

3.0 CATEGORIZED UNDERTAKINGS

This section provides a summary of activities that may be undertakings that affect cultural resources on [USAG-AK](#) installations over the five-year period of this document. The categories refer to classes of activities and not to specific or individual undertakings or projects.

3.1 Excavation

Excavation has potential to destroy archaeological sites. Excavation is prohibited unless authorized by Range Control and the Environmental Division. Common training activities requiring excavation include construction of foxholes, tank traps, hull down positions, barriers, and explosive excavations. Training of engineering units may involve excavation using heaving equipment. Excavation also occurs as part of the facilities maintenance mission of Public Works.

3.2 Off-Road Maneuver

Vehicle (wheeled and track) operation occurring off-road has potential to disturb sites by creating ruts, disturbing soil, and promoting erosion. Units training on installations are encouraged to use established roads and trails, and Range Control restricts off-road maneuver. The potential for ground disturbance from off-road maneuver is directly related to environmental and climatic factors. During winter, when the ground is frozen and covered *by adequate snow cover*, there is little potential for disturbance, and off-road maneuver is permitted. During breakup off-road maneuver is prohibited. During summer months, off-road maneuver is permitted except in designated protection areas, including creek bottoms, marshes, and tundra areas. A list of areas closed during summer is posted at Range Control ([USAG-AK Regulation 350-2, Range Regulation](#), 1 January 1995). Range Control also minimizes disturbance from off-road maneuver by scheduling training activities to avoid over-use of training areas.

3.3 Tree/Vegetation Removal

The removal of trees and other vegetation has potential to disrupt sites by overturning the soil. Destruction of trees and brush is prohibited unless required as part of training exercises ([USAG-AK Regulation 350-2](#)). The Environmental Division for wildlife habitat management *and wildfire suppression may conduct vegetation removal. Methods for tree and vegetation removal include use of bushers, hydro-axes and shear-blades. Hand thinning (removing the vegetation by chainsaw and other hand implements), has a low potential for impacting archaeological resources with no surface component.*

3.4 Construction

In the event of changes to the [USAG-AK](#) military mission, new facilities and construction may be necessary. The excavation of foundations for buildings and utility lines as well *as building of new roads and trails* can disturb or destroy archaeological sites. Large construction vehicles can sink into soft soil and cause additional damage.

3.5 Demolition

Demolition is the most obvious threat to historic properties and results in total loss of the resource. A historic property should never be inadvertently destroyed. However, even if a property is determined eligible or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), it can be demolished if incompatible with the military mission. Procedures for demolition are established by the [Advisory Council](#); procedures ensure that historic resources are given due consideration before proposed demolition.

3.6 Maintenance and Renovation

Although maintenance of a property is necessary to prevent deterioration, maintenance activities can destroy or alter features of a property. For instance, replacement of original windows or doors with new

ones of a different type can entirely change the character of a building. Renovation of a historic property can lead to removal of characteristics that gave it significance and result in the partial or complete loss of architectural integrity. Maintenance of facilities is the responsibility of Public Works.

3.7 Natural Resource Management

Natural resources projects sometimes are overlooked as potential causes of adverse impacts to archaeological sites. Activities such as vegetation clearing, timber removal, firebreak construction, and training land rehabilitation are potentially damaging to cultural resources. *The Cultural Resources Manager will address potential impacts in the preparation of INRMPs and review of proposed actions.*