

Executive Summary

Northwest Railway Museum

Collections Management Policy

The Northwest Railway Museum Collections Management Policy establishes guidelines for the scope, care, and control of the Museum's collections, including accessions, deaccessions, loans, and records. The Policy codifies the Museum's adherence to professional standards, best practices, and codes of ethics as defined by the American Association of Museums and American Association for State and Local History.

- Section II addresses the scope of the Museum's collections; the Policy formally establishes the Museum's Permanent Collection as distinct from its Other Collections. Objects in the Permanent Collection—artifacts which may help to establish or illustrate **the significance of railroads in the development of Washington and adjacent areas**—are held in the public trust and require the highest level of protection and care that the Museum can provide. The Museum's Other Collections—comprising library and reference material, objects used in hands-on educational programming, and exhibition props—are held to a lower standard of care and can be readily disposed of when deemed no longer useful or relevant.
- Section III of the Policy addresses the criteria and process for accessioning, or bringing acquisitions (newly acquired objects) into the Museum's Permanent Collection. The following basic criteria apply to all accessioned objects: the object must be consistent with the Museum's Mission Statement; the object must not be known to have been acquired illegally; and the Museum must have the ability and intention to care for the object. Most objects acquired for the Museum's Permanent Collection and Other Collections are donations. However, the Policy also establishes procedures for treating purchases; transfers from and exchanges with other museums and institutions; and bringing abandoned property and unclaimed loans (treated in detail in Section VI) into the collections according to Washington State law.
- Section IV the Policy establishes the criteria and process for instances of deaccessioning, or removing objects from the Museum's Permanent Collection—because an object has deteriorated beyond repair; has been found to be hazardous; is found to have been illegally acquired; is deemed more suitable for another public collection; or is not relevant to the Museum's mission. The Policy outlines procedures for transfer to another institution; repatriation; sale and the use of proceeds; and disposal.
- Section V of the Policy addresses loans of objects from Museum collections, stipulating that object loans to other museums are to be approved if the borrowing institution can provide a high standard of care and safety to the object. Additionally, the Museum shall care for incoming object loans according to the standard applied to its own collections.
- Sections VII and VIII outline the Museum's obligation to care for objects held in the public trust by preventing theft, loss, and damage. Additionally, the Museum is obliged to maintain public accessibility to the collections.

**Northwest Railway Museum
Collections Management Policy
June 2019**

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Preface

The Collections Management Policy of the Northwest Railway Museum was compiled by and reviewed by the Northwest Railway Museum staff; approved by the Northwest Railway Museum Board of Trustees on June 20th, 2019.

I. Introduction

A. Introductory Statement

The Northwest Railway Museum was founded in 1955. It was incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Washington in 1957. For the purposes of this document it shall be named the "Northwest Railway Museum" or the "Museum."

B. Mission Statement

The Museum's Mission guides the collecting activity.

1. Mission Statement

The Northwest Railway Museum mission is **to develop and operate an outstanding railroad museum that provides the public a place to experience the excitement of a working railroad and to see and understand the significance of railroads in the development of Washington and adjacent areas.**

C. Purpose of the Collections Management Policy

1. The Collections Management Policy of the Northwest Railway Museum establishes guidelines for the scope, care, and control of the Museum's collections, including acquisitions, deaccessions, loans, and records.
2. This Policy replaces all previous policies and is binding to all Museum representatives. This Policy will be reviewed every five years, with revisions approved by the Board of Trustees, to reflect changes in the Museum's circumstances and current professional standards.

D. Statement of Authority

1. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that this Collections Management Policy is implemented and adhered to by members of the staff, Board of Trustees, and volunteers.
2. The Collection staff oversees the acquisition of objects into the Museum's collections as well as the management of the collection, and recommend items to be removed from the Museum's Permanent Collection.
3. The Collections Committee provides guidance in matters of collections planning and acquisition strategy.
4. The Board of Trustees reviews and approves the Collections Management Policy.

II. Scope of Collections

As the mission of the Northwest Railway Museum has a two essential components: one, of preserving and maintaining the material culture, and two, living history of railway heritage of Washington State and adjacent areas; for purposes of management and operational efficiency, the Northwest Railway Museum's collections will be separated by different criteria and will have separation of functions in collections and record keeping, as may be required.

No artifacts or objects of railway equipment may be permanently exchanged between the Permanent and other collections without the consent of the Board of Trustees. All permanent or temporary transfers of artifacts between the collections will be completely and permanently recorded in the collection records. The Museum shall maintain a Collection of railway equipment to fulfill the specific interpretive needs of a regional railway museum in accordance with the Mission, Collection Management Policy and Scope of Collections Policy.

A. Description/Definition of Collections - Permanent

The Permanent Collection consists of, but is not limited to, artifacts that represent the significance of railroads in the development of Washington and adjacent areas; the Special Collections Archives, consisting of sound and visual recordings, documents and photographic images of railroads in Washington State and adjacent area. These objects represent the material culture of railway heritage and will not be used for living history purposes.

The Collection shall consist of unique artifacts unless clearly defined interpretive goals require similar objects.

The Northwest Railway Museum's Permanent Collection is divided into four main components:

1. Three-Dimensional Objects

This collection category consists of objects that represent the significance of railroads in the development of Washington and adjacent areas, including furnishings, personal artifacts, materials, communication artifacts, distribution and transportation artifacts, science and technology artifacts, and recreation artifacts. The Collection shall be limited to historically significant artifacts used in operation of trains and railways. When specific interpretive goals require an object no longer available, but a similar object used outside the region is available then the object may be acquired.

Though railway motive power and equipment are three-dimensional objects, they will be defined as a separate collection given their sheer size and the undertaking required to appropriately care for them.

2. Archaeological Artifacts

This collection consists of representative samples of railway cars and equipment including doors, windows, moldings, cladding, roofing, flooring, etc. It also consists of other archaeological artifacts relating to Railway history and/or archaeological artifacts relating to the history of the Museum's railway line.

3. Special Collections Archives

The Special Collections Archives consist of archival material, defined as any kind of recorded information, regardless of physical form or characteristic. Special Collections Archives material includes, but is not limited to, published and unpublished documents, maps, photographs and negatives, films, machine-readable magnetic and optical media, such as oral history interviews, and ephemera that relate to the development of railroads.

4. Railway Equipment Collection

This collection consists of railway motive power and equipment that form a representative sample of equipment significant to the development of railroads in Washington and adjacent areas. The Collection shall be limited to historically significant artifacts used in operation in the Pacific Northwest. When specific interpretive goals require an object no longer available, but a similar object used outside the region is available then the object may be acquired.

The Collection will be limited to, but not necessarily include, passenger cars, freight cars, steam locomotives, gas and diesel locomotives, and maintenance equipment operated on common carrier and logging railroads.

It is understood that items in this collection are part of the permanent collection and should therefore be treated with the same care and following the same standards as other Museum permanent collection artifacts. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties will be followed on any stabilization, preservation and restoration carried out on these artifacts.

B. Description/Definition of Other Collections

The Northwest Railway Museum also maintains collections that enhance research, education, and exhibition activities. These collections are defined as:

1. Reference Collection

The Reference Collection consists of newspaper clippings, pamphlets, photocopies of research materials, and other ephemera. It also contains books, booklets, periodicals, and pamphlets. Library material is generally non-circulating, but is maintained for reference use by Museum staff, volunteers, and visitors.

2. Education Collection

The Education Collection consists of objects for handling, demonstration, and use in educational and living history programs and outreach. This also includes objects deemed useful as exhibition props and for decorative use.

3. Running Trades and Shop Crafts Collection

This collection consists of objects used in our Running Trades Program also known as the Snoqualmie Valley Railroad including train cars and locomotives. This collection also consists of equipment that is actively use to maintain and restore the Museum's railroad and collection. Objects of this collection may be similar to artifacts in the permanent collection, but are still actively used and may be disposed of accordingly;

priority should be given to placing objects in the Permanent Collection before using for active work.

The Railway Equipment in this collection will be limited to, but not necessarily include, passenger cars, freight cars, steam locomotives, gas and diesel locomotives, and maintenance equipment operated on common carrier and logging railroads.

The Collection shall be limited to historically significant artifacts used in operation or operated in the Pacific Northwest. When specific interpretive goals require an object no longer available, but a similar object used outside the region is available then the object may be acquired.

Supplies, parts or tools acquired for use in maintaining, operating, preserving, restoring or completing items of railway equipment used by the Museum will not be part of the permanent collection. Items which serve as a parts inventory will be managed by individuals designated by the Executive Director. An updated list will be kept of such items in a depository designated by the Executive Director or his designee.

