

**Pacific Northwest Railroad Archive
Collection Management Policy and Guidelines for Volunteers**

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CANCELS: Initial Issue

CONTACT: Bob Kelly, Services Committee

SCOPE: PNRA Volunteers, Members, Board and Officers

SEE ALSO:

APPROVED August 8, 2012

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I. Introduction

A. Mission Statement

The mission of PNRA is to be a service organization providing affordable space and services for the benefit of nonprofit RHOs and thereby the public at large. These benefits are intended to strengthen the RHOs by making their railroad history collections much more accessible to the general public, promoting their collections' public use, preserving the collections physically and digitally, encouraging RHO memberships, and ultimately enabling RHOs to continue their missions to preserve and interpret railroad history for current and future generations.

Each RHO owns the material in their collection held at the Archive. PNRA has a responsibility for safeguarding each RHO's material and this collection management policy delineates how materials will be managed, accessioned and deaccessioned. The role of the PNRA Services Committee in these actions is to assure that the policy steps are approved and completed by the designated RHO and PNRA officers. This policy is intended to lessen the chance of misunderstandings or disputes arising from PNRA's collection management.

A Authority for the Policy

The Board of Directors for the PNRA approved this policy, its procedures and responsibilities for the management of the collection on August 8, 2012.

This Policy replaces all previous policies and is binding to all volunteer staff and representatives. This document and related procedures will be reviewed and be revised, as necessary, to reflect changes in PNRA programs and policies.

B. Responsibility for Implementation

The PNRA Services Committee will be responsible for implementing and monitoring of the processes identified in this document. The PNRA Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is implemented and adhered to by all members. The Services Committee and the Board are responsible for overseeing the development of the collections management policies.

II. Acquisition

For the purpose of this policy, acquisition is defined as all the activity related to discovery, planning, taking custody of, documenting, and acknowledging receipt of materials and objects.

A. Authority

The Services Committee members and the members of the Board and Officers have the authority to accept donations within the guidelines of this policy. The Services

Committee will follow the guidelines of the appropriate participating RHO in all acquisition and coordinate closely with the RHO's designated officers. The PNRA Board must approve any purchases, or any acquisition, of items which will result in an ongoing financial obligation to maintain.

B. Means of Acquisition

The PNRA cares for items owned by member RHO's. RHO's may designate materials they have acquired be added to the holdings at PNRA. In addition the PNRA may accept materials on behalf of the RHO's. The PNRA may acquire materials not related to a RHO under the authority of the Services Committee and the PNRA Executive Director.

New materials and objects may be acquired by gift, purchase, commission, bequest, temporary loan, exchange, field collection, and abandonment. No materials or objects shall be knowingly or willfully accepted or acquired which are known to have been illegally imported into, or illegally collected in the United States, contrary to state and federal law, regulation, treaty, and convention.

PNRA shall refuse to acquire materials and objects where there is cause to believe that the circumstances of their collection involved the unauthorized destruction of historic or archaeological sites, buildings, structures, habitats and districts. The PNRA will not accept human remains or objects known to be sacred to Native American or Hawaiian tribes.

The PNRA Services Committee in conjunction with the appropriate RHO's will determine how new materials will be designated and held at PNRA.

C. Criteria

Collection materials must meet the following tests of acquisition before being acquired by the PNRA:

1. RHO's must provide documentation of ownership upon transfer of materials to PNRA
2. Ownership of new materials will be documented
3. The PNRA must be in a position to care properly for the proposed acquisition.
4. The significance and relevance of the material or objects to the PNRA mission must be determined.
5. The materials or objects should, if possible, be documented as to provenance.
6. The proposed acquisition must represent no physical hazard to the collection, building or volunteers.
7. In the case of purchases, the PNRA Board and/or the RHO Board must arrange funding in advance. The purchase price is determined by the seller and agreed to by the Board's.
8. All moral, legal and ethical implications of the acquisition must be considered.
9. All acquisitions will be considered for property rights, copyrights, patents or trademarks. Exceptions must be approved by the Board.

10. Acquisitions must, except for compelling reasons which are approved by the Board, be free from donor-imposed restrictions.
11. Deeds of Gift must be signed and filled out completely. An original copy must be filed with the PNRA Secretary and the Secretary of the appropriate RHO.

D. Operational Donations

1. On occasion, PNRA may be offered materials for the benefit of administrative and facilities operations, but not for inclusion in the collection itself.
2. The approval of the PNRA Executive Director is required for the acquisition of all materials for operational purposes.

