

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Scope of Collection Statement July 2025



DEVA 40096: Frank (Shorty) Harris following
pack mule in Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes landscape.

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Death Valley National Park

SCOPE OF COLLECTION STATEMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Acquisition of museum objects is governed by the park's ability to manage and preserve materials according to National Park Service (NPS) Management Policies, Chapter 5 (2006), the standards for managing museum objects in NPS-28: Cultural Resources Management Guideline (1998); Special Directive 80-1 Guidance for Meeting NPS Preservation and Protection Standards for Museum Collections (1990); and the NPS Museum Handbook I-III. See section IV Acquisitions for more information.

1. Executive Summary

According to the General Management Plan (GMP) (2002), Death Valley National Monument was established by presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act of 1906, on February 11, 1933. The original monument contained approximately 1,601,800 acres. Supplementary proclamations in March 1937 and January 1952 increased the monument's acreage to 2,067,793 acres. The monument was subsequently enlarged and changed to Death Valley National Park (park or DEVA) by Congressional action on October 31, 1994, with the passage of the California Desert Protection Act. Approximately 1.3 million acres of new lands were added, bringing the total acreage of the new park to about 3,396,192 acres. Nearly 95% of the park was designated as wilderness by that same act. Death Valley National Park is the largest national park unit in the coterminous 48 states. The vast majority of its lands are located in the California counties of Inyo and San Bernardino, but a small portion of the park is located in the Nevada counties of Nye and Esmeralda. California State Highway 190 crosses the park east to west, and Highway 95 parallels the park north to south on the park's eastern boundary.

Death Valley National Park is the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere and one of the hottest places in the world. It is also a vast geological museum, containing examples of most of the earth's geologic eras. Here, plant and animal species, some of which occur nowhere else in the world, have adapted to the harsh desert environment. Humans have adjusted to these severe conditions, as evidenced by extensive archeological sites; historical sites related to successive waves of prospectors; miners, and homesteaders; present-day residences of Native Americans; and the current resort developments and active mines.

The Death Valley National Park museum collection is extensive and diverse. The majority of DEVA's museum collections are stored at two buildings in the Cow Creek Administrative Area. These buildings are CC345 (Curatorial Office & Collections Storage) and CC51 (Natural History Collections Storage). Collections are exhibited at Furnace Creek Visitor Center and Harmony Borax Works. DEVA collections storage facilities also store Manzanar National Historic Site (MANZ) museum collections and items subject to NAGPRA that have been repatriated to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe.

In 2015, a devastating flood damaged buildings and infrastructure located in the Death Valley Scotty Historic District, aka Scotty's Castle. The majority of the DEVA museum collections that were stored and exhibited at Scotty's Castle were moved offsite to a contracted museum storage facility in Compton, CA. A small number of items remain stored and exhibited at Scotty's Castle

(mostly larger objects) while other items are located at CC345. As of 2025, these collections remain offsite as the park continues to restore and rebuild the historic site.

The current DEVA museum collections span all standard NPS Service collecting areas, including history (subfields: art and archives), archeology, ethnology, biology, paleontology, and geology. The DEVA museum collection is the culmination of 90 years of collection by numerous park staff, volunteers, and visitors. Collecting practices currently focus on the historic, cultural, and scientific understanding of Death Valley National Park and its residents. The DEVA museum collection continues to grow through field collection, donations, transfers, acquisitions, and loans.

For additional information on the museum collection, please contact the Death Valley National Park Museum Curator at DEVA_curator@nps.gov.

2. Purpose of the Scope of Collection Statement

This [Scope of Collection Statement \(SOCS\)](#) defines the composition of present and future museum collection holdings of DEVA that contribute directly to the understanding and interpretation of the park's purpose, themes, and resources, as well as those objects that the NPS is legally mandated to preserve. The SOCS is designed to ensure that the entirety of the museum collection is clearly relevant to the site and sets appropriate limits for acquisition. The SOCS is intended to be an evolving document which must be reviewed on a regular basis (minimum every 5 years). Updates/changes should be made through interdisciplinary efforts of park and regional subject matter experts ([411.1 DM](#))

[Director's Order #24: NPS Museum Collection Management](#) states that NPS units with museum collections must:

- Approve and keep current a Scope of Collection Statement to identify the scope of collecting activities and define the purpose of the collection. (DO 24 4.3.6)
- Ensure that the statement is consistent with natural resource and archeological permit conditions. (4.3.6)
- Ensure acquisitions are consistent with the Scope of Collection Statement. (4.3.6)
- Deaccession objects inconsistent with the Scope of Collection Statement. (4.3.18)

Refer to the Use and Restrictions Appendix for other legislation and NPS legal authorities to acquire and preserve museum collections.

This statement is revised from the 1984 (Scotty's Castle), 2004 (Cow Creek/Furnace Creek), and 2010 (all park) draft Scope of Collection Statements. Death Valley National Park and the Western Archeological and Conservation Center (WACC), in Tucson, AZ, currently assist in managing and storing museum collections for Manzanar National Historic Site (MANZ). DEVA also assists in storing remains/objects subject to the Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) for the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe.

3. Context for DEVA Museum Collection

This section is compiled from NPS and non-NPS histories, reports, and plans, and provides context for museum collection acquisition. It is not intended to be comprehensive. For additional information about sources used, refer to the Appendix H, Selected Bibliography.

A. Park Purpose and Significance

The mission of DEVA is to maintain, preserve, interpret, and perpetuate the aesthetic, and the natural and cultural resources of the Mojave and Great Basin deserts of California and Nevada. The management philosophy for the park is to ensure preservation of these varied resources while also providing visitors the opportunity to discover, explore, and understand these resources.

Enabling legislation for Death Valley National Park includes Presidential Proclamations No. 2023, No. 2228, and No. 2691:

By Presidential Proclamation of February 11, 1933, No. 2028 (Monument boundary establishment), "certain lands known as Death Valley, in California, within a national monument [are set aside] for the preservation of the unusual features of scenic, scientific, and educational interest..."

By Presidential Proclamation of March 26, 1937, No. 2228 (enlargement), certain Nevada and California public lands contiguous to the monument, "have situated thereon various objects of historic and scientific interest, and are necessary for the proper care, management and protection of unusual features of scientific interest...and reserve such lands as an addition to... the Monument."

By Presidential Proclamation of January 17, 1952, No. 2691 (enlargement), "a forty-acre tract of public land in Nevada containing a remarkable underground pool known as Devil's Hole...is hereby added to and reserved as a part of the...Monument..."

In 1970, Death Valley National Park purchased Scotty's Castle and associated grounds for \$850,000 from the Gospel Foundation. The furnishings within the Castle were donated by the Gospel Foundation, as part of the transaction. Death Valley Ranch, or Scotty's Castle, was entered into the National Register of Historic Places on July 20, 1978 as Death Valley Scotty Historic District. There are two units of the district: The Scotty's Castle or Death Valley Ranch unit, and, the Lower Vine Ranch unit, also called the Lower Grapevine Ranch or Scotty's Ranch.

The California Desert Protection Act, signed October 31, 1994, (P.L. 103-433), expanded the Monument by 1.3 million acres and redesignated Death Valley as a National Park. In part, Congress found that:

"...the monument boundaries established in the 1930s exclude and thereby expose to incompatible development and inconsistent management, contiguous Federal lands of

essential and superlative natural, ecological, geological, archeological, paleontological, cultural, historical and wilderness values;

"Death Valley National Monument should be substantially enlarged by the addition of all contiguous Federal lands of national park caliber and afforded full recognition and statutory protection as a National Park..."

According to the 2002 GMP, Death Valley National Park's significant cultural and natural resources include:

- DEVA contains the lowest point in North America at 282 feet below sea level. The valley floor receives the least precipitation in the United States (average 1.84 inches per year) and is the site of the nation's highest and the world's second highest recorded temperature (134 degrees Fahrenheit or 57 degrees Celsius).
- DEVA is world renowned for its exposed, complex and diverse geology and tectonics, and for its unusual geologic features, providing a natural geologic museum that represents a substantial portion of the earth's history.
- Death Valley and the surrounding mountains and valleys have been the continuous home of the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe and other Native American groups, from prehistoric cultures to the present day.
- The extremely colorful, complex, and highly visible geology and steep, rugged mountains and canyons provide some of the most dramatic visual landscapes in the United States.
- DEVA contains one of the nation's most diverse and significant fossil records and most continuous volcanic histories.
- DEVA contains five major sand dune systems representing all types of dune structures, making it one of the only places on earth where this variety of dune types occurs in such close proximity. It also contains the highest dunes in California, Eureka Sand Dunes.
- DEVA is one of the largest expanses of protected warm desert in the world. Ninety-five percent of the park is designated wilderness, providing unique opportunities for quiet, solitude, and primitive adventure in an extreme desert ecosystem.
- Contrary to many visitors' first impression, DEVA's natural resources are extremely diverse, containing a large variety of plant species and community types. The area preserves large expanses of creosote bush valleys and other vegetation typical of the Mojave Desert. Extreme conditions and isolation provide habitat for an unusually high number of plant and animal species that are highly adapted to these conditions.
- DEVA has an extensive and well-preserved mining history representing over 100 years of mining technology.
- DEVA contains an unusually high number of well-preserved archeological sites, including rock art and alignments.
- Scotty's Castle, with its architectural style, quality, and priceless collection of antiques and art objects, built in a remote, isolated desert location in the early 1900s, is an icon that has immense public appeal.

The resources management objectives as stated in the GMP, which are integral to the park's museum collections, are to:

- Maintain, preserve, interpret, and perpetuate the aesthetic setting, and the natural and

cultural resources, of DEVA in such as manner as to:

- Protect the significant natural and cultural resources and values of the park, including geologic features, and to foster an improved understanding of natural processes through monitoring efforts and scientific research.
- Perpetuate native plants and animal life for their essential roles in the natural ecosystem.
- Strive to reduce or eliminate alien species to ensure long-term survival of the native ecosystem.
- Ensure the perpetuation of rare and endangered plants and animals and those species endemic (specific) to DEVA.
- Perpetuate and increase water resource science and conservation.
- Perpetuate the Devils Hole pupfish in the detached Devils Hole section of the park.
- Eliminate existing and prohibit new occurrences of all activities inconsistent with the protection of the natural ecosystem, except in the park's developed areas, as noted in the park's management plans.
- Restore to natural appearance, inasmuch as feasible, the land surfaces disturbed by man, recognizing that significant cultural values must be preserved.
- Prohibit or minimize the adverse effects of mining and mineral development that conflict with resource preservation and public appreciation of natural and cultural values.
- Provide for the reclamation of mining areas and the eventual completion or phaseout of mining.
- Maintain air quality monitoring to facilitate implementation of means to prevent deterioration of air quality and visibility.
- Continue to pursue redesignation of DEVA from a class II floor area to a class I air quality area.
- Prevent, eliminate, or reduce artificial lighting and noise in order to preserve the opportunity for visitors to experience the night sky and stillness of the desert.
- Perpetuate unimpaired the park's cultural and archeological resources, protecting them from vandalism, unauthorized excavation, collection, or appropriation.
- Protect the park's collections of natural and cultural objects from deterioration, natural disaster, misuse, and loss.
- Operate and manage Scotty's Castle, its grounds, and environs to recreate the atmosphere of the period of its construction and occupation by Walter Scott and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Johnson.
- Support research programs pertaining to natural and cultural resources and to social sciences, consistent with the park's resource protection and visitor services mission.

B. History of Death Valley National Park and DEVA Museum Collections

Management and storage objectives for museum collections are specifically identified under "Cultural Resources, Museum Collection" in the GMP:

Park staff are responsible for monitoring, documenting, and preserving a large, diverse museum collection that includes more than 177,000 cataloged objects and specimens, some stored in substandard conditions. An additional 23,000 archeological artifacts and records are at the NPS Western Archeological Center in Tucson, Arizona. Museum collections include historical objects and archival documents, archeological artifacts,

ethnological materials, biological specimens, geological samples, and paleontological materials. Numbers of currently cataloged objects in the various disciplines range from an estimated 78,900 historical objects to approximately 280 ethnological items. There are potentially 1,600 objects associated with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. Many of these objects may be returned to the Tribe as a result of this act.

In 2000, the National Park Service opened a new state-of-the-art curatorial facility at Cow Creek. The museum collection constitutes an important part of the overall resources offered by the park. In historic districts, the collection constitutes a primary resource that visitors view. A relatively large number of historic objects are on display in the national register-listed Death Valley Scotty Historic District. Diverse material types are exhibited in the historic house museum as well as on the grounds.

A collection management program will be further implemented to: (1) improve storage conditions to meet standards for all park collections stored; (2) provide a more comprehensive preventive conservation program; (3) acquire museum objects/specimens, including appropriate replacement furnishings for highly impacted objects targeted for exhibit; and (4) improve collection access and use, as appropriate. The collections management program will include cataloging the significant backlog of objects and collections at the park and correcting the deficiencies identified in the "Checklist for Preservation and Protection of Museum Collections."

The National Park Service will develop and implement a systematic applied cultural resource research program to ensure that (1) there will be adequate baseline information on location, condition, threats, and significance/ integrity of resources; (2) interpretation and preservation treatment of resources will be accurate; and (3) appropriate means will be used to manage, protect, preserve, and interpret Native American heritage or other ethnographic resources. The research program will include the following studies: ...an updated scope of collections statement and collection management plan.

The history of the DEVA museum program and collections is as follows:

Collections from Death Valley Prior to National Park Service Management

Early explorations and studies of the Death Valley area were made by surveyors, topographers, geologists, mineralogists, zoologists, botanists, meteorologists, and astronomers. They collected and cataloged many new species, measured and mapped new ground, and found new artifacts.

There are only a few of these objects and specimens currently represented in the park's museum collections; most are presumed to be located in private or public museums, educational institutions, the Smithsonian, or perhaps they are lost forever. The park has not adequately surveyed for the existence, identification, location, and condition of these earlier collections. Surveying for these collections is important in order to cross-reference

existing park collections and to fill-in information gaps regarding the cultural and natural history of Death Valley.

National Park Service Management

Presidential Proclamations of February 11, 1933, March 26, 1937, and January 17, 1952, established and enlarged Death Valley National Monument. On October 31, 1994, with the passage of the California Desert Protection Act, Death Valley became a National Park. The park's enabling legislation identified the need for the "preservation of the unusual features of scenic, scientific and educational interest". With this in mind, monument/park employees would continue collecting where the earlier explorers left off.

Beginning in the 1930s, park staff generally collaborated with scientists from universities or museums to collect specimens and data. One particular paleontological expedition, initiated prior to the establishment of the Monument, involved the National Museum, California Institute of Technology, and Park Naturalist Donald Curry. Discovery of important fossil remains influenced legislation to enlarge the Monument in 1937 to include the Nevada Triangle and other lands whereby "situated thereon various objects of historic and scientific interest, and are necessary for the proper care, management and protection of unusual features...".

M. French Gilman, Custodian-in-Charge and botanist, established the park's herbarium and founded a nursery for desert plants at Cow Creek. Geological specimens were also collected at this time. This preliminary collection was under the direct responsibility of Curry and was located at Cow Creek, in temporary wooden buildings, lofts and garages built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

After visiting the NPS Western Museum Division laboratories in Berkeley, CA, Curry proposed constructing a museum wing addition to the monument's administration building at Cow Creek. In 1937, he wrote a Justification and Preliminary Museum Development Plan which addressed interpretive plans and preservation strategies for the museum collection. That same year, Col. John R. White, then in charge of administration of the Monument, wrote to the NPS Director, "Quite apart from the technical and professional aspects of a museum as an educational part of the Death Valley National Monument, the Park Service has a remarkable opportunity here to be first in the field in the interpretation of the desert to the travelling public... It is urgently needed that we provide housing for collections and exhibits, particularly for the history of the region, as the increasing flood of visitors and demand for relics will make it progressively more difficult to secure material".

During the 1940s, herpetological "wet" specimens and more herbarium specimens were added to the collection. In 1940, Sierra Club endorsement was given to the establishment of a museum in Death Valley to serve as a "permanent repository for Indian, geologic, and other interesting relics which are now being dissipated." In 1942, Park Naturalist Edwin C. Alberts revised the "Museum Prospectus". Botanist Norman C. Cooper, geologist Thomas Clements, and archaeologist Lydia Clements, all of whom did

extensive research and collecting in Death Valley, added their support for the museum plans.

