



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Mall and Memorial Parks  
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000



### VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

#### Scope of Collection Statement

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Executive Summary

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection (VIVE) is comprised primarily of objects<sup>1</sup> that are left as offerings by visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM), which is often referred to as “The Wall.” This unique collection, believed to be the first of its kind in the United States, reflects the emotional impact of the VVM as well as a modern-day phenomenon of public offerings of grief and remembrance. The offerings, which began to appear soon after the dedication of the Memorial in 1982, were unanticipated and therefore not addressed in the site’s enabling legislation.

National Park Service (NPS) museum collections<sup>2</sup> comprise the institutional memory of NPS units and typically include both natural and cultural material. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, however, is almost entirely a history collection and includes personal items and tributes associated with names featured on the Memorial, military service items, archival materials, protest items, and public tributes. The collection is significant for its historical value; for its potential as a source for anthropological, historical, and sociological studies; for the motivations and stories behind the offerings; and for the ways in which the public has shaped the collection through its interactions with the VVM. The collection is one of the seven collections managed by the National Mall and Memorial Parks (NAMA).

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<sup>1</sup> 54 USC 120501 defines the term “museum object” as “a prehistoric or historic artifact, work of art, book, document, photograph, or natural history specimen.” The term “museum collection” in the National Park Service (NPS) is commonly used to describe a group of objects, scientific specimens, and archival and manuscript collections that are relevant to the park’s mission, mandates, history, and themes, and which the park acquires, manages, preserves, and makes available through research, exhibits, and other media for the public benefit (NPS *Museum Handbook*, Part I, 2003, 2:1).

<sup>2</sup> NPS Director’s Order #24: *Museum Collection Management* states that “NPS museum collections inform and enhance every aspect of the NPS mission, from resource management and interpretation, to research and public accountability. Featured in exhibits, interpretation and education programs, films, and print and electronic publications, NPS museum collections are key resources for educators, students, researchers, park managers, park neighbors, and the general public.”

## **B. Purpose of the Scope of Collection Statement<sup>3</sup>**

This Scope of Collection Statement (SOCS) defines the scope of present and future museum collection holdings for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection. This stand-alone document ensures that materials collected contribute directly to the understanding and interpretation of the site's purpose, themes and resources, including those objects that the National Park Service (NPS) is legally mandated to preserve. It is designed to ensure that the museum collection is clearly relevant to the VVM by setting limits to protect the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection against arbitrary or excessive growth, and to confirm that the National Park Service is able to adequately care for the collection.

## **C. Legislation Related to the National Park Service Museum Collections**

As of December 19, 2014, several of the commonly known laws specific to the National Park Service were realigned under Title 54 of the U.S. Code (54 USC).

The National Park Service's legal mandate for acquiring and preserving museum collections is contained in the Antiquities Act of 1906 (54 USC 320301-320303); the Organic Act of 1916 (54 USC 100101(a) et seq.); the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (54 USC 320101); the Management of Museum Properties Act of 1955, as amended (54 USC 102501-102504); the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, as amended (16 USC 469-469c); the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 USC 300101 et seq.); the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974, as amended (54 USC 312501-312508); the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended (16 USC 470aa-mm); and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 (54 USC 100701 et seq.).

Other laws, regulations, directives, and conventions, pertinent to museum collections include: the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 USC 1531 - 1543); the Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (16 USC 668a); the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 USC 703 - 711); the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1996); Disposition of Federal Records, (36 CFR Part 1228); Preservation, Arrangement, Duplication, Exhibition of Records (44 USC 2109); NPS Special Directive 87-3, the 1983 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES); the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (implemented in the United States by P.L. 97-446 in 1983, 19 USC 2601); the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA), (25 USC 3001-13); and Voluntarily Abandoned Property (41 CFR Part 102-41, Subpart C).

In addition to legislation related to NPS museum collections, the site is also subject to Service-wide NPS policies and guidelines. NPS Management Policies lay the foundation by which the NPS meets

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<sup>3</sup> Preparation of a SOCS is required by *NPS Management Policies* (2006, Chapter 5); *Director's Order No. 24: NPS Museum Collections Management*; and *Director's Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management*.

its responsibilities toward museum collections and provides policy standards and requirements for preserving, protecting, documenting, and providing access to, and use of NPS museum collections. *Director's Order No. 28: NPS Cultural Resources Management Guideline* states, "The National Park Service permits and encourages the acquisition of museum objects by donation, purchase, exchange, transfer, field collecting, or loan when these objects are clearly significant to an area" but, in the case of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, voluntarily abandoned property is the main source of acquisition. *Director's Order No. 24: NPS Museum Collections Management* and the accompanying *Museum Handbook* ensure that NPS managers and staff have information on the standards and actions for successfully and ethically complying with *NPS Management Policies* on museum collections. These documents also provide a means of measuring and evaluating progress in preserving, protecting, documenting, accessing, and using museum collections.

