

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING A COLLECTION

TO THE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS FACILITY OF WEST VIRGINIA

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INTRODUCTION

The Archaeological Collections Facility (ACF) is dedicated to the long-term preservation and management of state and federally owned archaeological collections and associated documentation from West Virginia. The ACF is committed to managing its collections so that their growth and preservation meet the highest possible professional standards and ensure the success of research, education, exhibition, interpretation, and traditional activities. We seek to inspire, advance and promote an appreciation and understanding of these artifacts of our state's heritage held in trust for the people of West Virginia.

This document outlines the Archaeological Collections Facility guidelines and instructions to be followed by state and federal agencies, private consulting firms, museums and individuals for the preservation of prehistoric and historic archaeological materials and associated records in compliance with federal and state mandated curation standards (36 CFR 79 – Curation of Federally Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections and West Virginia § 29-1 -1).

ACCESSIONS POLICY

Conditions of Acceptance

Archaeological materials must derive from West Virginia contexts or otherwise relate to West Virginia research questions. First priority is given to scientifically recovered collections of good provenience. Material of unusual quality lacking specific contextual information may be accepted if determined useful for educational, interpretive or exhibit purposes. In certain situations, other material may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Prior written approval must be obtained from the ACF collections committee in all instances.

Clear and valid title to the collection must be transferable to State of West Virginia, Division of Culture and History. A completed Deed of Gift form (*Appendix 1*) must be signed prior to transfer of collections to the Archaeological Collections Facility. In the case of federally owned collections, a signed Memorandum of Understanding for Curatorial Services must accompany each collection. Materials recovered from private lands should be accompanied by an agreement signed by the landowner stating that the materials recovered from her/his property have been permanently donated to the State of West Virginia for appropriate curation (*Appendix 2*). These documents become part of the permanent file associated with the material.

With very few exceptions, all acquisitions are unconditional. The facility normally cannot accept objects on which the owner has placed restrictions that would prevent effective research examination, normal exhibition use, loan, or disposal in accordance with this established policy. The facility also cannot accept objects with restrictions requiring that they be placed on exhibition, or that the collection of which they form a part should be kept together permanently and/or displayed only as a discrete collection.

The Archaeological Collections Facility will not knowingly or intentionally receive into its possession any object(s) that has been stolen, converted or taken by fraud in violation of local, state, national, or international laws or statutes.

Human Remains

Both 43 CFR 10 (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) and West Virginia Code §29-1-8a (Protection of human skeletal remains) provide specific rules and guidance for issues involving human remains. In response to this legislation, and in recognition of the deep cultural and emotional significance of these issues, the ACF does not encourage the excavation and long-term curation of human remains. The collections committee will consider donations of human skeletal remains only in consultation with lineal descendants or culturally affiliated groups. Should temporary housing be necessary prior to repatriation or reburial, the ACF will provide protective storage. In the event that donation is acceptable to all parties, the ACF will provide secure and appropriate long-term housing. Procedures for the recovery and treatment of human skeletal remains must be determined prior to excavation and must conform to any and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING A COLLECTION TO THE REPOSITORY

Due to current space restrictions the Archaeological Collections Facility is not accepting collections at this time. The Division of Culture and History is in the process of planning a state-of-the-art storage facility for the purpose of providing appropriate storage for collections currently held by Cultural Resource Management (CRM) consultants with ample space for future acquisitions.

Contacting the Facility with Intent

Firms, agencies, institutions, or individuals planning archaeological projects that may yield collections, and who wish to use the Archaeological Collections Facility as their collections repository are requested to contact the facility during the project's initial planning phase. This will provide us with important planning information and ultimately facilitate the transfer of the collections and accompanying documentation.

The project director should contact the Archaeological Collections Facility by submitting an Intent to Deposit form (Appendix 3) to determine if the collection falls within the areas of collecting interest, and would therefore be acquired by the facility. A project's collections may be accepted by the facility in advance of actual fieldwork. This initial acceptance will be based on evaluation of the collection against the ACF's accessions criteria, the transferability of permanent legal title to the State of WV, and the ability to meet the minimum standards for collection preparation and completeness of documentation.

Obtaining a Curation Agreement

The following information about obtaining a curation agreement will take effect when adequate storage space is available.

