

NAVAL WEAPONS STATION YORKTOWN

FY15 SECDEF EV AWARDS

CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT—LARGE INSTALLATION

Introduction

The land of Naval Weapons Station (WPNSTA) Yorktown is rich in colonial history, as well as that of the American Civil War. The station sits amidst a setting of natural beauty surrounded by the distant echo of the first settlers in Virginia and the battle cries of the Revolutionary War.

The site of what is now WPNSTA Yorktown was acquired for the Navy by a presidential proclamation on August 7, 1918 in response to the outbreak of World War I in Europe.



1942 Aerial of WPNSTA Yorktown

At that time, the Navy began actively participating in the North Sea Mine Barrage, a large and complex naval operation to lay a vast minefield. The operation required a new Atlantic coast mine depot to assemble, load, test, store and issue mines. The mission of the mine depot continued during World War II. The increased level of wartime activity and an active construction program led the installation to become the largest naval mine depot on the Atlantic coast. As World War II drew to a close and the early years of the Cold War began, the Mine Depot expanded its mission to include facilities to receive, test, store, and distribute advanced weaponry, including guided missiles. On August 7, 1958, on the station's 40th anniversary, the name was changed to WPNSTA Yorktown, in recognition of a much expanded mission for naval ordnance.

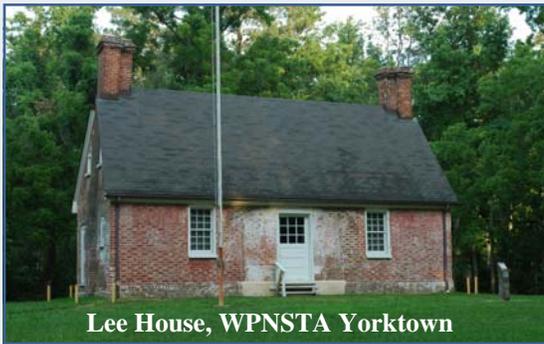
Installation Mission

The primary mission of WPNSTA Yorktown is to provide responsive, quality support for explosive ordnance receipt and storage, maintenance, logistics, research and development, and support services; expeditionary logistics training and operations; warfare training for Sailors, Marines, and other Services; and to serve as a premier recreational destination for service members and dependents. Today the station is a hub of activity, as one of the Navy's "explosive corridors" to the sea supply, amphibious and combatant ships may be seen arriving and departing the station's two piers.



ca. 1919 photograph

The station employs approximately 1300 civilians and 1900 active duty military personnel and hosts 37 tenant commands to include the Navy Munitions Command Atlantic, Naval Ophthalmic Support and Training Activity, Marine Corps Security Force Regiment, Fleet Industrial Supply Center, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group, Naval Expeditionary Medical Support Command, Defense Logistics Agency, Naval Surface Warfare Center, Explosive Ordnance Detachment Mobile Unit Two, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One and 19 departments.



