

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Handbook 2309.12 – Heritage Program Management Handbook  
Chapter 60 - Management of Heritage Collection**

**Amendment:** 2309.12-2015-1

**Effective date:** April 14, 2015

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Leslie A. C. Weldon, Deputy Chief, NFS

**Date approved:** April 8, 2015

**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:**

**Superseded Document(s):**

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**2309.12:** Establishes new handbook “FSH 2309.12, Heritage Program Management Handbook.”

**Zero code:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth new direction for the management of the Heritage Program.

**10:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for the coordination and consultation requirements for the Heritage Program.

**20:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for the planning requirements for the Heritage Program.

**30:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for the identification, evaluation, and allocation for management use requirements for the Heritage Program.

**40:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for protection and stewardship requirements for the Heritage Program.

**50:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for public education and outreach requirements for the Heritage Program.

**Forest Service Handbook 2309.12 – Heritage Program Management Handbook**

**Chapter 60 - Management of Heritage Collection**

**Amendment:** 2309.12-2015-1

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**60:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for the management of heritage collections for the Heritage Program.

**70:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction for administering the permits, agreements, and contracts for the Heritage Program.

**80:** Establishes codes, captions, and sets forth direction on the uniform guidance and procedures for Heritage professionals to manage and report cultural resource information.

Forest Service Handbook 2309.12 – Heritage Program Management Handbook  
Chapter 60 - Management of Heritage Collection  
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This chapter provides uniform guidance and procedures for Heritage professionals and technicians managing Heritage collections. Use this direction, in conjunction with FSM 2366 to:

1. Develop plans and protocols to identify, maintain, and use Heritage collections for Agency and public benefit.
2. Implement programs and activities to ensure long-term conservation and appropriate use of Heritage collections.

The term “Heritage Assemblage” used in the Heritage Natural Resource Manager (NRM) database is synonymous with “Heritage collection” used in FSM 2366 and this Handbook chapter. All Heritage collections are Priority Heritage Assets.

#### **60.4 – Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the Heritage professionals to:

1. Develop and implement Collection Management Plans.
2. Identify appropriate curation facilities.
3. Identify curation needs and initiate agreements with curation facilities.
4. Prepare items for curation.
5. Maintain permanent or temporary curation facilities.

#### **61 – Types of Collections**

Manage Heritage Program collections in accordance with Federal property and records laws and regulations; Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 79 - Curation of Federally-owned and Administered Archaeological Collections; and FSM 1680, FSM 2360, FSM 6200 and FSM 6400. In Federal terminology, heritage reports, documents, books, catalogues, maps, photographs, and related written material are considered to be records. Archaeological and historical artifacts and objects are considered to be property.

Heritage Program collections include a wide range of written, photographic, and electronic records and data relating to program activities and cultural resources. Some records must be maintained in perpetuity, such as cultural resource site records, while others have shorter retention value; for example cultural resource effects analyses required for a project by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1979 (NEPA), (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347).

Heritage Program collections include a wide range of prehistoric and historic artifacts along with Forest Service history memorabilia and objects held by the Heritage Program on behalf of the Forest Service History Program. Records must be associated with collected or acquired property (artifacts) to be of permanent curation value.

Heritage Program collection needs, requirements, and uses diverge from other types of Forest Service records and property described in FSM 6200 and FSM 6400. Clarifying and reconciling Heritage Program collection needs with Federal records and property requirements is an on-going process. Consult and coordinate with Regional or Forest/Grassland Records Management and Property Management Specialists as necessary.

For purposes of FSM 2360 and this Handbook, Forest Service Heritage collections include Archaeological Collections, Heritage Program Administrative Records, Archival Records, and Forest Service History, each with separate requirements for records management and curation.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) collections are included to address the occasional need for temporary or in some cases, long-term curation of certain NAGPRA items prior to final transfer of custody.

### **61.1 – Archaeological Collections**

Archaeological collections are the material remains from archaeological investigations such as components of structures and features, intact or fragmentary artifacts, natural objects used by humans, lithic debitage, organic material, rock art and other symbolic representations, components of shipwrecks, environmental specimens to assist in dating a site or sourcing materials within a site, and paleontological specimens if recovered from an archaeological context. See the definition of material remains in 36 CFR 79.

Also included in this category are the paper, photographic, and electronic records associated with the archaeological investigation yielding material remains, including, but not limited to, field notes, reports, maps, drawings, artifact inventories, diaries, photo logs, photographs and film, oral interview tapes, and digital records and images. See the definition of associated records in 36 CFR 79.

