

1 **3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

2 "Cultural resources" is a broad term that describes archaeological, architectural, and historical  
3 objects, sites, buildings, structures, or districts. Some of these are listed in or eligible for listing  
4 in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). To qualify as an eligible property, the  
5 resource must meet specific criteria established in the National Historic Preservation Act  
6 (NHPA). Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their  
7 actions on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Section 106 process  
8 requires federal agency consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Native  
9 American tribes, and other appropriate agencies and parties and input from the Advisory  
10 Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

11 Cultural resources can be divided into three broad categories: prehistoric, Native American, and  
12 historic. Prehistoric resources consist of the physical evidence (often buried) resulting from  
13 human activities that occurred before the time of written records. Native American resources  
14 are sites, areas, or materials important to living Native Americans for religious, spiritual,  
15 ancestral, or traditional reasons. Historic resources can consist of physical properties,  
16 archaeological sites, structures, or built items resulting from human activities since the time of  
17 written records. Cultural resources that are under water are called maritime or submerged  
18 cultural resources, and they can be prehistoric, Native American, or historic. Maritime sites can  
19 include inundated cities, harbors, shore installations, shipwrecks, or sunken aircraft.

20 In addition to the NHPA, cultural resources and Native American resources are protected by:  
21 the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. §§ 469-469c), the American  
22 Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. §§ 1996-1996a), and the Native American  
23 Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) (25 U.S.C. §§ 3001-3013). NAGPRA  
24 provides for the return of human remains and burial items to identified Native American  
25 descendants.

26 Cultural resources at NSTI have been identified through a number of previous investigations.  
27 These investigations identified cultural resources throughout NSTI, including some resources in  
28 areas that have since been transferred to other federal agencies and are no longer under Navy  
29 control.

30 In 1998, land on Yerba Buena Island, including two historic buildings, was transferred to the US  
31 Coast Guard. Some resources within this area are not part of the evaluation in this EIS. In 2000,  
32 FHWA conveyed 98 acres (40 ha) on Yerba Buena Island held by Navy to Caltrans for  
33 construction of the east span of the SFOBB. Approximately 20 acres (8 ha) of dry land were  
34 permanently conveyed in fee; the remaining 78 acres (32 ha) comprises five separate easements:  
35 51 acre (21 ha) and 18 acre (7 ha) TCEs over submerged land, an 8 acre (3 ha) TCE over dry land,  
36 and two 0.3 acre (0.1 ha) permanent aerial easements over dry land. Resources that lie within  
37 lands permanently conveyed in fee and were previously transferred are not included in this EIS;  
38 however, resources that are within the TCEs or aerial easements are evaluated.

39 **Cultural Background of NSTI**

40 The cultural background for NSTI consists of an overview of the history of the area from  
41 prehistoric times to the present. Summarized here, cultural backgrounds are used as contexts

### 3.4 Cultural Resources

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1 for developing significance criteria to help determine if specific properties are eligible for the  
2 NRHP. Specific contexts have been developed for NSTI's prehistoric, Native American, and  
3 historic resources (DON 1997f).

#### 4 *Prehistoric*

5 Not much is known about the region's first human inhabitants or when the area became home  
6 to the ancestors of modern Native Americans. Several recent discoveries in South America have  
7 seriously questioned the theory that the first people on the continent crossed the Bering Strait  
8 only 10,000 years ago. Some of the earliest sites recorded in the vicinity, south of the project  
9 area in San Jose and Scotts Valley, are dated to as early as 8,000 BC (Moratto 1984). Based on  
10 dates and material gathered from extensive archaeological excavations conducted at several  
11 large prehistoric shellmounds (i.e., sites where marine resources were consumed), it appears  
12 that human occupation of the San Francisco Bay Area also goes back many thousands of years.  
13 Evidence suggests that between 5,000 and 2,000 BC, the bay was used by groups of hunters and  
14 gatherers who subsisted on a wide variety of land, bayshore, and marsh resources. As time  
15 progressed, later groups who occupied the region are believed to have relied primarily on  
16 shellfish (Breschini and Haversat 1980; Moratto 1984). Although the aboriginal populations  
17 may have been affected by fluctuating sea levels, use of the region appears to have been  
18 continual until the historic period.

