

# **OFFICE OF STATE ARCHAEOLOGY CONNECTICUT STATE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

The Collections Repository of the Office of State Archaeology and the Museum of Natural History at the University of Connecticut (hereafter OSA/CSMNH) is intended to service archaeologists, state and federal agencies, and other organizations and individuals as a repository for private collections and cultural resource management collections required by state statutes.

The OSA/CSMNH will accept data and artifacts, accession them into the permanent university collections, and curate them in perpetuity according to established museum standards and procedures. Data and artifacts will be accessible for research, publication, and exhibition, and for educational and other purposes in conformance with established OSA/CSMNH policy and procedures.

## **I. Curation Legislation**

The repository is designed to satisfy existing state and federal requirements for the curation of federally owned collections or collections obtained through federally subsidized projects, in accordance with CT General Statutes, Sec. 10-383. The term "archaeological collections," as used here, includes: (1) all cultural, geological, faunal, and botanical remains recovered through archaeological survey, testing, or excavation; and (2) all written and visual records (notes, maps, field forms, and photographs), documenting the provenience and recovery of specific archaeological materials. The legal basis for the curation of federally owned collections or those obtained from federally subsidized projects lies in a series of acts beginning with the Antiquities Act of 1906 (P.L. 59-209; Stat. 225). The Uniform Rules and Regulations for this act express a concern that "antiquities" recovered on federal lands be permanently preserved and accessible. The regulations are outlined below.

The Historic Sites Act of 1935 (P.L. 74-292; 49 Stat. 66) directs the Secretary of the Interior to secure and preserve archaeological records; preserve and maintain archaeological objects; and contract or agree with the states for the protection, preservation, and maintenance of archaeological objects.

The Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960 (P.L. 86-523; 74 Stat. 220) provides for the collection and preservation of significant archaeological data endangered by the construction of dams. The legislation also directs the Secretary of the Interior to consult with various federal and state entities to determine the most appropriate repository for recovered archaeological specimens, and allows contracts or agreements to be made with federal, state, or other entities in the administration of the Act.

The Archaeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-291; 88 Stat. 174) amends the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960 and extends its provisions to include

any federal construction program or federally licensed activity or program. It also allows up to one percent of the funds appropriated for the activity to be used for the implementation of the act.

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-95; 93 Stat. 721) stipulates that archaeological resources removed from public lands are the property of the United States, and that such resources and associated records and data will be preserved by a suitable university, museum, or other scientific or educational institution.

The National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 96-515) contain provisions intended to ensure that prehistoric or historic artifacts are appropriately curated in an institution with long-term curatorial capabilities. Such curation is to be adequate to preserve the data and materials for future research and public interpretive programs. Eligible project costs include the costs of preservation activities under this act. The term "preservation" as used in the act includes curation, management, restoration, stabilization, and maintenance.

Finally, the State of Connecticut has designated the OSA/CSMNH as the official state repository for all artifacts found on state lands and state regulated projects (C.G.S., Sec. 10-383).

In summary, existing federal legislation provides for the preservation of archaeological data on federal lands or endangered by federal or federally licensed construction projects. Mere recovery, however, is not synonymous with preservation: archaeological data must be curated in an institution that can assure its continued preservation, maintenance, and access. Such preservation activities are eligible project costs, and agencies may consult and enter into agreements with various entities for the preservation of recovered archaeological materials.

## **II. Purpose**

By agreeing to serve as the repository for archaeology collections from the State of Connecticut, the OSA/CSMNH recognizes its responsibility to implement a high standard of curation for such materials. Proper and systematic preparation of collections prior to transfer to the OSA/CSMNH, is an integral part of ensuring this standard.

