

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

*CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT INDIVIDUAL/TEAM AWARD:
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE*

INTRODUCTION

Nellis Air Force Base (NAFB), NV, the “Home of the Fighter Pilot”, is situated on 14,000 acres approximately 10 miles northeast of Las Vegas. NAFB is the largest composite flying wing in the US Air Force, the largest operating base in the Air Combat Command (ACC), and with a workforce of more than 9,500 military and civilian personnel it is one of the largest single employers in Nevada. It is home to the most demanding and advanced air combat training program in the Department of Defense (DoD), honing composite strike forces of Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps air and ground units, pilots of every type of aircraft in the Air Force inventory, and members of allied nations into the best combat aviators in the world.

Creech AFB (CAFB), home to the famed “Hunters” of the 432d Wing, 432d Air Expeditionary Wing, and the Predator unmanned aerial vehicle, is located near the community of Indian Springs, NV, approximately 35 miles northwest of the city of Las Vegas, NV. It is also assigned to NAFB Cultural Resources Department’s stewardship area. Range lands operated and maintained by NAFB include the north Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) which is withdrawn from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 75% of the south NTTR which is co-managed with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, the Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field (ISAFAF), and the Tolicha Peak Electronic Combat Range (TPECR).

NTTR provides 15,000 square miles of air space and 2.9 million acres of range land to form the largest mass of continuous air and ground space in the free world available for military operations. Although the aerial combat training mission at NAFB is extensive and includes the deployment of a wide variety of live munitions, decision-making processes have successfully limited military actions to less than three percent of the available range lands.



The NAFB mission supports ground and air exercises. Activity locales are Nellis AFB, Creech AFB, and the NTTR. Shown here is a Thunderbolt II releasing munitions during a close air support training exercise on the NTTR.

BACKGROUND

The NAFB Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Program consists of studies and documentation of the artifacts, structures, and sites left behind by prehistoric to modern day people who occupied the land in order to gain insight into their activities and behaviors. It monitors and ensures NAFB is in compliance with applicable federal, state and agency laws, and Air Force and DoD regulations and policies, ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and implements and reports on actions taken to achieve Air Force and DoD CRM Program goals and objectives. NAFB also manages the largest and most complex Native American Program in the Air Force with participation by 17 tribes spanning four states (AZ, CA, NV, and UT).

Ms. Lynn Wulf, an archeologist at NAFB since 2009, oversees the NAFB CRM Program with support from the Air Force Environmental Center of Excellence, Lackland AFB, TX, and is the NAFB cultural liaison to the Native American Program. Ms. Wulf holds a Master of Arts Degree in History from the American Public University System and is currently a doctoral candidate at Pacifica Graduate Institute where she is seeking a Doctor of Philosophy in Mythological Studies with emphasis in Depth Psychology.



Mining Features are common on the NTTR. Archaeologist Lynn Wulf is shown by a mining adit. This is a co-managed location with the BLM.

INTEGRATED CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Nellis, Creech, and NTTR Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) provides installation managers and planners with guidelines and operating procedures for complying with the legal responsibilities for preserving significant archaeological and historic cultural resources. To ensure mission accomplishment while maximizing cultural resource protection the NAFB ICRMP was developed with input obtained through document review responses and recommendations from 25 agency personnel and contract managers, 200 public stakeholders, professional specialists, local agency reviewers, and 66 tribal council designated representatives of 17 sovereign nation tribes. Reviews and recommendations were gathered and discussed in communications during meetings (local and regional), telephone calls (conference and individual), emails, and letters. The NAFB ICRMP was reviewed by HQ ACC/A7AN, NAFB Commander, United States Air Force Warfare Center Judge Advocate office and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and signed 31 August 2012.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Ms. Wulf oversees and conducts studies of the evidence of prehistoric to modern day human activity on NAFB and NTTR and shares the results of findings with tribal and other stakeholders using a variety of media. She is responsible for ensuring installation compliance with NEPA, and the numerous cultural resource focused federal, state and agency laws, regulations, and policies.

She consults with the SHPO as needed to ensure NAFB projects comply with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), and frequently contacts and interacts with the representatives of the 17 tribes having ties to NAFB and NTTR. She determines program operating costs and submits budget requests, maintains and updates an inventory of data on NAFB and NTTR cultural resources, oversees and conducts field investigations, develops and manages contracts for CRM efforts, attends installation and public meetings, and completes CRM Program outreach activities. She also oversees the development of videos on the history of NAFB and NTTR, speaks at public events and technical conferences, and manages the Native American Program and sub-programs.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Ms. Wulf believes a program that strikes a balance with mission requirements, scientific and preservation research, regulatory compliance, and Native American concerns results in a high level of stakeholder confidence with immediate and positive results. She strives to ensure the NAFB CRM Program creates a sense of pride and ownership and fosters a spirit of environmental stewardship. Ms. Wulf maintains contact with stakeholders through engaging in local public meetings, interacting with local specialists and agencies, and conducting field visits to management areas throughout the year to solicit stakeholder inputs. The results of her efforts include increased community awareness of, and support for, the NAFB CRM; expedited coordination and clearance of military mission requests; and community pride for both mission activities and cultural resource management at NAFB and NTTR.

