

To have a successful program you need to understand how communication happens, what avenues are going to be used to communicate actions, and how to learn from communication you receive concerning the program. This chapter details the communications plan that is in place for this program and how we manage information in the development and execution of the program.

a) Communications Plan. The Cultural Resources Communication Plan realizes that there are several avenues that must be used to effectively communicate. Rarely will a message be communicated and received by using only one method. Therefore the following, multi-faceted approach is being used to communicate with our stakeholders, customers and the general public.

i) Integrated Process Team for Cultural Resources. The district has established an Integrated Process Team (IPT) for cultural resources (Figure 3-1) to develop the direction of the program and to ensure proper coordination among all district elements. Headed by the Cultural Resources Program Manager, this team is composed of representatives from each division within the district that has involvement in the cultural resource arena. The Program Manager is part of the Environmental, Economics and Cultural Resources section in Planning Branch of PPPMD. Current members and a Charter for this team are included in Appendix G.

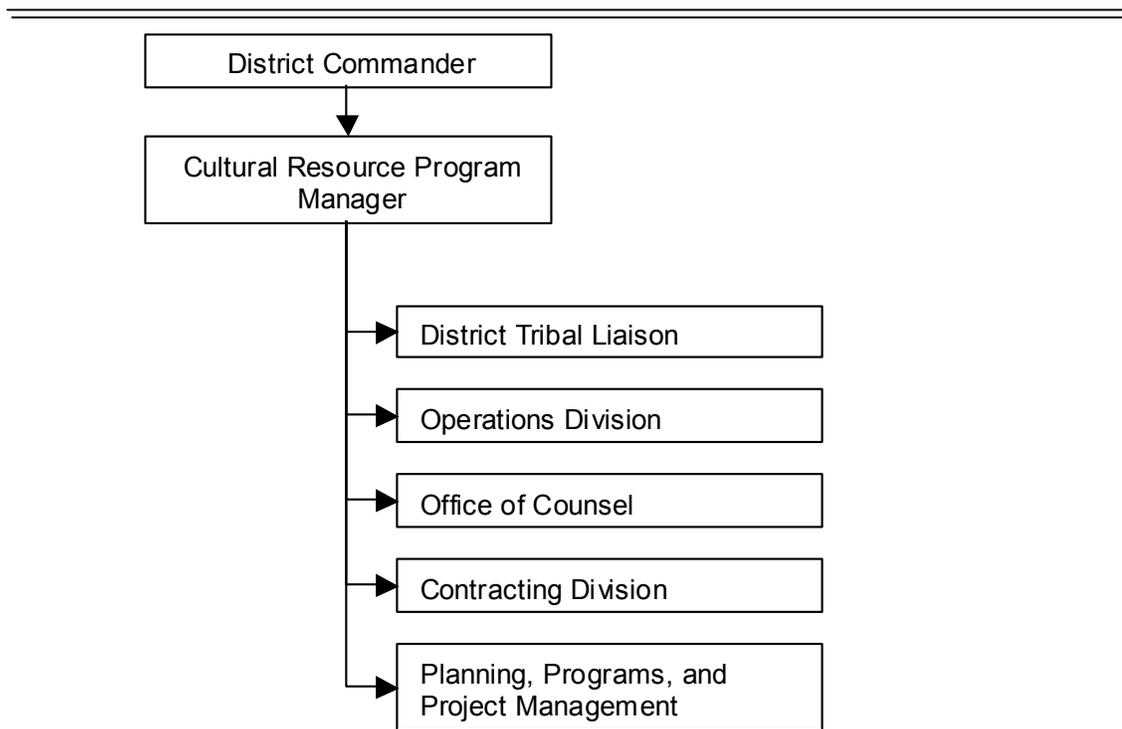


Figure 3-1. Integrated Process Team for Cultural Resources

ii) Cultural Resources Task Force. The Cultural Resource Task Force (Figure 3-2) was established to solicit consensual Tribal and other agency advice and recommendations, and to involve task force members in decision-making prior to the

more formal consultation with all Tribal leaders and other Federal, State, and Local agencies. The formation of this task force fit into the approach that the district wanted to pursue, which was a forum for involvement of all stakeholders in the success of the program. Where the IPT is essential in internally coordinating and gathering consensual advise and recommendations the Cultural Resources Task Force is essential in doing the same external to the Corps of Engineers.

Specifically, the purpose of the Cultural Resource Task Force is to share Omaha District cultural resource program information, allow for input and involvement of all members, assign and implement the agreed upon actions and monitor accomplishments of the program/Task Force. Current Members of the Task Force are listed in Appendix G along with the current charter.

