



IN FROM THE COLD

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Cold War Identification and Evaluation Efforts at Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California

The Environmental Project Office at Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS), China Lake, California, under the direction of Ms. Carolyn Shepherd, has been aggressively conducting an intense series of surveys during the past year in an effort to inventory and evaluate a number of historic buildings and structures on NAWS lands for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility.

In April 1996, NAWS initiated a survey of seven abandoned ranches and homesteads on NAWS lands. The survey, associated with a project to cap and abandon old wells at these sites, was required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Although none of the sites was found to meet the criteria for NRHP eligibility, the sites did yield substantial data that will contribute new information to ongoing research about desert homesteads. The findings of this survey were documented in the August 1996 report, *Historic Resources Survey, Inventory, and Assessment Report of Seven Well Sites at Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Kern County, California*.

In September 1996, an inventory and evaluation of numerous World War II and Cold War-era buildings and structures at NAWS was begun. The first phase of the project was to establish the historic context of the region prior to Navy acquisition. The NRHP criteria would be applied to this context in

determining the NRHP eligibility of structures identified during this effort, as well as for future evaluation efforts. This extensive research resulted in the development of the report *Before the Navy: A Contextual Overview of Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, Kern, Inyo, and San Bernardino Counties, California, Prior to Its Acquisitions by the U.S. Navy*. Next, the historic context of specific areas to be evaluated was developed and is presented in *Historic Context for Evaluating National Register Eligibility of World War II and Cold War-Era Buildings and Structures, NAWS, China Lake*.



Michaelson Laboratory, NAWS, China Lake

The next phase of the project involved research, inventory, and evaluation of identified buildings and structures to determine NRHP eligibility. Over 1,000 buildings and structures within the more urbanized areas at NAWS were evaluated. These areas included Main Site, Armitage Field, the China Lake Propulsion Laboratory area, and the Salt Wells Propulsion Laboratory. Five individual buildings, a group of 20 housing units, and two historic districts that appear to qualify for listing in the National Register were identified. The results are documented in the February 1997 two-volume report, *Inventory and Evaluation of National Register Eligibility for Buildings and Structures: Main Site, China Lake Propulsion Laboratory (CLPL), Salt Wells Propulsion Laboratory (SWPL), Armitage Field, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, California*. Volume I documents the survey and evaluation efforts and results, and Volume II includes the site records for the eligible properties.

Because NRHP-eligible historic properties are present at NAWS, development of a management plan is required. An in-house management team of staff architects and resources specialists is developing a plan to meet this mandate. In addition to the preparation of the nomination forms for the identified historic properties, NAWS staff is also in consultation with a private contractor to develop guidelines for the management of historic buildings, structures, and districts; to identify training requirements; and to establish evaluation, documentation, and archival standards for future efforts involving historic properties.

The final endeavor for the fiscal year is a survey and evaluation of a number of buildings and structures that were identified as being potentially eligible for the NRHP in the 1995 *Navy's Cold War Guided Missile Context: Resources Associated with the Navy's Guided Missile Program, 1946-1987*, which was prepared by a private contractor. In addition to finalizing the evaluation of buildings identified in this report, work will also include survey, inventory, and evaluation of a number of other individual buildings and areas at China Lake. Once this effort is completed, approximately 90 percent of the existing buildings and structures at NAWS China Lake will have been evaluated for NRHP eligibility.

NAWS China Lake has taken a proactive and aggressive approach to the inventory and conservation of the heritage of Department of Defense properties during the Cold War era, as well as to other historic and World War II-era properties present on its Navy-managed lands. NAWS China Lake environmental personnel are enthusiastic about and proud of their survey and evaluation efforts, as required by Section 110 of the NHPA. They feel they have been quite fortunate in the level of funding received for these efforts and in the ability to obtain support from contractor personnel so knowledgeable and widely respected within their profession.



