

FISCAL YEAR 2011 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – INSTALLATION

1. Introduction

Mission: The mission of the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC) at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) is to conduct relevant live-fire combined arms training, urban operations, Joint/Coalition level integration training that promotes operational forces readiness as well as to provide the facilities, services, and support responsive to the needs of resident organizations, Marines, Sailors, and their families today and tomorrow. MAGTFTC trains up to one-fourth of the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) prior to deployment, in support of ground combat operations during live-fire, combined arms exercises and numerous other training exercises over the course of the year.

Population: The MCAGCC population of over 25,000 is comprised of approximately 13,500 active military and over 11,500 family members. There are more than 1700 civilian personnel in both appropriated and non-appropriated fund activities. As a training center, MCAGCC trains approximately 30,000 Department of Defense personnel as well as foreign forces and over 5000 Marines through MCCES each year.

Location: MCAGCC is located in the southern Mojave Desert approximately 50 miles northeast of the city of Palm Springs. It is 597,398 acres (about 935 square miles) of diverse desert terrain and is the largest live-fire and maneuver training base in the Marine Corps.

Historical Context: The installation is rich with prehistoric and historic archeological sites that range in size from a few square feet to many hundreds of acres. Prehistoric archeological sites include high quality tool stone quarry sites, campsites, rock art and ceremonial locations, caves, and small lithic and ceramic scatters that date from 100 to 10,000 years ago. Historic archeological sites in the area are related to the first mining efforts in the southern Mojave Desert. These mines were established in the 1880s and are linked to the establishment of railroad sidings and stations in the desert. Mining and ranching dominated the early historic period and were eventually replaced by homesteading. World War I veterans who had been exposed to German gas attacks claimed the first homesteads. They moved to the Twentynine Palms region because the dry, clean air was beneficial to their continued health. In the 1930s, the depression era brought additional residents to the high desert. Some newcomers wanted to escape from the high cost of living in the cities; others wanted to try their hand at mining. This resurgence of mining activity continued well into the 1940s when the military arrived in the desert.

The military history of the installation began in 1941 when Condor Field was established by the Army Air Force to train glider pilots. Graduates of the training program went on to advanced combat glider training at Lubbock Army Airfield in Texas, and, in the spring of 1943, the Twentynine Palms Air Academy completed the contract to train glider pilots. It is estimated that over 1600 pilots were trained at Condor Field during its 15 months of operation. Between 1943 and 1944 the Twentynine Palms Air Academy became a conventional powered flight training facility, providing primary flight training to cadets, the first step in pilot training. Later in 1944, the Navy assumed control of the facility using it for flight training, bombing and

strafing. At the war's end, the facility was placed in caretaker status. In 1952, the Marine Corps acquired over 900 square miles in the vicinity of Twentynine Palms, including Condor Field, for use in training Marines with long range weaponry. Over time, the installation evolved into a premier live-fire training facility not only for Fleet Marines, but for other DoD services and military personnel from a variety of foreign nations.

2. Background

MAGTFTC has negotiated and signed two Programmatic Agreements (PAs) and two Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plans (ICRMPs) over the past 10 years. The first ICRMP, for FY02 through FY06, was ratified on December 10, 2002, with the Commanding General, MAGTFTC, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) constituting the signatory parties. This ICRMP was prepared as required by the PA dated March 21, 2001. The ICRMP for FY02 through FY06 identified specific inventory goals for the five year period covered by the ICRMP and projected the evaluation of 138 archeological sites. However, the acres surveyed and sites evaluated exceeded the expectations set forth in the ICRMP by almost double for FY02 through FY06. This was a major accomplishment for MAGTFTC. The second ICRMP covering the period from FY07 through FY11 was operational during this award period. As of the close of FY11, 45% (269,439 acres) of the 597,398 acre Center had been inventoried for cultural resources. Because the overall inventory goal of 46,817 acres set by the ICRMP had been exceeded by FY10, most of the focus in FY11 was on evaluating the sites for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

On December 20, 2007, the SHPO signed the current ICRMP for the period of FY07-FY11. The ICRMP is the MAGTFTC legal historic preservation compliance document guiding the inventory, evaluation and treatment program at MCAGCC. The ICRMP covers the resources found within the 935 square mile installation, and was mandated by the PA, ratified by signature between the Commanding General, MAGTFTC and the California SHPO on April 9, 2007. It should be noted that this PA was negotiated for a period of seven years to allow sufficient operational time for the five-year ICRMPs to be prepared and implemented. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), upon review of supporting documentation to the PA, did not believe that their participation in consultation was warranted, therefore, signatory parties included only the Commanding General and the California SHPO.