Manage the materials and records in this category according to the requirements in 36 CFR 79 unless they fall under NAGPRA.

### **61.2 – NAGPRA Collections**

NAGPRA collections consist of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony as defined in Section 10.2 of Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 10 -- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations. Treat all NAGPRA collections with dignity and respect.

Manage these items according to 43 CFR Part 10 and the requirements provided in 36 CFR 79 until repatriation and transfer of custody are complete.

When possible, store NAGPRA collections separately from other types of Heritage collections. Whenever possible, store human remains together with the funerary objects associated with that individual.

### 61.3 – Heritage Program Administrative Records

Heritage Program Administrative Records result from managing cultural resources under Federal laws, Executive Orders, and regulations for historic preservation. These include the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979 as amended (16 U.S.C. 470aa-mm), NAGPRA, The Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 469 – 469c), and before 1965, collections and records generated by the Historic Sites Act of 1935 as amended (16 U.S.C. 461-467), or the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. 469-469c-2). Examples include documents such as a survey report submitted to a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) pursuant to NHPA Section 106, a damage assessment for an ARPA investigation, or a NAGPRA inventory.

Manage administrative records in this category according to the requirements provided in 36 CFR 79.

### 61.4 – Archival Records

Archival records include but are not limited to documents, photographs, maps, audio and video recordings, and other records that are not the result of activities under cultural resource statutes, but rather are part of the Forest Service management record.

Archival records as defined here are mostly Forest Service administrative records. As such, they are not a primary Heritage Program responsibility and are not subject to the curatorial standards in 36 CFR 79. However, many Heritage Specialists are also responsible for administrative history at the Forest/Grassland level and therefore, are also responsible for archival collections.

Manage archival collections under the Records Management guidelines for Forest Service archival documents in FSH 6209.11 and History Program policy in FSM 1681.2. Additional guidance is available from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at <http://www.archives.gov/>.

There are some archival records, such as old aerial photographs and some land records, which do not qualify for long-term preservation according to NARA regulations or Forest Service Records Management guidelines but are frequently used to assist Forest Service Heritage professionals in the inventory and management of cultural resources. In these instances, the Heritage professional should work with local Forest Service Records and/or Property Management personnel to reconcile the continued use of these records by Heritage professionals with the other needs of the administrative unit, such as storage space.

Follow these guidelines for archival records that are part of the Forest Service management record:

1. Identify Forest Service administrative documents that tell part of the Agency's history. Take care that such documents and records are not lost or discarded when Forest Service personnel move or retire or during office space alterations or moves.

2. Coordinate with the Forest Service History Program and Regional Records Manager for assistance with transfer of Forest Service historic administrative records to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) or another Federal Records Center in accordance with Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1235 – Transfer of Records to the National Archives of the United States or Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1232 – Transfer of Records to Records Storage Facilities. It is not appropriate to place such records permanently in university or other private archives.
3. Original administrative documents of historical significance should not be permanently stored in Forest Service offices. Carefully make a copy and/or electronic scan of the original for retention in Heritage Program reference libraries, but do not retain the original. Work with the Regional Records Manager to prepare original documents for submission to NARA or another Federal Records Center. Periodically submit a listing of such records to the Forest Service Chief Historian.

### **61.5 – Forest Service History Collections**

Forest Service History Collections are materials such as uniforms, badges, patches, machinery, photographs, slides or other images, books, furniture, tools, telephones, dishes, alidades/fire finders, budget records, timber volume reports, and Agency newsletters and memorabilia that document the history of the Agency. Former Agency employees and their families often donate these items. Examples include:

1. Items or records associated with or signed by a significant figure. A significant figure can be nationally important (a President, Chief, prominent conservation figure), or a State or local person important in the history of a Forest, cause, or program (such as a Forest Supervisor or District Ranger). Give special attention to documents, including handwritten notes or documents, with annotations by a significant figure.
2. Items or records associated with a significant event, program, or activity.
3. Representative samples of items used in a common activity that is part of the Forest Service mission. Offer duplicate items to other Forest Service units for their collections, rather than disposing of them.
4. Items or records that capture the history of the land of a Forest, Grassland, or Research Station.

Follow the requirements in 36 CFR 79 in the absence of guidance in FSM 1680 for curation of these collections and artifacts.