## **D. Park History, Significance, Purpose, Themes and Goals**

### **1. Park History**

The legislation that authorized the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF)<sup>4</sup> to establish the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the National Mall,<sup>5</sup> states that the Memorial be established "in honor and recognition of the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War." In 1980, a national design competition was announced for the Memorial, and Yale architecture student, Maya Ying Lin, won for her submission. Lin's design featured a polished black granite wall in a V shape bearing the etched names of more than 58,000 men and women who died in combat or were listed as missing in action. The NPS assumed custody of the Memorial when it was dedicated on November 13, 1982.

Set at a distance from The Wall are four other features of the VVM added later to address other aspects of the Vietnam experience. A flagpole flies both the U.S. and the Missing in Action-Prisoner of War (MIA-POW) flags and carries the insignia of the five branches of the Armed Forces. Sculptor Frederick Hart's *The Three Servicemen* statue, installed in 1984, features three life-size American combat soldiers in Vietnam cast in bronze. Nearby is the Vietnam Women's Memorial authorized by *Public Law 100-660* in 1988 and dedicated in 1993. It features a statue of three nurses and one wounded soldier by artist Glenna Goodacre. The most recent addition to the Memorial is the *In Memory* plaque authorized by *Public Law 106-214* in 2000 and dedicated in 2004, which honors the men and women who died later as a result of their service in Vietnam.

When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was designed, constructed and dedicated, no one anticipated that visitors, touched by the war, would bring offerings to leave at the VVM. This phenomenon began soon after the dedication and took everyone by surprise. Unsure what to do with the items, National Mall and Memorial Parks maintenance personnel began taking them to the Park's maintenance yard where they quickly accumulated. The National Capital Region's Museum

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<sup>4</sup> The Park's partner, the VVMF, is the nonprofit organization that built the VVM.

<sup>5</sup> Public Law 96-297

Resource Center (MRCE) in Landover, Maryland, led by the Regional Curator, assumed care for the objects in 1984. Responsibility and accountability for the collection was officially delegated to the Director of MRCE under the memorandum: *Delegation for Accountability of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection* (1997). In 2015, responsibility for the collection was transferred to the National Mall and Memorial Parks. The collection is still housed at MRCE where museum technicians and interns catalog the massive collection.

For most of the VIVE's existence, the offerings have been collected by National Mall rangers each evening and retrieved regularly by a museum technician and taken to MRCE. The offerings, considered voluntarily abandoned property,<sup>6</sup> are then evaluated for inclusion in the museum collection by curatorial staff. Museum technicians and interns have worked to catalog the collection, but very little shaping or culling of the collection has occurred in part due to the broad parameters for collecting outlined in VIVE's original SOCS (1985), which were not widely or consistently implemented. As a result, the collection has grown at an unsustainable rate, necessitating the need for a more targeted scope of collection statement. The new SOCS will help Park museum professionals and management make decisions about which objects have the best potential interpretive value and contribute to the purpose and themes identified by the NPS and VVMF. This scope will guide the Park in collecting objects that best honor the original intention of the collection – to preserve the poignant tributes and personal items left in honor and remembrance by family, friends, and visitors affected by the Vietnam War.

## **2. Significance**

The Park and VVMF developed the following statement of significance for the Memorial noted in *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Interpretive Plan* (2011):

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial:

- Honors all the men and women who served during the Vietnam War.
- Gives loved ones a place to honor and remember those who died.
- Provides an area where veterans can seek closure.
- Is a tangible symbol of recognition by the American people. By separating the issue of the service of the individual men and women from the issue of U.S. policy in Vietnam through the Memorial, VVMF hoped to begin a process of healing and national reconciliation.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection is believed to be the first of its kind – a collection created from public offerings left at a public memorial, most of which are left anonymously. In this case, the collection exists to honor the men and women who served in the Vietnam War. The collection is significant for its historical value; for its potential as a source of cultural anthropological, historical, and sociological studies; for the motivations and stories behind the

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<sup>6</sup> 41 CFR 102-41.80

offerings; and the ways in which the public has shaped the collection through its interactions with the Memorial.