III. Acquisition Policy: Permanent Collection

A. General Statement

The acquisition policy addresses the specific criteria for additions to the Museum's Permanent Collection.

B. Authority

1. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers may accept collections donations on temporary custody.
2. The Executive Director and collection staff have the authority to accept donations into the Permanent Collection that have been placed in the temporary custody of the Museum. They can do so independently or together as the Staff Collections Committee.
3. The Staff Collections Committee consists of the Executive Director, Deputy Director, and Registrar. The Staff Collections Committee determines which items are suitable for the Museum based on the following the acquisition criteria. The Staff Collections Committee may seek the guidance of the Collections Committee, or other consultants.

C. Acquisition Criteria

Acquisitions for the Permanent Collection must meet the following criteria:

1. The object must be consistent with the mission and purpose of the Museum, as defined by the Mission Statement.
2. The object must have been collected and exported/imported legally and in conformity with all applicable international, national, state, and local laws, acts, agreements and treaties. The Museum will not collect any object known or suspected to have been stolen. The following criteria shall apply to all acquisitions, whether by purchase,

trade, auction, gift, or bequest—and, to the best of the Museum’s ability to determine provenance, to all loans.

- a. The ownership of the object must be clear. The donor must have clear and legal title to the object, and the history of ownership of the object shall be established as far as possible.
 - b. The acquisition of an object must not be in violation of generally accepted moral and ethical standards and it must be determined that the object is not immediately derived from illicit trade involving destruction of sites, artifacts or historic collections.
3. The quality of the object must be determined by comparing similar objects in terms of style, technique, aesthetic merit, historic significance, condition, documentation, research value, and exhibition value.
4. The proposed acquisition shall be in good or reasonable condition when received so that the Museum may fulfill the goal of preservation with as little repair or alteration to the object as possible. The object must represent no physical hazard to the collections, the building, the staff, volunteers, or visitors. The nature, condition, and, when appropriate, the history of the use of the object, as well as the resources needed for preservation and conservation, must be determined, including:
- a. Potential lifespan of the object.
 - b. Inherent stability.
 - c. Immediate preventative conservation and/or conservation costs.
 - d. Long-term preventative conservation and/or conservation costs.
 - e. Physically hazardous attributes.
5. The object can be adequately and appropriately cataloged and stored.
6. The object must have real or potential value in the Museum’s exhibition, interpretive, research, and educational activities. The following characteristics should be considered:
- a. Traits particular to a kind, group, or category of object.
 - b. Frequency of occurrence.
 - c. Relevance to the Museum’s mission.
 - d. Illustrative of changing cultural patterns and values, social structures, or technological developments.
 - e. Documents a phenomenon or event.

7. The object should have, if possible, thorough documentation of provenance.
8. Consideration should be given to any limitation regarding the intellectual property rights of an object, including copyright, patent, and trademark. If possible, no acquisition will be encumbered by less than full literary rights, property rights, copyrights, patents, or trademarks. If the use of the object is restricted or encumbered by an intellectual property right (such as copyright, patent, trademark, or trade name), the Museum must also obtain a nonexclusive license use agreement from the donor. The Executive Director must approve any exceptions.
9. All acquisitions must be free from donor-imposed encumbrances and restrictions limiting use or disposal. If an object is offered as a restricted gift (or purchase with restrictions), an attempt will be made to obtain it or a comparable object by gift or bequest without restrictions. The Executive Director must approve exceptions to this practice. In such cases, the conditions are to be clearly stated in an instrument of conveyance and in all records.
10. Acquisition of the object does not unnecessarily duplicate material already existing in the collections or in another local public collection. Any accepted duplicates must have a specific function within the Museum programs. Duplicates will be collected if they are in better condition, are better representations than those that exist in the collection, or enhance the overall value of the collection.
11. The object has a relationship to another collections object that reinforces its significance.
12. The Museum has the good-faith intention to keep the object in the collections for the foreseeable future. Objects will not be accessioned with the intent to deaccession later.

D. Means of Acquisition

The Museum obtains collections objects through the following methods:

1. Gifts/Donations and Wills/Bequests

The Museum accepts gifts/donations in which a donor gives an object or objects to the Museum and ownership and all rights to title are transferred to the Museum through assigned Deed of Gift or through a will upon an individual's death. The following special criteria and considerations apply to acquisition by gifts/donations:

- a. A gift/donation or will/bequest, or any part thereof, may be refused at the discretion of the Staff Collections Committee, if the object(s) involved do not meet the acquisitions criteria outlined in the previous section.
- b. Donors desiring an appraisal must obtain the appraisal from an independent appraiser. The selection of an appraiser is solely at the donor's discretion.

2. Purchase

Objects may be purchased for the Museum through private individuals, art and antique galleries, other railroads, other organizations, and through auction. The Executive Director approves all purchases. The Board of Trustees approves purchases in excess of \$10,000. When purchasing objects for Museum collections, the following criteria must be considered:

- a. The cost of the purchase relative to its importance to the collection.
- b. The possibility that it or a comparable object might be obtained through gift/donation or will/bequest.
- c. Fairness of price and other terms. When possible, comparative prices should be obtained from three independent sources.
- d. Purchases of objects created or owned by the staff or trustees of the Museum or their immediate families is prohibited.

3. Exchanges With or Transfers From Another Museum

An object proposed for exchange or transfer from the Northwest Railway Museum must first be deaccessioned. Criteria and considerations that pertain specifically to exchange and transfer include the following:

- a. Relative importance to the collections of the object(s) to be released from the collections and the object(s) to be acquired.
- b. Relative fair market values of the object(s) to be exchanged or transferred, as ascertained by at least two independent sources.
- c. Acceptance of exchange or transfer by original donor, if required.
- d. No loss of money or monetary value on the exchange beyond 20% of the fair market value of the deaccessioned object(s).

4. Commissions

The Museum may occasionally commission the creation of material. In the case of recordings, this is done only with the permission of the participants and following any use restrictions imposed by the participants.

5. Abandonment

The Museum may acquire objects regarded as appropriate to the collections that have been deemed abandoned property and unclaimed loans at the Museum. The Museum will follow the rules and guidelines as set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), "Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society," in order to gain title of abandoned property and unclaimed loans and legally add them to the collections.

6. Fractional or Partial Gift

The Museum may acquire objects through fractional or partial gifts, in which the donor gives the Museum ownership of a portion of the property, with the intention and understanding that the remaining portion(s) will be given to the Museum at a later date. The fractional gift can comprise a single item or a group of items. Fractional gifts often enable donors to avoid exceeding the annual allowable charitable tax deductions. The Museum will accept fractional gifts—through the use of legal assistance if necessary—to ensure that IRS criteria are met, to assure the completion of the gift, and to assure that Washington State laws are followed.

7. Restricted Gifts

If an object is offered as a restricted gift, an attempt will be made to obtain it or a comparable object by gift or bequest, without restrictions. The Executive Director must approve exceptions to this practice.

8. Accepting Restricted Gifts

If objects or collections are accepted with restrictions, the conditions are to be clearly stated on the Deed of Gift and in all records.

E. Acquisition of Objects for the Reference Collection

The Reference Collection contains material maintained for reference and research.

1. Objects donated under the Temporary Custody Receipt that are not accepted into the Permanent Collection may be deemed appropriate for the Reference Collection. However, objects may only be placed in the Reference Collection in this manner if the donor has signed a Disposition form to this effect.
2. Objects may be purchased or donated specifically for the Reference Collection.
3. Objects that are significant, unique, or rare will not be part of Reference Collection.
4. The following conditions must be met for the acceptance of objects into the Reference Collection:
 - a. The present owner must have clear title.
 - b. The object(s) must have been collected and exported/imported legally in conformity with all applicable international, national, state, and local laws.
 - c. All moral, legal, and ethical implications of the acquisition must be considered.
 - d. The owner must consent to a donation to the Reference Collection rather than to the Permanent Collection.
 - e. The Museum shall assume full title to donated objects, with the right of disposal, trade, or referral to more appropriate repositories. A Disposition form to this effect must be completed and signed by the donor and a Museum representative.

- f. All incoming objects shall be properly registered and recorded according to standard methods of registration for the Collection.

F. Acquisition of Objects for the Education Collection

The Education Collection consists of objects for handling, demonstration, and use in educational programs and outreach.