#### 19 *Native American (Ethnography)*

20 At the time of Euro-American contact (around 1769), Native American groups of the Costanoan  
21 language family occupied the area, from San Francisco Bay to southern Monterey. The large  
22 area that the Costanoans occupied was subdivided among several individual groups occupying  
23 specific territories. Shells, pine nuts, and obsidian for making stone tools were likely traded  
24 between coastal and inland groups, as evidence from excavated sites indicates. Costanoans  
25 used several semi-permanent camp areas, depending on where food was available during each  
26 season, moving locations to take advantage of both marine and land resources. The Ohlone, a  
27 Costanoan group that lived along the ocean shore, once occupied the project area. Like most  
28 California aboriginal groups, the Ohlone practiced a transient lifestyle and relied heavily on  
29 hunting and gathering. With the onset of Euro-American immigration to the area, their  
30 traditional way of life essentially disappeared by the mid-1800s (NPS 1976).

#### 31 *Historical Setting of NSTI*

32 Although Navy has managed Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island as a single facility since  
33 1940, the islands have different histories. Yerba Buena is a natural island that has been used by  
34 private parties and by the Army and Navy since the 1840s. Treasure Island is an entirely  
35 engineered island, constructed in 1936 and 1937.

36 *Yerba Buena Island.* Various parties claimed ownership of Yerba Buena Island (also known as  
37 Goat Island) through the Spanish-Mexican era of California history and through the early  
38 decades of American control. The Army asserted the right to occupy and use Yerba Buena  
39 Island in 1866, and in 1867 it took possession of the island. Troops were stationed on the  
40 southeastern part of the island, in a cove near the modern US Coast Guard station. In 1879, the  
41 Army reassigned artillery units to the Presidio of San Francisco and abandoned the Yerba

1 Buena Island garrison. In 1891, the Army Coast Artillery Corps took control of the island to  
2 erect a torpedo (i.e., underwater mine) depot.

3 In 1898, the Navy established a Naval Training Station in the East Cove area, in the location of  
4 the 1870s Army base, but the Army retained control of the eastern tip of the island until 1960.  
5 The Naval Training Station was active from 1900 until 1923, when Navy relocated it to the  
6 Naval Training Center in San Diego, and the Navy facility on Yerba Buena Island became a  
7 receiving ship facility. In the mid-1930s, the SFOBB was constructed. Yerba Buena Island  
8 became the center anchorage for the SFOBB (anchoring the suspension spans on the west and  
9 the cantilever spans on the east), and a tunnel traversed the central hill.

10 Treasure Island. Treasure Island is an entirely engineered island, consisting of rock and mud fill  
11 placed over shallow areas at the northern shore of Yerba Buena Island. The COE constructed  
12 the approximately 400-acre (162-ha) island during 1936 and 1937 to provide a short-term site for  
13 the Golden Gate International Exposition, with the intent of converting the site into a  
14 permanent airport for San Francisco when the exposition closed. The exposition was conceived  
15 to celebrate construction of the Golden Gate Bridge and the SFOBB. Most of the buildings  
16 constructed for the exposition were built to be temporary, with only three planned to be  
17 permanent.

18 In February 1941, Navy took possession of Treasure Island from San Francisco in exchange for  
19 land south of San Francisco on the peninsula. The peninsula property would become the site of  
20 the San Francisco International Airport. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December  
21 1941, the Navy built several hundred new buildings on the island, between 1942 and 1945.  
22 Most construction at Treasure Island during World War II was designed to function only for the  
23 duration of the war. Following World War II, Navy transformed Treasure Island into a training  
24 facility and unified various specialized technical schools from throughout the Bay Area into a  
25 consolidated facility on the island. Navy demolished dozens of World War II-era temporary  
26 structures during the 1960s and 1970s, making way for more modern residential and classroom  
27 buildings suited to its instructional needs.

#### 28 3.4.1 Summary of Previous Investigations

29 In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, Navy conducted cultural resource investigations  
30 to determine the presence of cultural resources within the area of potential effect (APE).

