

**Guidance for National Park Service Compliance with
the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
(NAGPRA)**

NPS Cultural Resource Management Guideline, Appendix R

Revised September 2013
Revised June 2017

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Sources Of Information And Assistance	1
3. When Does NAGPRA Apply?	1
a. Identification of Human Remains as Native American	2
b. Inadvertent Discoveries and Intentional Excavations.....	2
c. Collections	8
Summaries.....	9
Inventories	9
Future Applicability	10
Culturally Unidentifiable	13
4. Who Has Standing To Claim NAGPRA Items?	14
a. Lineal Descendants	14
b. Indian Tribes	16
c. Native Hawaiian Organizations	16
5. Who Does Not Have Standing To Claim NAGPRA Items?	16
6. Consultation	16
a. Identifying Consulting Groups	16
b. Initiating Consultation	17
c. Consultation Meetings	18
d. Maintaining Consultation	18
f. Cost of Consultation	18
7. Evaluating Repatriation Requests.....	19
a. Standing	19
b. Object Categories.....	19
c. Relationships	20
d. Evaluation of Evidence.....	22
8. Disputes	22
9. Transfer Of Control Or Custody	23
10. Reburial On Park Lands.....	23
11. Special Circumstances.....	27
a. Scientific Study of Major Benefit to U.S.	27
b. Multiple Disputing Claimants	27
12. Documentation	27
13. Glossary	29
14. Frequently Asked Questions	32

1. INTRODUCTION

Compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is achieved by implementation of the law [25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.] and the applicable regulations [43 CFR Part 10]. This appendix provides guidelines for National Park Service (NPS) park, center, and regional compliance with the statute and regulations.

On November 16, 1990, President George H.W. Bush approved the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act [P.L. 101-601; 25 USC 3001-3013; 104 Stat. 3048-3058] (NAGPRA). Final regulations were published on December 4, 1995 [43 CFR Part 10]. The law and regulations address the rights of lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. They require Federal agencies and institutions that receive Federal funds to provide information about Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations and, upon presentation of a valid request, return these cultural items to them.

The National Park Service – like all Federal agencies except the Smithsonian Institution – is required to comply with the regulations. Repatriation at the Smithsonian is governed by the National Museum of the American Indian Act of 1989, 20 U.S.C. 80q et seq. Park superintendents are responsible for

- notifying and consulting with lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations regarding intentional excavations and inadvertent discoveries on NPS lands;
- completing summaries of Native American collections in their control that might include unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony;
- completing inventories of human remains and associated funerary objects;
- evaluating requests for repatriation; and
- making decisions about the repatriation/disposition of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony under NPS control.

2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

This appendix is meant as general guidance. Additional information and technical assistance in implementing NAGPRA are available from the Park NAGPRA program, NPS regional offices, and NPS centers. To request assistance, parks should contact either their regional NAGPRA coordinators or the Park NAGPRA program manager. Contact information can be found on Inside NPS or SharePoint.

Park NAGPRA and National NAGPRA

Park NAGPRA and National NAGPRA are two distinct programs within NPS. National NAGPRA administers the national implementation components of NAGPRA – including developing regulations and generally assisting Indian tribes (including Alaska Native villages), Native Hawaiian organizations, museums, and Federal agencies with the NAGPRA process. Park NAGPRA oversees NPS' specific compliance responsibilities under NAGPRA by providing technical advice, guidance, and training to all national park units, centers, and regions.

3. WHEN DOES NAGPRA APPLY?

NAGPRA applies to Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony as defined in the statute and regulations (see glossary) that are –

- in Federal possession or control; or
- in the possession or control of any institution or State or local government receiving Federal funds; or
- excavated intentionally or discovered inadvertently on Federal or tribal lands.