Collections deposited with the OSA/CSMNH must represent a substantially complete record of information derived from the study that produced them so that they are suitable for research and public interpretation. A complete collection is one that includes all survey forms or excavation records, field notes, maps showing locations and boundaries, photographs, negatives, artifacts or other cultural materials, ecofacts, environmental material, analysis records, and copies of any reports and publications produced as a result of the study. Any materials destroyed during the process of analysis, such as in Carbon 14 dating, must be accounted for in the written documentation of the project. Other types of materials released for special analysis prior to submission must

also be accounted for in the written documentation. Final deposition of such materials must be clarified with the Collections Division of the OSA/CSMNH. It is the responsibility of the party seeking to deposit collections in the repository to ensure that any materials analyzed by outside specialists are received by the OSA/CSMNH in conformance with the procedures outlined below. Containers used in preparation of collections must conform to OSA/CSMNH specifications. Such supplies may be obtained from the OSA/CSMNH as part of the curation agreement: alternative arrangements may be made in advance.

It is the responsibility of each project director to ensure that all materials are delivered in good condition to the OSA/CSMNH. Normally, this will be accomplished through hand delivery by the project director or an authorized representative. Any exceptions to hand delivery must be arranged in advance by consultation with appropriate OSA/CSMNH personnel.

Assistance in complying with prescribed procedures is available from OSA/CSMNH staff. Consultation is especially encouraged in dealing with conservation problems. Staff persons include Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, CT State Archaeologist; Ms. Leanne Harty, Director of the State Museum of Natural History; Ms. Cheri Collins, Collections Manager.

### **III. Policy**

As the primary state institution curating archaeological collections, the OSA/CSMNH acknowledges a responsibility for the preservation of materials recovered by archaeological projects undertaken in Connecticut. To the extent feasible, the OSA/CSMNH will enter into agreements to curate recovered materials, provided the materials are complete, thoroughly documented, and prepared for curation according to Museum standards, including site information submitted on the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office site inventory forms. Criteria for determining if the OSA/CSMNH will curate a collection are included in the OSA/CSMNH's established research and collections policies and priorities. Except in the case of collections of outstanding research importance from unfunded projects, the OSA/CSMNH will be compensated at a predetermined rate. If these conditions are not met, the OSA/CSMNH may refuse the collections. The OSA/CSMNH will provide storage in perpetuity and accessibility to materials accepted.

### **IV. Procedures**

A project using OSA/CSMNH curatorial services must follow OSA/CSMNH requirements and conditions in effect at the time the agreement is made. A request for curatorial services must be directed to the Curator of Archaeological Collections, who will present the request to the OSA/CSMNH administrative staff for consideration. If the OSA/CSMNH agrees to provide curatorial services, the Curator will communicate such agreement in writing to the applicant, stating the conditions of the agreement and the applicable fee structure. The conditions are outlined below.

Requirements for Processing of Archaeological Project Materials All archaeological sites recorded in survey, testing, or excavation projects covered by a Repository Agreement with the OSA/CSMNH must be assigned a Connecticut Historical Commission site number. Site numbers will not be assigned until a State Historic Preservation Office site inventory form is completed and submitted to the OSA/CSMNH. Inventory forms will be provided by the State Historic Preservation Office.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS**

The procedures established by the OSA/CSMNH for the processing and preparation of archaeological collections are intended to ensure that all such collections are consistently and systematically prepared to preserve both the collections and their accompanying documentation for future use. Certain general procedures may be outlined for all such archaeological collections.

### **Disposal of Collections**

In agreeing to serve as a repository for archaeological collections, the OSA/CSMNH will accept no responsibility for disposal of any archaeological material prior to the transfer of such materials to the OSA/CSMNH. Although no further disposal of such materials is anticipated at this time, the OSA/CSMNH reserves the right of de-accessioning. It is the responsibility of all parties using the OSACS/MNH as a collections repository to comply with all counterpart guidelines of the sponsoring agency for disposal of collections. Complete records of any such disposal must be provided to the OSA/CSMNH as an essential part of the entire project documentation.

### **Preservation of Collections**

It is the policy of the OSA/CSMNH that all preservation treatment of specimens be performed in a generally conservative manner. No unnecessary treatment should be attempted and, in any event, no such treatment should be irreversible. Stabilization of perishable and fragile materials will, in most cases, be performed at the OSA/CSMNH by the Museum's Manager/Conservator. In those cases in which emergency conservation or stabilization must be performed in the field or field laboratory, the OSA/CSMNH should immediately be consulted for advice.

