

## Meeting Notes

### Interior Museum Property Committee Meeting

9:00 AM -- 3:00 PM, Thursday, April 13, 2006; Room 801, 1201 I Street, NW

The next meeting will be scheduled when events warrant. Meanwhile, work of the Interior Museum Property Committee (IMPC) will continue through subordinate working groups and through e-mail and telephonic communications.

These notes were prepared following review by meeting participants. IMPC meeting notes are posted on the Interior Museum Program (IMP) web pages at this URL <http://museums.doi.gov/impc.html>.

Ron Wilson opened the April 13 meeting at 9:00 a.m. with introductions. Meeting participants are listed below.

BIA	Emily S. Palus	703-390-6343
BLM	Carolyn McClellan	202-452-5090
FWS	Eugene Marino	703-358-2173
IACB	Kenneth Van Wey	202-208-3773
MMS	no representative	
NPS	Lynn Black	202-354-2002
	Terry Childs	202-354-2125
	Ann Hitchcock	202-354-2271
OS/NBC	Kim Robinson	202-208-1169
OS/PAM	Donald R. Cumberland	202-208-4698
	Ronald C. Wilson	202-208-3438
	Molly McMullen	202-208-7269
OS/OST	David Pradt (via phone)	505-816-1084
OS/SOL	Tobias (Toby) Halvarson	202-208-4361
Reclamation	Myra Giesen (via phone)	785-843-0160
	Tom Lincoln	303-445-3311
USGS	Allan Montgomery (via phone)	703-648-7321
	Joanna Bloch (via phone)	703-648-7326

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interior Museum Program offices will move in late May 2006 to Room 2071, Main Interior Building. Mailing and e-mail addresses, and phone numbers will not change.

The Museum Program will have a booth at the American Association of Museums annual meeting in Boston, April 27 – May 1, 2006. Anyone who has brochures that they would like us to distribute should send them to Donald Cumberland by April 20.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### 36 CFR 79 Deaccessioning Regulation Developments

Terry Childs reported that the Working Group drafting deaccession and disposition regulations has met four times since December 2005. Discussions have included identifying criteria of types of archeological materials suitable for deaccessioning, the meaning of “no longer of archeological interest”, and developing questions for informal consultation with Office of the Solicitor staff members on the definition of “Federally administered archaeological collection” and the relationship between Federal property law and the proposed regulation. The process is moving forward and will eventually result in proposed regulations being published in the Federal Register for public comment.

### Interior Museum Program Training and Technical Assistance

Donald Cumberland reported on FY2006 training and technical assistance:

#### **Managing Museum Property – March Session**

This 36-hour course was conducted in Tallahassee, FL on March 13-17, 2006. This very successful course was a collaborative effort with the NPS Southeast Archeological Center. It was hosted by the USGS. 23 participants received training.

#### **Curating Natural History Collection**

A very successful 36-hour Curating Natural History Collections course was conducted April 3-7, 2006 in partnership with the NPS Park Museum Management Program and the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History. 34 participants received training.

#### **Managing Museum Property – July-August Session**

We plan to conduct a second session of the Managing Museum Property course in St. Louis on July 31- August 4, 2006. We are collaborating with the NPS Jefferson National Expansion Memorial for this offering.

#### **Update on Distance Learning Module, Web Based Training “Introduction to Managing Museum Property”**

This approximately 30-45 minute module will be administered by DOI University. The IMP Training Committee is in the process of reviewing a draft of text submitted by DOI University. Once we finalize text DOI University will match graphics to text and the Committee will then review that effort. Completion of the module is expected this fiscal year.

### Technical Assistance or Planning Site Visits

#### **NPS Russell Cave National Monument and Little River Canyon National Preserve**

To develop collection storage plans for these sites as part of Collections Management Planning efforts.

**Homestead National Monument of America**

To provide collection storage planning assistance

**Pipe Spring National Monument**

To provide collection storage planning assistance

Funds for Museum Equipment and Supplies

With any funds remaining after the IMP training projects, we plan to transfer funds to bureaus for the purchase of museum equipment (museum cabinetry, shelving, environmental monitor devices, etc.) and museum supplies (archival items such as folders, photo enclosures, storage boxes, etc.) Priority should be given to the purchase of equipment and supplies needed to mitigate damages to collections and provide collection management assistance to units impacted by hurricanes in the Gulf. Please refer to *Tools of the Profession* and *Tools of the Trade* (for NPS) for descriptions and uses of these items. The lead bureau office should submit a listing of needed equipment and supplies to Donald Cumberland as soon as possible so that he can begin developing fund transfer documentation.

Contaminated Collections

Ron Wilson reported that the “Frequently Asked Questions” are complete, and that a draft notification form is being reviewed by Office of the Solicitor staff. He noted that Part 411 of the Departmental Manual (411DM) will be amended instructing bureau staffs to notify users of potential contamination before providing access to the collections.

