

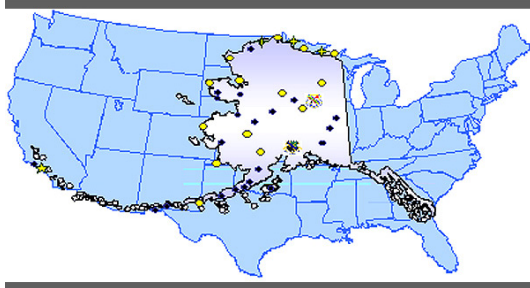
2005

Cultural Resources Management Award - Installation

611th Air Support Group Elmendorf, Alaska

INTRODUCTION

As North America's sentinels, the 611th Air Support Group (611 ASG) provides, the United States Air Force, North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) and the Federal Aviation Administration with radar surveillance, communications and infrastructure for homeland defense from the Last Frontier.



The 611 ASG's mission is to provide communications, engineering, logistical, environmental, and program management to maintain combat readiness for remote Alaska, Eleventh Air Force (11 AF) and NORAD. The group's responsibilities include the largest "cumulative base" in Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) consisting of one air station, two forward operating locations, 18 remote radar sites and 19 inactive sites, totaling 37,490 acres and 1284 facilities.

Headquarters PACAF activated the 611 ASG on 1 July 1994 and assigned it to the 11 AF, Elmendorf AFB. The new group inherited the personnel and responsibilities of the 11th Control Wing, and Eleventh Air Logistic Division, which it replaced.

With installations scattered throughout Alaska, the precursor organizations of the 611 ASG are intimately tied to the World War II and Cold War history of the 11 AF and the Alaska Air Command (AAC). The Alaskan Air Force was activated on 15 January 1942 to manage the buildup of the Army Air Forces in Alaska and was redesignated the 11 AF on 5 February 1942. Following the Japanese bombing of Dutch Harbor in the eastern Aleutian Islands and the occupation of Attu and Kiska in the western Aleutians in early June 1942, the 11 AF launched an air offensive against the Japanese on the two islands. Attu was retaken in May 1943, and the Japanese withdrew their garrison from Kiska in late July. For the remainder of the war, the 11 AF flew bombing and reconnaissance missions against Japanese military installations in the northern Kurile Islands from Attu and Shemya Islands. The 11 AF was redesignated the AAC on 18 December 1945, and its headquarters was moved from Adak to

Elmendorf AFB on 1 October 1946 to better manage Alaska's emerging air defense system.

Alaska's air defenses were greatly expanded during the early Cold War period of 1945-1959. An extensive Aircraft Control and Warning (AC&W) system was constructed along Alaska's coast and interior. The Alaskan segment of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line was built, and later extended to the eastern Aleutian Islands. By 1957, AAC had reached the height of its strength with over 200 fighter interceptors assigned to six squadrons.



Fighter-interceptor aircraft, such as this F-102A (Delta Dagger), and their pilots were housed in specially designed Combat Alert Cells.

Early warning and fighter direction were provided by 18 AC&W sites and 12 DEW sites tied together by the White Alice Communications System (WACS). The late 1950s and the 1960s saw a major reduction in AAC's forces as Air Force air defense doctrine changed, and emphasis shifted to defense against a mixed threat of missile and bomber attacks. The number of fighter interceptor squadrons shrunk to one, the air divisions were inactivated, and the AC&W sites reduced to 13. The Aleutian DEW Line segment was closed in 1969. Emphasis shifted towards supporting other commands. Communications and radar facilities were upgraded through the 1970s and 1980s, and remote staffing was drastically reduced. More recently, the 611 ASG has managed its installations through Base Operations Support (BOS) contracts and increased its environmental stewardship through its environmental remediation, operations and compliance programs.

BACKGROUND

The 611 ASG completed six Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plans, based on Cold War historical functional categories covering its highly disbursed 41 active and inactive sites. Most of the former AC&W sites and the DEW sites now function as part of the Alaska Radar System, with upgraded Long Range and Short Range radars. The airports at King Salmon and Galena currently serve as Forward Operating Locations (FOLs). Eareckson Air Station serves several DoD surveillance and support functions at a centralized location in the Pacific Ocean.



The 611 ASG maintains stewardship over a variety of Alaska Native, World War II and Cold War cultural resources. Cold War radar and communications sites and forward operating bases represent changes in DoD's Cold War strategies and technologies through the late twentieth century.