Headquarters Building, NAWS, China Lake

The Inventory and Evaluation of Cold War-Related Properties at Vandenberg Air Force Base

In June 1993, the Department of the Air Force selected Vandenberg Air Force Base (Vandenberg AFB) as the site of a Legacy-funded inventory and evaluation of Cold War properties. Vandenberg AFB was an ideal choice for such a project because the installation played a crucial role in the major military programs that shaped the character of the Cold War. Vandenberg AFB is the only site where the United States' intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) were test-launched under operational conditions. In addition, thousands of missile combat and maintenance crews received their training at Vandenberg AFB. The installation also served as the launch site for a number of important military satellites as well as civilian science and application satellites. The only other installation in the United States that rivals the Cold War significance of Vandenberg AFB in terms of its contribution to the nation's ballistic missile and space programs is Cape Canaveral Air Station in Florida.

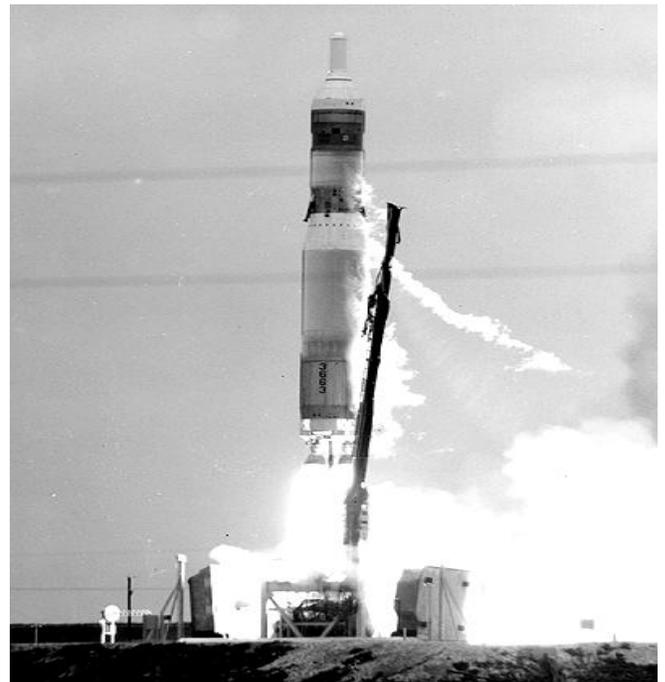
The Air Force contracted the services of the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories (USACERL) to conduct the Vandenberg AFB Cold War study. The purpose of the project is to inventory and evaluate the Cold War properties at Vandenberg AFB for eligibility to the NRHP. When completed, the study will provide the major foundation for the development of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) that will provide specific guidance for Vandenberg AFB regarding the management and treatment of its Cold War properties.

Because Vandenberg AFB is large and there are many properties to be evaluated, the inventory and evaluation effort was conducted in three phases. Phase One involved an inventory and evaluation of Space Launch Complexes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10; all 30th Space Wing Western Range radar, optical tracking, telemetry, command control, and weather support facilities; and the Capehart Housing units

located on North Vandenberg AFB. Phase Two examined the Minuteman facilities, MX Peacekeeper facilities (including the Rail Garrison facilities), the Navstar Ground Station, and the Vandenberg Tracking Station, all located on North Vandenberg AFB. Phase Three involved an inventory and evaluation of the Atlas, Titan, Bomarc, and Blue Scout, Jr. launch facilities at North Vandenberg AFB, and the former U.S. Coast Guard Lifeboat Rescue Station and Lookout Tower at South Vandenberg AFB.

The unique characteristics of the Cold War-related properties at Vandenberg AFB presented the authors with a number of problematic issues relating to questions of significance and integrity. All of the Cold War properties at Vandenberg AFB are presently under 50 years of age, and therefore, according to *National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years*, these properties must be determined to possess "exceptional importance" to be eligible for listing on the NRHP.

