Appendix B: Cataloging Costs

APPENDIX B: CATALOGING COSTS

**A. Estimating Cataloging
   Costs**

1. *How do I estimate the cost to
   catalog objects?*

If you…	Then…
have cost data from a comparable cataloging project	use that data and adjust the variables to accommodate the new project
lack comparable cost data	contact other parks that have similar collections and ask for their cost data, then adjust the variables for your situation
are uncertain about the costs	use the regional or Servicewide average in Figure B.1, Recent Cataloging Costs

*Figure B.1 charts provide high, low, and average cataloging costs.
The charts also include costs by discipline and region, as well as
Servicewide costs, for recent fiscal years.*

Note: Do not use regional costs data that seems to be out of line compared with other regions' costs for that discipline. Cost data can be skewed when only a few objects are cataloged.

Approach the question of cataloging costs from two angles. Determine a rough estimate of the cost and determine the cost per item. Base cataloging cost estimates on:

- how long the work will take

- how the work will be accomplished

- the level of personnel needed to do the work

- additional costs, such as travel, materials, overhead, computer equipment, and benefits

After you determine the overall cost, divide the cost by the number of items to determine the cost per item. Use the cost per item to compare with the costs of past projects or the costs in Figure B.1. Make adjustments as appropriate.

2. *What variables affect
   cataloging costs?*

Costs for cataloging vary and depend on many factors, including the:

- expertise and skills of the staff or the contractor who will do the work

- size of the collection (for example, larger collections tend to have lower costs because of economies of scale)

- type or discipline of the material you are cataloging (for example, ethnology tends to have higher costs; archeology has relatively lower

costs)

- type or discipline of the material you are cataloging (for example, ethnology tends to have higher costs; archeology has relatively lower costs)

- complexity of the collection (for example, a collection of unorganized personal papers will take longer to catalog than a collection of organizational files that are neatly filed in original order)

- amount of lot cataloging (for example, material that you lot catalog would have lower costs than items you catalog individually)

- condition of the collection (for example, maps might need to be relaxed and unrolled before cataloging)

- amount of documentation that is needed (for example, history objects may require identification and dating; natural history specimens may already have labels that include identification)

- overhead charged by contractors and other service providers

- costs for computer equipment

- costs for materials, such as archival supplies, that are essential to the cataloging process

- travel costs, if travel is required to accomplish the cataloging

3. *How do I interpret the data in Figure B.1?*

For each discipline in each region, the charts provide a high, low, and average cost for cataloging an object. The charts also show how many objects were cataloged at that cost. Remember that there are economies of scale. Projects with few objects tend to have higher than average costs. Projects with many objects tend to have lower than average costs.

B. Funding Cataloging Costs

1. *Where can I get funds to catalog recent acquisitions?*

Projects that generate collections must fund the cataloging, preservation, and preparation of those collections for storage. Project funds may be from archeological or natural resource projects, exhibit development, historic furnishings implementation projects, historic structure stabilization projects, or other sources.

- catalog other acquisitions, such as gifts, with:

- base funds

- Cultural Resources Preservation and Protection (CRPP) funds, *or*

- Natural Resources Preservation and Protection (NRPP) Funds

2. *Where can I get funds to catalog the backlog?*	Catalog collections that are part of a pre-1987 uncataloged backlog with:

- park base funds

- Backlog Cataloging funds, *or*

- CRPP funds

Catalog post-1987 backlogs using:

- park base funds, *or*

- CRPP funds

3. *Where can I get funds to recatalog the collections?*	Park base and CRPP funds are good sources for recataloging.

C. Applyinf For and Spending Cataloging Funds

1. *How can I apply for cataloging funds?*	The Associate Director, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, makes an annual call in late summer for cultural resources projects to be funded by CRPP and Backlog Cataloging. The Associate Director, Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, makes an annual call for NRPP projects. Contact the regional/support office (SO) curator for guidance in seeking funding.