### 3. Purpose

The purpose of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is to honor and recognize the men and women who served and sacrificed their lives in the Vietnam War. The Memorial separates the issue of the individuals who served in the military during the Vietnam War from the U.S. policy that carried out the War in order to foster national reconciliation.<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection is to preserve those offerings left at the VVM that best reflect the interpretive themes and statements of significance outlined below. The intention is to increase knowledge, understanding, and inspiration among present and future generations through exhibits and interpretive programs and to support research, resource management and education.

### 4. Themes

The Park's main interpretive themes for the site are identified in the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Interpretive Plan* (2011). This plan was developed in anticipation of the future Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center, which will be constructed on the National Mall near the VVM and will exhibit some of the VVM collection. The goals and themes for the Center are broad in scope due to efforts to reach out to a wider community of veterans and the public. Due to the vast size of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection and limited storage options, the museum collection will continue to have a strict focus on the Vietnam War and its veterans. The themes developed for the Center focus on the following:

- **Honor.** The Vietnam Veterans Memorial honors those who served and died by providing a place to express respect for their lives and actions, to encourage emotional and academic searches for understanding of the Vietnam War, and to enhance the difficult process of healing.
- **A Lasting Influence.** Many domestic and global social changes, cultural changes, technological innovations, and military advances that occurred during and as a result of the Vietnam War have had lasting influence and continue to be relevant.
- **Shared War Time Experiences.** Service members' shared war time experiences connect them to one another and to a larger community (unit, branch of military service, and other veterans).

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<sup>7</sup> [www.vvmf.org/memorial](http://www.vvmf.org/memorial)

- **Strong Bonds of Loyalty, Friendship and Service.** The courage, sacrifice, and devotion of those who fell during the Vietnam War, of those who returned, and of those who waited back home created strong bonds of loyalty, friendship, and service that continue today.

## **E. Planning Documents Relevant to the Site and Museum Collection**

Core planning documents relevant to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and its museum collection include the following:

- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Scope of Collection Statement* (1985)
- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection Management Plan* (1986)
- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Interpretive Prospectus* (1994)
- *Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Interpretive Plan* (2011)

## **F. Structures, Landmarks and Park Resources Listed on National or International Registries**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was administratively listed on the National Register of Historic Places upon its dedication on November 13, 1982.<sup>8</sup> An individual nomination has not been prepared. The VVM is a contributing site to both the East and West Potomac Parks Historic District and the National Mall Historic District National Register Nominations. The VVM is considered a memorial group; its five components include the Memorial designed by Maya Lin, and the sculptural group of the Three Servicemen, the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the flagpole, and the *In Memory* plaque to honor veterans who died as a result of their service.

## **II. TYPES OF COLLECTIONS**

The legal mandates, resource management objectives, and interpretive themes stated in *Section I* of this SOCS provide general direction for acquiring materials for VIVE's museum collection. National Park Service museum collections are divided into two main categories: cultural and natural. The guidelines identified in the following sections for each collecting category are intended to guide collecting and to prevent arbitrary and excessive growth of the site's museum collection, while ensuring that the collection remains relevant to the VIVE's mission and purpose.

### **A. Cultural Collection**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection is primarily a cultural collection, with most of it identified as a history collection. Objects and archives with a direct association to the site and the names etched on the VVM are more desirable for inclusion in the collection than objects without a direct association. Objects in the VVM cultural collection must increase knowledge of the Vietnam

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<sup>8</sup> By its Congressional designation as a national memorial, the VVM is one of several National Park Service units that are automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places at their dedication without supporting documentation.

experience and inspire present and future generations through use in exhibits, research and interpretive programs. Curatorial oversight guides additions to the collection so that NAMA keeps the most relevant objects for the collection.

