

**CNO AWARD NOMINATION
NAVAL AIR STATION FALLON, NEVADA
CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, LARGE
INSTALLATION
FY2014 and FY2015**



INTRODUCTION

NAS Fallon is located in Churchill County, Nevada, approximately eight miles south of the city of Fallon. The installation includes the Main Station and the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) comprising approximately 241,000 acres. The Main Station includes the bulk of support facilities (headquarters, barracks, classrooms, maintenance areas, and flightline) and is roughly 8,670 acres. The FRTC includes four discontinuous air-to-ground bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20), the Dixie Valley electronic warfare range, and three special use areas. The land managed by NAS Fallon is a mixture of Navy-acquired land and land withdrawn from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). The Navy shares management responsibilities with Department of Energy for the Shoal Site, a special use area significant because of its use in the 1960s for underground nuclear tests.

The station's primary mission is to provide integrated air training events in support of carrier air wings, Marine air groups, and joint and multinational exercises. NAS Fallon is home to the Navy's TOPGUN program and is the only Navy installation that provides advanced Carrier Air Wing Strike Training. Tenant commands include Naval Air Warfare Development Center (NAWDC); Naval Special Warfare Detachment, Fallon; Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit (EOD) 11; and Strike Fighter Weapons Maintenance Detachment Pacific and Fighter Squadron Composite 13 (VFC-13). The base population is approximately 3,000 with 1,130 active duty personnel, 300 civilian Department of Defense employees, and 1,400 contract employees.

The NAS Fallon Main Station is located in Lahontan Valley within the Great Basin cultural and physiographic region. Associated bombing ranges are located nearby in Fairview Valley, Dixie Valley, the Carson Sink, and Rawhide Flats. The environment is characteristic of the high desert, with dry hot summers and cold, wet winters with moderate snowfall. Temperature variation throughout the year can be extreme with summer highs reaching over 100 degrees Fahrenheit and winters lows below zero.

Located at the heart of ancient Lake Lahontan, the Fallon area includes archaeological sites that date back more than 10,000 years. As is typical of the Great Basin, most archaeological sites are open air artifact scatters located on or near the surface. However, the Fallon area is somewhat unique due to several important sites located nearby. These include prehistorically occupied caves (Salt Cave, Hidden Cave, Spirit Cave, and Lovelock Cave) and the Grimes Point petroglyph site, all of which are managed by the BLM but are within a few miles of Navy holdings. The ancient shorelines of Lake Lahontan offer some of the oldest sites in Nevada including several found recently on NAS Fallon bombing ranges B-16 and B-19. Prehistoric burials have also been found in cave and dune sites throughout the Lahontan Valley including on

the NAS Fallon Main Station. Significant historic sites are abundant on the FRTC including ranching and mining sites as well as several important transportation routes (California Emigrant Trail, Pony Express, Overland Trail, and Lincoln Highway). The Lahontan Valley was a major beneficiary of the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902 and continues to utilize the many irrigation ditches and canals constructed by the Act in the early years of the 20th century. The NAS Fallon Main Station includes several segments of the irrigation features that make up the Newlands National Historic District.

NAS Fallon opened in 1944 as Naval Auxiliary Air Station (NAAS) Fallon with the mission of training Navy pilots for the Pacific theater. At the end of World War II, the base was closed and many of the buildings were disassembled, although the bulk of the flight line buildings remained. With the beginning of the Korean War, the base was reopened and expanded to accommodate the Navy's new jet aircraft including the construction of a longer runway. In 1960, the runway was again lengthened, making it the longest runway in the Navy. In 1962, the Air Force established a Semi-Automatic Ground Environment Backup Interceptor Control (SAGE BUIC) facility at the south end of the base. Beginning in the 1960s, NAAS Fallon was one of the first Navy bases to incorporate Electronic Warfare training into its mission. The base was given full NAS status in 1972 and, in 1996 became home to the Navy's TOPGUN program. From World War II to the present day, NAS Fallon has served as one of the Navy's premier pilot training installations.

BACKGROUND

NAS Fallon has one Cultural Resource Manager (CRM) assigned to the installation. Since 2009, this role has been filled by Robin Michel. Ms. Michel holds a Master's Degree in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas, which she earned in 2003. She has over 15 years of experience in cultural resource management. Ms. Michel is an archaeologist by training, but as the CRM for NAS Fallon, she wears many hats, functioning as archaeologist, historic preservation specialist, and tribal liaison.

