



United States Department of Defense Best Practices in Cultural Resources Management

07-365

Background:

Sound Cultural Resources Management requires an ability to balance the spirit and the law of United States historic preservation stewardship requirements with sound mission support. The Department of Defense has been extremely fortunate to employ a series of cultural resource management professionals; archaeologists, architectural historians, and preservation architects, who have used creative problem solving and management skills to set new standards for best practices within the Department of Defense. The purpose of this project is to provide some of these examples in an easy to use handbook that would also encourage further sharing of ideas and best practices.

Objective:

The objective of this project is to provide practical information to professionals who are new to the world of Department of Defense Cultural Resources Management, creative ideas to experienced colleagues, and also to members of garrison leadership who may not be familiar with what they should and can expect from a cultural resources program that understands the relationship between stewardship and mission requirements.

Summary of Approach:

The handbook includes discussions of:

- Management of Historic Structures
- Native American Consultation
- Myth Busting
- Using Cultural Resources as Assets to Support the Mission
- Partnering within an Installation
- Partnering outside an Installation
- Public Outreach
- Volunteer Programs
- Proactive Archaeological Survey and Management Methods to Avoid Mission Delay

In addition to the handbook, the project also produced Heritage Awareness Outreach Poster Calendars. The calendar uses a perpetual format so that the exact days can be written in for any year. The calendar highlights outreach opportunities that are related to heritage and cultural resources. As a way of illustrating potential for partnering, cultural resource managers who receive calendars are encouraged to offer copies to their colleagues who work in the installations' equal opportunity offices. These types of meetings lead to partnership, an example of a best practice.

It is our hope that the printed handbook will serve as a jumping off point for sharing additional best management practices. We know that we have colleagues who will read the handbook and say, "Wait a minute, I have a better example." Opening the discussion, perhaps on line, will disseminate additional best practices.

Benefit:

The long term benefit will be better education of Department of Defense installation leadership and cultural resource specialists. The experienced practitioners have discovered that an ability to understand and support the military mission leads to enhanced historic preservation and cultural resource stewardship in the military setting. The opportunity to share best practices is intended to help each cultural resource team to work more effectively with installation leadership to develop stewardship methods that support the mission.

Accomplishments:

This project supported a series of Best Management Practice meetings and briefings that reached all services within the DoD including a plenary session at the 2007 Sustaining Military Readiness Conference. Several hundred copies of the Best Management Practices publication as well as the Heritage Outreach Calendar have been printed and are being distributed throughout DoD. Preliminary feedback concerning both publications has been positive. The calendar is helping to establish new partnerships or reinforce old partnerships between cultural resource and equal opportunity offices at many installations.

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