



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

General Accounting Office Working Papers
Concerning Review of Federal Agencies and
Implementation of Archeological Salvage Laws

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	General Accounting Office Working Papers Concerning Review of Federal Agencies and Implementation of Archeological Salvage Laws
Date:	1974-1981
Identifier:	NAA.1989-62
Creator:	United States. General Accounting Office
Extent:	12 Linear feet
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Administrative Information

Citation

General Accounting Office Working Papers Concerning Review of Federal Agencies and Implementation of Archeological Salvage Laws, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Conditions Governing Use

By agreement with the General Accounting Office, pertinent agencies must give approval before researchers are allowed to examine the documents. Researchers should contact the archives concerning this requirement well in advance of a visit.

Biographical / Historical

Several pieces of federal legislation concerning archeological sites were adopted during the 1960s and 1970s. These included the Historical Preservation Act of 1966, National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Archeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974, and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979. In addition, the president issued Executive Order 11593, dated May 13, 1971, insuring that federal agencies would record, preserve, and maintain cultural materials found on federal lands. In spite of these efforts, growing criticism developed among archeologists that the laws were not working well. A particular problem involved the New Melones Dam in California, a project whose start virtually coincided with the act of 1966. In May 1979, because of growing concern, the chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs requested the General Accounting Office (GAO) to conduct an investigation into whether archeological resources were being adequately protected, how well the laws were working, where problems existed, and approaches to resolving problems. Requested was a specific report on the New Melones project and, in addition, a report on the general problem.

To carry out the investigation, a team was formed with GAO personnel of the Washington (D.C.), San Francisco, Denver, and Atlanta offices, with each office assigned specific responsibilities. Archeologist Charles R. McGimsey III served as consultant.

Most of the New Melones investigation was carried out of the San Francisco office. The general investigation involved the examination of the operations of historic preservation offices of the states of California, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, and Georgia and some state's water and transportation authorities. In addition,

insofar as they were involved in archeology, there were examinations into federal agencies and projects including the Bureau of Land Management, Water and Power Resource Service, Housing and Urban Development, Department of Transportation, Corps of Engineers, Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Soil Conservation Service, Advisory Council on Preservation, Interagency Archeological Service, National Technical Information Service, Tennessee Valley Tellico Project, and the National Register. Many federal archeologist and leaders of nonfederal archeological organizations were interviewed in connection with this investigation.

Scope and Contents

Included among the materials are transcripts and notes concerning interviews, letters, memoranda, policy statements, planning documents, model and sample forms, agreements concerning archeological work, copies of laws and regulations, budget material, charts, maps, photographs (mainly the New Melones project), archeological publications, newspaper clippings, tables of organization, and drafts of reports. Generally most of the material is organized into bundles, each bundle usually pertaining to general background work with a particular agency or to the administration of the GAO project.

Arrangement

(1) Headquarters administrative material and draft reports; (2) headquarters bundles; (3) San Francisco office bundles; (4) Denver office bundles; (5) archeological publications concerning California ('grey literature')

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Archeological Resource Protection Act, 1979
Archeological and Historical Preservation Act, 1974
Historical Preservation Act, 1966
Law -- Antiquities
National Environmental Policy Act, 1969

Names:

McGimsey, Charles R.

Places:

New Melones -- California -- Antiquities
New Melones -- California -- Archeology