On the basis of the information provided on the Intent to Deposit form, the facility collections committee will determine whether the collection will be accessioned into the ACF collections. When it has been agreed upon that the Archaeological Collections Facility of West Virginia will be the designated repository for the collection, a Curation Agreement (*Appendix 4*) will be issued. Curation Agreements formalize the understanding about both parties' responsibilities and are necessary in order to deposit collections at the repository for permanent storage. The Curation Agreement must be signed by an official of the requesting party who has the authority to transfer ownership of the collections, and to enter into legally binding agreements with the State of West Virginia's Archaeological Collections Facility for the collection's custody and care.

Curation agreements between the repository and a federal agency will be handled with a Memorandum of Understanding. The signing representative of the agency will be responsible for seeing that collections deposited with the Facility meet the requirements stated in these guidelines.

Curation Fees

The following information about obtaining a curation agreement will take effect when adequate storage space is available.

Private firms, institutions and government agencies wishing to use the ACF as a repository are required to enter into a Curation Agreement with the Archaeological Collections Facility and should build curation fees into contract or grant budgets. A one-time curation fee will be charged for each full-sized box containing artifacts or associated materials, the amount to be determined when adequate storage space is available. Collections currently in storage with CRM firms will not be assessed this one-time curation fee.

In the case of small, privately held collections, the fee will be waived. In cases where the curation fee presents a financial burden on the donor, an exemption or reduction of fees may be negotiated.

Since it is often difficult to accurately estimate the volume of material to be generated, ACF may negotiate "fixed price" fees for certain projects. Contract archaeologists will be required to renegotiate curation fees in situations where the collections are considerably greater than initially anticipated.

Fees are payable at or before the time a collection is submitted with no exceptions.

Transferring a Collection

The following information about transferring a collection will take effect when adequate storage space is available.

When both parties have signed the curation agreement, and materials are prepared for long-term storage according to these guidelines, an appointment should be made with the repository curator(s) to schedule a time for transfer of the materials. Transportation of collections to the facility is the responsibility of the donor, and should be carried out in coordination with the facility curator(s). It is strongly recommended that all materials be hand-delivered to avoid loss or damage. **The donor must notify the facility curator(s) at least 48 hours prior to transportation or shipment of the collections.** The repository will not accept responsibility for collections delivered without advance notice or left with any museum personnel other than a repository curator.

A Collection Inventory record (*Appendix 5*) must accompany the collection when the donor submits a collection to the repository. This form will be kept with the documentation associated with the site to facilitate future research.

Upon transfer, the donor will be given a signed statement from the repository stating that the materials were received (*Appendix 6*). However, the donor is not released from any responsibility until an inspection of the complete collection has been performed, the curation bill is paid in full and the repository issues a signed release form titled Notification of Acceptance (*Appendix 7*).

Inspection ensures adequacy of artifact processing, labeling, packaging and documentation. Those collections that do not meet the following Minimum Standards for Preparing Collections will be returned to the depositor for further preparation at their expense.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PREPARING COLLECTIONS

Cleaning and Conservation

All non-perishable artifacts must be washed or dry-brushed, with the exception of those that are to be or have been subjected to special analysis (i.e. blood residue analysis), or artifacts whose surfaces may be damaged by cleaning. Fragile or perishable artifacts and organic materials (basketry, seed, wood, charcoal, textiles, etc.) must be treated, when appropriate, and packed to provide physical protection from crushing as well as a chemically stable environment.

Other artifacts that present special conservation problems should be subjected to appropriate conservation techniques prior to shipment, and must be packaged separately. All conservation methods must be documented, including the chemical and trade names of all materials used. Contact the curator(s) of the facility with questions or concerns regarding cleaning and conservation methods.

Artifact Cataloging

Sequential catalog numbers beginning with 1 are assigned to each site. The catalog numbers will be assigned to discrete provenience units employed by the archaeologist. Do not assign sequential catalog numbers across collections from different sites within one project area. Groups of materials with common attributes and the same intra-site provenience, such as fire-cracked rock, unmodified flakes of the same lithic material or body sherds may be given the same catalog number. Under no circumstances should materials with common attributes from different proveniences be grouped under one catalog number. To avoid confusion, each site must be assigned its own catalog series beginning with 1.

For previously collected, tested, and/or excavated sites, archaeologists must contact the Archaeological Collections Facility to obtain the next available sequential catalog and specimen numbers. This reduces the chance of redundancy among catalog and specimen numbers per site. It is possible that material previously excavated from a site is not stored and/or on record with the ACF of West Virginia. Thoroughly research all possible previous excavations and repositories.

