



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

February 2009

Historical Happenings

Notes on Cultural Resource Management in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Historical Happenings provides information on the USFWS Cultural Resources Management program. Information comes from sources such as the Regional Historic Preservation Officers, websites, new sources, as well as other cultural resource management professionals.

Issues are also available on the USFWS Cultural Resources website <http://historicpreservation.fws.gov>. Submissions are encouraged and can be made via email. Please contact Eugene Marino at Eugene_Marino@fws.gov for submission guidelines.

FWS Regional News:

Washington Office—

Our Preserve America grant selections have been made. The winners will be announced next month. We saw a very good group of applicants this year and the decision was difficult. The projects selected will be great additions to winners from previous years. This marks a great end to a fantastic grant program. Thanks to all who showed an interest in the Preserve America grants.

We have Podcasts! Check out the FWS Cultural Resources webpage for podcasts developed to provide visitors to the site some additional information on our program. You can access them here <http://www.fws.gov/historicpreservation/> Check under Recent News.

Region 4—Archaeologist Rick Kanaski introduces us to one of the most remote Refuges in the system—Navassa National Wildlife Refuge

In 1914, the U.S. reclaimed the island shortly after the opening of the Panama Canal using the Guano Mining Act of 1858. To aid navigation through the reef-laden waters around Navassa, the Lighthouse Service constructed a 162-foot tall concrete tower (figure 1), a keeper's house, an outhouse, and five outbuildings. Construction was completed by 1917.

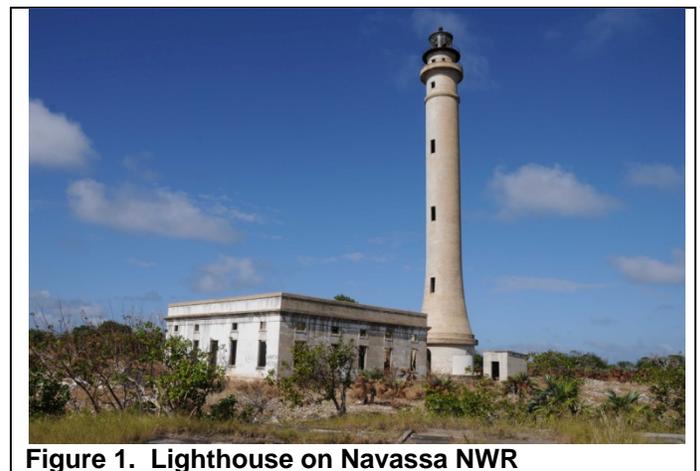


Figure 1. Lighthouse on Navassa NWR

The Keeper's house (figure 1) is a concrete Spanish style residence with a central patio. A large cistern, which is located in the central patio, provided potable water for the keeper, one or two assistants, and their families. The cistern, being the only source of fresh water on the island, continues to be used by Haitian fishermen. The Lighthouse Service automated the light in 1929; the lighthouse was visited twice a year by maintenance crews. During WWII, the Navy set up an observation post—grim duty indeed. By 1996, the U.S. Coast Guard deemed the light as irrelevant for navigation and extinguished it.

Since the mid-19th century, the island has been subjected to a number of geological, terrestrial and marine biological investigations (fisheries, insects, gastropods, birds, reptiles). The island's current vegetative cover is second growth forest dominated by four tree species [poisonwood, short-leaf fig, pigeonwood, and mastic]. Palms are sparsely scattered over the karst landscape. The vegetation appears to have been heavily impacted or influenced by the earlier mining operations; allegedly, fire was used to clear the

underlying guano and oolitic mineral phosphate deposits. Fire continues to be factor in the island's ecology. Fires are deliberately set to clear limited areas of vegetation or escape from untended campfires.

Haitian fishermen, today, are the only regular visitors to the island sailing in small boats to fish in the waters around Navassa (figure 2). They camp on the island, drawing on its various resources to augment their catch and incomes, such as the blue-footed boobies and narrow guage rail. The rail are hand-carried to Lututown (figure 3) and gingerly loaded onto their boats. They also plant yams, beans, and melons in small gardens, in addition to foraging for plants, such as a small wild chile. These fishermen paradoxically represent a threat to, but also hope for the conservation and management of, the island's biological and cultural resources.



Figure 2. Haitian boats used for transport around Navassa NWR



Figure 3. View of Lututown

Other Agency News

ACHP—continues to collect projects from agencies where youth are involved in preservation activities. Their goal is to showcase how youth can be involved in such projects in order to take an interest in history while

at the same time enjoying some of America's most precious outdoor resources.

ACHP has also recently submitted the 2008 Preserve America report to the President for his review.

Legislative News

Committee on Appropriations has set aside \$300 million for the National Wildlife Refuge System for infrastructure projects. This may include work on historic buildings currently in need of maintenance.

Economic Stimulus Package Includes Incentives for Energy

Efficiency Retrofits of Residential and Commercial Buildings House appropriators began the task of moving forward on an \$825 billion economic stimulus package this week that includes major spending for energy efficiency initiatives that could benefit older and historic residential and commercial structures. Lawmakers hope to complete the stimulus before the start of the Presidents Day recess on February 13th.

The Appropriations Committee approved \$3.5 billion for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants Recovery, which could provide funding for retrofitting older and historic residential and commercial buildings. According to the House Appropriations committee report on their portion of the stimulus, "the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program will assist states, local governments and Indian tribes in implementing strategies to reduce fossil fuel emissions created as a result of activities within the jurisdictions of the eligible entities and reduce the total energy use. Activities eligible to receive funding include: conducting residential and commercial building energy audits; establishing financial incentives programs for energy efficiency improvements; grants to non-profits organizations to perform energy efficiency retrofits; developing/implementing programs to conserve energy used in transportation; developing and implementing building codes and inspections services to promote building energy efficiency; installing light emitting diodes (LEDs); and developing, implementing, and installing on or in any government building on-site renewable energy technology.

Training, Upcoming Events, Education, and Volunteers and Friends News

There are a number of activities at the Cathlapotle plankhouse. For information on these events take a look at www.plankhouse.org

Southeast Regional Biologists' Conference to be held February 23-27 at Calloway Gardens, Pine Mountain, GA. The conference seeks to "provide a forum for exchange of information & experiences involving resource management & conservation across the Southeast US". Cultural resource management is an integral component of this effort.

Friday, Feb. 6th: Refuge Chiefs' Meeting, Charleston, SC - guided fieldtrip of the Grove & Jehosee Island Plantations, EF Hollings ACE Basin NWR.

April 25 - Commemoration of Francis Marion & Battle of Fort Watson at Santee Indian Mound/Fort Watson Archaeological Site complete with wreath & color guard. Sponsored by Sons of the American Revolution & the DAR. Held in conjunction with the birding festival at Santee NWR. Open to public & festival participants. Ceremony at 11 am on the 25th.