

SNOMNH ACCEPTANCE POLICY FOR NEW ACQUISITIONS

Acquisition Policy

The Department of Archaeology adheres to the policy for acquisition as stated in the SNOMNH Collections Management Policy (2002:3-5), specifically the criteria for acquisition, authority to acquire, commencement of ownership, legal requirements, and appraisals and identifications. All incoming specimens must be accompanied by permits (originals or copies) as proof that the collector/donor followed all laws set forth by state and federal governments, and/or foreign governments and agencies. Copies of all pertinent documents are filed in the Department's archives and in the Office of the Registrar (see *Accessioning Procedures*, under *Receiving and Accessioning New Collections*).

Sources of Acquisition

The Department of Archaeology may acquire artifacts by purchase, contract, gift, bequest, exchange, field collection, abandonment, or other appropriate means. The Department of Archaeology most commonly receives new artifacts from field collection. Artifacts are commonly deposited from research projects or from collecting trips by students, professors, and curators.

The curation and deposition of archaeological materials and their relevant records are a responsibility of the Curator of Archaeology and any affiliated staff member of SNOMNH. Applications for deposition of archaeological materials and their pertinent records are welcomed for review from the University of Oklahoma Department of Anthropology faculty or their graduate students; from professional archaeologists; from avocational archaeologists formally affiliated with the Oklahoma Anthropological Society; and from private citizens wishing to donate artifacts found on their lands. All requests are carefully reviewed and are either accepted or denied by the Curator of Archaeology.

Archaeological Collections Eligible for Curation

The SNOMNH will accept prehistoric and certain historic archaeological collections from archaeological sites or localities recorded in Oklahoma. Formal records on such sites or localities should be on file with the State Archaeologist at the Oklahoma Archeological Survey. Collections eligible for curation can result from major archaeological excavations, from minor testing, or from surface surveys. If the latter, with few exceptions, acceptable collections must contain sufficient diagnostic artifacts to reliably identify each site's age and cultural affiliation. The exceptions include collections from prehistoric flint or other stone quarries where culturally diagnostic tools are rare but where a range of artifacts attest to how raw material was acquired and at least preliminarily processed. Other exceptions include undiagnostic tools and/or flakes found with the remains of prehistoric animals and tools and/or flakes or cores cached together in locations isolated from recognized archaeological sites. **Whether surface or excavation finds, archaeological collections deposited at the SNOMNH must be accompanied by documents showing the materials were obtained legally from federal, state, or private lands.** In the case of the latter, there should be a document signed by the landowner that transfers title of the artifacts to the archaeologist or firm in charge of the survey or excavation.

The SNOMNH Archaeology Collection emphasizes prehistoric and particular kinds of historic archaeological collections from Oklahoma. For more than six decades, archaeologists associated with the University of Oklahoma, especially with antecedents of the Oklahoma

Museum of Natural History, endeavored to find, preserve, study, and explain the evidence for prehistoric Native Americans, their origins, and their ties to historically recorded people who live(d) in what is now Oklahoma. The collections currently housed at the Museum reflect past concerns of the curators and staff to ensure that Native American archaeological heritage in Oklahoma was not destroyed, ignored, or forgotten.

The Department of Archaeology will prioritize the acquisition of collections that relate to the SNOMNH's stewardship of Oklahoma's Native American prehistoric and early historic cultural heritage. This Department prioritizes the acquisition of these types of collections because of their significance for both stewardship and research. In particular, the Department has an abiding concern for collections from those locations that enable researchers to link historically recognized communities with the state's prehistoric residents. Prioritizing acquisitions is also important because limited space is available for additional collections.

The SNOMNH's administration and archaeological staff recognize that historical archaeological collections pertaining to Native American tribes removed to Oklahoma and collections from places of subsequent Euroamerican settlement are also vital to the state's cultural heritage. Although the Museum may not be able to accept such historic collections, the Museum staff will work with the State Historic Preservation Officer, the State Archaeologist, staff archaeologists with state and federal agencies, private contract archaeologists, avocational archaeologists, and delegated representatives of relevant tribes to see that pertinent historical archaeological collections are housed at professionally staffed, responsible Oklahoma curatorial facilities whose formal missions entail preserving and interpreting the diverse, rich tapestry of Oklahoma's historic cultural heritage. Preferably, these recognized repositories will be in the same region as where the historic archaeological collections originated.