All catalog numbers in a collection must be accounted for. If an item is initially assigned a number and is then subsequently deleted from a collection, or if a catalog number is otherwise not used,

please indicate such on the final catalog submitted with the collection. That is, type “unused number” adjacent to the appropriate space on the catalog and leave data fields empty. As such, that catalog number will not be considered to have missing items during future collection inventories or research investigations.

Only an adequate representative sample of certain artifact classes (e.g., brick, fire cracked rock, window glass, etc.) will be accepted for curation. In general, bulk amounts of these classes of artifacts should be quantified, weighed, measured and recorded in the field. However, prior approval can be given on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions will not be made without prior consultation with the ACF curators.

Include a full, written explanation of the cataloging method employed with each collection. Each collection must be properly arranged and cataloged as stated in this agreement.

Artifact Labeling

Most artifacts should be marked with provenience information including the Smithsonian trinomial site number, catalog/lot number and specimen number. The labeling system to be used is illustrated as follows:

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>46MR1</u>
Catalog #. Specimen #	1.1

All labels written directly on an artifact must be reversible and legible. Each artifact should be marked using waterproof ink and clear base and topcoats. Undercoating *must* be used on all items to facilitate labeling and reduce the danger of ink permanently bonding with the artifact. White waterproof ink or a white base coat may be used on dark surfaces. Recommended materials for object marking include clear and opaque acryloid B-72 in acetone, black and white waterproof ink, thin square artists’ brushes and Sharpie® Ultrafine marking pens.

Always put the label in the most inconspicuous spot. Never place a label on the retouched edge of a lithic tool, the exterior surface of pottery, or the maker’s mark or other diagnostic feature of an artifact. Always try to label the ventral (smooth) face of a flake or tool. For bifacial lithic items, and for all items where there may be a question, try to label the least photogenic surface.

Artifacts too small to be marked must be sorted by artifact class or analytic unit, placed in 4-mil polyethylene self-sealing bags (or other archivally stable containers) and clearly labeled. Provenience information must be clearly written on the bag or container with archival waterproof ink or marker. Even permanent ink can rub off the outside of a plastic bag or container. This form of labeling, used alone, will not be acceptable. Information must be duplicated on a tag made of Tyvek or acid-free paper and enclosed in the container.

Certain classes of artifacts (small lithic artifacts, brick fragments, window glass, nails, etc.) from the same provenience need not be individually marked. Instead, a sample of artifacts, the container and a label may be marked as described above. Include information regarding artifact counts and weight totals on the container and label.

Organic material may be labeled with Tyvek or acid-free paper tags that must be affixed to the container, with a second label slipped into the container. Additional information may be put on the container label such as taxonomic identification and artifact description. Smaller perishable organic remains, such as seeds, must be placed in a polyethylene or acid-free container as described above.

Artifacts illustrated or photographed in reports and/or publications should be labeled as such. These materials should be boxed separately and clearly labeled on individual containers inside the box as to plate or illustration number for easy reference. This information must be noted in the associated document catalog as well.

Packaging Materials

Use of museum quality, acid-free boxes is required. The Archaeological Collections Facility's storage system is designed to utilize a particular box (inside dimensions 23.5" long x 12.5" wide x 6.25" high) most effectively, expanding the storage capacity significantly. This box consists of a tray with hand holes and a 3" deep lid plus a partition cell set of one long and 4 cross pieces. It is known as the West Virginia Box and is obtainable from the Hollinger Corporation, P.O. Box 8360, Fredericksburg, VA 22404, phone (800)-634-0491.

No box is to weigh more than 30 pounds. Materials must be appropriately grouped and packed with respect to weight and fragility. The specific organization should take into consideration such factors as stability, composition, provenience, future research needs and special needs of fragile and unstable artifacts. Grouping artifacts of like composition makes it easier to meet their environmental needs within their package and within the repository.

