

## **Historical Significance of the Four Lakes Communication Site<sup>a</sup>**

The discontinuous National Register-eligible Four Lakes Communication Station Historic District consists of eleven buildings, Buildings 103, 104, 105, 106, 201, 202, 203, 206, 207, 208, and 301, which are significant for their historic significance and for their survival as a distinguishable entity, the Fairchild Defense Area Nike Annex F-37 Military Reservation (Nike Site F-37), a Cold War-era Nike missile installation erected to protect Fairchild Air Force Base (AFB).

Nike Site F-37 is one of approximately 200 Nike Ajax installations established in the late 1950s through early 1960s. The development of this particular form of weaponry, the surface-to-air guided missile, commenced at the end of World War II; however, it was the Cold War (1946-89) which provided the impetus for the continued development of the missile program, and led to the construction of Nike installations throughout the United States

Nike missile installations were located near major urban areas and military installations, providing a circular ring of defense; serving as the last line of defense in the event of an air attack. Each installation was constructed according to standardized designs. However, due to geographical constraints, configurations at each installation varied. A typical Nike missile installation was divided into three main areas of function: the Administrative Area, the IFC or Control area, and the Launch Area, though the Administrative Area was typically located within either the IFC Area or the Launch Area. The majority of buildings and structures which comprised a Nike missile installation were designed as permanent structures, with habitability and outward appearance in mind.

Though none of the Nike missile installations in the United States fired their missiles in response to an air attack, each of the installations were constantly on alert and ready to fire at a moment's notice. Regular drills ensured that military personnel maintained a constant state of readiness. In 1961, F-37 was closed, because it was not adequately equipped to handle the new Nike Hercules missiles, and was turned over to the Washington Air National Guard.

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<sup>a</sup> Department of the Air Force, 2007. Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Level II Mitigation Documentation, Fairchild Defense Area Nike Annex F-37 Military Reservation (Four Lakes Communication Station), Cheney, Spokane County, Washington, November.