

## Chapter 10. RECORDS DISPOSITION

In life cycle management, disposition is the final process of determining the usefulness of information contained in a record. The informational value contained in the record at its time of creation determines how long it is retained and if that information has short-term, long-term, or permanent value. The process of determining the informational value is very difficult because many factors may influence the decision-making process.

1. Objectives. There are three objectives to an effective records disposition program: preservation of records and information of continuing value; disposal of records having temporary value due to changing conditions; and the economic management of records with long term or permanent value.
2. Disposition Authority. All records, information, and data created, or received by Reclamation, must have a NARA approved retention schedule signed by the Archivists of the United States. These retention schedules are legally mandated by various Acts of Congress, laws, and the Code of Federal Regulations. Official records, regardless of storage medium, may only be disposed of in accordance with the approved retention schedules. These mandated requirements contain administrative, disciplinary, and criminal penalties for non-compliance with the approved disposition schedules.
3. Transfer. Official records designated for long-term or permanent retention must be transferred to the Federal Records Center or National Archives in accordance with the transfer instructions designated in Volume II of the IMH. Only copies of records, information, and data may be transferred to other Federal agencies or external entities outside of Reclamation due to legal, business, and security reasons.

Records transferred to the FRC remain in the custody of Reclamation. Records transferred to the National Archives become the property of the Archives. Records sent to the FRC or National Archives may be loaned back to Reclamation on a short term basis, copied, scanned, etc. In the case of known future reference requirements and to eliminate the frequent necessity for loans, an electronic or paper ‘reference’ copy should be kept in the office.

4. Disposal. Records may only be disposed of in accordance with the legally approved retention schedules in Volume II of the IMH. Disposal must comply with all policies, regulations, and guidance established to protect FOUO, proprietary, PII, financial or other sensitive non-disclosure information.

Authorized destruction may occur through contracted sale for recycled waste paper as long as the company provides locked bins for disposal of sensitive information. Shredding, pulping, burning, or macerating is an acceptable means of recycling paper in order to protect non-disclosure information. Witnessed disposal of sensitive information must occur unless Reclamation and the recycler agree to the conditions under which such disposal is monitored. Magnetic media may be disposed of using erasure or physical destruction.

Short-term temporary, non-record, and transitory materials should be disposed of on a routine basis to reduce and eliminate office and electronic systems clutter. This disposition has legal and audit ramifications if not adhered to in accordance with the approved schedules.

Records stored within Reclamation or the FRC may only be disposed of or destroyed in accordance with NARA approved retention schedules in Volume II of this manual. No disposal may take place if records are under a freeze or hold issued by a Federal Court, the Department of Justice, or the Office of Solicitor until the hold/freeze has been officially lifted. Records may be retained for longer periods with appropriate justification such as on-going audits, routine litigation, protracted claims, etc. However, Reclamation's Records Manager must inform NARA of such exceptions in writing.

**Program, technical, and subject matter specialists must be informed of any pending disposal of records, either within Reclamation, or upon receipt of an FRC 'Notice of Intent to Destroy Records'. A consultation review concerning the disposal should occur prior to physical destruction.**

5. General Transfer Procedures. It is not economical to process and transfer records to the FRC that have a temporary disposition of 10 years or less. Nor is economical to process and ship an accession of only 1 to 5 boxes if they have a temporary disposition of less than 10 years. Reclamation transfers all its records to the FRC and National Archives located in Denver, Colorado.
  - a. Boxes – Standard GSA records box 8115-00-117-8249 are used to ship either standard or legal size file folders and may be obtained through GSA. Map and drawing boxes W811500000006R are available through the Denver warehouse.
  - b. Shipping – Use only the standard boxes listed above for shipping records.
  - c. All records in the box must have the same retention classification code or disposal authority located in Vol. II of this Manual, and the same disposal or transfer date.
  - d. Do not pack boxes too tightly so that it becomes difficult to remove and replace file folders when doing reference. Leave about an inch of space per box. If it is the last box in the accession, you may fill the remaining empty space with filler material if the folders do not entirely fill the box.
  - e. Pack letter size folders with the folder label facing the front of the box. Legal size folders or records should be packed facing the left side of the box when viewing the box from the front.
  - f. Once the accession number has been received from NARA, enter it in the space provided along with the box number in sequential order. Do not put any other markings or writing on the outside of the box. If a note or some other information must accompany the box for reference later use a pencil and write it on the smaller of the top flaps so it is covered over when the box is taped shut.
6. Preparing the Transmittal Form 135 and 135A

