

World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument

New monument expected to benefit Tulelake

By LEE JUILLERAT
H&N Staff Writer

A proclamation by President George Bush on Friday including the former Tule Lake Segregation Center in a new World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument was welcomed in Tulelake.

David Porter Misso of the Tulelake Chamber of Commerce was elated at Friday's designation.

"It's just awesome," said Misso, who had promoted efforts to have the former Tule Lake Segregation Center receive protective park status. "I think it's an opportunity to get more recognition to our region and the role it played. The more the outside world hears about our historic past, the easier it will be to get them here to learn about our future."

He said the designation efforts have been unpopular with some Tulelake Basin residents, but said, "This is the best thing that's happened in a long time."

He also expressed hope that people with items from the former camp would donate them for possible display in a museum or visitor center. Misso believes a new barracks should be built at the site.

"And I'll jump right in

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— David Porter Misso,
Tulelake Chamber of
Commerce

and help build it."

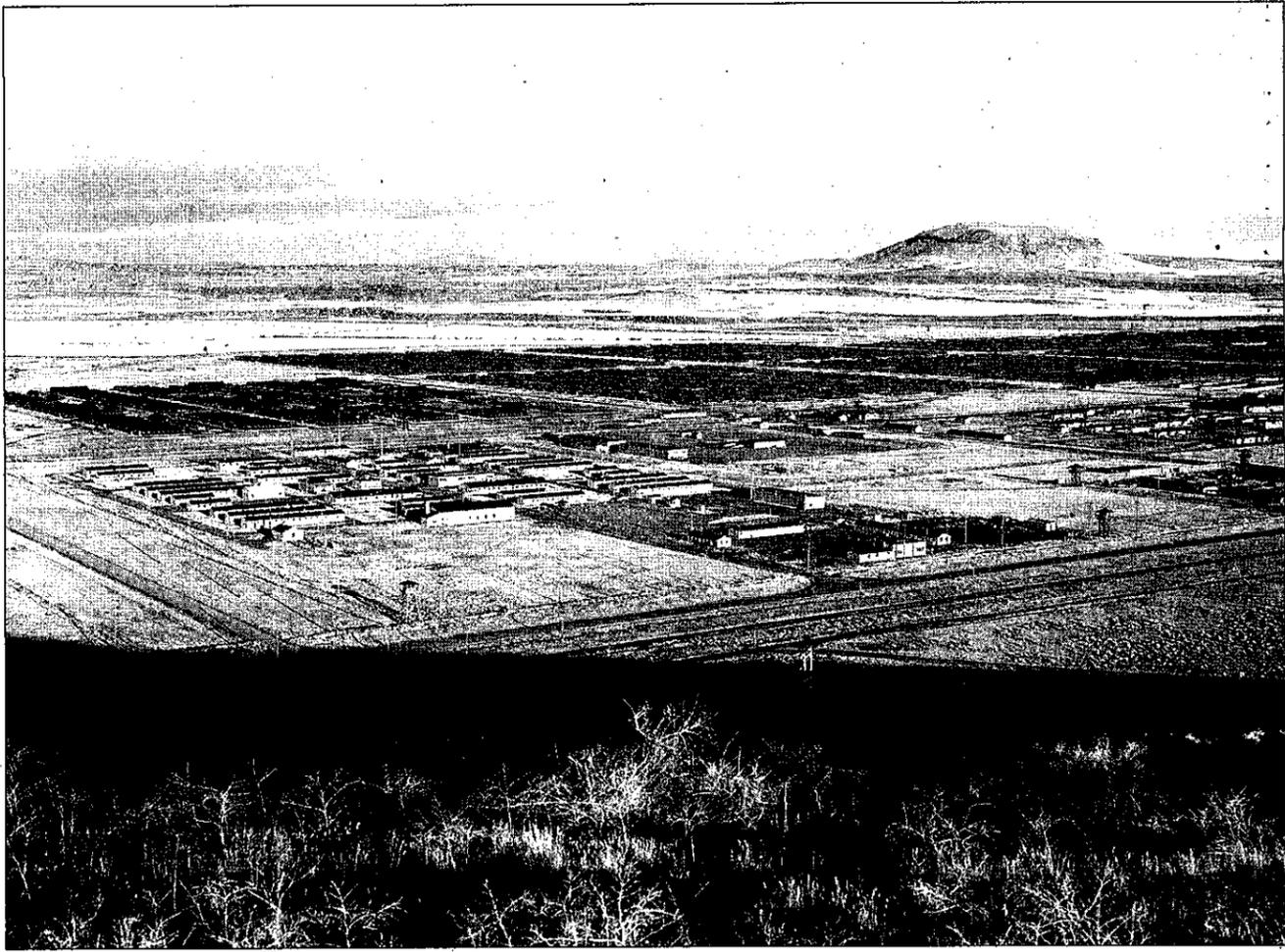
Volunteer work

Buildings with a deep history — they formerly housed the Tulelake Civilian Conservation Corps and Japanese Americans and Italian and German prisoners of war during World War II — are part of the newly designated monument.

