



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to North American Water and Power Alliance Records

NMAH.AC.1052

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2011

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	North American Water and Power Alliance Records
<b>Date:</b>	1964-1990
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.1052
<b>Creator:</b>	North American Water and Power Alliance. Ralph M. Parsons Corporation (Pasadena, Calif.)
<b>Extent:</b>	0.6 Cubic feet (2 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection contains executive reports, promotional material, correspondence, articles and publications documenting the North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA), which was a large-scale, transcontinental water transfer plan designed by the Ralph M. Parsons Corporation in 1964.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Immediate source of acquisition unknown. Found in the Division of Engineering and Industry, now known as the Division of Work and Industry, National Museum of American History.

### Provenance

Transferred to the Archives Center in 2007 from the Division of Work and Industry, then known as the Division of Engineering and Industry.

### Available Formats

A digital surrogate (RDVD 1052.01) of the videotape, North American Water and Power Alliance, exists.

### Processing Information

processed by Kristin Davidson, intern, 2011.

### Preferred Citation

North American Water and Power Alliance Collection, 1964-1990, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu) or 202-633-3270.

## Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning intellectual property rights. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

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## Biographical / Historical

The North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA) was a large-scale, transcontinental water transfer plan designed by the Ralph M. Parsons Corporation in 1964. The Parsons Corporation was founded in 1944 to provide engineering, procurement and construction services for government, petrochemical, and infrastructure clients. In the early 1960s, Parsons invested its own financial resources to study and develop a conceptual plan for NAWAPA, which would divert fresh water from Alaska to water-deficient areas of seven Canadian provinces, thirty-three U.S. states, and three Mexican states. The total projected investment was about a hundred billion dollars with construction estimated to take approximately twenty years.

Although the NAWAPA project was never realized, the Parsons Corporation (<http://www.parsons.com>) continues to provide engineering, construction, technical, and management services to private industries and government agencies.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection contains a promotional video, correspondence, plans, studies, reports, articles, newspaper clippings, and newsletters, which document the North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA), a large scale, transcontinental water transfer plan designed by the Ralph M. Parsons Corporation in 1964 to collect excess water from the northwestern part of the North American continent and distribute it to deficient areas of Canada, the United States and Mexico.

**Series 1: Plans and Studies, 1964-1989**, is arranged topically and contains conceptual studies, executive plans, summaries, and papers and presentations about the NAWAPA project. The conceptual plans (Volumes One, Two and Five), detail the engineering, financial, and sociogeopolitical aspects of the project, while the other materials provide overall background and context for the project's conception.

**Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1990**, is arranged chronologically and contains letters and interoffice memoranda about the NAWAPA project. The contents of the letters primarily relate to efforts to gain federal government support for the NAWAPA. The majority of the correspondence was created by Joseph Volpe, Jr., Vice-President of Parsons Corporation and W.E. Leonhard, Chairman and CEO of Parsons Corporation. Correspondence from congressional representatives such as Senator Fran E. Moss (D-Utah) and Representative Harold T. (Bizz) Johnson (D-California) are present. There are some tax returns, letters and interoffice memoranda concerning the dissolution of the NAWAPA Foundation Inc., which was a subsidiary of the Parsons Corporation.

**Series 3: Reference Materials, 1964-1990**, is arranged topically and contains brochures, articles, publications, newspaper clippings, notes, and audio visual materials documenting the NAWAPA project and water issues. Materials from the National Water Alliance, National Democratic Policy Committee (Water from Alaska), and the Water Policy Report of the Western Governors' Association are represented. The NAWAPA promotional video tape on 1/2" VHS, circa 1964, was originally shot on 16mm color film and produced by the Ralph M. Parsons Corporation. The film depicts still images of landscapes, mostly rivers and reservoirs, and engineering projects such as dams, hydroelectric power plants and irrigation systems. The film is narrated and discusses the importance of the NAWAPA project. A digital surrogate (RDVD 1052.01) of the videotape exists.

## Arrangement

The collection is organized into three series.

**Series 1: Plans and Studies, 1964-1989**

**Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1990**

**Series 3: Reference, 1964-1990**

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Conservation of natural resources
- Engineering -- 20th century
- Lobbying
- Water transfer
- Water-power

Types of Materials:

- Brochures -- 1950-2000
- Correspondence -- 1950-2000
- Reports
- Videotapes

Places:

- Great Lakes (North America)
- Ogallala Aquifer

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Plans and Studies, 1964-1989

Language: English.

Box 1, Folder 1	Conceptual Study (Engineering), Volume 1, 1964 December 7
Box 1, Folder 2	Conceptual Study (Financial), Volume 2, 1965 March 1
Box 1, Folder 3	Conceptual Study (Sociogeopolitical), Volume 5, 1966 March 17
Box 1, Folder 4	Executive Plans and Summaries, undated
Box 1, Folder 5	Papers and Presentations, 1966-1980
Box 1, Folder 6	National Waterways Study, 1981 July
Box 1, Folder 7	North American Water and Power Alliance booklet, circa 1960s

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## Series 2: Correspondence, 1974-1990

Language: English.

Box 1, Folder 8            1974-1978

Box 1, Folder 9            1981-1984

Box 2, Folder 1            1984-1990

Box 2, Folder 2            Interoffice, 1982-1990

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## Series 3: Reference Materials, 1964-1990

Box 2, Folder 3-4	National Water Alliance, 1983-1990
Box 2, Folder 5	National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC)/Water from Alaska, 1981-1982
Box 2, Folder 6	Water Policy Report, undated
Box 2, Folder 7	Articles and Publications, 1964-1983
Box 2, Box 8	Notes and Contacts, circa 1982
Box 2, Folder 9	North American Water and Power Alliance (promotional video), undated
Box 2, Folder 10	North American Water and Power Alliance (RDVD 1052.01), undated

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