

**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**



NORTH CASCADES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMPLEX

Scope of Collection Statement

2025

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 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

North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA) contains three NPS units: North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. The three units are managed under one administrative structure. Similarly, the museum collections associated with the three park units are managed as one collection using the NOCA prefix in the NPS museum cataloging system. The collection consists of archeological artifacts and samples, scientific specimens, historical artifacts, archival material, and art. General provenance of most items in the collection are the three co-managed park units, either directly collected within the three units or generated by NOCA staff. Some materials have been transferred from the United States Forest Service, which managed the area before the Park Complex's enabling legislation was passed by Congress. Other materials in the collection have been donated by private citizens.

North Cascades National Park is notable as one of the first National Parks designated as Wilderness. Ross Lake National Recreation Area contains the Skagit Hydroelectric Project, which consists of three dams built and managed by Seattle City Light (Ross Dam, Diablo Dam, and Gorge Dam). Ross Lake NRA is also transected by Washington State Route 20 and contains NOCA's primary front-country infrastructure. Lake Chelan National Recreation Area is notable for the presence of significant inholdings by the Stehekin homesteader community and Stehekin Landing, a resort destination at the north end of Lake Chelan.

The collection is primarily stored at Marblemount Curation Facility, located in Marblemount Ranger Station approximately 10 miles from the western boundary of Ross Lake National Recreation Area on Washington State Route 20. An auxiliary collection storage room is maintained in the basement of the Golden West Lodge at Stehekin Landing in Lake Chelan NRA.

The collection grows through permitted collection of scientific specimens, archeological monitoring and excavation, transfers of material from Park Complex staff, and donations from private citizens.

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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 North Cascades National Park Service Complex that contribute directly to the understanding and interpretation of the park's purpose, themes, and resources, as well as those objects that the National Park Service (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 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.

3. Context for NOCA Museum Collection

A. Park Purpose and Significance

Enabling legislation for the three units was passed on October 2, 1968 (Public law 90-544). North Cascades National Park was designated “in order to preserve for the benefit, use and inspiration of present and future generations certain majestic mountain scenery, snowfields, glaciers, alpine meadows and other unique natural features.” Ross Lake National Recreation Area was designated “in order to provide for the public outdoor recreation use and enjoyments of portions of the Skagit River and Ross, Diablo, and Gorge Lakes, together with the surrounding lands, and for the conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of such lands and waters.” Lake Chelan National Recreation Area was designated to “provide for the public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of portions of the Stehekin River and Lake Chelan, together with the surrounding lands, and for the conservation of the scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of such lands and waters.”

The North Cascades NPS Complex Foundation Document (2017) refers to the museum collection specifically in the significance statement for Culture and History, stating that “the complex preserves the history of the North Cascades through its collections of artifacts,

photographs, historic documents, geological and biological specimens, and oral histories.” (p.9) The document also includes full significance statements for the following aspects of the park units:

- North Cascades Landscapes
- Glaciers
- Ecosystem and Biodiversity
- Wilderness
- Wilderness Recreation
- Culture and History
- Research and Education
- Skagit River
- Recreation in Ross Lake National Recreation Area
- Water-Based Recreation
- Lake Chelan
- Recreation in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area
- Stehekin

The North Cascades NPS Complex museum collection is also addressed in two mitigation plans generated through Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licenses. These include “Archaeological Resources Mitigation and Management Plan for Upper Skagit River Valley Archaeological District” prepared pursuant to FERC License #553, which allows operation of the Skagit Hydroelectric Project managed by Seattle City Light in Ross Lake National Recreation Area; and “Lake Chelan Historic Properties Management Plan” prepared pursuant to FERC License #637, which allows operation of the Lake Chelan Hydroelectric Project by Public Utility District No. 1 of Chelan County. While the Seattle City Light plan indicates that the NOCA museum collection will be the repository for archeological collections generated by mitigation activities on Ross Lake and also provides funding for curation of these collections, the Chelan PUD plan indicates that the repository managed by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation is the primary repository for archeological collections generated by mitigation activities on Lake Chelan outside of the borders of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area.