### **62 – Funding**

Include cost estimates for collection management in all applicable plans of work and scopes of work for Heritage Program activities including those conducted under NHPA Sections 106 or

110 and those conducted under contract or agreement. See 36 CFR 79.7 for methods to fund curatorial services.

The Forest Service Resource program or a non-Forest Service entity implementing an undertaking under Forest Service authority that requires NHPA Section 106 review bears the cost of the management of collections resulting from the work done under that authority.

### **63 – Collection Management Plan**

Prepare a Collection Management Plan (CMP) to guide the long-term management and care of Heritage collections. CMPs may be for individual Forests/Grasslands, a group of Forests/Grasslands, or an entire Region. The Regional Heritage Program Leader determines which is appropriate and reviews all CMPs for adequacy and consistency.

Follow Federal property laws, regulations, and guidelines when developing and implementing a CMP. A CMP should include at a minimum:

1. Standards and guidelines for field collections.
2. Comprehensive inventories of items in the Forest Service unit's Heritage Collections, organized by collection type and Heritage NRM Assemblage designation case file number and site number (and Smithsonian or other institution number if available).
3. Standards for protection of collections against fire, flood, and other environmental elements.
4. Security standards to protect collections from theft and unauthorized use.
5. Protocols for access and Agency use of collections.
6. A legally binding agreement or contract for institutions curating the Forest Service unit's collections.
7. Standards and protocols for loans, accessions, monitoring, and use including internal Agency use.
8. Staffing and funding needs.

#### **63.1 – General Guidelines for All Heritage Collections**

Follow the following guidelines when dealing with Heritage collections:

1. Accession Heritage collections as soon as they are in Forest Service custody and catalog them promptly thereafter. Provide adequate temporary storage and security according to the guidelines for permanent curation facilities in 36 CFR 79.



2. All archaeological and historical artifacts and records should be securely stored. It is inappropriate for Forest Service employees, including Heritage Program staff, to display historical and archaeological items in Agency offices (atop desks, cabinets, window sills) unless they are part of a formal interpretive-educational exhibit. Unsecured artifacts are especially vulnerable to theft or discard when employees transfer or retire, or during office space alterations or moves.
3. It is never appropriate to return back to the ground archaeological material that has been excavated, collected, and accessioned. Items repatriated under NAGPRA that are subsequently re-buried at the request of an Indian Tribe under the authority of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Title VIII: Forestry, Subtitle B - Cultural and Heritage Cooperation Authority (P.L. 110-246) and items conveyed under the Native American Technical Corrections Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 122), are exceptions.
4. Discourage Agency employees from collecting artifacts during their work duties (for example while timber cruising, trail construction, or other activities) on behalf of the Heritage Program unless specifically requested to do so by the Heritage professional (for example vulnerable artifacts). Encourage employees to mark the location of any cultural resource they encounter or observe on scaled maps so that the site can be visited and recorded by Heritage Program staff.
5. Identify all curatorial facilities that house Heritage collections in the Heritage Assemblages Module in the I-Web database.
6. Keep all associated materials resulting from systematic research projects together in the same repository unless separation is necessary for security, protection, analysis or exhibition, or when on temporary loan for specific use elsewhere.
7. Ensure that non-Forest Service institutions receiving or housing Forest Service Heritage collections meet the standards in 36 CFR 79. Qualified institutions must be able to catalog and accession collections adequately and in a timely manner.
8. Execute a curation agreement with an appropriate curatorial facility that includes legal responsibility for the physical safety of the collection.
9. Provide access to collections held in Forest Service or other curatorial facilities to qualified researchers who demonstrate a need to use them.
10. Document loans in a loan agreement that includes a list of the loaned items, and conditions for preserving, handling, and shipping.
11. Monitor the condition of collections in either Forest Service or external curatorial facilities at least once every 5 years and complete a monitoring report with findings and any proposed actions.

The Forest Service currently has no statutory authority to deaccession collections from National Forest System lands, except Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony that have been repatriated under NAGPRA or Native Alaskan objects conveyed under the Native American Technical Corrections Act of 2004 Section 122.

### **63.2 – Archives and Curation Facilities**

Include procedures in the CMP to properly accession and house all Heritage collections owned and administered by the Forest Service in curatorial facilities that meet standards and guidelines in 36 CFR 79.

Include a schedule in the CMP to transfer all collections temporarily stored in Forest Service facilities that do not meet 36 CFR 79 standards to appropriate curatorial facilities that do.

