



Verde Valley Archaeology Center, Inc. Preservation Policy

Importance of Preservation. The mission of the Verde Valley Archaeology Center includes preserving prehistorically significant materials of the Verde Valley for future research, teaching and cultural awareness of the community. **Preservation is intertwined with all activities at the Center.** Future use of the materials depends on the preservation decisions made today. Preservation protects the Center's investment in its records and respects its obligations to the donors of the collections placed in the Center's protective custody.

Definition of Preservation. Preservation encompasses all those activities that address the Center's needs for long-term access to its collections. Preservation management includes planning and implementing those policies, procedures, activities and practices that will minimize further deterioration, extend the useful life and (where appropriate) renew the usability of collections materials selected for further preservation treatments.

Goals of Preservation at the Center. The goal of the Center's preservation activities is to ensure that the materials are accessible and usable for as long as they are needed. For some of the Center's archival holdings, our goal is to preserve the information, regardless of format but within the context in which it was created and originally used. For the artifacts and other special collections materials that have intrinsic value, preservation of the original format is just as important as maintaining access to the information they convey. The Center shall allocate resources adequate for achieving these goals. The Center's staff is charged with acquiring, organizing and distributing resources to ensure adequate protection of information and (where warranted) the originals of materials of enduring value, to serve the needs of present and future generations.

Responsible Custody. By acquiring the materials in its holdings, the Center has assumed responsibility for their active preservation. The Center's preservation program focuses on providing all holdings a basic level of protection and care that includes the following: adequate environmental controls; proper housing; disaster prevention and response plans; appropriate security; and improved practices and procedures that favor the stabilization and preservation of all holdings. As a general rule, planning and careful needs assessment will precede action, and prevention activities will have priority over renewal activities.

Selection of Records for Preservation Action. Certain records may be selected to receive treatment beyond that provided for all holdings. These treatments may include item level conservation, mass conservation and reformatting. Records will be selected for preservation action on the basis of the following criteria: amount and nature of use; condition, including level of protection already applied; significance in relation to the mission and collecting policies of this institution; and value for research or other use such as exhibit or public education.