

Annual Report for the Programmatic Agreement Regarding Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Ventura County, California

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The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is pleased to report the following progress pursuant to the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) Programmatic Agreement (PA), executed on April 17, 2014, and amended in 2020. The PA stipulates actions to be taken by NASA regarding demolition and soil and groundwater cleanup at SSFL in Ventura County, California. The PA, including the 2020 PA Amendment #1, is attached to this report (Attachment 1).

This memorandum is submitted in accordance with Stipulation VIII of the PA, as amended. The Signatories to the PA are NASA, the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians (Santa Ynez).

The following text discusses the PA stipulations that have been completed and that were active during the reporting period of April 2021 through March 2022, as well as NASA's actions or activities performed under those stipulations. In some instances, this report includes brief summaries of actions from previous reporting years for context.

The South Central Coastal Information Center of the California Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS) at California State University, Fullerton was closed from March 2020 until January 2022 because of COVID-19 restrictions. The CHRIS partially reopened in January 2022 and is working through the backlog of data requests and submittals. The CHRIS center assigns archeological site numbers and is a repository for reports and archeological site forms. The submittal of some reports and the receipt of site numbers have been delayed as a result of this lengthy closure.

Programmatic Agreement Stipulations

Stipulation I.A.1. Immediate Demolition. In Stipulation I.A.1, NASA agreed to demolish the Coca Test Area Historic District and retain one test stand and affiliated control house in either the Alfa or Bravo Test Area Historic District, provided that retention was consistent with NASA's fiscal and legislative requirements.

In its March 2019 audit report of SSFL, the NASA Office of Inspector General (OIG) recommended that NASA make a decision on whether to preserve or demolish the test stands and control houses before beginning soil remediation activities and to implement that decision. In March 2020, NASA decided to return to its demolition commitments under the PA. For further information, see Stipulation I.B.1. During the reporting period, NASA completed demolition of the two test stands and the control house in the Bravo Test Area Historic District. NASA plans to move ahead with the demolition of the Coca Test Area Historic District.

Attachment 2 contains an updated list of properties within each district.

Stipulation I.A.2. Items for Display. During the reporting period, NASA SSFL worked with NASA artifacts officers across the agency to identify items for display from the Bravo Test Area Historic District prior to demolition. The three iconic "tiki torches" from Bravo Test Stand II (Building 2713), historically used to redirect and safely burn off excess gases generated during engine or engine component testing, were

declared excess property and removed from the structure prior to demolition. The property was transferred to the U.S. Air Force on March 24, 2022, for display upon completion of the Flight Test Museum at Edwards Air Force Base.

Stipulation I.B.1. Retention of Historic Test Stands and Facilities. To address the OIG's concerns and recommendations and in accordance with PA Stipulation I.B.1, NASA is retaining Alfa Test Stand I (Building 2727), Alfa Test Stand III (Building 2729), and the Alfa Control House (Building 2208), all of which are individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Although the PA stipulates the retention of only one test stand and control house, NASA has determined it is feasible and desirable to retain these three NRHP-eligible structures within the Alfa Test Area Historic District.

Stipulation I.B.2. Consultation. NASA continues to consult in accordance with the stipulation.

Stipulation I.B.3. Hazardous Materials Identification. This stipulation is complete. In 2013, the Great Southern Engineering firm completed a survey at SSFL that evaluated the presence of asbestos, lead-based paint, and other hazardous materials on the individually eligible properties in the three historic districts.

Stipulation I.C.1. Structural Documentation. This stipulation is complete. NASA coordinated with the National Park Service (NPS), which completed Level I, Level II, and Level III Historic American Engineering Record documentation in February 2016. NPS posted this document on its website on May 10, 2016: https://www.nps.gov/hdp/exhibits/ssfl/SSFL_index.htm

Stipulation I.C.2. Photography and Narrative. This stipulation is complete. NPS posted the structural documentation via a virtual tour on its website: https://www.nps.gov/hdp/exhibits/ssfl/SSFL_index.htm

Stipulation I.C.3. National Register Determination of Eligibility. NASA will update the NRHP determination of eligibility for the retained historic structures. There was no activity on this stipulation in this reporting period.