Program Management

Ms. Wulf is dedicated to ensuring mission accomplishment by eliminating cultural resource related project delays. To accomplish this she held quarterly meetings with installation planners and managers to identify project needs followed by range visits with Native American representatives to capture potential cultural concerns. This method of pre-project planning allows issues of concern to be identified and mitigated before a project is started, has increased trust and confidence between NAFB/NTTR and its stakeholders, and has successfully eliminated projected delays. She coordinated AF Form 813 (NEPA) evaluation surveys for 103 projects requiring Native American approval with 30 tribal representatives and obtained their consent with no

delay in mission, completed sampling surveys of mountain ranges to clear 2,000 acres for a Global War on Terror project, and accomplished a research design and clearance for 5,000 acres for a 20 year project, which included regular consultation activities with tribal representatives, inclusion of tribal monitors in field activities, and responses and recommendations from Document Review Committee (DRC) composed of tribal representatives.

Historic Buildings And Structures

Ms. Wulf initiated a revolutionary architectural inventory plan (AIP) covering more than 1,000 NAFB, NTTR, and Creech AFB structures. The largest effort of its type in the Air Force, it addressed large scale clearance needs and expedited cultural needs for a 10 year footprint. She ensured the accurate assessment of potential negative project effects, such as encountering historic properties or consultation needs which would delay project activities or add unexpected costs. To facilitate study accuracy, efficiency, and project cohesion she used information and processes from other bases as well as coordinated the NV SHPO to ensure project review concurrence.



This photo, taken in 1956, shows the NAFB original footprint. The original Thunderbird hanger lies in the lower left hand quarter. The wide open desert lands, seen in the uppermost area, are now Northern Las Vegas.

Ms. Wulf obtained first person accounts of historic events at NAFB from the son of an immigrant who cut wood and broke wild horses on the base, and from a contractor who worked on a non-disclosed experiment in 1963. These surveys were conducted to replace information lost in a previously documented record needed to complete a comprehensive accounting of historic structures on NAFB administered lands.

Ms. Wulf also inspected the historic mining, ranching, and 1940s military training Civet Cat Canyon Cave Dugout, a limited access site, and initiated a treatment and preservation plan to maintain its integrity and improve its condition rating. Her efforts resulted in the preservation of a historic property rarely found on federal or state agency administered lands.

Archaeological Resources

Ms. Wulf conducted research on NAFB military history and published the results in a document distributed to museums and internal and external agency offices to provide land stewardship transparency and public outreach information. Working closely with tribal members, she ensured the protection of a Native American burial site located on NTTR by developing an agreement with users of that part of NTTR to prevent disturbances to the burial site and ensure it is kept undisturbed. Tribal members consistently express their satisfaction with the site's appearance and NAFB's management dedication during annual field visits. The preservation of this and 90 other Native American cultural sites has strengthened tribal trust in NAFB's cultural resource management efforts.



Archaeologists are shown documenting a prehistoric feature. A Native American monitor watches. This process enables exceptional holistic information gathering, with cultural sensitivity.

Native American Program

Ms. Wulf initiated the NAFB initiative to sponsor Native Americans at professional and regional archaeology and anthropology meetings where they are asked to speak about the success of the proactive processes used by the base to develop and maintain relationships with Native Americans. A first in the region, this sponsorship provides professional, academic, tribal, and public entities with

information on cutting edge processes, positive tribal relationships, and cultural resource modeling. Her success in effectively managing the Native American Program is illustrated by her efforts in obtaining 700 pages worth of exclusive, highly coveted, culturally sensitive and previously undisclosed information on tribal traditions and practices. By carefully explaining the benefits associated with greater visibility of the traditions and practices, Ms. Wulf was able to obtain “Informed Consent” and permission from tribal members, granting NAFB permission to share the information with researchers, academics, and other agencies. She established the NAFB Native American Videographer Program which was used to produce 14 videos covering the cultural practices of the Southern Paiute and Shoshone Tribes. Each video features Native Americans interviewing Native Americans. This approach facilitated open discussions and shared insights on cultural practices.

Ms. Wulf led eight intergenerational (grandparents, sons, daughters and grandchildren) site visits attended by 90 Tribal members from 15 tribes to NTTR lands that had been closed to public access since 1942. Participants who had lived on these locations demonstrated traditional activities and recounted their personal histories. She captured these events to create a digital library containing nearly 26,000 cultural digital photographs and 10 terabytes of HD video. Such a collection of data is rare and is considered an information gem.