411DM Revision

The discussion on contaminated collections (above) opened broader discussion of what other edits are needed to 411DM. Suggestions, including recommended language, should be submitted to Ron by the end of April.

**COORDINATING WITH THE OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR (SOL)**

Toby Halvarson reported that up to 19 SOL staff members participate in monthly conference calls to share information on current activities involving cultural resources. He asked if the IMPC, as cultural resources clients, would be interested in participating in the calls on a bi-monthly basis. IMPC representatives responded positively to the suggestion, believing that the increased coordination and communication would be useful. The names of key cultural resources staff were provided to Mr. Halvarson for use in arranging future calls.

## **INTERIOR MUSEUM COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ICMS)**

Lynn Black distributed a survey that she described as the beginning of the process to obtain a clear picture of what the bureaus are currently using, and to identify the universe of needs in the new ICMS. She will share the survey electronically, and will follow-up with each bureau to clarify any questions that exist after she reviews the survey responses, and will compare the list of needs against Departmental requirements. Once needs are determined, a request-for-proposals will be issued.

Reclamation inquired about which reports will be incorporated into the ICMS. Lynn responded that there would be opportunities for bureau-specific reports. In addition, the report interface between ICMS and the Department's Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) will need to include all museum-related data used in Departmental reports supported by FBMS.

She noted that the National Park Service currently requires individual parks to upload their annual reports to a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site. The data are then downloaded by Washington Office staff to compile service-wide reports. Auditors are able to access the same data to independently verify the data reported. A similar system might work for ICMS. Several meeting participants noted that auditors are seeking quarterly reports, so the ICMS may need to plan for that as well.

## **CHANGING FY2006 REPORTING CONTEXTS**

There was general discussion of interactions and overlap of groups such as the Heritage Assets Partnership (HAP) <http://www.doi.gov/pam/HeritageAssetsPartner.html>, Office of Financial Management Heritage Assets/Stewardship Land workgroup, and the Accounting and Auditing Policy Committee (AAPC) <http://www.fasab.gov/aapc/aapc.html>

Discussions among these groups offer opportunities for clarification and streamlining of reporting requirements. The HAP is in the best position to identify how the various requirements interrelate.

## **STRATEGIES FOR COLLECTION CONDITION ASSESSMENTS**

Corrective Action Plans developed by the Office of Financial Management (PFM) require bureaus to give higher priority to accessing the condition of our museum collections by determining what percentage of the Department's standards are met by the facilities housing the collections.

It was noted that there may be legal restrictions on asking non-federal repositories to complete our checklist of Departmental standards. Ron Wilson will meet with PFM staff on April 17 to discuss options.

[At the April 17 meeting, it was decided that bureaus will be asked to focus on evaluating

bureau facilities using the checklist keyed back to specific 411DM standards. A streamlined process to seek self-certification by non-federal facilities will be coordinated at the Department level.]

## **BUREAU MUSEUM PROGRAM UPDATES**

### Bureau of Indian Affairs

Emily Palus reported on NAGPRA compliance projects, and on the transfer of collections from the Arizona State Museum to the Huhugam Heritage Center <http://www.huhugam.com/> in Chandler, Arizona. She noted that the Tohono O'odham Nation plans to complete its new Heritage Center by Fall 2006 in Sells, Arizona.

### Bureau of Land Management

Carolyn McClellan reported that BLM is currently recruiting a national curator to lead the BLM museum program. She hopes to fill the position this summer.

### Bureau of Reclamation

Tom Lincoln and Myra Giesen reported

- Reclamation will be installing Re:discovery software at the end of April.
- Reclamation's Budget Review group recommended that it cut its museum property budget in half in 2008 and that Reclamation aggressively pursue deaccession authority [Ron Wilson noted that it is unlikely that deaccession authority will reduce the costs associated with managing Federal collections, so the group may be operating on false assumptions.]
- Reclamation's revised Museum Property Management Plan, Museum Property Management Policy Statement, and Museum Property Management Directive and Standard are in final review.
- Reclamation is adopting a Facility Condition and Cost Estimate Checklist, adapted from the DOI 411DM Short Checklist, as an official Reclamation form.
- Senior Reclamation managers are in the process of clarifying the definition of museum property where it is explicit that Reclamation units should count only accessioned personal property as museum property. Reclamation anticipates its overall estimated item counts will decrease since some units have been counting unassessed and unaccessioned field assemblages as museum property; and
- Reclamation is preparing a formal request to the Office of the Solicitor to clarify what is meant by the phrase "federally administered collection."

