

# Tule Lake Unit

## World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument

Environmental Assessment: Tule Lake Jail  
Public Scoping Newsletter #1, Summer 2014

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



*Historic image of the Tule Lake Segregation Center Jail  
Courtesy of Denshō Digital Archive*

## Jail Restoration Public Scoping

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### *Dear Friends,*

The National Park Service seeks your input in the restoration of the Tule Lake Segregation Center jail. The jail is infamous to Tule Lake and the Japanese American incarceration story because it was the only site out of the ten WRA to contain a jail.

We are conducting public scoping in the design for a plan for restoration of the jail. We ask for your involvement with this process to help guide us by providing your vision and ideas for the jail. Your comments will help formulate a vision for the jail's development.

The National Park Service is designing a plan for the restoration of the jail at the Tule Lake Unit that reflects the perspectives of those who

feel connected to the site. It is through your cooperation that the National Park Service will be able to share its valuable lessons with the public and act as a catalyst in telling this important American story.

Thank you for participating in this scoping process. We look forward to continued collaboration with you.

Sincerely,

Mike Reynolds, Superintendent  
Tule Lake Unit, World War II Valor in the Pacific  
National Monument

# Brief History of Tule Lake and the Jail

Tule Lake is the largest of the ten War Relocation sites, where people of Japanese descent from the West Coast were forcibly removed and incarcerated during World War II. At the peak population, the center held over 18,700 persons.

The jail is unique to the WWII Japanese American incarceration history because Tule Lake was the only one of the ten War Relocation Authority camps to become a maximum-security facility with three separate detention facilities—including the jail. This building was in use from late 1944 until the closure of the Tule Lake Segregation Center on March 28, 1946. This concrete jail was used to administratively detain dissident leaders before moving them to Department of Justice camps in Santa Fe, New Mexico and Bismarck, North Dakota.

The building was neglected for years and deteriorated as a result of aging and weathering. California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) recognized the historic significance of the jail, and constructed a shelter to protect the building from the elements when it was under their jurisdiction. CalTrans transferred the jail and the motor pool structures to the National Park Service with the designation of the Tule Lake Unit as a NPS unit in 2008.



## Funding the Project

The National Park Service recognizes the hard work that the Tule Lake Committee does to help with the preservation efforts of this new national monument. In 2013, the Tule Lake Committee (TLC) received a \$192,467 grant from the National Park Service's (NPS) Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program for the second of three phases of the restoration:

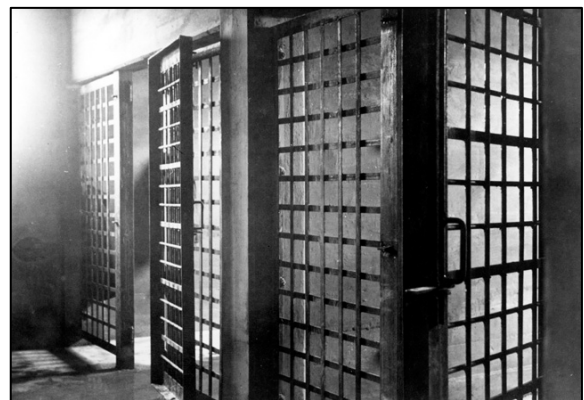
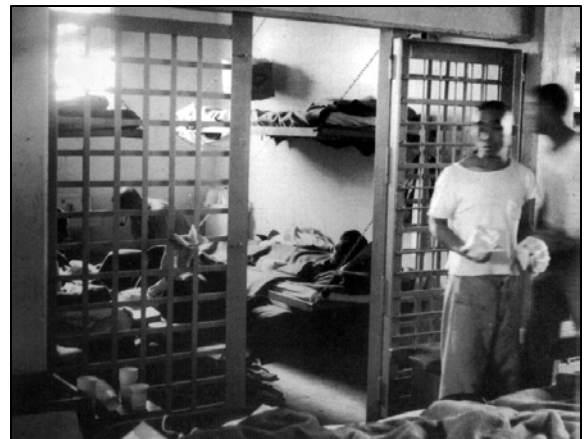
Phase I: Historic Resource Study

Phase II: Design Schematics

Phase III: Implementation

The Tule Lake Committee contracted with the Architectural Resources Group, Inc. (ARG) to create schematic design alternatives. In April 2014, the TLC and NPS began work on the project. With ARG's expertise, this phase of the project will provide options for future preservation and use of this building.

The Tule Lake Committee needs to raise one third of the grant amount for matching funds. Help them reach their goal by donating online at [www.tulelake.org](http://www.tulelake.org).



**Above images:** Historical image of the interior of the Tule Lake jail, Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

**Left:** Tule Lake jail under the CalTrans shelter, NPS Photo, 2013

# Project Description

The project restores the jail following recommendations set forth in 2011 Historic Structure Report. The initial design phase, called schematic design, is in process. During this phase a minimum of three draft alternatives will be developed which will be available for public comment prior to the project going into the next design phase.

The alternatives will explore options for functionality, accessibility (from parking area to building and within the building), emergency egress, fire protection requirements, utility connections, integration with possible interpretive routes, exhibit integration, weather protection, material selection, and other issues related to the restoration of historic structures. The following outlines what is expected in the project:

## *Graffiti Preservation*

Preserving the historic graffiti found in the interior of the building is a priority and the NPS has commissioned a study to inventory the graffiti and provide recommendations for its conservation. The study recommendations will be considered for incorporation into the restoration project.

