

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Evaluative Archeological Testing of the 1866 Infantry Barracks to Develop a Treatment Plan for Foundation Stabilization, phase 2

**Discipline:** Cultural Resources  
**Type of Project:** Technical Assistance  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** University of Wyoming  
**Effective Dates:** 9/30/2009 - 5/1/2014  
**Funding Amount:** \$25,000

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

NPS Contact: Mitzi Frank, Superintendent, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Fort Laramie, WY,  
Phone: 307-837-2221; mitzi\_frank@nps.gov

Investigator: Danny Walker, Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist, Dept. 3431, 1000 E.  
University Ave., Laramie, Wyoming 82071 (307) 721-0882, dnwalker@uwyo.edu

**Project Abstract:** Fort Laramie was a hub of activity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as it was first associated with the fur trade, and then with a military presence. The Oregon Trail goes through the National Historic Site and Fort Laramie is the beginning of the Bozeman Trail. Standing historic structures and historic records at Fort Laramie NHS have defined the site's historic resources since the park was established as a national monument in 1938. There is little information about structures with no surface evidence such as travelers on the Oregon and Bozeman Trails, or Native Americans (treaties of 1851 and 1868). The extant standing structures are contributory elements to the National significance of Fort Laramie, but no evaluations have been made for many of the remaining visible foundation, surface features and subsurface features, known to have been present from military and photographic records. Significant known archeological sites and features are rapidly being threatened by inadequate protection from natural erosion and deterioration or from man-caused disturbances. Their immediate detailed documentation is necessary to preserve important information about the park's periods of significance. The NPS must maintain its significant resources in good condition. Without this project, Fort Laramie NHS will not be able to assess and treat deteriorating sites or develop procedures to ensure their long-term preservation.

The 2010 project described here will be focused on providing background archaeological data on one of these inadequately recorded features, the 1866 Infantry Barracks foundation area. This area has seen increased natural erosion and a reduction in stabilizing vegetative cover in recent years because of the on-going drought in the area. The lack of vegetative cover and natural erosion has resulted in numerous artifacts becoming exposed with the resulting concern about visitors picking up souvenirs. The barracks foundation is presently included under PMIS51303 for evaluative testing and development of a stabilization plan. The work proposed here will provide basic archaeological background information on the current condition of the foundation, its construction methods, and an indication of artifact density within and outside the foundation for eventual development of such a stabilization plan.

Work proposed will include the following, at a minimum:

- A. Review of all available historic literature, maps and photographs of the structure
- B. Archeological testing of a minimum of an additional 25 square meters (beyond those units tested in phase 1, 2009), randomly placed around and within the structure
- C. annual reports will be prepared discussing the work conducted during that specific fiscal year. At the end of the project, a final technical summary report will be submitted.
- D. Collections will be returned to the park for housing after the cooperators have cataloged them into the ANCS+ system.
- E. The appropriate portions of the CSI will be updated at the next park update. This is the narrative portion of the park's archeological database.
- F. The ASMIS database for the park will be updated at the next park update.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

Final report of archeological testing results, to include the preservation needs of the 1866 Infantry Barracks, and an appropriate treatment plan developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office. A draft long-term Resource Monitoring Plan/Program will be developed in consultation with Fort Laramie National Historic Site to ensure adequate and appropriate monitoring of site conditions. Final Report to be submitted by: February 1, 2014

**Keywords:** Infantry Barracks, foundation stabilization, Fort Laramie NHS, University of Wyoming