To be included in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial cultural collection, items must meet the following criteria:

- Items with a discernible connection to service in the Vietnam War, circa November 1, 1955-May 15, 1975.
- Items addressed to or concerning a person listed on the VVM when the donor is someone with a first-degree or second-degree relation to the deceased (parent, sibling, child, aunt/uncle, niece/nephew, grandchild, or personal friend).
- Items left in honor of Vietnam veterans that provide context for a better understanding of the many aspects of the Vietnam War experience and its veterans.
- Items related to the design, construction, and ongoing care of all components of the Memorial.
- Items that address interpretive and/or research needs identified in management plans, resource management plans, exhibit plans and other applicable planning documents and resource studies.
- Items associated with regulatory and compliance activities required by law such as those mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

NPS cultural collections are subdivided into four disciplines: archeology, history, archives, and ethnology. The following list identifies, by discipline, object types appropriate to the VIVE's museum collection and, as needed, notes current representation.

## **1. Archeology Collection**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial collection does not contain an archeological component at this time. Any archeological materials recovered during compliance projects at the Memorial will be handled in accordance and managed as part of NAMA's archeology collection.

## **2. Ethnology Collection**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection contains two potential ethnology collections:

- a. Native American objects.** A small number of items left anonymously at the VVM are apparently associated with Native American culture.

- b. **Objects associated with ethnic minorities in Vietnam.** The collection contains several items identified as having an association with Southeast Asian ethnic minorities from the Central Highlands of Vietnam, who were recruited to fight alongside U.S. forces in the Vietnam War.

### 3. History Collection

The history collection is an important component of the interpretive and resource management programs and supports the purpose of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Currently estimated to contain approximately 200,000 objects, VIVE's history collection is still being collected, evaluated, and cataloged. Only historic material that has a direct association with the Vietnam War, the men and women who served during the Vietnam War, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are to be included in the museum collection.

The history collection is divided into six major categories:

- a. **Personal Artifacts.** This category includes objects left by visitors to the VVM which illustrate a direct relationship or personal connection between a veteran and their involvement in the Vietnam War. Photographs, poems, letters, personal narratives, signs, cards and three-dimensional objects are collected. All materials must be associated with a name on the VVM, a Vietnam veteran, or have a direct connection to the Vietnam War experience.
- b. **Vietnam Military Service Items (1955-1975).** Objects and artifacts in this category include original uniforms, accoutrements, awards, gear and other military items. All materials must be associated with a name on the VVM, a Vietnam veteran, or have a direct connection to the Vietnam War experience.
- c. **Protest, Activism, and Advocacy Materials.** Historical collection materials in this category include signs, letters and other types of items that relate to protests, activism, and and/or advocacy of the Vietnam War or issues resulting from service in Vietnam including, but not limited to: Anti-War efforts, GI Resistance efforts, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Prisoners of War (POW), Missing in Action (MIA), and Agent Orange.
- d. **Public Tribute Items.** This category includes objects left at the VVM by the general public to honor the men and women who served in the Vietnam War. Due to the vast numbers of items that fall within this category, the Park must be selective about what it adds to the collection. Items must compliment the Park's interpretive goals and statements of significance and represent an object category not already included in the collection. A large amount of items left by school, youth, or other groups currently exists; a small

representative sample may be retained, if such materials support approved NAMA or VIVE planning documents.<sup>9</sup> However, this type of material will not be collected in the future.

- e. **Architectural Elements.** When original architectural fabric is removed from a historic structure during a preservation or repair project, a representative portion is accessioned into the museum collection. Included in this category are the molds and casts of the *Three Servicemen* statue and test panels of the Memorial that were used for corrosion studies.
- f. **Site History Items.** This category includes materials that relate to the Memorial's planning, design, construction, and preservation. It also includes materials that document major singular events that have occurred there, such as its dedication.

#### 4. Archive Collection

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial collection does not contain an archival component at this time. Regional planning documents, regional public affairs materials, and NAMA documents relating to the design, construction and maintenance of the Memorial are contained within larger Regional and Park archival holdings and are cataloged as part of those archives in order to retain their provenance and context.

Twenty-four linear feet of resource management records associated with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are cataloged in the MRCE administrative records.<sup>10</sup> Resource management records are defined in the Departmental Manual (*411 DM 1 Policy and Responsibilities for Management of Museum Property*), and may include site forms, field notes, drawings, maps, photographs, video tapes, sound recordings, oral histories, inventories of artifacts, and other associated records that were created in connection with the management of the site and its resources. Documentation relating to the VVMF design competition and Maya Lin's original design for the VVM is located in the archives of the Library of Congress.

Policy and procedures for archival collections and records management are outlined in *NPS Management Policies* (2006); *Director's Order #11D: Records and Electronic Information Management*; the *Service-Wide Records Schedule* (SRS) and the accompanying *Records and Electronic Information Management (REIM) Guide* (2012); and the *Museum Handbook, Part II. Appendix D: Archives and Manuscript Collections*.