Archaeological sites yielding both historic and prehistoric artifact collections **should not** have these collections and their records divided among repositories. The SNOMNH will accept collections from sites where the principal research was on the location's prehistoric inhabitants but where minor amount of related or non-related historic materials also were recovered. Collections from principally historic sites that also yield minor amounts of prehistoric artifacts should be kept together and curated at a repository where the historic materials are germane to that facility's mission.

NAGPRA Considerations

Human remains and any associated funerary objects will **only** be accepted by the SNOMNH if the SNOMNH is the designated repository **after** the NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) process has been followed thoroughly. This process should be initiated by the archaeologist responsible for uncovering the remains, and the process should be undertaken according to federal and state law, thus involving consultation with the State Archaeologist, the State Historic Preservations Officer, any federal or state agencies involved with the archaeological excavation, state or county law enforcement officers (as designated by state law), and all Native American tribes with which the burial(s) might be affiliated. ***All NAGPRA compliance and consultation efforts are the responsibility of the archaeologist in charge of the exposure of human remains and/or associated funerary remains and recovery, his or her agency or institution, and/or the contracting agency, firm, or institution that is funding the excavation.***

The SNOMNH NAGPRA Compliance Officer is Dr. Dan Swan, Curator of Ethnology.

Requirements for Curation

The SNOMNH will accept for long-term storage and curation archaeological materials that are properly collected through surface surveys or controlled and recorded excavations under the following conditions:

1. **Materials.** Archaeological materials acceptable for curation may consist of broken or complete, unfinished or finished:
 - a. tools
 - b. ornaments or art of stone, bone, shell, wood, or fibrous plants
 - c. pottery vessels or parts thereof
 - d. any refuse that helps explain how these artifacts were made and/or used
 - e. plant and animal remains that attest to the hunting, gathering, and/or horticultural economies of past human societies
 - f. any materials that bear witness to domestic or other kinds of dwellings and buildings made and used by past residents
 - g. samples of charcoal or ash associated with man-made features
 - **Uncataloged items or materials not used/for use in reported analyses will not be accepted.** For example, bulk samples of fire-cracked rock or soil which have not been analyzed by the principal archaeologist most likely will never be analyzed by the Museum staff, and the storage of such bulky materials will quickly exceed the capacity of the SNOMNH's archaeology collection space.
2. **Documentation.** All archaeological materials brought to the SNOMNH for curation **must** be accompanied by:
 - a. Original field records, field notes, applicable excavation and/or survey permits (including reference to project/contract numbers), and maps pertinent to the recovery of the archaeological materials
 - b. Original photographs and catalogs documenting the field work and recovery of the curated archaeological materials
 - c. Original collection processing records, especially those pertaining to special conservation procedures undertaken on particular artifacts or material classes
 - d. Two copies of any written or published reports on the collection(s)
 - e. Electronic copies of catalog information and, if available, electronic copies of photographs, reports, and other supporting documentation
 - All of the documentation relating to the collection **MUST** be stored in archival quality material (no metal, including staples) and, if possible, printed on archival-quality medium(s) (acid-free or acid-free/lignin-free). This includes the field records and field notes.
 - Digital copies (in addition to the original prints) of all records (including photographs, notes, analyses, and reports) are highly encouraged. However, except for the catalog, digital records are not required as of this time (policy may change in the future).
3. **Processing.** Archaeological materials must be properly cleaned, cataloged, and placed in SNOMNH-specified containers by the archaeologist or agency wishing to accession these materials to SNOMNH. If these materials contain fragile specimens, these items must be properly conserved before submission for curation. Initial conservation is the responsibility of the archaeologist and agency, institution, or firm

