

Progress Report  
on Interagency Cooperative Agreement  
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submitted by

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## Introduction

This report covers the progress in 1996 of activities conducted under a five-year interagency cooperative agreement signed by representatives of the University of Wyoming (UW), Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Federal Highway Administration (FHA), Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), Wyoming Department of Commerce (DOC), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The purpose of the agreement has been to provide cost-sharing for: (1) completion of the NAGPRA inventory at the University of Wyoming Archaeological Repository (UWAR), and (2) development of collections management and inventory capabilities for museum property curated at UWAR.

Task Orders pertaining to NAGPRA have been completed with BLM, USBR, USFWS, and WYDOT. Two additional task orders with BLM and one with USBR are in place to assist with collections management at the UWAR in the Ag A building on campus (see attached map). Several activities were completed in 1996, while others were either continued or initiated. These are summarized below.

## Box Inventory

Task order funding and our own resources continue to be committed to the box inventory of archaeological collections in the repository. Task orders currently are supporting 1-2 students and we have funded two student interns through our own budget. A total of 159 boxes were inventoried this year. Added to last year's 300, this figure produces a total of 459 boxes inventoried to date.

The fact that fewer boxes were inventoried in 1996 can be explained by a couple of factors. First, task order dollar amounts have decreased somewhat, so we have hired fewer student assistants. Second, the inventory staff encountered boxes that contain scores of small assemblages from different sites that had been organized by county in our old system. Most of these are assemblages were gathered during contract projects on federal lands or for federal undertakings. Boxes like these go much slower, because so many sites are involved. Depending on the contents of a single box, inventory efforts may take from half an hour to two weeks to complete.

#### Computer Programming

Last year we mentioned the hiring of Eric Ingbar to develop the computer program for our box inventory. Eric has largely completed this effort and will be visiting us later this month, hopefully to work out the last few bugs in the system. Our curator has been working with him regularly and is planning a day long training session with him when he returns to Laramie. Eric has installed the program in Windows 95 to make our records more consistent with the work he is doing on the Wyoming Cultural Records database with SHPO. With any luck, we will begin to do data entry in earnest next semester. The format for the data entry of box information is attached.

#### Curation Training

Earlier this year, we had enrolled our curator in a collections management training class in Virginia. Unfortunately,

recent government shut downs caused cancellation of the class, and to our knowledge none have been rescheduled. These classes are important if repositories are to become better acquainted with federal guidelines, so additional training sessions must be offered again soon. We will schedule Judy Brown in a session if and when they are rescheduled, provided funding is still available.

#### Special Collections

Three curation activities are relevant here. The first occurred earlier this year when we had a student complete the sorting and boxing of bison bone from the Finley site on BLM property in Sweetwater County. This bone had been left at the site decades ago when vandals potted the site. We recovered the assemblage in the late 1980s.

The second project was the hiring of a student part time to review E.B. Renaud's field notes from surveys conducted in Wyoming before World War II. Mike Peterson performed this task by attempting to identify as many of Renaud's sites as possible that came from BLM land. Peterson was not able to resolve all of the site locations, but he did report to BLM on those that he could resolve. Final editing on this project is due for completion in January 1997, but considerably more work could be done, including additional site visits.

The third project is scheduled for next semester and involves curating several old collections that were gathered by the BLM in the 1970s. This project is being funded in part by a BLM Task Order.

Cooperative agreement funding also was used to purchase two items that will enhance collections security at the archaeological repository. The first purchase was a fire proof filing cabinet which will be used to store billing and accession records. The second is a security door for the main entrance to the archaeological repository itself. It is signed as having restricted access. Both entrances to the repository now have security doors in place. These items were considered important elements in the needs assessment.

#### Cultural Records

We mentioned last year that the curator received new space in the Ag A building on campus, specifically Rooms 108 and 108A. This year the University gave us permission to move the SHPO Cultural Records office into this space as well. The move was completed in October, and the repository now holds site forms, field notes, maps, and archaeological collections all in one building ensuring more rapid access to each for research and management. With Cultural Records help, the building is now wired for high speed computer access. This move will go a long way to helping us better integrate archaeological resource management in the state.

The Dean's office at the University also worked with the State Archaeologist's Office, the Department of Anthropology, and the Department of Range Management to acquire shared lab/storage space in a large room adjacent to the archaeological repository in Ag A. This space will be used as a laboratory and collections storage for

Anthropology and Range Management. UWAR plans to install shelving for 2,000 or more additional boxes in a portion of the room that

can be caged off from work areas.

#### Emergency Procedures Manual

Dr. Danny Walker and Judy Brown prepared an emergency procedures manual for the Ag A facility. This manual covers a variety of issues, including responses to natural disasters, storage matters, emergency help, evacuation plans, etc. It has been approved by the Department of Commerce for use by the State Archaeologist's Office and will be made available to staff working in the building. The document also will be added to as we develop some of the recommendations in the needs assessment. It also may be superseded as additional plans develop at the University.

#### Plains Conference

The cooperative efforts we all are making with the archaeological repository in Wyoming has received regional recognition. Brad Coutant, of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, delivered a paper on the cooperative agreement in a symposium on collections management at the recent Plains Conference in Iowa City. Dr. Miller was a discussant in the symposium. Federal agencies, academia, repositories, and others are beginning to talk more together about curation issues and the Wyoming effort is well represented in this dialogue.

#### Future Funding

As we mentioned before, a couple of years ago we submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) for a curation

improvement grant to conduct our collections inventory. We were not funded, but we did receive some good reviews. Next semester we plan to work this proposal over and either resubmit it to NSF or

send it to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). We hope to have better luck this time since we accomplished many of the objectives that were recommended in the initial reviews, such as a needs assessment, development of a computer program, and conducting a sample box inventory.

#### Conclusion

This marks the end of the second year of operations under the interagency Cooperative Agreement. We are continuing to implement as many recommendations in the needs assessment as possible, and we have begun discussions with other parties on how to better link databases among the cultural records office, our repository, and Western Wyoming College (another repository).

As the curation program is completed on our computer, some staff will spend more time on data entry and less time on the actual box inventory. This will slow the inventory somewhat, but it will be easier to keep everything caught up. After two years of administering several task orders, it is obvious that a single, large grant is needed to concentrate enough sustained effort on the inventory to complete it in a few, rather than several, years.

This page is a copy of a campus Map Of the  
University of Wyoming