B. History of NOCA and NOCA Museum Collections

Proposals for a national park in the North Cascades began in the late 1890s and focused on the scenic value of Lake Chelan. These calls for conservation met opposition from local constituents who focused on the extractive value of the land adjacent to the lake. In 1897, much of the land currently included in North Cascades National Park was federally designated as part of the Washington Forest Reserve. The United States Forest Service became responsible for federal land management and recreational infrastructure in the areas now designated as Ross Lake National Recreation Area and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. Meanwhile, the Skagit Hydroelectric Project was being constructed by Seattle City Light, including completion of the Gorge Dam, Diablo Dam and Ross Dam. The construction of the three dams took place between 1921 and 1953, resulting in the impoundment of the northernmost reach of the Skagit River, creating Gorge Lake, Diablo Lake, and Ross Lake.

In the 1950s, the growing wilderness movement renewed interest in creating a North Cascades National Park, fueled particularly by the Forest Service's plans to build a road system in Glacier Peak Wilderness. In 1963, a study team was coordinated jointly between the Forest Service and the Park Service to investigate federal land use in the North Cascades. Meanwhile, the North Cascades Conservation Council independently published the "Prospectus for a North Cascades National Park." Their proposal offered the idea of melding wilderness and national recreation area to meet multiple needs and provided a legislative blueprint that some considered more coherent than the study team's conclusions. The enabling legislation package shepherded through Congress by Senator Henry M. Jackson included the recreational uses already managed by the Forest Service while preserving a large portion of the land as one of the first national parks designated as wilderness. More information about the park's administrative history can be found in [North Cascades NP: Contested Terrain: North Cascades National Park Service Complex: An Administrative History \(nps.gov\)](#).

Accumulation of material in the NOCA museum collection began with volunteer botanists Ralph and Dorothy Naas, who began collecting and preparing herbarium specimens for the nascent park units in the early 1970s. Other natural history specimens were collected by ranger-naturalists and resource management staff. Rangers brought a selection of surface-collected historic archeology artifacts into the collection from abandoned mining camps. The archival collection began with transfers of records from the Forest Service, including planning and architectural drawings of legacy USFS campgrounds built prior to the park complex's designation. As the park complex acquired lands in the Stehekin District, park staff received artifacts related to the Weaver and Buckner Homesteads and accessioned them into the collection. A number of outdoor artifacts were left in place on the Buckner Homestead, a large portion of which were loaned to the NPS while ownership remained with the Buckner family. Both the loaned outdoor artifacts and those owned by the NPS were nominally managed as museum artifacts until 2016, when all outdoor Buckner artifacts were deaccessioned.

In the late 1980s, archeological survey and testing work began to produce significant amounts of archeological material for accession into the NOCA collections. Meanwhile, transfers of permanent park records began to increase the archival holdings. In the early 2000s, two significant geology collections were accessioned: the Roland Tabor Collection, which was collected during mapping of geological formations in the North Cascades by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Peter Misch Collection, which focuses on metamorphic rock types in the North Cascades. In 2022, NOCA's museum program began transferring much of the previously accessioned administrative records to the National Archives and Records Administration, paring down the archival holdings to focus on records directly associated with museum artifacts, documentation of park resources frequently consulted by park staff, and donated archival collections.

C. Collection Themes and Categories

In lieu of a Long-Range Interpretive Plan, the Foundation Document provides interpretive themes for the park units. The themes include:

- North Cascades Landscape, Ecosystem and Biodiversity

- Glaciers, Rivers, and Lakes
- Wilderness
- Culture and History
- Research and Education
- Climate Change
- Outdoor Recreation

NOCA's museum collection is directly mentioned in the Foundation Document as supporting resources for "Culture and History" and "Research and Education" theme. The museum collection currently contains a sizeable archeological component with a much smaller historical collection. Photographs and documents in the archival collection also support the "Culture and History" theme. Although much of the natural history collection has grown through mandated collections, significant growth has occurred through large donations from non-park sources, including the herbarium specimens collected by Dorothy and Ralph Naas, the Tabor geology collection transferred from the USGS, and the Misch geology collection donated by the University of Washington. These natural history components support the "Research and Education" theme along with the cultural components of the collection.

D. Special Designations

North Cascades NPS Complex manages five historic districts. Three are listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Golden West Lodge Historic District (NR# 88003442), Buckner Homestead Historic District (NR# 88003441) and High Bridge Ranger Station Historic District (NR# 88003443). Marblemount Ranger Station Historic District and Imus Historic District have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register by the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. A Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) listing including 49 contributing properties for North Cascades NPS Complex was entered in the National Register on December 29, 1988. Examples of contributing properties include the two original Backus-Marblemount Ranger Station houses, the three remaining fire lookouts (Copper Mountain, Sourdough and Desolation Peak), and a portion of the United States-Canada international boundary.

