

**DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
DIGITAL COLLECTION**

- I. The Denver Museum of Natural History's digital collection contains digital information resources that document and supplement the Museum's disciplines and history in accordance with its mission. All digital collections are subject to the provisions of DMNH Manual of Collections Policies and Procedures. The Museum adequately supports and ensures the professional management and preservation of the digital collections and incorporates appropriate planning for digital issues into its long-term planning and budgeting.
- II. The digital collections of the Museum include born-digital records (records created originally by a computer or other digital recording device), or scanned records, including but not limited to digitized images of photographs and documents. The digital collection may contain but is not limited to databases, image files, sound files, and textual files.
- III. The purposes of the DMNH digital collections are:
  - A. to serve diverse and widespread audiences by facilitating access to DMNH resources (collections, exhibits, programs, and publications)
  - B. to support DMNH research and education initiatives
  - C. to enrich Museum products with previously untapped or underused resources
  - D. to increase operational efficiency
  - E. and to balance long-term preservation with short-term use of original collections by:
    1. reducing exposure to handling, light, and other agents of deterioration, and/or
    2. by capturing and preserving faithful representations of original objects.
- IV. Categories of the digital collection are:
  - A. Archival Collection:
    1. Items maintained as part of the Museum's archival digital collection will be kept for their long-term continuing value to the Museum, its audiences, and society at large.
    2. Archival digital collections provide information and content for the development of programs, exhibits, outreach projects, and publications, as well as research.
    3. Archival digital collections and their metadata will be maintained and preserved as permanent assets of the Museum.
  - B. Ephemeral Digital Files:
    1. Items in digital format which have no foreseeable use beyond their initial (and usually) short-term use may be classified as ephemeral and should be supported by DMNH during their period of usefulness.
    2. Digital items not intended or accepted for the archival collections, including versions and copies of archival digital files such as those used for programming, exhibition, outreach, and publication, fall in this category.
    3. Ephemeral digital files are subject to the current Archives Retention Schedule. They should be disposed of when they have exceeded their period of immediate usefulness and/or have met any legal requirements.
- V. General Acquisition Guidelines:
  - A. In the case of a work made for hire, the employer or other person for whom the work was prepared is considered the author (for purposes of title,) and, unless the parties have expressly agreed otherwise in a written instrument signed by them, owns all of the rights comprised in the copyright [Title 17, Section 201(b) of the United States Code].
  - B. Items in the digital collections must be DMNH copyright, in the public domain, or otherwise cleared in writing for use by the DMNH as required by law.
  - C. DMNH Digital Capture Standards will be observed for all items protected by DMNH copyright and any other items that meet the requisite discipline-based guidelines for addition to DMNH collections.
  - D. Items will be added to the digital collections in a prioritized fashion based on audience, research, and/or preservation needs.
  - E. Acquisition of digital collections shall be coordinated with Information Systems to ensure the Museum's ability to acquire and support/preserve all digital collections.
- VI. Acquisitions to the Archival Digital Collections:

In addition to the general acquisition guidelines, candidates for the archival digital collection shall be:

  - A. needed in digital format by a defined audience or audiences or required for research or preservation purposes.
  - B. acquired within collecting guidelines set out in the DMNH Collections Policy Manual, departmental collecting statements, or other DMNH policies which may govern collecting.
  - C. classified as archival status based on their estimated potential for long-term usability and accessibility.
  - D. considered for archival status if they preserve or enhance the preservation of original materials.
  - E. considered for archival status if it is better to preserve the digital file than to reacquire them or if reacquisition is impossible.
  - F. acquired at a resolution sufficient to capture all significant detail of the original and be faithful representations of the original materials.
  - G. preserved in hard copy, as well as digital, whenever possible.
  - H. preserved in formats designed to minimize data loss over the long-term and minimize potential barriers to long-term accessibility.
- VII. Responsible Parties
  - A. CRD Management Team (Chief Curator and Department Heads)
    1. in cooperation with Information Systems, sets digital imaging priorities in order to ensure the institution's

