

4.3 Hanford Cultural Resources Laboratory

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The Hanford Cultural Resources Laboratory (HCRL) was established by the Richland Operations Office in 1987 as part of PNL. The HCRL provides support for managing the archaeological, historical, and traditional cultural resources of the Hanford Site in a manner consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, cultural resource reviews must be conducted before each proposed ground disturbance or building alteration/demolition project on the Hanford Site. During 1994, Hanford contractors requested 511 such reviews, 26 of which required archaeological surveys. The surveys covered a total of 10.09 km² (3.9 mi²) and resulted in the discovery of 11 prehistoric archaeological sites, 27 historic archaeological sites, and two archaeological sites with historic and prehistoric components. The cultural affiliation of one site could not be determined on the basis of existing data. Sixty buildings and/or structures were also inventoried and added to the HCRL database.

Three large projects were undertaken in 1994: the Tank Waste Remediation Systems Complex, the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility Site and the Proposed Basalt Quarry Sites. Four sites and 21 isolated finds were recorded during fieldwork conducted for these three projects. Most of the sites recorded are historic in nature and contain information ranging from lifeways of early settlers in the Hanford area to military installations of the 1950s. In addition to these efforts, the HCRL was involved in the environmental assessment of the EMSL relocation.

Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that federal agencies undertake a program to identify historic properties, maintain and manage cultural resource information, consider the effects of proposed undertakings on properties that are eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places early in the

planning process, consider the use and re-use of historic properties, and seek opportunities for cooperative efforts with others in the preservation and use of historic properties. A Historic American Engineering Record documentation process was initiated for a multibuilding complex and two individual buildings that were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places during this period.

The archaeological site-monitoring program is designed to document the current condition of cultural resources and thus to determine whether cultural resource management and protection policies are effective. Site monitoring activities for FY 1993 were completed and reported early in FY 1994. Natural erosive and human processes are the most significant factors impacting the majority of sites. These impacts could be reduced by site revegetation and increased surveillance. Sites with public access received the heaviest impacts from looting and vandalism. Sites inside and outside the security perimeter are also impacted by wind erosion, which is intensified by off-road vehicle use. Site evaluation is also an important aspect of Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In 1994, five archaeological sites, the White Bluffs Road, and the McGee Ranch/Cold Creek Valley District were evaluated. All but one historic archaeological site was found to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Compliance activities falling under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act included the acquisition and curation of cultural materials, completion of a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act summary report, and the discovery of human remains at the original EMSL construction site and selection of a new EMSL site.

Educational activities associated with the cultural resources program included presenting lectures to groups of all ages and developing a series of displays to be used in Hanford Site facilities for worker education. Lectures were presented to

groups ranging from primary school rock hounds to civic groups. In April, the HCRL participated in a multimedia news conference to discuss events associated with the discovery of human remains at the original EMSL construction site.

The HCRL participated in the Teacher Research Associate and Northwest College and University Association for Science programs. One Teacher Research Associate was involved in researching past stream conditions on and off the Hanford Site using archaeological shell samples; another Teacher Research Associate provided preliminary faunal analysis of one archaeological collection from the Hanford Site. Three Associated Western

Universities, Inc., Northwest Division student interns were also involved in field and laboratory work with HCRL staff.

Ongoing research activities were continued, when possible, as part of compliance work. Research in the field of archaeology and history focused on several general areas of interest: interaction between prehistoric inhabitants and their plant and animal resources, the cultural interface between Native Americans and early settlers, early settlement patterns of Euro-Americans, the private-to-public land transfers that took place during the early 1940s for the Manhattan Project, and the built environment of the Manhattan Project and the Cold War period.