The Washington Parks Wilderness Act (1988) designated the Stephen Mather Wilderness, which includes 635,000 acres spanning across all three park units.

The Park Complex contains five Research Natural Areas, which are protected areas devoted to research, education and conservation of biodiversity. North Cascades National Park contains three Research Natural Areas: Silver Lake, Stetattle Creek, and Boston Glacier. Ross Lake National Recreation Area contains two Research Natural Areas: Big Beaver and Pyramid Lake.

II. TYPES OF COLLECTIONS

This section describes the contents, present and future, of the park's cultural collection and natural history collection.

1. Cultural Collection

The purpose of this collection is to increase knowledge and inspiration among present and future generations through exhibits, research, and interpretive programs; support research, resource 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 and manuscript collections. Four of these disciplines are represented in the NOCA museum collection, with the exception of ethnology. The largest portion of the cultural collection is archival and manuscript collections, followed by archeology, history, and art. These collections include photographs, written documents, architectural drawings, archeological materials and records, historical artifacts, and artwork.

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 NOCA approved planning documents and resource studies.
- Service-wide initiatives if applicable.
- Enhancing the understanding of, and promoting increased stewardship of, the park's 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 prehistoric 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. Parks should develop appropriate standard operating procedures (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 and the Regional Archeologist.

NPS *Management Policies* (2006, section 5.3.5.1) mandates 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.

All proposed projects involving ground disturbance at NOCA are reviewed by the Section 106 Coordinator and Interdisciplinary Team at monthly compliance meetings. Appropriate actions to monitor, test, or excavate potentially impacted archeological sites are reviewed by the Washington State Historic Preservation Office and affiliated tribes in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Archeological field projects are typically undertaken for Section 106 identification efforts or as the result of implementing a management plan to mitigate adverse effects from relicensing one of the two hydroelectric projects within the Park Complex.

Archeology Collection at NOCA

The archeology collection contains 81,786 objects including pre-contact lithics, faunal remains, post-contact artifacts, and analytic samples. There is currently no cataloging backlog of archeological material. Incoming loans of archeological materials include pre-contact artifacts housed for the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe (USIT) and both pre- and post-contact materials housed for Seattle City Light. Express permission from the Tribe is required for access to the materials on incoming loan from USIT for any reason other than routine curation tasks performed by NOCA’s museum curator.

Mandated acquisitions: Archeological collections, except inalienable and communal property (as defined by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) 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 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. 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 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.

Should be acquired: Confiscated archeological materials recovered from unauthorized and illegal activities in NOCA in violation of ARPA should be acquired, providing that the materials are known to have been recovered from lands within NOCA's boundaries. 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 NOCA museum staff as soon as possible. Museum staff should also be consulted to ensure proper handling and transportation of these materials. Objects resulting from unauthorized and illegal activities in the park may be considered for acquisition, with all associated documentation 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.

May be acquired: Surface or diagnostic finds not recovered from systematic excavations, but which have provenience data that can connect the artifact to a specific archeological site location, recorded or not. Collections recovered from within the park before it was created should be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on legal title, provenience data, condition, objects present, size of collection, associated records, etc.

Not to be acquired: The Park should discourage visitors from collecting cultural resource materials from park property. 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. However, these objects may be kept by the park for use in teaching or interpretive activities. Objects excavated from non-NPS property, potentially hazardous material including unexploded ordnance and ammunition (see the Potentially Hazardous Material Appendix), Native American human remains, and inalienable and communal property subject to NAGPRA will not be accessioned into the museum collection (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 resource management.

The composition of the park's ethnology collection is subject to change as traditionally associated peoples are identified. Federally recognized tribes associated with NOCA include Upper Skagit Indian Tribe, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, Tulalip Tribes of Washington, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Lummi Nation, Samish Indian Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation. NOCA also regularly consults with two First Nations that are not federally recognized due to their location within Canadian borders: the Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council and the Stó:lō Nation.

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 in this SOCS.

Ethnology Collection at NOCA

NOCA currently has no ethnology collections. An Ethnographic Overview has been completed for NOCA. The resulting report and associated project files are included in the archival portion of the collection.

Mandated Acquisitions: There are no legal mandates for the Ethnology collection. Please refer to the Archives Resource Management Records section for guidance on records related to ethnographic studies.