In 1950, Park Naturalist Floyd Keller continued efforts to erect a museum facility and to protect specimens through the NPS Western Museum Division laboratories. In 1951, Inyo County Superintendents began soliciting Congress for the construction of a Death Valley museum. In 1953-1954, the first systematic accessioning and cataloging of the collection using museum methodologies began. In 1954, Ann Rosener of the Pacific Coast Borax Company (later U.S. Borax and Chemical Corporation) rehabilitated an old mining structure into the "Death Valley Museum", located at Furnace Creek Ranch. Some exhibits were loaned from the Monument and the project was handled on a cooperative basis. This building, located on a private inholding, was renamed the "Borax Museum" when the Furnace Creek Visitor Center was built; the Borax Museum is currently privately owned and operated by Xanterra.

In 1956, the NPS redevelopment program, Mission 66, came to Death Valley. A Furnace Creek site was chosen for the proposed Museum/Visitor Center on land donated by U.S. Borax and Chemical Corporation; the State of California initially appropriated the funds (later matched by the NPS) and the Death Valley '49ers sponsored the project and obtained public support.

By March 1960, construction of the Visitor Center and Museum was complete; the dedication occurred November 12. An entire wing of the new facility was designated for museum storage and curation, a library, and the Chief Naturalist's office. From 1960-1961, museum objects were moved from Cow Creek to the new facility. Exhibits were planned and installed by the reestablished Western Museum Laboratory from 1961-1962. From the late 1960s to 1981, park aids and technicians cared for the museum collections part-time or as a collateral duty and worked under the Division of Interpretation; salaries were at times paid for by the park's cooperating association, the Death Valley Natural History Association.

In the late 1960s, Superintendent Robert Murphy recommended that the government purchase Scotty's Castle and the Lower Vine Ranch because of the importance of the natural, historical, and archeological resources, and the status of the castle as a major tourist destination. In 1970, the National Park Service purchased Scotty's Castle and associated lands. At this time the Gospel Foundation also donated the antique and custom-made furnishings and other Castle related materials to the National Park Service. This new component entailed the operation of a prominent historic house museum furnished with unique textiles, antique and custom-made furniture, Native American basketry, ceramics, and other decorative arts within 1920s Spanish style stucco clad structures. Also included was western gear and ranching equipment, historic vehicles, tools, uninstalled site features, and a large archive associated with the site. With this new emphasis came special preservation concerns which would require the use of trained staff to focus on care of this collection. The collection included many furnishings and other objects or archives of high monetary value. An inventory and informal appraisal was conducted at the time of acquisition.

Between 1970 and 1972 the National Park Concessions, Inc. provided public tours through the Castle. General oversight was provided by the National Park Service. By approximately 1972, NPS staff began providing tours and had more of a presence on-site at Scotty's Castle.

The primary focus for managing the Death Valley museum collection during the 1970s and 1980s was in improving accountability: accessioning, cataloging and inventorying backlog and new collections. Despite the growing collection, designated curatorial storage and workspace diminished due to the growth of park staff and their needs for workspace in the Visitor Center. In 1975, the first Scope of Collections Statement was written and approved. In 1977, a Collection Management Plan was written by a team of Western Region and Harpers Ferry Center staff that dealt almost exclusively with the Scotty's Castle collection. In 1988, a Collection Storage Plan was written exclusively for the Furnace Creek and Cow Creek collections.

In 1984, a temporary, full-time Museum Technician (GS-1016-05) was hired to care for the Scotty's Castle collection (Scotty's Castle position, 8133-505). In 1985, the position was reclassified and upgraded to a GS-1016-07 permanent appointment, originating from Furnace Creek, Division of Interpretation (8138-003). In 1990, park organizational changes occurred in conjunction with staff changes at Scotty's Castle; the Museum Technician position at Furnace Creek was now under the Division of Resources Management (8136-019). In 1991, due to the "accretion of duties", the position was reclassified to a Museum Curator (GS-1015-09). In 1993, the position was reclassified as a GS-05/07/09, and in 1997 it was reclassified as a GS-11.

By 1983, a permanent museum curator position was filled to manage the Scotty's Castle museum. By 1984 the curator was promoted to a GS-9. Subsequently, the Scotty's Castle Curators coordinated with the Furnace Creek/ Cow Creek Curators in completion of integrated collection management reports. During late 1991, the Scotty's Castle Museum Curator position was upgraded to a GS-9/11 position.

The current organizational chart includes one permanent GS-11 Museum Curator to manage all DEVA museum collections. The DEVA Curator is also responsible for the management of the Manzanar National Historic Site (MANZ) museum collections. Other museum positions and duties for DEVA and MANZ are filled through collateral duties, term hires, contract hires, interns, and volunteers.

In 1992, a historic CCC warehouse (CC51) located at Cow Creek was modified as a small museum storage facility to accommodate collections still located in substandard, CCC-era structures. In 1999, construction of a new museum storage and research facility located at Cow Creek commenced and upon completion, the new facility (CC345) houses all of the park's (minus Scotty's Castle's collection) cultural resource museum collections, archives, and the park library. Currently, the park's natural history collections are located in CC51. In 2001, DEVA's archeological collection on loan to the Western

Archeological and Conservation Center (WACC) was returned to the park and is now stored in CC345.

In 2000, MANZ began storing their museum collections in CC345. The MANZ collection consists of historic material from donors, field collections, archeological material, and associated records. The MANZ SOCS (2025) identifies the scope of collecting activities and defines the purpose of the collection.

In 2010, CC345 was expanded by 1600 square feet to accommodate the park's growing collection, to consolidate collections located in sub-standard facilities at Cow Creek and Scotty's Castle, and to temporarily accommodate MANZ museum collections. Also, in 2010, the park began a major rehabilitation project where the historic museum exhibits were replaced with modern exhibits designed by the Harpers Ferry Center. In 2016, the majority of the Scotty's Castle collection was moved to an off-site non-NPS facility following a major flooding event that knocked out utilities at the Castle. As of 2025, these collections remain offsite, and efforts are being made to re-open Scotty's Castle and return the collections to the park. In 2025, the park underwent structural changes and relocated the curatorial program from the Resources Management Division to the Interpretation and Education Division.

Partnerships with other California Desert parks and federal agencies, museums, universities, businesses, and friends groups will continue to be an important component of a successful museum management program for Death Valley National Park.

C. Collection Themes and Categories

The DEVA Statement for Management (November 1990) identifies the park's primary resources as Geological and Mining; Climate; Water; Fauna; Flora; Air Quality; Cultural; Archaeological; Historical; and Museum Collections. Both the DVNM Interpretive Prospectus (February 1990) and the DEVA Statement for Interpretation (1994), identify the following themes:

- Geological Processes and Geographic Relationships
- Cultural and Historical Record
- Desert Ecosystems

The park's Resource Management Plan (1994) more specifically identifies the park's important cultural periods and themes:

- Indigenous Populations: Earliest Inhabitants, Post-Archaic and Pre-Contact Developments, Prehistoric Archeology, and Ethnohistory of Indigenous Populations, 7000 BCE - present.
- Westward Expansion: Westward Trails and Travelers/the Mining Frontier, 1763-1898.
- Business: Extractive or Mining Industries, 1830-present.
- Transportation: Trails and Roads associated with Indian migration, early exploration, movement of miners, their supplies and equipment, travel and tourism, and railroads.

- Architecture: Notable examples of vernacular, desert mining and ranching architecture; CCC-era structures and "parkitecture"; and Scotty's Castle, a Spanish-Mediterranean complex with inventive, self-sustaining features for water, electricity, heating and cooling.

The Long Range Interpretive Plan (2005) summarizes the media needs and problems in the park and includes a number of proposals, surveys, and studies needed that would specifically utilize the park's museum collections and archives. The Plan fails to specifically address how the park's museum collections can (and do) support the park's interpretive programs. This deficiency should be addressed and corrected when updating the Long Range Interpretive Plan.

The park's museum collection supports the interpretive management program as it reflects the above interpretive themes. The museum collection is used for exhibits, NPS research projects, interpretive media, and to answer information requests. At Scotty's Castle, in addition to constituting a primary resource that visitors come to view, the museum collection also supports the living history interpretive program.

The park's Resource Management Plan (1994) identifies the park's current resource management issues as follows:

- Natural Resources: Threatened and Endangered Species; Native Fauna; Vegetation Communities; Non-Native Plants and Animals; Aquatic Ecosystems; Water Quality & Quantity; Air Quality and Meteorology; Geology & Soils; Paleontology; Minerals Management; Visitor Use Impacts.
- Cultural Resources: Cultural Resources Staff; Inventory and Evaluation; Museum Collections; Historic Mining Sites; Scotty's Castle; Archaeological Resources; CCC-Era Resources; Ranching & Homesteading Resources; Cultural Landscapes; Database Management; Native American Issues; Studies.

DEVA's museum collections support the Resources Management program as it reflects the historical themes, archeological investigations, and research or project documentation for the park. These projects have produced archeological artifacts, paleontological samples, biological specimens, archival documents, and geological samples that are now cared for in the museum collections. In addition to most of the above, the museum collection at Scotty's Castle also supports overall preservation efforts.

Other related management planning or resource study documents include:

- Exhibit Plan, 1957
- Collection Management Plan, 1977
- Archaeological Overview & Assessment, 1977
- Historic Resource Study (Mining), 1980
- Collection Condition Surveys, 1986 to present
- Wayside Exhibit Plan, 1987
- Collection Storage Plan, 1985, 1988
- Historic Structure Report Main House and Annex, Scotty's Castle, 1991

- Historic Furnishing Report, Scotty's Castle, 1991
- Flood Mitigation Plan, 1993 (Scotty's Castle, 1994)
- Ethnographic Overview & Assessment, 1995
- Traditional Use Study, 1996
- Historic Resource Study, New Lands, 1997
- Cultural Affiliation Study, 1998
- Museum Management Plan, 1999
- Paleontological Survey, 1999
- Museum Collection Conservation Plan, 2003
- Museum Development Plan, 2006
- Pacific West Region Museum Collection Curatorial Facility Plan, 2006
- Museum Collections Emergency Operations Plan, 2007
- Scotty's Castle Museum Management Facility: An Evaluation of Proposed Alternatives, 2008
- Historic Resource Study, Death Valley Scotty Historic District, 2009
- Historic Structures Report, Death Valley Scotty Historic District, 2009
- Position Management Plan, 2010

The purpose for the museum collections includes managing objects that the National Park Service is mandated to preserve. This includes archeological materials, except inalienable and communal property, recovered from within park boundaries through systematic collection are National Park Service property and must be retained in the park's museum collection in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 4704 Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (as defined in 43 CFR 7.13) and NPS Management Policies (2001). Associated field data and records also must be maintained as part of the park's museum collection.

In addition, certain natural history specimens that are not consumed in analysis and are appropriate for long-term preservation are also collected by mandate. 36 CFR 2.5(g) states that natural history specimen collection permits issued by the Superintendent must contain the following conditions: "(1) Specimens placed in displays or collections will bear official NPS museum labels and their catalog numbers will be registered in the National Park Service National Catalog, and (2) Specimens and data derived from consumed specimens will be made available to the public and reports and publications resulting from a research specimen collection permit shall be filed with the superintendent."

D. Special Designations

Six historic properties in DEVA are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Skidoo — listed April 16, 1974
- Harmony Borax Works — listed December 31, 1974
- Eagle Borax Works — listed December 31, 1974
- Saline Valley Salt Tram Historic Structure — listed December 31, 1974
- Leadfield — listed June 10, 1975
- Death Valley Scotty Historic District — listed July 20, 1978 (museum collections are listed as a contributing element of this National Register historic district)

Numerous other historic properties and/or cultural landscapes in the park have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These sites are in various stages of the documentation and nomination process, and more sites are being considered for NRHP eligibility every year.

Draft national register nomination forms were prepared for the following Traditional Cultural Places (TCPs) by the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe through a NPS Historic Preservation Grant:

- Mushroom Rock
- Ubehebe Crater
- Navel Spring
- *Tumpisa* District (Furnace Creek area)

In 1983, Eureka Dunes was listed on the registry of National Natural Landmarks as an excellent example of eolian (wind) geological processes. It is the tallest dune complex in the Great Basin biophysiographic province of the United States. The site contains a threatened grass genus, as well as numerous other endemic and rare plant species.

II. TYPES OF COLLECTIONS

DEVA's interpretive themes and resources management goals and objectives stated in the introduction serve as general guidelines for acquiring objects for the museum collections. The following specific guidelines will prevent arbitrary and excessive growth of the collection, while ensuring that it remains relevant to the park's purpose. The development of the museum collection should proceed in close coordination with regional curatorial staff.

1. Cultural Collection

The cultural resource collection provides for research, education, exhibits, and supports resource management goals and projects for Death Valley National Park. The museum collection includes material from the disciplines of history, archeology, ethnology, and archives and records. The following list identifies object or artifact types by discipline that are appropriate to acquire for the museum collection. Artifacts, archives, and associated records previously collected from DEVA that are housed in other repositories should be located, documented, and cross-referenced. These early collections yield important information and lend insight to historical resources management and interpretive goals and objectives for the park.

The purpose of this collection is to increase knowledge and inspiration among present and future generations through exhibits, research, and interpretive programs; support research, resources management, and education; provide baseline data of park cultural resources; document changes these resources are undergoing because of internal park conditions and external effects, and guarantee the protection of information about important objects and resources whose in-situ preservation cannot be assured.

The cultural collection is subdivided into five disciplines: archeology, ethnology, history, art, and archival & manuscript collections. All five disciplines are represented in the DEVA museum collection, with the largest portion by volume made up of the History and Archival/Manuscript collections. Major themes include mining, Indigenous ethnology & archeology, tourism, and significant historical figures.

An object from the site or directly associated with person(s) or event(s) commemorated by the park is more desirable than a similar object without such association. Future growth of the collection should be restricted to items related to:

- Interpretive and/or research needs identified in DEVA approved planning documents and resource studies.
- Service-wide initiatives, if applicable.
- Enhancing the understanding of, and promoting increased stewardship of, DEVA cultural resources.
- Cultural resources baselines/inventory and monitoring activities.
- Regulatory and compliance activities such as those mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA).

A. Archeology Collection

Archeological resources are any material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities which are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. They can reveal scientific or humanistic information through archeological research ([NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline](#)). Material remains are “artifacts, objects, specimens, and other physical evidence that are excavated or removed in connection with efforts to locate, evaluate, document, study, preserve, or recover a precontact or historic resource” ([36 CFR 79.4\(a\)\(1\)](#)).

Legal and ethical [standards](#) provide protection for archeological sites and materials. Artifacts found on the surface by NPS staff and visitors outside of an archeological investigation should be left in place; collecting them removes them from their archeological provenience, degrades sites, and can reduce our understanding of the artifacts and their contexts. If archeological materials are collected outside the parameters of an authorized archeological study and brought to park staff, appropriate measures must be taken to ensure that the visitor or staff member collects no more material, that precise provenience information is recorded, when possible, that park cultural resource staff are notified, and that the objects/data are promptly given to the curatorial staff upon receipt by staff members. DEVA frontline staff are provided with standardized forms in the event of a visitor turning in an unauthorized collect (referred to as a Voluntary Report of Collection). Parks should develop appropriate standard operating procedure (SOPS), interpretive messages and staff training to prevent this unauthorized collection of materials. Violations under the [Archaeological Resources Protection Act \(ARPA\), 1979](#), should be promptly reported to park law enforcement officers, the DEVA Cultural Resource Manager, and the Regional Archeologist.

NPS Management Policies (2006, section 5.3.5.1) mandate that archeological resources are managed in situ, unless the removal of artifacts or physical disturbance is justified by research, consultation, preservation, protection, or interpretive requirements. “Data recovery actions will be taken only in the context of planning, consultation, and appropriate decision-making . . . conducted within the scope of an approved research design.” Refer to the Research Design Appendix for a more in-depth discussion of research design development within the context of the permitting process.

Project design should not incorporate more artifacts than is necessary to meet legitimate project goals. Costs for curation and documentation of these materials will be part of the approved project as specified in 36 CFR Part 79, Curation of Federally-owned and Administered Archeological Collections. Park staff, volunteers, and visitors shall be strongly discouraged from picking up surface artifacts.