### **Cleaning and Washing of Collections**

Most non-perishable materials, including bone, shell, ceramics, and stone, should be washed and cleaned in plain water with a soft bristle brush. Perishable and very fragile artifacts, including all vegetal, hide, and fiber items, metal artifacts, artifacts suspected of bearing fugitive paint, and unconsolidated mineral specimens, should not be washed. Such materials should be carefully brushed with a soft brush to remove loose or

unconsolidated soil: further cleaning will be performed, as necessary, at the OSA/CSMNH under the direction of the Conservator. Under no circumstances should such perishable and fragile artifacts be stored or transported in plastic bags or other impervious containers. They should be packed in boxes or bags with soft tissue paper until they can be transferred to the OSA/CSMNH.

### **Labeling of Specimens**

Most specimens should be labeled with Field Numbers (FNs) or Specimen Numbers (SNs) and, if possible, with the proper State Historic Preservation Office site inventory number. Other numbers should be limited to the absolute minimum necessary to maintain proper control of the materials.

Black india ink should always be used to label most specimens: felt tipped pens should not be used. Very dark-colored specimens may be labeled with white india ink: white typing correction fluid should not be used to prepare a label surface on such specimens. Very coarse material, such as basalt or quartzite, may be labeled by using a small artist's brush and black or white paint, as appropriate: otherwise, rough or porous surfaces should be prepared for labeling by a light application of clear nail polish or shellac. All labels should be protected by a light application of clear nail polish or shellac after the label is thoroughly dry. Labels should be small, neat, legible, and inconspicuously placed. In general, labels are best placed near and parallel to an edge of a specimen. Ceramic sherds should be labeled on the interior. Labels should not be applied over diagnostic or potentially informative features of artifacts. Chipped stone artifacts, for example, should be labeled on unflaked areas whenever possible.

Perishable specimens such as vegetal, hide, and fiber artifacts should not be labeled directly. These types of artifacts should be identified with labeled string-tie tags or placed in labeled bags or boxes, as appropriate. Very small artifacts such as disc beads and lithic debitage also need not be labeled directly but may be placed in clearly labeled bags or boxes or in glass or plastic vials. Exceptionally rough or porous materials, such as rusting metal, as well as very large artifacts, should be identified additionally with a labeled string-tie bag.

### **Boxing and Inventorying of Collections**

Upon completion of analysis and the illustration and photographing of all necessary specimens, project collections should be organized for disposition. As each archaeological project will undoubtedly present specific problems of collections organization, only general guidelines will be offered here. The fundamental organizing principles should be provenience and artifact class. Collections should be organized first by site and then by intra-site provenience and artifact class. Cardboard containers for final packing of collections are available from the OSA/CSMNH in two standard sizes. The larger size (12 x 15 x 10 inches) is a general-purpose container and may be used for most types of materials, while the smaller size (5 x 8 x 12 inches) is intended for packing very dense materials such as ground stone and iron artifacts. Projects for which

containers are not obtained from the OSA/CSMNH should use new, clean boxes that conform as closely as possible to the sizes described. Paper bags used for internal packing of material should also be new and clean.

Standard recording forms for the inventory of collections are not necessary. However, a detailed artifact inventory list must be submitted, recording all the information and documentation accompanying the collections. The list must document the occurrence of specific materials in the collections, identify their location, and provide information on field provenience. Standard labels for boxes should be used to ensure that certain basic information is always consistently displayed for visual inspection.

### **Procedures for Preparation of Photographic Collections**

The photographic record of archaeological projects, surveys, and collections will be incorporated into the Special Collections, Thomas Dodd Center for Historic Archives at the University of Connecticut. Since the material may eventually be used in research, publication, exhibition, interpretation and education, proper preparation and documentation is vital in order to ensure a high standard of curation.

General information, guidelines, and specific procedures to be followed in the preparation of such collections prior to deposit at the OSA/CSMNH and Special Collections are as follows.