- B. Curators Review Committee
  - 1. makes decisions on questions of user access to digital collection.
- C. Curators
  - 1. designate and accept materials to be added to the archival digital collections. Materials may not be removed from the archival digital collections without approval of the Curators Review Committee.
  - 2. assess the continuing or long-term value to potential subsequent users of these materials, consult with the Museum Archives in questionable cases, and classify them as archival or ephemeral.
  - 3. determine and document intellectual property rights to all digital files and avoid intellectual property infringement.
  - 4. compile documentation and record archival acquisitions through the Registrar's office.
  - 5. ensure that archival digital materials are cataloged on the collection management system.
  - 6. coordinate with the Information Systems department to ensure the Museum's ability to support and preserve the archival digital collection and its growth.
  - 7. ensure that the creation of appropriate metadata for digital files is done prior to acceptance of files into the archival digital collection.
  - 9. consult with Information Systems to budget and plan for necessary equipment purchases.
- D. Archives
  - 1. admits files into the archival digital collection.
  - 2. ensures the archival or ephemeral classification assigned to digital materials.
  - 3. assures the appropriate faithful representation of the original while keeping digital file sizes as small as possible.
  - 4. understands the current admissibility or non-admissibility of digital files in legal actions and setting appropriate procedures for digital capture and tracking.
  - 5. helps avoid intellectual property infringement.
  - 6. ensures that the creation of appropriate metadata for digital files is done prior to acceptance of files into the archival digital collection.
  - 7. coordinates with the Information Systems department to ensure the Museum's ability to support and preserve the archival digital collection and its appropriate growth.
  - 8. consults with Information Systems to budget and plan for necessary equipment purchases.
- E. Collections Managers
  - 1. designated by Curators to maintain digital and hard copy collection documentation.
- F. Registrar
  - 1. maintains digital and hard copy accession records for acquisitions to the archival digital collection.
- G. Conservation Department
  - 1. Shares responsibility with Archives to establish currently acceptable practices for preservation.
- H. Collection Management System Administrator
  - 1. coordinate with collection management system software providers and the Information Systems Department when necessary.
  - 2. maintain user access parameters in collection management system.
  - 3. coordinate with Information Systems to publish collection management system online.
- I. Information Systems Department
  - 1. provides appropriate storage for the digital collection.
  - 2. conducts regular back-ups of all parts of the digital collection.
  - 3. conducts software upgrades/migrations for continued access to all parts of the digital collection.
  - 4. coordinates and approves acquisitions of computers and computer peripherals, which include but are not limited to computers, scanners, and digital cameras, to ensure long-term support.

VIII. Access to the digital collection

- 1. In fulfillment of its obligation as a public information provider, the DMNH subscribes to a policy of providing the fullest possible access to its collections and collections documentation, while providing appropriately for their security and preservation. Restrictions affecting access and use of digital collection data will be applied equitably.
- 2. The DMNH respects the privacy of individuals who provide the DMNH with collections documentation, or are the subjects of documentation held in DMNH custody.
- 3. DMNH reserves the right to refuse any request for access to digital collections and information that is inconsistent with its preservation or privacy obligations.
- 4. The DMNH may, at its discretion, institute fees for the use of digital collections and accompanying data. Fees will be instituted and applied equitably.

IX. Security against deliberate or accidental alteration of files in the digital collection will be accomplished in any of the following ways. It is recognized that the DMNH may adopt new strategies as security technologies and standards for best practices improve.

- A. Restrict user access.
- B. Provide only copies of data online.
- C. Provide low resolution and/or watermarked images online.
- D. Regular and frequent back-ups of all parts of the digital collection conducted regularly by Information Systems staff.
- E. Print hard copies of digital files as appropriate.

F. Originals from which digital files are created will continue to be maintained in perpetuity.