Ensure that all Heritage collections housed in non-Forest Service facilities have a loan agreement.

Work with the curatorial facility and Forest Service Grants and Agreements personnel to develop a legally binding agreement for all curatorial services pursuant to 36 CFR 79. A Memorandum of Understanding is not legally binding; however the template for a Memorandum of Understanding for Curatorial Services for a Federally-Owned Collection template in 36 CFR 79, Appendix B may serve as an interim instrument until a legally binding agreement is signed.

The terms and conditions to include in contracts, memoranda, and agreements for curatorial services are described in 36 CFR 79.8. These include but are not limited to:

1. Statement that identifies the collection or group of collections to be covered and any other U.S. Government-owned personal property to be furnished to the repository.
2. Statement that identifies who owns and has jurisdiction over the collection.
3. Statement of work to be performed by the repository (explicit, detailed).
4. Statement of the responsibilities of the Forest Service and any other appropriate party.
5. When the collection is from a site on National Forest System lands that the Agency Official (Forest Supervisor) has determined (based on the recommendation of the Heritage professional) is of religious or cultural importance to any Indian Tribe having aboriginal or historic ties to such lands, such terms and conditions as may have been developed pursuant to other Federal regulations.
6. Term of the contract, memorandum, or agreement; and procedures for modification, suspension, extension, and termination.

7. Statement of costs associated with the contract, memorandum, or agreement; the funds or services to be provided by the repository, the Forest Service and any other appropriate party; and the schedule for any payments.
8. Any special procedures and restrictions for handling, storing, inspecting, inventorying, cleaning, conserving, and exhibiting the collection.
9. Instructions and any terms and conditions for making the collection available for scientific, educational and religious uses, including procedures and criteria to be used by the Repository Official to review, approve or deny, and document actions taken in response to requests for study, laboratory analysis, loan, exhibition, use in religious rituals or spiritual activities, and other uses. When the Repository Official is to approve consumptive uses, this should be specified; otherwise, the Agency Official should review and approve consumptive uses.
10. Instructions for restricting access to information relating to the nature, location, and character of the prehistoric or historic resource from which the material remains are excavated or removed.
11. Statement that copies of any publications resulting from study of the collection are to be provided to the Agency Official.
12. Statement that specifies the frequency and methods for conducting and documenting the inspections and inventories.
13. Statement that the Repository Official shall redirect any request for transfer or repatriation of a federally-owned collection (or any part thereof) to the Federal Agency Official, and redirect any request for transfer or repatriation of a federally administered collection (or any part thereof) to the Agency Official and the owner.
14. Statement that the Repository Official shall not transfer, repatriate, or discard a federally- owned collection (or any part thereof) without the written permission of the Agency Official, and not transfer, repatriate, or discard a federally administered collection (or any part thereof) without the written permission of the Agency Official and the owner.
15. Statement that the Repository Official shall not sell the collection.

Use recent Federal agency examples when developing repository contracts, memoranda, and agreements. Exercise caution when borrowing a repository template from another Forest Service unit or agency because repository (institutional) charters, missions, operational capacities, and other contingencies vary. Repository contracts, memoranda, and agreements should be reviewed by the Regional Heritage Program Leader.

Funding is an essential part of a repository contract, memorandum, or agreement. During out-year work planning and budgeting, include repository funding and funding for any related Forest Service work (funding may be provided by the agency program that generated the collection, as

well as by the heritage program). Ensure that a funding mechanism is in place for repository memoranda and agreements.

## **64 – Loans**

Allow for loans of Forest Service Heritage collections to appropriate institutions for research, exhibits, and interpretive programs in accordance with 36 CFR 79 and agency guidelines. Loans may only be to institutions and may not be made to individuals.

Coordinate with Forest Service property specialists regarding the loan of the Federal government property.

Use standard loans agreements signed by the Agency Official and a representative of the receiving organization for loans to appropriate entities including, but not limited to:

1. Nonprofit educational, historical and cultural institutions (such as museums, historical societies, Indian Tribes)
2. Organizations providing curatorial services (such as conservation treatment and exhibit preparation).
3. Other Forest Service units or non-Forest Service repositories (museums and universities) for curation and appropriate use of collections.

Use form AD-107 (Report of Transfer or Other Disposition or Construction of Property) or the sample loan form in 36 CFR 79, Appendix C for loans to museums and institutions. Track loans in the Heritage NRM Assemblages module and monitor the condition of Heritage collections under long-term loans.

