

Fiscal Year 2004 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards Nomination

CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

**LTC MICHAEL TARPLEY
CAMP BEAUREGARD, LA**



Sustain the Mission. Secure the Future.



BACKGROUND

Based at Camp Beauregard, La., Lieutenant Colonel Michael Tarpley serves as Cultural Resources manager for the Louisiana Army National Guard (LAARNG).

POSITION DESCRIPTION

In line with the Army’s move away from mere compliance-driven cultural resources management to that which also supports mission sustainability, LTC Tarpley created and leads a comprehensive National Guard program—managing cultural resources at five major installations and 80 armories across the Pelican State. Collectively known as Fort Louisiana, they comprise 1,352 buildings and 29,000 acres of training land. Since founding the program in 1997, he has also been responsible for two National Register Historic Districts, 43 National Register structures and 511 American Indian cultural sites to date (including traditional fishing grounds, sacred areas and flint-knapping sites). LTC Tarpley’s goals as cultural resources manager are detailed below in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
LAARNG Cultural Resources Program Goals

- To create innovative cultural resources programs that are transferable to state, federal and military agencies across the country,
- To achieve a successful balance between mission accomplishment and cultural resources protection,
- To provide for the optimum quality and quantity of training lands for Soldiers; and
- To achieve full compliance with all cultural resources laws and regulations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mission Enhancement

The success of LTC Tarpley’s programs greatly enhances the training lands for the LAARNG, serving the military mission of readiness. Balancing Soldier training needs with cultural resources protection and sensitivity to the community leads him to unique and diplomatic solutions. For example, in

FY 2002, when the LAARNG created the Mechanized Engineer Training Area, LTC Tarpley consulted with tribal elders on three Native American cultural sites facing impacts. Elders agreed to mitigation of the sites, while LTC Tarpley adapted the original construction plans to protect another cultural site near the original construction.

“LTC Tarpley’s innovative style and foresight has allowed all of us to accomplish what we are supposed to as Soldiers and to train in a much more efficient manner. He truly has the Soldiers and Airmen at heart...”

- BG (Retired) Robert A. Lee, Mississippi Army National Guard

Overall Cultural Resources Management

LTC Tarpley combines his passion for cultural resources with a keen instinct for managing budgets. Under his watch, his program’s budget grew from \$130,000 to over \$400,000, and trained personnel increased fivefold from FY 2002 to FY 2004. To reduce costs, he implements creative staffing approaches; for example, he is the only National Guard Bureau (NGB) cultural resources manager to employ a Native American Affairs coordinator as referenced by AR 200-4. This has saved the LAARNG over \$500,000 in consultant fees and consultation costs associated with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) clearances. If training or construction activities result in accidental damage, military and tribal representatives can mediate the issue internally without incurring prohibitive legal fees.

LTC Tarpley coordinates cultural resources management with and provides training to the Chief Facilities and Maintenance Officer, Chief of Staff, troop units and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure compliance. Because he is also responsible for natural resources management, LTC Tarpley works to ensure the integration of each program’s resources and goals. Before any construction begins, he uses the NEPA process, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps and a national database that identifies and tracks characteristics of historic structures to ensure construction activity will not damage archaeological sites or historical structures.

Figure 2. Status Summary

ICRMP: Fully approved and updated

Inventory surveyed to date:

- 96 percent of military lands
- 2 National Register Historic Districts
- 43 National Register structures
- 511 American Indian cultural sites

Historic Buildings and Structures

LTC Tarpley manages historic structures statewide including the Carville National Register Historic Districts and Jackson Barracks, which is comprised of the most significant Greek-Revival complex nationally and 17 buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). He also assessed 100 percent of all armory structures, determined their NRHP status and recorded the results in a national database. LTC Tarpley ensured that all 43 National Register buildings in the Jackson Barracks and Carville Historic Districts and all WWII-era Camp Beauregard buildings were adaptively reused for office space and storage, achieving the goals identified in Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)—and avoiding the expenses associated with constructing new work and storage areas.

Archaeological Resources

LTC Tarpley identified more than 500 previously unknown archaeological sites during Phase I Archaeological Surveys and four new sites eligible for the NRHP in FY 2004 during Phase II Testing. Additionally, advancing the LAARNG’s state mission to “preserve and protect life, property, peace, order and public safety,” LTC Tarpley combined site protection and vulnerability assessment programs to reduce multiple annual looting crimes to zero incidents in FY 2004. To do so, he developed the only comprehensive Department of Defense (DoD) site protection program to incorporate military police trained in the requirements of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), crime scene preservation techniques, on-site surveillance and remote-sensing surveillance. He also partnered with the SHPO in FY 2003 to successfully lobby the state legislature to increase archaeological crime penalties on state lands to equal ARPA penalties on federal lands.