Both ICRMPs focused on the timely identification and evaluation of archeological resources, historic and prehistoric. In 1999, all buildings and structures built before 1989 were inventoried and evaluated for National Register eligibility with negative results. The California SHPO concurred with the not eligible determination on August 30, 2002. The ICRMPs were therefore geared towards the management of archeological resources.

The ICRMP for FY07 through FY11 includes general information on the mission of MAGTFTC, presents the location and setting of MCAGCC, and describes the cultural resources management history, organized by training area to facilitate development of management goals. The ICRMP also provides the plan's objective, the organizational and review responsibility for its implementation, and provides a detailed discussion of land uses. A regional and installation specific context for both historic and prehistoric properties was

developed. Additionally, all cultural resources studies completed at the installation were detailed to establish an historic record. Priorities were established for future inventories and evaluations. The practical focus of the ICRMP is to identify inventory and evaluation requirements, for the five-year life of the document, in response to training needs and requirements. Additional topics in the ICRMP include curation plans, data management, site protection measures, monitoring plans, Native American consultation and coordination plans, and public awareness/outreach plans.

The ICRMP for FY07 through FY11 was reviewed and adjusted annually, and updated in a new ICRMP for FY12 through FY16. An Historic Preservation Compliance Report (HPCR) is required annually, and documents all cultural resources management activities for the prior fiscal year. An HPCR was submitted to the California SHPO, the ACHP, the Tribes and other interested parties for each fiscal year including FY10 and FY11. HPCRs are due within 75 calendar days of the close of the fiscal year.

The Cultural Resources Section is positioned under the Natural and Cultural Resources Branch of the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs (NREA) Division and is staffed by the branch chief and three archeologists. Dr. Marie Cottrell is the branch chief and serves as the cultural resources manager as identified in the ICRMP. Dr. John Hale is the staff archeologist; Ms. Leslie Glover (MA) is the cultural resources specialist; Mr. Nicholas Chamberlain is the collections manager; and Ms. D'Anne D'Albers is the contract curation technician. The staff is responsible for the cultural resources management program including management and operations of the Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center at MCAGCC.

3. Program Summary

a. In FY10 and FY11, the Marine Corps initiated consultation with the California SHPO and seven Native American Tribes relative to the Land Acquisition and Airspace Establishment Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Although three study areas were identified for the project, the Preferred Alternative comprised portions of two of the study areas; the West (146,667 acres) and the South (21,304 acres). Initial surveys beginning in 2008 were systematic stratified sample surveys, while those performed during the past two years were concentrated in areas of demonstrable resources sensitivity and in areas most likely to be affected by the expanded base training mission. To date, 78,184 acres (53%) of the West Study area have been or are being surveyed; 14,417 acres (68%) of the South Study area have been or are being surveyed; while 19,936 acres in the non selected East Study area have been inventoried. Currently, 113 archeological sites have been recorded and 39 are in the process of being evaluated. The Marine Corps requested that the existing Programmatic Agreement (April 2007- April 2014) be applied to any acquired lands and a separate ICRMP be developed to guide inventory, evaluation, and treatment program for cultural resources within acquired lands. Because MCAGCC has a proven history of meeting its obligations under the Programmatic Agreements and ICRMPs, the California SHPO concurred with this approach.

b. The first and only of its kind aboard a Marine Corps installation, the Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center has been in operation since April 2007. The facility meets federal curation standards and ensures MCAGCC's compliance with 36 CFR 79 and the availability of collections to researchers. Additionally, the Center provides numerous and

varied opportunities for public outreach. Over 600 boxes of archaeological artifacts and paleontological specimens, as well as associated documentation (inventories, archived reports, photographs, maps, field notes, etc.) are curated at the Center using archival quality packaging materials and methods, and fire-safe vaults for original photographic materials and files. An electronic collections database tracks the location of each artifact and is updated as more artifacts are accessioned into the collections. NREA staff regularly conducts tours of the Center for Marines, Sailors, and their families, and is available for tours for the general public by appointment.

Funding for the design of a second curation building was received in FY11 and, early in FY12, funding for construction was received. The building will be constructed in the immediate vicinity of the main Curation Center and will primarily function for storage. In addition to housing MCAGCC materials, the curation center is becoming a regional Marine Corps facility with Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) for curation signed with MCAS Yuma and MCLB Barstow.