2. *What are some things to remember when applying for cataloging funds?*	When you apply for cataloging funds, make sure:

- your project meets the criteria for the fund source

- your park submitted a Collections Management Report (CMR, Form 10-94) last year (see Section VIII of Chapter 4 in this handbook)

- the data on the CMR are consistent with your proposal (for example, the park has a backlog of 5,000, and you are proposing to catalog 2,500)

- the project will enter the catalog data in the Automated National Catalog System (ANCS+) or its successor

- you identify the project in the park's Resource Management Plan and Project Management Information System (PMIS)

- archives to be cataloged are archives that belong in the museum collection and **are not official records** (see Appendix D in this handbook)

3. *What are some things to remember when spending funds for cataloging?*	When you spend funds for cataloging museum collections, make sure:

- you spend the funds and accomplish the work as proposed, or submit a revision to the fund manager after consultation with the regional/SO curator

- you submit an accomplishment report to the fund manager at the end of the fiscal year

- you submit the catalog data on disk to the National Catalog (see Chapter 3 in this handbook)

D. List of Figures

REGION		ARCHEOLOGY		ETHNOLOGY		HISTORY		ARCHIVES		BIOLOGY		PALEONTOLOGY		GEOLOGY	
		COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS
AK	HI	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.97	239	2.99	4,382	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.52	23	0.58	13,111	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.40	262	1.19	17,493	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
IM	HI	1.03	11,682	N/A	N/A	4.52	5,527	1.74	14,345	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	0.71	32,285	N/A	N/A	4.52	5,527	0.71	2,786	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	0.82	50,086	N/A	N/A	4.52	5,527	1.25	63,059	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MW	HI	7.26	23	7.22	9	9.41	186	3.41	293	52.83	53	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.36	15,007	7.22	9	2.52	413	0.36	24,814	7.24	746	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	1.69	44,034	7.22	9	5.81	4,383	0.95	56,233	10.26	799	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NC	HI	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.50	1,140	N/A	N/A	6.52	158	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.50	1,140	N/A	N/A	3.82	500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.50	1,140	N/A	N/A	4.47	658	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NE	HI	3.10	20,000	N/A	N/A	10.55	4,169	3.97	37,780	0.60	250	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.02	10,834	N/A	N/A	0.07	3,000	0.36	131,680	0.60	250	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	2.60	51,440	N/A	N/A	7.56	11,541	1.21	194,160	0.60	250	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PW	HI	8.19	103	N/A	N/A	10.00	9	2.50	4	5.47	597	9.23	363	10.00	1
	LOW	0.48	92,979	N/A	N/A	1.30	2,804	0.22	160,800	1.55	322	9.23	363	3.21	156
	AVG	0.64	96,569	N/A	N/A	1.33	2,813	0.27	166,804	2.48	3,228	9.23	363	4.19	528
SE	HI	9.27	433	N/A	N/A	24.00	25	2.76	2,366	8.74	1,761	N/A	N/A	3.00	2
	LOW	6.07	11,744	N/A	N/A	8.02	499	1.10	14,596	8.74	1,761	N/A	N/A	3.00	2
	AVG	6.18	12,177	N/A	N/A	8.57	5,392	1.33	16,962	8.74	1,761	N/A	N/A	3.00	2
TOTAL	AVG HI	2.45	32,241	7.22	9	7.26	11,295	3.16	65,166	8.03	2,819	9.23	363	5.33	3
	AVG LOW	1.05	162,849	7.22	9	3.09	13,406	0.34	347,787	6.52	3,579	9.23	363	3.20	158
	AVG	1.52	254,311	7.22	9	6.38	31,058	0.90	515,411	5.18	6,696	9.23	363	4.18	530

Figure B.1a. Recent Cataloging Costs (FY 1997)