All packing materials must be archivally stable and acid-free. The materials listed below are some of the most common items used for packaging:

Acceptable Materials:

- Acid-free corrugated board and mat board, preferably unbuffered
- Clear, no-PVC self-closing plastic bags without pleats
- Clear, no-PVC plastic containers
- Nonbuffered, acid-free cardboard boxes, various sizes
- Nonbuffered, acid-free tissue paper
- Polyethylene foam, preferably foamed with nitrogen
- Polystyrene – rigid boxes only
- Unbleached muslin, washed 5 or 6 times to remove sizing
- Silica gel (packaged)

Unacceptable Materials:

- Colored or clear plastic bags with pleats and/or twist ties
- Colored plastic containers
- Plastics containing PVCs
- High acid content or buffered cardboard boxes
- High acid content or buffered tissue paper
- Paper towels
- Newspaper
- Any acidic paper products
- Glass containers
- Rubber bands
- Pressure sensitive tapes (scotch, masking, mailing, etc.)
- Bubble pack
- Cotton Wool
- Polystyrene peanuts or beads

Non-archival quality pressure-sensitive tape (e.g. scotch, masking, strapping) fasteners and glues should never be used on documents. Any material in contact with paper records should be of archival quality, reversible, non-yellowing and should not cause damage to the paper.

Box Labeling

A Box Inventory sheet (*Appendix 8*) will be completed and submitted with the collection. The Box Inventory sheet provides the repository with the site number, accession number, project name and/or number, donor information and a list of catalog numbers and content description for each box. In the lower right hand corner of the box write only the accession number and box number corresponding to this inventory sheet in pencil. Repository personnel will create a permanent label for the box.

Collection Documentation

Prior to transfer a completed Deed of Gift (*Appendix 1*) form must be received by the ACF along with a signed Curation Agreement.

Two copies of the completed collection catalog, both on acid-free paper, must be submitted with the collection. The catalog should include box numbers to facilitate artifact location. Cultural material submitted without associated catalogs will not be accepted.

If artifacts have been the subjects of specialized conservation methods, a list of the methods used must be submitted with the catalog. This list must be accompanied by the conservator's complete report, including photographs of treatment methods and procedures. Also include any site treatment performed by non-conservators (i.e., treating metals, gluing pots, etc.)

Records Management

All original documentation must be deposited with the artifacts and specimens. An acid-free copy of all paper records must be provided. While in use in the field, paper records should be kept in the most stable environment possible. Try to keep them clean and avoid overstuffing notebooks and file folders. In preparation for submitting paper records to the repository, organize all the materials into acid-free folders. Records not received in acid free folders will be transferred and re-labeled at the depositor's expense. The following is a list of associated documentation that should be deposited with the material remains:

- Revised site form (if one is needed)
- Collection Inventory Form
- Pertinent correspondence and administrative records
- Field logs or journals. If several sites were recorded in the same journal, submit machine-made copies of all pages referring to that site and properly identify the journal from which it was copied.
- Survey records, organized by date
- Excavation records, organized by unit, then date, or other logical manner
- Maps 8^{1/2}x11" or smaller
- Lab analysis records, logically organized
- Lab manual
- Specialized reports, data, etc.

- Archival records
- Professional papers generated by project
- Maps larger than 8^{1/2}x11"
- When appropriate to the collection, prepare a copy of all computer disks. A printout of computer-generated data must be submitted on acid free paper.

Maps

Maps and drawings over 8 ½ x 11" should be rolled, not folded.

Photographs

Photographic records must be provided. They must be printed on archivally stable media and housed in polypropylene, polyethylene or Mylar sleeves. All photographic material and illustrations must be clearly labeled using archivally stable ink or other medium. A legible photographic record form with complete information shall accompany each photograph, sheet of negatives and/or slides submitted.

Negatives and slides shall be placed in labeled archival storage sheets. Only archival quality storage materials including Mylar, polypropylene, polyethylene, and acid-free paper are acceptable for storing photographic media.

The project director is responsible for having copies made of any prints or slides s/he may want to keep for slide programs or other uses prior to transfer. The repository has restricted the use of its slides, negatives and prints to duplication purposes only. The original slides are no longer available for loan.

For photographic excavation documentation we require the continued use of high quality 35mm photography on black and white film, the long-term preservation standard for primary documentation. For creating a digital record of excavations we recommend that a CD of digital images of the film be ordered at the time of development, and that digital cameras be used in the field for secondary documentation. Please see Position Statement: Primary Field Documentation by Digital Photography (*Appendix 9*) for more information.

Computer Disks and CDs

While documentation in these formats may be submitted in addition to acid free paper archives, we cannot guarantee, and take no responsibility for, the accessibility and use of these formats.

Acknowledgements

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