31 Previous studies of buildings and structures at NSTI fall into two categories—those conducted  
32 before 1996 and those supporting a comprehensive inventory conducted by JRP Historical  
33 Consulting Services in 1996 and 1997. Pre-1996 studies of buildings and structures at Yerba  
34 Buena Island are restricted to studies of senior officers' quarters (DON 1982b) and a historical  
35 investigation by staff from Mare Island Naval Shipyard conducted in 1995 (DON 1995a). The  
36 National Park Service (NPS) inspected and analyzed data from the exposition buildings at  
37 Treasure Island in 1987 for potential National Historic Landmark (NHL) status, as part of a  
38 thematic study of world's fair sites in the U.S. (NPS 1987). The intent of the NPS study was to  
39 determine whether any exposition buildings would qualify for listing in the NRHP,  
40 individually or as a historic district.

### 3.4 Cultural Resources

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1 In 1996-1997, JRP Historical Consulting Services conducted a comprehensive inventory of all  
2 buildings and structures at NSTI (DON 1997a). That inventory effort included preparing a  
3 historic context for evaluating historic significance, as well as an inspection of all buildings on  
4 both islands.

5 Also in 1996, PAR Environmental Services, Inc., conducted archaeological investigations within  
6 NSTI (DON 1997f). In addition to a field survey, personnel of the Northwest Information  
7 Center (NWIC) of the Historical Resources File System, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park,  
8 completed a prehistoric and historic site record and literature search (NWIC File No. 96-227).

9 The California State Lands Commission Shipwreck database was reviewed for reported  
10 shipwrecks in the vicinity of NSTI. The SFOBB retrofit project also has been investigated to  
11 identify eligible and potentially eligible sites within the APE.

12 Background studies conducted at both Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island identified  
13 significant archaeological properties and historic buildings and structures that are within the  
14 areas that Navy transferred to the US Coast Guard and the FHWA. While not formally part of  
15 this analysis, discussions of some transferred resources are included to assist the reader in  
16 understanding the project.

#### 17 3.4.2 Summary of Known Resources

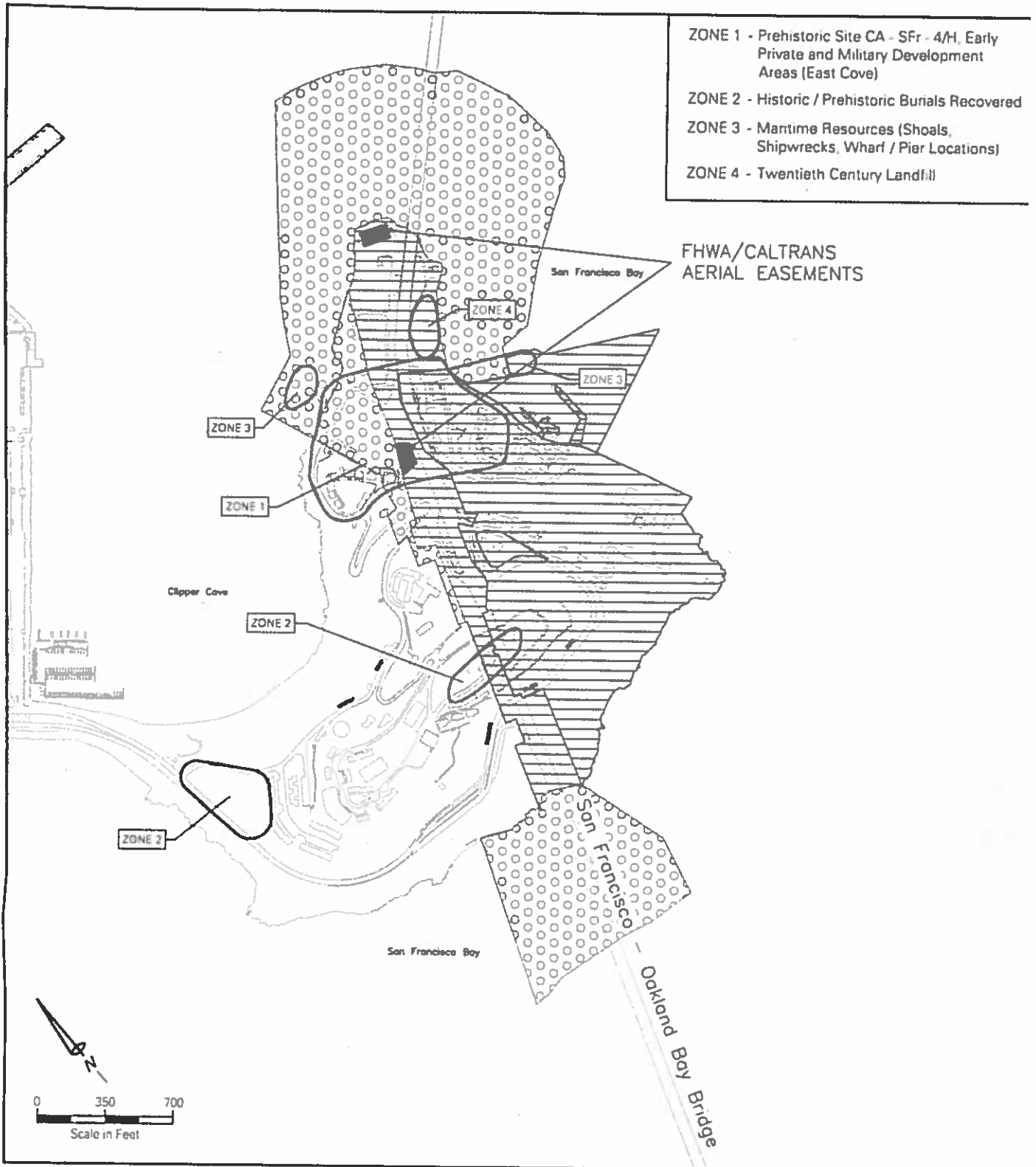
##### 18 *Status of Cultural Resources at Yerba Buena Island*