Three grants from the National Environmental Education Foundation and the DoD Legacy Program were received to develop three gardens that address different cultural and ecological themes. These gardens are co-located with the curation center. The Cultural Heritage Garden is a water-wise ethnobotanical garden designed to educate visitors about water conservation, native vegetation, and traditional Native American plant uses. The Chemehuevi Tribe is assisting in providing Native names for the various plants and their traditional uses. The Hummingbird and Butterfly Nectar Garden was constructed in response to Native American concerns regarding the state of local pollinator species. Lastly, the third garden will provide a controlled habitat for ambassador tortoises, Thelma and Louise, wherein they will be seasonally available for visitation. Construction of the gardens included donated labor by Marines, Boy Scouts, and school children from nearby Condor Elementary School as well as environmental staff.

c. In meeting the cultural resources management goals of the ICRMP, a total of 23,726 acres have been inventoried over the past two years bringing the total to 269,439 acres or 45% of the 597,398 acre base. Also, 49 recorded archeological sites have been evaluated for National Register eligibility during this period bringing the total of assessed sites to 515 or 27.5% of the 1871 recorded sites. An additional 132 sites are in the process of being evaluated but reports are not yet completed. The proactive inventory and evaluation program outlined in the ICRMP was not only met, but exceeded in many cases. Developing land management strategies to protect significant archeological sites while not encumbering training missions is vital. As part of the Request for Environmental Impact Review process implemented at MCAGCC, the Cultural Resources staff has reviewed over 150 projects aboard the base since the beginning of FY07. Cultural Resources staff, as in prior years, reviewed the cultural resources program as well as military goals and updated the ICRMP for the period to cover FY12 through FY16. The ICRMP has been reviewed within the Marine Corps and is currently being reviewed by the California SHPO. Copies were provided to all seven Tribes that consult with the Marine Corps for review and comment. Signatures are expected by late winter 2012.

4. Accomplishments

Overall Cultural Resources Management at MCAGCC has been extraordinarily successful. Virtually all lands considered available for military maneuver have been inventoried and 1871 archeological sites have been identified and recorded. At the end of FY11, approximately 45% of MCAGCC lands have been inventoried. Of the 1871 archeological sites found aboard the base, almost 35% have been or are in the process of evaluation. All buildings and structures at the base had been inventoried and evaluated in 1999 and none of these were recommended as eligible; the California SHPO concurred with these findings. MAGTFTC operated under its second PA and second ICRMP from FY07 through FY11. Also, a draft ICRMP, our third, was completed in late FY11 and is in for review with the California SHPO. Because surveys have been completed for so many of the maneuverable areas on the base, projects proposed by mission operations require limited or no advance surveys to ascertain whether cultural resources will be involved with the proposed projects. Navigating through the National Environmental Policy Act process is expedited, whether the project requires a categorical exclusion, an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement.

In fact, the success of the overall cultural resources management program at MCAGCC has greatly facilitated the consultation process with the California SHPO, the ACHP, and the Native American Tribes affiliated with the installation. The SHPO has concurred that the existing Programmatic Agreement may be applied to acquired lands as identified in the Land Acquisition and Airspace Establishment EIS, and an ICRMP be prepared to manage cultural resources in the expansion areas. As a result, the Marine Corps has met the consultation requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act for this undertaking in an expeditious manner.

Archeological Resources at MCAGCC constitute the sole category of cultural resources on the installation. To date, 1,871 archeological sites have been located and recorded within the base boundaries and of these 647 sites have been or are in the process of being evaluated. Currently, the Keeper of the National Register has determined only one site, the Foxtrot Petroglyph Site, eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Also, documentation was provided the California SHPO related to 18 historic mining sites with MAGTFTC's determination that 10 of the sites were eligible and eight were not. SHPO concurred. One of the goals of the CRM program is to submit nomination packages through the SHPO for concurrence with eligibility determinations. A nomination package for the Deadman Lake Archeological District has been prepared and a second package is under preparation for the Quackenbush Training Area and should be ready for submission in 2013.

