

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS 2022

TEXAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, LARGE INSTALLATION

With such a large installation and a wide array of historic holdings and artifacts to preserve, cultural resources management is always a challenge for the Texas Army National Guard, a challenge met by proactive strategies that blend technological advances and collaborative partnerships. Statewide, the installation encompasses 61 readiness centers, 20 Armed Forces Reserve Centers, four Army Aviation Support Facilities (AASF), five training sites, and the historic Camp Mabry headquarters, all scattered across nearly 269,000 square miles of Texas.

Texas has the largest joint force in the nation, consisting of over 19,000 Texas Army National Guard, approximately 3,200 Texas Air National Guard, and around 2,300 Texas State Guard volunteers and about 600 state/federal civilian employees. The TXARNG's facilities to support these troops are located in both dense urban communities and rural areas within coastal lowlands, large river floodplains, rolling plateaus, forested hills, deserts, and a variety of aquatic habitats. Across these lands, a rich military history has also played out, beginning with the Texas Volunteer Guard of the 1820s, the earliest iteration of the modern TXARNG. Cultural resources on the TXARNG's total 34,000 acres include prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, documents, buildings, and structures; American Indian traditional cultural properties, as well as previously collected prehistoric and historic artifacts from prior archaeological surveys.



Among the most prominent cultural resources management (CRM) milestones achieved over the past two years is the rehabilitation of Building 1 at Camp Mabry, a WWII-era structure that has just reopened as TAG offices and serves as a centerpiece of the historic district. This historic building had to be essentially gutted to address structural problems and rebuilt to historic standards with full State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurrence. In addition, building on a robust Tribal outreach commitment, the CRM program has expanded traditional cultural property survey efforts throughout the state, bringing Tribal representatives into collaboration to better identify and delineate sensitive sites and artifacts. Programmatically, the CRM program achieved a recentering of resource management with a new Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) that realigned the goals and targets of that document with the broader Texas Military Department Strategic Plan.



Revamping the ICRMP addressed a finding that had emerged in EPAS audits; following old templates and mirroring the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan had placed the CRM program out of alignment in terms of its goals and what could actually be achieved across the installation. By remodeling the ICRMP on the Strategic Plan, the CRM program is now able to create trackable metrics that allow for accurate assessment and alignment with the training and readiness objectives for the TXARNG. Implemented this year, the ICRMP is creating new efficiencies that put preservation and readiness in balance, rather than leaving CRM activities siloed within the environmental section. Following this document, the CRM program is also better positioned to submit STEP-funded projects that are explicitly linked to TXARNG readiness objectives. Across the installation, the CRM program has achieved cost savings as

well, partnering with university teams to conduct site monitoring and inventories are drastically reduced costs compared to private contractors.

To best support TXARNG operations, the CRM program has long emphasized collaboration with the SHPO, ensuring compliance and streamlining processes to clear training, construction, and maintenance activities. At the onset of the global pandemic, the CRM program immediately reached out to the SHPO and consulting Tribes and submitted a memo for record to prepare for unknown impacts to normal Section 106 processes that may be necessitated by Covid-19 response. With expectation thus aligned, the CRM program was able to avoid regulatory issues over the past two years and preserve project timelines.

The new ICRMP is further bolstered by other dedicated CRM plans and protocols, including a guide for conducting Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) surveys that emphasizes avoidance to training impacts and details management for identified areas. This guide, and the scopes that are in place for TCP, were developed with input from Tribal nations utilizing their experts.

The CRM program is fully integrated within TXARNG operations, from the working within the Environmental branch with the team of natural resources, sustainability, and compliance managers, to the directorate level with programming and project team at the Construction and Facility Management Office (CFMO). Annual information briefings are conducted with construction, maintenance, and range staff, and the Environmental Trainer has incorporated CRM guidance and policies into Compliance Toolkits and the Lone Star Portal intranet. CRM staff also assists the CFMO on preparing scopes of work for historic facility projects, serves on teams reviewing bid proposals, and assists with qualifying contractors for historic structure work.

Among the installation's cultural resources are a 221-acre National Register Historic District, a National Register eligible Nike Missile silo and radar site, 52 eligible buildings, 6 Traditional Cultural Properties, and just over 700 archaeological sites.