The transfer of records to an FRC requires the preparation of SF-135 and SF-135A (see Illustrations 10-2a and 10-2b). Offices making shipments to an FRC will prepare an original and three copies of the SF-135. Complete all items of the SF-135 **except** 4, 6(b), 6(c), and 6(j) through (m) as shown on the reverse of the form as follows:

Item:

1. To. Enter the mailing address of the FRC to which the records will be transferred.

2. Agency Transfer Authorization. To be signed and dated by the designated RIMO for the office.

3. Agency Contact. Enter the name, building, room number, and telephone number of the person to contact concerning the records. This will usually be the Records Officer or files custodian for the organization transferring the records.

6. Records Data. Fill in columns as follows:

(a) Accession Number. Reclamation is assigned record group (RG) number 115.

(d) Volume. Each standard FRC box holds 1 cubic foot of records. Use “Odd” for Drawing boxes.

(e) Agency Box Numbers. Insert appropriate box numbers.

(f) Series Description. For each records series, a statement generally describing the records precedes the detailed description by folder of each box. Include the record series title, the name of the office that created the records, a general description of the records, and their inclusive dates. Any pertinent historical data involving the organization is to be included for permanent records. General Accounting Office site audit records must be identified. Double space between the description of records to facilitate identification of contents. It is important that the contents of each box be clearly identified to enable the FRC to give reference service and apply the correct disposition authority. For each accession, attach a REDS-Records folder index by box or detailed inventory to the SF-135. Each folder in every box being shipped will be detailed on the inventory.

(g) Restriction. Use one of the codes listed below. These codes are also listed on the back of the SF-135. Explain any restrictions on the bottom of the page, if necessary.

C – Confidential Security Classification  
R – Restricted Use – witnessed disposal not required  
W – Restricted Use – witnessed disposal required  
N – No restriction

(h) Disposal Authority. Identify the disposal authority by reference to Volume II of this handbook and the number of the appropriate records disposition item in the records schedule.

- (i) Disposal Date. Compute the disposition date from the appropriate records disposition item in the records schedule. Advance the date to the beginning of the next calendar quarter (e.g., items eligible for disposition according to the schedule on 10/1 would have a disposal date of 1/1).
3. Submission Instructions for SF-135. Submit the original and two copies (with attached inventories) to the RIMO for review, approval, and signature. The file custodian for the originating office will keep one copy in suspense until the FRC authorizes shipment of the boxes.
4. Processing the SF-135.
- a. The FRC will review the SF-135 for completeness and accuracy. A copy of the completed SF-135 is returned indicating the FRC approval to ship the records.
  - b. The RIMO will forward the completed SF-135 to the file custodian in order to prepare the boxes for shipment. One copy of the completed SF-135 must be placed in box 1 of the accession before the records are shipped to the FRC.
7. Shipping the Records. The most economical means available is to be used to ship records to an FRC. Records may be transferred by regular mail for small shipments (under 100 pounds) or by commercial motor or rail freight for larger shipments with costs to be paid by Reclamation. Shipping regulations require each box be sealed and addressed. Properly packed containers weigh approximately 25 to 30 pounds each.

Enter the following descriptions on Government bills of lading or other shipping documents to obtain the lowest freight rate for record shipments,:

"Records, Office, old, in boxes, securely protected against opening in transit"

"The agreed or declared value of this property is hereby specifically stated by the shipper not to exceed 3.5 cents per pound."

8. Signed SF-135. Upon receipt of the records shipment, the FRC will complete item 6(j) of the SF-135 providing the location of the records and return one copy to the originating office.
9. Referrals to Stored Records. Even though records are physically stored in FRC's, they are readily accessible to the offices that transfer them. The requestor may ask for information from the records or for the loan or return of the records through their local RIMO. Use OF-11 (see Illustration 10-3) in requesting reference service or NARA's automated Centers Information Processing System (CIPS), if available. Use a separate OF-11 for each folder or box requested. Persons requesting reference service should specify:
- a. The name and location of the person for whom the request is being made.