Surface artifacts shall be left in situ and their location documented. In the event of unauthorized collecting, or if the material is under immediate threat of loss or destruction, items may be collected. The accession for surface finds will contain, at the minimum, an inventory of the accession, a map showing the location of where the artifact was recovered, who recovered it, when it was recovered, why it was recovered, the artifact’s current location and any other pertinent data regarding the material. The artifact will be placed in suitable storage with other

surface artifacts. The container(s) in which these artifacts are stored shall be clearly marked with the accession number.

Artifacts recovered from persons involved in unauthorized or illegal activities (illegally excavated or surface collected within the park's boundaries) are considered confiscated archeological artifacts. They may also be classified as evidence pending legal actions as assigned by the investigating authority. Law Enforcement personnel should consult park museum staff to ensure proper handling and transportation of this material.

In the case of unauthorized artifact collection, because the artifact was not scientifically excavated, its immediate value does not warrant cataloging. At such time as a professional archeologist determines that any of the unauthorized collections has archeological value, then the artifact will be cataloged. The museum catalog record will include all available data recorded about the artifact in the accession file.

The park will continue to locate and document archeological collections from excavations that predate the establishment of the park in 1933. See Subsection "III. NAGPRA" for information on Death Valley National Park's NAGPRA holdings and repatriation undertakings.

Archeology Collection at DEVA: As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report states that the DEVA archeology collection contains 54,940 individual objects and 239 backlogged objects. Archeology collections at DEVA span all five established Death Valley archeological periods, described below. The majority of DEVA archeology collections are stored at the Cow Creek collections storage facilities.

By quantity, a large portion of the Cow Creek/Furnace Creek museum collection consists of archeological material (artifacts and documentation). Archeological surveys and excavations conducted primarily during the 1950s and 1960s produced a large collection of artifacts representing the five pre-Contact and Historic periods established in Death Valley archeological timelines. Recent archeological collections are the result of compliance projects and the excavation of sites threatened by imminent destruction. Most of these artifacts have never been fully analyzed or studied. Significant archeological research outside of the park has yielded an excellent comparative framework for future analytical studies of the artifacts in the park's museum collections. Analysis of these artifacts will help define future archaeological fieldwork and refine the prehistoric and historic timeline of the park. Acquisition of material should be limited to artifacts collected during park mitigation and compliance projects.

Categorization of DEVA archeological collections follow the archeological periods, beginning 9000 years ago, originally proposed by William Wallace in the 1950s. Later, Alice Hunt and other archeologists utilized a similar chronology:

Death Valley I or Paleo-Indian Period (7000-5000 BC): The earliest well-documented occupation within the Great Basin is characterized by hunting of now extinct megafauna with large stemmed and shouldered spear and atlatl points. Domed scrapers, spokeshaves, crescents, graveurs and leaf shaped knives complete the flaked stone assemblages. Sites are

generally located along relict lakeshores (Lake Manly in Death Valley) or on gravel benches near springs.

Death Valley II or Desert Archaic Period (3000 BC- AD 1-500): An increased focus on plant food processing, suggested by the increased number of seed grinding implements, are characteristic of the early part of this period, referred to as the Pinto Period. Pinto, Humbolt, Mojave and points in the Silver Lake series; drills, gravers, scrapers and scraper planes are all characteristic of this period. The Elko-Gypsum Period defines the latter part of Death Valley II (beginning about 2000 BC). Elko, Humbolt, and Gypsum Cave point styles are common, as are drills, scrapers and knives; shell and stone beads, incised and painted pebbles, slate tablets and split-twigg figurines; mortars and pestles are also characteristic of this period. Sites are generally open sites located on silty ground with few stones, and rockshelters located near water sources.

Death Valley III or Early Ceramic Period (AD 500-1000): The bow and arrow were adopted by Great Basin Cultures about AD 500 and are represented by smaller projectile points of the Rose Spring and Eastgate (or "Rosegate") series. Ancestral Puebloan influence is evident in the early part of the period: imported ceramics, pendants, bone beads, Olivella and Limpet shell beads, unbaked clay figurines and conically shaped clay pipes are evident. Unshaped basin metates and one-hand manos were utilized to process plant foods.

Death Valley IV or Later Ceramic or Shoshonean Period (AD 1000-European Contact): After AD 1200, Ancestral Puebloan influence decreased and locally manufactured brownware appeared. Desert side-notched points, knives, drills, gravers, flake knives, scrapers, hammerstones, arrowshaft straighteners; Olivella shell, glass and bone beads; pendants of argillite and talc, and incised stones characterize these late assemblages. Baked and unbaked clay figurines, stone and clay balls are also associated. Manos, metates, portable and bedrock mortars, and pestles complete the inventory. Researchers believe the Numic-speakers (including the Shoshone) spread into the Great Basin and Mojave deserts during this period.

Historic Period (Appr. AD 1800-Present): The collection contains material from sites associated with the historic settlement and development of the lands within Death Valley National Park. This includes material from both Euro-American and Native American sites. Most historic archaeological material collected is the result of general overall archeological surveys and excavations.

Mandated acquisitions:

Archeological collections, except cultural items (see 43 CFR 10.2) as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), recovered from within park boundaries through systematic collection must be retained in the park's museum collection. [43 CFR 7.13](#), "Custody of Archeological Resources," requires that archeological resources excavated or removed from public lands remain the property of the United States. Archeological material must be of archeological value and interest, including scientific integrity and replicability. [NPS Management Policies](#) (2006, section 5.3.5.1) mandate that artifacts and

specimens recovered from archeological resources, associated records, and reports will be maintained together in the park museum collection.

Collections (artifacts and/or associated records) may result from research or compliance projects, including because of historical research, surveys (phase I), test excavations (phase II), and research or mitigative excavations (phase III). Every archeology project will result in materials for the museum collection; even if artifacts are not collected, project records (both physical and digital) must be accessioned and cataloged into the collection. Museum and archeological staff should work together to create an SOP for transferring archeological project records to the museum collection. These records may include field notes and catalogs; daily journals; drawings and maps; spatial data; photographic prints, negatives, and slides; photographic logs; sound recordings; raw data sheets; instrument charts; remote sensing data; collection inventories; analytical study data; conservation treatment records. The museum curator (or collateral duty museum staff) will work cooperatively with the Project Investigator (archeologist responsible for the project) to make certain that these records are complete and preserved. Always retain original documents rather than copies whenever possible. Such documents, subject to DO-19 regulations, shall be certified to the Archivist of the United States as necessary for ongoing business.

Park archeological records are scattered in various locations (universities, individual archeologists, WACC, Pacific West Regional office, etc.) and/or are missing. Emphasis needs to be placed on acquiring missing or incomplete records associated with the archeological projects conducted within the park.

Should be acquired:

Confiscated archeological materials recovered from unauthorized and illegal activities in DEVA in violation of ARPA should be acquired if they are accompanied by detailed provenience records. These materials commonly include archeological materials illegally excavated or obtained through uncontrolled surface collecting or excavation by unauthorized individuals within a NPS unit's boundaries. Such objects might be held temporarily by law enforcement following legal chain of custody protocols as evidence if legal action is to be taken but should be formally turned over to museum staff as soon as possible. Museum staff should also be consulted to ensure proper handling and transportation of these materials. Objects subject to ARPA may only be added to the collection once all legal questions are resolved. If an archeologist or related subject matter expert is not on the park CAC, museum staff should request an assessment of the significance of the materials and potential research value.

Such documents, subject to DO-19 regulations, shall be certified to the Archivist of the United States as necessary for ongoing business.

May be acquired:

Surface or diagnostic finds not recovered from systematic excavations with limited provenience records may only be accepted into the collection if the artifact is deemed especially

archeologically significant by a trained Archeologist. All available data on the artifacts, as detailed above, must be retained in the collection. Collections recovered from within the park before it was created may be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on legal title, provenience data, condition, objects present, size of collection, and associated records.

Not to be acquired:

Artifacts with no direct provenience within the park, artifacts which lack data, and artifacts with questionable provenance should not be accessioned into the museum collection. The park should discourage visitors from collecting cultural resource materials from park property. Objects excavated from non-NPS property, potentially hazardous material (see the Potentially Hazardous Material Appendix), and any newly discovered human remains and/or NAGPRA cultural items removed from park lands should not be accessioned into the museum collection. Rather, disposition should be addressed through compliance with sections 10.4 through 10.7 of 43 CFR 10 in accordance with the mandated timelines found in 43 CFR 10. See Section III for information about inadvertent discoveries related to NAGPRA.

B. Ethnology Collection

According to NPS-28, [Cultural Resource Management Guidelines \(Chapter 10\)](#), the ethnology classification is used for resources associated with the cultural systems or ways of life, and the related technology, sites, structures, and natural resources of peoples associated with the park from before the park's establishment. The decision to call resources "ethnographic" depends on whether associated peoples perceive them as traditionally meaningful to their identity as a group and the survival of their lifeways.

There are four ethnographic resource types that have been assigned cultural significance by traditional users which include sites (archeological or historic places), structures (built features), objects (portable materials), and landscapes (areas containing diverse natural and cultural resources). When natural resources acquire meaning according to the different cultural constructs of a particular group, they become ethnographic and thus cultural resources as well. A major goal of ethnographic object collections is to facilitate collaborative relationships between the NPS and the peoples whose customary ways of life affect, and are affected by, park resources management.

The composition of the park's ethnology collection is subject to change as traditionally associated peoples are identified. Artifacts and their associated records illustrating the cultural continuity and adaptation of the Native American cultures of the Great Basin Culture will be collected and maintained. This includes objects from the Western Shoshone, Southern Paiute, Kawaiisu, and Owens Valley Paiute. Sub-groups more specific to Death Valley include the Timbisha Shoshone, otherwise known as the Panamint Shoshone. Included are objects composed of clay, glass, metal, paper, stone, plant, animal, or synthetic materials, or combinations of all of these materials. This material includes objects collected through both archeological and non-archeological methodologies.

The primary cultural group associated with DEVA is the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, whose homeland is Death Valley and the surrounding mountains and valleys. Timbisha Shoshone basketry makes up the majority of the DEVA Ethnology collection. Other Native American groups from the Southern Nevada-East Central California area, primarily the Paiute and Kawaiisu, also have ties to DEVA. Other cultural groups associated with DEVA include Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II, Basque Americans, Chinese Americans, Germans, French, and Latino populations.

It is the policy of DEVA to consult with the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe and other affiliated Native American groups regarding the park's ethnographic collections, especially material that may be considered sacred or religious and any new acquisitions. Consultation with the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe and other affiliated Tribes is required in regards to NAGPRA-related ethnographic material.

Ethnographic studies of the park and its resources will generate records including oral histories, journals, photographs, field notes, reports, and other documents associated with ethnographic fieldwork. Because of their documentary nature, these materials shall be included in the museum collection as archives and are described in section II.1.E of this SOCS.

Ethnology Collection at DEVA: The ethnology collection makes up a relatively small portion of the DEVA collection. As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates there are 349 ethnology objects, and 63 backlogged ethnology objects. The most significant part of the ethnology collection is the Scotty's Castle collection of Timbisha Shoshone (Panamint Shoshone) decorative basketry. Other object types in the ethnology collection are described below.

The ethnology collection consists primarily of Panamint Shoshone basketry and beadwork. Representative collections include chipped and ground stone implements, pottery, basketry, personal possessions, and stored foods. Acquisition emphasis needs to be placed on acquiring associated material such as oral histories, photographs and archives. Further information is also needed from repositories or collectors of Death Valley material for comparative analysis and inventory.

Historic mining and homesteading communities often included other important ethnographic groups including the Basque, French, Chinese, Germans and Latinos. During World War II, the Japanese American culture in association with the Manzanar WWII Relocation Center became a part of the ethnographic history of Death Valley. Meaningful artifacts and archival material associated with these cultures should be sought for selective addition to the collection.

The Scotty's Castle ethnology collection consists of ethnographic objects collected by Albert and Bessie Johnson primarily during the 1920s and 30s. The majority of these objects are finely crafted tourist trade baskets associated with Timbisha Shoshone or Paiute ethnic groups. A few baskets from earlier in the 20th century are included. In addition, a small number of baskets in the collection at Scotty's Castle are associated with other geographic areas and cultures, such as the Washoe and several Pacific Northwest cultures. A master's thesis completed in 1989 included a general analysis of the basketry in the Scotty's Castle collection, although it did not

determine individual makers. Related archival records such as oral histories or photographs should be sought.

Mandated Acquisitions:

There are no legally mandated ethnology collections.

Should be acquired:

Ethnological objects located within the park boundaries and determined to be at threat from natural disasters, construction, or vandalism, should be collected, but should not be accessioned without first consulting with the appropriate tribe or cultural group. Please refer to the Archives Resources Management Records section for guidance on records related to ethnographic studies.

Only ethnographic materials with a direct association with the park, such as from an eminent individual from an affiliated Native American tribe or other cultural group, should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The park's ethnology collection may include archives and media associated with an ethnographic study. The park will always consult with the appropriate tribe or cultural group before accepting any newly donated ethnographic objects.

May be acquired:

Ethnographic objects owned or used by an individual or cultural group traditionally associated with, and significant to, the park mandate. The park should carefully consider collections of non-original ethnographic resources which may be related to the existing museum collection or attributed to traditionally associated people of the park/park area.

Not to be acquired:

Ethnographic materials from peoples who do not have direct traditional associations to the park.

C. History Collection

Historic objects are a key component of the park's museum collection. They provide for use in exhibits and in research of themes relevant to the park. When a large quantity of unprovenanced objects are available, priority is given to acquiring the best-preserved examples appropriate to identified themes.

History Collection at DEVA: As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates there are 55,794 cataloged history objects, and 8,398 backlogged history objects. The majority of the objects on exhibit at the Furnace Creek Visitor's Center, Harmony Borax Works, and Scotty's Castle are part of the DEVA history collection. Most of the history collection that is typically displayed at Scotty's Castle has been stored offsite at a non-bureau repository since 2016.

The DEVA museum collection reflects the spectrum of materials made and/or used during recorded times by humans residing in what today is Death Valley National Park. They include cultural collections that are neither archeological nor ethnological. These collections document individual or community life; social, cultural, political, economic, and technological trends; and events associated with DEVA's mission, themes, and history.

Mandated Acquisitions:

There are no legal mandates for the History Collection.

Should be acquired:

Only historic material with a direct association to the park that is not duplicative of existing collections should be included in the museum collection. When a large quantity of an object type is available, priority should be given to acquiring only the best-preserved example. The history collection is based on the park's interpretive themes, which includes the following collecting categories:

Early exploration: Includes the 1849-50 emigrant and pre-mining period. Little evidence of this important but elusive period exists in the museum collections. The park should actively acquire documented materials associated with this period of Westward Expansion.

Mining history: The mining history of Death Valley encompasses a variety of subjects. Sites and features within the park are often closely associated with sites, features and institutions outside the park's boundaries. Gold, borax, talc, and other minerals were sought after, found, and/or removed. Mining activities were supported through the transportation of food, water, and other supplies into, and processed ore out of, this remote area. Innovative engineering approaches were used to produce energy, water, and food, and, to remove, process, and transport ore. Unique communities developed (more often temporary) that provided prospectors, miners and their families with an escape from their work and solitary desert existence. This diverse period is represented by the following museum collection subjects:

Specific Mine Locations: Objects, documentary materials, mining claims, and photographs associated with a particular mining site or endeavor.

Technological Innovations: Objects, documentary materials, and photographs relative to technological adaptations specifically developed and used in Death Valley.

Community Development: Objects, documentary materials, and photographs that reflect the founding, development and occasional demise of mining communities.

Prospectors and Miners: Objects, documentary materials, and photographs pertinent to the lives of the people associated with mining in Death Valley.

Mining Industry: Archives and objects that document the history of operations by mining corporations and companies within the boundaries of Death Valley. Notable corporations include US Borax, Inc. and the Keane Wonder Mining Company.

Historical Development, other than mining: Objects from this period should reflect the following museum collection subjects. They may include but are not limited to possessions of significant individuals, original furnishings, photographs, and other documentary material:

Scotty's Castle: Historical objects associated with the Castle and its eminent figures, including Death Valley Scotty, Albert and Bessie Johnson, and prominent guests. Primarily those objects which were used or manufactured during the Death Valley Scotty Historic District period of significance (1922-1956) should be accepted into the museum collection.

Travel, Tourism, Recreation: Includes Stovepipe Wells Resort, Furnace Creek Inn and Ranch, Panamint Springs, and other resort areas; Railroad, automobile, and air transportation, mountain peak and cabin registers.