<i>Cultural Resources Management Plans</i>	
Installation	Date
AC&W (10)	Completed 1999, revised 2004
DEW (8)	Completed 2000, revision in early 2006
Eareckson Air Station	Completed 1999, revised 2004
Galena Airport	Completed 2000, revision in progress
King Salmon Airport	Completed 2000, revision in progress
WACS (24)	Completed 2002

<i>Major Resource Features – National Register eligible</i>	
Title	Resources
DEW	Radars activated in 1957 and provided arctic coast coverage from Alaska to Greenland (7+)
AC&W	Early 1950s radar (10)
WACS	Provided communications between radar and FOBs and civilian telephone service (24)
FOB	Galena and King Salmon Air Station provided forward air defense (2)
Archaeological sites	Prehistory of arctic coastal sites through last 1400 years on prime locales in north Alaska

Organization and Staffing

The cultural resources management (CRM) program is part of the environmental quality element located within the environmental flight of the 611th Civil Engineer Squadron (611 CES). In addition to cultural resources, the quality element also manages all environmental concerns with the exception of the environmental restoration program. The 611 CES has only one cultural resources program manager (CRM), Karlene Leeper, who designs and implements the program with the help cooperating universities and organizations. The 611 ASG Native Liaison, who works directly for the 611 ASG Commander, is crucial to the program in the implementation of the DoD American Indian and Alaska Native Policy, training on Alaska Native issues and consultation with tribes and

<i>Selected Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Plans</i>		
Titles	Objectives	Dates
NAGPRA Plan Eareckson AS	Archaeological excavation and reburial of Aleut human remains	2005
NAGPRA Plan Port Heiden Radio Relay Site	Reinterment of eroding Alaska Native cemeteries	2003
DEW sites MOA for Environmental Restoration	Allows demolition at Alaska DEW sites, recordation and oral history	2005
Programmatic Agreement for 611 ASG Archaeology	Survey to enable environmental projects	1999

Native communities.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Over the past two years, the 611 ASG has implemented a number of complex projects in the areas of historic preservation compliance and Alaska Native issues throughout Alaska. A key component of all of these projects has been careful coordination with diverse shareholders, contractors and DoD agencies served by the 611 ASG.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Overall Cultural Resources Management

The 611 ASG has an outstanding record of working with others including the Alaska State Historic Preservation Officer (AK-SHPO), Alaska Native tribes and communities, cooperating and partnering agencies and scholars to guarantee resource stewardship and mission effectiveness. One project that exhibits these relationships was the emergency exhumation of Aleut graves at Port Heiden, Alaska during the winter of 2003-2004 and the summer of 2004. In November 2003, extreme high tides, in concert with a late fall storm caused the erosion of a 20th century cemetery at Port Heiden, Alaska. Residents of this village exhumed most of the remains and reburied them in an inland cemetery, but some were lost to the Bering Sea. The residents of Port Heiden had previously sought help for relocating remains from this cemetery from many agencies, but received very little assistance.

Several hundred meters down the coast from the eroded cemetery is a parcel of land managed by the 611 ASG. This land was previously used in World War II as part of Fort Morrow, and contained a warehouse and a dock nearby. During the Cold War, it was used as a boat landing and tank farm for the integrated DEW radar and WACS site. Port Heiden residents testified that unmarked graves were situated within the 611 ASG parcel, near Saint Agafia's Russian Orthodox chapel. The chapel is now in ruins and has not been used as a chapel in many years, probably since the 1920s. After the November 2003 storm, and with predictions of a similar extreme high tide in late December,

people from many State, federal and Port Heiden agencies met in Anchorage to discuss the issue of the potential unmarked cemeteries. The cemeteries were probably on 611 ASG land, so arrangements were made to carry out consultation and begin excavation to rescue burials from erosion.

A NAGPRA Plan was quickly drawn up between the 611 ASG and the Native Village of Port Heiden. The 611 ASG used oral history, historic research, surface examination, historic photos and ground- penetrating radar to locate the unmarked cemeteries, including an early 20th century church cemetery and the 1919 mass grave from the influenza epidemic. Staff from the Alaska State Office of History and Archaeology, the University of Alaska and the 611 CES Environmental Flight worked together to accomplish the excavations.

Excavation of most of the church cemetery was accomplished in December 2003 and January 2004. The mass grave from the influenza epidemic was discovered and excavated in summer 2004 and descriptions of the human remains were accomplished during that summer so that reburial could occur in fall 2004.

Historic Buildings and Structures

The 611 ASG has a distinctive kind of building infrastructure. The sites are quite small and remote and facilities were designed for rapid construction in arctic conditions and to house small crews. Several Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) in the late 1990s enabled recordation of historic components of AC&W and FOL; which are weathered, degraded and relatively short-lived temporary ephemeral. The CRM integrates historic preservation compliance into the maintenance and upkeep of the radar stations which require constant maintenance and occasional to for modernized operations.