1. Many items acquired for the Education Collection are useable and expendable, and are not expected to be of a permanent nature.
2. Objects donated under the Temporary Custody Receipt that are not accepted into the Permanent Collection may be deemed appropriate for the Education Collection. However, objects may only be placed in the Education Collection in this manner if the donor has signed a Disposition form to this effect.
3. Objects may be purchased or donated specifically for the Education Collection, including quality replicas based on documented originals.
4. Objects that are of a sensitive nature, are significant, unique, or potentially hazardous to visitors in hands-on programming will not be part of the Education Collection.
5. The following conditions must be met for the acceptance of objects into the Education Collection:
 - a. The present owner must have clear title.
 - b. The object(s) must have been collected and exported/imported legally in conformity with all applicable international, national, state, and local laws.
 - c. All moral, legal, and ethical implications of the acquisition must be considered.
 - d. The owner must consent to a donation to the Education Collection rather than to the Permanent Collection.
 - e. The Museum shall assume full title to donated objects, with the right of disposal, trade, or referral to more appropriate repositories. A Disposition form to this effect must be completed and signed by the donor and a Museum representative.
 - f. All incoming objects shall be properly registered and recorded according to standard methods of registration for the Education Collection.

G. Acquisition of Items for the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection or for Other Museum Use

The Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection consists of items or objects deemed useful as exhibition props and for decorative use.

1. Items donated under the Temporary Custody Receipt that are not accepted into the Permanent Collection may be deemed appropriate for the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection or for Museum use.
2. Items can be placed in the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection in this manner, or be used by the Museum in another manner, only if the donor signed a Disposition Form to this effect.
3. The following conditions must be met for the acceptance of objects into the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection:
 - a. The present owner must have clear title.
 - b. The object(s) must have been collected and exported/imported legally in conformity with all applicable international, national, state, and local laws.
 - c. All moral, legal, and ethical implications of the acquisition must be considered.
 - d. The owner must consent to a donation to the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection rather than to the Permanent Collection.
 - e. The Museum shall assume full title to donated objects, with the right of disposal, trade, or referral to more appropriate repositories. A Disposition form to this effect must be completed and signed by the donor and a Museum representative.
 - f. All incoming objects shall be properly registered and recorded according to standard methods of registration for the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection.

H. Objects Placed in the Temporary Custody of the Museum

1. Incoming objects are placed in the temporary custody of the Museum for the following purposes:
 - a. For acquisition as a donation to the Permanent Collection of the Museum.
 - b. For examination as a potential acquisition for the collections of the Museum.
 - c. For examination, study, or research.
2. An agreement through the completion of a Temporary Custody Receipt occurs when objects are left with the Museum in order to accomplish one of the above objectives. The depositor is required to complete the Temporary Custody Receipt, including their name, address, and telephone number, and a description of the object(s). Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers have the authority to accept objects under temporary custody.

I. Appraisals and Authentications

1. Museum staff will not provide appraisals or authentications to the public, including those for objects offered to the Museum. However, Museum staff can, in appropriate cases, offer certain practical advice to donors or the public through the use of Internal Revenue Service Publication 561, "Determining the Value of Donated Property." Donors desiring to take an income tax deduction must obtain an independent appraisal at the donor's expense. If a donor seeks assistance in finding an outside appraiser, staff will offer several sources for qualified appraisers who could undertake the assignment, and will refrain from offering information on only a single individual appraiser, to avoid the appearance of endorsement or favoritism.
2. From time to time, the Museum may commission a professional appraisal of selected objects in or aspects of the Permanent Collection. The results of such appraisals will not be shared with donors.

J. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

All persons associated with the Northwest Railway Museum must abide by the legal and ethical rules governing the institution. Staff, trustees, and volunteers owe loyalty to the Museum. Activities that conflict with this loyalty or cause staff, trustees, and volunteers to favor outside or personal interests over those of the Museum must be avoided. All trustees, staff, and volunteers shall carefully avoid the reality and the appearance of using their positions or the information and access gained from their positions for personal gain. Critical areas in which staff, trustees, and volunteers must avoid conflicts of interest with the Museum in order to reap personal gain include:

1. Personal Collecting, Dealing, Use, and Gain

- a. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers shall refrain from personal collecting in any manner that conflicts with the interests and credibility of the Museum. Collecting items in competition with the Museum must be avoided. Collections acquired prior to employment, appointment to the Board of Trustees, or becoming a Museum volunteer; family inheritances; and collections outside the Museum's field of interest are exempt from policy restrictions.
- b. If Museum staff, trustees, or volunteers consider purchasing an object, or collection of objects, that is within the Museum's area of collecting, he/she must give the Museum the first option to acquire the object. If the acquisition of the object is declined by the Museum, then the individual may purchase it.
 - i. This will be done by notifying the Staff Collections Committee. If the Collections Committee deems the Museum is not interested in the object they will record it in their meeting minutes that Museum staff, trustees and volunteers are free to pursue the item for their own personal collecting.

- c. No staff, trustee, or volunteer may use his/her Museum affiliation to promote his/her or an associate's personal collecting activities. In all activities and statements, it must be made clear whether the person is acting or speaking for the Northwest Railway Museum or for himself or herself.
- d. No staff, trustee, or volunteer may participate in dealing (buying or selling for personal profit, as distinguished from occasional sale or exchange from a personal collection) objects similar or related to the objects collected by the Museum, or be employed by a dealer.
- e. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers must not trade objects from their personal collection for objects from the Museum's collection. No object that is a part of the Museum's Permanent Collection, under Temporary Custody Receipt, or on loan to the Museum shall be used by staff, trustees, or volunteers for personal use or gain, either on or away from Museum premises. Collections shall not be made available for any other purpose contrary to the Collections Management Policy.

2. Acceptance of Gifts Connected with the Museum

- a. When staff, trustees, or volunteers receive an object as a gift for the Museum collection, the gift is to be immediately deposited at the Museum. The Museum will then determine how to use or dispose of the object. Potential donations to the collections should be accepted with care and must be refused if there is suspicion or motive on the part of the giver to obligate or influence the recipient.
- b. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers must not accept gifts or favors in connection with their relationship with the Museum. Gifts include discounts on personal purchases from suppliers who sell or furnish services to the Museum, except where such discounts regularly are offered to the general public.
- c. When staff, trustees, or volunteers receive a gift from an artist exhibiting at the Museum or otherwise affiliated with the Museum, the recipient should first offer the gift to the Museum.

3. Other Ethical Considerations

- a. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers must not purchase objects deaccessioned from the Museum unless they are offered to the general public such as through Museum rummage sales or auctions.
- b. Museum staff, trustees, and volunteers will not store personal collections, objects, or items at the Museum. Books, periodicals, and other reference material are exempt from this policy. Personal items that are deposited as part of a documented loan are exempt from this policy. Personal items may also be used to decorate staff offices.

4. Illegal Acquisition

- a. The Museum shall not knowingly acquire any object illegally exported from its country of origin, or illegally imported into the United States. The Museum shall seek to honor the precepts of the UNESCO Convention concerning The Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and The International Trade in Endangered Species.
- b. The Museum shall not knowingly acquire any object illegally obtained in the United States in breach of any law, in breach of sound conservation principles for the protection of the environment, or in breach of ethical trust. The museum shall seek to honor the precepts of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and its U.S. laws.
- c. When an object is in question, it is the responsibility of the Museum to attempt to establish the object's provenance and, when necessary, to make all reasonable inquiries of the appropriate agencies of foreign governments to determine that the Museum can obtain clear title if the object is to be a gift or purchase.
- d. If it is determined that an object offered to the Museum for a gift or for purchase is stolen property or is in the United States illegally, the Executive Director will report all of the pertinent facts to the Executive Committee at the earliest opportunity. If deemed necessary by the Executive Committee, the matter will go before the full Board of Trustees, as well as the proper authorities. Also, the precise nature of title to the considered object shall be ascertained with the advice of legal counsel, if necessary.
- e. Exceptions to these provisions may occur at the request of the U.S. National Park Service or appropriate government authorities concerning the care and preservation of seized property.

IV. Deaccession Policy

A. General Statement

Objects in the Permanent Collection will be retained if they continue to be relevant and useful to the purposes and activities of the Museum, and if they can be properly stored, preserved, and utilized. Deaccessioning of objects may be considered when these conditions no longer prevail or in the interests of improving the collections for the Museum's purposes and activities. The collections of the Museum are a public trust and the first consideration in the deaccessioning process is the Museum's responsibility to the public. Because of its complex legal and ethical nature, deaccessioning will be carefully considered and, when undertaken, deaccessioning will strictly follow established Museum procedures, will be carefully documented, and will be handled in an open and candid manner.