### **Designation of Archival Film**

For archival purposes, the OSA/CSMNH considers the black-and white negative the original record and its corresponding print the temporary image. Color positive and negative films of every commercial brand are chemically unstable and should be used in project documentation only as a supplemental record. Advice and information on the use and archival quality of different film types may be obtained on request from the Special Collections, Thomas Dodd Center, UConn.

### **Preliminary Organization of Collections**

Prior to the actual documentation process, photographic material should be organized by film type (roll film, sheet film, 35mm slides, etc.) in logical, chronological order. Due to the nature of the photographic process, not all film produced during a project represents a significant archival record. For this reason, it is important during preliminary organization to carefully edit and cull out redundant, irrelevant, and poor-quality images.

### **Procedures for Preparation of Archival Materials**

Materials must be arranged in some logical order (working order, alphabetical, chronological, etc.). It is not advisable to rearrange a file which is in good working order. Individual parts must be marked (guide-cards or other system). If the arrangement of the file is such that it cannot easily be understood by outsiders, a note explaining the file

order is necessary.

The Special Collections Department needs the following: (1) name of the project, (2) name(s) of the site(s), (3) name of the Project Director, (4) name(s) of the author(s) of notes and reports, and (5) date(s) of notes, reports, etc. Additional information regarding the purpose and result of the project is helpful. If the data mentioned above can easily be gathered from title page(s) or short introduction(s), no special information sheet is needed.

The Special Collections Department needs the name and address of a person who can be contacted if additional information is needed.

### **Curation Services and Costs**

All fees charged by the OSA/CSMNH are associated with the costs of curation services, which include maintaining storage areas and environments, monitoring stored materials, providing remedial conservation, providing access and management, and maintaining administrative staff to carry out these functions.

### **Curation Fee**

The three hundred dollar curation fee per box (12 x 15 x 10 inches) is budgeted as follows:

- \$200 - Administrative processing and tracking of incoming materials, including preparation for storage, the purchase of appropriate storage supplies, and computer and staff costs related to processing and tracking.
- \$100 - Physical storage of materials, including equipment and housing for the collections.

## APPENDIX

### REPOSITORY AGREEMENT

#### LABORATORY OF ARCHAEOLOGY CONNECTICUT STATE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

#### UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

The Office of State Archaeology/Connecticut State Museum of Natural History (OSA/CSMNH) agrees to serve as collections repository for artifacts and archaeological data recovered by as a result of archaeological survey and limited testing projects on state, federal, and Indian lands in Connecticut, or as a result of archaeological survey for federally funded projects. This agreement is limited to projects initiated by between and . The OSA/CSMNH will provide storage in perpetuity for such materials and accessibility for use in research, display, and education.

Donor agrees to the following provisions:

1. Must submit copies of all contracts and change orders to contracts covered by the permits for which the Museum has been named as a repository. Such copies must be sent to the OSA/CSMNH within one week of the award of contract.
2. All project materials must be received by the OSA/CSMNH within two months of the termination of the contract.
3. All projects for which the OSA/CSMNH has been named as repository must submit properly completed State Historic Preservation Office site inventory forms for all sites recorded.
4. All artifacts submitted must be documented and processed according to OSA/CSMNH requirements for processing of archaeological project materials (see Guidelines).
5. Complete data and documentation from all projects in which the OSA/CSMNH has been named repository must be submitted to the OSA/CSMNH, regardless of the recovery of artifacts. Project data and documentation must include one complete set of the following:
  - a. Map defining project area
  - b. Field maps
  - c. Field notes
  - d. Field recording forms
  - e. Analysis and catalogue sheets
  - f. Photographic negatives, contact prints, and any computer readable data, final analyses, inventories

Note: Originals of these records must be submitted whenever possible: they must be documented and processed according to the requirements of the Special Collections Department, Thomas Dodd Center for Historical Archives at the University of Connecticut.

6. In the case of projects which involve private as well as state, federal, or Indian lands, artifacts, data, and documentation from work performed on the private land must be submitted to the OSA/CSMNH along with other project materials.
7. One original and two copies of all preliminary, final, and other reports must be submitted.
8. The OSA/CSMNH will be compensated at the rate of \$300 per 12 x 15 x 10 inch box for permanent repository.