E. Appraisals and Authentication

No staff or volunteer shall offer appraisals of the monetary value of materials or objects to donors for the purpose of establishing a fair market value of gifts offered to the PNRA. Donors must obtain an independent appraisal.

F. Conflict of Interest

All officers and volunteers should avoid the appearance and reality of collecting items in competition with the PNRA and the RHO's and they must comply with all terms of the PNRA Conflict of Interest Policy.

G. Collecting Objectives of the PNRA

The PNRA collection will promote the enabling of RHOs to continue their missions to preserve and interpret railroad history for current and future generations.

III. Deaccession Policy

A. Definition

Deaccession is the process of removing permanently from the collections accessioned objects and archive materials. The process shall be cautious, deliberate, and scrupulous. Periodic evaluation of PNRA and RHO collections will be undertaken in order to identify and eliminate items duplicated or inappropriate to the mission of PNRA and participating RHO's. PNRA will not deaccession RHO materials without RHO approval. Additionally, RHO's may independently decide to remove or deaccession their items held at PNRA. Processes for these matters are detailed below.

B. Criteria

In close coordination with the RHO's, objects and materials to be considered for deaccession must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Object or material is outside the scope of collecting objectives of RHO;
2. The object or material lacks physical integrity (incomplete or damaged) or has deteriorated beyond repair.

3. The object or material is an unneeded duplicate.
4. The RHO/PNRA is unable to preserve it properly.
5. The object or material represents a hazard or danger to the volunteers or facility.
6. The object or material, although, existing in the records, is missing and has not been located for more than 2 years.

C. Authority

Once approved by the Services Committee and appropriate RHO committee or officer a deaccession decision must be authorized by the PNRA Board Chair-person and the Board of the appropriate RHO.

D. Restrictions

1. Before any material or object is recommended for deaccessioning, or deaccessioned, reasonable efforts shall be made to ascertain that the PNRA and the RHO has the legal right to do so.
2. In the event of a question concerning intent or force of restrictions, legal advice will be obtained.
3. RHO coordination and approval is required to deaccession any item owned by the RHO and in the care of the PNRA.

E. Procedures

1. After reviewing the procedures and ensuring that there are no legal constraints the Services Committee deaccessions the item.
2. The Services Committee will determine the value for an item, if able to do so through research and consultation. If the material appears to have a monetary value of greater than \$500.00, then the PNRA Board and the RHO Board will be advised and approve all actions relating to the object.
3. The deaccession must be approved before any object can be removed physically or any transfer agreement enacted.
4. If the material has not been documented previously, then photographs or photocopies should be completed before disposition. (Representative samples are acceptable in the case of voluminous paper and photographic collections).

F. Ethics of Sale

1. Objects and material from the PNRA collections shall not be given, sold, or otherwise transferred, publicly or privately to PNRA volunteers, officers, board members, or their immediate families or representatives.
2. No deaccessioned material will be sold through the archive store.
3. Methods of disposal of deaccessioned material are based on the nature, value, provenance of the items and RHO policy. These methods include: sale, exchange, transfer to another institution; public auction; destruction, transfer to other purposes or repatriation.
4. The methods of disposal are determined on a case by case basis by the RHO's and the PNRA.

5. In cases where collections are to be transferred, traded or sold to other museums, archives, or non-profit historical agencies, care must be taken to ensure that the receiving institution can provide professional care for these materials. The deaccessioned material must relate to the mission of the institution receiving it.

- G. Proceeds
 1. The items owner, whether PNRA or RHO, will determine how any proceeds from deaccession will be deposited.

- H. Public Disclosure and Record-keeping
 1. This deaccession policy will be made available to any donor or prospective donor on request.
 2. A list of all materials and collections which have been deaccessioned from the permanent collections shall be maintained by the PNRA.

IV. CARE AND SECURITY OF THE COLLECTIONS

- A. The PNRA has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide reasonable care for the material entrusted to its care. Volunteers should work in cooperation to ensure that collections and related documentation are well-maintained.

- B. To protect the collection from theft and vandalism, the PNRA shall continue to improve its procedures as well as security-consciousness among volunteers.

- C. Material on loan to other institutions will be reviewed on an annual basis and loan documents updated.

V. DOCUMENTATION

- A. The volunteer caretakers of the collections are charged with responsibility for the physical preservation and safety of the collection records as well. The Services Committee will arrange for and maintain detailed records of collections owned by the PNRA including: accession, deaccession, cataloguing, storage, loan and inventory. RHO's will follow their individual policy for detailed documentation.