19 The 1996 cultural resource investigations identified archaeological and historic resources on  
20 Yerba Buena Island. Four areas, or zones, of subsurface archaeological sensitivity on Yerba  
21 Buena Island were defined and are discussed further below (Figure 3-3). Due to the transfer of  
22 Navy property to the US Coast Guard and FHWA, portions of Zone 1, Zone 2, and Zone 3, and  
23 much of Zone 4 are no longer Navy property and are not part of the proposed disposal and  
24 reuse action considered in this EIS.

##### 25 *Zone 1*

26 Zone 1 contains a prehistoric site with a historic component (CA-SFr-4/H) and early private  
27 and military development. The prehistoric component of site CA-SFr-4/H contained burials  
28 reportedly removed from the site in 1934 (DON 1997f). The remains are housed at the Phoebe  
29 Hearst Museum in Berkeley, California. Following the FHWA transfer, Caltrans conducted  
30 additional work at the prehistoric site, including Native American consultation, additional site  
31 testing, and development of treatment plans to comply with the NHPA (Caltrans and FHWA  
32 2001). Caltrans determined the historical component of site CA-SFr-4/H to be a  
33 noncontributing element for eligibility to the NRHP (Caltrans and FHWA 2001). Caltrans  
34 developed treatment plans for the resources, as part of the SFOBB retrofit project (Caltrans and  
35 FHWA 2001).

36 There appear to be no remnant buildings or structures associated with pre-1867 occupation of  
37 the island, even though it had been occupied since the 1840s (DON 1996p). One building  
38 remaining from the early military period of occupation is the lighthouse, built in 1872 and still  
39 used by the US Coast Guard. The lighthouse is not on Navy property and  
40



There are four zones of predictable archeological sensitivity where the likelihood of unexpected discoveries of significant archeological and historical resources is judged high.

## Archeologically Sensitive Zones Yerba Buena Island

**Legend**

-  Areas Excluded from Proposed Navy Disposal
-  FHWA/Caltrans TCEs
-  FHWA/Caltrans Aerial Easement

**Figure 3-3**



1 would not be affected by the disposal action. The other remaining structure on Yerba Buena  
2 Island from this early period is the reinforced concrete Building 262, the torpedo building  
3 constructed in 1891 as the mine assembly building. It is north of and almost directly beneath  
4 the SFOBB, at the eastern water's edge and is unoccupied. There is an aerial easement over  
5 Building 262, although the structure itself was not transferred to FHWA. Also within Zone 1  
6 are the foundation remnants of the Naval Training Station's original administration complex, its  
7 associated outbuildings, and seven unmodified Senior Officers Quarters (Quarters 1 through 7).  
8 Other buildings remaining from this period include Quarters 8 and 9, which were constructed  
9 between 1900 and 1905. Quarters 8 and 9 were within an area transferred to the US Coast  
10 Guard. One historic district and three individual buildings that meet the criteria for listing in  
11 the NRHP were identified as part of the comprehensive 1996 investigation.