Military: World War II and Cold War Military Training (Fort Irwin, China Lake NWS, etc.), Japanese American Incarceration in Death Valley

Ranching and Homesteading: Includes Indian Ranches (Strozzi, Hungry Bill, etc.) and Ranches associated with recreational ranching and mining (Barker Ranch).

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC): Between 1933-1942, the CCC played an important role in the development of the park and in the early preservation of the park's resources. While official CCC documents are the purview of NARA and *should not* be collected, material documenting the lives of CCC members (such as photographs, journals, etc.) within Death Valley should continue to be collected.

Countercultural Movements: Countercultural movements, especially those focused on the area of Saline Valley Warm Springs, have been a key part of the park's history during the 20th and 21st centuries.

Current Events: Memorabilia from important current events is included in the museum collection and will continue to be preserved as they become available. "Current events" refers to historical events such as natural disasters or protests, not park-sanctioned commemorative events. Care should be taken to identify official records associated with park-sanctioned events prior to acquisition and/or deaccession.

Historic Fabric: Multiple historic structures are integral to the history of Death Valley. The largest of these is Scotty's Castle (Death Valley Ranch). Other important historic structures include Lower Vine Ranch, Grantham Warm Springs Camp, CCC-era buildings, and dozens of smaller mining structures.

When original fabric is removed from an historic structure during restoration or repair in the park, small representative portions of the removed fabric that provide significant historical

information will be preserved in the museum collection along with any associated documentation. Any park or contractor work that will result in the removal of historic fabric should include provisions for relevant experts to determine the historical significance of all removed historic fabric and provide written documentation for museum staff. Historic fabric may include building materials and components, lighting devices, plumbing fixtures, etc.

Future collections activity in this area will concentrate on the acquisition of outstanding examples of objects currently not represented in the collection, which meet the criteria referenced above and clearly address a resources management, interpretive, or research deficiency noted in park documents, thus ensuring that the history collection is relevant to the needs of the park.

May be acquired:

Rare books retained for their unique physical properties or associative value with significant events and people may be acquired. However, books should never be added to the museum collection simply because they are perceived as old, rare, or valuable. Rare books, when collected for rarity, should be placed in the Resources' library and assessed by a librarian/rare book professional.

The collecting categories described below are those that require consultation with relevant experts before acceptance into the museum collection. These collections may or may not be relevant to DEVA's collecting mission, depending on the existence of duplicate materials or information:

Government Surveys: The U.S. Government sponsored a number of military, boundary, geological, and biological surveys that included Death Valley in the latter half of the 20th century's Westward Expansion period. These surveys served to introduce this region and its unusual features to the American public. Most artifactual remains (maps, reports, etc.) of these surveys are located in the National Archives. Any other evidence of this period, if fully substantiated as to provenance, may be useful to accession into the collection on a case-by-case basis.

Scotty's Castle, Outside of Period of Significance: While the Scotty's Castle collection should overwhelmingly consist of objects used or manufactured during the Death Valley Scotty Historic District's period of significance (1922-1956), some objects that fall outside of this period may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Objects representing the activities of concessionaires operating at Scotty's Castle may only be acquired if they significantly inform the history of Scotty's Castle or tourism in Death Valley.

National Park Service Administration: Historical objects associated with life in Death Valley under National Park Service administration. Care should be taken to identify official records associated with NPS Administration events prior to acquisition and/or deaccession.

Not to be acquired:

The park should not acquire objects without a direct association to the park's resources, objects that duplicate current holdings or objects in such poor condition that they are beyond conservation, or objects that are inherently unstable in ways which causes the item to deteriorate or destroy itself. Potentially hazardous materials may not be accepted, except on a case-by-case basis. See the Hazards in the Collection Appendix for more information.

The park will not accession period pieces and reproductions in the museum collection. Period pieces, reproductions and living history props are managed as non-museum property. The following categories of objects are also not to be acquired:

Large / Macro Objects: While DEVA will continue to care for the macro-objects already accessioned into the museum collection, the museum collection will not accept any new large-scale objects such as mining and ranching equipment, automobiles, and sculptures that are stored or exhibited outdoors. The park does not have sufficient staff, time, or funding to care for additional macro artifacts.

Advertising Models: Except on a rare case-by-case basis, DEVA will not accept models, figurines, or miniatures used as advertisements or promotion in relation to Death Valley.

Scotty's Castle Duplicates: The park will not collect architectural elements, historic fabric, or other historical objects from Scotty's Castle that duplicate objects already held in the collection.

D. Art Collection

Art collections generally consist of paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures admired and appreciated primarily or solely for aesthetic or intellectual content. Although created primarily for utilitarian or decorative purposes rather than aesthetics, the artistry and skill of many folk artists is now recognized, and folk art is sometimes considered within art collections. Although most artists in parks work independently, the NPS may commission artists to create works of art inspired by a specific park or resource.

Art Collection at DEVA: The art collection at DEVA is relatively small in quantity, but takes up a disproportionate large amount of space in collections storage. As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates that there are 328 cataloged art objects in the DEVA museum collection and 4 backlog art objects.

Mandated acquisitions:

There are no legal mandates for the art collection.

Should be acquired:

There are no categories under "Should be Acquired" for the Death Valley National Park art collection. Fine art is not a collecting focus for the DEVA museum collection.

May be acquired:

Works commissioned by the NPS for specific park purposes, such as exhibitions, illustrations, education, or interpretation may be acquired if they possess significant artistic merit. Note that contracts commissioning works of art should include language transferring copyright to the NPS.

DEVA may accept artwork produced by Death Valley National Park or other Artist-in-Residence programs into the museum collection at the discretion of the CAC, but acceptance is not required. If an Artist-in-Residence wishes to donate artwork that has not been accepted into the DEVA museum collection, it may be maintained as Controlled Property by the park's Property Officer.

Art that is directly associated with the park and/or significant people/events related to the park's enabling legislation and which adds significantly to the understanding of DEVA's Cultural and Natural Resources should be acquired. Proposed acquisitions must be evaluated by the CAC along with appropriate artist and art history research against existing collections and the park's mission and resources.

Fine And Decorative Arts: Significantly aesthetic or historically original art objects shall be limited to those depicting Death Valley and/or those subjects closely related to the historical categories listed above. Emphasis will be given to those objects that can be properly exhibited and interpreted, and can be cared for based on established museum standards. The purchase or collection of original art for the decoration of NPS Administrative offices is discouraged: art reproductions, mass-produced graphics and photography are instead encouraged for decorating offices.

Not to be acquired:

The park will not accept art with undocumented provenance and no clear title; "office art" or reproductions (posters, prints, and similar mass-produced copies); artwork with no direct association of past ownership, subject, or artist to the park. NOTE: the NPS Commissioned Art Collection is not managed as a museum collection, but as Federal Property. The park will not accept art produced or commissioned by a partner organization if it does not possess significant artistic or historical value; Objects in such poor condition that they are beyond conservation; or objects that are inherently unstable in a way which causes them to deteriorate or destroy themselves.

E. Archives Collections

For the NPS, the term "archives" or "archival collections" refers to permanently valuable documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.

From the [Museum Handbook I, CH 1, pg 11](#):

Other than resource management records, Federal records should not be included in the museum collection without specific authorization from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). These records are the original or “record copy” documents created or received in the course of performing the daily work of the NPS. Examples of records that do not belong in the museum collection include audit records, budget materials, central files, contracting files, financial records, law enforcement records, legal records, museum and project administrative records, permits, personnel records, and superintendent’s correspondence files.

By quantity, the archives make up by far the largest portion of the DEVA museum collections. As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates that there are 969,588 individual cataloged archival objects, and 521,742 individual backlogged archival objects. Because archival items are most commonly measured in linear feet, this is a number estimated using the standard NPS conversion rate of 1600 items per 1 Linear Foot. Using these calculations, the total archival volume of the collection is approximately 604 Linear Feet of cataloged archival material and 326.5 Linear Feet of backlog archival material.

a. Manuscript Collections at DEVA

The term “manuscripts” commonly refers to single documents or collections of documents created by organizations (“organizational records”), businesses (“corporate archives”), and individuals or families (“personal papers”). In NPS museum collections, manuscript collections are primarily donated by individuals, organizations, or families and may include material such as letters between family members, ledgers from businesses, and photographs documenting a family’s history.

Manuscript collections, or donated collections, are not “park Federal records” and should always be maintained and cataloged separately from resources management record collections. They are not subject to the Federal Records Act (FRA), Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), or other laws governing federal records access. Donated collections may be protected by copyright or other restrictions, and the NPS may hold copyrights for donated materials.

DEVA currently stores records associated with the Death Valley 49ers, a park partnership. The records are not presently part of the museum collection, but may be accessioned in the future if the park deems them sufficiently important and has the capacity to properly care for them.

Examples of archive and manuscript collections include, but are not limited to scrapbooks, photographs, film, diaries, oral and video histories, posters or public notices, personal papers and memorabilia, and administrative files. Items need to meet the same subject criteria as described in section 1 above to be included in the collection. Records that are managed by NPS museum collections staff include:

Mandated Acquisitions:

There are no legal mandates for manuscript collections.

Should be acquired:

Manuscript collections should be acquired, but proposed acquisitions must be evaluated by the CAC on a case-by-case basis against existing collections and the park's mission and resources.

Personal Papers: This category may be represented by personal or family papers, memorabilia, correspondence, photos, and other material related to Death Valley National Park. Notable collections include the photographic collection of Burton Frasher and the Matt Ryan Collection.

Organizational Records: This category may be represented by records such as those associated with U.S. Borax and other corporations or companies with strong associations to Death Valley.

Assembled Manuscript and Archival Collections: Collections might include photographic images pertaining to the park and oral histories.

Scotty's Castle Manuscript Collections: Includes original correspondence, records, ephemera, etc. produced or used by significant figures associated with Scotty's Castle.

May be acquired:

Manuscript collections may be acquired, but proposed acquisitions must be evaluated by the CAC on a case-by-case basis against existing collections and the park's mission and resources.

Not to be acquired:

Photocopies or scans of diaries, letters, historic photos, etc. from personal collections or other repositories are more appropriately library "vertical files" or interpretive use collections and will not be acquired for the museum collection. General "family vacation" images from members of the public and employee personal photos unrelated to the park will not be acquired. Digital copies of analog photos or documents that are already in the collection created for access and use will not be added to the museum archives.

Books and other library materials acquired in association with significant events or individuals, as well as publications retained for their physical properties or their associative value (but not their rarity), shall be managed as part of the park's museum collection. However, general library materials are not managed as part of the park's museum collection. Policy and procedures for library materials are outlined in NPS Management Policies (2001), Chapter 5, and, DO-28, Cultural Resource Management Guideline. Library collections are managed by the park Historian and volunteers.

b. Resources Management Records in the Archival Collections at DEVA

Resources Management Records (RMR) document the management of natural and cultural resources, and park lands which must be [preserved in perpetuity](#). Using professional discretion,

knowledge of park resources management, and working with an NPS archivist (park, regional office, WASO), staff may determine how they support the management of the resources, and if they are active records.

Associated records are Resources Management Records that document and provide context for museum objects, specimens, and samples. Some associated records are specifically mandated by laws and regulations that govern how we manage archeological, biological, and paleontological collections.

For archeology: [Archaeological Resources Protection Act](#) (ARPA), specific reference to retention of associated records found here: [US Code Title 16, 470cc](#). And [36 CFR 79](#) which are regulations associated with undertakings associated with the Antiquities Act, Reservoir Salvage Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and ARPA.

For biology: [Management Policies 2006 \(nps.gov\)](#) and [36 CFR 2.5](#)

For paleontology: [16 USC 470aaa-1: Management \(house.gov\)](#)

Resources Management Records (RMR) are federal records subject to the Federal Records Act (FRA), Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), or other laws governing federal records access. Although records created by government employees are in the public domain, records within the park archives created by others may be subject to copyright or other legal restrictions. A compelling reason would be needed to accept copyrighted formats.

Approximately 110 LF of permanent park Resources Management Records are accessioned in the Death Valley National Park museum collection. Approximately 150 LF of unaccessioned and inaccessible permanent park Resources Management Records are awaiting processing in the Death Valley collections storage area, and an unknown number of permanent Resources Management Records are scattered throughout park offices. 23 linear feet of DEVA's permanent Resources Management Records are stored at the Western Archeological and Conservation Center in Tucson, Arizona.

Mandated Collections:

Records associated with collections made through permitted activities associated with the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and the Paleontology Resources Preservation Act of 2009 (PRPA) are mandated to be retained by law.

Resources Management Records: Documentary products of the park's cultural and natural resources management projects are to be permanently retained in the museum collection. These include but are not limited to archeological surveys and excavations, ethnographic reports and studies, historical architecture research and maintenance, cultural landscape research, natural science research, and park planning information. NPS employees, volunteers, contractors, cooperating associations, and educational and other institutions generate these records. Cultural resources management staff will work with

the park records manager to determine maintenance and disposition of resources management park records.

Should be Acquired:

Death Valley resources management and lands records that are not permanent DEVA Resources Management Records are not mandated, but should be acquired, if resources allow, if they provide valuable information for the continued management of park resources.

May be Acquired:

The [*NPS Service-wide Record Schedule*](#) (SRS) and the NPS [*Records and Electronic Information Management \(REIM Guide\)*](#) identify additional records that have enduring value to both the NPS and NARA. These records are not RMR or archives, but a very small set of permanent park records related to protection and safety, wildfire management, and park facilities management.

The CAC should review these permanent records in the SRS and REIM Guide and determine if any will be acquired for the museum collection or if all materials will be sent to federal records centers (FRC).

The following categories may be acquired for the Death Valley archival collection on a case-by-case basis, as determined by the Collections Advisory Committee:

Timbisha Shoshone Tribal Records/Archives: The Timbisha Shoshone Tribe does not currently have the resources to maintain a museum collection or archives and may ask DEVA to store Tribal records or archives in the future. Some Tribal records are already on long-term loan to DEVA. Any future acquisitions would be accessioned as long-term loans from the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe. DEVA must consult with the Tribe before accepting any offers of Tribal records by non-Tribal entities.

Not to be Acquired:

Museum records including but not limited to accession book, accession files, catalog records and databases, catalog folders, annual inventories, images/scans documenting objects/specimens, and object conservation condition and treatment reports must be permanently retained but are not to be accessioned into the collection. These records constitute metadata about the collection.

The following categories should not be acquired for the Death Valley museum archival collection:

DEVA Administrative Records (Non-Resources): Non-resource related permanent park records should not be accessioned into the museum collection. Guidance on this subject has differed over the years, and a large number of non-resource park administrative records have already been accessioned into the collection. The park museum staff will no longer accession permanent records from park divisions other than Resources

Management. Administrative records from divisions other than Resources Management will be managed by appropriate division staff, the park's Records Manager, and NARA.

CCC Administrative Records: Official Administrative records from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) are permanent (non-resources) records and should not be accessioned. However, as noted in the History section, non-official records of CCC enrollees' lives and activities while in Death Valley (including photographs, paper records, etc.) can be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Active/Official Records: These records are generated by the museum property system to manage museum property. They include but are not limited to accession, catalog, inventory and loan records. They are retained in association with museum collections, but are not cataloged or managed as part of the park's museum collection.

2. Natural History Collection

The purpose of the DEVA natural history collection is to support scientific research, resources management and education; provide baseline data of the park's natural resources; document changes these resources are undergoing because of internal park conditions and external effects; preserve important or locally significant species collected in response to specific research or interpretive needs; and guarantee the protection of important paleontological specimens.

Future growth of the collection is restricted to specimens and associated records generated through authorized, systematic scholarly research and selective acquisition based on:

- Needs identified in DEVA's enabling legislation or presidential declaration, approved planning documents and resource studies.
- Service-wide initiatives.
- Interpretive needs identified in planning documents.
- Enhancing the understanding of, and promoting increased stewardship of, the park's natural resources.
- Natural resource baselines, inventorying, and monitoring activities as mandated by park guidance and federal law.
- Regulatory and compliance activities such as those mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970.

All collecting activities must be in compliance with [36 CFR 2.5](#), [the Research Permitting and Reporting System \(RPRS\)](#), NPS Management Policies (2006, section 4.2.3), *Director's Order #77: Natural Resource Protection* (under development), and *NPS Natural Resources Management Guideline* (1991). Please see Appendix G: Permits for more information.