Lee House, WPNSTA Yorktown



Phase II Excavation, WPNSTA Yorktown

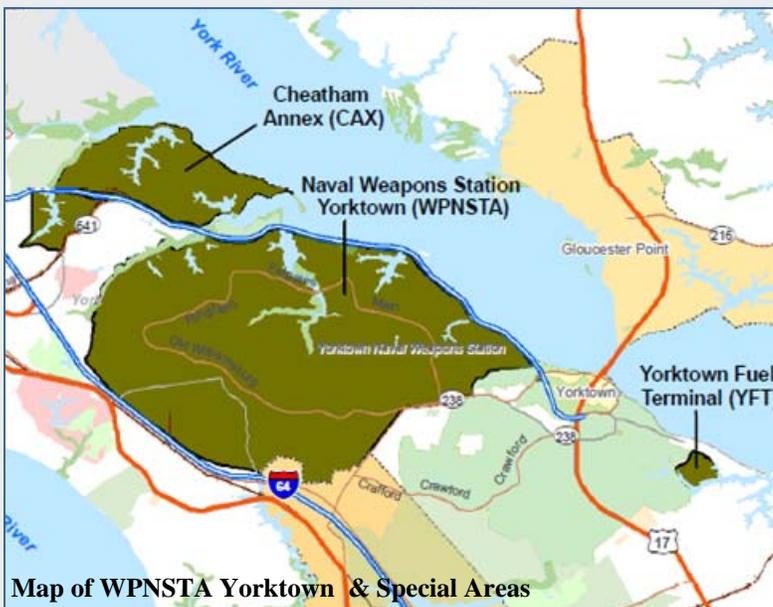
Location

WPNSTA Yorktown is a complex of three formally separate activities, and encompasses the main site, Cheatham Annex (CAX), and Yorktown Fuel Terminal (YFT). The three parcels lie on Virginia’s lower peninsula between the York and James rivers. The largest parcel, WPNSTA Yorktown, encompasses approximately 10,320 acres in York and James City counties and the City of Newport News. The Colonial Parkway runs adjacent to the northeast WPNSTA boundary. Interstate 64 bounds WPNSTA Yorktown to the southwest. The small community of Lackey is adjacent to the southeast border. CAX encompasses 2,298 acres northwest of the WPNSTA Yorktown and is located entirely within York County. CAX comprises two parcels, including the main base and Jones Pond. YFT is a 138-acre parcel to the southeast of WPNSTA Yorktown.

The Station is part of a large contiguous area of publicly owned land on the Peninsula that includes the Colonial Parkway, Camp Peary Naval Reservation, Newport News Park, watershed protection areas, and various York County parks. Although these facilities have very different missions, each supports large areas of undeveloped land that play a key role in the health and sustainability of the region’s cultural resources.

Program Management

With a land rich in history and vast in acres of land, WPNSTA Yorktown and its special areas have 426 identified archaeological sites which portray a diverse range of history. The archaeological sites provide a unique look into the past lifeways and cultural patterns of Native Americans and early Colonial settlers; portrayal of events of the Revolutionary War and Civil War; and depiction of African American and European American communities in York County during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. In addition, WPNSTA Yorktown has the oldest structure in the Navy’s inventory, the Kiskiack Historic Property, and recently identified a collection of buildings at Skiffe’s Creek Annex, for further evaluation due to their connections in support of the Cold War mission of the installation. The Kiskiack Historic Property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and consists of the Lee House (a 17th century plantation house) and a cemetery. The property is an identified archaeological site associated with the occupation of the house.



Map of WPNSTA Yorktown & Special Areas



WPNSTA Yorktown



Cheatham Annex

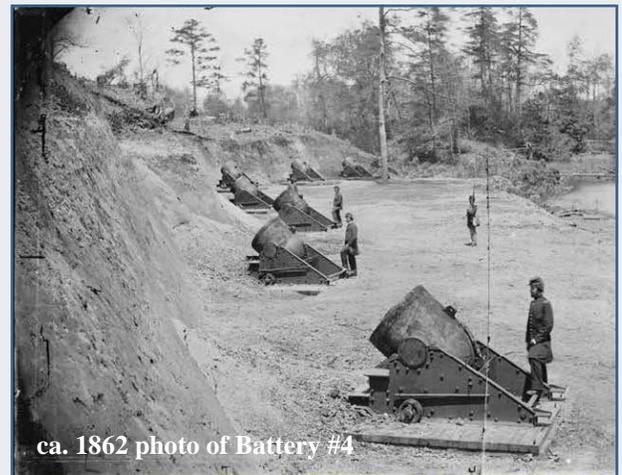
WPNSTA Yorktown cultural resources program has been established for several decades with the listing of the Kiskiack Historic Property in 1969 and the first archaeological investigations performed in 1979. Today the program is managed regionally by the Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA) Environmental Core Cultural Resources (CR) Team. The CR team consists of three staff members who fully meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications for archaeology and architectural history and provide day-to-day cultural resources management to the six Navy installations in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. The archaeologist of the CR team is dedicated as the Cultural Resources Manager for WPNSTA Yorktown and works closely with the Public Works Department (PWD) Yorktown in implementing the program.

Since the establishment of the cultural resources program, the installation has been a good steward of cultural resources striking a balance between cultural resources management and mission readiness. Over the years, WPNSTA Yorktown made strides in identification of cultural resources. These include completion of fifty-two archaeological investigations resulting in approximately 70% of the installation receiving Phase I archaeological investigations and fourteen Phase II evaluations.

Currently, WPNSTA Yorktown is conducting Phase II evaluations on four prehistoric-multicomponent sites and an architectural survey on its Cold War built environment resources. These identification efforts provide a critical framework to implement a program that avoids or minimizes impacts to cultural resources while supporting the mission of the installation.

In January 2014, CNRMA signed the Regional Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) for Naval Installations in Hampton Roads, Virginia, which includes WPNSTA Yorktown. The ICRMP is a living document and updates are made at least annually with resource and contact changes. In addition, CNRMA executed a Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the Navy's Historic Buildings in Hampton Roads in 1999, that includes the Kiskiack Historic Property at WPNSTA Yorktown. The PA enables the Navy to streamline the Section 106 review process for specific undertakings involving historic buildings and specifically enables WPNSTA Yorktown to have a more efficient cultural resources program.