Collections obtained under permit and housed in non-Forest Service facilities remain the property of the Federal government.

Collections housed by the Smithsonian Institution are in Federal ownership and control and not on loan.

### **64.1 – Research**

Follow these guidelines when loaning Forest Service collections for research purposes:

1. Authorization requires a written request to the Agency Official and should include a proposal detailing the purpose, methods, and expected results of the research and the qualifications of the individual researchers for handling the materials within the collection. For collection materials appearing on the internet, authorization and written request are not required as posting to the World Wide Web implies permission to use.
2. Ensure the loan agreement provides for security and preservation of the materials, including adequate staff supervision.

3. Destructive analysis, such as radiocarbon dating and DNA analysis, may be a legitimate research use of collections when the impact is minor or when the object is common. Before recommending or implementing destructive analysis, consult with SHPO, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties under NHPA, ARPA, or NAGPRA as appropriate.
4. Allow reproductions of original objects if the reproduction process will not harm the original object. If reproductions are retained in the collection, label them indelibly as reproductions.

## **64.2 – Education and Interpretation**

Follow these guidelines when loaning Forest Service collections for education and interpretation purposes:

1. Consider age, condition, rarity, and other attributes of the items if the intended use involves extensive handling or exposure to damaging elements (particularly historic documents).
2. Consult with Indian Tribes before loaning items or collections that may be of religious or cultural significance to those Tribes.
3. Include explicit guidelines, limits, and safeguards in the loan agreement for how items will be used and protected in educational or interpretive activities.

## **65 – Acquisitions**

When considering acquisitions of materials or records:

1. Evaluate the need for and/or benefits of acquiring Archival and Forest Service History collections using 65 Exhibit 01.
2. Do not accept donations of materials that are not from National Forest System lands, unless they meet the criteria above for Forest Service History artifacts and records.
3. The return of items that were removed from National Forest System lands is not a donation or a gift; it is a return of Federal property.
4. Consult with appropriate Indian Tribes regarding any acquisition that involves human remains and associated funerary objects, or potential unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.
5. Determine the copyright status of any archival and manuscript collections, including photographic materials and sound recordings or works of art acquired through gift, purchase, or exchange. All works published prior to 1928 are in the public domain.

