

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Process and Catalog Resource Management Records, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area and Nez Perce National Historical Park

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Washington State University
Effective Dates: 7/1/2010 - 9/30/2011
Funding Amount: \$28,551

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: The NPS has administered the Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area (LARO) since 1946 when the Secretary of the Interior approved an agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Park Service designating the NPS as the site manager. This 154-mile reservoir includes approximately 100,000 acres of NPS managed lands and receives over 1.2 million visitors per year.

In 1997 a museum management plan was completed for LARO. This plan provided management recommendations aimed at guiding the museum program over a five-year period. The report noted the potential for growth in both the archaeological and archival collections and highlighted the lack of storage space, staffing, and funding dedicated to the LARO museum management program. Since that time the park has made several attempts to address these issues.

In 2000, Nez Perce National Historical Park (NEPE) and LARO entered into an agreement for storage and preservation of the LARO museum collection. In the summer of that year the LARO museum collection was transferred to the NEPE administrative facilities in Spalding, Idaho for long-term curation. The transfer focused primarily on the object collections, as the archives collections were maintained at LARO. In 2001 the state and condition of the LARO archives collection was reviewed by NEPE Archivist, Robert Applegate at the request of LARO staff. It was found that much of the collection lacked professional archival arrangement, description, preservation, finding aids, park access and use procedures, trained staff, or proper storage space. These collections remained largely inaccessible and unusable. Recommendations from that 2001 visit called for greater records management control and improved archival acquisition practices that included a prioritization of collections to be accessioned, arrangement and description of those collections, cataloging the data into the NPS collections management database, production of finding aids, and housing of those collections into the park archives storage facility at Fort Spokane.

The NEPE Resource Management staff has continued to assist LARO in management and preservation of their museum collections. This relationship has been formalized by the establishment of the NEPE museum management staff as Curator of Record for LARO. As part of this agreement, Robert Applegate (NEPE archivist) continues to provide assistance to the development of projects for management of the archives collection. The primary objectives for this project include prioritizing the collections for accession, arrangement and description of those collections, cataloging the data into the NPS collections management database, and the production of finding aids.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: May 30, 2011

Keywords: Washington State University, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area (LARO), camas, soil study, catalog, resource management records, archives collection