#### B. Natural History Collection

The purpose of natural history collections is to support scientific research, resource management, and education; provide baseline data of Park natural resources; and to document changes to resources due to internal Park conditions and external effects.

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<sup>9</sup> For all items outside of the SOCS, the park follows the disposition guidelines outlined in 41 CFR 102-36.305-330.

<sup>10</sup> MRCE 134, MRCE Administrative Records

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection contains a few objects identified as natural history specimens. These specimens were collected as abandoned property left at the VVM, not according to scientific methodology. The Park does not anticipate additions to the VVM natural history collection.

Any natural history specimens collected during compliance projects at the Memorial will be handled in accordance and managed as part of NAMA's natural history collection.

### **III. MUSEUM COLLECTIONS SUBJECT TO THE NATIVE AMERICAN GRAVES PROTECTION AND REPATRIATION ACT OF 1990**

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA), 25 USC 3001-13, requires, in addition to other actions, a written summary of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. NAGPRA required an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects to have been completed by November 16, 1995.

Further study is needed to determine whether any of the items in the VIVE collection are subject to NAGPRA.

### **IV. ACQUISITIONS**

NPS policy permits the acquisition of museum objects by gift, purchase, exchange, transfer, and field collection under the authorities of the Antiquities Act of 1906, the National Park Service Act of 1916, the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the Management of Museum Properties Act of 1955, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection is unique in that the collection is acquired almost entirely through offerings left at the VVM, which are considered voluntarily abandoned property under 41 CFR 102-41, Subpart C, *Disposition of Seized, Forfeited, Voluntarily Abandoned, and Unclaimed Personal Property*. The key factor in the acquisition process for this collection depends on this important interaction with the VVM. For most of its existence, acquisitions to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection have not been permitted through the mail or personal delivery to Park offices. The act of leaving the item at the VVM has been a contributing factor when determining whether items will be considered for acquisition. The Park will consider other options on a case-by-case basis but intends to continue to enforce this aspect of acquisition for this unique collection. Additionally, the Park acquires resource management records as field collections and transfers.

Acquisition of museum objects is governed by the Park's ability to manage, preserve, and provide access to them according to Chapter 5 of the *NPS Management Policies* (2006); the standards for managing museum collections in *Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management* (1998); *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1997); *Director's Order #24: Museum Collection Management* (2008); and the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part I: Museum Collections*; *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II: Museum Records*; and *NPS Museum Handbook, Part III: Access and Use*. NPS policy is to accept only unrestricted gifts and bequests with no limiting conditions, including

copyright. Museum objects must be acquired, accessioned, and cataloged in accordance with the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II: Museum Records*.

All acquisitions must be collected, exported, imported, transported, or otherwise obtained and possessed in full compliance with the laws and regulations of the country of origin, the United States federal government (including NAGPRA), and the individual states of the United States.

In accordance with *Director's Order #44: Personal Property Management, Chapter 10* (2008), all proposals for the acquisition of firearms and ammunition, except archeological field collections, must be reviewed and approved by the Regional Curator. Acquisition of firearms included on the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' list of prohibited and restricted weapons require concurrent review by the Regional Curator and the Regional Law Enforcement Specialist. All ammunition acquired must be certified as inert before it is brought onto the collection facility premises.

The Park Superintendent, by delegation, represents the Director of the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior in accepting title to and responsibility for museum collections. The Superintendent bears the ultimate responsibility for the acquisition and proper care and management of the museum collection. The Superintendent may delegate the day-to-day care of the collection to the Park's Curator. All acquisitions made by the Superintendent (or designated receiving officer) must be in accord with this approved Scope of Collection Statement.

Items left at the VVM become property of the federal government. In this case, the Superintendent delegates the acquisition process to the Park's rangers who retrieve the offerings each evening. NAMA park rangers issue a DI-105 Receipt for Property form to transfer collected VVM offerings to the Park's curatorial personnel, who evaluate them for inclusion in the museum collection. Items selected for the VVM collection must receive formal approval from the Superintendent (or designated individual) before they can be accessioned into the museum collection. The Curator prepares all instruments of conveyance for the Superintendent and donors. Items that are selected for the museum collection obligate the government to furnish long-term professional care for the objects. For this reason, the Park must be very selective when deciding which items to accession.

