementation of the ICRMP. Thus, the nature and scope of the environmental analysis is programmatic. Environmental effects of implementing this plan on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely are the focus of this study.

3.1. Existing Conditions.

U.S. Army Alaska is responsible for managing cultural resources on approximately 1.6 million acres of lands that compose Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely. Current Army estimates indicate that there are hundreds of cultural resources located on Army military lands which represent the entire prehistory and history of Alaska and the nation. Data from Army installations indicate that there are approximately 160 archeological sites representing the prehistoric and historic Native American occupation of the land. There are over 290 historic buildings and structures many of which represent the Army's own role in the nation's history. Fort Wainwright contains the Ladd Field National Historic Landmark (NHL), one of only 35 NHLs in Alaska. U.S. Army Alaska is clearly responsible for managing a broad range of cultural resources and complying with an entire suite of applicable statutes, regulations, Executive Orders (EO), and Presidential Memoranda (see Appendix). It is the Installation Commander's responsibility to ensure compliance with these laws and to implement the ICRMP.

In the last half of the twentieth century, the various missions of the U.S. military have impacted the landscapes of Forts Wainwright and Greely. Continued use of the lands to meet mission requirements have the potential to impact existing cultural landscapes and associated historic properties as well as to create new landscapes. Ground defense, cold weather training, and preparedness for worldwide deployment have been the primary missions of Fort Wainwright in the 1990s. This did not change in 1998 when the 6th Infantry Division (Light) was designated the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate). Similarly, Fort Greely's mission has changed little since the end of World War II. The post continues to function as one the nation's premier cold weather testing and training facilities. In 1992 the U.S. Air Force moved its Cope Thunder training program from the Philippines to Alaska. Training facilities were developed on both Forts Wainwright and Greely to support this ongoing program.

3.2. Predicted Environmental Impacts.

3.2.1. Effects of No Action Alternative.

Considering the numerous categories and sheer number of cultural resources that USARAK is responsible for managing on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely, and the suite of statutes, regulations, EOs, and Presidential Memoranda that USARAK must comply with, the lack of any cultural resources policy would result in negative impacts to the historic assets that USARAK controls. Moreover, this alternative directly contravenes the purpose and need as stated in section 1.3 of this EA. This alternative is not viewed by the Army as a feasible option and therefore, is not carried forward for further consideration.

3.2.2. Effects of Full Implementation Alternative.

U.S. Army Alaska is considering implementing an integrated plan for management of cultural resources on Forts Wainwright and Greely. This decision, alone, is not likely to result in any quantifiable, concrete, on-the-ground impacts. Rather, its effect will be felt as resource managers implement management activities consistent with the direction and guidance of the ICRMP. That second level of planning and decision making will involve additional environmental review that considers on-the-ground impacts. In addition, the ICRMP formalizes a comprehensive and uniform policy for managing cultural resources, eliminating the present ad hoc approach. The primary effect of the ICRMP will be more deliberate and rational cultural resource planning and management.

There are no predicted adverse impacts to cultural resources located on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely lands resulting from the proposed promulgation of the ICRMP. The proposed ICRMP defines cultural resources as; historic properties as defined in the NHPA, cultural items as defined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, archeological resources as defined in the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979, sacred sites as defined in EO 13007 to which access is provided under American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) of 1978, and collections and associated records as defined in 36 CFR 79. The Army's definition of cultural resources is comprehensive in nature and follows the Department of Defense Instruction 4715.3 (DODI 4715.3) "Environmental Conservation Program" in its scope.

As a result of the comprehensive definition of cultural resources proposed in the ICRMP, Army management actions would take into account all relevant and applicable cultural resources statutes, regulations, EOs, and Presidential Memoranda. A result of this comprehensive approach would be clear policy addressing all relevant and applicable requirements for cultural resources. The approach taken in

the ICRMP would encourage integration of all cultural resources management activities and not focus only on one class of cultural resources.

ICRMP's proposed approach to management of cultural resources is inclusive in nature and encourages integration of all cultural resources management activities with ongoing actions such as installation master planning, natural resources planning, military training and testing operations, military construction plans and others, in order to avoid conflict with the Army installation's military mission. This ICRMP was prepared as required by AR 200-4. The ICRMP follows the guidance in DODI 4715.3 and integrates the entirety of the installation's cultural resources with management actions required to support ongoing mission activities. Such an approach allows for long term planning, ready identification of potential conflicts between the installation's mission and all relevant categories of cultural resources. This approach also integrates the compliance actions necessary to maintain the availability of properties and acreage required for the military mission.

The ICRMP calls for the preparation of a Programmatic Agreement between the Army and the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer to address on-going maintenance of buildings and structures that contribute to the Ladd Field National Historic Landmark. It also provides guidance in how to provide for maintaining eligible properties to the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation." Implementation of the ICRMP will have a positive effect on historic properties and their continued use in meeting the military mission.

The ICRMP incorporates a cultural landscape approach in understanding cultural resources that are on Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely. Through this approach, the ICRMP addresses management of the resources in regard to the military mission. Implementation of the ICRMP will provide appropriate levels of cultural resources management in light of mission requirements and insure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing cultural resources. Through understanding the cultural landscape, greater flexibility may be achieved for providing acreage required for the military training mission.

Anticipated effects to recreational activities can be determined by understanding the effects that these activities may have on cultural resources and appropriate management steps to address potential adverse impacts. Implementation of the ICRMP will further the understanding of cultural resources on Forts Wainwright and Greely and how to protect them from recreational impacts. The ICRMP provides for surveying and inventorying cultural resources to better understand their nature. Further investigations will provide for better understanding of the extent of cultural resource sites and identification of those that need protection.