Native American Program at MCAGCC has been in place since the mid 90s. MAGTFTC consults with seven Native American Tribes that have interests in lands currently occupied by MCAGCC. These include the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, the Colorado River Indian Tribes, the Chemehuevi, the Twentynine Palms Band of Mission Indians, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. Although the installation does have evidence of human remains at one site aboard the base, the Surprise Springs site, no human remains have been disturbed or collected. The installation does not have any items that relate to human remains or items of cultural patrimony in its collections nor do any of the Tribes identify traditional cultural properties within the base boundaries. The numerous archeological sites, including rock art sites and various rock alignments, are interpreted as having cultural significance to Native American groups. All

reports of investigations are provided to the seven Tribes with whom regular consultations are conducted.

In February 2011 all seven Tribes were contacted and we were able to meet with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe for input into the development of the new ICRMP and to clarify consultation procedures. For the most part, the Tribes prefer face to face meetings twice a year to review the MCAGCC program. The other Tribes expressed interest in continuing consultation but were otherwise occupied with various projects in the desert. Later in February, all of the Tribes were provided copies of the draft EIS for the land expansion project. It should be noted that MAGTFTC has met and consulted with the Tribes over the past four years regarding the Land Acquisition project on a regular basis. The only Tribe that we have not had the opportunity for face to face meetings is the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, although we have discussed our project with them by phone.

Curation is an ongoing process at MCAGCC and has been since 1995. The first and only of its kind aboard a Marine Corps installation, the Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center has been in operation since April 2007. The facility meets federal curation standards and ensures MCAGCC's compliance with 36 CFR 79 and the availability of collections to researchers. Additionally, the Center provides numerous and varied opportunities for public outreach. Over 600 boxes of archaeological artifacts and paleontological specimens, as well as associated documentation (inventories, archived reports, photographs, maps, field notes, etc.) are curated at the Center using archival quality packaging materials and methods, and fire-safe vaults for original photographic materials and files. An electronic collections database tracks the location of each artifact and is updated as more artifacts are accessioned into the collections. NREA staff regularly conducts tours of the Center for Marines, Sailors, and their families, and is available for tours for the general public by appointment.

Since the current 2500 square foot building is reaching capacity, funds were programmed two years ago for the construction of a second curation building at MCAGCC. Funding for the design of a second curation building was received in FY11, and early in FY12, funding for construction was received. The building will be constructed in the immediate vicinity of the main Curation Center and will primarily function for storage. In addition to housing MCAGCC materials, the curation center is becoming a regional Marine Corps facility with Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) for curation signed with MCAS Yuma and MCLB Barstow.

MAGTFTC has entered into a partnership with Joshua Tree National Park wherein in case of disaster, each partner will take in the other's collections for safekeeping until disaster issues are resolved.

Cultural Resources Awareness, Community Relations and Outreach have been staples at MCAGCC since the mid 90s as well. Over 30,000 Marines, contractors, and visitors have received information regarding cultural resources conservation efforts at the base in FY11. The Curation Center has averaged around one group ranging in size from four to 50 people each month since its opening. Groups include retirees, Chamber of Commerce representatives, local government personnel, and school children. The facility is open for visitation during normal work hours, five days a week. MAGTFTC cultural resources personnel have participated in

Earth Day and have provided lectures to various groups in the southern California area. Additionally, Dr. Cottrell teaches Archeology and Anthropology as well as Cultural Geography at Copper Mountain College and is able to use many examples of local Native American culture based on findings from the base. Dr. John Hale completed his doctoral degree at the University of California, Riverside and is using data regarding the Rock Art at MCAGCC and the Mojave in preparing talks to various groups in the area. Additionally, his interests have led him to develop a number of talks focusing on historic events and figures that have made a significant contribution to the patterns of history in the Mojave Desert.

Community Relations and Affiliations include memberships in the Twentynine Palms Historical Society, the Morongo Basin Historical Society, the Society for American Archeology, Society for California Archeology, and the Archaeological Institute of America. These relationships and participation with other organizations such as the California Cultural Resources Protection Alliance contribute to our understanding of regional cultural resources preservation issues.

Mission and Environmental Enhancement has been achieved through the establishment of the PA which allows MAGTFTC an alternative mechanism to achieve compliance than the normal Section 106 process. MAGTFTC has prepared an ICRMP as required by the PA that not only sets forth inventory, evaluation, and treatment goals over the course of five years, but allows the Cultural Resources Manager to document annually, no effect and no adverse effect actions in lieu of individual consultations. This expedites the compliance process and allows MAGTFTC to be responsive to the rapidly changing training needs in this time of international conflict.