Additionally, as part of his comprehensive site protection program, LTC Tarpley provides ARPA training, with coordination from the US Forest Service (USFS), for military and tribal police. With USFS, LTC Tarpley developed a unique DoD program using GIS spatial and aerial data, along with artifact density, site visibility and previous damage data to organize surveillance needs. With his emphasis on transferability, he provided support in the use of remote surveillance techniques when Fort Carson created a comparable site protection program for its archaeological resources.



▲ As part of LTC Tarpley’s site protection program, Soldiers install remote cameras and sensors to monitor and protect archeological and culturally significant sites on LAARNG lands.

Native American and Native Hawaiian Programs/ Curation Efforts

Community Partnerships. LTC Tarpley’s successful and unique partnering with Native American tribes has earned him high praise. He developed four formal Native American Consultation Agreements from FY 1999 to FY 2003, one of which was the first and only programmatic agreement for implementation of Section 106 of the NHPA on National Guard land, forged between the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the SHPO, the NGB, the LAARNG and tribal nations. The ACHP’s chairman, John Nau, officially commended this effort and accomplishment in FY 2003.

LTC Tarpley held the first NGB-approved seminar to train Guardsmen in consultation protocols, agreements and tribal relations. The seminar

assembled 30 Guard states/active-duty installations and 24 tribal nations and Alaskan villages. The seminar was elevated to NGB control and now serves as a national workshop model.

LTC Tarpley created a Native American Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Louisiana and displaced tribes that significantly increased tribal access to military lands for collection of plants for ceremonial and other uses. Additionally, he helped develop the Native American Historical Initiative (NAHI), a US Army Environmental Center (USAEC)-funded and NGB-approved pilot project that incorporates the unique knowledge, resources and expertise of federally recognized tribes into ICRMP development. Begun in 1999, this MOU project serves as a model for government-to-government consultation. The Initiative's report was endorsed by the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) and is now used as guidance for conducting Native American programs by numerous tribal governments, state and federal agencies and military installations.

Beginning in FY 2002, LTC Tarpley conducted the first DoD Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) inventory of places of religious and cultural significance to federally recognized tribes affiliated with Fort Louisiana. In partnership with key tribal leaders and federal agencies, LTC Tarpley funded and organized this intensive survey of TCPs and produced a report suggesting a reevaluation of Bulletin 38 of the National Register governing TCPs.

Artifact Curation and Lands. LTC Tarpley values artifact curation as an integral part of his cultural resources program. He negotiated an agreement with the SHPO for artifacts from LAARNG lands to



▲ A concept later adopted by Fort Benning, Ga., is LTC Tarpley's Native American Keepsafe Cemetery, shown above. It is a mitigation resource for inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains by dedicating military land for their re-interment and is the first of its type on DoD land.

be selectively curated at Native American tribal museums upon tribal request. He also administers a curation contract with Northwestern State University (NSU) of more than 21,300 Native American artifacts uncovered during training land surveys. In addition, during several consultation meetings, LTC Tarpley initiated planning for a five-year internship program with NSU for tribal members to support archeological surveys and assist with development of interpretive museum displays of Native American cultural materials.

In FY 2004, LTC Tarpley began the planning phase of the first African-American archaeological and military history program on National Guard military lands. The implementation phase will include archival studies of and excavations at 19th century African-American commercial sites at Camp Minden to help the public understand how this historic community developed and shaped the lives of succeeding generations. It also involves development of a permanent African-American exhibit at the Louisiana Maneuvers and Military Museum.

Consultation and Transferability. He assisted Fort Benning with the transfer of lands containing sacred sites to the city of Columbus, Ga., creating a national precedent by upholding the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) on federal lands once transferred out of federal control.

"Mike recognized the importance of bringing federal tribes to the table to participate in ICRMP development. He built the smoothest consultation process and his tutelage extends beyond the Army. The Federal Highway Administration and the Louisiana Department of Transportation have since developed similar programs."

- Dr. Tom Eubanks, state archaeologist for Louisiana

Additionally, from FY 2002 to FY 2003, LTC Tarpley's consultation skills proved invaluable when tribal nations and Native Hawaiians were overwhelmed by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requests for cultural site clearance for proposed cell tower locations. Given their limited resources, it was impossible for the tribes to comply with the 30-day timeframe for response, leading the FCC to interpret non-response as consent and begin construction. LTC Tarpley partnered with USET and legal counsel, and agreements were negotiated with FCC Chairman Michael Powell. Using the LAARNG model, an MOU was created requiring the FCC to engage in government-to-government consultation and tribal reimbursement.

LTC Tarpley also began providing assistance in FY 2002 for ICRMP development and Native Hawaiian consultation. Based on the LAARNG ICRMP model, the Hawaii Army National Guard (HIARNG) hired a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner to negotiate consultation and to foster cultural exchange. Furthermore, LTC Tarpley assisted the HIARNG for two years in developing its overall cultural resources management program.