12 This Senior Officers Quarters Historic District includes seven senior officers quarters, Quarters 1  
13 through 7, all built between 1900 and 1905 (Figure 3-4). The district also includes three  
14 associated garages, Buildings 83, 205, and 230, and formal landscaping elements. In 1997, the  
15 SHPO agreed in concept on the proposed historic district. One building within the group,  
16 Quarters 1, the Nimitz House, was individually listed on the NRHP in 1991.

#### 17 *Zone 2*

18 Zone 2 is broken into two areas, one that contains prehistoric burials, and the site of the original  
19 historic cemetery site dated to 1849 (DON 1997f).

20 The first part of Zone 2 is an area of reported prehistoric and historic archaeological deposits,  
21 including Native American remains removed in the 1930s from the top of the island where the  
22 signal tower now stands (DON 1997f). Most of the area where the reported human remains  
23 were found is within the area transferred to FWHA.

24 The second part of Zone 2 is reported as the early cemetery of the island, dated to 1849.  
25 Although all known burials were relocated to San Francisco in the 1930s, the zone is considered  
26 sensitive because of the possibility of additional unmarked graves (DON 1997f).

#### 27 *Zone 3*

28 Zone 3 contains potential historic maritime resources from before 1835 through 1923 (DON  
29 1997f). Maritime traffic both in prehistoric and historic times seems likely, due to the strategic  
30 location of the island. A review of reported shipwrecks using the California State Lands  
31 Commission Shipwreck database did not reveal any shipwrecks in the waters surrounding  
32 Yerba Buena Island; however, four shipwrecks were reported in the vicinity (Caltrans and  
33 FHWA 2001). In investigations conducted for the SFOBB retrofit project EIS, Caltrans included  
34 a maritime archaeological survey that extended 1,200 feet on either side of the bridge, within  
35 Clipper Cove, and in an area east of Building 262 (Caltrans and FHWA 2001). This survey did  
36 not reveal the presence of any shipwrecks. The *Utica*, a boat that burned and sank in 1850, is  
37 plotted (using latitude and longitude provided by the shipwreck database) on what would have  
38 been the shoals to the north of Yerba Buena. This area has since been filled and is now Treasure  
39 Island.

### ***3.4 Cultural Resources***

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1 Zone 3 also contains areas where historic wharves were constructed, as shown on archival maps  
2 from 1871 that depict a wharf within the East Cove off Yerba Buena (DON 1997f). The Navy  
3 transferred some property within Zone 3 to FWHA as part of the SFOBB retrofit project.

#### ***4 Zone 4***

5 Zone 4 is an area along East Cove that includes the site of a historic dump dated to the 1920s  
6 through the 1930s associated with the Yerba Buena Naval Training School (DON 1997f). The  
7 Navy transferred nearly all property within Zone 4 to FHWA as part of the SFOBB retrofit  
8 project. In addition to those resources identified for each of the zones on Yerba Buena Island,  
9 the SFOBB also plays a part of the historic record of Yerba Buena Island. The State Historical  
10 Resources Commission nominated the SFOBB for listing in the NRHP on September 6, 1999  
11 (Caltrans and FHWA 2001). Completed in 1937, the SFOBB was first determined as eligible for  
12 NRHP listing in 1983. The bridge held numerous records when it opened, and it remains a Bay  
13 Area centerpiece. (The Navy transferred the land supporting and immediately adjacent to the  
14 SFOBB to FWHA, and it is not part of the NSTI disposal and reuse action.)