- B. Description catalogue information which assigns unique numbers to specific items (or discrete groups in the case of manuscript materials) will be created in a timely manner following acquisition. Materials will be marked with their identification numbers and storage locations recorded. RHO processes will be integrated with PNRA held materials.

- C. Similarly, the PNRA volunteer staff and RHO representatives shall continue to make progress entering records into the collections management system.

- D. A duplicate set of accession and cataloging records and computerized catalogue records shall be made and stored off-site and as designated by the RHO's.

VI. Loans

A. Outgoing

1. PNRA will lend most materials to other qualified cultural institutions for the purpose of exhibition subject to the conditions outlined below.
 - a. Each loan and its specific conditions must be approved in advance by the appropriate RHO.
 - b. Collection items will not be loaned to individuals or businesses except by the permission of the Board
 - c. An outgoing Loan agreement between PNRA and the borrowing institution is required.
 - d. The loan shall be made for a particular period of time (generally one year or less), and will be reviewed annually, if renewal is requested. The PNRA will recall a loan for good cause at any time.
2. Each loan request will be considered on a case-by-case basis in discussion with the appropriate RHO. Factors to be evaluated include:
 - a. Physical condition of the item;
 - b. Rarity and historic value;
 - c. PNRA or RHO need for the item (e.g., exhibition or research);
 - d. Environmental conditions and security measures at the borrowing institution;
 - e. Nature and duration of the proposed loan;
 - f. Insurance and transportation arrangements;
 - g. Amount of advance notice received by PNRA.
3. The Services Committee or PNRA Executive Director may recommend that a high quality reproduction be substituted for original materials requested for exhibition because of preservation or security reasons. The cost of producing the reproduction will be borne by the borrowing institution or department.
4. Items can only be loaned if the borrowing institution is willing and able to meet the specific requirements necessary for the material's preservation and security as outlined in the conditions on the Loan Agreement.
5. All out-going loan material will be marked, labeled or tagged, as appropriate, valued by the Services Committee, catalogued and condition reported. Packing will be managed by the Services Committee.
6. Proof of insurance, if reasonable, will be required in advance.
7. Generally, the cost of transport and crating, if required, is borne by the borrowing institution

8. While on display, material will be credited to PNRA and RHO, as indicated on the Loan Agreement form.
 9. Permission to reproduce the loaned material in any manner must be requested in advance and obtained in writing from PNRA.
- B. Incoming Loans
1. Incoming loans must be authorized by the Services Committee, the PNRA Board Chair-person and the appropriate RHO.
 2. Loans will be made for a specified time period and require a written agreement. The value of the loan material, determined by the owner/lender, will be recorded on the Loan Agreement.
 3. The PNRA will not accept loan material which is known to have been collected illegally, represents a hazard to the volunteers, or fails to conform to local, state or federal law (e.g., human remains, sacred material:).
 4. If the lender cannot be located or refuses to accept the return of the material, the loan will be deemed abandoned property

VII. ACCESS TO AND USE OF THE COLLECTION

- A. Access
1. The collections and their records may be used for research purposes by the PNRA staff, RHO's, staff from other institutions, scholars, students and other responsible parties. No material will be removed without the Services Committee or PNRA Executive Director approval.
 2. Research access will be scheduled with the Services Committee or PNRA Executive Director during regular hours set for this purpose.
 3. A researcher application will be completed by non-PNRA/RHO staff prior to access and an Access Log will be kept for daily activity.
 4. Handling and photocopying of certain paper and collections may be restricted because of size, fragility, or other considerations.
 5. Access to certain types of information may be denied or restricted, including name and address of the donor. The researcher will be informed of the nature of the restriction(s).
 6. In most cases, examination of collections will be limited to designated office areas.

7. PNRA and appropriate RHO will receive a complimentary copy of any publication or video/film that either describes or reproduces any material from the collection.
8. The 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. PNRA reserves the right to refuse a copying orders if, in its judgment, fulfillment of that order would involve violation of this law.

B. Copying/Photography/Scanning

Collection objects, images and other material may not be copied, photographed or scanned without the advance approval of the onsite PNRA manager.

C. Fees

PNRA may charge fees to pay for the cost of research time, photography, photocopying, and mailing requested by patrons.

APPENDIX 1
Pacific Northwest Railroad Archive
Policy on the Repatriation, Acquisition, Care and
Exhibition of Native American Collections

The PNRA will follow the policy and procedures of the Washington State Historical Society as defined in their current Collection Management Policy.