Stipulation I.C.4. Video Documentation. This stipulation is complete. The drawings, photographs, and virtual tour are posted on YouTube at the following links:

Alfa Test Area: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqUQ_pelTa0

Bravo Test Area: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo3f_TiBcoI

Coca Test Area: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSE2eCBtAY>

Coca Test Stand 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji2JxVI6npM>

Stipulation I.C.5. Oral Histories. This stipulation is complete. The oral histories are posted on NASA's SSFL website: <https://ssfl.msfc.nasa.gov/cultural/oral-history.aspx>

Stipulation II.A. Native American Advisory Board. With the formation of the Sacred Sites Council (SSC) in 2014, NASA's responsibility under this stipulation is complete. NASA met with the SSC on multiple occasions during this reporting period, including a meeting onsite with NASA senior leadership in August 2021. NASA continues to consult with the SSC to preserve and protect Native American cultural and archaeological resources at SSFL.

Stipulation II.B. Ethnographic History. This stipulation is complete. The final *Ethnographic Overview of the Native American Communities in the Simi Hills and Vicinity* was submitted to the SHPO, Santa Ynez, and ACHP in March 2017. This stipulation required a public version of this document, which was posted on NASA's website on a page with other key documents relating to SSFL: <https://ssfl.msfc.nasa.gov/about/key-documents>. This is the direct link to the pdf: https://ssfl.msfc.nasa.gov/files/documents/local/2017/SSFL_Ethnographic_Overview_public.pdf.

Stipulation II.C. TCP Nomination. No activity occurred during the reporting period. For background, the NRHP nomination of the Burro Flats Cultural District TCP went before the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board in June 2020 and the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in July 2020. The nomination was discussed and approved by the California Native American Heritage Commission and the California State

Historical Resources Commission in August 2020. After these approvals and the signature of the California SHPO, NASA sent the TCP nomination to the Keeper of the NRHP in September 2020. It was returned to NASA by the Keeper in October 2020 for technical revision, specifically related to the physical description and integrity of the property. NASA revised the text based on these comments and returned the nomination to California SHPO in February 2021 for resubmittal to the Keeper.

This stipulation is technically complete, as the PA stipulates the submittal of the nomination to the Keeper of the NRHP; however, NASA intends to continue with the process, in coordination with the SHPO and the Keeper of the NRHP, and get the TCP listed in the NRHP.

Stipulation II.D. Access. This stipulation is ongoing. In accordance with this stipulation and Executive Order 13007, “Indian Sacred Sites,” NASA provides access to requesting tribal members who wish to enter SSFL when requests are made to visit Native American Sacred Sites. During the reporting period, NASA had multiple meetings with tribal representatives of the SSC to discuss access.

Stipulation II.E. Reseeding. This process is ongoing. In areas where structures were demolished and soil remained, NASA used a native seed mix specially formulated for SSFL. The same seed mix is used throughout the site.

Stipulation III.A. Boundary Determination and National Register Nomination. This stipulation is complete. In accordance with the second part of this stipulation, the Burro Flats Site was re-listed in the NRHP with the updated boundary and additional information in July 2020.

Stipulation III.B. Monitoring. This stipulation is ongoing, as needed by onsite activities. Archeological and local Native American monitors were present during ground-disturbing activities within the Burro Flats Site and the areas defined by the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Action Plan (ESAAP). Ground-disturbing activities within Area II and Area I LOX are monitored by a Native American monitor.

Stipulation III.C. Environmentally Sensitive Areas Action Plan. This stipulation is complete. NASA updated the ESAAP after completion of the Extended Phase I investigation and the ESAAP is updated as cultural resources data changes.

Stipulation III.D. AOC Exception Consideration. NASA has submitted the Burro Flats Site Complex Boundary, the final Archeological Site Boundary Determinations at NASA-administered Areas I and II, the TCP and Burro Flats nominations, and the Ethnographic Study to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). To date, no decision has been made by DTSC regarding how the “Native American Artifacts” exceptions clause in the 2010 Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) will be defined or used.

Stipulation III.G. Documentation and Curation. This stipulation is complete. In October 2018, NASA executed a curation agreement with the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles.

Stipulation III.H. Protection. This stipulation is complete. This stipulation calls for NASA to update the standard operating procedures in the SSFL Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP). NASA updated the SSFL ICRMP to include the boundaries of the Burro Flats Site Complex and other new or extended site boundaries.