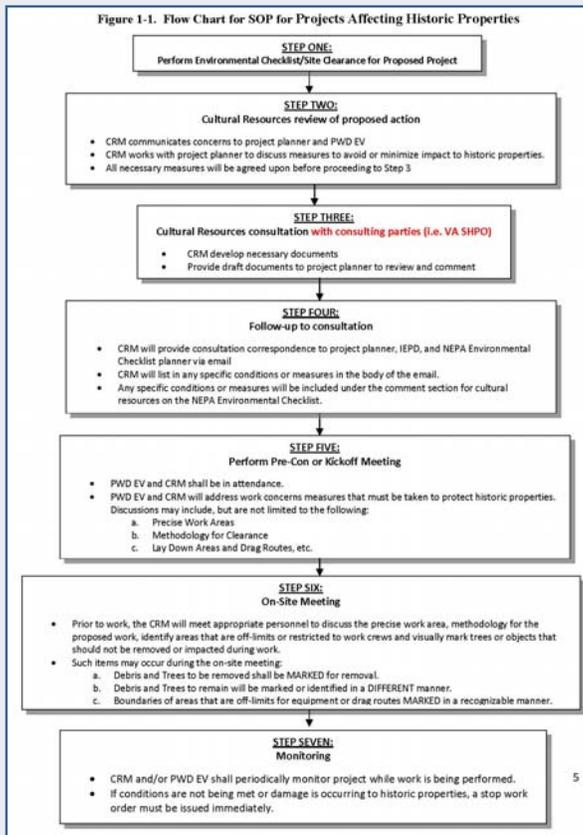
Associated with a strong cultural resources program are valuable partnerships with external stakeholders including the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (also known as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, the Catawba Indian Nation, the Council on Virginia Indians and local communities. WPNSTA Yorktown fosters strong working relationships and instills trust between the Navy and stakeholders through open-communications via meetings, conference calls and site visits. Currently, WPNSTA Yorktown is part of a Tribal Cultural Affiliation Study conducted by CNRMA to identify federally-recognized tribes with ancestral ties to the land and to initiate consultation with the appropriate tribes to understand their concerns and develop a protocol for future consultations. CNRMA and NAVFAC MID-LANT Environmental Conservation and Planning Branch, various divisions in PWD-Yorktown, including Environmental, Construction, Engineering, Planning, and Acquisition, as well as the Commanding Officer, Base Admin Office, and Public Affairs Office provide program support.



ca. 1862 photo of Battery #4



2014 photo, Battery #4 (eligible site), YFT



Technical Merits and Impacts/Outcomes

With more than 10,000 acres of land and numerous cultural resources adorning the landscape, proactive identification of cultural resources and development of management practices are essential. Through close coordination with the CNRMA CR Team and PWD-Yorktown, the WPNSTA Yorktown CR program successfully integrates with the mission of the installation through partnerships with interested parties, the National Park Service, SHPO, personnel responsible for project planning and execution, and local community members.

Cultural Resources Training (completed June 2014): WPNSTA Yorktown hosted the first cultural resources training for Navy personnel in the Hampton Roads area in 2014. The primary audience of the training included the Command Triad, PWD Yorktown personnel and Environmental staff from other Navy installations. The training consisted of two four-hour sessions serving four main purposes: 1) promote awareness of cultural resources; 2) promote cultural resources stewardship; 3) familiarize the audience with the CR Standard Operating Procedure; and 4) provide a better understanding of cultural resources compliance as it relates to the day-to-day functions of the PWD and

military readiness. The training included specific cultural resources examples and lessons learned from cultural resources issues from WPNSTA Yorktown. Overall the training provided an understanding of cultural resources management at the installation. Forty people attended the training.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Projects Affecting Historic Properties (completed 2015): The purpose of the SOP is two-fold: 1) promote awareness of cultural resources for all personnel working at WPNSTA Yorktown; and 2) enhance coordination between the CRM and PWD Yorktown to ensure early engagement in project planning and continued communication during projects. The SOP aligns with the ICRMP and outlines the necessary steps in further detail for coordinating with the CRM when a proposed action has the potential to affect or will affect a cultural resource during the planning and design stages and project execution. The implementation of the SOP enabled the early identification of cultural resources concerns to avoid and minimize effects to archaeological resources through design changes and/or employment of best management practices. Overall, the SOP resulted in cost savings to the Navy through reduction of cultural resources mitigation costs and costs associated with development of NEPA Environmental Assessments. The SOP was developed in consultation with the SHPO.