Unauthorized surface collecting of any natural or cultural resources by visitors or park staff is illegal according to the *Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Volume I* (36 CFR 2.1). Specimens found on the surface should not be removed from their original location by unauthorized individuals; they should be reported to park staff authorized to collect resources. If materials are turned into the park, standard NPS policies and procedures must be followed to

ensure that the finder collects no more material, the precise provenience information is recorded, if possible, and the subject specimens and data are delivered promptly to the park. Unless the items are determined to be significant by a subject-matter expert in the respective discipline (biology, geology, or paleontology), they should not be cataloged into the park's museum collection.

Natural resource specimens collected outside park boundaries should not be managed as museum property unless mandated.

DEVA acquires natural history collections through internal NPS projects and outside permitted research projects conducted by researchers within park boundaries. Collections associated with research permits are accessioned and cataloged. NPS projects conducted without a research permit are subject to the same laws and policies as those with a permit.

Acquisitions and future growth of DEVA's natural history collection are initiated by park staff or outside researchers and will be restricted to specimens and associated records divided into three disciplines: biology, geology, and paleontology.

The park's natural history collections are located in the Cow Creek/Furnace Creek museum collection storage areas and in multiple non-federal repositories. Collection information can be found in the Museum Collection Management System (MCMS). There are five paleontological holotype specimens (type specimen upon which the description and name of a species is based) in the collection.

Mojave and Mediterranean Network (MOJN) parks, including DEVA, have Inventory & Monitory (I&M) specimen collecting protocols which primarily call for catch/release and visual observation only.

Consultation with relevant Native American tribes is necessary for protecting and maintaining DEVA's natural resources. Consultation with relevant stakeholders is already required for research permits issued through RPRS. NPS Natural Resources staff will consult with the relevant stakeholders and Native American tribes, particularly the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, when designing research that may result in specimen collection.

Published journal articles and books are not associated records, unless they are included in the final report provided by RPRS permitted researchers. Except in this case, published materials should not be accessioned into the natural history associated records collection.

The Death Valley National Park General Management Plan extensively describes the natural resources the park preserves and their status. Listed below are some of those natural resources specific to DEVA, according to the park General Management Plan (2002):

- 51 species of native mammals
- 2 species of exotic mammals
- 346 species of birds
- 36 species of reptiles

- 3 species of amphibians
- 6 species of fishes
- 5 dune areas
- Extensive paleontological and geological resources

Multiple protected species are endemic to Death Valley National Park. Federally listed species in Death Valley include:

- desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*)
- Devils Hole pupfish (*Cyprinodon diabolis*)
- southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailli extimus*)
- least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)
- Eureka Valley dunegrass (*Swallenia alexandrae*)
- spring-loving centaury (*Centaureum namophilum*)

Final species recovery plans exist for the desert tortoise, Eureka Valley dunegrass, and the Devils Hole Pupfish. A draft recovery plan is in development for the least Bell's Vireo.

California listed species, other than those also federally listed or proposed include:

- California (or western) yellow billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)
- Willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailli*)
- Mohave ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mohavensis*)
- Cottonball Marsh Pupfish (*Cyprinodon salinus milleri*)

California rare plant species, not otherwise federally listed or proposed include:

- July gold (*Dedekera eurekaensis*)
- Rock lady (*Maurandya petrophila*)

Museum collections serve as the verifiable and reproducible evidence of a scientific study. Therefore, their collection and long-term preservation is a crucial aspect of ensuring scientific integrity.

A. Biology Collection

Biological resources are plants and animals which live within, migrate through, or otherwise make use of a park. These include all species belonging to all five of the commonly recognized kingdoms of living things, such as flowering plants, ferns, mosses, lichens, algae, bacteria, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, insects, worms, crustaceans, and microscopic plants and animals. These biological resources can be either native or exotic.

Biological collections include specimens (or parts thereof) from plants and animals and their associated records. Copies of records created during biological research are retained, at the discretion of the park, as part of the museum collection, regardless of specimen collection. These

collections document the non-human biology of the park at a given time and place. When researchers make observations about the park environment, they often collect voucher specimens to testify to their observations. If these specimens are not destroyed or consumed in analysis, they should become part of the park's museum collection as determined during the permitting process. The NPS has an ongoing program to inventory and monitor living resources in the park that generates many specimens for the museum collections. Over time, NPS biological collections can help document changes in the park environment and changes in species, thus helping to inform park planning, natural resources management, cultural landscape management, and interpretive programs.

Park museum staff should only accept biological specimens that are fully prepared in a museum-quality manner.

Examples of biological collections may include:

- Animal skins
- Skeletal material
- Prepared specimens
- DNA samples and other viable samples (blood)
- Tissue samples
- Marine and freshwater shells
- Pinned insects
- Pressed plants
- Tree cores
- Casts of animal tracks
- Specimens or other collected material that results in derivatives that may be patentable or otherwise protected under the intellectual property (IP) laws.

Specimens of the endangered Devils Hole pupfish are on loan to 20+ institutions. Other biological specimens from the DEVA museum collection are on long-term loan to multiple non-NPS institutions.

Biological Resources at DEVA: DEVA has diverse biological resources and much remains to be learned about lesser studied taxa and habitats within the park, as well as impacts of anthropogenic and natural processes.

As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates that there are 16,785 cataloged biology specimens in the DEVA museum collection and 1,794 backlogged biology specimens. The subcategories of the biology collection are broken down below.

Plants and Lichen: Each species of vascular plant indigenous to the park, as well as each species of vascular plants introduced to the park, should be represented by a flowering specimen in the park herbarium. Specimens illustrating regional differences, important variations, and range of occurrence may also be included.

Nearly all species of vascular flora are represented in the park herbarium. Specimens collected by the park Nurseryman in the 1930s are historically significant. Non-vascular flora is not well represented in the herbarium. Emphasis should be placed on developing the collection of non-vascular plants and completing the collection of vascular plants.

Mammals: Each species of mammal indigenous to the park should be represented by a good study skin and skull of an adult individual. Male and female specimens and immature specimens are included only if found to show significant differences. Specimens illustrating the range of morphological differences, seasonal and transitional changes, and local varieties may also be included. Skeletal fragments may be collected if research warrants collection and study.

The park's mammal collection is fragmented due to sporadic and unscientific studies. Only the Bighorn Sheep population studies have yielded a sizeable collection. Most specimens are duplicates or road kills. Not all species are represented in the park's museum collection. There are no current plans for active collecting of additional specimens.

Birds: Each species of birds indigenous, either as a migrant or resident to the park, should be represented by a good study skin of an adult individual. Male and female specimens and immature specimens are included only if found to show significant differences. Specimens illustrating the range of morphological differences, seasonal and transitional stages of plumage, and local varieties may also be included. Skeletal fragments are not desirable unless research warrants collection and study.

The park's bird collection is moderately representative but incomplete. There are no current plans for active collecting of additional specimens.

Reptiles, Amphibians, and Fish: Each species of reptiles, amphibians, and fish indigenous to the park, as well as non-native species introduced to the park, should be represented by one adult individual. Male and female specimens and immature specimens are included only if found to show significant differences. Specimens illustrating the range of morphological differences, seasonal and transitional changes, and local varieties may also be included.

The reptile collection is fairly represented but only a single amphibian species has been collected. The fish collection is well represented and includes all five species found within Death Valley.

Invertebrates: No comprehensive inventory of Death Valley's aquatic or terrestrial invertebrates has been completed. Most surveys and collections to date were by independent investigators generally interested in single species or single orders or families. The Lepidoptera and Coleoptera insect orders are the best representatives of invertebrates in the museum collection. Other collected invertebrates have questionable to non-existent identifications.

When feasible, each family and/or genus/species indigenous to the park should be represented by at least one adult specimen. Determination of the quantity to be collected should be based upon species conservation and anticipated current and future scientific needs. A minimum number of conspicuous larvae may be included for further documentation.

Mandated acquisitions:

Specimens and samples obtained for preservation during inventory, monitoring, research, and study projects permitted by DEVA through the Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS), together with associated records, are mandated collections. Collecting of animal and plant specimens will be associated with needs identified in the Resource Management Plan/Resource Stewardship Strategy or approved I&M plans, or as needed to voucher research projects. All approved study plans will limit collected specimens to what has been determined as a sufficient number of examples. Threatened and endangered (T&E) specimens should not be added unless (1) accidental death occurs or (2) if researchers comply with all legal restrictions regarding protected species, including all Federal, State, and other permitting requirements for all proposed collections.

Museum staff should communicate to permitted researchers and DEVA Natural Resources staff that specimen preparation is the responsibility of the researcher and must be completed prior to accessioning.

Remainder samples and specimens not wholly destroyed during analyses that retain scientific value and potential for further testing remain Federal property and must be returned to the park.

Associated records: All original records associated with natural history field collections for each collecting category must be retained as part of the museum collection. These records must include field notes, and may include catalogs, daily journals, drawings and maps, photographs and negatives, slides, sound recordings, raw data sheets, instrument charts, collection inventories, analytical study data, conservation treatment records, and computer documentation and data, as well as any other documents generated through collection and analysis activity. Such documents, subject to NPS-19 regulations, shall be certified to the Archivist of the United States as necessary for ongoing business.

Should be acquired:

The park will identify gaps in the collection that are significant for baseline inventories and future research. These park research needs are identified in RPRS. Museum staff should communicate collection gaps and research needs to permitted researchers and DEVA Natural Resources staff. Specimen preparation is the responsibility of the researcher and must be completed prior to accessioning.

May be acquired:

Taxidermy "mounts" are not desirable for inclusion in the museum collection. Prepared study skins are preferred. Taxidermy specimens with strong provenance to the park (particularly extirpated species) may be acquired if they convey significant scientific information. Although taxidermy specimens are traditionally considered more for exhibit or public education purposes, new technologies are proving that these specimens can have scientific value. Therefore, such specimens should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis considering provenance, condition, rarity, and other relevant factors. Specimens prepared prior to the 1990s may be contaminated with arsenic or heavy metals. For future potential gifts of taxidermy specimens, the donor should bear the responsibility to test the specimen for harmful materials prior to NPS consideration. For more information on health hazards in collections, see Potential Hazards in Collections Appendix below.

The park may acquire whole biological specimens preserved in liquid. However, the researcher or Natural Resource staff member who prepared the specimen must provide a specimen maintenance plan as part of the associated records. Specimens preserved in liquids (i.e. alcohol, etc.) should be photographed in color in order to record important colors and patterns. Color charts (i.e. Munsell) may also be utilized. Metadata on preservation methods should also be included in documentation for specimens preserved in liquid. This information should then be included in the museum records.

Reproductions, such as casts or molds of a specimen, may be acquired if they are the only remaining evidence of the original specimen. See [NPS Museum Handbook, Appendix N](#) for more information about evaluating the accession of reproductions.

Accessioning of specialty collections such as frozen or other types of tissue samples are discouraged as they are beyond the park's capabilities for preservation. DEVA will not store on-site any frozen, unpreserved soft tissue or genetic material. The park should utilize the National Park Service Special Collections located at the American Museum of Natural History in New York's Ambrose Monell Collection for Molecular and Microbial Research or another appropriate repository, if the accessioning of these tissue samples is necessary. This facility houses frozen tissue samples containing DNA of threatened and endangered animals found on NPS lands. The five-year renewable agreement provides the NPS with the Museum's specialized expertise and technologically advanced storage facilities. Researchers who wish to collect specimens of these types are responsible for contacting an appropriate repository and making arrangements for specimen storage prior to accessioning.

Not to be acquired:

Biological specimens collected outside the park's boundaries will not be accessioned into the museum collection. Specimens collected outside the park's boundaries or in contiguous areas may be collected by Natural Resources staff for research or interpretive needs, but should not be accessioned into the museum collection. Scientific specimens lacking provenience documentation, lacking scientific value, in poor condition or which were not prepared to professional standards, and species for which the DEVA museum collection already has a representative sample, are not to be acquired. Hazardous specimens, such as those preserved with arsenic or heavy metals, should not be acquired.

Specimens specifically collected as a type or reference collection, e.g., for fire management programs that are used in the field, heavily used, etc., are not to be collected. Living specimens are not to be acquired for the museum collection. Nor is the museum collections management system to be used to inventory or document living collections.

In the event that museum-quality biological specimens are deaccessioned from the museum collection, every reasonable effort will be made to keep the specimens in the public domain.

B. Geology Collections

NPS *Management Policies* (2006, section 4.8) describes geologic resources as both geologic features and processes. “Geologic processes” are the natural physical and chemical forces acting with natural systems and human developments across a broad spectrum of space and time. Examples include exfoliation, erosion, sedimentation, glaciation, karst processes, shoreline processes, and seismic and volcanic activity. “Geologic features” are the products and physical components of geologic processes. NPS *Management Policies* (2006, section 4.8) requires the NPS to preserve and protect geologic resources and geologic features as integral components of park natural systems. As described in the NPS [Museum Handbook, Part II \(2012\)](#), geological collections inform park planning and development, natural and cultural resources management, and interpretation.

Geological Resources at DEVA: As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report for DEVA indicates that there are 1,562 cataloged geology specimens and 1,766 backlogged geology specimens in the museum collection. The geology collections are primarily samples that were collected very early in the park’s history.

Recent updates to DEVA policy include a moratorium on the issuing of research permits involving geologic collecting within park boundaries, including rocks, soils, and other minerals. The policy was implemented due to concerns over the cumulative impacts destructive sampling may have on the park and wilderness landscape. Limited collection of sediments by researchers has been allowed on a case-by-case basis in instances where the research assists DEVA’s understanding and management of park resources. Other exceptions may include planetary science-related research requests, where certain study environments exist only in Death Valley National Park. In instances where limited collecting is approved, the vast majority of specimens are destroyed during analysis and no specimens are retained.

Mandated acquisitions:

Specimens and samples obtained for preservation during inventory, monitoring, research, and study projects permitted by DEVA through the Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS), together with associated records, are mandated collections. Remainder samples and specimens not wholly destroyed during analyses that retain scientific value and potential for further testing remain Federal property and must be returned to the park.

Associated records: All original records associated with natural history field collections for each collecting category must be retained as part of the museum collection. These records must include field notes, and may include catalogs, daily journals, drawings and maps, photographs and negatives, slides, sound recordings, raw data sheets, instrument charts, collection inventories, analytical study data, conservation treatment records, and computer documentation and data, as well as any other documents generated through collection and analysis activity. Such documents, subject to NPS-19 regulations, shall be certified to the Archivist of the United States as necessary for ongoing business.

Should be acquired:

DEVA will identify gaps in the collections that are significant for baseline inventories and future research. These needs are identified in RPRS under the park research needs. Identified research needs may also come from or be included in other park resources documents (RSSs, Foundation Document, etc.).

Rocks and Minerals: Rock hand specimens and mineral samples that illustrate the mineral forms and varieties required to document rock types, formations, and mineral varieties found in the park should continue to be collected. Additional specimens may be collected to illustrate variations in structure or composition within the above categories.

May be acquired:

Surface or isolated finds, specimens collected in the park illegally that are returned to the park, and specimens collected before the park was established should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis considering factors such as legal title, importance or rarity of the specimen, presence of existing specimens in the museum collection, condition, available provenience, and associated geologic data.

Economic Minerals and Ores: Specimens that document the mineral forms and varieties currently or formerly mined in the park may be collected. Where possible, representative samples of the actual ore (i.e. the unprocessed mineral-bearing material as removed from a particular mine) being mined, milled, or dumped may be included. Depleted minerals may be represented by specimens from other localities as long as they are typical of the mineral varieties once found in the park.

Not to be acquired:

Specimens and samples from outside the park's boundaries, and specimens and samples lacking provenience documentation are not to be acquired. Rock hounding (amateur collecting of specimens) is prohibited in national parks by 36 CFR 2.1(a); specimens collected without research permits after the park was established should be referred to appropriate law enforcement officials. Previously collected geological specimens that are missing associated information should be deaccessioned, but every attempt shall be made to keep them in the public domain.

Specimens collected outside the park's boundaries or in contiguous areas, should not be included in the museum collection unless the specimens are required to augment park-related research. Appropriate documentation and/or permissions are necessary for collection of these specimens.

C. Paleontology Collections

The [Paleontological Resources Preservation Act \(Public Law 111-011\) \(PRPA\)](#) defines a paleontological resource as “any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms, preserved in or on the earth’s crust, that are of paleontological interest and that provide information about the history of life on earth, except that the term does not include— (A) any materials associated with an archaeological resource (as defined in section 3(1) of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470bb(1)); or (B) any cultural items (see 43 CFR 10.2) as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The law requires that both the paleontological resource and copies of associated records be preserved for the public in an approved repository, to be made available for scientific research and public education.