Should be acquired: Only ethnographic materials with a direct association with the park, such as from an eminent individual from an affiliated Native American tribe; should be considered on a case-by-case basis. A park's ethnology collection may include archives and media associated with a study.

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

History collections reflect the spectrum of materials made and/or used during the post-contact Era by humans residing in what today is the United States and its Territories. 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 a park's mission, themes, and history. They also may include art, such as paintings and sculpture, and rare books.

Some history collections reflect activities of well-known individuals, others evidence everyday life and actions of working-class people. Documenting and interpreting historical objects to the public in the context of their original settings enhances the public's understanding. For more in-depth discussion of history collections, see [Museum Handbook II, Appendix G](#).

History Collection at NOCA

NOCA's history collection includes 519 artifacts with a cataloging backlog of 58 artifacts. The most notable accession in this category is the Davis Collection associated with Lucinda Davis and her two sons, Glee and Frank, which represents early homesteading material culture in the Upper Skagit Valley. The Weaver Collection and small objects associated with the Buckner Homestead Historic District represent early homesteading in Stehekin. Outdoor objects at Buckner Homestead were previously accessioned into the museum collection but were deaccessioned in 2016 due to the Park Complex's inability to care for the items in situ according to NPS museum standards. No further objects from the Buckner Family should be accessioned unless the objects are small enough to be stored within the Park Complex's curation facilities.

Mandated Acquisitions: There are no legal mandates for the History Collection.

Should be acquired: Only historic material with a direct association to the park is to be included in the museum collection. When a large quantity of an object type is available, priority should be given to acquiring the best-preserved examples. The history collection is based on the park's themes used to establish the following collecting categories:

- Artifacts from mining sites within the park
- Architectural samples from historic buildings managed by North Cascades NPS Complex (see below for more detail)

- Artifacts and ephemera documenting significant events in NOCA's development (e.g., ephemera related to the opening of the North Cross Highway and signing of the park complex's enabling legislation)
- Artifacts associated with homesteading in the Upper Skagit Valley circa 1880-1920
- Artifacts associated with homesteading in Stehekin circa 1880-1950
- Artifacts associated with the Buckner Historic District including William Buzzard's initial homesteading of the site (1889-1910) and the Buckner Family's development and use of the homestead and orchard (1910-1970)
- Artifacts associated with the United States Forest Service presence while managing the lands now designated as North Cascades NPS Complex, 1908-1968
- Artifacts associated with the activities of the Citizen Conservation Corp in the Upper Skagit and Stehekin Area, 1933-1942
- Artifacts with a commemorative purpose, including ephemera from park anniversaries and ceremonial gifts given by tribal entities
- Artifacts associated with recreation and tourism with an exceptional history that are appropriate for exhibit use

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 resource 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: Objects outside of the collecting themes that will prove directly useful for interpretive or research purposes. 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: 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. Objects that are inherently unstable which causes the item to deteriorate or destroy itself. Potentially hazardous materials, except on a case-by-case basis. See the Hazards in the Collection Appendix for more information.

Period pieces and reproductions will not be accessioned into the museum collection and will be managed as non-museum property.

Historic Fabric

Should be acquired: During ongoing/future repair and rehabilitation of historic properties within the park, household objects and samples of architectural fabric should be acquired, where appropriate.

In cases where it is no longer viable to retain original architectural fabric in the structure, the best (highest quality/most complete) example of a particular element should be evaluated for inclusion into the park's museum collection. Consideration must be taken regarding the

significance of the resource, the condition of the resource, and the park's capacity to curate the resource.

If original elements are to be reused in the structure or recreated, a sample of the original element could be retained in the museum collection. Elements in this category should be characteristic of the period of significance, for example tiles that are unique to the structure itself, or character-defining features that are associated with the original owner. If representative samples of these elements would be useful for future management of the resource, then they should be included in the museum collection. Other elements such as paint or wallpaper samples, roof shingle samples and related materials would be good candidates for inclusion in the museum collection, as these materials would also be beneficial for continued management of the structures.

Not to be acquired: Very large items (sections of concrete, beams, etc.), items in very poor condition, and items not unique to the structure or period of significance would generally not be considered for inclusion in the museum collection but should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

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 appropriate 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 NOCA

There are 101 objects in the art collection with no cataloging backlog. Most of the works were acquired through the Artist-in-Residence programs in the Stehekin District and Skagit District, neither of which are currently active. In recent years, artists have occasionally approached the Park Complex offering to donate a work. These works should only be acquired if the artist is willing to transfer copyright to the NPS.

