

# **JODA MUSEUM COLLECTIONS ACCESS POLICY**

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Division of Paleontology  
Museum Collections and Laboratory Access

Access to all museum collection and laboratory areas is restricted to individuals that have requested access in advance and have a legitimate curatorial or professional reason be in those places. This includes access to the museum collections and accession room, paleontology lab, as well as the museum gallery during non-public admission hours. The legitimate reasons to be in most areas of the Thomas Condon Paleontology Center and Cant Ranch, especially the offices, are many and need not be specifically addressed. The policy regarding access to the museum collection areas and paleontology laboratory requires specific clarification.

The museum collections and paleontology laboratory are professional work areas that were designed for specific uses. It is expected that appropriate professionals will be responsible for the areas. Responsibility for all of the paleontology areas (including the laboratory, collections storage, museum gallery during non-public admission hours, accessions storage, and paleontology offices) is ultimately the responsibility monument Superintendent, delegated to the Museum Curator / Paleontologist. Day-to-day operation of the paleontology laboratory is the primary responsibility of the JODA Fossil Preparator. Day-to-day operation of the museum collections is the primary responsibility of the JODA Collections Manager.

Access to the museum collections and the paleontology laboratory must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Access to the space must be for a reason that is consistent with the intended use of the space (this may include reasons of curation, research, education, maintenance, safety, resource management, or administration that have direct relevance to the space or the personnel that work in the space).
2. Must be supervised by a NPS/JODA curatorial staff member at all times.
3. Non-NPS access **MUST** be requested in writing, approved, and scheduled at least one week in advance by a curatorial staff member. Requests a month in advance are preferred, as this will facilitate scheduling by curatorial staff.

In addition, access for research or educational purposes must be supported with a written research application that identifies specific specimens, taxonomic groups, geological strata, or items that would be studied. This allows equipment to be set up (such as microscopes, photo mounts, and work areas) and specimens to be located in advance. The research application and guidelines for access to museum collections will be provided to all individuals requesting access.

Access for commercial purposes (including filming and professional photography) must be coordinated with a NPS commercial permit.

Due to the difficulty of monitoring individuals and risks involved, group tours of the museum

collections and paleontology laboratory are generally discouraged. Some professional organizations and university classes may have research or educational interests that relate directly to museum collections, specifically including information that is not available in the museum exhibits. These groups should submit an application, in lieu of a research application, that justifies access to the collections. Such groups should be limited to less than 10 individuals at a time, so they can be properly supervised by curatorial staff. In lieu of tours of the museum collections and paleontology laboratory, requests can be made to curatorial or interpretive staff to speak to groups in the museum lobby and exhibits.

Access to certain museum spaces puts museum objects at risk of breakage, deterioration, and theft. Therefore, unnecessary access to these spaces will be denied. The intention of this policy is not to prevent access to the curatorial spaces, but to ensure the best protection of the NPS property that is housed in these spaces.

## **USES OF COLLECTIONS**

To fulfill the goals of the monument as described in the introduction, objects from the museum collections may be used for research, educational, public exhibit, and management purposes. The primary considerations for the use of museum objects are the preservation and conservation of each object and the collection as a whole. Researchers and other specialists may examine collections, but only in compliance with the conditions and procedures outlined in NPS Director's Order 24: *NPS Museum Collections Management*, NPS Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resource Management*, and the monument's written collections access policy: *JODA Museum Collections Access Policy* (Appendix II). All use of the collections and examination of objects and archives must be supervised by a JODA curatorial employee and must be scheduled with a JODA curation employee in advance.

To facilitate proper use and planning of access to the collection, the complete JODA museum inventory is available online at: <http://www.museum.nps.gov/joda/page.htm>. Most information regarding the identification and disposition of the collections are available to the public at all times. Only specific information deemed sensitive for management reasons is withheld.

Destructive analysis and testing is a legitimate use of museum collections for approved research purposes when: 1) the impact is minor, or 2) the object is common. Approval by the Superintendent is required for such testing, and researchers must comply with restrictions and procedures outlined in NPS Director's Order 24: *NPS Museum Collections Management* and NPS Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resource Management*. If an object is rare or significant, a request for destructive analysis should be reviewed by the Regional Curator and may be approved only by the regional director, as outlined in NPS Director's Orders 24 and 28. In accordance with *NPS Management Policies* (2006), disinterred human remains or photographs of remains will not be exhibited. Grave goods or other sacred objects will not be displayed if Native Americans who are culturally associated with them or their representation object to such display.

Museum objects will not be used consumptively or in interpretive demonstrations without prior authorization, as outlined in NPS Director's Order 24: *NPS Museum Collections Management*, NPS Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resource Management*, and Director's Order 6: *Interpretation and Education*. The use of reproductions is preferred to the consumptive use of museum objects.

Photographs of museum objects are made available to the public to provide an indirect use of the museum collections, through publications and exhibits (including content on the monument website). The credit line for their use should be listed as: National Park Service, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Many of the monument's paleontological specimens have been illustrated in publications; their use is noted in the museum record.

All exhibits containing museum objects must have proper security, appropriate environmental controls, and proper mounts to ensure the long-term preservation and protection of the objects.

Objects may be loaned to qualified institutions for approved purposes in accordance with the *NPS Museum Handbook*. Institutions must meet accepted museum standards for security, handling, and exhibition of NPS museum objects. Sensitive materials may require additional conditions prior to a loan commitment. Expenses related to loans of museum objects, including return shipping and insurance, will normally be assumed by the borrower.