Dr. Paul Green, in his *Interim Guidance: Treatment*

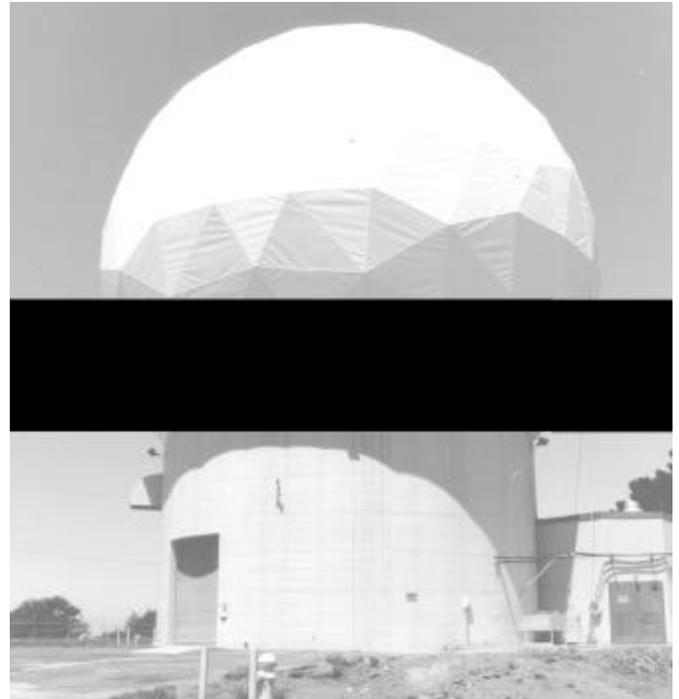


Historical photograph of a Titan I Launch at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA

of Cold War Historic Properties for U.S. Air Force Installations (June 1993), suggests that the first step in identifying exceptionally important Cold War properties is to identify the Cold War programs at an installation that are considered exceptionally important and then identify those properties that are specifically associated with operational missions. This excludes from consideration such properties as base exchanges, general administrative buildings, family housing, maintenance shops, and sewage treatment plants. At Vandenberg AFB, the exceptionally important Cold War programs are the various ballistic missile testing and training programs (e.g., Thor, Atlas, Titan, Minuteman, and Peacekeeper) that provided the United States with an operational nuclear missile force and the necessary support personnel. Other exceptionally important programs that Vandenberg AFB has supported include the U.S. military and civilian space programs. The military space program provided critical information to military and political leaders during the Cold War. Since the establishment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in 1958, the civilian space program has supported the military space program by sharing critical scientific information and technology. The civilian space program has also greatly expanded our knowledge of science and the universe. This knowledge, of course, is also of significant value to the military.

After identifying the exceptionally important Cold War programs and the properties associated with them, a distinction must be made regarding the nature of the association or contribution of these properties to the operational missions. Some properties directly supported operational missions while other properties supported them in a secondary or complementary capacity.

An example would be the distinction between a Minuteman launch facility and a Minuteman maintenance facility at Vandenberg AFB. The Minuteman maintenance facility served primarily for the mating of missile components. Although this function was certainly important, it is



TLM-18 Antenna and Support Structure at the Vandenberg Tracking Station, Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA

considered to be of a secondary or complementary nature. The launch facility, on the other hand, directly supported Minuteman missions by serving as the primary staging ground for the various Minuteman weapon system testing programs. A Minuteman launch facility, because of the direct nature of its contribution to operational missions, better illustrates and offers a better understanding of the Minuteman program than does a maintenance facility. Properties that directly supported operational missions of exceptionally important Cold War programs at Vandenberg AFB are themselves exceptionally important and therefore qualify for listing on the NRHP.

After determining which Cold War-related properties could be considered exceptionally important, it was necessary to address the question of integrity. Most of the Cold War properties at Vandenberg AFB that qualify for the National Register are considered exceptionally important because of their historic function rather than their architectural or engineering design.

Therefore, integrity of function becomes more important in these cases than integrity of design. These properties can demonstrate integrity of function, despite modifications or changes, as long as they retain sufficient physical integrity to adequately convey a sense of their historic function.