NAS Fallon currently functions under an Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP), which was signed in April, 2013. Since 1996, NAS Fallon has had a Programmatic Agreement (PA) with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Nevada Bureau of Land Management. Revised in 2011 the PA streamlines the cultural resource process by allowing small projects that clearly have "no effect" or "no adverse effect" to forego consultation with the Nevada SHPO. The NAS Fallon PA lists several types of Exempt Undertakings that do not require SHPO consultation and concurrence, greatly facilitating day-to-day operations

There are 10 federally recognized tribes with interests in NAS Fallon and its activities. In addition to the formal consultation process required by the NHPA and SECNAVINST 5090.1C, the installation CRM attends informal meetings with tribal cultural committees to ensure that communication remains open between the installation and the tribes. Agreements with Native American tribes include a Memorandum of Understanding with the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe in the treatment of Native American burials and an upcoming Memorandum of Agreement with the Walker River Paiute Tribe regarding off-range ordnance and aircraft mishaps on tribal land.

Currently nearly 30 percent of NAS Fallon has been surveyed for archaeological resources with over 1,000 sites inventoried, including over 150 archaeological sites that are eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In addition to archaeological resources, the installation includes nearly 200 buildings and structures that date from Churchill County's early ranching history as well as military buildings dating to World War II (1941-1945) and the Cold War (1946-1989). Historic resources eligible for the National Register include the Boyer Ranch (c. 1865), the Ellis Ranch (c. 1930), the Devore Ranch (c. 1930), Hangar 7 (b. 1944), Building 95 (b. 1944), the Bravo-16 loft bombing range buildings (c. 1960), and the four buildings that make up the Fallon Air Force Station SAGE BUIIC complex (b. 1962).

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The cultural resource management program at NAS Fallon excels at supporting the military mission by utilizing innovative strategies to meet the mission while protecting sensitive cultural resources. During Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, notable accomplishments include:

- Over 14,000 acres inventoried for archaeological resources, resulting in the discovery of nearly 500 archaeological sites.
- National Register of Historic Places evaluations of 66 archaeological sites.
- Programmatic Agreement between NAS Fallon, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office to address the effects of ground training activities on bombing range B-16.
- Over 300 hours donated to the program by volunteers from the University of Nevada, Reno and the local archaeological community
- Historic building maintenance plan for Hangar 7, NAS Fallon's sole remaining WWII-era hangar.
- Department of Defense Legacy Program grant to develop guidance for evaluating buildings and structures under the NRHP "work of a master" standard.
- Public outreach projects for both the base and the general public.

Archaeological Resources

Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015 were notable in the number of management goals met by the installation. Four large archaeological inventories were undertaken, all funded under Section 110 of the NHPA. In total, these projects covered approximately 14,670 acres, the largest amount of land inventoried at NAS Fallon for any two year period. As a result of these projects, 486 new sites were recorded, increasing the total number of sites managed at NAS Fallon to over 1,000. In addition to archaeological inventories, NRHP evaluations were conducted on 66 archaeological sites.

As of 2015, nearly 30 percent of NAS Fallon has been inventoried for archaeological resources. For the past several years, including Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, NAS Fallon has been proactively surveying its bombing ranges and evaluating archaeological sites under its management. This approach has greatly reduced the amount of time required to plan construction projects and has facilitated changes to training when new requirements arise. Having a solid knowledge base of where archaeological sites are located has been a tremendously helpful planning tool for the installation. Navy Special Warfare (NSW), with their ever changing training requirements, has perhaps benefited the most from this knowledge as SEAL teams can now shift quickly from one



Figure 1. Archeologists excavate a prehistoric rock shelter on NAS Fallon Range B-16.

area to another on range B-16 to experience several types of training without interruption.

In further support of NSW, an Environmental Assessment was undertaken for range B-16 during which 30 resources eligible for inclusion to the NRHP were identified. In order to ensure proper management of these properties, the installation developed a Programmatic Agreement (PA) in partnership with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office and the Bureau of Reclamation that stipulates the mitigation efforts required for both archeological and architectural resources on range B-16. One important stipulation allows construction projects to begin within one week of archaeological fieldwork completion, saving the Navy valuable time and money in implementing projects.



Figure 2. A few of the volunteers who donated time to work at a Paleoindian site on Range B-16.

For Fiscal Year 2014, in addition to its normal management duties, the installation worked with the Great Basin Paleoindian Research Unit at the University of Nevada, Reno to facilitate access to a significant Paleoindian site on Range B-16. During 10 days of fieldwork in March 2014, the installation CRM and 15 volunteers (students and professionals) mapped and conducted exploratory excavation at the site. Over 300 hours of time was donated by the volunteers. Results from this work indicate that the site is between 9,000 and 11,000 years old - one of the oldest sites in the Lahontan Valley. The success of this project is encouraging and additional collaborations between NAS Fallon and the University of Nevada are planned for the coming years.

