

# Fish and Wildlife Service

## FY 2006 Report on Museum Property Management and Heritage Assets

### MUSEUM PROPERTY

(1) **Summary of Accomplishments:** The following accomplishments were reported by Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) offices for FY 2006. FWS accomplishments are broken out by four task classifications: National Initiatives; NAGPRA Collections Management; Archaeological Curation; and Collections management, care, and use. Within each task accomplishments are noted by Region.

#### **National Initiatives**

The Headquarters Office of the FWS (Arlington, Va.) reports the continuation of a multi-year effort to identify museum collections stored at Federal and non-Federal repositories. In FY 2006 our contractor has visited several Fish and Wildlife National Wildlife Refuges to identify museum collections and their needs. Additionally, non-Federal repositories for our Alaska Region have been better delineated resulting in a more accurate number of actual repositories available for reporting. These data have been used to update current information on museum collections and plan for additional surveys.

#### **NAGPRA Collections Management**

(a) The Southeast reported that NAGPRA consultation regarding human skeletal remains and associated funerary objects recovered from the Zebree Site at Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge is nearing completion. A signed and approved draft Federal Register Notice has been forwarded to NPS.

(b) The Alaska Region reported that NAGPRA inventories were completed for 90 sets of human remains.

#### **Archaeological Curation**

(a) The Midwest Region reported a purchase order to the University of Wisconsin, Madison for an inventory and assessment review of several archaeological collections curated there. The project will greatly assist in better identifying the needs of the Region's museum property.

(b) The Pacific Region and California Nevada Office reported that a review and assessment of collections at the Nevada State Museum has been completed earlier this FY. The review has identified a process through which to bring all collections house at the museum into compliance with Departmental guidance for museum collections. The bulk of the work identified focuses on rehabilitating collections from Stillwater and Anaho Island National Wildlife Refuges. Also completed was a rehousing project for collections from Last Supper Cave, which is part of Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge.

Rehousing the materials resulted in a rise in reported archaeological collections for the Region.

### **Collections Management, Care, and Use**

(a) The Mountain-Prairie Region reported that museum property funds were used to hire a temporary museum technician to assist with collections management task at DC Booth National Fish Hatchery (Hatchery). Also, funding provided to Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge allowed for the purchase of new museum cabinets to house collections, an intern to assist in collection cataloging.

(b) The Northeast Region reported that in addition to cataloging, lending property and updating the Region's records in FY 2006, Region 5 used museum property and replicas of museum property in an exhibit about Native Americans and eighteenth century European settlers at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Design was completed and the panel has been installed.

The National Conservation and Training Center reported the computerized environmental monitoring program and IPM plan were maintained in museum areas and security measures were maintained with key control in tandem with a security key-pad entry system in the archives storage areas. Key control for the display areas was also maintained. Accountability was continued in hard copy, with 50 new accessions, including objects, documents, photographs, slides, and books.

442 individual objects and a large collection of confiscated ethnographic objects (880) representing endangered species were catalogued. In addition, all accession and catalog files were entered into the Rediscovery program, all incoming documents and photographs were conserved by installing them into archival enclosures.

The Dave Hall Historic Photograph collection was inventoried and catalogued and entered into our Image Access Pro computer program (so far, 8021 photos). All new unaccessioned books in the museum archives were inventoried and entered into databases. A database inventory of Region 6 photos is continuing. 204 photographs were entered into the new Content DM database which is web-based and makes FWS photos accessible to web viewers.

Two new exhibits were designed, and are still awaiting fabrication and installation on the NCTC campus, which include the Migratory Birds Survey, and Prehistory timeline exhibits. In addition, a display on the duck docket at the Baltimore Courthouse is in production. A display on flight suits is completed and awaiting installation

(2) **Resources.** Funding devoted to the museum property program activities during FY 2006 is estimated at \$1,155,000. This total includes funding provided under the FWS "Art and Artifact" budget. Funding was used by FWS offices to cover portions of salaries, travel, contracts, cooperative agreements, equipment, documentation of collections, interns, and a limited amount of conservation work. Salaries for museum personnel associated with the Bertrand collection at the Desoto Refuge, the D.C. Booth

Hatchery, and the National Conservation Training Center were not covered by Arts and Artifacts funding, but are reflected in the overall funding estimate.