Cultural Resources Awareness and Education

Training Soldiers is an important component of the LAARNG's mission, and educating troops about the value of our nation's cultural resources is part of that training. LTC Tarpley has successfully coordinated several programs to enhance cultural resources awareness and education. For example, he ensures all Soldiers training on Louisiana military lands are briefed about cultural resources protection. He also educates the troops and public through the Jackson Barracks Military Museum and the Louisiana Maneuvers and Military Museum.

He secured funding to create a permanent Native American Cultural Resources Interpretive Exhibit display for FY 2005 in the Louisiana Maneuvers and Military Museum. In addition, in FY 2004, he negotiated the permanent loan to the LAARNG of the 6,000-volume private research library of the late Bill Day, former tribal historic preservation officer for the Poarch Band of Creek Indians—making this rich resource available to the public.

LTC Tarpley also developed the Fort Louisiana Leaders' Environmental Handbook and Soldiers' Environmental Field Card in-house and provided cultural resources awareness training to soldiers, with over 20,000 copies distributed to date. These materials inform Soldiers about such topics as spill containment procedures, no-dig areas and the care of unearthed artifacts.

"LTC Tarpley's dedication to historic preservation and to involving tribes in the management of ancestral places is an example of what is possible, not what is required. As a result of his tireless efforts, LAARNG has forged unprecedented relationships with the state, Indian tribes and other federal agencies, to establish a first-rate cultural resources management program."

- Valerie Hauser, ACHP Native American program coordinator

In FY 2004, LTC Tarpley initiated a program to expand upon the heightened cultural sensitivity of troops returning from Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The briefings given to troops deploying and training on Louisiana military lands have been expanded to build upon the new heightened awareness for overall cultural resources protection.



▲ LTC Tarpley documented the oral history of the Choctaw code talkers of WWI and the Comanche code talkers of WWII, who trained at Camp Beauregard prior to overseas deployments during the wars. He poses above, with Charlie Chibity, the last surviving Comanche code talker of WWII.

Community Relations

The LAARNG’s cultural resources management program realizes its true value with community involvement. LTC Tarpley adheres to the LAARNG’s community mission of enhancing community relationships and providing mutually beneficial support. In FY 2003, he hosted and coordinated the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society’s Tribal Summer Youth Practicum for cultural and natural resources awareness—the first time the society has ever conducted its Youth Practicum on a military installation. Youth from 10 different tribal nations across the Southeast participated. This event further expanded the access already enjoyed by the community in the form of open hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and other recreational activities on the installation. Although troop activity prevented the installation from hosting the summer youth practicum in FY 2004, LTC Tarpley helped plan a second one, which was held at the tribal center of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.



▲ LTC Tarpley talks with Mary Jones of the Jena Band of the Choctaw Indians. His strong partnerships with key tribal leaders like Jones help make cooperative initiatives, such as this Native American cultural site assessment at Camp Beauregard, reality.

the USFS, the Louisiana SHPO, the ACHP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, USET and numerous sovereign tribal nations concerning government-to-government consultation and archaeological site protection.

“LTC Tarpley’s commitment to environmental and cultural issues as they affect American Indians is outstanding. His willingness to take the initiative and to do the right thing has gained not only my respect but that of the tribes in the Eastern Region. His vision and dedication is a wonderful example of military professionalism.”

- Franklin Keel, director, Eastern Region, Bureau of Indian Affairs, US Department of the Interior

“LTC Tarpley has a sincere cultural sensitivity and particularly in his respectful manner of working with tribal leaders on the protection of traditional cultural properties. Here in Hawaii, we refer to such principles of respect as Aloha. LTC Tarpley has truly learned to hold this code of ethics close to his heart while conducting his work. I hope the DoD honors the fine standards LTC Tarpley has illustrated for others to follow...”

- Toni Auld Yardley, traditional cultural resource management specialist, Kanakamaoli Religious Institute, Hawaii

Environmental Enhancement

With the assistance of the Colorado Center for Ecological Management of Military Lands, he completed a community vegetative survey to help locate and protect native river cane, a type of bamboo that tribes use to make cane baskets.

Cultural Resources Compliance

Interaction with federal, state and community groups has advanced the LAARNG goal of full compliance with the law. LTC Tarpley achieved 100 percent cultural compliance through involvement of the Joint Staff, Army major command staff and trainers in the NEPA process. LTC Tarpley and his staff partner with the National Park Service,

CONCLUSION

LTC Tarpley’s energy, compassion, character and strong sense of duty power the LAARNG’s complex cultural resources management program, making it a model for other installations. He is dedicated to his stakeholders; he launches and drives forward efficient and successful programs that have proven transferable; he partners with key tribal, community, state and federal leaders; and he works hard to ensure his programs advance the federal, state and community missions of LAARNG.