## *Site*

The restoration project is focused on the jail building itself; the only outside work anticipated in this project is creating an accessible path from the parking lot to the building. This would provide a stable surface for walking or wheelchair use.

## *Exterior*

The restoration of the exterior will at a minimum provide a weather tight and maintainable enclosure with materials (walls, roof, doors, windows, exposed piping) consistent with the appearance of the building when it was built. The metal shed currently protecting the building will no longer be needed and will be removed.

## *Interior*

Beyond the preservation of the graffiti, design alternatives for the interior could incorporate varying degrees of restoration to the various rooms, including wall and ceiling surfaces, interior doors, and fittings such as bunks, plumbing fixtures and stoves.

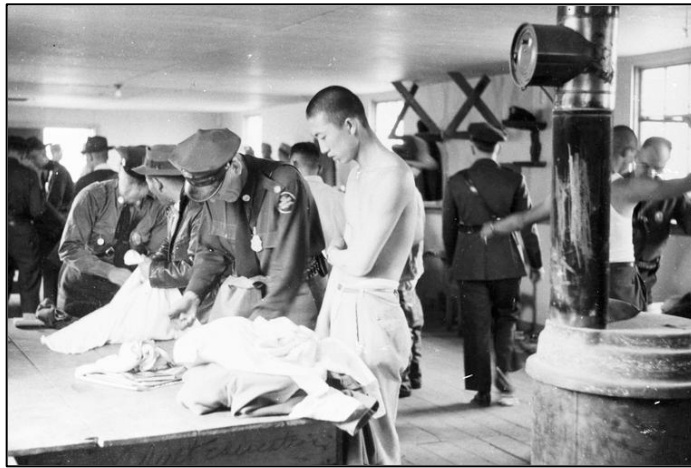
Metal items were previously removed from the building in the 1950s, and in the case of the doors and frames this meant breaking out the adjacent concrete walls. Restoration, recreation and reinstallation of some or all of these items will be explored in the design alternatives. A local farmer retained these items on his farm since the 1950's. In 2012, he donated them to the National Park Service for use on this project:

- All cell doors (6) and the majority of the side panels that occurred on either side of the cell doors (10 of 12 originally installed)
- All interior metal doors and frames that separated detainee areas from the administrative areas (6 total)
- A limited number of bunks (3 out of 24 originally installed)
- One stove (out of 8 originally installed)

### *Electrical Service and Plumbing Fixtures*

Electrical service is planned to be restored to the building. New light fixtures are intended to replicate the original ones.

No plumbing fixtures or fittings exist in the building, either in cells, showers or two individual toilet rooms. While water and sewer service are not planned to be restored to the building, fixtures and piping representative of what was originally in the building may be installed.



*Historical image of inmate getting searched by authorities at Tule Lake  
Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.*

## How You Can Help

During this initial “scoping” phase of the jail restoration project, we would like to know what you want us to consider as we begin the schematic design phase. On the next page are some questions to help you provide comments. You may fill out this comment form and email it back to us at [tule\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:tule_superintendent@nps.gov) or mail it back to us at the address below. Comments need to be received by **July 31, 2014**.

Please send comments to:  
Hanako Wakatsuki  
RE: Jail Comments  
P.O. Box 1240  
Tulelake, California 96134

1. What issues or concerns do you have about the jail restoration project?

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2. What hopes, preferences, or expectations do you have for the visitor experience at the jail in the future?

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3. While the current project is focused just on the jail building itself, historically the jail was part of the larger stockade area. How do you think the jail restoration relates to the future interpretation or recreation of other parts of the stockade?

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4. While visitor center functions are not intended for the jail building, exhibits may be part of future interpretation plans for the building. To what degree do you feel exhibits should be inside the building versus keeping the building more as it appeared when it was originally built?

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5. Since not all interior pieces like bunks and plumbing fixtures currently exist, how important do you feel it is to restore these items through the entire interior versus, for example, fully restoring a representative cell?

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6. Since photo documentation is limited for the jail, and that now that there is a specific project on the jail, we would like to solicit any recollections about how the building and site were used, furnished, etc. Do you have firsthand knowledge of how the jail looked like? Do you have photos that you would like to share?

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7. Do you know what happened in each of the administration rooms?

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8. Do you know what was the enclosed rear yard was used for? Since the rear yard is fenced, the assumption is that every inmate came and left through the front, is that correct?

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This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

2012 Tule Lake Pilgrimage image of the jail.  
Courtesy of the Tule Lake Committee, photo by Dorey Nomiyama.



National Park Service  
Tule Lake Unit  
P.O. Box 1240  
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### Contact Us

#### Planning Team:

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Nancy Nordensten, Chief of Resources  
Tule Lake Unit and Lava Beds NM  
(530) 667-8106

#### Project Website:

You can access more information about this planning effort for the Tule Lake Unit's jail by visiting:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/tule>

Tule Lake Unit Website:  
For general information about the unit:  
[www.nps.gov/tule](http://www.nps.gov/tule)