(3) **Issues.** The following issues have been identified by FWS offices:

Museum property management responsibilities are handled as a collateral duty. Demands on staff time to respond to other critical field station projects and compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act affect our capabilities to meet Departmental inventory, cataloging, and curation standards. Although making headway with respect to collections management, FWS simply lacks the staff, time, and funding to adequately respond to many of its various conservation, cataloging, and curation issues.

Many Regions are developing options for partnering with other agencies that use the same non-federal repositories to increase funds available for proper curation and maintenance of collections.

(4) **Revisions to FWS Plan.** Revisions to the FWS Museum Property Plan were begun and will continue during the coming fiscal year. The new sub-committee for Museum Property was also, launched in July 2005, has been an effective communication tool and has assisted in augmenting existing FWS repository data.

(5) **Goals.** As identified in the most current Museum Property Plan and agency policy, the FWS primary museum property management goals are to:

(a) identify the location of agency collections and engage in constructive dialog with facilities to improve their care.

(b) implement agency policies and procedures for meeting the objectives of 411 DM and legal requirements.

(c) continue to correct identified deficiencies associated with the management of collections.

(d) develop the capability to meet program objectives, specifically in terms of ensuring the availability of trained personnel and adequate storage for important collections.

(e) work cooperatively with other bureaus and facilities to address areas of mutual concern, such as the need for common storage, conservation of objects, improving access to information and collections, and training.

(6) **History.** The history of maintaining collections in the FWS can be traced to the 1871 establishment of the Bureau of Fisheries and the 1886 establishment of the Section of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy within the Department of Agriculture. In 1891, this Section was renamed the Bureau of Biological Survey. The Bureau of Fisheries and the Bureau of Biological Survey were transferred in 1939 from their respective departments to the Department of the Interior. In February 1940, the Wildlife

Division of the National Park Service also was transferred to the Bureau of Biological Survey and, on June 30, 1940, the Bureau of Biological Survey and the Bureau of Fisheries were merged to establish the Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1956, that agency was renamed as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife FWS consisting of two bureaus. In 1970, most of the functions of one of these bureaus, the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, was transferred to the Department of Commerce. In 1974, the remaining bureau, the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, was renamed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1993, research functions of that agency were transferred to the newly established National Biological Survey.

As a result of its tremendous growth and diversification, the FWS responsibility for managing museum property collections has expanded significantly. The FWS currently is responsible for millions of scientific objects and specimens, archeological and historical materials, artwork, and historical documents. The FWS is comprised of 7 Regional Offices and hundreds of field stations, which encompass approximately 94 million acres of land. Responsibility for collections maintained by the Research section of the FWS were transferred to the National Biological Survey in 1993 and then most recently to the U.S. Geological Survey in 1996. Some of these research collections can be traced directly to the origins of the FWS in the 19th century. The National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia and an archives facility at the D.C. Booth National Historic Fish Hatchery in South Dakota have enabled FWS to accelerate its efforts to identify and protect vulnerable historical collections and documents. Both facilities have active programs to assist FWS offices in preserving collections associated with the bureau's history.

(7) **Oversight.** Program oversight at the national level is provided by the Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System and the FWS Historic Preservation Officer. Each FWS Regional Office has designated an individual to coordinate the management of collections and provide guidance within the region. The actual management of museum property maintained by FWS units is the responsibility of the respective manager and his/her staff. Information on these collections is sent to and maintained by the Regional Office coordinator at the close of each fiscal year. In most instances, archaeological collections located in non-FWS facilities are tracked by the appropriate Regional Historic Preservation Officer.

