

SAM NOBLE OKLAHOMA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES FOR SAMPLING

General Philosophy

The Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History (SNOMNH) operates with the goal of preserving the integrity of specimens/objects in order to develop greater understanding through scientific research. While the SNOMNH recognizes the significant results that can be obtained by the use of specimens/objects in established and novel applications, it seeks to balance the losses to the collections caused by sampling with the potential of the proposed research and the SNOMNH's obligations to the scientific community.

Application

Researchers who wish to sample specimens/objects should send an inquiry by email or regular mail to the Curator in charge of the appropriate collection to verify whether or not the collection contains any of the desired specimens/objects. The formal request must include a cover letter written using institutional letterhead and the Sampling Request form. The request should be made by the academic advisor if the applicant is a student.

Evaluation/Assessment

Final approval for requests shall be granted by the Curator in charge of the appropriate collection. The SNOMNH may approve, table, or disapprove any sampling request. More information, modifications to sampling methods, research, or further analysis may be requested before approval is given. Certain specimens/objects may not be subjected to sampling without the permission of the Director as well as the Curator in charge of the collection. These include specimens of extinct Recent taxa, type specimens, specimens/objects figured or illustrated in a professional or scientific publication, and specimens/objects that are considered by the SNOMNH to be of special, archival, or historical importance.

Criteria for the evaluation/assessment of a request may include the following:

1. The research proposal is sound and the probability of obtaining useful data is high;
2. The use of SNOMNH collections in lieu of others is justified;
3. The methods proposed are the least destructive means of obtaining the intended results;
4. The researcher (applicant) is qualified to perform the work and complete the project;
5. The amount of sample and number of specimens/objects requested is justified as necessary to obtain accurate results;
6. Each specimen/object can be safely sampled without disfiguring damage or defacement or the preclusion of future study or analysis;
7. The degree to which any proposed sampling affects the specimen/object is minimal;
8. The used portions of samples, products, extracts, etc. will be returned;
9. The kind and extent of the request does not duplicate any ongoing or previous research efforts;
10. Assurance and/or evidence that the applicant has met legal requirements associated with receiving the material.

Approval

If the sampling request is approved, a cover letter and the Sampling Agreement will be sent to the applicant. The agreement contains information on the terms and conditions for the use of samples, acknowledgment of the SNOMNH and the specimens/objects sampled, charges, return of samples and associated products and results, transfer of samples and associated products to third parties, and any other appropriate terms and conditions. Sampling will be initiated after the applicant has countersigned and returned the agreement to the SNOMNH.

Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the agreement set by the SNOMNH in previous transactions may be grounds for denying new requests. Likewise, failure to abide by the terms of the Sampling Agreement may be grounds for denying future transactions.