



2020 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards Cultural Resources Management, Large Installation Award

Each year since 1962, the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) has honored installations, teams, and individuals for outstanding achievements in Department of Defense (DoD) environmental programs. These accomplishments include outstanding conservation activities, innovative environmental practices, and partnerships that improve quality of life and promote efficiencies without compromising DoD's mission success. The 2020 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards cycle encompasses an achievement period from October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019 (Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019). A diverse panel of 54 judges with relevant expertise representing Federal and state agencies, academia, and the private sector evaluated all nominees to select one winner for each of the nine categories. These nine categories cover six subject areas including natural resources conservation, environmental quality, sustainability, environmental restoration, cultural resources management, and environmental excellence in weapon system acquisition.

About the Cultural Resources Management, Large Installation Award

The Cultural Resources Management, Large Installation award recognizes efforts to promote effective cultural resources management through proactive stewardship of DoD's extensive and rich heritage assets, including archaeological sites, cultural items, the historic built environment, and cultural landscapes. Through dynamic cultural resources management programs that partner with installation stakeholders, such as master planning, public works, and range management, DoD identifies and evaluates cultural resources that impact training, testing, and operational capabilities. The award also showcases successful partnerships with American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Native Hawaiian Organizations, states, and other historic preservation stakeholders to protect cultural resources in a manner that sustains mission readiness as responsible stewards of our collective heritage. Large installations have more than 10,000 acres and can include leased, military-owned, or administered outlying ranges or training practice areas. The 2020 winner of the Cultural Resources Management, Large Installation award is *Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, California*.

About Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, California

Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake spans 1.2 million acres in the California Mojave Desert. At least 95% of NAWS China Lake's land holdings, or over one million acres, remain undisturbed. The installation was established as a Naval Ordnance Test Station on November 8, 1943, as a partnership between the Navy and California Institute of Technology to test and evaluate rockets and other aviation ordnance. The Navy conducts 85% of its research, development, acquisition, test, and evaluation programs at NAWS China Lake. The installation also hosts a Seabee School, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Training Command, and energy production facilities that operate as public/private ventures. NAWS China Lake is home to the largest collections and concentrations of Native American rock art in the Western Hemisphere and numerous well-preserved prehistoric, ethno historic, and historic sites that represent the human experience in North America from over 10,000 years ago to the Age of Rockets.



Flight mission over NAWS China Lake. Personnel conduct an impressive 85% of the Navy's research, development, acquisition, test, and evaluation programs at NAWS China Lake.

Major Accomplishments in FY 2018-2019

- The NAWS China Lake Cultural Resources (CR) Program completed earthquake damage assessment, recovery, and renovation efforts on the installation's Curation Facility, where over 80% of Navy Region Southwest's historic artifacts are contained, following earthquakes on July 4 and 5, 2019, the largest in the State of California in the last 20 years. The installation's CR Program personnel renovated the NAWS China Lake Curation Facility after the earthquakes to include steel reinforced replacement shelving to keep artifacts stable and in place for curation.
- The CR Program worked with a nonprofit organization, Friends of China Lake Archaeology, to create the curation facility and help the curator organize and maintain artifacts and records collections housed at the facility. Installation staff helped consolidate two of the Navy's largest archaeological collections from San Nicolas Island and NAWS China Lake into one facility with one curator, meeting Federal standards and providing cost savings.
- Installation personnel rapidly reviewed eight military construction projects totaling over \$5 billion in less than three weeks. Staff also helped Regional Headquarters initiate State Historic Preservation Officer consultations on 11 eligible buildings in the Salt Wells Historic District for three military construction projects. CR Program staff oversaw the completion of appropriate maintenance and repair in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, including using cost effective measures from a detailed economic analysis.
- To ensure the Navy could satisfy requirements in the San Nicholas Island Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) consultation, a curator cataloged collections and created preliminary lists of artifact types necessary for the NAGPRA summary process. The Department of the Navy and Tribe stakeholders established trust through this culturally-sensitive approach where consultative relationships did not previously exist. At the culmination of a three-year joint planning effort, CR Program personnel facilitated a NAGPRA repatriation event starting at NAWS China Lake and ending at San Nicolas Island.



The condition of NAWS China Lake's Curation Facility after the earthquakes of July 4 and 5, 2019. Staff took this photograph during the assessment phase of the earthquake recovery.



The NAWS China Lake Curation Facility after damage assessment, recovery, and renovation efforts following the earthquakes of July 4 and 5, 2019. Steel reinforced replacement shelving units keep artifacts stable and in place for curation.