Mandated acquisitions: There are no legal mandates for the art collection.

May be acquired: Works commissioned by the NPS for specific park purposes, such as exhibitions, illustrations, education, or interpretation may be acquired. Proposed donations by individual artists inspired by experiences in NOCA may be acquired. Proposed acquisitions must be evaluated by the CAC on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the museum program's ability to care for the object.

Not to be acquired: Art with undocumented provenance and no clear title; "office art" or reproductions (posters, prints, and similar items).

E. Archival Collections

For the NPS, the term “archives” or “archival collections” refers to permanently valuable documentary materials providing information about a place, institution, events, or group of people. In addition to written documents, these materials can also include still images, moving images, sound recordings, and ephemera. Archival collections hold their value in context; they should be evaluated and managed as assemblages of information. Archival collections offered for accession should not be “cherry-picked” or split up in order to gain a single preferred item for the collection. Some archival materials in NOCA’s museum collection have been accessioned through donation. However, most of the archival material accessioned into the collection has been generated by NOCA or regional staff.

While the archival profession generally measures archival collections according to linear feet (LF), the NPS Museum Program measures archival collections as individual objects with a conversion factor of 1 linear foot to 1600 objects. The 2024 Collection Management Report for NOCA lists the archival portion of the collection as 305,422 objects (191 LF) with a backlog of 79,558 objects. Materials in the archival collection subject to restricted public access include the Archeology Program Records and the Maps and Architectural Drawings Collection. While most of the archival collection is housed at Marblemount Curation Facility, the Stehekin District Resource Management Records and a portion of the Maps and Architectural Drawings Collection are housed at the Golden West Collection Storage Room.

a. Manuscript Collections at NOCA

The term “manuscripts” commonly refers to 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 letters between family members, ledgers from family businesses, and photographs documenting the family’s history.

Manuscript collections, or donated collections, are not Federal records and should always be maintained and cataloged separately from collections generated by the NPS. 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.

Key manuscript collections held by NOCA include the Davis Family Collection, 1874-1986 (3 LF); Joe and Margaret Miller Collection, 1968-1984 (2 LF); D.J. McIntyre Collection, 1928-1972 (3 LF).

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 already in the collection created for access and use will not be added to the museum archives.

b. Federal Records at NOCA

In the past, there was considerable misunderstanding among museum staff about which records are meant for inclusion in NPS museum collections. The Museum Handbook, Part I, directs parks to accession resource management records into museum collections while highlighting that inactive federal records should be transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). At NOCA and other parks, the category of “resource management records” was loosely interpreted to include all park-related records except short-term temporary records identified in the NPS Records Retention Schedule. The result was large archival holdings that numerically and physically dominated museum collections. In 2019, NARA issued M-19-21, a memorandum to Federal agency officials setting a formal timeline for government-wide transition to electronic records. It included a mandate for robust records management programs at all federal agencies and announced a deadline for transfer of analog records to NARA. The resulting Servicewide push to remove federal records from NPS museum collections presented an opportunity for the NOCA museum program to transfer a significant volume of Park Complex records to NARA. Transfers of permanent records to NARA in 2022 and 2024 and concurrent removal of temporary records accessioned in error reduced the size of NOCA’s archival collection by roughly fifty percent. However, the Collection Advisory Committee has authorized retention of some federal records within the collection using the following criteria:

- 1) Records associated with three-dimensional objects in the collection, otherwise known as “associated records.” Examples include archeological field records, field notes and reports associated with scientific specimens, and information linked with artworks. Examples include the Archeology Program Records, field records from permitted collection of scientific specimens, and records from the Artist-in-Park programs.
- 2) Park-generated archival collections that contain significant amounts of media that require specialized storage conditions such as film-based material or oversized items. Examples include the Maps and Architectural Drawings collection (almost entirely oversized drawings, including rare formats that require special housing) and the Revegetation Program Records (contains approximately 5000 slide transparencies that require storage at freezing temperatures).
- 3) Collections that are frequently accessed by Park Complex staff for interpretive, resource management, or operational purposes. Examples include the History Program Records and the Stehekin District Resource Management Records (both collections are frequently consulted for reference requests).

