

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
BILLINGS CURATION CENTER

SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS STATEMENT

Prepared by:

Billings Curation Center Curator

Date

Approved by:

Billings Curation Center, Supervisor

Date

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose Statement

This Scope of Collections Statement serves as a guide in the acquisition and preservation of museum property for the permanent collections of the Bureau of Land Management's Billings Curation Center (BCC). The permanent collections are those materials at the BCC over which the BLM exerts custody and control on matters concerning collections and property management. The BCC has the responsibility of insuring the proper preservation, accountability, interpretation, access, storage and use of these collections. The main purpose of this document is to ensure that all present and future collections of museum property acquired by the BCC are clearly relevant to the BCC's mission and responsibilities, and to prevent arbitrary and excessive growth of the BCC's museum property holdings.

B. Departmental Authorities for Museum Property

The authority of the Department of Interior and its constituent bureaus to acquire and preserve museum property appears in the following laws, regulations and standards:

Legal Authorities

- Antiquities Act of 1906, 16 U.S.C. 431-433.
- Reservoir Salvage Act, 16 U.S.C. 469.
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 16 U.S.C. 470
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 90 STAT. 2743 (Specific to BLM).
- Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, 16 U.S.C. 470aa-mm.
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3001.
- Preservation, Arrangement, Duplication, Exhibition of Records, 44 U.S.C. 2109
- Disposal of Records, 44 U.S.C. 3301
- Executive Order 11593, 36 FR 8921.

Regulations

- Federal Property Management Regulations, 41 CFR 101.
- Disposition of Federal Records, 36 CFR 1228.
- Custody of Archaeological Resources, 43 CFR 7.13.
- Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections, 36 CFR 79.

Standards

- Interior Property Management Regulations, 410 DM 114-60.
- Museum Property Management, 411 DM.

C. Summary of BLM's Mission (taken directly from bureau-wide Scope of Collections Statement)

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the balanced management and use of the public lands and resources and their various values, so that they are considered in a combination that will best serve the present and future needs of the American people. The BLM manages the Federal Government's largest land base and a diverse range of land and resource uses, including livestock grazing, forest products, watershed protection, transportation corridors, mineral extraction, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation and wilderness, and cultural and paleontological resources, among others. The vast BLM-administered lands and resources are managed on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield, weighed through an analytical planning process that involves extensive public participation.

The BLM was not historically a museum-oriented agency. This has changed since the late 1970's with the development of special units such as the Billings Curation Center and the Anasazi Heritage Center, which have specific curation and public education missions. In its conventional administrative offices and other field units, the BLM has few holdings of museum property, which generally did not arise from systematic BLM initiatives aimed

primarily at acquiring museum property.

The BLM was created in 1946 by merging the General Land Office (GLO) and the Grazing Service. The BLM today administers some 270 million acres of public lands principally in the West and Alaska, and some 730 million acres of subsurface mineral reserves, distributed nationwide. The BLM is a decentralized agency, organized hierarchically. The Washington Office provides bureau-wide program policies, procedures and standards for Montana's two-tiered field organization. State, Field Offices and Field Stations implement the various resource management and support programs within their geographic areas of responsibility.

The history of the BLM and its predecessor agencies closely reflects the growth of the United States, especially as growth affected those lands west of the one-hundredth meridian. These western lands, their evolving uses, and the material remains of the past that they contain, represent in microcosm the sweep of American History.

The public lands and their resources have sustained the traditional lifeways of native peoples, beginning more than 10,000 years ago and continuing up to the present. They have seen use for transportation, immigration, mining, ranching, farming, timber harvesting, military and other purposes by later Euro-American arrivals. Since 1785 their availability and use have profoundly influenced the development of the United States. A key GLO purpose was to administer the survey and disposal of the public domain for such uses as railroad construction, homesteading and mineral development. (The GLO itself once maintained a collection of mineral specimens from the public domain, since lost, for use by researchers.) Now and in the future, collections of museum property can be uniquely valuable in illustrating and preserving the rich histories of the public lands and resources, their changing importance through changing times, and the agencies and philosophies that have guided the course of the Public Domain through the past two centuries.