#### ***15 Yerba Buena Consultation and Affected Properties***

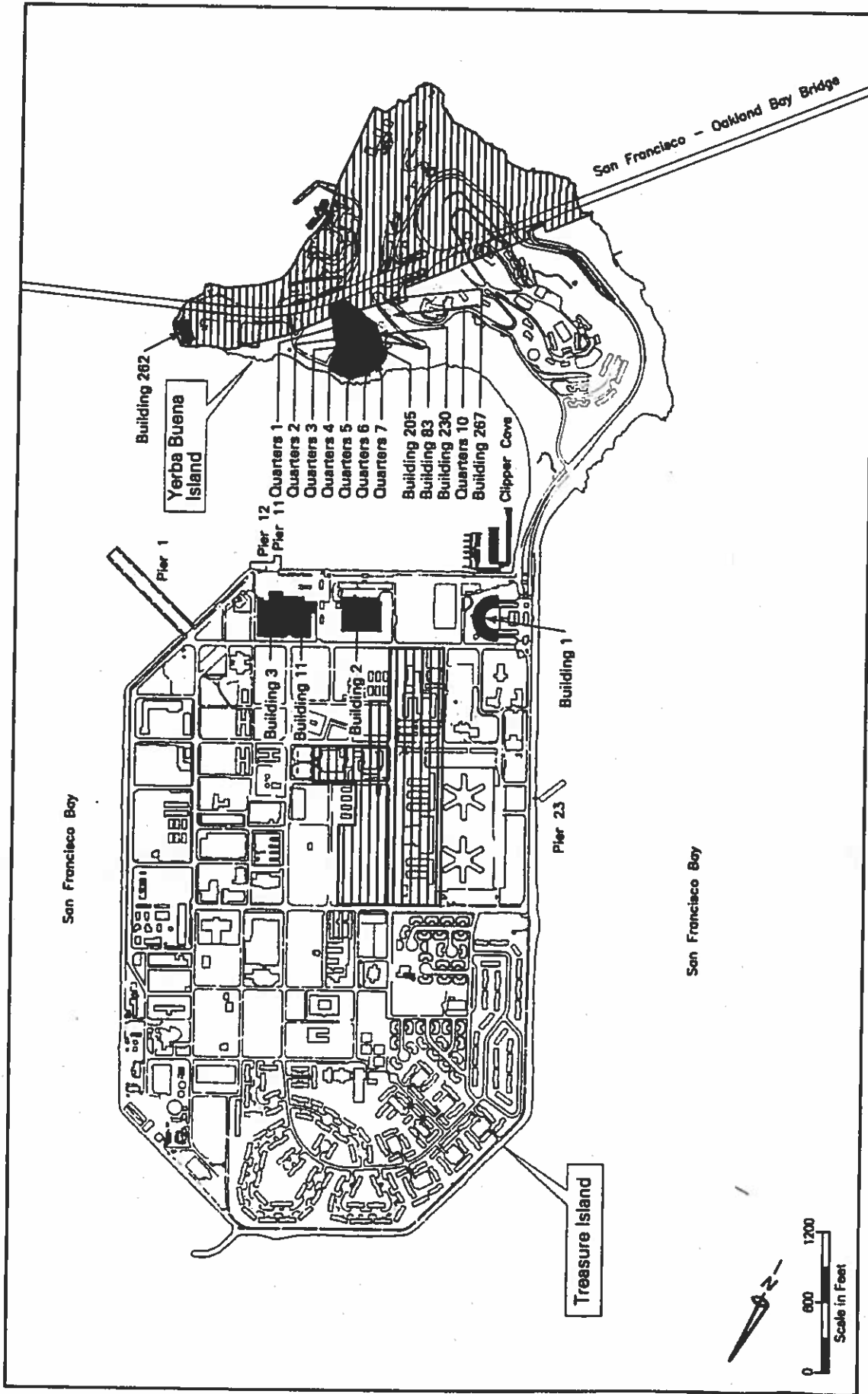
16 The SHPO concurred with the Navy that the Senior Officers Quarters Historic District, Quarters  
17 8 and 9, and Building 262 were eligible for listing in the NRHP and that zones 1 through 4 may  
18 have properties that qualify for listing (SHPO letter October 15, 1997). The SHPO also  
19 commented that further information was needed on several historic features before  
20 determinations of eligibility were possible. In response, Navy provided additional information  
21 (Navy letter dated March 2, 1998) supporting the argument that the features would not qualify  
22 under eligibility criteria. Navy and the SHPO have completed a memorandum of agreement  
23 (MOA) in which it is determined that the eligible properties that would be affected by the  
24 undertaking are limited to Quarters 1, which is individually listed on the NRHP, Quarters 2  
25 through 7 and their garages (Building 83, Building 205, Building 230), the formal landscaping  
26 elements of the area, and any potential undiscovered prehistoric and historic sites on Yerba  
27 Buena Island (the MOA is discussed further in section 4.4 and a copy is included as Appendix  
28 H).