## **V. USES OF THE COLLECTION**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection may be used for exhibits, interpretive programs, research, publications, or other interpretive media. The primary considerations for the use of museum objects are the preservation of each object in question and of the collection as a whole. The objects should be accurately interpreted to help people understand the events or circumstances related to them.

In accordance with NPS policy,<sup>11</sup> the Park will not exhibit objects, or photographs of objects, that are subject to NAGPRA. Drawings, renderings, or casts of such items will not be displayed without

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<sup>11</sup> *NPS Management Policies* (2006), Chapters 5 and 7

the written consent of the culturally affiliated Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. The Park will consult with culturally affiliated or traditionally associated peoples to determine the religious status of any object whose sacred nature is not confirmed. These consultations will occur before such an object is exhibited or any action is taken that may have an adverse effect.

Researchers and other specialists may examine objects and archival materials under the conditions and procedures outlined in *Director's Order #24: NPS Museum Collections Management*; *Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management* (1998); *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1997); and in the Park's written *Museum Collections Access Procedures*. Outside researchers must submit a research proposal to the Superintendent for review by the Park's Research Coordinator. Special care must be taken when granting access to this collection to protect private information as outlined in the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part III, Chapter 1: Evaluating and Documenting Museum Collections Use*.

Any interpretive use defined as consumptive must be authorized in advance, as outlined in *Director's Order #24: NPS Museum Collections Management*; *Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management* (1998); *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1997); and *Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education* (2005). The use of reproductions is preferred to the consumptive use of original objects. Reproductions of paper-based materials such as letters and photographs will be used for long-term exhibition in place of originals.

Destructive analysis is a legitimate use of museum collections for approved research purposes when the impact is minor or when the object is common, in which case approval by the Superintendent is required. 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 *Director's Order #24: NPS Museum Collections Management*; *Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management* (1998); *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (1997).

Objects may be loaned out to qualified institutions for approved purposes in accordance with *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 5: Outgoing Loans*. Institutions should submit a Standard Facilities Report for consideration and must meet accepted museum standards for security, handling, and exhibition of NPS museum objects. Sensitive materials may require additional conditions be met prior to a loan commitment. Expenses related to loans of museum objects, including shipping and insurance, will normally be assumed by the borrower. 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.

## **VI. RESTRICTIONS**

Restrictions, in addition to those applying to use of the museum collection outlined in *Section V* of this SOCS, are as follows:

When a large quantity of an object type already exists in the collection, only a representative sample will be kept, with priority given to acquiring the best-preserved examples. The number of representative samples kept for the collection depends on the type and size of object. Types of objects that fall within this restriction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Non-personalized military-issue objects (uniforms, boots, helmets, headwear, patches, etc.).
- Activism/advocacy objects related to Vietnam veterans issues (Rolling Thunder, Gold Star families, Sons & Daughters in Touch, Vietnam Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, National League of Families, etc.).
- Tobacco products.
- Liquor bottles.
- Wreaths and fake flowers.
- Wall rubbings.
- Flags.

Items that will not become part of the VIVE museum collection include:

- Mass-produced, impersonal items (souvenir dog tags, patches, insignia, etc.).
- Items left by school or youth groups.
- Perishable or biotic items likely to deteriorate (flowers, food, etc.).
- Items likely to deteriorate due to inherent vice.
- Items that pose a safety hazard or that contain chemical residue.
- Random items with no context such as pencils, shoes, hats, etc. that appear to have been left by accident.
- Objects relating to social or political movements or wars other than the Vietnam War fall outside of this SOCS and are not retained.
- The scattering of human remains is prohibited at NAMA.<sup>12</sup> Any human remains and other associated funerary objects are not appropriate for the VIVE museum collection and should never be left at the VVM.

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 USC 300101 et seq.), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended (16 USC 470aa-mm), the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998 (54 USC 100701), and NPS Management Policies (2006) 4.1.2. "Natural Resource Information" and 5.2.3 "Confidentiality," the Park may withhold from the public sensitive information concerning: rare, threatened, or endangered species; commercially valuable resources; minerals; paleontological resources; archeological and other cultural resources; objects of cultural patrimony and sensitive ethnographic information; information provided by individuals who wish the information to remain confidential; personally identifiable information; and the identities of individuals who wish to remain anonymous. Inquiries

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<sup>12</sup> 36 CFR 2.62 (b)

of this nature will be referred to the regional Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act Officer for consultation and possible review.