D. BLM Authorities for Museum Property (taken directly from the bureau-wide Scope of Collections Statement)

Complementing the authorities cited under Departmental Authorities, specific Bureau of Land Management policy directives on the management of materials that meet the Department's definition of museum property include the following:

BLM Property Management Manuals

- Manual Section 1520, Personal Property
- Manual Section 1522, Classification and Accountability
- Manual Section 1523, Storage and Inventory Management
- Manual Section 1524, Loss, Damage or Theft
- Manual Section 1527, Disposal

BLM Cultural Resource Management Manuals

- Manual Section 8130, Utilizing Cultural Resources for Public Benefit

BLM Law Enforcement Manuals

- Manual Section 9260 and Handbook H-9262-1, Chapter IV, Procedures for Processing and Recording Evidence

E. Summary of the Billings Curation Center Mission

The mission of the Billings Curation Center, within the Branch of Land Resources, Montana State Office is:

To catalog, curate, preserve and protect the cultural materials, historic and prehistoric, originating from Bureau of Land Management properties in Montana and the Dakotas, in accordance to the standards established in The National Park Service's *Museum Property Handbook* (411DM).

To encourage the scholarly use of the collections held at the Billings Curation Center, by way of educational programs and exhibits, student internships, and promoting their availability to researchers.

F. Purpose of the Billings Curation Center's Collection

The basic goal of the BCC is to preserve and manage archaeological remains derived from BLM lands in Montana and the Dakotas. The BCC staff contributes to this goal by maintaining a systematic collection of artifacts and records; documenting regional occupation through research-assisted efforts; serving as a source of expertise in regional history and prehistory; and educating the public about the value of cultural resources and their relationship to multiple-use management on nearby public lands.

Consistent with this goal is our role as a federal repository. Collections of museum property are housed and maintained in facilities such as the BCC to satisfy statutory requirements and bureau-wide program initiatives. BLM also recognizes both the educational and intrinsic value of museum property collections, and therefore operates the BCC to assist in all efforts that contribute to public enhancement of these collections.

For archaeological collections to be used to provide a contextual basis for prehistoric occupations, it is important that these materials are collected legally. Therefore, the BCC policy is to accept only those materials that have been systematically collected and professionally documented. The exception to this is cases where unprovenienced material would enhance the research, and/or educational collections, as well as provide an educational outreach to the local community by providing a permanent home to local collections acquired prior to the passage of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

In keeping with the above-stated goals and priorities, the BCC has divided its collections into the following categories:

1. **RESEARCH SERIES:** A research collection is maintained in order to provide a greater depth of materials for reference and research purposes and to fulfill the legal obligations of the Federal government to properly curate for the public benefit, cultural material collected from public lands. All of this material has been systematically collected and represents a comprehensive sample of the prehistoric and historic occupation in Montana and the Dakotas. By concentrating on the curation of these collections from scientifically investigated sites, the BCC can specialize as a primary research facility for this topic. This series of material encompasses all artifactual material, related scientific samples and all associated project-generated documentation.
2. **EDUCATION SERIES:** This collection of unprovenienced material is to be used in interactive situations at the BCC; for loans to local teachers for use in the classroom; for use in local exhibits in non-institutional settings; as lecture illustrations; and potentially for maintaining education outreach kits.

II. CATEGORIES OF MUSEUM PROPERTY

The themes, goals, objectives and mandates outlined in the introductory section serve to guide the acquisition of collections at the BCC.

A. **ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS:** By definition, this category encompasses "objects, project-generated documentation, and laboratory and object documentation that result from systematic archaeological research on Federal lands. Curation of this type of museum property is mandated by law and regulation." The largest percentage of the BCC's collection fall within this category. Based on the different sources of these materials, the following groupings have been devised to assist with the management of the collections.

1. All cultural materials (both prehistoric and historic).
2. Cultural materials and project-generated documentation from BLM public lands.
3. Prehistoric collections and supporting project-generated documentation from other federally administered land Montana and the Dakotas. Transfer of these collections would be through individual curation agreements.
4. Notes, photographs, maps and other forms of documentation that pertain to the cultural resources in Montana, North & South Dakota.