B. Deaccessioning Authorization

1. The Collections Department staff recommend to the Executive Director an object for deaccessioning if, in their best judgment, one or more criteria for deaccession (as outlined below in “C. Criteria for Deaccessioning”) have been met.
2. Any object from the Permanent Collection may be deaccessioned by the approval of the Board of Trustees on recommendation of the staff.
3. Any object from the other non-Permanent Collections may be deaccessioned by the approval of the Collections Committee.

C. Criteria for Deaccessioning

At least one of the following criteria must be met in order for a collections object to be considered for deaccessioning:

1. The object is deemed irrelevant or no longer useful to the purposes of the Museum and no longer furthers or serves the Museum’s mission, as defined by the Mission Statement.
2. The object is not of sufficient quality, researched value, or historical or aesthetic significance to the held in the Permanent Collection.
3. The object can be used for trade with another museum, for an object that would upgrade the quality of the collections and be more consistent with the mission and purpose of the Museum.
4. The object is determined to be significantly more useful and relevant to the collections and programs of another museum and the other museum will provide greater public access to the object.
5. The object is determined to be significantly better cared for and preserved in collections of another museum and the other museum will provide greater public access to the object.
6. The object has accidentally been accessioned twice. The record for an object that was unintentionally accessioned twice will be removed. The object remains, but the record is changed.
7. The object has doubtful potential utilization for the Museum’s Permanent Collection, for exhibition, or for research in the foreseeable future.
8. The object lacks history or provenance.
9. The object is a duplicate or near duplicate of other objects in the collection, there is a comparable and better example in the collection, and the duplicate object does not improve the collection.

10. The object has deteriorated beyond usefulness or economical repair, is not of use for Museum exhibitions or research, and is in such poor physical condition that proper restoration is not feasible, or would render the object essentially false.
11. Reasonable determination is made that the object is a forgery or fake or is falsely attributed or documented.
12. The Museum no longer has the means or ability to care for the object. The Museum is unable to preserve, store, or care for the object properly due to cost or size, or because the object poses a threat to public safety if displayed in the manner prescribed by its design. Maintenance, care, and storage requirements for the object are beyond the Museum's reasonable capacities, or are not commensurate with the value of the object to the collection.
13. The object is not of museum quality and is not likely to be exhibited or loaned to other institutions.
14. The object poses a hazard to human life or health or is harmful to other objects in the Museum's collection.
15. The object is determined to have been acquired in a manner contrary to the Museum's acquisitions policy.
16. The object has been determined to rightfully belong to a group or individual other than the Museum.
17. The object is subject to compliance with federal and state legislation and regulations, i.e., UNESCO conventions or the reburial of human remains and associated funerary objects and the repatriation of sacred objects and items of cultural patrimony (NGPRA).

D. Deaccessioning Restrictions

Before any object is recommended for deaccession, or is deaccessioned, reasonable efforts shall be made to ascertain that the Museum is legally free to remove it from the collections. Where restrictions to the disposition of the object are found, the following procedures shall be utilized:

1. Mandatory conditions of acquisition will be strictly observed unless a court of competent jurisdiction authorizes deviation from their terms.
2. All objects to which special restrictions apply shall not be deaccessioned and disposed of until the Museum has made reasonable efforts to comply with the restricting conditions. In the event of a question concerning intent or force of restrictions, the Museum shall seek legal counsel.

E. Deaccessioning Procedures

The Museum will follow the procedures for the deaccession of objects as set forth in this policy:

1. Independent appraisals to establish market value will be completed when needed.
 - a. An outside independent appraisal is required to establish market value or to confirm a high-value item when the fair market value is estimated.
 - b. An appraisal is also necessary when conducting an exchange, to ensure that an exchange is creditable and equitable, to maintain the public trust, and to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of such.
2. The opinions of members of the Collections Committee will be sought in deaccessioning decisions, if necessary or when appropriate.
3. The term of possession for an object to be held in the Museum's Permanent Collection before it can be deaccessioned is five years.
4. The Museum will not deaccession or remove an object without first establishing title.
 - a. The object's accession records and all other pertinent documentation will be reviewed to determine and ensure that the museum holds clear and valid legal title to the object.
 - b. Objects that meet the criteria for deaccessioning but to which the Museum does not hold legal title require that the Museum follow the procedures of Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), "Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society," to establish title before deaccessioning the object. The object will not be formally accessioned into the collection, but legal title must be obtained by the Museum before the object is removed.
5. An object is considered officially removed from the collections of the Museum when the Museum's procedures for deaccessioning are followed, including review of the object by Museum staff, Board of Trustees approval when needed, and when the Museum's procedures for deaccessioning are completed.

F. Deaccessioning Methods and Disposition

Methods of disposition for deaccessioned objects shall be in the best interest of the Museum and the educational and cultural communities that the Museum represents and serves.

1. Staff will recommend a method for the disposal of a deaccessioned object. The Executive Director must approve of the method.
2. An object deaccessioned from the Permanent Collection shall be removed and disposed of in accordance with one of the guidelines outlined below in order of preference, insofar as it is practical to do so:
 - a. Transfer to another Northwest Railway Museum collection.

- b. An object, of minimal value, deaccessioned from the Museum's Permanent Collection will not be removed completely from the Museum when it is determined to be appropriate for another Northwest Railway Museum collection. When determined appropriate, the object will be transferred into the Reference Collection, the Education Collection, or the Running Trades and Shop Craft Collection, and all required paperwork and marking will be completed.
- c. Offer to one or more appropriate institutions.
- d. The Museum shall, if appropriate, offer a deaccessioned object to one or more tax-exempt public institutions wherein the object may serve the purpose for which it was initially acquired by the Museum. This depends upon the nature or quality of the object and the Museum's awareness of an institution or institutions that may be interested in acquiring the object. Transactions can be accomplished through the following methods:
1. Gift Transfer by permanently removing an object from the Museum's Permanent Collection and placing it in another appropriate institution or non-profit organization without reciprocal compensation.
 2. Exchange and/or Trade by the conveyance of ownership of a deaccessioned object in return for title to an object from another institution, to advance the research, education, and exhibition programs of all parties.
 3. Private Sale done by the conveyance of ownership of a deaccessioned object from the Museum to another appropriate institution in return for monetary compensation.
- e. Offer through public sale, auction, or consignment.
Only if the deaccessioned object is inappropriate for gift or exchange with another institution, or cannot be placed in another Museum collection, will consideration be given to offering the object for public sale through negotiated, public auction, sealed bid, or open bid. Private sales will be arranged only with other museums or appropriate educational institutions. If objects are offered for sale, preference should be given for sale at advertised public auction, or to the public market in a manner that would best protect the interests, objectives, and legal status of the Museum and adhere to the highest ethical standards. The museum will identify itself at public sale of deaccessioned objects. Only if there are compelling reasons, and upon Board of Trustees approval, will deaccessioned objects be disposed of anonymously. Wording for an auction catalog or sales literature will read: "Deaccessioned property from the Northwest Railway Museum, sold to benefit the acquisition fund as approved by the Board of Trustees."
- f. Complete destruction and disposal of the object.

A deaccessioned object will be destroyed and disposed of when the object is in a seriously deteriorated condition or is a hazard to people or other objects and it has been determined that its condition renders it not of museum quality, or that it would not be accepted by any other institution. The physical disposal or destruction of a deaccessioned object is to be witnessed, and a record of the date and manner of disposal or destruction and witness names will be placed with the deaccession file. All identifying information and labels will be removed from the object prior to destruction.

g. Repatriation of cultural property.

If it is determined that deaccessioned objects rightfully belong to another cultural group, the Northwest Railway Museum will make every effort to return the objects under the guidelines of current repatriation laws and instruments such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (Public Law 101-601) and the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO, Paris, 1970).

3. Notification to Donor/Return to Donor.

The return of a deaccessioned object to a donor or the donor's heirs will generally not be considered. It is, however, appropriate for the original donor or the donor's heirs to be notified of the deaccession.

G. Ethics of Disposition

No member of the Museum's Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, or their immediate families or representatives, or those whose association with the institution might give them advantage in acquiring an object, shall be permitted to acquire an object deaccessioned by the Museum through gift, sales, or public or private transfer, or otherwise to benefit from its sale or trade. Material and objects deaccessioned and removed from the Museum's other collections (Reference, Prop, and Education) are exempt from this policy.

H. Use of Proceeds from Disposition

Proceeds from the disposal of deaccessioned objects through sale, trade, and the like will be restricted only for acquisitions for the Permanent Collection and for the direct care (preventative conservation, rehabilitation, restoration and conservation) of the collection. New acquisitions from these funds, and objects received in exchange, will be recorded with the name(s) of the original donor(s) of the deaccessioned objects. Any exceptions to this policy will require Board of Trustees approval.