- b. The accession number of the transfer in which the record was included, as shown on the SF-135.
- c. A description of the information and/or records desired.
- d. The number of the box in which the records should be found as shown on the SF-135, along with the location number.

Records must be returned to the FRC in the original folders or boxes to allow accurate refileing. If for some reason the box is unusable for shipment, copy all information from its front onto the front of the replacement box.

10. Disposal of Records by Reclamation or the FRCs.

**Before disposal of records by Reclamation or upon receipt of Notice of Intent to destroy records from the FRC, consult with the subject matter specialist in the Office of primary Responsibility prior to records disposal.**

Records stored at Reclamation facilities or the FRC will normally be destroyed in accordance with the applicable standard in the records schedule in Volume II of this handbook and approval by RIMO. If it is determined that certain records need to be kept longer than their scheduled retention, the RIMO will provide appropriate justification to the Reclamation-wide Records and Information Management Officer who will coordinate the request to NARA to suspend destruction until the requirement is met as provided by 44 U.S.C. 2902.

11. Preparing Transmittal Form 258 for the National Archives by filling in the appropriate fields:

Item:

- 1 NARA Use Only
- 2A Agency Approval – signature of the Records Officer and date
- 2B Name, Title, Mailing Address – of the Records Officer
- 3A NARA Approval – signature of approving NARA official and date
- 3B Name, Title, Mailing Address – for the NARA approving official
- 4A Records Series Title – place the classification code first and then a short description of the records, e.g. ENV-6.00 National Environmental Policy Act Compliance (NEPA) – permanent
- 4B Date Span of Series – put in date of earliest to latest dates
- 5A Agency or Establishment – Department of the Interior
- 5B Agency Major Subdivision – Bureau of Reclamation
- 5C Agency Minor Subdivision – Office of Origin, e.g. Fallon Field Office or Eastern Colorado Area Office
- 5D Unit That Created the Records – Program or Function, e.g. Cultural Resources Program or Geology Division
- 5E Agency Person with Whom to Confer – Name/Telephone Number
- 6 Disposition Authority – e.g. classification code and NARA approval number, example ENV-6.00 N1-115-94-7
- 7 Is Security Classified Information Present? – put an X with the appropriate item, most frequently use is No, Other, Segregated

## VOLUME I – POLICY, PROCEDURES, RESPONSIBILITIES

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- 8 Current Location of Records – put an X with the appropriate indicator
- 8A Address: - e.g. the address of the office submitting the records from 5C
- 8B FRC Accession Number – completed this if records are being sent to Archives directly from the FRC with current FRC accessioning information
- 9 Physical Form – place an X in front of the appropriate choice
- 10 Volume: / Container: - in Volume indicate the number of Cu. Ft. being shipped and in Container the type of box ‘FRC’ or ‘Archives’
- 11 Date Records Eligible for Transfer: - typically this ‘Immediate’ because the disposition period has been exceeded and transfer is appropriate
- 12 Are Records Fully Available for Public Use? – place an X in front of the appropriate item – if ‘No’ type in FOUO or *sensitive*
- 13 Are Records Subject to the Privacy Act? – place an X in front of the appropriate indicator
- 14 Attachments – All accessions must include an ‘index’ and an X placed in front of *Listing of Records Transferred*
- 15-17 are for NARA Use Only

Once the SF-258 is completed and signed it must be sent to the National Archives and Records Administration – P.O. Box 25307 – Denver, CO 80225 for completion, signature, and assignment of the accession number in box number 17. Include an index for all boxes and file folders associated with the accession.

Once the approved SF-258 is received with the accession number, each box must have the number applied on the front of the box in the specified location along with the consecutive box number e.g. 1 through ...

- 12. Retirement in REDS-Records: After shipment and/or receipt of shelf location box assignments, indexed folders should be retired in the REDS-Records system. Use FRC as the first part of accession numbers from the Federal Records Center to easily identify this as an FRC accession. After retirement, Current and Home location will be identified as [Box # - Accession Number], such as: 1 – FRC-115-99-0001 for the Federal Records Center or 1 – NRG-115-99-034 for the National Archives.