PRPA requires that paleontological resources collected on federal land remain the property of the United States and that the paleontological resource and copies of associated records will be preserved for the public and made available for scientific research and public education. The law requires curation of these resources, stating “Any paleontological resource, and any data and records associated with the resource, collected under a permit, shall be deposited in an approved repository.” Park staff are in the process of locating legacy collections housed in non-federal institutions that have not been cataloged into DEVA’s museum collection.

Uncontrolled surface collecting by visitors and park staff is prohibited. Fossils found on the surface by visitors should not be removed from their original location by the finder, but rather promptly reported to park staff. If visitors or staff collect a fossil illegally, the object and location data should be promptly given to the museum curator upon receipt by staff members. Identify if molds, casts, and other reproductions such as 3D scans or prints, exist. See [NPS Museum Handbook, Appendix N](#) for more information about evaluating the accession of reproductions. These are made from fossils to share information with other researchers, preserve a specimen in situ before disarticulation, or make surface details clearer for black and white photography. Reproductions, such as casts or molds of a previously collected specimen, may be acquired if they are the only remaining evidence of the original specimen, a portion of a fossil that is now missing due to consumption by destructive analysis, or serve as a record of steps in the preparation process wherein they act to preserve taphonomic information or other important data which has been destroyed by the preparation process. 3D digital files should be preserved as you would digital photographs within an archive or other appropriate digital repository.

Paleontology Resources at DEVA: As of Fiscal Year 2024, the Museum Collections Management Report indicates there are 1,635 cataloged paleontology specimens and 287 backlogged paleontology specimens in the DEVA museum collection. A significant portion of these specimens are sourced from Copper Canyon, perhaps the most important paleontological site within the park. The subsections of the paleontology collection are listed below.

Vertebrate and Invertebrate Fossils: Many vertebrate fossils from within the boundaries of Death Valley were excavated under permit and removed to other museums in the 1930s. Most notably, due in part to the discovery of Titanotheres, the monument's boundaries were expanded to include the areas where these fossilized remains were located. Fossilized fish imprints have also been found in two separate areas within the park.

Paleobotany: Isolated finds include leaf imprints, relict lake-side vegetation imprints, and fossilized wood. Neogene and Quaternary pollen is likely preserved in ancient lake sediments.

Trace Fossils: Trace fossils are known from Salt Creek, Cow Creek, and Copper Canyon. These are all Pliocene to Pleistocene in age and include nearly 30 different forms of bird and mammal tracks; mammals include camel, horse, cat, dog, and proboscidean. Track forms include 5 holotype species.

Specimen collecting strategies and protocols should be coordinated with the NPS Paleontology program and follow guidelines established in the *Death Valley National Park Paleontological Survey*, Nyborg TG and Santucci VL. 1999.

Mandated acquisitions:

Fossil plant, vertebrate, invertebrate, or trace specimens and associated records generated through systematic surveys or excavations undertaken within the park boundaries, especially those permitted under RPRS; [high fidelity casts](#) made from the molds of trace or body fossils left in situ; and scientifically significant paleontological resources. Remainder samples and specimens not wholly destroyed during analyses that retain scientific value and potential for further testing must be acquired into the museum collection. All associated records, including field notes, photos, forms, and reports must be included in the accession.

Should be acquired:

All NPS construction projects in areas with potential paleontological resources must be preceded by a preconstruction surface assessment prior to disturbance. For any occurrences noted, or when the site may yield paleontological resources, the site will be avoided or the resources will, if necessary, be collected and properly cared for before construction begins. NPS 2006 MP 4.8.2.1

May be acquired:

Confiscated paleontological materials recovered from unauthorized and illegal activities in DEVA in violation of PRPA may be acquired. These materials commonly include paleontological materials illegally excavated or obtained through uncontrolled surface collecting by unauthorized individuals within an NPS unit's boundaries. When such collections are encountered, law enforcement and museum staff should be consulted as soon as possible to ensure proper accountability, handling, and transportation of these materials. Such objects might be held temporarily by law enforcement following legal chain of custody protocols as evidence if

legal action is to be taken but should be formally turned over to the museum staff person as soon as possible. Once all legal questions are resolved, the objects and all associated documentation should be added to the park's collection after review by CAC and Superintendent Approval.

The park should avoid purchasing fossils, unless they meet all of these criteria found in the management policies:

A park may purchase fossil specimens for the park museum collection only after making a written determination that the specimens are scientifically significant and accompanied by detailed locality data and pertinent contextual data; the specimens were legally removed from their site of origin, and all transfers of ownership have been legal; the preparation of the specimens meets professional standards; the alternatives for making these specimens available to science and the public are unlikely; and acquisition is consistent with the park's enabling legislation and scope of collection statement, and acquisition will ensure the specimens' availability in perpetuity for public education and scientific research. NPS 2006 MP 4.8.2.1

Specimens collected before the park was established and specimens collected in the park illegally that are returned to the park should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as legal title, association with historical figures, importance or rarity of the specimen, condition, available provenience and associated geologic data.

Presence of existing paleontology specimens of the same species in the museum collection should not disqualify a specimen from being added to the collection because of the probability of species variation between multiple fossils of the same species.

Reproductions, such as casts or molds of a previously collected specimen, may be acquired if they are the only remaining evidence of the original specimen. See [NPS Museum Handbook, Appendix N](#) for more information about evaluating the accession of reproductions.

Not to be acquired:

Fossils from outside the park's boundaries; fossils lacking sufficient provenience documentation; and purchased specimens, unless they are specimens collected from within modern park boundaries prior to its designation as a park unit, are not to be acquired.

Specimens collected outside the park's boundaries or in contiguous areas should not be included in the museum collection unless the specimens are required to augment park-related research or for interpretive goals (exhibits, educational programs, etc.). Appropriate documentation and/or permissions are necessary for collection of these specimens.

III. PARK MUSEUM COLLECTIONS SUBJECT TO THE NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT OF 1990 (NAGPRA)

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 USC 3001-13) and implementing regulations (43 CFR Part 10), requires Federal agencies and institutions that receive Federal funding (including museums, universities, state agencies, and local governments) to protect and repatriate Native American human remains and cultural items to lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations. Items in the possession or control of the NPS identified as subject to NAGPRA must be addressed in accordance with 43 CFR 10. The regulations require:

- Consultation with deference given to the Native American traditional knowledge of lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations;
- Address disposition of any newly discovered Native American human remains or cultural items removed from federal lands and any Native American human remains and cultural items in NPS possession or control removed from federal lands after the enactment of NAGPRA on November 16, 1990 in accordance with 43 CFR 10.7;
- Identification of all Native American human remains and cultural items in NPS possession or control removed from federal lands prior to the enactment of NAGPRA;
- Development of NAGPRA inventories or summaries in compliance with 43 CFR 10.9 and 10.10 to facilitate consultation and eventual repatriation of Native American human remains and cultural items removed from federal lands prior to the enactment of NAGPRA.

NPS policy and guidance for NAGPRA compliance can be found on the NPS NAGPRA Guidance SharePoint where more detailed information is available to address the following:

- Duty of Care (43 CFR 10.1(d)) which requires the NPS to care for, safeguard, and preserve human remains and cultural items in its custody, possession, or control;
- Steps to complete disposition of human remains and cultural items removed from federal lands after the enactment of NAGPRA (43 CFR 10.4 through 10.7);
- Steps to complete summaries and repatriation of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony removed from federal lands prior to the enactment of NAGPRA (43 CFR 10.9);
- Steps to complete inventories and repatriation of Native American human remains and associated funerary objects removed from federal lands prior to the enactment of NAGPRA (43 CFR 10.10);
- Consultation with lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations;
- Determining cultural affiliation (43 CFR 10.3);
- Developing and publishing a Notice of Intended Disposition (NID) - 43 CFR 10.7(c)(2), a Notice of Intended Repatriation (NIR) - 43 CFR 10.9(f), and a Notice of Inventory Completion (NIC) - 43 CFR 10.10(e);
- Evaluating requests for repatriation (43 CFR 10.9(d) and 10.10(f)) or claims for disposition (43 CFR 10.7(c)(3)) of human remains and cultural item; and
- Developing and maintaining a record of consultation.

The park's holdings subject to NAGPRA categories were initially listed in a Servicewide Summary that was distributed to all Indian Tribes, Alaska Native villages, and Native Hawaiian organizations on October 27, 1993. The 1993 Summary for the park listed seven clay figurines that were considered objects of potential cultural patrimony. Soon after the Summary was distributed, it was discovered that there were over 500 items that are potentially considered unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. In 2025, the park continued its research, reviewing archeological site records and associated collection items for any additional items subject to NAGPRA that may have been missed. Consultation with potentially culturally affiliated tribes and discussions with ethnographers and archeologists will continue to verify cultural patrimony for these items. A copy of the 1993 Summary is on file in the park and the 2025 summary is in-progress.

NAGPRA required a written, item-by-item inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects to be completed no later than November 16, 1995. The physical remains of 28 individuals of Native American ancestry and 348 associated funerary objects subject to NAGPRA were listed in the park's inventory, and a Notice of Inventory Completion was published in the Federal Register on January 11, 2002. A copy of the Inventory is on file in the park. The Notice stated the park's intent to repatriate all remains and associated funerary objects to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe after February 11, 2002, provided the park received no valid counterclaim. Since 2002, no counterclaims have been made, and the park and the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe executed a Repatriation Agreement, signed September 12, 2023. From October 24, 2023, to March 19, 2024, the park held all repatriated human remains and associated funerary items in collections storage under a loan with the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe. On March 19, 2024, all human remains and associated funerary objects were transferred to the Tribe's custody and the loan was closed. If requested again, DEVA will provide storage for NAGPRA remains and items repatriated to the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe under loan agreements as appropriate.

As required under 43 CFR Part 10.8c, DEVA was contacted by five non-federal institutions prior to January 13, 2025 who had NAGPRA holdings they believed came from within park boundaries. These institutions included:

- University of California, Berkeley: 827 cultural items
- University of California, Davis: 1 cultural item
- The Field Museum: 12 cultural items
- Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County: human remains of 2 individuals
- Diablo Valley College: 1 cultural item

DEVA took custody of all items and human remains in the spring of 2025 but did not accession them into the park's collections. DEVA will begin consultation with all potentially culturally affiliated tribes, with the intent to repatriate all remains and cultural items by the end of FY2026.

The park will continue to consult with members of the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe and other affiliated Native American groups as required in regard to NAGPRA-related archaeological material.

Any newly discovered human remains and/or NAGPRA cultural items removed from park lands **should not** be accessioned into the museum collection. Rather, disposition should be addressed through compliance with sections 10.4 through 10.7 of 43 CFR 10 in accordance with the mandated timelines found in 43 CFR 10. Death Valley National Park has a Plan of Action for Inadvertent Discoveries subject to NAGPRA on file in the Archeology office building. A digital copy of the Plan of Action can also be found on the shared DEVA Resources drive.

IV. ACQUISITIONS

1. Acquisition Criteria

Acquisition of museum objects is governed by the park's ability to manage and preserve materials according to *NPS Management Policies, Chapter 5* (2006), the standards for managing museum objects in *NPS-28: Cultural Resources Management Guideline* (1998); *the NPS Checklist for Preservation and Protection of Museum Collections (Checklist)*; and the *NPS Museum Handbook I-III*.

DEVA continues to acquire objects that relate to the site through donation, purchase, exchange, transfer, field collection, and loan. In accordance with NPS policy and general museum practice, only unrestricted gifts should be accepted. Only the regional director can allow an exception to this rule. Gifts or bequests must be free of restrictions as to their use and future disposition. However, museum collections are subject to legal restrictions, such as privacy laws and classified data. Refer to the MH-III, Chapter 2: Legal Issues, for information on use and access restrictions.

Museum objects must be acquired, accessioned, and cataloged in accordance with the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II* (2000).

Firearms and ammunition acquired for museum exhibits and research purposes, are not intended for use as operational firearms. The NPS standards for managing, use, and disposal of museum objects are outlined in the *NPS Museum Handbook Parts I and II*, and *NPS-28, Cultural Resources Management Guideline*, as well as the *Draft Appendix X: Museum Firearms, Small Arms Ammunition, Artillery, And Munitions (still under review)*.

2. Roles and Responsibilities for Accessioning and Deaccessioning

Accountable Officer: The park's Superintendent, by delegation, represents the Director of the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior in accepting title to and responsibility for all museum objects. The Superintendent bears the ultimate responsibility for the acquisition, proper care, and management of the unit's museum collection. The Superintendent has delegated the day-to-day care of the collection to the custodial officer for museum collections. This designation must be made in writing.

All permanent acquisitions must receive formal approval from the park's Superintendent before they can be accepted into the museum collection. Before physical receipt of the acquisition, all

paperwork, including the Deed of Gift, must be signed by both the park and the donor. Upon receipt, all newly acquired objects and related documentation must be turned over to the Receiving Officer. The Curator, or Custodial Officer, prepares, for the Superintendent's signature, all instruments of conveyance, and letters of thanks, acceptance, or rejection, and transmits them as appropriate to the donor, lender, vendor, or other sources of acquisition.

The Superintendent, as the accountable officer, also must approve all incoming loans, which are considered temporary acquisitions, and is the final signatory for all loan documentation.

Custodial Officer: The custodial officer is directly accountable and responsible for the physical care and documentation of the museum collection. The custodial officer, usually the curator or other museum staff (including collateral duty), provides oversight of the museum collection, as delegated by the Accountable Officer. In the absence of those positions, it may be assigned as a collateral duty to an employee in a different job series.

Designated Receiving Officer: The Superintendent appoints, in writing, the Receiving Officer for the museum collection. The Receiving Officer is responsible for documenting the receipt of museum collections. The Receiving Officer can be one of the museum staff or a staff member from another program/division.

The Receiving Officer signs the Accession Receiving Report (Form 10-95), the Receipt for Property (DI-105), and any other receipts for museum property. The Custodial Officer cannot serve as the Receiving Officer, nor can the Superintendent.

Kimberly Selinske, Park Historian, was established as Designated Receiving Officer for Death Valley National Park in 2025.

Collections Advisory Committee: The Collections Advisory Committee (CAC) reviews the appropriateness of the proposed accession or deaccession and its disposition. Since 2017, all parks are required to establish a CAC. A CAC is required to review all proposed new accessions other than scientifically generated archeological and natural history field collections and their associated records from NPS-administered land. The CAC should also review any miscellaneous items "found in collection." See *Museum Handbook*, Part II, Chapter 2 for types of accessions and their definitions.

Park-specific CACs shall be established based on the guidelines for deaccessioning committees in the [Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 6](#) and [Appendix B](#). The CAC must include at least one member at the GS-1015-11 grade or higher, must include at least three members, and must make recommendations in writing.

A Collections Advisory Committee was established for DEVA in 2023. Additional employees and guests may serve in an advisory capacity as a Subject Matter Expert; however, these individuals are not official Collections Advisory Committee members nor will they vote.

Members of the DEVA Museum Collections Advisory Committee, who are required to vote, are: Sarah Saxe, Museum Curator, DEVA

Kimberly Selinsky, Park Historian, DEVA

Jeremy Stoltzfus, Abandoned Mine Lands Program Lead, DEVA

V. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Acquisition and deaccession decisions are guided by NPS *Museum Handbook* mandates, strategic collecting directions outlined in this SOCS, and the following management actions:

- As stated in the [Museum Handbook I, chapter 2, section J: Writing the Management Actions section](#), SOCS will be reviewed and updated at least every five years but can be updated more often whenever changed conditions clearly alter the mission of the park or when priorities in a specific collecting category have been met. Changes must be approved by the superintendent.
- CAC will be reviewed and updated to fill vacancies as needed

Priorities for Deaccessioning: DEVA has prioritized the following collection types/emphasis areas that are targeted for future deaccessioning:

- Objects accessioned in error
- Duplicates
- Non-Resources Management permanent park administrative records
- Duplicative specimens with potential destructive analysis research value
- Natural resource collections with limited or no provenience or context

Deaccessioning has been identified as a regional Museum Program priority for the Pacific West Region (PWR) Five-Year Plan due to the ever-expanding nature of the region's museum collections.