I. Public Disclosure

1. The deaccessioning of objects from the collections of the Northwest Railway Museum will be publicized in accordance with established museum best practices.
2. Because deaccession records are public records, deaccessioning information will be provided to the public in reply to a reasonable request. A list of all objects, including

their disposition, that have been deaccessioned from the Permanent Collection within the past five years may be distributed in response to any responsible inquiry.

V. Loan Policy

A. General Statement

The Loan Policy states the purposes for and the conditions covering the temporary transfer of objects, not their ownership, from or to the museum.

B. Authority

Only the Registrar, and Executive Director are authorized to approve or reject out-going loans from the Permanent Collection as well as accept or reject in-coming loans.

C. Loans: General Information

1. To the best of its ability, the Museum will avoid the possibility that any loan might appear to give rise to commercial exploitation and/or bring discredit upon the Museum.
2. Museum staff will oversee the safety of loaned items in a manner consistent with oversight of and care for the Museum's Permanent Collection.
3. The Museum will adhere to accepted archival standards for the preservation of all loan forms and records.

D. Loans: Outgoing

Conditions for outgoing loans of Museum collections objects:

1. The Museum shall loan collections objects consistent with its educational, research, and exhibition needs and to increase public accessibility to objects in the collections. Outgoing loans may be made to other museums, libraries, historical societies, galleries, and historic sites and institutions engaged in nonprofit, educational, and scholarly purposes. Such loans are to be evaluated in the light of scholarly value, relevance to the museum community as well as to the public, and the borrowing institution's ability to provide proper care for the object(s).
2. Loans of collections objects generally will not be made to individuals.
3. Under special circumstances approved by the Executive Director, government offices or agencies, private corporations, fairs and expositions, and commercial galleries may borrow collections objects for exhibition purposes when all loan conditions have been met.
4. All loans of Museum collections objects shall be for a specific purpose and a specific time period and shall be fully documented. All outgoing loans will be documented by written loan agreements between the Museum and the borrower prior to shipment or receipt of the loan. Also, Museum staff will make written condition reports before any loan leaves the Museum.

5. Borrowers must meet the restrictions and specifications set by the Museum via a current facilities report to cover such aspects as security, installation, environment, handling, etc. Museum staff is to obtain facilities reports from new or unfamiliar borrowers of objects from the Museum's collections. Updated facilities reports of previous borrowers are to be requested if current reports are over three years old.
6. Unless otherwise stipulated, the borrower must agree to assume all costs associated with the preparation, packing, insurance, and transportation of all objects loaned from the Museum's collections. For objects included in special exhibitions organized by the Museum, costs of preparation and packing are generally taken into account through the exhibition rental fee. Insurance and transportation is per the exhibition agreement. The Museum requires evidence that adequate insurance coverage has been obtained through a certificate of insurance or a copy of the policy.
7. The borrower will be informed if special conservation or mounting is needed, the cost of which generally will be assumed by the borrower.
8. Museum staff will review and update all outgoing loans on a regular basis for compliance with the terms of the loan and to see that objects are safe and that they are being used for the agreed-upon purpose. Long-term loans over one year at one location will be reviewed on a yearly basis to determine future status. The condition of the objects will be reviewed and insurance coverage will be updated to ensure that insurance valuations are current. The Museum reserves the right to recall loaned objects.
9. If an object is on loan to the Museum, no outgoing loan is to be considered without written approval from the owner. A normal use of an incoming loan does not include a re-loaning of the object to another party.
10. Collections objects that are lent to another museum, non-profit organization, etc., cannot be lent to another party by the first borrower. All outgoing loans of collections objects must be made directly through the Northwest Railway Museum.
11. No object will be exposed to loan conditions that may seriously threaten its safety.
12. Determination of what will be loaned from the Museum collections.
 - a. The Collections Department staff will assess the feasibility of collections items as outgoing loans. Consideration will be given to scholarly significance of the proposed use of the loaned object(s) in relation to the exhibition and research needs of the Museum. If a conflict arises, an alternative object will be suggested for loan.
 - b. Objects must be in stable condition for loan and must be able to withstand transit, climate changes, handling, and exhibition.
13. Objects restricted from loan.

- a. Certain objects in the collections may be identified as being objects that should not leave the Museum, except under extraordinary circumstances, due to their physical condition, rarity, or great importance to the Museum. Therefore, restrictions are placed on the loan of these identified objects. Identified objects may include rare books, manuscripts, textiles, artwork, and other inherently fragile artifacts that should not be subjected to travel or exhibition conditions.
- b. An object that is encumbered by restrictions that inhibit a loan will not be lent.

14. Insurance

- a. Objects lent by the Museum are required to be insured in transit and while in the custody of the borrowers.
- b. The Museum requires evidence that adequate insurance coverage has been obtained through a certificate of insurance or a copy of the policy.
- c. Museum staff will periodically monitor all long-term outgoing loans to ensure that insurance coverage is updated and insurance valuations are current.

E. Loans, Incoming

1. Conditions for incoming loans to the Museum

- a. Objects are borrowed by the Museum only for a specific purpose and a set time period. Incoming loans will be accepted only for the specific purposes of exhibition, research, acquisition, or consideration of such. The Museum will not accept “indefinite” or “permanent” loans.
- b. The following factors are to be taken into account by the Museum before accepting any loans: the availability of storage or exhibition space; transportation type and the object’s condition and ability to withstand travel; any conservation or preservation requirements; the lender’s restrictions; and any problems of provenance or copyright.
- c. All incoming loans must be documented by a written contract in the form of the Incoming Loan Agreement prior to shipment or receipt. The Incoming Loan Agreement delineates the rights and responsibilities of the Museum and the lender.
- d. When the Museum accepts a loan of property, the Museum is to inform the owner of the provisions of Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society.”
- e. To the best of its ability, the Museum must affirm that the lender is either the owner of the object to be lent, or is a duly authorized agent of the owner with full authority to enter into the loan agreement.

- f. As stated on the Museum's Incoming Loan Agreement, "the Museum will exercise the same reasonable care as it does in the safekeeping of its own objects of a similar type."
- g. All incoming loaned objects must be thoroughly documented and tagged as loans immediately upon their receipt, with the exception of complete incoming temporary exhibits.
- h. Museum staff will make written condition reports for all loans entering the Museum.
- i. Museum staff will update and review all incoming loans on a regular basis. All incoming loans are to be monitored for compliance with the terms of the loan.
- j. In the rare event that the Museum does accept a long-term loan, if the duration of the loan is over one year, the loan will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine future status. The condition of the objects on loan will be reviewed and the Museum shall receive updated current market values in order to update insurance.
- k. To the best of its ability, the Museum will ensure that lenders make no commercial exploitation of the fact that a lent object was exhibited by the museum.
- l. Objects on loan to the Museum will not be lent, photographed, or photo mechanically reproduced without the owner's written permission. Nothing will be done to clean, repair, or otherwise alter the condition of a borrowed object without the written consent of the owner.
- m. Objects lent to the Museum for a specific purpose, such as exhibition, will be insured through the Museum's general insurance policy while in the custody of the Museum. Such incoming loans will be covered by insurance while on the Museum premises and in transit, or as specified by the lender and as stated on the Incoming Loan Agreement form.
- n. Loans will be stored separately from the Permanent Collection.
- o. If property was loaned to the Museum for a specified term, the Museum may give notice of termination and return of the loan at any time after expiration of the specified term.
- p. The Museum has the responsibility of ensuring that loans are promptly returned to the lender as per the agreed upon time stipulation of the loan.
- q. It is the responsibility of the owner of property loaned to the Museum, or of the owner's representative, to notify the Museum promptly in writing of any change of address or change in ownership of the property on loan.

- r. If a third party is sent to pick up the loan, the Museum will require written approval from the lender.
- s. If the lender dies before the loan is returned, the Museum and the executor of the will/estate will follow the terms of the will. If the terms are unclear or there is confusion about ownership, the Museum will consult legal counsel.

2. Permanent or Long-Term Loans to the Museum

- a. The Museum may terminate a loan of property if the property was loaned to the Museum for an indefinite term and the property has been held by the Museum for five years or more.
- b. The Museum will work to identify and return all existing long-term loans. However, if it is determined that a loan has a particular relevance to the Museum's mission, Museum staff will work with the lender to possibly turn the object(s) into donations to the Museum, or to have the loaned object(s) willed to the Museum in the future.
- c. If lenders are not identified or cannot be found, the Museum will follow the guidelines as set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), "Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society."