Geographic Information System (GIS) (on-going): WPNSTA Yorktown utilizes existing management tools to integrate and promote cultural resources management. In particular, the GeoReadiness Explorer, available through the NAVFAC MIDLANT portal to planners and other PWD personnel captures cultural resources GIS data. The data includes boundaries of identified archaeological sites, cemeteries and areas requiring Phase 1 archaeological investigations as well as the location of historic buildings. With this data, planners and project proponents identify at an early stage if their proposed work will be within a cultural resources area and engage promptly with the CRM. In addition, twelve historic maps of WPNSTA Yorktown and Cheatham Annex were geo-referenced resulting in the creation of GIS shape files that depict the historic development of the facilities that can be overlapped with the modern installation maps. The geo-referenced maps assist the CRM in determining effects and appropriate levels of archaeological investigations in un-surveyed areas.

Vegetation Clearing Best Management Practices (on-going): Given the vegetation clearing requirements associated with security, safety and utility work, WPNSTA Yorktown recognized the need to establish best management practices (BMPs) to protect cultural resources during the work. In collaboration with the CRM and PWD Yorktown staff, WPNSTA Yorktown developed a set of BMPs to be incorporated as standard language in the current ground services contract as well as any future vegetation clearing contracts. The BMPs apply when vegetation clearing will occur within the boundaries of an archaeological site or in areas with archaeological potential. The BMPs include such requirements as vegetation cut by hand, stumps left in place and no use of mobilized mechanized equipment. In addition, the BMPs require coordination between the CRM, PWD-Yorktown staff and the contractors performing the work. Prior to work beginning, the CRM meets on site with PWD Yorktown staff and the contractor to explain the significance of the archaeological sites; review the BMPs; address any questions from the contractor; and walk the site with the contractor to decide the best location for drag routes (if needed), vehicle access points and laydown areas. As further precaution, the CRM also marks the boundaries of the sites in the field to denote the areas that require the application of BMPs. *The BMPs resulted in the completion of five (5) successful Section 106 consultations with SHPO for concurrence of “no adverse effect” determinations for various vegetation clearing actions occurring within a five-year time frame.* This effort reduced project delays and enabled WPNSTA Yorktown to meet critical mission requirements while protecting the valuable cultural resources.

College of William & Mary Field School (on-going): Through a cooperative agreement with the College of William & Mary, WPNSTA Yorktown fostered a partnership with the school’s Department of Anthropology to evaluate the archaeological deposits that contribute to the significance of archaeological Site 44YO002. Since 2011 and continuing into 2016, the Department of Anthropology, acting under an ARPA permit, conducted field schools on various portions of Site 44YO002. The field school is an excellent opportunity for WPNSTA Yorktown to greatly add to the understanding of this very important archaeological resource and enable better management of the site pursuant to Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In turn, the field school presents an opportunity for undergraduate and Ph. D. candidates to have hands-on experience with all aspects of archaeological investigations including professional archaeological field data collection and analysis techniques.

Further Student Research Opportunities as part of the field school:

Chris Shephard, Ph. D. Candidate, Dissertation topic: Shell Bead Sourcing / Exchange during the Late Woodland and Contact Periods. Shell beads recovered from the shell midden at 44YO002 are integral to this research.

Jess Bittner, Graduate student, Thesis Topic: Ditches and Palisades at Kiskiak and Beyond

Anna Richmond, Undergraduate student, Research Topic (Honors Thesis): Chronology Construction along Indian Field Creek



Map of areas of archaeological sensitivity depicting the need for vegetation clearing BMPs



College of William & Mary students participating in the field school, 2015

The field school is an example of a successful collaboration between various cultural resources professionals including the Navy cultural resources personnel at NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic, NAVFAC Atlantic, professors at College of William & Mary, and archaeologists with SHPO. The field school presents a public outreach opportunity as well by developing positive working relationships with the Council of Virginia Indians, including the Pamunkey Tribe and Mattaponi, raising awareness of this significant cultural resource to Navy personnel and their families and the local communities. Navy personnel and their families stopped on multiple occasions during the field school to ask the professor and student's questions. The local newspaper has published articles on the field school.



WPNSTA Yorktown Commanding Officer, Captain Paul Haebler, & Public Works Officer, CDR Stephen Fichter, discuss the findings of the field school with College of William & Mary Professor, Martin Gallivan

Archaeological Site 44YO002 was first identified in 1979 and subsequent archaeological investigations occurred in 1999 and 2000 and most recently as part of the College of William & Mary field school. Site 44YO002 is also referred to as the Kiskiak site. The site represents a major component of the dispersed village of Kiskiak, the principal settlement of the Kiskiak Indians and the location of several documented encounters with Jamestown colonists during the early 17th century. The site has experienced very little disturbance resulting in remarkably well-preserved archaeological deposits. The historical significance of the site is considerable as a Native American settlement with stratified deposits that accumulated over several thousand years, undisturbed features associated with the emergence of a village, and material linked to early colonial interaction in the Chesapeake. As part of a suite of related settlements located near the York River, Site 44YO002 possesses great potential to shed light on Native American history in the Chesapeake.

