

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY

Subject: Policy Regarding Agency History

Policy Number: 2009:10

I. PURPOSE

To safeguard objects of historic value that relate to the history of the Department of Natural Resources, its constituent units, and predecessor agencies, and to provide for the interpretation and dissemination of that information to Department personnel and the general public via the ad hoc Committee for Maryland Conservation History.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies Department-wide.

III. POLICY

All units and offices of the Department of Natural Resources will safely keep objects relating to the history of the Department, the individual units and offices of the Department, or personnel who did, or now do, work for the Department and its units and offices. Such objects include, but are not limited to, manuscripts, correspondence, publications, photographs, maps, artwork, and three-dimensional artifacts that relate to past Department or unit activities and are pertinent to the task of preservation and/or conservation of natural resources in Maryland. Excluded from this policy are records which currently fall under DNR's policy for Records Management (Policy 94:03) and privileged personnel records not meant for general dissemination. In the event that objects cannot be stored safely by units and offices, arrangements will be made to evaluate and, if appropriate, transfer objects to a central facility for safe storage.

IV. EXAMPLES

These examples are illustrative, but by no means inclusive, of the kinds of objects that fall under this policy:

- Equipment used in field operations that illustrate previous practices but are no longer used.
- Collections of slides or photographs taken during field work.
- Outdated uniforms, badges, or other insignia worn by DNR personnel.
- Documents that provide insight into the history of the activities of the department, constituent units and offices, or predecessor agencies.

Discretion shall be exercised in identification of items of value. Personnel responsible for disposition of objects that might fall under this policy are encouraged to consult with the Department's Committee for Maryland Conservation History for guidance.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

A. There is within the Department a Committee for Maryland Conservation History.

1. Members of the Committee are listed on the Committee's website at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/Pages/md-conservation-history/index.aspx>
2. DNR units and offices are encouraged to designate representatives to this Committee and are challenged to discover their own history.

3. The Committee will meet as needed and as possible in order to guide this effort.
 4. The Committee will cooperate with any non-state entity that may wish to support this initiative.
- B. Units and offices will not dispose of objects that fall under this policy, rather will maintain them as is, preferably in dry, pest-free conditions.
1. In the event that objects cannot be maintained by units and offices, units and offices should contact a Committee member to make arrangements for evaluation and possible removal to a central storage facility.
 2. Objects may be dropped off at the DNR Library for evaluation after contacting a Committee member.
 3. DNR units and offices are encouraged to send the general descriptions of historic items to a Committee member for review.
- C. The Committee will construct a Department-wide electronic database to inventory historic items.
1. The inventory will be built as resources permit.
 2. Items of interest will be tagged.
 3. Units will retain the tagged items until further notice OR, if they wish to surrender them, arrangements can be made to move the objects to a central collection facility.
 4. If in doubt, contact a Committee member for guidance.

END