Volunteers working through the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which manages the former camp, reroofed one building and did other preservation work last summer.

Ron Cole, complex manager, believes the park designation will benefit the former CCC camp.

"It's always been a great story to tell, but we haven't been the entity to do it alone, so I'm really looking

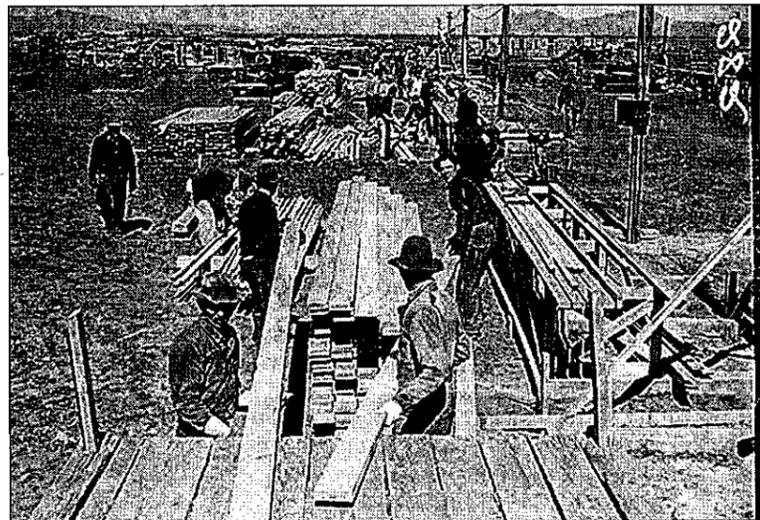


U.S. Bureau of Reclamation/Shaw Historical Library

The Tule Lake Segregation Center in 1946. The former camp will become part of a new World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. President George Bush signed a proclamation on Friday. The monument also includes sites in Alaska's Aleutian Islands and Hawaii.

forward to working with the Park Service," Cole said. "There's a lot of history to tell. I think we're going to see those buildings renovated and preserved so that people can see and experience them."

The monument also will include five historic sites at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and three sites in Alaska's Aleutian Islands chain.



National Archives/
Klamath County
Museum

LEFT: Construction begins on a War Relocation Authority center for Japanese Americans near Tulelake in the 1940s.

BELOW: The Japanese internment camp in 1945.

Monument only includes federal land

Lava Beds National Monument Superintendent David Kruse and Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges manager Ron Cole said Friday the Tulelake Basin areas designated as part of a new national monument includes only existing federal lands. No local government or private lands are included.

The former Tule Lake Segregation Center land includes only about 18

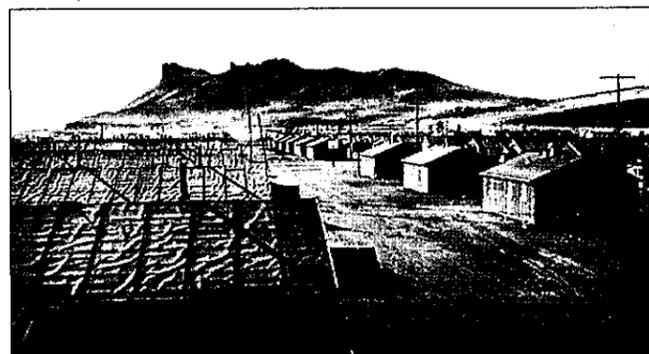
acres managed by the Bureau of Reclamation. Another 20-plus acres owned by the California Department of Transportation is awaiting environmental clearance before being transferred to the federal Bureau of Land Management for eventual transfer to the National Park Service, a process Kruse estimates will take about a year. The actual segregation camp covered

7,400 acres.

The combined 42 acres was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2006. The area's most significant structure, a stockade, is part of the Caltrans property.

Neither Kruse nor Cole had any information Friday on how the park would be funded. It's expected the agencies would develop a general management plan.

— Lee Juillerat



On the Web

To see the national monument's still-developing Web site and to listen to President George Bush's speech, visit https://pwrCMS.nps.gov/customct/apps/ww2ip/dsp_monuments.cfm.