Ms. Wulf was instrumental in the establishment of a Graduate Intern Program that provides 7 students a chance to study anthropology, archaeology, film studies, and ethnobotany while working at NAFB. The effectiveness of the program is clear as one student has completed a Masters of Arts in Anthropology through work conducted on NTTR, and another has produced a video, “The Students of Stonewall”, that has received favorable attention on social media. She also started the Native American Videographer Program to provide 15 tribal videographers an opportunity to develop and use their skills to produce videos documenting and memorializing tribal traditions and practices. The program leverages the instruction and experiences of NAFB videographers, and has resulted in the creation of a Tribal Language Group, a videoing language class, and Heritage Practice Classes. Ms. Wulf also established a Native American Future Leaders Program, the only program of its type within DoD, to provide selected tribal youth with an opportunity to participate in leaders meetings, field and training events,

and creating cultural videos and documents to be used in NAFB projects and products. This program introduces participants to functioning leadership roles in government-to-government activities and prepares them for positive future roles as leaders and innovators.



A Native American Future Leader helps a tribal videographer in training event. Several training events are completed each year. Merging tribal youth with NAFB tribal representatives is beneficial to all involved, in learning, experiencing and gathering video products for Base archives.

Cultural Awareness

Ms. Wulf has overseen the development of numerous documentaries and publications, and is responsible for creating an environmental calendar featuring pristine views of NTTR. These calendars, which are in high demand, focus on unique natural features of the range, and provide a glimpse into the preservation efforts taking place on NTTR. Volunteers distributed 10,000 calendars to local businesses, external agency offices, VA hospitals, schools, and community support facilities. Copies are also sent to military members stationed overseas.

Ms. Wulf was also responsible for supervising the production of videos covering historic World War II crashes on the Tonopah Army Air field (featuring 120 historic photographs and interviews with crew members) and oversaw development of a WWII Tonopah Army Air Field publication in partnership with the Central Nevada Museum. These documents provide education on the rich military history of NAFB and increase national interest and pride in its historic service to the nation. She also executed a project highlighting local Tonopah community members who assist NTTR with researching archived documents on historic motorbike races.

Community Relations

Ms. Wulf researched anecdotal information, primary resources, archived records, and regional museums to compile a historical accounting of military training conducted on NAFB, Creech AFB, and NTTR. Collected information was published in *The History of the Nellis AFB Military Training Lands*, a DoD funded document published by NAFB. A unique feature of this publication is that it includes photographs, maps, illustrations, and historic newspaper articles that feature the history of lands administered by NAFB (NAFB, CAFB installation regions, NTTR, and south ranges). The publication has been shared with schools, internal and external environmental agencies, and counterparts and stakeholders, and volunteers have donated the publication to regional libraries. She created a GIS time-based ethno-historic-to-present events model for use as a management information tool and educational resource. Her model is being used to educate and inform participants of tribal meetings and for scientific advancement at the 9th International Conference on Military Geology.

Ms. Wulf managed a large scale characterization project, a process of learning about an area through identifying interdisciplinary information and creating context and management data, without costly specialty restrictions normally be applied in standard compliance project work, using a unique methodology that incorporated gaining knowledge through tribal project participants. The project was acclaimed throughout the western United States and resulted in a DVD video and a gray paper, titled *Collaborative Ethnography Film; A workshop Case Study for the McNair Scholarship Program*, was the basis of the keynote presentation at the National Association for Interpretation 2011 Annual Meeting, was the basis of the article “Integrating Numic Ethnoecology and Spirituality to Revitalize a Fragmented Land” published in the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, and was discussed in a presentation given at the University of Florida Symposium on Ethnobiology, Religion, and Nature.

Mission Enhancement

By effectively protecting, enhancing and educating military personnel and external stakeholders on the significance of the cultural and historic resources at NAFB/NTTR/CAFB, Ms. Wulf directly contributes to the sustainability of the NAFB/NRTTR/CAFB mission. Her enlightened leadership has been instrumental in accumulating vast amounts of data from places like Stonewall Mountain and prehistoric habitation sites in the valley below and integrating it into the investigations and evaluations required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for installation/range infrastructure improvement projects. Ms. Wulf also practices an active and on-going consultation process with Native American tribes to solicit important insights and meaningful recommendations that serve to eliminate the potential for negative surprises later in a project. She obtains information from tribal members who are aware of the many enigmatic cultural and archaeological features, often overlooked during surveys only to be discovered during mission critical operations, and escorts them to areas proposed for development or other activity and encourages them to voice their concerns or request mitigation or preservation measures. Her actions are crucial to avoid having installation planners invest in projects, only to find themselves immersed in sudden conflicts when tribes are not included when consideration is being given to resolve a problem.



NAFB CRM conducts extensive outreach. Publications or videos are created and provided freely to those interested. Many NAFB publications are staple reference materials for local schools, and BLM, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife offices.