B. **ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS:** The BCC does not collect or maintain materials in this category.

C. **ARTWORK:** The BCC does not collect or maintain materials in this category.

D. **HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION:** Two types of collections at the BCC would be classified in this category:

1. Documentation is maintained at the BCC that reflects the institutional history of the BCC. This includes all material relating to design and construction; all events held and/or sponsored by the BCC; and other institutional landmarks, such as unit citations and volunteer events. The material in this category consists of photographs, slides, newspaper articles, written presentations, brochures, posters, invitations, and any other material that documents the history of the BCC.

2. Documentation on the historic settlement and development of Montana, North & South Dakota.

E. **HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS:** The only historic material maintained at the BCC is from historic archaeological contexts and is described under "A: ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS".

F. **RESEARCH COLLECTIONS (Education Series)** Material within this category consists of cultural and natural history collections that can be added to existing comparative collections, which support research or educational efforts of the culture and the surrounding environment.

1. Faunal specimens which were indigenous to and/or used prehistorically in the Northern Great Plains.
2. Raw lithic materials which were found or used prehistorically in Northern Great Plains.

G. **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION FOR MUSEUM PROPERTY:** This category includes all museum property documentation that describes the acquisition, condition and location of BCC collections. This documentation includes all accession records, collection inventories, computerized data, conservation treatment records and photos taken for documentation purposes.

III. SUMMARY OF UNASSOCIATED FUNERARY OBJECTS, SACRED OBJECTS, AND OBJECTS OF CULTURAL PATRIMONY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT.

Based on the information we presently have on our collections, the BCC does not have any materials that fall within the categories of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. As consultation continues, it may be determined that some items within our archaeological collections have been determined to be subject to NAGPRA. It is the intent of the BCC to establish meaningful dialogues with all tribal parties throughout this entire process. The BCC understands that by not listing any items at this time, it does not preclude identification of such items at a later date.

IV. ACQUISITIONS

Acquisition is the administrative process of discovering, preliminarily evaluating, negotiating for, taking custody of, and documenting title to an object, assembly or lot. The BCC's acquisition policy shall govern all museum acquisitions. No acquisition shall be appraised by a staff member or any other person closely associated with the BCC, but the staff may render impartial assistance to donors seeking independent, qualified appraisers. Finally, it is departmental policy to accept only unrestricted donations of museum property.

A. Authority

All potential additions to the BCC collection will be reviewed by the BCC Supervisor and Curator who will determine whether a potential acquisition is appropriate to the collection for exhibit, research, or educational enhancement.

B. Description

Materials enhancing the collection should quantitatively or qualitatively reduce inadequacies in the collection. Proposed acquisitions should also be evaluated relative to available adequate storage space, conservation or stabilization needs, and consistency with BCC, Bureau and Departmental policies. Authority for acceptance of acquisitions and providing appropriate recognition to donors will lie with the BCC Supervisor and Curator. The exception to this is small donations from private individuals that the BCC Curator determines would be of use in the educational collection. All acquisitions by the BCC must meet the requirements outlined in this document. The means of acquisition are listed below and are subject to the following conditions:

1. Donations (gifts): Only unconditional, unrestricted donations will be accepted. No BCC staff member will make appraisals for potential donors.
2. Bequests (wills): These are considered donations and must, therefore, meet the same standards. The terms of the will can in no way place restrictions or encumbrances on the BCC that are contrary to operational policies.
3. Loans: Objects loaned to the BCC should be for a specific purpose and a finite period of time. Also, the loan should provide a significant contribution to BCC goals, as well as conditions favorable to the BCC.
4. Transfers: Transfers of ownership of incoming material can be made with non-profit educational or research institutions or organizations, or Tribal, Federal, or State agencies. Acceptance of such collections should be based on the ability of the material to contribute and enhance the BCC collections. Transfer material should also conform to a listed material type as stated in this document. The entity transferring ownership should be prepared to release all matters of custody and control of the collection to the BCC, within the parameters allowed by current curation regulations (i.e. 36CFR79). Finally, these collections should be packaged according to BCC standards. All such collections will be charged a one-time curation fee for processing the collection into the BCC accessioning system. This fee will be assessed per cubic foot of material turned over to the BCC.
5. Exchanges: Trades may be made with other permanent, non-profit educational or research institutions

