



Curation Plan for Historical Documents and Artifacts North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project

Submitted to



Portland, Oregon

Submitted by



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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	1
2.0	Creating the Collection – Accession and Deaccession Procedures	1
3.0	Organizing the Collection and Record Keeping	2
4.0	Housing the Collection	2
4.1	Storage Security	3
4.2	Proper Staffing	3
5.0	Access to the Collection.....	4
5.1	Loans.....	4
6.0	Note on New Media	4
7.0	Bibliography	5
7.1	Books	5
7.2	Websites.....	5

1.0 Introduction

In September 2006, PacifiCorp completed a Historic Properties Management Plan (HPMP) for the North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project (the Project) in Douglas County, Oregon. Section 4.4 of the HPMP requires that a curation plan (for items related to both archaeology and history) be created for the Project following the federal guidelines for curation as set forth in 36CFR79 (Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections). PacifiCorp has amassed a collection of historical documents, photographs, records, and ephemera associated with the North Umpqua Hydroelectric Project in Douglas County, Oregon. Paper records such as reports, correspondence, project files, drawings, and business files comprise the bulk of the collection, but there are objects in other media as well, including photographs, x-rays, and microfilm.

This curation plan details the appropriate steps for PacifiCorp to take to organize and preserve this collection in accordance with standard archival practices and the federal regulations set forth in 36CFR79. Archeological artifacts and any prehistoric materials discovered through excavation are outside the purview of this curation plan; they are to be handled according to the procedures in 36CFR79.

2.0 Creating the Collection - Accession and Deaccession Procedures

The first step in collections management is to establish and disseminate a collections policy, both to control the collection's growth and to insure that all appropriate materials are collected and properly preserved. PacifiCorp's archive staff in the Portland headquarters will be responsible for creating and implementing this policy as well as distributing it to offsite locations where materials that should be accessioned may be located. The collections policy will set out the purpose of the collection, criteria for acquisition, and types of material to be collected.

As materials are acquired by the collection, they must be processed according to consistent accession practices. Information about the item's acquisition, ownership, provenance, author (if applicable), date of origin, content, composition, and condition should be recorded in the accession procedures, along with other data pertinent to the type of document or artifact under question. Each item must be labeled uniformly.

Offsite locations must review all their files, reports, photographs, and other documents that might need to become part of the collection and must provide a detailed list of holdings to the main archive. The archive will review these holdings in accordance with its collections policy and inform the offsite offices which materials should be delivered to company headquarters in Portland, Oregon, and which materials may be housed onsite. Headquarters will also provide guidance to the offsite locations on the proper filing, storage, and maintenance of the documents. No documents may be discarded or destroyed without consultation with PacifiCorp headquarters, nor shall documents that should eventually be accessioned by headquarters be endangered through improper storage (for example, housing project log books or blueprints in a wet or flood-

prone powerhouse basement). When the archive receives these materials, they will be processed according to standard accession practices.

Materials in the existing collection or at offsite locations that no longer fit within the collections policy guidelines may exist. Such materials can be kept within the collection or they can be deaccessioned. The collection may deaccession materials that are outside the scope of its acquisition policy, are in such poor condition they cannot be preserved or stabilized, consist of hazardous materials, are too large for the existing storage facilities, require storage conditions which existing facilities cannot meet, or are unnecessary duplicates of other materials in the collection. Proper records must be made and maintained on all deaccessioned materials. Deaccessioned materials may be destroyed, donated, or otherwise disposed of as long as proper records have been generated to document their fate.

3.0 Organizing the Collection and Record Keeping

All items in the current collection must be recorded in an up-to-date catalog. Each item must be labeled and have an individual record. The catalog entry for each item should follow a consistent form, including information regarding the item's author/creator, date, origin, contents, composition, and any other data relevant to the collection's use. The catalog must be stored in a manner that protects the records from theft or fire. A duplicate copy of the entire catalog should be stored offsite.

Each collection needs an organizational system designed to allow researchers to discern what materials will be helpful for their work and then to locate those items. Whenever possible, accessioned materials should retain the original order in which they were kept (e.g., files from offsite locations). The classification system must include a finding aid; although these have often been in the form of a card catalog ordered by number or by subject, finding aids increasingly employ computer programs (such as an Access database), which are both easier to use and require less space than paper records. In whatever form, catalogs and finding aids must be kept current as new items are added to the collection, storage areas are reorganized, or items are deaccessioned.