- that generated the collection. Unstable specimens requiring conservation treatment will not be accepted unless arrangements are made beforehand to do this treatment. The SNOMNH can recommend contract conservators. Some conservation treatment may be performed by contract conservators using SNOMNH preservation lab facilities, but at the expense of the contracting agency. *See Processing of and Cataloging Artifacts into the Research Collection* for more guidance.
4. **Cataloging.** Archaeological specimens must be properly cataloged prior to their deposition at SNOMNH. All cataloging should be completed according to the SNOMNH standardized system and thus be accessioned and integrated into the SNOMNH archaeological collection without specimens having to be recataloged by SNOMNH staff. Contact the Archaeology Collection Manager if the material requires catalog numbers (see the cataloging section under *Processing of and Cataloging Artifacts into the Research Collection* for more guidance).
 5. **Multiple Sites.** If multiple sites are to be deposited at one time at the SNOMNH (even if pertaining to a related survey project), ALL artifacts and documentation for each site MUST be clearly distinguishable. While multiple sites may be delivered in 1 box (if few artifacts were recovered from each), they must be clearly marked (whether by use of dividers or by placing them in separate bags). All documentation and artifacts at the SNOMNH are stored by site number, so to help facilitate the filing process, this should be done prior to deposition (with special emphasis on documentation and photographs).

Special Notes on the Preparation of Photographic Materials

The permanence of photographs has been the primary concern of preservationists for over a century. Acceptance of photographic materials from archaeological projects for storage at the SNOMNH is part of the Archaeology Division's role to maintain and preserve the materials as they relate to prehistory. Certain factors affecting the permanence of photographs, including deterioration and longevity, need to be controlled. These issues will be addressed to inform and assure those who will be forwarding photographic materials to the Museum for storage that we strive to provide the best possible atmosphere for photograph storage. Also, the institutions, companies, or individual contractors are provided with information that details the types of materials that are accepted by the SNOMNH for storage in our facility. Along with the documentation relating to archaeological projects that will be housed at this repository, original photographs and associated material during the projects will also need to be turned over to the Museum for storage.

Care of Photographic Materials

Critical to the preservation of photographic collections is the control of temperatures and relative humidity. Fluctuations are more damaging than temperatures and relative humidity that are steadily too high or too low. Conservationists maintain that the best environments are those that are stable and controllable. Temperatures and relative humidity in the SNOMNH storage areas can be and are maintained at acceptable levels and are monitored on a regular basis. Air quality can be another detriment to photograph preservations. Filtering and purification of air is highly recommended. Light levels can be damaging to photographs and storage in an area where light can be moderated is important. Finally, handling photographs can also cause deterioration of prints and negatives.

Acceptable Photographic Formats

1. **General Requirements:** The SNOMNH requires that original photos, negatives, photo logs and related materials be sent with the artifacts that are to be curated.
2. **Duplicate Images:** When photos are sent for curation at SNOMNH, duplicate images are not needed. The archaeologist in charge of the project or a designee should determine which photographs will and will not be curated and note these in the photo log. However, the negative strip should not be divided or cut to remove uncurated images, but should be left intact.
3. **Film Type:** The SNOMNH discourages the use of Polaroid film—chemicals in the photo do not promote longevity and often yellow in a relatively short period of time. Although black and white film is still considered much more stable than color slide or color film, the archival qualities of color film have advanced and are much more preferable to researchers. Photographic slides are less stable than prints and negatives. If slides were taken by the project investigator or designated photographer, the SNOMNH prefers to receive prints and negatives, although this is not required.
4. **Photo Log:** Another important aspect of photo/negative curation is the use of a photo log. This is used to record all the film used during a particular project. This log should be archival and in a format that can be easily interpreted by SNOMNH staff for filing purposes. The log should have a general heading with the company name (if applicable), project name and number, film roll number and film type. The log should also contain information dealing with the negative strip number, frame number, along with a description, direction, date, and photographer. If photographs of individual artifacts are labeled with their associated catalog number, it is much easier for future researchers to access these files. This log, along with the prints, negatives, project notes, and maps, will be curated at SNOMNH.