As quoted by the Daily Press newspaper on July 1, 2015, “a partnership between the College of William & Mary and Yorktown Naval Weapons Station is illuminating the existence of a tribe of Native Americans whose lives intersected with the Jamestown settlers in the earliest years of colonization” <http://www.dailypress.com/features/history/dp-nws-kiskiak-indian-dig-20150701-story.html>



Orientation to the Mission

In FY14 and FY15, WPNSTA Yorktown made great strides, striking a balance between mission requirements and cultural resources management. The CRM reviewed forty environmental checklists for proposed work and completed twenty Section 106 consultation packages. The proposed work included vegetation clearing of electrical utility right of ways, vegetation clearing of fence lines, construction of new facilities in support of the Marine Corps Security Force Regiment consolidation, and installation restoration work. Working closely with the SHPO, National Park Service (NPS) and the Navy design team, WPNSTA Yorktown successfully avoided adverse effects to archaeological resources and a potential Cold War historic district, saving the Navy money in avoided NEPA and mitigation costs and significantly shortening the project timelines between design and award.

In support of new and increased training requirements for the Navy and Marine Corps personnel located within the Mid-Atlantic region, the Navy identified WPNSTA Yorktown as a proposed site for a small arms live-fire training facility. Due to developmental constraints at the installation, design criteria for the range and safety requirements, the location of the facility was limited and from an operational standpoint, the best place was situated amongst several identified potentially eligible archaeological sites. Through teamwork with the CRM, the Navy design team and PWD Yorktown personnel and after numerous meetings and design re-iterations on the orientation of the different elements of the facility, the design of the small arms facility was able to successfully avoid ground disturbance within the boundaries of the archaeological sites. All construction elements including the roads, berms, targets, and support facilities were able to be located outside the boundaries of the archaeological sites thereby rendering a determination of “no adverse effect” with SHPO concurrence. The commitment of WPNSTA Yorktown to perform archaeological investigations enabled the planners and Navy design team to identify cultural resources concerns at the early stage of the project and to begin the dialogue with the CRM to avoid and minimize any impacts. The end result yielded a cost savings to the Navy by reducing costs associated with data recovery efforts and supported the project construction timeline by avoiding the requirement to perform additional archaeological investigations. The small arms facility serves as a typical example of how WPNSTA Yorktown merges mission requirements with protection of archaeological resources.

Stakeholder Interaction

Since the inception of the cultural resources program at WPNSTA Yorktown, the installation has recognized the value of partnerships with internal and external stakeholders for successful management of cultural resources. In FY14 and FY15, WPNSTA Yorktown continued to foster strong relationships with external stakeholders including SHPO, NPS, the College of William & Mary, the Council of Virginia Indians, the Catawba Indian Nation, and local communities. In particular, WPNSTA Yorktown and Cheatham Annex share a boundary line with the CNHP. WPNSTA Yorktown frequently meets with the superintendent of the park and the cultural resources manager to discuss proposed projects and potential effects on NPS-owned resources to address their concerns early in the process and handle the proper Section 106 consultations. Based on the outcomes of the meetings and consultations, WPNSTA Yorktown is able to incorporate avoidance and mitigation measures into the projects to avoid effects to NPS historic properties.

In the last two years, WPNSTA Yorktown has made a concerted effort to strengthen its internal stakeholder communications through the development of the cultural resources SOP, BMPs for vegetation clearing projects and completion of cultural resources training. The emphasis on developing these tools enhanced the understanding of the significance of the cultural resources and cultural resources regulations amongst Navy personnel and fostered an environment of cultural resources stewardship.

FY16 and Beyond

In the last two years, WPNSTA Yorktown has shown a strong commitment to cultural resources management through the implementation of its ICRMP and innovative strategies to foster a balance between resources protection and operational requirements. The work performed in FY14 and FY15 laid the framework to carry the success of the cultural resources program beyond FY15. For instance, the cultural resources SOP and the vegetation clearing best management practices will periodically be reviewed and revised accordingly. Cultural resources training will be completed periodically to promote awareness for new employees and provide a platform for discussion on lessons learned and ways to improve the efficacy of the cultural resources program in support of changing mission requirements. The College of William & Mary field school will continue into FY16 and beyond.