4.0 Housing the Collection

Housing the collection encompasses two kinds of storage: each item must be protected or encased in appropriate materials and each item must be housed or stored in an appropriate condition or container. For example, paper records should be enclosed in acid-free folders or boxes; large documents or fragile maps should be stored flat in shallow drawers rather than rolled or placed upright on shelves. Qualified professionals should be hired to assess items for storage to determine their condition and their particular storage requirements.

Artifacts, photographs, negatives, x-rays, and microfilm in the collection will have different storage requirements from paper documents. The age of the items, their component structure, and the methods used in their creation will all determine their storage needs.

The storage area or areas must be large enough to allow sufficient space “to properly store, study and conserve the collection” (36CFR79.9.2). Lighting in storage areas must meet conservation guidelines. It might be necessary to provide additional areas for studying the collection with lights that allow researchers sufficient illumination without causing damage to the collection items under review.

4.1 Storage Security

The storage area or facility must protect the collections from fire, environmental hazards, pests, theft, natural disasters, civil unrest, and the ravages of dirt:

- The facility must meet all fire, health and safety, and building codes.
- The facility must have fire detection and suppression systems.
- The facility must have environmental controls to monitor humidity, temperature, “visible light, ultraviolet radiation, dust, soot, gases, mold, fungus” (36CFR79.9.5).
- The collection must have a system of pest control.
- The collection must be protected with appropriate security measures such as locked areas, security systems, and signature logs.
- There must be an emergency management plan including procedures for dealing with “fires, floods, natural disasters, civil unrest, acts of violence, structural failures and failures of mechanical systems within the physical plant” (36CFR79.9.3).
- Housekeeping must be adequate to control dust and keep storage area clean.

Qualified professionals should inspect the storage facility periodically and issue written reports of their findings.

4.2 Proper Staffing

Performing all of the functions outlined above requires a staff trained in proper archival and curatorial procedures. Staff members need to have expertise in the proper handling, storing, cleaning, and conservation of collection materials. The more varied the composition of materials in the collection, the more demanding these tasks will be. Staff members will need to understand the particular needs of each kind of artifact or document.

Staff members need to formulate standards and procedures for the collection; there should be official written standards for curatorial, storage, inventory, and conservation procedures.

Staff members need to oversee the proper handling of the collection, including enforcing the standards researchers using the collection must follow.

Staff members need to conduct periodic inventories and inspections of the collection and its catalog, and to produce and preserve written reports of these processes.

Staff members need to oversee the conservation of items in the collection. When staff members are not expert enough to apply appropriate conservation techniques, they must find properly trained conservators and oversee their work. Written records must be maintained on all conservation measures.

5.0 Access to the Collection

Collections governed by 36CFR79 must be available for scientific, educational, and religious use. This requires that qualified researchers are provided access to study, borrow, and use the collection.

Collections staff must determine if there should be access restrictions on any materials for confidentiality or security reasons. It may be necessary to enforce measures such as signature logs, requiring researchers to be accompanied by a staff member, and restricted physical access to the general collection to safeguard the collection's holdings.

5.1 Loans

Qualified professionals or institutions may request loans from the collection for study or exhibition purposes. The collection must have a written loan policy governing these exchanges.

There must be a written agreement for each loan that includes provisions detailing: object or objects loaned, purpose of the loan, any restrictions on the object's or objects' use, and duration of the loan. In addition, there must be written proof of insurance covering the loss, damage, or destruction of the loan during transit or while in the borrower's possession.

All of the above guidelines apply if the purpose of the loan is to place the object or objects on exhibition. In the case of exhibition use, the loan agreement should be particularly specific about prohibited uses that might damage or weaken the loan object.

6.0 Note on New Media

New acquisitions will inevitably include new media, particularly digital records. Storage, handling, and conservation procedures will have to be modified to adapt to new requirements. In addition, it might be necessary for the preservation of existing items in the collection to duplicate them in digital or electronic form. The collection's deaccession procedures will have to be written to include provisions considering whether it is necessary to keep both the original and the new digital copy of the item.

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