Preparing Photographic Materials for Curation

1. **Prints:**
 - a. When submitting photographic materials for curation, please use only archivally acceptable materials.
 - b. Prints should be labeled on the back with three items – the trinomial site number, the film roll number (if applicable) and the image number from the photo log (ex: 34Gv203 03 01). Use a pencil or photo pen to record this information on the back of the print.
 - c. The prints should then be placed in the proper storage sleeves manufactured of archival quality high-density polyethylene. The number of prints per sleeve will vary, depending on the size of the originals.
 - d. Prints from digital images can be printed with the file name – if the file name contains the above information (a unique number for each photograph that includes the site number), separate labeling of each photograph is not needed.
 - e. In general, printed photos should not exceed 4/page.
2. **Negatives:**
 - a. Label the negative strips with the site number, the film roll number, and image number. Use a photo pen to label the negative strips. Do not write on the image.

- b. Place the negative strip in the appropriate sized, archivally appropriate high-density polyethylene storage sleeves. Negative strips should contain only six images per sleeve.
3. **Slides:**
- a. Although the SNOMNH prefers not to be sent slides, if necessary and other options are not available, the slides should be individually labeled with a photo pen. Provide the trinomial site number, a unique slide number, project designation, and description of the image.
 - b. Slides are cataloged right side up and oriented so that one should be able to read the information without turning the slide around.
 - c. Slides are stored in archival quality high-density polyethylene pages with 20 top opening slots per sleeve.
4. **Digital Images:**
- a. Recently, many archaeologists have converted to using digital cameras and therefore the original photographs are contained on a CD or DVD. The SNOMNH will accept a disk copy of the photo log and photographs, but a hard copy (on archival material) must accompany the disk(s).
 - b. The file name for each digital photograph must include the site number and either provenience or the image number from the photo log, along with any other identifying information (i.e., 34Gv203_N100E200_lev1.jpg or 34Gv203_01.jpg).
 - c. Each photograph in the hard copy must be visible (at least 3.5"x4" size) and clearly labeled, in case the digital copy is damaged and the files cannot be retrieved.
 - d. Multiple photos per page can be printed, but the photographs must be organized and separated by site number (as this is how they will be archived).

Applications for Deposition and Curation

The SNOMNH requests that all non-Museum affiliated archaeologists submit an application for deposition and curation *before* arranging to deposit archaeological collections to the Museum. Application packets are available from the Archaeology Collection Manager at the SNOMNH, or online at <http://www.snomnh.ou.edu/collections-research/archaeology.htm>. These applications will seek information on the site(s) involved, the nature of the field work, and estimates on the kinds and quantities of artifacts, records, photos, etc., that will be generated for curation. While the SNOMNH's staff recognizes that these applications will entail reasonable estimates of volume (needed for storage), these applications should be submitted to, and approved by the Museum, before archaeologists submit proposals for grants or contracts that will generate archaeological collections. In this way, the archaeologists can demonstrate and verify that they are fulfilling long-term responsibilities to the granting/contracting agencies. It also ensures that CRM companies have anticipated an adequate amount of money in the bidding process for the long-term storage charge.

Curation Fees

This section encompasses the issue of the development and implementation of a fee structure for curation and management of those and future archaeological collections.

For years archaeological repositories have had fee schedules and policies regarding collection curation and management, and since 1981 the SNOMNH has had such policies and fee

schedules. In 2003, review was made of comparable institutions in nearby states to retrieve information about policies and fee structures. Comparison of those policies was used as a guide for the development of our new policies at the new SNOMNH. The fee structure range among the reviewed facilities was broad and considered a wide range of implementations.

Collection curation and management is expensive and the funds generated from storage fees will be used to provide adequate curation of the archaeological collections and their associated documentation. Long-term curation can be a costly facet of collection management and fees will be used for this long term care and associated management costs, as well as providing proper shelving, archival storage materials, and environmental controls. Finally, curation fees can also be used to help with research accessibility to the collections and their associated records.

Development of a fee structure was not based upon the value of the collection, but primarily on the amount of space taken to accommodate the collections and associated documentation, as well as the cost of management. The SNOMNH bases its fees on cubic foot storage needs for the archaeological collections and by linear inch storage needs for associated records.

The most current fees assessed to collections that will be housed at the SNOMNH repository are available from the Collection Manager. These fees are only applicable to materials which have been archivally curated according to SNOMNH's guidelines. If specimens are not curated appropriately, an additional cost will be added to these fees to cover salaries, supplies, and overhead (see Appendix B, *Archaeological Curation Fees and Fee Structure*).