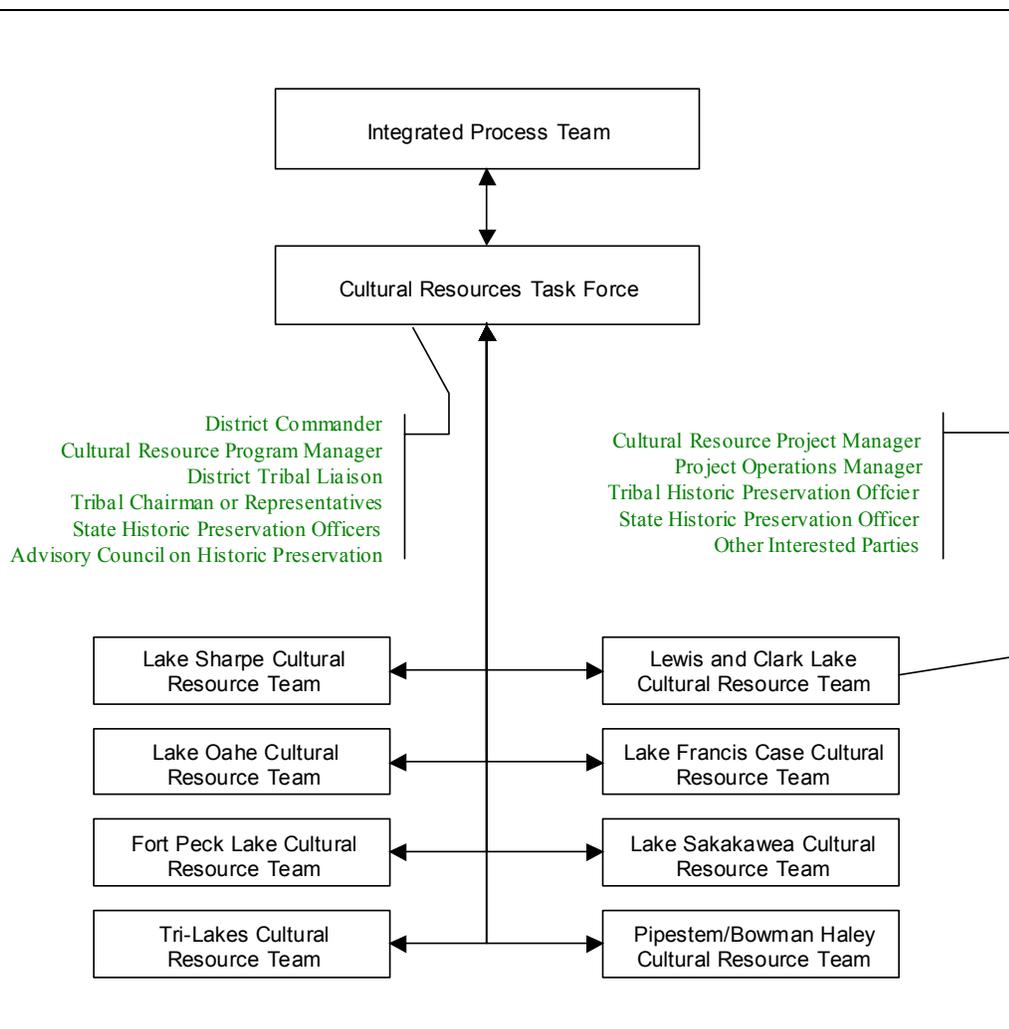


Figure 3-2. Cultural Resource Program Structure

iii) Project/Lake Cultural Resources Team. Depending on the recommendations from the Cultural Resource Task Force and the Integrated Process

Team, the potential exists for the formation of individual project/lake teams (Figure 3-2). It is anticipated that these teams would be the cultural resource programs main interface with other federal agencies, state agencies, Native American tribes, other interested groups and the public. The teams would be responsible for the planning, prioritization and implementation of the cultural resource program effecting federal lands in the project/lake area. The team is composed of the project operations manager, the Omaha District Project Manager, effected Tribal Historic Preservation Officer's, State Historic Preservation Officer's, other interested parties and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (when required). It is anticipated that there would be eight teams, one for each Missouri River main stem project, a team for the Pipestem/Bowman Haley, North Dakota projects, and a team for the three Tri-Lakes projects. Charters would be developed and included in Appendix G when completed.

iv) Tribal Consultation. There are twenty-eight Tribes located within the Missouri River basin. The geographic boundaries of the Missouri River basin include the homes and lands of several bands of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota. In addition, several other Tribes occupied aboriginal homelands in the basin but have since relocated to other regions of the country. In an effort to involve the Tribes of the region in the program activities we have developed two documents that describe how we plan to involve the Tribes.