Mandated Collections: Records associated with collections made through permitted activities associated with the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 and Paleontology Resources Preservation Act of 2009 (PRPA) are mandated by these laws to be retained.

Should be Acquired: Records meeting the three criteria listed above, particularly accumulations to existing collections such as archeological field records.

May be Acquired: There may be rare instances when a very small set of NPS materials related to park management, programs, projects, or activities provide sufficient informational or evidential value to warrant permanent preservation within museum collections. 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: Any analog federal records falling outside of the criteria set by the Collection Advisory Committee. 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 accessioned into the collection.

2. Natural History Collection

The purpose of NOCA's natural history collection is to support scientific research, resource 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 NOCA'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.
- 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.

Uncontrolled surface collecting 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 the finder; they should be reported to park staff delegated with museum collection responsibilities. If materials are turned in to 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.

NOCA acquires natural history collections through internal NPS projects and permitted research projects conducted by external 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 NOCA'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.

NOCA's natural resources may be mildly described as complex and magnificent. In addition to the four biomes included in the park (temperate rainforest, subalpine, alpine, and dry ponderosa forest), the area is also known for stunning metamorphic geology. North Cascades National Park historically included more glaciers than any national park in the contiguous 48 states, although these glaciers are rapidly disappearing. The Park Complex's species checklists include more than 81 mammals, 21 reptiles and amphibians, 231 birds, 28 fish, 500 insects and 250 aquatic invertebrates. More than 1400 vascular plants and 320 non-vascular plants are included in the checklist. Checklists for lichen and fungi have not been established, as there has been no intensive inventory for either category, but both groups are observably diverse within the Park Complex.

A. Biology Collection

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.

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 may 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 NOCA 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 resource management, cultural landscape management, and interpretive programs.

Examples of biological collections may include:

- Animal skins
- Skeletal material
- 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.

Biological Resources at NOCA

NOCA 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. Several plant species in the herbarium are listed on the Washington State List of Plant Species of Conservation Concern.

The biology collection contains 34,884 specimens with a backlog of 3,039 uncataloged specimens. Most of the uncataloged specimens are fish scales and otoliths collected by NOCA's Aquatic Ecologists. The park's onsite herbarium contains 9961 specimens and constitutes the largest category of scientific specimens in the NOCA museum collection. Most of these specimens are housed at Marblemount Curation Facility but a small portion (565 specimens) are housed at the Golden West Collection Storage Room for staff reference in the Stehekin District. Bird and mammal study skins, pinned insects, and wet-preserved specimens of aquatic vertebrates and invertebrates are also present in the Marblemount Curation Facility. The Burke Museum, University of Washington, is the primary repository for off-site loans of scientific specimens, including 3,311 herbarium specimens, 592 vertebrate specimens, and 100 arachnid specimens. Other non-bureau repositories housing NOCA biological specimens on long-term loan include:

- USDA-ARS Pollinating Insects Research Unit at Utah State University
- University of Wisconsin-Madison Insect Research Collection
- Washington State University Department of Entomology
- University of Texas-Arlington Amphibian and Reptile Research Center
- Western Washington University Geology Department

- University of Minnesota School of Earth and Environmental Sciences
- San Jose State University (Geology)
- University of Nevada-Reno Department of Geological Sciences

Mandated acquisitions: Specimens and samples obtained for preservation during inventory, monitoring, research, and study projects, together with associated records, must be acquired. Collecting of animal 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.

May be acquired: Study skins of vertebrates found in the Park Complex that are prepared according to best practices in vertebrate collections (not commercially prepared taxidermy). NOCA wildlife biologists occasionally collect poached or accidentally killed birds and mammals and retain reliable information as to the date and place that the animal was found. These specimens may be prepared and included in the museum collection.

Not to be acquired: Biological specimens collected outside the park's boundaries will 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 NOCA museum collection already has a representative sample are not to be acquired. Taxidermy acquired by the Park Complex for interpretive purposes will not be accessioned into the museum collection. Specimens specifically collected as a type or reference collection for field use and without provenience documentation are not to be collected. Living specimens, including viable seeds collected for propagation, are not to be acquired for the museum collection.