VI. APPENDIX A: ENABLING LEGISLATION**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION**

[No. 2028—Feb. 11, 1933—4-7 Stat. 2554]

WHEREAS it appears that the public interest would be promoted by including certain lands known as Death Valley, in California, within a national monument for the preservation of the unusual features of scenic, scientific, and educational interest therein contained:

Now, THEREFORE, I, Herbert Hoover, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power in me vested by section 2 of the act of Congress entitled "AN ACT For the preservation of American antiquities," approved June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225), do proclaim and establish the Death Valley National Monument and that, subject to all valid existing rights, the area indicated on the diagram hereto annexed and forming a part hereof be, and the same is hereby, included within the said national monument.

Warning is hereby expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of this monument and not to locate or settle upon any of the lands thereof.

The Director of the National Park Service, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, shall have the supervision, management, and control of this monument as provided in the act of Congress entitled "AN ACT To establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes," approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535-536), and acts additional thereto or amendatory thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 11th day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and thirty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and fifty-seventh.

HERBERT HOOVER.

By the President:

HENRY L. STIMSON,
Secretary of State.

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION**

[No. 2228—Mar. 26, 1937—50 Stat. 1823]

WHEREAS certain public lands contiguous to the Death Valley National Monument, established by the Proclamation of February 11, 1933 (47 Stat. 2554), have situated thereon various objects of historic and scientific interest, and are necessary for the proper care, management and protection of unusual features of scientific interest within the said monument; and WHEREAS it appears that it would be in the public interest to reserve such lands as an addition to the Death Valley National Monument:

Now, THEREFORE, I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, under and by virtue of the authority vested in me by section 2 of the Act of June 8, 1906 (ch. 3060, 34 Stat. 225; U. S. C. title 16 sec. 431), do proclaim that, subject to the provisions of the Act of Congress approved June 13, 1933 (48 Stat. 139), and to all valid existing rights, the following described lands in California and Nevada be, and the same are hereby added to and made a part of the Death Valley National Monument:

MOUNT DIABLO MERIDIAN—CALIFORNIA

T. 18 S., R. 44 E., that part southwest of former west boundary of Monument (unsurveyed).

T. 19 S., R. 44 E., that part southwest of former west boundary of Monument (unsurveyed).

T. 19 S., R. 45 E., that part southwest of former west boundary of Monument.

T. 20 S., R. 45 E., that part west of former west boundary of Monument.

SAN BERNARDINO MERIDIAN—CALIFORNIA

T. 25 N., R. 3 E., those parts of sees. 5, 8, 16 and 17 lying southwest of a line parallel to and 500 ft. northeasterly from the center line of Dante's View highway.

T. 18 N., R. 4E., sees. 1 to 12, inclusive; N/4 sec. 13; Nj/4. sec. 14; N1/2 sec. 15; Nj4 sec. 16; N>4 sec. 17; N1/> sec.

18 (partly unsurveyed).

Tps. 19, 20 and 21 N., R. 4 E. (partly unsurveyed).

T. 22 N., R. 4 E., sees. 31 to 36, inclusive (partly unsurveyed).

T. 18 N., R. 5 E., sees. 1 to 12, inclusive; N/ 4 sec. 13; Ny2 sec. 14; N j / sec. 15; NJ4) sec. 16; N 1

/ sec. 17, N/ 4 sec.

18 (partly unsurveyed).

T. 19 N., R. 5 E. (partly unsurveyed).

T. 20 N., R. 5 E., sees. 25 to 36, inclusive (unsurveyed).

T. 18 N. R. 6E., Wy2 sec. 5 ; sees 6 and 7; Wy2 sec. 8; NWJ 4 sec. 17, Np2 sec. 18 (partly unsurveyed).

T. 19 N., R. 6 E., W1

/ . sec. 5 ; sees. 6 and 7; WJ 4 sec. 8; Wj-4 sec. 17 ;

sees. 18 and 19; Wy2 sec. 20; Wy2 sec. 29; sees.

30 and 31 ; Wy2 sec. 32 (unsurveyed).

T. 20 N., R. 6 E., Wy2 sec. 29; sees. 30 and 31 ; W1

/> sec. 32 (unsurveyed).

MOUN T DIABLO MERIDIAN—NEVADA

T. 11 S., R. 42 E., (unsurveyed).

Tps. 11 and 12 S., R. 43 E. (unsurveyed).

Tps. 11, 12 and 13 S., R. 44 E. (unsurveyed).

Tps. 11, 12, 13 and 14 S., R. 45 E. (partly unsurveyed), containing approximately 305,920 acres.

Warning is hereby expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of this monument and not to locate or settle upon any of the lands thereof.

The Director of the National Park Service, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, shall have the supervision, management, and control of the monument as provided in the act of Congress entitled "An Act To establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes," approved August 25, 1916 (ch. 408, 39 Stat. 535, U. S. C. title 16, sees. 1 and 2), and acts supplementary thereto or amendatory thereof.

The reservation made by this proclamation supersedes as to any of the above-described lands affected thereby the withdrawal made by Executive Order No. 6910 of November 26, 1934, as amended, and Executive Order of December 1, 1913, creating Public Water Reserve No. 13.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 26th day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and thirty-seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and sixty first.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.
The President,
CORDELL HULL,
Secretary of State

VII. APPENDIX B: NPS MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

The Department of Interior defines a museum collection as a subset of personal property that is retained for long-term preservation, study, and interpretation consistent with statutory requirements and its relationship to the mission of the respective bureau and park. The NPS affirmed its mandate to actively acquire and preserve objects, specimens, and archives in *NPS Management Policies* (2006, section 5.3.5.5), stating that “The Service will collect, protect, preserve, provide access to, and use objects, specimens, and archival and manuscript collections . . . in the disciplines of archeology, ethnography, history, biology, geology, and paleontology to aid understanding among park visitors, and to advance knowledge in the humanities and sciences.”

Parks acquire and manage museum collections because they are:

important park resources in their own right as well as being valuable for the information they provide about processes, events, and interactions among people and the environment. Natural and cultural objects and their associated records provide baseline data, serving as scientific and historical documentation of the park’s resources and purpose. All resources management records that are directly associated with museum objects are managed as museum property. These and other resources management records are preserved as part of the archival and manuscript collection because they document and provide an information base for the continuing management of the park’s resources (NPS-28 Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1998: 137).

Because of their significance, *NPS Management Policies* (2006, section 1.4.6) includes museum collections among the park resources and values which are subject to the no-impairment standard. Impairment (pg. 11)

[NPS Management Policies \(2006, section 1.4.6, pg 11\)](#)

1.4.6 What Constitutes Park Resources and Values

- The “park resources and values” that are subject to the no-impairment standard include + the park’s scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife, and the processes and conditions that sustain them, including, to the extent present in the park: the ecological, biological, and physical processes that created the park and continue to act upon it; scenic features; natural visibility, both in daytime and at night; natural landscapes; natural soundscapes and smells; water and air resources; soils; geological resources; paleontological resources; archeological resources; cultural landscapes; ethnographic resources; historic and prehistoric sites, structures, and objects; museum collections; and native plants and animals;
- appropriate opportunities to experience enjoyment of the above resources, to the extent that can be done without impairing them;
- the park’s role in contributing to the national dignity, the high public value and integrity, and the superlative environmental quality of the national park system, and

the benefit and inspiration provided to the American people by the national park system; and

- any additional attributes encompassed by the specific values and purposes for which the park was established. (See introduction to chapter 4)

VIII. APPENDIX C: LEGISLATION RELATED TO NPS MUSEUM COLLECTION AND OTHER RELATED CONVENTIONS, LAWS, AND REGULATIONS

These laws provide the legal mandates for NPS management of museum collections:

- 16 USC
 - 469-469c: Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, as amended
 - 470aa-mm: Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979
 - 470aaa: Paleontology Resources Preservation Act of 2009
 - 668a Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended
 - 703-711 Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918
 - 1361-1407 Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972
 - 1531-1543 Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended
- 18 USC 43-44 Lacey Act of 1900 [The Black Bass Act of 1930 (16 USC 851) added fish to the list of wildlife under the Lacey Act]
- 25 USC 3001-3013 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
- 41 USC 102-41 Subpart C Voluntarily Abandoned Property
- 42 USC 1996 American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978
- 54 USC
 - 100101: Promotion and Regulation
 - 100301-100302: Establishment (Organic Act of 1916)
 - 100701 et seq.: System Resource Inventory and Management (National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1988)
 - 102501-102504: Museums (Museum Properties Management Act of 1955)
 - 300101 et seq: Historic Preservation (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966)
 - 312501-312507: Preservation of Historical and Archeological Data (Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974)
 - 320301-320303: Monuments, Ruins, Site, and Objects of Antiquity (The Antiquities Act)
 - 321010-321016: American Antiquities [Policy and Administrative Provisions], (Historic Sites Act of 1935)

The following regulations include major requirements for NPS museum collections management.

- Copyright Act of 1976 (17 USC 101 et seq. [1988 & Supp. V 1993])
- Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archeological Collections” (36 CFR Part 79) and in something about the update for deaccessioning
- Disposition of Federal Records (36 CFR 1228)
- Disposal of Records (44 USC 33)
- Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants (50 CFR, Sections 17.11 and 17.12)
- Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (40 USC 483[b])
- Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended (44 USC 3101 et seq.)
- Freedom of Information Act of 1966, as amended (5 USC 552)
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations (43 CFR 10)
- Preservation, Arrangement, Duplication, Exhibition of Records (44 USC 2109)
- Preservation of American Antiquities (43 CFR Part 3)

- Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a)
- Protection of Archeological Resources (43 CFR Part 7)
- Research Specimens (36 CFR, Section 2.5)
- Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987 (43 USC 2101 through 2106)
- Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (7 USC 2131 through 2159)
- Copies of records, documents, etc.: charges, disposition of receipts (43 USC 1460)
- Commercial filming activities on federal land (Public Law 106-206)
- Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State-Federal Relationships (43 CFR 24)
- Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies were published in the Federal Register as 67 FR 5365
- Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 (16 USC 63)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 35)
- Federal Technology Transfer Act of 2012 (15 USC 3710)
- Information Quality Act (passed in section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106-554; H.R. 5658)
- National Archives and Records Administration Act of 1984 (44 USC 21)
- Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997 (Public Law 104-208)
- Permits (36 CFR 1.6)
- Preservation of Natural, Cultural, and Archeological Resources (36 CFR 2.1)
- Presidential and Federal Records Act Amendments of 2014 (Public Law 113-187; H.R. 1233)

Presidential memoranda pertinent to museum and archival collections include: Presidential memoranda pertinent to museum and archival collections include

- Memorandum on Preserving Scientific Integrity in Government Decision-Making (2009) and the Presidential Memorandum on Managing Government Records (2011)
- “Technical Edits” for 36 CFR were published in the Federal Register as 80 FR 36474, effective as of on June 25, 2015

The following international conventions apply to NPS cultural collections:

- 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (implemented in the United States by P.L. 97-446 in 1983, 19 USC 2601)
- 1983 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The following governmentwide and departmental policies and standards apply to NPS museum collections:

- 41 CFR 101 Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR)
- Departmental Manual Part 11, Museum Property Management, Chapters 1-3
- Departmental Manual Part 517, Chapter 1, Pesticide Use Policy
- Interior Property Management Regulations, Departmental Manual Part 410, Personal

Property Management (Subpart 114-60)

Excerpts from NPS Management Policies (1988) that are specifically relevant to museum objects are as follows:

- Chapter 4 - Natural Resource Management
 - Natural Resource Collections (Page 4:4)
 - Integrated Pest Management Procedures (Page 4:13)
 - Paleontologic Resource Management (Page 4:19)
- Chapter 5 - Cultural Resource Management
 - Inventories (Page 5:1)
 - Preservation of Data and Collections and Protection of Research Potential (Page 5:3)
 - Treatment of Museum Objects (Pages 5:9-10)
 - Acquisition, Management, and Disposition of Museum Objects (Page 5:10)
 - Historic Furnishings (Page 5:10)
 - Archives and Manuscripts (Pages 5:10-11)
 - Fire Detection and Suppression (Page 5:14)
 - Pest Management (Page 5:14)
- Chapter 7 - Interpretation and Education: Interpretation and Native Americans (Page 7:5)
- Chapter 8 - Use of the parks: Research and Collection Activities (Pages 8:15-16)
- Chapter 9 - Park Facilities: Curatorial Facilities (Page 9:15)
- Chapter 10 - Concessions Management: Merchandise and Handcrafts (Pages 10:8-9)

Director's Orders (DO) supplement the NPS Management Policies. The following DO include guidance for museum collections

- Director's Order #11D: Records Management
- Director's Order #24: NPS Museum Collections Management
- Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management
- Director's Order #44: Personal Property Management
- Director's Order #77: Natural Resource Protection
- Director's Order #77-10: NPS Benefits Sharing
- Director's Order #79: Integrity of Scientific and Scholarly Activities

For a more detailed description of legislation and regulations as related to NPS museum collections, please see [Museum Handbook, Part I, Appendix A: Mandates and Standards for NPS Museum Collections.](#)

IX. APPENDIX D: USES AND RESTRICTIONS OF MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

A. General Use

The site's museum collections may be used for exhibits, interpretive programs, research, and other interpretive media such as publications. The governing consideration on the use of museum objects is the conservation of each object in question and of the park's collection:

- All exhibits or displays containing museum objects must have proper security and appropriate environmental controls to ensure their long-term preservation.
- Social Media posts must follow the guidelines outlined in *Director's Order #70*.
- Objects and records will be available for research purposes consistent with the preservation of the collection, subject to the guidelines outlined in *Director's Order #28* (1998) and *Director's Order #24* (2008).
- No use of the museum collection will be permitted without a curatorial staff member present. Prior arrangements must be made to examine museum collection materials. Non-NPS researchers who wish to use the collection must complete an application form, which will be reviewed by DEVA curatorial staff.
- Museum objects are prohibited from being used in living history demonstrations. For more information regarding museum collection use in demonstrations, see [Museum Handbook, Part III, Chapter 6](#). Exhibits may be incorporated into programs through organized tours or other non-consumptive techniques.
- Requests for consumptive analysis or testing of museum materials will comply with restrictions and procedures outlined in *Director's Order #28* (1998) and the [Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 4](#). <include any park-specific data use procedures>

Requests for monetary and/or non-monetary benefits sharing stemming from research results derived from NPS-permitted research including progeny and unmodified derivatives of collected specimens, museum specimens, living collections, and multiple generations thereof, i.e.

Material, will comply with [Director's Order #77-10](#) (2013) and [NPS Benefits-Sharing Handbook](#) (2018).

- With appropriate authorization, documentation, and tracking, collected specimens may be used in the laboratory to create *Material*. The Collected Specimen Transfer Agreement (CSTA) authorizes the movement of collected specimens when a determination has not been made regarding final disposition. The Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) authorizes the movement of material that a researcher has created in a laboratory, and the loan agreement authorizes the movement of permanently retained museum specimens or living collection items.
- Parks must use research permits, CSTAs, cataloging records, loan agreements, and MTAs, as applicable, to track collected specimens, museum specimens, and material.

Tracking collected specimens, museum specimens, and material is critical to monitoring commercial use of research results and eventual benefits sharing.

- Objects may be loaned to qualified institutions for exhibition or research use in keeping with the conditions cited in “Conditions for Outgoing Loans (Form 10-137A)”. No loans are made to individuals. Institutions must be able to adequately care for the loan and the borrowing institution must complete a facility report to determine the risk of lending an object. A standard facility report can be purchased from the American Alliance of Museums. A condition report (Form 10-637) along with photographs of the loan shall be completed by collections staff before it leaves NPS custody. Sensitive materials may require additional conditions prior to a loan commitment. Expenses related to the loan of museum collection objects, including shipping and insurance, will be assumed by the borrower.

No exemption will be granted for use of museum objects where such use may lead to loss or destruction of human remains, associated or unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony as defined by NAGPRA, unless such use is approved by the culturally affiliated group(s) in addition to the regional director or director as described in NPS-28, Cultural Resource Management Guidelines. Exhibition of Native American skeletal or mummified human remains or photos or replicas of them are specifically prohibited.

An exhibit plan and design (EPD) serve as a guide for the development of exhibits that support the interpretive themes of a park. The final production-ready exhibit plan identifies the museum objects and graphics to be exhibited and provides label text. Detailed design drawings provide specifications on environmental and security needs for objects, special mounts needed to support objects, and techniques in exhibit case construction that facilitate access to museum objects. Park curatorial staff, conservators, and regional curators must be included in the development and review of EDPs. Indigenous groups associated with archeological and ethnographic objects will be consulted about their use in exhibits. (The NPS *Museum Handbook*, Part III provides guidance on the exhibit plan and design.)