Historic Structures: Building 1 at Camp Mabry dates to WWII; as part of the training site's historic district, work on the building requires state antiquities permitting, a rigorous process. To convert the building to TAG offices and ultimately preserve the structure for future generations, the building had to be drastically renovated. The CRM program embedded an architectural historian into the project from the planning and design through the construction phases. Both interior and exterior elements contributed to the building's historic eligibility, with features like a

A Refined Mission:

- People First: Cultural Resources will support soldier and civilian population, as well as our close stakeholders in community, with a sustainable and accessible program.
- Relevant and Ready: Provide efficient and appropriate management strategies for the long-term support of TMD.
- Communicate and Partner: Deliver message on the history of TMD lands and facilities and build lasting partnerships with our communities.



large truss system and original windows, but these features had to be integrated with modern antiterrorism protections. In terms of safety, extensive interior mold and pest issues had to be remediated, and structural failures of the foundation needed correction; to support the building with metal shoring, hundreds of holes had to be drilled in the exterior brick, necessitating extensive SHPO consultation. Floor supports that were burned in a past electrical fire were discovered as the second floor was renovated. Essentially, each step of the process revealed



In process in the rehabilitation of historic Building 1. The building required significant structural support which required close coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to proceed with stabilization plan.

another structural instability. Nonetheless, the TXARNG persevered and transformed a building that was nearly unsalvageable into an historic showpiece.

The TXARNG installation manages for nine readiness centers that are eligible for listing on the National Register; three of these armories are currently undergoing renovations with SHPO concurrence. As with Building 1, the contracts for these projects mandate inclusion of an historic architect to review all plans. The CRM program has helped to educate project managers on the benefit of this approach, since proper CRM oversight from project onset will ultimately streamline the entire process. Because these readiness centers are not public spaces, the TXARNG has negotiated freedom to reconfigure interiors with the SHPO, while exterior facades are being preserved and maintained.



Site Monitoring: The installation has introduced a photopoint database for architectural and archaeological site monitoring that is linked to GIS. Created in collaboration with a university team, the photopoint database establishes visual records of cultural sites to track impacts from fire, erosion, or other disturbances. The technology now allows for photos taken with cell phones or tablets to instantly upload to the database seamlessly with embedded GPS coordinates. At present, access is limited to the GIS staff, environmental staff, CFMO, and range control personnel, but a web-based GIS portal is currently under development that will allow access to expand to Tribal or SHPO partners through a password-protected access point. In the future, crowdsourcing of additional data may even be possible, allowing visitors to Camp Mabry, for instance, to submit their own photos of buildings or WPA-era limestone features throughout the training site.

Cultural Surveys: TCP surveys are an ongoing effort for the TXARNG installation. One is currently in progress at Camp Swift focused in part on plants that are significant in one Tribe's cultural origins and ceremonies. The CRM manager organized an educational session presentation on the natural/cultural resources tribal nexus for this survey. A TCP at Camp Maxey is also underway, with a reconnaissance survey completed in December 2020 with the principal investigator consulting with Tribal representatives from the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma. Video

collected from that survey is being shared with other interested Tribes as well, which helps these partners to remain engaged even when travel is curtailed. These efforts have helped to deepen the TXARNG's Tribal relationships, especially with Tribes that may not have ancestral ties to the land but may have passed through it and are themselves learning more about that era of dislocation. Further TCP investigation at Camp Maxey will commence in October 2021.



Curation: The TXARNG completed its NAGPRA compliance inventory a few years ago, one of the first states to do so, and with new guidance from NGB, they are now able to submit that documentation for confirmation. Finding solutions for general curation practices has also been a focus over the past two years. Throughout the statewide installation, curation agreements had often been drafted project-by-project. Currently, the CRM program is in the final stages of completing an overarching curation agreement that encompasses all facilities that hold TXARNG inventories. These facilities will now provide annual reports that integrate all TXARNG holdings using the same standards for cataloging and documentation. This, in turn, will simplify the tracking of artifacts and create a single protocol for all collections moving forward.