In order to comply with NPS Policy that prohibits the acquisition of objects with restrictions, the Park will use discretion when evaluating potential acquisitions for which there are possible copyright restrictions.

Restrictions may be placed on the publication of images or manuscripts in the museum collection if these materials are subject to copyright, and the National Park Service does not hold the copyright.

Though an unlikely scenario in the case of the VIVE, endangered, threatened, or rare plants or vertebrate and invertebrate animals will be collected only when accidentally killed or when dead from natural causes. The collection of threatened, endangered, or rare plant and animal species will comply with NPS Management Policies (2006), be in accordance with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and will be strictly limited according to the applicable rules of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In the unlikely event that the Park discovers it has type specimens, final disposition will be determined at the Service-wide level and will adhere to recognized conventions established for specific disciplines.

The Park will not knowingly be a partner to or condone the trafficking in illicitly collected materials.

For items not retained for the collection, the Park will follow the disposition guidelines outlined in 41 CFR 102-36.305 -330.

## **VII. MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

NAMA has identified the following management actions required to maintain and improve VIVE's museum collection:

- The Park must review this Scope of Collection Statement every five years and revise it as needed to remain supportive of and consistent with any changes to the Park's mission. Any revision to this document requires the written approval of the Superintendent.
- Accessioned items that do not meet the criteria established in this Scope of Collection Statement should be deaccessioned according to the procedures in the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II: Museum Records, Chapter 6: Deaccessioning* (Director's Order No. 24: Museum Collections Management).
- Duplicate items that are not retained as part of a representative sample should be deaccessioned according to the procedures in the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II: Museum Records, Chapter 6: Deaccessioning* (Director's Order No. 24: Museum Collections Management).

- The Park will establish a Collections Advisory Committee to advise and oversee accessions and deaccessions to the collection, and to assess potential loans, exhibitions, and other uses. Guidance for establishing a Collections Advisory Committee is in the *NPS Museum Handbook, Part II, Chapter 6, Section D* (Director's Order No. 24: Museum Collections Management).
- Update the National Mall and Memorial Parks website with language for school and youth groups suggesting alternative ways to honor Vietnam veterans other than leaving items at the VVM. The vast majority of current offerings are letters and other types of materials left by school and youth groups. The large volume of these materials places a burden on Park staff and will not be retained for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection<sup>13</sup>.
- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection Management Plan (CMP) from 1986 is no longer current. Since that time, the collection has come under new management with new policies, new personnel, and a new Scope of Collection Statement. The CMP should be updated to better reflect current conditions and to help the Park with short-term and long-term planning.
- The Park should undertake an archival survey to determine the extent of archival materials at NAMA and MRCE pertaining to the VVM and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection. An additional 19 linear feet of potential archival materials from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection has been identified.
- The Park should conduct oral histories with key figures who contributed to the establishment of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection to document its history and development. Possible interviewees include Pam West, former Regional Curator and Director of MRCE; Duery Felton, former Curator for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection; Tony Migliaccio, former Grounds Supervisor for NAMA (he is generally identified as the first person to start saving items left at the VVM); Steven Bavisotto, former Curator who worked on the collection; Gregory Vaughan, MRCE staff member responsible for the first accessions; Anthony Porco, former Museum Technician.
- The Park will ensure that the permanent museum collection is collected, cataloged, and professionally cared for consistently and in a timely manner.
- A new Delegation of Accountability should be signed by the NAMA Superintendent and the Regional Curator to officially transfer the collection to NAMA's authority.

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<sup>13</sup> Possible alternatives include schools creating a virtual Wall; encouraging students to volunteer with veterans and/or raise money to help veterans; identifying and honoring local veterans; leaving offerings at their local veterans' memorials; etc.

- The Park should update its outdated Standard Operating Procedure for collecting offerings left at the VVM.

## **VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Renny Bergeron, Supervisory Museum Curator, NPS National Capital Region Museum Resource Center; Allen Bohnert, Independent Museum Consultant; Robert Chenoweth, Museum Curator, Nez Perce National Historical Park; Kara J. Hurst, Supervisory Registrar, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian; Ashley Intemann, Museum Technician, National Mall and Memorial Parks; Theresa Langford, Museum Curator, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site; Laurel Racine, Curator, NPS Northeast Museum Services; and Kym Rice, Director and Chair of Museum Studies, The George Washington University.