The ICRMP also provides updated roles, responsibilities and internal operating procedures necessary for program operations. The current USARAK cultural resources program organization, roles, and responsibilities are clearly presented in the ICRMP along with internal operating procedures.

3.2.3. Effects of Partial Implementation Alternative.

Partial implementation offers a less comprehensive program than the proposed action for the protection of cultural resources. Such actions would emphasize reacting to identified problems and noncompliance as opposed to the proactive approach of the total ICRMP. A partial implementation approach would achieve compliance with various applicable cultural resources statutes, regulations, EOs, and Presidential Memoranda but would not provide as many benefits to the planning and management of the entire Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely cultural landscape.

APPENDIX

Federal Statutes, Regulations, Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda

Federal Statutes

Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987 43 USC 2101-2106
American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, as amended 42 USC 1996-1996a
Antiquities Act of 1906 16 USC 431-433; 34 Stat. 225
Archeological and Historic Data Preservation Act of 1974 16 USC 469-469c
Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 16 USC 470aa-470ll
Historic Sites Act of 1935 16 USC 461-467
National Environmental Policy Act 42 USC 4321-4370c
National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended 16 USC 470-470w
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 25 USC 3001-3013

Federal Regulations

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties, 36 CFR 800
Council on Environmental Quality, Regulations Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 CFR 1500-1508
Department of Defense, Protection of Archeological Resources, 32 CFR 229
Department of the Interior, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 43 CFR 10
Department of the Interior, Curation of Federally-owned and Administered Archeological Collections, 36 CFR 79
Department of the Interior, Determinations of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, 36 CFR 63
Department of the Interior, National Historic Landmark Program, 36 CFR 65
Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places, 36 CFR 60
Department of the Interior, Preservation of American Antiquities, 43 CFR 3
Department of the Interior, Supplemental Regulations [per ARPA], 43 CFR 7.2
Department of the Interior, Waiver of Federal Agency Responsibility under Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 78

Executive Orders

EO 11593 Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
EO 13007 Indian Sacred Sites

Presidential Memoranda

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, dated April 29, 1994: Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INTEGRATED CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN (ICRMP) AT FORT WAINWRIGHT and FORT GREELY


OCTOBER 2000

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION. United States Army Alaska (USARAK) proposes to implement an Integrated Cultural Resource Management Plan (ICRMP) at Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely during 2001-2005 to manage cultural resources, support the military mission, and comply with cultural resource laws. The objective of the proposed action is to provide a comprehensive approach to cultural resources management that goes beyond the myopic focus of AR 420-40 on the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and historic properties. In addition, the proposed action is intended to identify internal agency procedures and the appropriate roles and responsibilities of USARAK officials in the cultural resource management process at all levels of the USARAK.

ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS. In consideration of the integrated long term planning approach proposed in the "Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan 2001-2005: Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely, Alaska" for cultural resources management, it is anticipated that promulgation of the ICRMP will avoid significant impacts to air, land, water, esthetic, socioeconomic, natural or cultural resources. Potential negative impacts would be more than offset by positive impacts of implementing this ICRMP.

CONCLUSIONS. Based on a review of the information contained in this Environmental Assessment, it is concluded that the implementation of the "Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan 2001-2005: Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely, Alaska" is not a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Accordingly, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for this proposed action is not required.

POINT OF CONTACT. Requests for further information or submittal of public comments may be made for 30 days after first publication date to: Gale Skaugstad, United States Army, Alaska (USARK), Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Resources Division, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703-6500, telephone (907) 353-9689, email SkaugstadGA@wainwright.army.mil


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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

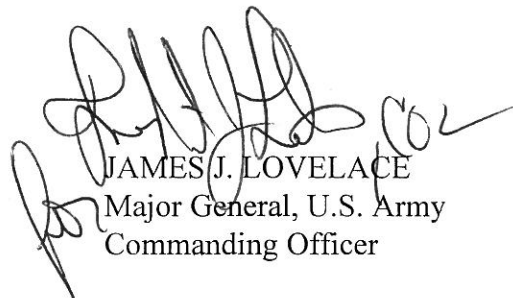
The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 is implemented by Army Regulation (AR) 200-2 (Environmental Effects of Army Actions), December 1988. Chapter 5 of AR 200-2 authorizes the preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) after an Environmental Assessment (EA) review indicates that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

ACTION: To proactively manage cultural resources on Forts Wainwright and Greely through implementation of the "Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan 2001-2005: Fort Wainwright and Fort Greely".

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS: An EA and FNSI have been prepared for the proposed action. Copies of these documents are available upon request. Interested parties are invited to submit, in writing, any comments or objections they may have concerning the proposed action. Comments received will be reviewed and relevant issues will be addressed and incorporated into a revised EA. If no comments are received during the public comment period, the original EA will become the final EA document. For further information, please contact Gale Skaugstad, United States Army, Alaska (USARK), Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Resources Division, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703-6500, telephone (907) 353-9689, email SkaugstadGA@wainwright.army.mil

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: An EA is prepared to determine the extent of environmental impacts of a proposed action and decide whether or not these impacts are significant. If the proposed action may or will result in significant impacts, an EIS is prepared to provide additional information on the context, duration, and intensity of the impacts. If an EA shows that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts, a FNSI is prepared and NEPA compliance is satisfied. A FNSI is a document that briefly presents the reasons why a proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

The FNSI documents the decision that an EIS is not required for NEPA compliance. A FNSI is completed when no comment period is necessary, a comment period was held but evidenced no significant public concern, or public concern resulted in reconsideration of the FNSI, which was still appropriate upon reexamination.



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