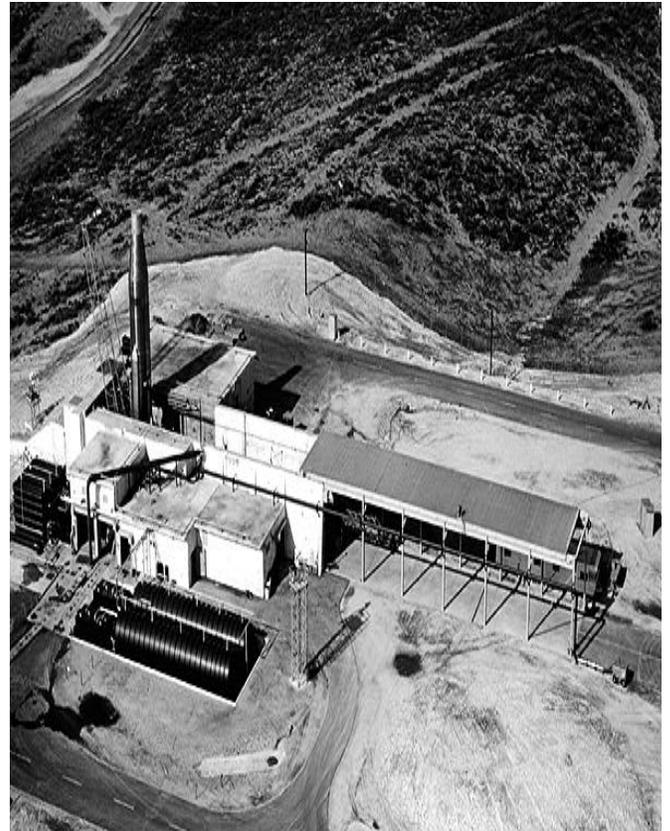
An example would be a launch complex that has been constantly modified over the years to accommodate new generations of space vehicles. Even though the launch complex probably does not retain integrity in terms of its original design, it can demonstrate integrity of function by retaining certain key components necessary to convey a sense of its historic function as a launch site supporting exceptionally important programs.

This interpretation of integrity may initially appear to complicate the management of historic Cold War properties. In reality, however, it greatly simplifies it. Modifications or upgrades to operational historic Cold War properties not major enough to change the function of the property should be considered to have no adverse affect on the property, although some documentation of the changes might be recommended. In fact, documenting the evolutionary changes experienced by such properties presents a more accurate view of their fundamental nature and the extraordinarily dynamic nature of the U.S. Cold War research and development programs.

This approach would not be appropriate for facilities that are found eligible for the NRHP based on their unique or exceptional architectural or engineering design. In those cases, integrity of design would take precedence and these properties must retain the relevant physical characteristics in order to meet the NRHP integrity requirement.

Identifying historic Cold War-related properties at Vandenberg AFB and evaluating their NRHP eligibility is an important first step in developing a plan that will assist Vandenberg AFB and the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in making timely and efficient decisions

regarding the installation's compliance with the



Historical photograph of one of the Atlas Abres-B coffin-type launch complexes at Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA

National Historic Preservation Act. These evaluations of Cold War properties at Vandenberg AFB will provide the major foundation for the development of one component of a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) and/or a PA regarding the treatment and management of Cold War properties at Vandenberg AFB. A well-developed CRMP and PA will expedite or replace the traditional Section 106 process and allow the installation to go forward with its mission while fulfilling its historic stewardship responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner.

Department of the Army Thematic Study for Military-Industrial Properties

The Department of the Army has been developing a historic context that is being approached from a thematic basis. This thematic study examines the Military-Industrial Complex as representative of the majority of Army Cold War properties. Other themes may also need to be developed to address properties eligible at a state or local level of significance (e.g., properties in Alaska). The anticipated completion date for the Thematic Study for Military-Industrial Properties was August 1997.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *In From the Cold* is to provide a forum in which Cultural Resources Managers and Cold War experts throughout the DOD, Department of Energy, and the National Park Service may offer support and expertise to one another in their Cold War research efforts. It does not purport to reflect policy, practices or doctrine.

Newsletter Information

Projects submitted directly by a federal agency or verified by the federal sponsor can be published in this newsletter. Copies of the news-letter are mailed to the Departments of Defense and Energy organizations and the National Park Service. Copies of studies and reports listed in the newsletter are not available from HQ AFCEE. Please contact the project sponsor directly. Your articles are welcome!

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Features in the Next Issue The National Park Service and the Department of Energy