F. Unclaimed Loans and Abandoned Property

- 1. At times, the Museum holds unclaimed loans and abandoned property which the owners have failed to retrieve after the expiration of the loan. If the owners cannot be located or are unknown, the Museum will follow the procedures set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), "Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society."
- 2. When the Museum accepts a loan of property, the Museum informs the owner of the provisions of Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), "Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society."

G. Loans of Personal Collections

- 1. Trustees, staff, volunteers, and others associated with the Museum shall not bring items from their personal collections into the Museum for storage.
- 2. Appropriate objects owned by individuals associated with the Museum may be lent to the Museum for exhibition or research purposes.
- 3. Personal collection objects should not be intermingled with Museum collections unless used for specific purposes.

4. Unless personal objects are borrowed for legitimate purposes such as exhibition, the Museum will not insure them.

VI. Abandoned Property

A. General Statement

This section of the Collections Management Policy addresses the ways in which the Museum, using the guidelines set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society,” is to handle unclaimed loans and abandoned property in order to legally retain or dispose of them.

As stated in RCW 63.26.020 Abandoned property - notice: “Any property held by a museum or historical society within the state (of Washington), other than by terms of a loan agreement that has been held for five years or more and has remained unclaimed shall be deemed to be abandoned.”

B. General Process for Managing Abandoned Property at the Northwest Railway Museum

The Museum will make every effort to research existing records or information concerning abandoned property. If no documentation is found, or if found documentation is unclear about ownership, the Museum will follow the rules and guidelines as set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society,” in order to gain title of abandoned property and unclaimed loans and legally add them to the collections or remove them permanently from the Museum.

C. Abandoned Property: Objects “Found in Collections”

1. The Museum uses the term “found in collections” for objects that are found in the Museum and lack any significant documentation.
2. The Museum will determine through the guidelines set forth in Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society,” that these objects have been in its possession for some time without definitive records.

D. Abandoned Property: Objects “Abandoned at the Museum”

“Objects abandoned at the museum” is the term used by the Museum for objects that are left or abandoned at the door or are received by the Museum with no documentation concerning ownership.

E. General Process for Handling Objects “Found in Collections” and Objects “Abandoned at the Museum”

1. To handle objects “found in the collections” or “abandoned at the museum,” the Museum follows the guidelines set forth by Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society,” as outlined in RCW 63.26.020, “Abandoned property – Notice”; RCW 63.26.040, “Notice of abandonment of property”; and RCW 63.26.050, “Vesting of title in museum or historical society – Subsequent purchase from museum or historical society.”

2. The Museum gains title to the objects “found in the collections” and to objects “abandoned at the Museum” as per RCW 63.26.050, “Vesting of title in museum or historical society.”

F. Unclaimed Loans

“Unclaimed loans” are property on loan to the Museum and subject to a loan agreement, for which no claim has been made, or action filed to recover the property, when the lender is notified after termination or expiration of the loan agreement, or when the Museum is unable to locate the lender.

G. General Process for Handling Unclaimed Loans

1. To manage unclaimed loans, the Museum follows the guidelines set forth by Chapter 63.26 Revised Codes of Washington (RCW), “Unclaimed Property Held by Museum or Historical Society,” as outlined in RCW 63.26.030, “Loaned property deemed donated – Notice of owner’s change of address – Notice of provisions of chapter”; RCW 63.26.040, “Notice of abandonment of property”; and RCW 63.26.050, “Vesting of title in museum or historical society – Subsequent purchase from museum or historical society.”
2. The Museum gains title of unclaimed loans as per RCW 63.26.030 (1), “Loaned property deemed donated.”

H. When Claims Are Made

When the Museum has given notice of abandonment of property or of termination of a loan, as per the guidelines set forth in RCW 63.26.040, “Notice of abandonment of property,” and a claimant appears to have the right to make the demand for the object, the Museum must find evidence that supports or contradicts the claim and that will appear a valid defense.

1. If the claim is determined to be valid, the Museum must proceed with the return of the object and the claimant must agree, through an Indemnity Agreement, to indemnify and hold harmless the Northwest Railway Museum, its trustees, employees, agents, and members from any and all claims, demands, actions, losses, liabilities, damage, costs, charges, and attorney’s fees made by any person or persons claiming any right, title, or interest in or to the property as descendants of or through the estate of the decedent.
2. If the claimant fails to produce satisfactory proof to support the claim and the claim is determined to be unproven, the Museum will seek legal counsel to create a clear letter from the Museum to inform the claimant why his or her right to bring claim is disputed. The claimant is put on notice and an applicable statute of limitations is started that limits the time in which the claimant can challenge, in court, the Museum’s rejection of the claim.

VII. Care and Control of the Collection

A. General Statement

The Northwest Railway Museum is obligated to ensure the preservation, control, security, and treatment of all museum objects. This section of the Collections Management Policy outlines the obligation that the Museum has for the preservation and treatment of museum objects.

B. Responsibilities

1. The Museum staff and Board of Trustees are entrusted with the protection of the collections. It is their professional, legal, and ethical responsibility to provide reasonable care and handling to preserve the collections entrusted to the Museum.
2. The Museum staff also has the responsibility to use care in preventing the theft and damage of property by the unlawful acts of others, to control biological and catastrophic risks, and to provide intellectual control of and accessibility to the collections.
3. The Collections Department staff and the Executive Director are ultimately responsible for the physical care, intellectual control, and accessibility of the collections and collections records. They provide the guidance and technical specifications on how best to care for the collections, setting standards and guidelines for handling, for storage, for security, for the optimum environmental conditions within the means of the Museum facility, and for the use of the objects in exhibitions and otherwise.
4. Museum staff bears the responsibility for the care of collections items moving in and out of the Museum, including objects on loan and objects under temporary custody.
 - a. The responsibility to provide care for objects on loan to the Museum is governed by the Incoming Loan Agreement and is written on the Incoming Loan Agreement form.
 - b. For all other objects placed in the custody of the Museum, the degree of responsibility assumed by the Museum is set forth in the terms written on the Temporary Custody Receipt.

C. Guidelines for Preventative Conservation (Care, Maintenance, and Control)

Preventative conservation, care, maintenance, and control of the collections objects are all essential in the management of the Museum's collections.

1. Preventive Conservation and Conservation

- a. Any measure that prevents damage or reduces the potential for it is considered preventative conservation. To the best of its ability, the Museum must devote itself to prevent or at least slow down the deterioration of all objects entrusted to its care. Proper handling, storage, exhibition, and management of the collections are critical elements in preventive conservation.
- b. At each stage of the process of acquiring, processing, storing, exhibiting, providing access to, and maintaining objects, Museum staff must have clearly in mind the objects' immediate preventative conservation and possible conservation treatment needs, beginning with a review of the objects' physical condition.

- c. Acquisition decisions are to be based in part on a consideration of the long-term preventive conservation requirements of each object.
- d. Conservation assessments of the overall collections are to cover all aspects affecting the care of collections, including museum staffing and training; policies and procedures concerning the use of collections; storage and exhibition conditions and techniques; and the museum environment, including the condition of the building and storage and exhibition spaces.
- e. Appropriate collections management includes measures to prevent deterioration or further deterioration of objects. Thus, to the best of its ability, the Museum will house items in acceptable archival containers. The Northwest Railway Museum staff consults *Guidelines for Information About Preservation Products*, An American National Standard Developed by the National Information Standards Organization, approved August 23, 2000, by the American National Standards Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, concerning the purchase and use of preventative conservation products for storage and exhibition of all objects.
- f. Museum staff should regularly seek education on updated professional standards and implement necessary procedural and material changes, ensuring the best possible environment for the Museum's collections.

2. Environmental Controls (Conditions)

Proper environmental conditions aid in the preventative conservation of collections objects. The environmental conditions of storage, exhibition, and collections workroom areas shall be monitored regularly by the Collections Department staff, within their capabilities and to the extent that facilities will allow.

3. Storage

Proper storage techniques, enclosures, and environments aid in the preventative conservation of collections objects. The Collections Department staff shall be responsible for the proper storage of all collections objects.

- a. To the extent possible, all collections objects will be housed in archival containers in or on acceptable storage furniture and within acceptable storage spaces.
- b. The Collections Department staff will monitor storage areas regularly for changing environmental conditions, pests, molds and mildews, deteriorating objects, water, etc.

4. Exhibition

The Museum shall execute its preventive conservation responsibilities in its exhibition processes by:

- a. The careful selection of objects that are appropriate for the proposed length and type of the exhibit.