Stipulation IV.B. Further Archeological Investigation. This stipulation is complete. The findings from the Extended Phase I investigation were reported in the final *Archeological Site Boundary Determinations at NASA-administered Areas I and II, Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Ventura County, California* and include sites outside the Burro Flats Site Complex.

Stipulation IV.C. Archeological Site Discovery and Evaluation. This stipulation is complete. The findings from the Extended Phase I investigation were reported in the final *Archeological Site Boundary Determinations at NASA-administered Areas I and II, Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Ventura County, California* and include evaluations of sites outside the Burro Flats Site Complex. (Refer to Stipulation VII for additional information about unanticipated discoveries.)

Stipulation IV.D. This stipulation is ongoing. In the event the final cleanup footprint includes a portion of an NRHP-eligible archeological site, NASA will consult with DTSC and request that the site be considered part of the “Native American Artifacts” exceptions clause in the 2010 AOC. No determination regarding which sites will be considered under the “Native American Artifacts” exceptions clause have been made.

Stipulation IV.E. ICRMP Updates. This stipulation is complete. Although this stipulation is complete, NASA will continue to update the SSFL ICRMP for NASA-administered areas, as needed.

Stipulation IV.G. Training Module. This stipulation is complete. NASA continues to administer the training module to all onsite workers. No updates were made to this training module during the reporting period.

Stipulation V. Consultation and Review. NASA continues to comply with this stipulation regarding review of reports and other PA deliverables.

Stipulation VI. Duration. The duration of the PA was extended via Amendment #1 in April 2020. See the Stipulation XI Amendments section for a discussion of the extension of the duration of the PA.

Stipulation VII. Unanticipated Discoveries. NASA followed the procedures outlined in the PA and the ICRMP for unanticipated discoveries. No unanticipated cultural resources discoveries were made during the reporting period. Throughout the life of the PA, no items have been found that are human remains or funerary objects.

Stipulation VIII. Annual Reporting. This annual report is submitted in accordance with Stipulation VIII. NASA will continue to submit annual reports to the Signatories until the PA expires or is terminated. The 2020 Amendment #1 added an annual meeting with Signatories following receipt of the annual report.

Stipulation XI. Amendments. In accordance with this stipulation, PA Amendment #1, which extends the duration of the agreement by 10 years, was executed on April 6, 2020. This amendment is included in Attachment 1.

Other Cultural Resources Activities

In addition to the activities stipulated in the PA, NASA has developed or completed other cultural resources-related tasks. The following are summaries of those tasks.

Dstretch Photographic Investigation

To update the accuracy of its rock art catalogue, NASA carried out a Dstretch photographic survey of existing rock art and likely rock art locations within NASA-administered Area II. Although no new rock art was discovered, the investigation confirmed the accuracy of the rock art inventory in NASA-administered areas. During the survey, 14 previously unrecorded archeological resources were recorded. Site forms for these resources and the summary report will be submitted to South Central Coastal Information Center.

Alfa Test Area Baseline Assessment

Because it has elected to retain Alfa Test Stands I and III and the Alfa Control House, in July 2021, NASA conducted a baseline assessment of the historic, environmental, and structural condition of the three individually eligible structures. The initial report will be completed in 2022 and include inspection checklists for each structure from each of the three areas of expertise. Annual inspections will be conducted using the checklists.

Archeological District Evaluation

The archaeological district evaluation will be revised with new information from recent investigations and findings. In 2017, NASA completed the draft NRHP evaluation of a potential archeological district (*NRHP Eligibility Evaluation, Burro Flats Archeological District, Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Ventura County*). NASA met with SHPO in May 2017 to review the draft district evaluation and discuss the proposed boundaries. The updated evaluation was submitted to SHPO, Santa Ynez, and the SSC in February 2018.

Attachments

- 1 Programmatic Agreement Regarding Santa Susana Field Laboratory, as Amended
- 2 Status of Structures within Historic Districts

View Attachment 1. Programmatic Agreement Regarding Santa Susana Field Laboratory, as Amended at: https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/2020_pa_amendment.pdf

(View the 2014 Programmatic Agreement Regarding Santa Susana Field Laboratory, at: https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/files/SSFL_EIS_ROD.pdf#page=19

To obtain Attachment 2, Status of Structures within Historic Districts, please email lori.manes@nasa.gov