Architectural Resources

Hangar 7

Constructed in 1944, NAS Fallon's "Hangar 7" is one of only two extant World War II-era wooden Birchwood-type hangars in Nevada. During World War II, it was home to CASU 54, one of the Navy's aircraft maintenance units posted to the homefront. The hangar was used for aircraft maintenance, bomb assembly, and parachute storage. Today, it serves as the home of NAS Fallon's Search and Rescue team, "The Longhorns," and as the installation's air terminal for visiting squadrons. For thousands of airmen and sailors, Hangar 7 is their first glimpse of the NAS Fallon airfield. In 2011, Hangar 7 was determined eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places for its association with World War II and for its architectural significance in the state of Nevada. In 2015, NAS Fallon contracted with JRP Historical Consulting LLC and Garavaglia Architecture Inc. to develop a historic building maintenance plan for Hangar 7. This document provides guidance for maintenance and refurbishment of the building as well as proposed upgrades to continue the building's relevance into the future. This document will ensure that Hangar 7 continues as a viable part of NAS Fallon's mission while retaining its historic integrity.

Department of Defense Legacy Grant

In 2015, NAS Fallon, working in conjunction with JRP Historical Consulting LLC, applied for and was awarded a Department of Defense Legacy Grant for the project, "Works of a Master? Addressing Evaluation of Routine or Prosaic Architecture by Famous Architects on Military Facilities." The inspiration for the project came from a particular problem experienced at NAS Fallon in 2013, namely that Nevada SHPO disagreed on the NRHP determinations of eligibility on a set of range spotting towers because the towers had been designed by a locally famous architectural firm and the towers had not been adequately evaluated under the "work of a master" standard under Criterion C of the NRHP. This led to additional workload for the installation CRM, project delays, and unnecessary expenditures of time and money.

In consideration of this issue, NAS Fallon and JRP Historical Consulting LLC, applied for and were awarded a Legacy grant to develop guidance on how to evaluate mundane or standard-design buildings under the work of a master standard. Installations under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense (DoD) contain a wide variety of buildings designed by architects who are considered "masters" for the purposes of the NRHP. While many DoD buildings are impressive structures with obvious architectural merit, a far larger number of unremarkable, unadorned structures (guard shacks, spotting towers, warehouses, residential units, etc.) exist within the DoD inventory, some of which were designed by master architects. To further complicate the

issue, many buildings dating to the mid-20th century are now eligible for consideration under the NHPA. Much of these were designed by architects who may not yet be recognized as masters simply because their body of work is so recent and has yet to be considered under the 50-year standard of the NRHP. This was the case with architect Ralph Cassazza, who designed several buildings for NAS Fallon as well as iconic Reno, Nevada buildings such as the Lawlor Events Center at the University of Nevada, Little Flower Catholic Church, and the Booth Street Federal Building. The guidance developed under this Legacy grant will provide installation CRMs with methodology to evaluate the buildings under their management using the works of a master standard and how to determine if a particular architect may be considered a master. This guidance will prevent costly project delays like those experienced at NAS Fallon in 2013.

Public Outreach

A particularly rewarding project for Fiscal Year 2014 was the placement of two interpretive panels on the NAS Fallon Main Station. Both panels were designed in-house by the NAS Fallon Public Works Department (PWD) with historic details provided by the installation CRM and graphic design by the PWD geographic information analyst. The first of the two panels summarizes the history of the NAS Fallon airfield. It was placed among static aircraft displays near the airfield. The second panel describes the history of the Lincoln Highway in the Fallon area. It was placed on the NAS Fallon main station on Union Lane, the original 1913 route of the highway. This placement also ties-in with the official Lincoln Highway markers that were placed on Union Lane in 2011. Celebrating Naval and local history provides a sense of tradition and continuity to active duty and civilian personnel alike, inspiring pride in those serving at NAS Fallon.



Figure 3. Airfield History interpretive panel at Air Power Park.

Summary

NAS Fallon is responsible for cultural resources in an area covering 241,000 acres in central Nevada. For Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, the NAS Fallon Cultural Resource Program saw notable achievements in meeting management goals including: survey of over 14,000 acres; recordation of nearly 500 archaeological sites; National Register of Historic Places evaluations of 66 archaeological sites; partnerships with the State Historic Preservation Office, the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Bureau of Reclamation; the creation of a building maintenance plan for Hangar 7, and a Department of Defense Legacy grant. Through pro-active management of its lands and innovative thinking, NAS Fallon continues to be a leader in archaeology and historic preservation for the Department of the Navy.