The first is the Northwestern Division Native American Program Desk Guide, a guide for Tribal consultation provided by the Northwestern Division. The Desk Guide sets forth guidelines to be followed in the implementation of a consultation program or procedure. Each District is responsible to develop it's own consultation plan. The Desk Guide is included in Appendix H. The second document is the Tribal Consultation Outline. This outline provides a procedure for the Omaha District to follow that provides interaction to establish a process and guidelines for meaningful consultation. Responsibilities for consultation will be met and shared between the District and the appropriate Tribes. Coordination and cooperation will be the foundation. The outline is included in Appendix H.

These guidelines are not intended to replace specifically mandated consultation requirements, such as those identified in the National Historic Preservation Act or the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act implementing regulations. Rather, they would provide a framework for implementing those requirements.

v) Public Notices/Announcements. Official announcements or requests are distributed through the Public Notice system. All notices are composed and reviewed internally to ensure the proper message is being conveyed. After the development, review and approval process has been completed the Omaha District Public Affairs office (PAO) receives the information for distribution to local, regional or national media and agencies. The public affairs personnel will handle routine items. Items that will effect or benefit the entire basin, district or a specific region are examples of information that will be disseminated through PAO. At the discretion of the program manager and designated public affairs personnel, the PA office will handle most incoming media requests.

vi) Internet Web Site. An additional means of data dissemination and information sharing is the Cultural Resources website. The website is part of the Omaha District website and can be located at the following address: <http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil>. The website contains information on the program including mission and purpose, goals and objectives, laws and regulations, agreements, project plans, and other documents. The purpose of the website is to provide information to the public in a timely and efficient manner.

vii) Public Presentations. In an effort to help outside agencies and possible stakeholders understand the missions of the cultural resource program, public presentations will be made. These shall include local, regional and national in scope with all cultural resource personnel involved during the year. These forums give others the opportunity to understand what we accomplish, the current status of the program and an opportunity to ask questions. It also allows cultural resource personnel to educate the public, both young and old on the importance of cultural resources to our national heritage.

viii) Customer Feedback. Feedback for the program is actively sought and given as part of the implementation of the above referenced teams. Feedback is documented through meeting minutes, participant notes or other means and discussed as the meetings progress. Follow-up is assigned to a specific person to ensure accountability for an action. Customer feedback is obtained by project and by program. After the completion of each project feedback is solicited from all that were involved in the project. This would include the PDT, internal customers and external customers. The project manager solicits feedback either verbally or in writing in an effort to determine what went well on the project and what could be improved on future projects of a similar nature. All information is entered into the lessons-learned program.

Annually the program manager sends out a questionnaire to all parties that had interaction with the cultural resource program. The questionnaire is sent to gather feedback on the program performance as well as to help establish goals and objective for the upcoming year. This questionnaire is distributed during the month of August each year. Feedback is compiled and distributed to all those personnel involved in the cultural resource program. All information is entered into the lessons-learned program.

ix) Lessons Learned. The lessons learned program is an essential tool used to provide cultural resource personnel with specific and timely feedback. The feedback is intended to improve the programs customer service and performance. The information is contained in the DrChecks program. These comments are entered as feedback is received, so all program participants can see the information by querying the database.

b) Information Management. Information management is essential to the success of the cultural resource program. Information that cannot be found, is inaccurate or is misleading will not help the program progress and improve. The main location of all cultural site information is the Cultural Resource database. Unofficial and official project files are also kept. These three areas are the main repositories of all internal cultural resource information. External repositories of information will not be covered in this plan.

i) Cultural Resource Database. The cultural resource database was developed to support the gathering and updating of archeological site information. It continues to grow by adding new sites and Traditional Cultural Properties. The data contained in the database consists of historical data, including the most recent data received from reports and site visits. This database feeds the GIS system that allows the sites to be visually represented. Cultural resource personnel maintain the database while the Information Management personnel in the district maintain the GIS system.

ii) Unofficial Project Files. Each project manager has a file of information at their desk that pertains to the projects that they are or have worked. This file is called an unofficial file because the information contained in the files does not meet the requirements of the Modern Army Record Keeping System (MARKS). Examples of information contained in unofficial project files are interoffice correspondence, working copies of reports, telephone conversation records, phone numbers, preliminary draft and draft reports, etc. These items are not required to be retained after project completion. It is expected that each project manager have at least one project file folder for each project. On the top of the folder the name of the project should be clearly displayed.

iii) Official Project Files. Official project folders are kept at the Section secretary desk. These files are ones that meet the requirements of the MARKS system and are labeled accordingly. Examples of official project files are external written correspondence, final reports, legal transcripts of meetings, etc. While these items can also be kept at the project manager's desk the original should be kept in the official project folder. When a project is completed all official information will be transferred to the Official project folders, if not already contained in the folders. Each item in the folders shall be marked and maintained according to the requirements contained in the MARKS handbook.

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