Mr. Geoff L. Haskett, Assistant Director-National Wildlife Refuge System, represents the FWS on the Department's Executive Program Committee. Mr. Eugene Marino represents the FWS on the Interior Museum Property Committee.

(8) **Collection Size** See Attached Tables.

(9) **Number of objects cataloged.** FWS offices report that approximately 1.86 million objects have been cataloged, 80% of which are archaeological collections managed by non-FWS institutions. The remaining 20% consists of items maintained by agency field stations that have been cataloged according to Departmental and FWS standards.

**(10) Condition of Museum Collections.**

(a) Most FWS offices are unable to offer an overall assessment of their collection condition. However, Desoto Refuge and DC Booth Hatchery report that about 25% of the collections are in excellent-to-good condition and NCTC reports that 100% of their object collections are in good-to-fair condition.

(b) The FWS reports that for FY 2006 a total of 89 facilities holding FWS collections have been evaluated. Three are FWS repositories that are rated as 'excellent to good'. The remaining 86 are non-federal repositories of which 36 are rated as 'good' and 48 as 'fair' and 2 as 'poor'. Data for the FWS repositories is based on reviews of the facility and infrastructure by Department museum property specialists and information on the non-FWS facilities was derived by examinations conducted by FWS contractors and data collected by the Department.

**(11) Additions and Withdrawals of Museum Collections by Discipline** For FY2006, FWS reports additions of 324,424 and withdrawals of 195,550 (See attached Tables).

**(12) Deferred Maintenance of Collections**

Three regions report a total of \$2.5 million in deferred maintenance to address the management of their collections, while two regions report \$661,000 in deferred maintenance for facilities (See attached Charts).

**(13) Collection information available via the Internet.** The following facilities have information about their collections available via the world wide web.

(a) General information about the FWS Museum Property program can be found at <http://historicpreservation.fws.gov> the new Cultural Resources website recently launched by FWS.

(b) General information about Desoto Refuge's Bertrand Collection home page is found at <http://refuges.fws.gov/generalinterest/steamboatbertrand2.html>.

(c) Information about D.C. Booth Hatchery is available via the D.C. Booth Hatchery home page, <http://dcbooth.fws.gov/>. A few research requests have been received via the Internet.

(d) While not open for public visitation, the National Conservation Training Center has posted general information about its collections and the agency's heritage initiative at <http://www.nctc.fws.gov/history/index.html>.

**(14) Attendance at locations exhibiting objects.**

(a) The Desoto Refuge reported the following for attendance at locations exhibiting FWS objects:

- (i) DeSoto Refuge Visitor Center 69,800
  - (ii) Mystic Seaport Museum 295,500
  - (iii) Nebraska Lewis & Clark Signature Event 40,000
  - (iiii) Henry Doorly Zoo 1,464,400
- (b) DC Booth Hacthery reported attendance (including outdoor exhibits) of 149,000.

(15) **List of FWS and Non-Federal repositories and Accountable Officers.** No information is available on FWS accountable officers. A partial list of non-Federal repositories believed to be storing FWS collections on loan is attached.

(16) **Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.** The FWS 1995 inventory required by Section 5 of the Act provides the most current information on human remains and associated materials identified by FWS offices (Table 1). The complete inventory is available for review upon request. Information below is largely unchanged from the previous reporting year.

**Table 1. Summation of FWS NAGPRA information**

NAGPRA FTEs	Total Number of Remains subject to NAGPRA	Culturally Affiliated Remains	Culturally unaffiliated remains	Repatriated Remains	Total Number of NAGPRA items reported in Notices
0.5 (\$70,000)	c.915	51	c.886	29	Human Remains: 103 Funerary Objects: 13 Sacred Objects: 30 Objects of Cultural patrimony: 137

(a) Briefly discuss current issues, recent accomplishments, and/or next steps related to bureau NAGPRA compliance. (See NAGPRA Collections accomplishments above.)