REGION		ARCHEOLOGY		ETHNOLOGY		HISTORY		ARCHIVES		BIOLOGY		PALEONTOLOGY		GEOLOGY	
		COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/ OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS
AK	HI	6.23	868	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	1.09	13,280	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	6.23	868	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	1.09	13,280	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	6.23	868	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	1.09	13,280	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
IM	HI	3.11	5,308	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.52	11,902	3.28	326	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	.20	2,982	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.10	15,703	2.37	982	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	1.66	8,290	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.81	27,605	2.83	1,308	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MW	HI	1.72	12,017	3.88	59	15.01	358	15.85	631	11.51	279	.51	973	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.72	12,017	3.88	59	3.50	2	.32	15,162	5.85	694	.51	973	N/A	N/A
	AVG	1.72	12,017	3.88	59	6.63	1,923	4.11	88,588	7.77	1,057	.51	973	N/A	N/A
NC	HI	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NE	HI	3.07	20,185	N/A	N/A	14.01	3,386	.88	10,694	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	3.07	20,185	N/A	N/A	14.01	3,386	.41	119,089	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	3.07	20,185	N/A	N/A	14.01	3,386	.62	286,983	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PW	HI	5.84	450	N/A	N/A	5.84	1	N/A	N/A	5.84	43	5.84	2,846	N/A	N/A
	LOW	5.84	450	N/A	N/A	2.87	1,569	N/A	N/A	5.84	43	5.84	2,846	N/A	N/A
	AVG	5.84	450	N/A	N/A	4.35	1,570	N/A	N/A	5.84	43	5.84	2,846	N/A	N/A
SE	HI	3.88	515	N/A	N/A	10.00	26	6.71	1,192	2.48	6,609	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.63	3618	N/A	N/A	10.00	26	.20	23,857	2.48	6,609	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	2.92	17,595	N/A	N/A	10.00	26	3.58	68,745	2.48	6,609	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	SERVICEWIDE AVG	2.62	59,405	3.88	59	9.17	7,530	1.76	485,201	3.17	9,017	4.48	3,819	NO DATA	NO DATA

Figure B.1b. Recent Cataloging Costs (FY 1998)

REGION		ARCHEOLOGY		ETHNOLOGY		HISTORY		ARCHIVES		BIOLOGY		PALEONTOLOGY		GEOLOGY	
		COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS	COST/OBJECT	TOTAL OBJECTS
AK	HI	50.45	103	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	2.05	3,800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	50.45	103	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	.79	15,600	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	50.45	103	N/A	N/A	2.81	625	1.42	19,400	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
IM	HI	1.54	16,261	N/A	N/A	7.02	2,508	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.54	16,261	N/A	N/A	7.02	2,508	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	1.54	16,261	N/A	N/A	7.02	2,508	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MW	HI	2.02	20,660	N/A	N/A	17.00	1,531	14.52	325	10.00	228	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.50	1,846	N/A	N/A	17.00	1,531	.83	27,798	10.00	228	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	1.76	22,506	N/A	N/A	17.00	1,531	3.50	74,524	10.00	228	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NC	HI	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NE	HI	4.75	4,423	N/A	N/A	6.98	4,142	1.00	61,600	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	2.61	2,131	N/A	N/A	5.79	5,126	.19	119,200	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	3.43	25,236	N/A	N/A	6.52	11,121	.52	290,800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PW	HI	8.00	2,656	25.00	2	11.71	2,375	1.00	12,800	1.89	5,282	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	8.00	2,656	25.00	2	2.69	1,115	.04	700,000	1.89	5,282	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	8.00	2,656	25.00	2	7.47	3,675	.76	723,780	1.89	5,282	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SE	HI	3.88	515	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	.26	129,500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	LOW	1.63	5,900	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	.26	129,500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	AVG	2.97	20,020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	.26	129,500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	SERVICEWIDE AVG	2.73	86,782	25.00	2	7.47	19,460	.83	1,238,004	2.23	5,510	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA	NO DATA

Figure B.1c. Recent Cataloging Costs (FY 1999)