Background:

Department of Defense components are federally mandated to protect and manage archaeological sites and collections. Every archaeological project on federal land results in a collection of artifacts and/or administrative and field records that must be curated and maintained in perpetuity in compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and federal regulations outlined in Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archeological Collections (36 CFR 79). DoD Components own large collections of archaeological material that are stored either in facilities on base or held at privately or state-owned repositories through the implementation of Cooperative Curation Agreements.

Objective:

This project prepared a test case for integrating archaeological artifact collection data into USAF developed cultural resources data system, MCRAD. The data included archaeological collections from prehistoric and historic sites, as well as land based and submerged shipwreck sites.

Summary of Approach:

At project initiation, Versar met with Navy representatives to review MCRAD capabilities and coordinate various DoD data collection and reporting requirements. The database design and reporting tools were modified as necessary to accommodate emergent requirements identified during this consultation (i.e. NA IPT metrics).

Versar coordinated with NAVFAC, Hampton Roads Naval Museum, and NWS Yorktown to arrange data collection activities. Versar collected artifact collection data for Hampton Roads Naval Museum collections and NWS Yorktown in electronic form. Paper records were collected where relevant electronic data were not available. Data collected included information related to alleged ARPA violations associated with the collections. Versar entered these data into the appropriate MCRAD data tables (e.g. Artifacts, Artifact Collections, Events, and Violations). Versar provided NAVFAC with a copy of the data in Oracle dmp file format, in MS Access format, and made the data available for viewing online and for export to a spreadsheet compatible format (comma separated value).

Versar analyzed integration results and present a draft report to DoD representatives. Versar also developed a database reporting form to extract data for the annual Federal Archaeology Report. Versar prepared a final report in response to agency comments

Benefit:

The project will assist DoD agencies nationwide in meeting the archaeological collections management and reporting requirements of ARPA, NAGPRA, and NHPA. The project was intended to assist DoD in meeting Heritage Assets reporting requirements consistent with SFFAS 8 and 29.

At present, MCRAD is the only relational cultural resources data model designed for DoD installations that incorporates artifact collections, ARPA violations, and data elements related to NAGPRA issues. At present, there is no deployed enterprise level data management system that maintains these data. Data are maintained in an ad hoc fashion at the installation level, and reported annually up through the chain of command. The process of answering the required data calls is time consuming, and the accuracy of the resultant reports is difficult to verify. The project will provide an opportunity to examine data migration issues from existing systems, and develop cost estimates for other Services to utilize this system.

This project addresses a number of the Legacy program's stated areas of emphasis. It will "enhance DoD's ability to access, evaluate, and use existing inventory data" in addition to facilitating the curation and management of archaeological collections and associated documentation. Implementation of MCRAD will increase the research value and accessibility of collections to the military and the private sector. These collections are an important component in the development of regional archaeological historic contexts, which can be used to assess the significance of sites. Use of such contexts provides DoD a defensible position for making National Register eligibility determinations and follow-on site management decisions. Incorporating artifact collections data into MCRAD, and developing related reporting tools will help to provide DoD with quick reference information for planning purposes and land management decisions.

Accomplishments:

The project has collected paper and electronic artifact collections data from NWS Yorktown, and from the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, and entered these into the prototype MCRAD database. The database is available online, along with a simple report form designed to summarize historic properties data into the data elements in the federal archaeological activities report. The data and the reporting form are available online at: http://mcrad.cevp.com/pls/htmldb/f?p=101. Interested parties may contact Dr. Brian Crane to request a userid and password. The results of the project have been summarized in a summary report.

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