or organizations, or Tribal, Federal or State agency if the end result is enhancement of the BCC collection. Such an exchange can not be in conflict with any current curation regulations (i.e. 36CFR79). Objects exchanged should be of a similar nature and relative value, (i.e. prehistoric material for prehistoric material, etc.) and within the parameters defined by this document.

6. Field Collections: Historic or prehistoric archaeological materials, found within the Montana and the Dakotas, either by permit efforts or casual finds by staff or public, may be accessioned into the collection if accompanied by information detailing the exact location of the find. Field collection material resulting from permit efforts must conform to the BCC packaging standards before being accepted by the BCC. A curation fee will be charged for those collections generated as the result of non-Bureau initiated development or research projects on public lands.

7. Temporary Reposits: Other permanent, non-profit educational or research institutions or organizations, or Tribal, Federal, State, County or municipality agencies may, from time to time, need to temporarily store material at the BCC. This type of curation agreement would be for a specified period of time. The arrangement differs from a loan in that this material is not solicited by the BCC for an internal purpose. In fact, most temporary reposits are requested by the repositing organization. Collections taken on a temporary reposit may include, but are not limited to artifactual material confiscated by law enforcement officials; material to be accessioned into the BCC, but ownership has not been transferred; and entities which have material to be curated, but are awaiting the completion of a curation facility. Temporary reposits, other than having a form which documents their receipt, are not integrated into the BCC accessioning system, and therefore do not become museum property.

V. USES OF COLLECTIONS

As a curation facility, the BCC has as a primary consideration the conservation of each object in its collection, as well as the collection as a whole. In so doing, uses of the collection must be consistent with that goal. Accordingly, all collection uses will follow bureau policies and regulations that are presently in affect. Appropriate uses of museum property include exhibits, interpretive programs and research. Museum property will not be used in living history programs.

The BCC has formal policies pertaining to uses of the collection that involve lending, borrowing, repositing or research use at the BCC. The BCC actively seeks the exchange of information these activities promote. Policy statements for each of these activities are included in the BCC's Collections Management Plan (in draft).

The following credit line must accompany all photos of BCC objects, BCC documents and archives and BCC photographic images used in any document: "From the collections of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Billings Curation Center". The BCC will receive two copies of any document produced using BCC collections in any manner. In addition, the BCC will receive a photocopy of analysis notes made by a researcher while using BCC collections.

VI. RESTRICTIONS

The BCC, as a federal facility, will attempt to limit restrictions placed on collection use and access. However, due to the nature of museum property and our role to preserve in perpetuity, certain restrictions are necessary.

1. The BCC acknowledges the proprietary nature of archaeological site locations, and will restrict this information from the general visiting public and casual collection user.
2. The BCC acknowledges the value of destructive analysis and will consider all legitimate requests of this nature. Such uses can not be in conflict with curation regulations and policies and must be approved by the BCC's Supervisor and Curator.
3. All museum property covered by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act will be restricted as to its use based on the wording of the law. However, the BCC has as a primary mission the promotion of research. Where these two are not in conflict, the BCC will continue to support and facilitate

research requests. It is the intent of the BCC to develop pertinent policies concerning such uses in full consultation with all interested parties.

4. The BCC will not accept collections that place restrictions on its use. Only unconditional donations will be accepted by the BCC.

VII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This Scope of Collection Statement must be reviewed, at minimum every three years and, when necessary, revised to remain supportive of and consistent with any changes in the BCC mission. As part of this review process, the BCC will ensure that the appropriate discipline specialists review and comment on this document.

Presently, the BCC has a Collection Management Plan in draft. It is the intent of the BCC curator to incorporate all new laws, policies and regulations into this document.

The BCC will continue to work with all BLM discipline specialists to further assess the condition, status and location of BLM collections in non-federal facilities.