With the revamping of the CRM program mission and ICRMP, supporting the TXARNG training and readiness mission has been firmly placed at the center of all undertakings. The CRM program's goals are aligned with the TXARNG's goals: to put the people first with proactive support, ensure undertakings are relevant to readiness, and communicate effectively with stakeholders about the TXARNG's future and its legacy. Projects like historic structure renovations, for instance, are planned to put preservation and modern requirements in balance, saving the TXARNG from the time and expense of sacrificing historic structures to build new. All elements of the TXARNG structure recognize the importance of preserving these resources, and the investment of the CFMO, trainers, and GIS staff in expanding the CRM photopoint database reflects this shared commitment. Prevention of damage and repair of deteriorating resources ultimately saves time and money for the TXARNG organization statewide. Building up relationships with Tribal and SHPO partners is also key to uninterrupted operations and greater training access throughout the state; rather than restrict what the TXARNG is able to do. These partners enable solutions to potential conflicts with resources.



One innovation that other military organizations would benefit by emulating is the alignment of the ICRMP with the TXARNG's strategic plan, which improves the planning of CRM activities, enables assessment of their impact, and aligns funding priorities. TXARNG has been a leader in modeling TCP projects as well, establishing guidance to integrate Tribal expertise and inputs throughout the process. The CRM program manager has presented on TCP practices for military conferences and partnered with Tribal representatives to present on issues like TCP implementation and wildland fire impacts to cultural resources. This year, they presented at a virtual conference for the National Military Fisheries and Wildlife Association. The TXARNG's photopoint database is another innovation that others could adopt—as well as an important tool for CRM continuity and consistency. As the cultural resources lead on the NGB conservation committee, the TXARNG CRM program manager has already been providing scopes of work and cost estimate examples for other states to set up similar databases; she has created a template





center where states can see what the TXARNG was done and adapt those approaches for their own needs. Any soldier or civilian with Sharepoint access can contribute to documentation of historic architectural or archaeological resources, and the TXARNG is working on further expanding this access securely to partners. With all training sites essentially 100% surveyed, this ongoing monitoring is essential to efficient management and prioritization of resources. The data becomes more than just documentation; it is operationalized for planning and compliance, particularly with introduction of the new online GIS function. CRM compliance, moreover, is not limited to the purview of the Environmental office, but rather recognized as a shared stewardship responsibility across directorates. To that end, the CRM program has developed new training resources that communicate CRM compliance processes and environmental directives so that these needs are considered at planning and design stages.



The TXARNG's 16 consulting Tribes are a major stakeholder for the CRM program throughout the statewide installation, and outreach with these partners is a core element of the CRM program. Building on the success of the TCP program, the TXARNG is exploring ways to further integrate natural and cultural resources into Tribal collaborations, where cultural sites and sacred plants often have nexus. With the impacts of the global pandemic, regular Tribal consultation meetings were suspended over the past year, though the TXARNG generally partners for joint consultation meetings with other States/Army National Guards, whom share a number of Tribal connections. For this year, a hybrid consultation meeting is planned for October, with virtual and in-person participation options. The TXARNG also participated in this year's planning sessions for the To Bridge a Gap virtual Tribal conference.



The pandemic postponed the joint Texas and Arkansas Guard consultation meeting. However, Texas worked with tribal partners to develop a hybrid consultation in 2021 to keep commitment of annual consultation. Here, Cultural Resources Manager Kristen Mt. Joy meets with Tribal representatives.



The TXARNG's CRM program also deeply values public outreach and education. The work happening now to expand the GIS-enabled photopoint database reflects this commitment, as the CRM and GIS program continue to collaborate on creating a secure link that will virtually expand CRM staff to include potential visitors to TXARNG facilities and training sites. At Camp Mabry, for instance, the public are regular users of the training site's track, museum, pavilions, and gardens; if just a fraction of these visitors submitted their own photos of limestone features or historic buildings, the monitoring power of the CRM program grows exponentially. The CRM program is currently developing plans for integration of this feature with existing walking tours and educational pamphlets as the GIS staff continues working on the tools to protect TXARNG system integrity with automated data capture.



While public access to resources like the museum and in-person events were suspended, the TXARNG maintained public access for outdoor sites and sought out virtual alternatives. The CRM program contributed to the virtual exhibits for Texas Archaeology Month and took part in virtual conferences for the cultural resource community. Even with challenges, the TXARNG finds ways to share its commitments to legacy and communicate the vision for its future.