Any and all uses of materials from the DEVA museum collection will be consistent with the preservation standards set out in *Director’s Order #28: Guideline for Cultural Resources Management* (1998). Any consumptive or destructive use of museum objects must be approved by the Regional Director.

B. Commercial Uses

1. Filming & Photography

Filming and photography that will subject collections to unacceptable light levels, heat buildup, deterioration or possible breakage or theft shall not be permitted. Items subject to copyright and privacy shall have all appropriate releases obtained before filming or photography is permitted. Traditionally affiliated groups shall be consulted to determine whether filming or photography would have an adverse impact on them before permitting use of museum collections.

On January 22, 2021, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia issued an order in *Price v. Barr*. The decision declared the provisions applying to commercial filming under 54 U.S.C. 100905, 43 C.F.R. Part 5, and 36 CFR 5. are unconstitutional under the First Amendment. The National Park Service is working with Department of Interior solicitors and the Department of Justice attorneys to determine the ramifications of the decision and how this decision will be implemented.

Until further instructions are provided, the implementation and enforcement of the commercial filming portions of 43 CFR part 5 including: 1) accepting applications and issuing permits for commercial filming; 2) enforcing the terms and conditions of permits or issuing citations and 3) collecting cost recovery and location fees for commercial filming activities will cease.

If filming activities in your park that would have previously been managed under a commercial filming permit could potentially impact park resources or the visitor experience, please reach out to the NPS Special Park Uses WASO program manager for further assistance. We anticipate issuing additional guidance about how parks can manage filming activities in a manner that complies with the court order. If you have questions, please contact the NPS Special Park Uses WASO program manager at 202-513-7092.

2. Reproduction of Museum Objects for Profit

Only the Superintendent can authorize reproduction of a museum object, archive, or specimens. A park can enter into agreements with a cooperating association to reproduce museum collections as sales items. Parks can also enter into a reproduction agreement with contractors or other organizations to reproduce a museum object for sale or distribution. All reproductions of NPS museum objects must carry a reproduction mark, NPS credit, and interpretive label.

For detailed information regarding factors to evaluate when considering a reproduction request, legal issues, information about reproduction agreements, and other issues, see the NPS [Museum Handbook, Part III: Museum Collections Use](#). Additional information is provided in DO-21: Donations and Fundraising, DO-32: Cooperating Associations, and DO-53: Special Park Uses.

X. APPENDIX E: SENSITIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

In accordance with 54 USC 300101 et seq.: Historic Preservation, commonly called the National Historic Preservation Act; ARPA, NHPA, as amended (16 USC 470aa-mm); 54 USC 100701-100707: System Resource Inventory and Management, and NPS Management Policies (2006, sections 4.1.2. and 5.2.3), the park may withhold from the public sensitive and confidential information, including the specific location, character, nature, ownership, or acquisition of cultural resources, and the nature and specific locations of rare, threatened, or endangered species, commercially valuable resources, caves, minerals, and paleontological resources.

Under some circumstances, the NPS may be required by law to disclose confidential information acquired during consultations, public meetings, and other research, planning, and stewardship activities, or in association with the acquisition of resources, including museum collections. Therefore, the park cannot guarantee confidentiality of all information received. To the extent permitted by law, the park will withhold from public disclosure information provided by individuals who wish the information to remain confidential and the identities of individuals who wish to remain anonymous and who are protected from release by exemption under FOIA. The park should refer inquiries to the regional FOIA and Privacy Act officer for consultation and possible review.

XI. APPENDIX F: HAZARDS IN COLLECTIONS

Potential health and safety concerns may exist in NPS collections due to the nature of the object or specimen or to past management strategies. Some examples of inherent risks for natural science collections include: rocks and minerals may be radioactive or contain asbestos, mercury, or arsenic; fossils from some formations may be radioactive and may emit high levels of radon; fluid-preserved specimens are sometimes fixed or stored in formalin; and taxidermy collections may contain arsenic.

Samples of materials from historic structures may contain asbestos, lead, arsenic, or other potential hazards. History, ethnology, and archeology collections may include objects with radioactive compounds; mercuric or arsenic compounds; chromium, cadmium, zinc, and lead; and pyrotechnic compound fillings, chemicals, or gas. Deteriorating cellulose nitrate film emits nitrogen oxide gases. Deteriorating cellulose acetate film emits acetic acid. Ammunition for historic firearms and unexploded ordnance (UXO) such as bombs, cannonballs, grenades, rockets, & other projectiles and explosives may be live. Spears, swords, and arrows have sharp edges and may be coated with poisons. Medical, dental, and veterinary equipment may contain viable pathogens, or toxic or controlled substances. Industrial equipment, machines, and vehicles may also contain many types of hazards such as broken glass, rust, and other contamination.

Suspected unexploded ordnance (UXO), live ammunition, and other explosives and energetic materials may be discovered in storage and on exhibit, during archeological excavation, construction, or other approved ground disturbing activities, and by park visitors. UXO is extremely dangerous and constitutes a major safety risk. Treat all ordnance with extreme caution and never assume it is disarmed. Upon discovery, secure the space where the UXO resides. Do not attempt to touch, handle, or move any suspected UXO. Contact your regional curator and park Law Enforcement Ranger or Safety Officer and provide them with the following information:

- The circumstances that the items were found, a detailed description of events, current storage conditions, and the information on instructions/labeling already completed.
- Provide a catalog number list of the UXO and any other ammunition (small arms and ordnance).
- Provide any photos that can be found and scan/include those in the correspondence. Do not go back and photograph.
- Include the number of cabinets in which these items are stored or if there are any on open shelving, in boxes, etc.

The service-wide policy outlined in NPS DO-50B, Occupational Safety and Health, along with the Museum Handbook, outlines a framework for establishing and implementing a Risk Management process when managing hazardous collections including:

- Recognize and identify the hazards
- Evaluate the hazards
- Reduce or eliminate the hazards to the extent possible

NPS DO-24 (section 4.3.11) requires that curatorial staff notify users that collections may have been treated with potentially toxic substances. All individuals seeking direct access to NPS museum collections must be provided with DI-3320 “Notice of Potential Hazards in Museum Collections.” The form must be completed before providing access to collections, including repatriations, traditional use, and loans of materials from the collection for management or research. Completed DI-3320s with original signatures must be retained by the park that is accountable for the collection being accessed for 120 years from the date the form is signed. If the recipient of the form declines to sign the form, document this in the notes section at the bottom of the form.

Potential and known hazardous collections in the DEVA museum collections were identified by previous museum staff, and steps to confirm potential hazards are being taken. The presence of lead and arsenic in museum objects was confirmed in a testing report that has since been misplaced, and cabinets containing these objects were labeled to indicate the presence of lead and arsenic. Possible arsenic and lead containing objects should be tested again to confirm contamination.

Objects in the DEVA museum collection that are known to have tested positive for the presence of arsenic in the past include:

- DEVA 213: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 214: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 1891: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 1966: *Mergus serrator*
- DEVA 3310: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 3316: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 3318: *Bucephala clangula americana*
- DEVA 3319: *Aythya collaris*
- DEVA 3611: Crucible
- DEVA 4825: *Mergus serrator*
- DEVA 10894: *Branta canadensis*
- DEVA 10980: *Mergus serrator*
- DEVA 10981: *Anas cyanoptera*
- DEVA 10984: *Neotoma fuscipes*
- DEVA 10985: *Neotoma fuscipes*
- DEVA 11003: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 11142: *Sialia currucoides*
- DEVA 11163: *Anas acuta*
- DEVA 11164: *Anas acuta*
- DEVA 11165: *Anas discors*
- DEVA 11166: *Anas crecca*
- DEVA 11210: Assay Crucible
- DEVA 11213: Assay Crucible
- DEVA 11214: Assay Crucible
- DEVA 14634: *Anas crecca*
- DEVA 33019: *Neotoma lepida*

- DEVA 55121: *Neotoma lepida*
- DEVA 51275: *Neotoma lepida*

While these objects are stored in labeled cabinets, no other mitigation has taken place. Hazardous collections should be physically isolated from other collections for staff safety.

Death Valley staff have recently become aware of the possible presence of mercury in historical herbarium collections. As of 2023, park staff are planning to contract out mercury testing of the park's herbarium collection. Precautions are being taken by park staff when handling both potential and known hazardous collections, including the wearing of PPE (N95 masks and Nitrile gloves) when accessing cabinets that contain hazardous collections.

Known hazardous collections may be acquired or deaccessioned on a case-by-case basis and only when the hazards have been identified and can be appropriately and safely mitigated.

XII. APPENDIX G: RESEARCH COLLECTIONS AND PERMITS

Per NPS Management Policies (2006), the Service encourages appropriately reviewed natural and cultural resource studies and research whenever such studies and research are consistent with applicable laws and policies. All studies and research in parks will employ nondestructive methods to the maximum extent feasible with respect to resource protection, research methodology, and the scientific and management value of the information and collections to be obtained. Although studies and research involving physical impacts to park resources or the removal of objects or specimens may be permitted, studies and collecting activities that will lead to the impairment of park resources and values are prohibited.

In implementing NPS policies and procedures to ensure scientific integrity and resource stewardship, NPS managers should consider that:

- The science is not complete until the specimens and associated data which voucher the study are appropriately documented and preserved.
- Field work and analysis are the most expensive components of scientific projects.
- The cost of field work means that each collected specimen has high financial value. Requiring that researchers deposit voucher specimens in permanent collections protects that financial investment.
- Failure to retain appropriate scientific collections to document the scientific validity of the research is not economical or ethical.
- Identifications of species in faunistic and ecological studies (versus taxonomic studies) are more often made by non-specialists using only published keys. This increases the likelihood that misidentifications may occur, resulting in lower levels of confidence in identifications which will need to be verified by specialists in the future to validate the research.
- Using scientific collections to answer research questions can reduce some costs for new field work.
- As scientific advances are made and new techniques are developed, existing well-documented scientific collections will become even more important to NPS resources management and science.
- A specimen available today may not be available in the future, just as many specimens collected decades ago can no longer be recollected due to habitat loss, population decline, and other issues. Environmental specimens collected in a time series can never be replicated.
- Each biological specimen is a “snapshot in time” which reflects the biology and ecology of the living animal and its environment. Collecting another specimen decades later does replicate the earlier specimen of the same species.
- The passage of time, technological challenges, and prohibitive costs make it impossible to replace specimens collected but not retained when they are needed later.
- Periodic (and in some cases, routine) collection of scientific specimens for permanent retention is vital to understanding the processes, rates, and impacts of climate change.

As noted above, museum collections serve as the verifiable and reproducible evidence of a scientific study. Therefore, their collection and long-term preservation is a crucial aspect of ensuring scientific integrity.

Per Directors Order #24, and the standard permit requirements, all resource projects in parks must include funding for curation of specimens collected to prevent an increase in the backlog of uncataloged materials. The standard permit conditions require that associated project records including data, field notes, photographs, maps, etc. are submitted as part of the project's deliverables and that they are cataloged according to NPS standards. A project is not considered completed until everything, including specimens, is cataloged and the data entered into the NPS official museum cataloging system.

Natural Resource Research Collections and Permits

Natural resource collections include non-living and living specimens. Research that includes taking plants, fish, wildlife, rocks, or minerals is governed by 36 CFR 2.5; additional guidance for research, collecting, and managing specimens and associated field records is found in the NPS Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS), Director's Order #77, Director's Order #77-10, and the NPS Museum Handbook. All collection of paleontological resources must comply with the Paleontological Resources Protection Act, or PRPA. Non-living specimens and their associated field records are managed as museum collections. Living collections will be managed in accordance with the provisions of a park's general management plan, the Animal Welfare Act, and other appropriate requirements.

RPRS is the online system used by the NPS to manage the research application and reporting process. Park museum staff with collection custodial duties can effectively use RPRS to collaborate with park research coordinators, resources management staff, research permittees, and repositories to help manage permanently retained collections including completion of specimen labels, submission of catalog data, and submission of copies of field notes.

RPRS is also used to help track agreements with non-NPS repositories. When a researcher applies for a permit and proposes that collected specimens be retained in a non-NPS repository, the applicant must obtain the signature of a repository official (on Appendix A of the application) agreeing to the proposal and the terms of the NPS loan agreement that would be required upon deposit of the collections. Park museum staff coordinate completion of catalog records and issue loans to document collections deposited at repositories.

Currently, NPS policy allows superintendents discretion to issue permits to park staff and other NPS staff (i.e., network Inventory and Monitoring staff), especially when specimens will be collected for retention in park collections.

Cultural Resource Research Collections and Permits

All archeological research must comply with ARPA, the Antiquities Act, and NAGPRA, as applicable. Guidance for collecting and managing field data, objects, specimens, and features of sites and structures retrieved during cultural resource research and treatment projects, together with associated records and reports, can be found in 36 CFR 79.4, Director's Order #28, and the NPS Museum Handbook. Archeological collections and their associated records are managed

within the park museum collection, stored in NPS or non-NPS repositories, as appropriate, including repositories maintained by partners.

Permits that allow cultural resources to be physically disturbed or allow objects or specimens to be collected must require provisions for the long-term preservation and management of any recovered objects and specimens and for their cataloging, together with any associated records, in the NPS museum cataloging system. Independent researchers will be authorized to conduct archeological research on park lands only through the issuance of an ARPA or Antiquities Act permit by the appropriate regional director. This permitting authority cannot be further delegated. As appropriate, parks will also issue other necessary permits, such as a special use permit.

While RPRS is most used for natural resource-related research, all external research on NPS-managed lands must be documented in RPRS and may include archeological or other cultural resource research.

Reviewing Research Permits

Current guidance does not require park museum staff or the CAC to work collaboratively with park resources management staff or the research coordinator to control collecting through permit conditions or specific requirements for collections. It is recommended, however, that park museum staff work with park research and/or resources management staff to advise the superintendent on what objects and specimens should be (or must be, according to statute) collected and managed as museum property. In some parks, curatorial and natural resource staff work together to review collection permit requests and advise the superintendent to reject certain collecting requests that are duplicative of existing collections and re-direct the researcher to conduct research on existing collections at the park or in other repositories. This process is particularly valuable to support park goals in protecting rare species, limiting/preventing duplicative or repetitive collecting, and ensuring there is no impairment of park resources or values.

DEVA does not currently have written guidelines on the consultation of museum staff when reviewing research requests that may generate museum collections. Guidelines for the submission of scientific research permits can be found on the park's website at [Scientific Research Permits - Death Valley National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/devalley/scientific-research-permits.htm). As of 2025, research permitting staff informally include the museum curator in the permit review process.

Future guidance for the review of research permits that will produce museum collections should include park specific processes/guidelines for museum staff to review permitted research requests. Ensure process/guidelines include:

- Up-to-date contact information for park curator listed in RPRS
- Clear and complete instructions for collections and data submission under “Park-specific Research Conditions” on park Information page in RPRS; provide instructions for permittees to coordinate with park curator and prepare and submit labels, cataloging data, and specimens for collections to be retained, as well as resources management records

- and copies of field notes.
- Monitoring annual submission of IARs and remind delinquent investigators of their responsibilities
- Coordinating the authorization to permanently retain collections in a non-NPS repository ONLY after documenting in RPRS receipt of Appendix A is signed by the proposed non-NPS repository.

XIII. APPENDIX H: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Helpful links:

[National Park Service Organic Act](#)

[National Park Service Omnibus Management Act of 1998](#)

National Park Service Management Policies 2001

Natural Resource Management Reference Manual #77

[Director's Order #77 \(Natural Resources Inventory and Monitoring\)](#)

Director's Order #77-10: NPS Benefits Sharing

[Director's Order #24 \(National Park Service Museum Collection Management\)](#)

[Natural Resource Management Reference Manual 41 \(Wilderness Preservation and Management\)](#)

[Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act \(16 USC 470f\)](#)

[Endangered Species Act of 1973](#)

[Wilderness Act of 1964](#)

[Archeological Resources Protection Act](#)

[43 CFR 7](#)

[36 CFR 2.5](#)

[Scientific Research Permits - Death Valley National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)
[Research Permits - Everglades National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)
[NPS Archeology Program: Federal Archeological Permits](#)
[Research Permits - Yellowstone National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)
[Obtain a Research Permit - Bering Land Bridge National Preserve \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

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