- b. Establishing the specific conditions needed to protect objects selected for exhibition.
- c. Protecting the objects during the period of exhibition by maintaining high standards of collections management, including protection against higher amounts of light and pollutants, more extreme ranges and greater fluctuations in temperature and humidity, and the increased risk of physical damage while on exhibition.
- d. Establishing a clean, secure, and environmentally safe holding area to gather objects and stage their installation.
- e. Documenting the condition of objects completely.

5. Handling

The Collections Department staff is responsible for the training of volunteers, interns, and other staff working with the collections and for ensuring safe handling.

6. Inventory

The Collections Department staff, with the aid of trained interns and volunteers, will conduct periodic inventories. Inventories will be designed to facilitate the improvement of research, documentation, storage, and access, and to allow the Museum to detect losses and take necessary, diligent action.

D. Risk Management

1. Controls

- a. The Museum will take every precaution to provide the collections in its care with safe storage, processing, and exhibition installation environments. In the event of an emergency that places an object or the collections in jeopardy, the staff immediately present shall use their best judgment to rescue and salvage the object(s). All further procedures to protect and care for the collections involved shall be taken under the guidance of the Collections Department staff and Executive Director, in consultation with appropriate professionals.
- b. Procedures for handling emergencies and providing proper environmental conditions for collections objects will be established by the Collections Department staff.

2. Risks, Biological (Integrated Pest Management)

- a. Integrated pest management (IPM) is practiced by the Museum.
- b. Regular pest-monitoring inspections of the collections in storage, on exhibition, and housed in all collections workroom areas will be conducted by

the Collections Department staff, with the help of the trained volunteers and facilities staff. Pests, molds, and mildews will be immediately addressed.

3. Risks, Catastrophic (Disaster Planning/Emergency Preparedness)

- a. The Museum is responsible for protecting the collections against reasonably foreseeable dangers. The collections are to be adequately protected against fire, theft, vandalism, and natural disaster, as well as harmful light, temperature extremes, humidity, and dirt.
- b. Disaster planning and emergency preparedness for such events as flood, fire, earthquake, explosion, riot, or terrorism must be continually addressed by all staff. This will be an ongoing process, with periodic reviews for key staff and with organization-wide drills.
- c. The Collections Department staff are responsible for developing and emergency plans for the Museum's collections.

4. Insurance

- a. Objects owned by the Museum, whether on the premises or off, are collectively insured by the Museum.
- b. Objects borrowed by the Museum (on loan to the Museum) for exhibition, study, or other reasons are to be covered by the Museum's insurance policy.
- c. Objects placed in the temporary custody of the Museum for other than loan purposes, such as objects for review for acceptance into the collection, for identification, or for possible purchase or trade, are considered loans to the Museum and are covered by the Museum's insurance policy.

5. Security

The Collections Department staff, registrar, and Executive Director are responsible for the security of all collections objects on exhibition and in storage as well as the security of all records and information concerning the collections.

- a. Physical and Intellectual Control of Collections Objects on Exhibition and in Storage

In order to maintain physical and intellectual control of collections objects, the Museum will conduct periodic inventories in all exhibition and storage spaces. Inventories will allow the Museum to detect losses and take necessary, diligent action to retrieve any losses as well as upgrade security, if needed.

- b. Security of Collections Objects on Exhibition and in Storage

1. Collections will be protected against vandalism and burglary by being housed in locked storage areas and exhibited with the utmost of

security in mind at all times. The electronic fire/theft system will be activated at all times when staff is not present.

2. All catalog records concerning collections objects will be adequate to furnish police with usable descriptions of missing/stolen objects. Digital images of all collections objects will be taken and placed into the collections management database system to allow for a visual record of each object.

c. Security of Collections Records and Information

1. All primary collections records will be safeguarded from hazards such as fire, smoke, water, earthquake, theft, etc. Duplicate copies of accession information, Deed of Gift forms, and computerized collections records are to be stored off-site.
2. The following items of information are considered privileged and shall not be made public except to those persons with a right to know as approved by the Executive Director or Collections Department staff.

- Names of anonymous donors, lenders, or prior holders.

- Mailing addresses of all donors, lenders, or prior holders.

- Location of collections objects not on public display.

- The purchase price of objects, insurance valuation, appraised value, or similar assessment of value.

VIII. Control of Collections (Records, Inventory, and Access)

A. General Statement

This section of the Collections Management Policy stipulates the standards by which the Museum maintains records of the Permanent Collection as well as loans. It also addresses the Museum's policies concerning public or other access to the collections and the collections records and their use.

B. Authority

The Collections Department staff, under the direction of the Executive Director, have the authority to implement and manage all aspects of the documentation of the Museum's collections and to provide and implement guidelines and procedures for the access to and use of the collections and the collections records.

C. Documentation

1. Records

- a. The Collections Department staff is charged with the physical preservation and safety of the collections records as well as the objects. The staff shall create and maintain detailed records of collections owned by the Museum, including temporary custody, accession, catalog, deed of gift, donor, condition reports, storage, inventory, loans, exhibition, and deaccession records.
- b. The records of legal ownership of collections and other documents listed above shall be maintained in the Collections Department office.
- c. Records will be entered into the collections management database.
- d. A duplicate set (photocopies or computerized hard copies) of accession records, deed of gift forms, and computerized catalog records shall be stored off-site.
- e. Detailed records of loaned objects and objects under Temporary Custody Receipt shall also be maintained.

2. Research

Documentation is to include provenance, maker, use of object, and materials, among other information.

D. Collections Accessibility (Access to and Use of the Collection)

1. Collections Access

- a. The collections and their records may be used for research purposes by Museum staff, staff from other institutions, scholars, students, and other interested parties.

- b. Access to the collections and their records is subject the willingness of the researcher to follow handling procedures.
- c. Handling, photographing, and/or photocopying of certain paper and textile collections and objects may be restricted because of size, fragility, restrictions, or other considerations.
- d. Access to certain types of information may be denied or restricted, including cases of requested anonymity, imposed restrictions, collections values, storage locations, etc. The researcher will be informed of the nature of the restriction(s).
- e. In most cases, examination of collections will take place in designated areas outside of storage under direct supervision of staff or trained volunteers. Supervision is not required in the Reference Collection or Reference Collection.

2. Photographing the Collections

Collections objects, images, and other material may not be photographed without the advance approval of the Collections Department staff, or Executive Director. For each request the proper paperwork, including the Photographic Release Form, must first be completed by the photographer. The photographer must also comply with all applicable use policies and fees.

3. Research

- a. Collections Department staff will make reasonable efforts to research collections inquiries regarding donations and loans from donors or lenders and their heirs as well as to make such information available, unless there are legal constraints against doing so.
- b. Collections Department staff will make reasonable efforts to assist with research requests, including collections research and library use.

4. Commercial Use

- a. The Museum may occasionally arrange for the manufacture and sale of replicas, reproductions, or other commercial items adapted from the Museum's collections. In doing so, all aspects of the commercial venture shall be carried out in a manner that will not discredit the integrity of the Museum or the intrinsic value of the original object. Any reproductions shall be clearly marked as such.
- b. Replicas, reproductions, and adaptations may be made only with the written permission of the Executive Director.

5. Fees for Access, Reproduction, and Use of the Collections

The Museum has established a set schedule of fees for photocopying, photographic copies, digital images, library and archives use, mailing requests to patrons, and so on. These fees may be waived at the discretion of the Collections Department staff, or Executive Director.

6. Reproductions and Copyright

- a. Before the Museum undertakes any reproduction services through the creation of images or reproductions from the collection, the Collections Department staff must determine the ownership of copyright or to what extent the Museum owns the copyright of the collections object (including photographs and archival material) and what, if any, legal limits exist for reproduction and distribution of said object.
- b. Under “fair use,” U.S. copyright law authorizes libraries and archives to furnish photocopies and reproductions of copyrighted material only under certain specified conditions. Such copies may not be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If a user requests or later uses a photocopy or reproduction for purpose in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. The Museum reserves the rights to refuse a copy order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of that order would involve violation of this law.

IX. Public Disclosure

The Collections Management Policy of the Northwest Railway Museum shall be made available to donors, prospective trustees, or, upon request, to other persons.