Archaeological Resources

Many 611 ASG radar sites were placed on some of the limited high and dry land along the Alaska's arctic coast. Some of these sites were also the former sites of ancient Alaska Native villages. The 611 ASG maintains strong relationships with AK-SHPO, Native communities and BOS contractors and archaeologists to implement strong preservation and research plans at these sites. Archaeological deposits found at Eareckson Air Station during utility construction in 2002 were excavated in 2005 to evaluate the site and learn more about cultural history of the western Aleutians.

An extensive program of public outreach accompanied this project. Reburial of human remains located in summer 2005 was completed during the same month, in accordance with the NAGPRA Plan with The Aleut Corporation.





ard - Installation

design and sponsor training called “Implementing Government to Government Relationships in Alaska”. This training is open to all DoD employees who have responsibilities in Alaska. The 611 ASG Native Liaison also conducts briefings for Air Force personnel who are new to Alaska. Air Force Staff are briefed with shorter presentations when requested.

The CRM is active in the Alaska Anthropological Association’s Public Education Group. She designed, organized and implemented an anthropological speaker series to share the work of prominent anthropologists with communities in urban and rural Alaska. The logistics for this project was complex, and the CRM worked with state, federal, municipal and university organizations to provide an extremely successful first lecture tour.

The CRM is the Point of Contact and organizer for the Alaska DoD Cultural Resources Working Group, which is co-chaired by the 11 AF Civil Engineer and the AK-SHPO. The group meets to share problems and solutions on historic preservation issues that DoD agencies have in common. The group offers collaboration on such things as Programmatic Agreements, training programs and field tours/seminars at historic properties.

During the early 2000s, the 611 ASG carried out several archaeological projects at coastal radar sites at Tin City and Cape Lisburne. The 611 CES installed archaeological exhibits at Wales and Point Hope, villages adjacent to the radar sites.

Archaeological excavation at Eareckson Air Station, Shemya Island during summer of 2005 provided educational opportunities for island residents, including an exhibit, lectures, a fishing contest to collect scientific specimens, a chance to work on an archaeological excavation and impromptu discussions with the archaeologists from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and universities.

Alaska Native Program

The Native Liaison program implements the DoD Alaska Indian and Alaska Native Policy across all programs of the 611 ASG. The 611 ASG Native Liaison coordinates management and operations issues that may affect Alaska Native tribes and constituent communities. The Native Liaison also designs and implements training for federal government and Alaska Native audiences.

The CRM works with Alaska Native tribes and other organizations to implement requirements of cultural resources laws and regulations, including the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and NAGPRA. She also works with Native historians to record oral histories about 611 ASG facilities and locations.

Curation

The 611 CES has arrangement at the University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks and the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow to curate artifacts from archaeological sites on 611 ASG lands.

Documentation related to Section 106 mitigation efforts are held at the 11 AF History Office, the AF Historical Research Agency and the National Archives Alaska Office.

Cultural Resources Awareness and Education

The 611 ASG Native Liaison and the 611 CES CRM partnered with a number of Alaska Native tribes, municipal, state and federal agencies to teach

Community Relations

The CRM is very active in professional, academic and community organizations, especially as they pertain to public education, awareness, and community education. She also works closely with tribal organizations and village schools to teach cultural resources topics such as NAGPRA, NHPA and archaeology through exhibits, discussion and presentations. She implements the public speakers program for urban and rural communities for the Alaska Anthropological Association and received a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum for this year's lectures. The 611 ASG benefits from presentations to international audiences such as the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association. The CRM also serves on a graduate student education committee at the University of Alaska Anchorage and cooperates and utilizes skills of staff and students there. Volunteers are instrumental in completing archaeological work at Eareckson Air Station.

Mission and Environmental Enhancement

Prior cultural resources work at Eareckson's Cobra Dane Radar and island archaeological sites allowed Ground-based Mid-Course Defense (GMD) projects to go forward on schedule. The National Register eligible Cobra Dane radar was upgraded

without adverse effect due to excellent relationship with AK-SHPO and 611 CES CRM and use of local Elmendorf AFB photographic talent. The 611 CES CRM and a photographer from 3rd Wing Communications Office took black and white photography, while the GMD office gathered plan views for the building upgrades.

The MOA between the 611 ASG and the AK-SHPO guaranteed that the facility demolition and environmental remediation at seven former DEW sites would be implemented on schedule while assuring that history of the sites was well-recorded. This MOA involved complex consultation with the AK-SHPO, six Alaska Native tribes and coordination with the public through municipal governments and restoration advisory board meetings

Cultural Resources Compliance

The 611 CES CRM works closely with all elements of the 611 ASG to evaluate needs for historic preservation and cultural sites compliance. In addition, she maintains excellent relationships with the AK-SHPO, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (ACHP), Alaska Native tribes, Department of Interior agencies and the history and archaeological research community.