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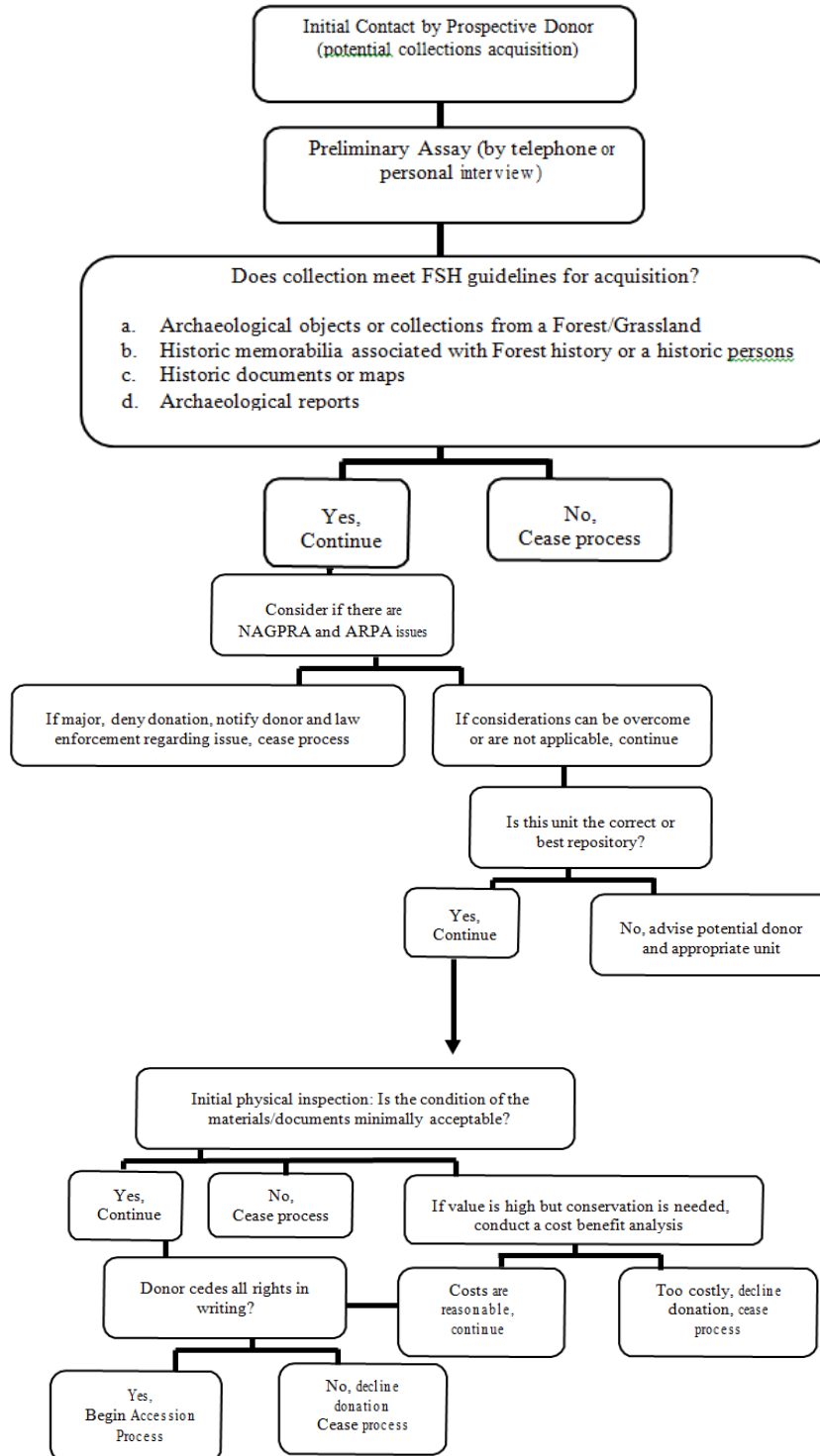
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6. Document Federal ownership and custody of acquired collections; the potential donor must provide a complete release for donated materials; use the Deed of Gift template provided in Appendix A of 36 CFR 79 to document releases.
7. Record the acquisition, accessioning, cataloguing, and other associated records for Heritage Collections in the Assemblages module of Heritage NRM and in the Forest Service unit's Collections Management Plan.

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**65 – Exhibit 01**

**Decision Tree for Acquisition of Donated Heritage Collections**



## **66 – Deaccessioning (Reserved)**

## **67 – NAGPRA Repatriation**

Follow NAGPRA Section 7 and 43 CFR 10.10 when repatriating Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

Manage these items as NAGPRA collections according to 43 CFR Part 10 and the requirements provided in 36 CFR 79 until repatriation and transfer of custody are complete.

See FSM 1563 and FSH 1509.13 for guidance on NAGPRA collections. Go to the NPS National NAGPRA website for more information ([www.nps.gov/history/nagpra](http://www.nps.gov/history/nagpra)).

### **67.1 – Repatriation of Culturally Affiliated Native American Remains**

Initiate repatriation only upon receipt of a written request from the culturally affiliated Indian Tribe or from one of the culturally affiliated Indians Tribes when there is more than one Tribe. Repatriation may begin 30-days after publication of a Notice of Intent to Repatriate.

Repatriation of human remains of known cultural affiliation and associated funerary objects may begin 30-days after publication of the Notice of Inventory Completion.

### **67.2 – Repatriation of Culturally Unidentifiable Native American Remains**

Repatriation of culturally unidentifiable remains occur under 43CFR 10.11. Initiate repatriation only upon receipt of a written request from an Indian Tribe from whose aboriginal lands the remains were removed.

Consult the Forest Service's National NAGPRA Coordinator prior to consultation with Indian Tribes regarding repatriation of culturally unidentifiable remains.

Repatriation of human remains may begin 30-days after publication of the Notice of Inventory Completion.

### **67.3 – Transfers of Custody (Repatriation) of Native American Remains**

Follow NAGPRA Section 3 and 43 CFR 10.6 for transfer of Native American remains and NAGPRA objects from existing collections.

Initiate transfers of custody only upon a written request from the culturally affiliated, aboriginally occupying, or culturally related Indian Tribe, or from one of these three when there is more than one Tribe, after consultation with all potentially affected Tribes.



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Publish a Notice of Intended Disposition in the local newspaper of record prior to transfer of human remains and NAGPRA objects. Transfer of custody may begin 30-days after publication of the second Notice of Intended Disposition.