X. Review, Monitoring, and Revision of the Collections Management Policy of the Northwest Railway Museum

The development of the Collections Management Policy of the Northwest Railway Museum shall be an ongoing process, monitored and changed with the needs of the Museum and best practices in the museum field. The Executive Director, Collections Management staff, and Board of Trustees shall review the entire policy every five years to ensure its compliance with current laws and professional standards, and to ensure its usefulness for managing and caring for the Museum’s collections. Any additions, deletions, or revisions shall be incorporated into the policy and the revised policy shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

XI. Glossary

Collections Management Definitions

The following terms are used in the Collections Management Policy:

AASLH: “In 1904, the American Historical Association, itself a fledgling professional body, established the semi-autonomous Conference of State and Local Historical Societies to serve the leaders of those agencies. In 1939, a group of Conference members, chaired by Christopher C. Crittenden, director of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History, discussed and then proposed the creation of an independent entity. Its job would be to better coordinate the activities of historical societies and stimulate the writing and teaching of state and local history in North America. On December 27, 1940, the Conference of State and Local History met and disbanded itself. Then the American Association for State and Local History was born. Its first charter stated that AASLH’s purpose was, simply, ‘the promotion of effort and activity in the fields of state, provincial, and local history in the United States and Canada.’”

AAM: “Founded in 1906, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) is dedicated to promoting excellence within the museum community. Through advocacy, professional education, information exchange, accreditation, and guidance on current professional standards of performance, AAM assists museum staff, boards and volunteers across the country to better serve the public.”

Access: Addresses the Museum’s policies concerning public or other access to the collections and collections records. (AAM Definition)

Accession: (1) Any acquisition formally accepted into the Museum’s Permanent Collection. This term describes all of the objects registered into the Museum’s Permanent Collection, which came from the same source at the same time. (2) The process of formally accepting and recording an item into the Museum’s Permanent Collection (includes documenting title and information as well as acknowledging receipt).

Accessioning: The formal process by which objects are legally accepted into the Permanent Collections and by which they are recorded as collections objects; involves the creation of an immediate, brief, and permanent record utilizing a control number or unique identifier for objects added to the collections from the same source at the same time, for which the institution accepts custody, right, or title. (AAM “Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Acquisition: (1) Any object acquired by the Museum. (2) The process of acquiring an object, including the discovery of or offering of, preliminary evaluation, negotiating for, taking custody of, documenting title to, and acknowledging receipt of. (3) The process of obtaining legal possession of an object.

Appraisal: An expert or official valuation of an object for quality or value. A donor may seek an appraisal for tax purposes. Because the Internal Revenue Service wants impartial appraisals, an appraisal by an interested party, such as the Museum, can be immediately suspect by the IRS.

Artifact: In this collections management document, the terms “artifact” and “object” are synonymous.

Cataloguing: The creation of a full record of information about an object, cross referenced to other records and files, including the process of identifying and documenting these objects in detail. (AAM “Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Collections: Groups of objects and their associated information, collected with purpose and maintained in order, managed in the public trust for the purpose of documentation, research, and education. (AAM “Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Collections Management: All of the activities that relate to the administration of a museum's collections. These include the deliberate planning, development, and documentation of collections. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Collections Management Policy: A written document, approved by the governing authority, which specifies the museum's policies concerning all collections-related issues, including accessioning, documentation, storage, and disposition. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Conservation: The treatment of artifactual materials to help extend their survival and usefulness while at the same time maintaining their original integrity as much as is possible.

Deaccession: The process of legally removing accessioned objects from the Museum's collection. Deaccessioning does not affect the museum's ownership of an object per se but it does mean that the museum no longer holds the object in the public trust. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Deaccessioning: The formal process used to remove accessioned objects from the collections permanently, or, when an object has been lost or destroyed, the formal process used to document the loss in the collections records.

Deaccession Policy: The policy that lists the criteria and processes by which deaccessioning decisions are made and addresses the use of earnings arising from the deaccession activity.

Disaster: An unexpected occurrence inflicting damage and having long-term adverse effects on museum operations. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Disposal: The process of physically removing a deaccessioned object from the collection. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Education, Reference, and Running Trades and Shop Crafts Collections: Objects specially designated for teaching, research/reference, exhibition props, or other purposes. (AAM Definition) These objects are not part of the Northwest Railway Museum's Permanent Collection.

Education Collection: Those objects that are expendable and acquired to further the Museum's educational purposes. They are held by the Museum for hands-on educational activities, which may be used consumptively and disposed of without formal deaccessioning. The Museum is not committed to preserving Education Collection objects in perpetuity.

Exchange: An exchange with another museum is the process whereby the Museum has determined that an object is more appropriate to the collections of another museum. The Museum deaccessions and removes the object from its collections and trades with the other museum for an object of similar value. Complete ownership and right to title of the object is also transferred.

Governing Authority: The entity that has legal and fiduciary responsibility for a museum (this body may not necessarily own the collections or the physical facility); may include not-for-profit boards, appointed commissions, governmental bodies, and university regents. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary) The governing authority for the Northwest Railway Museum is called the Board of Trustees.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM): The coordinated use of pest and environmental information with available pest control methods to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. IPM programs apply a holistic approach to pest management decision-making, taking advantage of all appropriate pest management options, including, but not limited to, pesticides. (AAM "Peer Review Manual" Glossary)

Loans: Temporary transfers/assignments of collections objects from the Museum, or temporary transfers/assignments of objects to the Museum for stated Museum purposes, such as exhibition or research, and for a specified period of time. These transfers/assignments do not involve a change in ownership.

Loan Policy: The Loan Policy states the purposes for and the conditions covering the temporary transfer of objects, not their ownership, from or to the Museum.

Long-term loan: A loan with no specified ending date.

Motive Power and Equipment: Objects references in this global term include locomotives, railway cars, and equipment either self-propelled or intended to be pushed or pulled and designed to operate on two parallel rails. This term includes – *but is not limited to* - objects such as locomotives, including steam, electric, diesel-electric, gas-mechanical; trolley cars including interurbans and streetcars; passenger cars including coach, sleeper, parlor, observation, dining, and baggage; freight cars including box, flat, stock, log, refrigerator, tank, hopper, gondola, side dump, and cabooses; and special-purpose equipment including ballast tampers, ballast spreaders, automatic spikers, snow plows, cranes, and material-handling machines.

NAGPRA and Other Laws: Demonstrates the Museum’s knowledge of and adherence to various laws, like the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which may affect collections or collecting activities. (AAM Definition)

Nomenclature: The formal, standardized system of object names used by the Museum as the basis for its subject catalog. A master list of object names for historical objects is found in Robert Chenhall’s book *Nomenclature*. The Museum currently uses Chenhall’s *Nomenclature* and its own in-house terms.

Permanent Collection: Those acquisitions that have been formally accessioned by the Museum. The Museum is committed to preserving these objects to the best of its ability. Objects registered in the Permanent Collection are held by the Museum in public trust and cannot be disposed of except by a deliberate, formal process of deaccessioning.

Preventive Conservation: Any measure that prevents damage or reduces the potential for it. Preventative conservation focuses on non-conservation treatment rather than actual conservation treatment. Proper handling, storage, and management of collections are critical elements in preventive conservation. Providing proper exhibition methods for collections objects is also part of preventative conservation.

Provenance: Information regarding the history, ownership, and original location of museum artifacts.

Public Disclosure: Identifies the types of information that may be released about the collections and collections policies. (AAM Definition)

Repatriation: The return of collections objects to the appropriate representatives of groups with a clear historical or cultural connection to the object.

Reproduction and Copyright: Refers to the ownership of copyright of collections objects and the creation of images from the collection. (AAM Definition)

Restricted Gift: An object offered to and accepted by the museum with legally binding conditions that materially affect the object’s use or disposition.

Risk Management: A program of risk control that includes analyzing the probability of risk to museum collections, facilities, visitors, and staff as well as planning and implementing appropriate preventive measures and response methods. (AAM “Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, codified as 36 CFR 67. The Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings and the Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

Temporary Custody/Objects Placed in the Custody of the Museum Under Temporary Receipt/Temporary Deposit of Objects: Objects that are not owned by the Museum but are left temporarily with the Museum for other than loan purposes—for example for attribution, identification, or examination for possible gift or purchase, pending permanent legal action. (AAM “Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Title: The possession of rights of ownership in personal property. Separate rights of possession include copyright interests, trademark rights, and any specific interest that the previous owner may have reserved. (“Peer Review Manual” Glossary)

Transfer: A transfer from another museum is an acquisition in which another museum determines that an object from their collection is more appropriate for the Northwest Railway Museum. The other museum transfers complete ownership and right to title of the object to the Northwest Railway Museum. Objects can also be transferred from the Northwest Railway Museum to a more appropriate institution. The Northwest Railway Museum transfers complete ownership and right to title of the object to the receiving institution.

XII. Bibliography

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