Department of Defense
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Commander’s Guide To Archaeological Curation - Presentation

US Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District
Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections

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Federal law, regulations, and service-wide guidance dictate that installations are required to curate (provide professional, long-term care for) all archaeological collections recovered from DoD-owned and managed lands.

Archaeological materials and all associated records must be maintained together as a unit.

Collections currently do not meet mandatory standards. The status of DoD collections is generally poor.
Guiding Principles for Curation

- Curation should begin before archaeological materials are collected or a document is created.
  - A curation plan should be developed and implemented.
- Consider that all curation actions may have a permanent, rather than temporary, effect.
  - Inappropriate curation methods have decreased “survivability” of many collections.
Guiding Principles for Curation (Continued)

- Document each action.
  - Maintain chain of custody and administrative control over collections.

- Follow guidelines in 36 CFR Part 79, Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archeological Collections.
  - Curate collections in a professional repository that meets the basic standards outlined 36 CFR Part 79.
Legal Requirements for Curation

- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
- Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990
DoD and Service-Wide Guidance

- DoD Instruction 4715.3 (Environmental Conservation) 11-11-96
- AIR FORCE:
  - Air Force Instruction 32-7065 (6-13-94)
  - HQ Air Mobility Command, Curation Guidelines for Archeological Collections (Draft)
- ARMY:
  - Army Regulation 200-4 (1-8-98)
  - Department of the Army PAM 200-4 (1-8-98)
DoD and Service-Wide Guidance
(Continued)

- ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS:
  - ER 1130-2-540 (11-15-96)
  - EP 1130-2-540 (11-15-96)

- NAVY:
  - SECNAVINST 4000.35 (8-17-92)
  - OPNAVINST 5090.1B (2-2-98)

- MARINES:
  - Marine Corps Order P5090.2A (7-10-98)
Who Is Responsible?

- **Active Installations**
  - Installation Commander ultimately responsible
  - Environmental Office staff typically handle duties

- **Installations in BRAC process** (minimal military presence)
  - Staff with NEPA compliance duties
  - Responsibility shifts to MACOM level

- **Closed Installations** (no military presence)
  - MACOM inherits responsibility
  - May delegate duties to sister installation
How to do this?

1st Step - Gather all background data, including:
- Information on all previous archaeological investigations on base;
- All site information;
- All material collections that were recovered;
- Location and condition of the collections;
- Location and condition of the records

2nd Step – Curate collections according to 36 CFR Part 79
Major Components of 36 CFR Part 79

- Ensure that the repository maintains professional museum practices, including:
  - Written policies and procedures for records and objects management
  - Periodic review and revision of policies to stay current

- Employ museum professionals knowledgeable in the methods of:
  - Conservation
  - Accessioning
  - Cataloging
  - Labeling
Repositories should have adequate space for:
- Collection storage areas
- Offices
- Research areas
- Registration activities

Repositories should meet all building codes, including:
- Structural adequacy
- Fire detection and suppression systems
- Security
Environmental Controls should be installed and maintained.

An Emergency Management Plan should be developed and implemented.

An Integrated Pest Management program should be implemented and monitored.
Archaeological collections are the only physical record for our national heritage for the prehistoric and early historic eras. They are irreplaceable.

DoD is required to maintain their collections by law.

Assistance with this effort is available from the Mandatory Center of Expertise for the Curation and Management of Archaeological Collections.

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