### Fish and Wildlife Service

Eugene Marino reported:

- FWS continues its national contract with the Army COE to identify collections at non-federal repositories in Alaska
- FWS has expanded its work with the COE to include a project aimed at FWS field stations in various Regions to determine what, if any, amount of museum property is located there. This will help FWS determine whether the material should be removed to a non-federal repository or curated in place.

- In an attempt to improve consistency in reporting FWS is reviewing its museum property information to better cross reference it with other Departmental and Bureau data calls in order to make sure the numbers are as consistent as possible.
- In FY06 FWS will use a portion of its museum property funding to procure curation supplies to be used at Refuges to better house museum property.

#### Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB)

Ken Van Wey reported the IACB continues its NAGPRA compliance activities. Press and Congressional interest continues in the Department's plans for the three IACB museums.

#### National Business Center

Kim Robinson reported on current exhibits at the Interior Museum. He noted that conservation of the Museum's dioramas is nearing completion. Kim is spending one day per week working at the NPS Museum Resource Center unpacking Interior Museum collections that were packed several years ago in preparation for the move to the new facility. He is responding to a request from Sealaska for NAGPRA information.

#### National Park Service

Ann Hitchcock reported that current NPS service-wide initiatives include (*new items since last report in italics*):

- Establishing significance criteria
- Developing an award named after Ralph Lewis—*The NPS Appleman Judd award for cultural resources has been renamed the Director's Appleman-Judd-Lewis Award for Excellence in Cultural Resource Management to honor Ralph H. Lewis and commemorate his pioneering contributions to museum management within the National Park Service and to the museum profession at large. Among his repertoire of accomplishments, Mr. Lewis's career included significant writings in museum curation, including contributions to the NPS **Field Manual for Museums** (1941), and authorship of **Manual for Museums** and the retrospective volume **Museum Curatorship in the National Park Service 1904-1982**.*

*This award was originally established in 1970 to honor Roy E. Appleman a long time and highly respected National Park Service historian who started to work for the National Park Service in July 1935 and retired as Chief of the Washington Office Branch of Park History Studies in July 1970. In 1979, Henry A. Judd's name was added to the award upon his retirement as Chief Historical Architect.*

- Integrating museum management and the incident command system—*Currently NPS is working with OEPC on writing standard operating procedures for the Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties Protection part of Emergency Support Function #11 (ESF#11 [NCH]) as part of the National Response Plan. The procedures are currently out to each bureau's Environmental Safeguards Group contact for review. NPS is developing an Environmental Safeguards Plan that will be available in draft in July. NPS continues to coordinate DOI cultural resources response for ESF #11 (NCH) for 2005 hurricane season.*

- Initiating project to extend the longevity of NPS film-based collections—(*Fee Program funding*) Held a scoping meeting with film preservation experts in January. Currently preparing to assess the need in parks.
- Initiating project to prepare high quality digital images of significant objects in NPS museum collections and post the images on the web greatly expanding web access to park catalog data and images (Fee Program funding)
- Completing a Congressionally mandated service-wide storage strategy
- Developing service-wide repository agreements and maintaining an agreement with American Type Culture Collection to serve as repository for biological collections in cryogenic storage.
- Renewing policy, DO#24 NPS Museum Collections—*on hold while NPS Management Policies are under review.*
- Revising policy, DO28, Cultural Resources—*on hold while NPS Management Policies are under review.*
- Completing a service-wide management review of implementation of deaccessioning and annual inventory procedures in parks
- Maintaining Museum Management Program web site with 19 web exhibits and 6 lesson plans—*posted new web exhibit featuring collections from Marsh- Billings- Rockefeller National Historical Park.*
- Maintaining the Web Catalog—*three sites added bringing the total to 23.*
- Coordinating development of Interior Collections Management System
- *Developing exhibit on the Antiquities Act Centennial in cooperation with the DOI Museum. Exhibit opens in early May. For more information on the centennial, see <http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/sites/antiquities/index.htm>.*

#### Office of Special Trustee for American Indians

##### U.S. Geological Survey

- As a result of the U.S. Geological Survey closing its print plant and ceasing to print USGS Topographical Maps on site, the Museum Property Program accessioned many new mapping items.
- Hydrology (Water Resources) exhibit at Frostburg State University closed and stream gauging equipment and recorders were returned to the collection.
- Museum Property Program staff are working with former USGS geologists to acquire personal objects for an exhibit in the National Center on Levi Nobel's geologic mapping of Death Valley.
- Museum Property Program's continuing search for cultural items and field equipment was highlighted in an article the USGS "Fisheries Bulletin."
- Allan L. Montgomery, USGS Museum Property Program Coordinator and Federal Preservation Officer will be retiring at the beginning of June. Allan has headed the USGS museum and historic preservation program since December 1998. Prior to that he held curatorial and collection management positions with the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of the Army, and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Allan's new address will be 114 Maple Drive, Edinboro, Pennsylvania 16412.