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 NOCA

The North Cascades are known as a unique geological area created by metamorphic activity and other geological processes, including glacial activity. Because geologic processes are a major part of the North Cascades formation, development, and management, geological resources should be well represented in the museum collection by specimens and associated records. NOCA's museum collection contains two collections accumulated by researchers focusing on the area's complex geology. The Peter Misch Collection was accumulated by Dr. Peter Misch over forty years of collecting hand samples in the North Cascades for the purpose of studying metamorphic processes using thin sections and petrographic imaging. The Misch Collection was donated by the University of Washington Department of Earth Sciences. The Tabor Collection was accumulated by Roland Tabor during the process of mapping geological formations in the North Cascades with his field partner, Ralph Haggerud. Both collections contain specimens collected outside the Park Complex's boundaries but were accessioned as complete assemblages to maintain the integrity of the researchers' work.

The geology collection contains 14,080 geology specimens with a backlog of 358 uncataloged specimens. This backlog is comprised of specimens unaccompanied by field data in the Misch Collection. While Peter Misch's field specimens were donated to NOCA, his papers (including his field notes) are housed at University of Washington Libraries' Special Collections. Research at UW Special Collections will be necessary to catalog the remaining specimens in the Misch Collection. Other non-bureau repositories housing NOCA biological specimens on long-term loan include:

- Western Washington University Geology Department
- University of Minnesota School of Earth and Environmental Sciences
- San Jose State University (Geology)
- University of Nevada-Reno Department of Geological Sciences

Mandated acquisitions: Specimens and samples obtained for preservation during inventory, monitoring, research, and study projects, together with associated records. 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.

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.

Not to be acquired: Specimens and samples from outside the park's boundaries unless they are part of an assemblage focused on North Cascades geology. Specimens and samples lacking provenience documentation are not to be acquired. Rock hounding (amateur collecting of specimens) is prohibited in most 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.

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 item (as defined in section 2 of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001)).” (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.”

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 NOCA

The paleontology collection contains seven specimens, two fossilized impressions of bivalves and five fossilized impressions of vascular plants. The vascular plant fossils were accessioned as part of the Tabor Collection and have been cataloged into the geology collection due to the lack of botanical identification information available for cataloging as paleontological specimens. Further additions to the paleontological collection are likely to be scarce but are possible.

Mandated acquisitions: Fossil plant, vertebrate, invertebrate, or trace specimens and associated records generated through systematic surveys or excavations undertaken within the park boundaries; [high fidelity casts](#) made from the molds of trace or body fossils left in situ; and scientifically significant paleontological resources, together with their associated records. 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.}

May be acquired: Confiscated paleontological materials recovered from unauthorized and illegal activities in NOCA 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.

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 provenience documentation; and purchased specimens, unless they are originally from the park but acquired before it was a park, are not to be acquired.

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.

There are no NAGPRA materials in the NOCA museum collection. The Park Complex completed its NAGPRA summary on October 20, 1993. No human remains or other materials subject to NAGPRA were present in the collection.

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.

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*. <List any park-specific acquisition procedures that supplement these policies>

NOCA 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.

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.

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:

- Review collection for items that are outside of this Scope of Collection Statement and prepare deaccession plan.

Required topics:

- 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

Appendix A: Enabling Legislation

Enabling legislation for the three units of North Cascades National Park Service Complex can be found at [Enabling Legislation - North Cascades National Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).

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 resource management records that are directly associated with museum objects are managed as museum property. These and other resource 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)

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.](#)

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 [PARK] 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 NOCA 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.

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.

<Provide notable park-specific information regarding collections, archives and their associated records that contain sensitive or confidential information>

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 ordinance).
- 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.

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.

NOCA meets its responsibilities for safely managing hazardous or potentially hazardous collections by mitigating the potential impacts of hazardous collections and deaccessioning hazardous collections as needed. In 2022, the collection was reviewed for UXO. One live bullet was identified and deaccessioned. The collection contains 1722 wet specimens preserved in ethanol with Wardol or Wardsafe added as a preservative. These specimens are kept separately in a marked cabinet with a ventilation hood for safe access and the museum curator has been fitted with a half-mask respirator for working with these collections. There is one asbestos specimen in the NOCA collection; the cabinet is specially marked as containing hazardous materials.

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 resource 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 and associated records 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. 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, resource 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 resource 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 resource management staff to advise the superintendent on what objects and specimens, and associated records should be (or must be, according to statute) collected and managed as museum property. At NOCA, 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.

The recommended permitting process and 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 resource 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.

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](#)

[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 \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

Appendix H: Selected Bibliography

North Cascades National Park Service Complex/Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
Museum Management Plan, 2005

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