#### ***29 Status of Cultural Resources at Treasure Island***

30 Because most of Treasure Island consists of fill material, the potential for buried prehistoric or  
31 historic archaeological resources related to pre-Navy occupation is considered to be extremely  
32 low. The potential for paleontological resources also is considered to be low, based on the soil  
33 composition and geological formation of the Treasure Island project area lands. Any marine or  
34 submerged cultural resources, such as shipwrecks, also would have been covered by the  
35 dredge-and-fill used to create the island.

36 Treasure Island itself is an engineered island and is over 50 years old. In a letter, the SHPO  
37 asked the Navy to consider the potential eligibility of the entire island, specifically the  
38 engineering achievements of the San Francisco Army Corps of Engineers in 1936 (SHPO letter  
39 October 15, 1997). In response, JRP Historical Consulting Services and Navy evaluated the  
40 significance of Treasure Island in the field of engineering and concluded that it did not appear  
41 to be a significant example of the dredge-and-fill techniques of the Corps of Engineers, which





# National Register Listed Buildings and Eligible Properties on NSTI

Naval Station Treasure Island, California

Figure 3-4



1 had been doing similar work throughout the Bay Area, California, and the U.S. decades before  
2 the island was built (Navy letter to SHPO dated March 2, 1998).

3 Three historic features containing a number of structural foundations built during World War II  
4 were encountered on Treasure Island during the 1996 survey. These foundations are clustered  
5 on the north end of the island and, except for the Brig Overflow that was constructed in 1943, all  
6 date to 1944. They include Buildings 207 (barracks), 222 (brigade guard house), 228 (bachelor  
7 officers quarters), 236 (administration and classrooms), 237 (oil tank), 238 (boiler house and  
8 shop), 239 (oil separating pit), 240 (forecastle mock-up), 241 (boiler room), 242 (engine room),  
9 243 (flight deck), 244 (diving tank), and 245 through 257 (oil and gas tanks and pits). Though 50  
10 years old, these foundations are from a well-documented phase of Treasure Island's history.  
11 The historic remains are limited to surface foundations that are documented on maps and do  
12 not contribute significant information for interpreting the island's history. It was recommended  
13 that the foundations do not qualify for inclusion in the NRHP.

14 Of the Golden Gate Exposition buildings that the Navy used during World War II (DON 1995a),  
15 five still exist (in whole or in part), with only Building 1 (the Administration Building), Building  
16 2 (the Hall of Transportation), and Building 3 (the former Palace of Fine and Decorative Arts)  
17 remaining in relatively unaltered condition. In 1982, a cultural resources inventory of buildings  
18 and structures on Treasure Island (DON 1982b) concluded that these three remaining buildings  
19 individually meet the criteria for the NRHP. Building 111 also was considered eligible as a  
20 structural component of Building 3. The National Park Service analysis in 1987 concluded that  
21 insufficient resources from the exposition existed at Treasure Island to warrant additional  
22 eligibility recommendations.

### 23 *Treasure Island Consultation and Affected Properties*

24 In 1984, the SHPO concurred with the Navy's finding that Building 1 was eligible for the NRHP  
25 (California Office of Historic Preservation 1984), and in 1992 the SHPO made this same  
26 determination for Building 2 and Building 3 (California Office of Historic Preservation 1992).  
27 Building 111 also qualifies for the NRHP as a structural element of Building 3 (California Office  
28 of Historic Preservation 1992). The SHPO and Navy in their MOA determined that the eligible  
29 properties that would be affected by the undertaking are limited to Buildings 1 and 2, Building  
30 3 with its associated Building 111, and any potential undiscovered prehistoric and historic sites  
31 on Treasure Island.

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