The statute and regulations describe two sets of procedures and requirements – one for intentional excavations and inadvertent discoveries (25 USC 3002 [Section 3]; 43 CFR Subpart B) and one for collections (25 USC 3003-3005 [Sections 5-7]; 43 CFR Subpart C) – to ensure proper treatment and repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. See Figure 1 for an overview of the differences between the requirements for inadvertent discoveries and intentional excavations and the requirements for collections. Consultation with Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations is required in all circumstances [43 CFR 10.5, 10.8(d), 10.9(b)]. See Section 6 below for more information about consultation.

a. Identification of Human Remains as Native American

When human remains are found on park lands, whether by inadvertent discovery or intentional excavations—or when human remains are found in NPS collections—the critical first step is to determine whether or not the remains are Native American. Analysis of the human remains by an osteologist, forensic anthropologist, biological anthropologist, or medical examiner may be required. If the remains are Native American, NAGPRA must be followed. If the remains are not Native American, NAGPRA does not apply.

b. Inadvertent Discoveries and Intentional Excavations

Provisions regarding inadvertent discoveries [43 CFR 10.4] and intentional excavations [43 CFR 10.3] are designed to facilitate the proper disposition of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony that might be intentionally excavated or inadvertently discovered on park lands after November 16, 1990.

Comprehensive Agreements

Whenever possible, parks should enter into comprehensive agreements with culturally affiliated Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations that have claimed, or are likely to claim, Native American human remains and other cultural items excavated intentionally or discovered inadvertently on Federal lands [43 CFR 10.5(f)]. Although comprehensive agreements are optional, they can be useful in streamlining and managing the consultation process over the long-term. Agreements should address all land management activities that could result in the intentional excavation or inadvertent discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, and should establish a process for effectively carrying out NAGPRA regulations regarding consultation [43 CFR 10.5], the determination of custody [43 CFR 10.5 and 10.6], and the treatment and disposition of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

If a park has a comprehensive agreement in place with tribes, the provisions of that agreement should be followed when human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are inadvertently discovered or intentionally excavated. Such agreements help maintain good relationships with tribes, reduce the likelihood of argument or legal conflict, and improve management flexibility.

Inadvertent Discoveries

Inadvertent discovery means the unanticipated encounter or detection of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony found under or on Federal or tribal lands [43 CFR 10.2(g)(4)]. See Figure 2 for a model of the inadvertent discovery process.

Any person who has inadvertently discovered human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony in park units must immediately notify the superintendent by telephone and confirm in writing. If the inadvertent discovery occurred in connection with an ongoing activity, the person must stop the activity in the area of the inadvertent discovery and make a reasonable effort to protect the remains and objects from further disturbance.

As soon as possible, but not later than three working days after receipt of the written confirmation of notification, the superintendent must certify receipt of the written notification, further secure and protect the remains and/or items, and notify lineal descendants, Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations

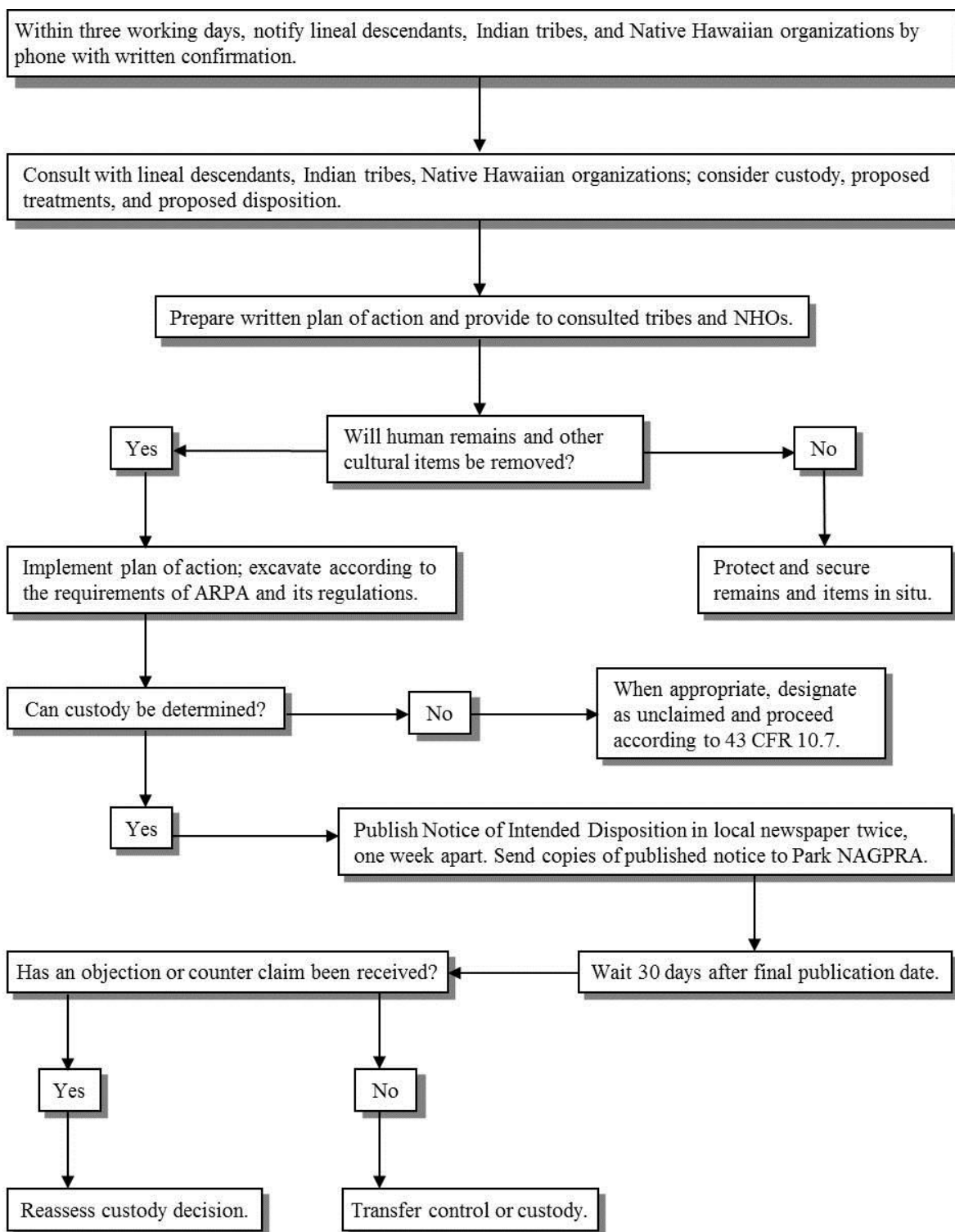
Figure 1. Overview of Parameters for Discoveries/Excavations vs. Collections

Inadvertent Discoveries and Excavations	Collections
25 USC 3002 (Section 3) 43 CFR 10 Subpart B (§10.3-10.7)	25 USC 3003-3005 (Sections 5-7) 43 CFR 10 Subpart C (§10.8-10.13)
Requirements for Investigations and Documentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify human remains as Native American Consultation Scientific methods and techniques if removed. Descriptive/interpretive report if removed Curate items not subject to NAGPRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify human remains as Native American Consultation Summaries: general descriptions of unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony Inventories: item-by-item descriptions of human remains and associated funerary objects
Priority of Custody (See Section 7.c. below)	
<p>1st – Lineal descendant*. If no lineal descendant can be identified, then</p> <p>2nd – Indian tribe on whose tribal land cultural items were found. If items were not discovered on tribal land, then</p> <p>3rd – Culturally affiliated Indian tribe. If cultural affiliation cannot be determined, then</p> <p>4th – Indian tribe that occupied the land aboriginally, as determined by the Indian Claims Commission – unless there is another tribe that has a stronger cultural relationship other than cultural affiliation as defined under NAGPRA.</p> <p>Note: If custody cannot be determined or no claim is received within specified timeframes, the remains and objects are considered unclaimed. Proceed according to 43 CFR 10.7. See Section 3.b. for additional information.</p>	<p>1st – Lineal descendant*. If no lineal descendant can be identified, then</p> <p>2nd – Culturally affiliated Indian tribe.</p> <p>Note: If no lineal descendant can be identified and cultural affiliation cannot be determined, the remains and objects are considered culturally unidentifiable. Proceed according to 43 CFR 10.11. See Section 3.c. for additional information.</p>
Required Public Notice	
Local newspaper(s) – Notice of Intended Disposition	<i>Federal Register</i> – Notice of Inventory Completion, Notice of Intent to Repatriate

*Lineal descendants have first priority for human remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects only.

Figure 2. Inadvertent Discovery Process Model

NOTE: This model assumes that human remains have been determined to be Native American, any associated activity in the area of the inadvertent discovery has been stopped, the remains and items have been protected, appropriate park officials have been notified, and coordination with law enforcement has occurred, where applicable.



of the inadvertent discovery. If appropriate, the cultural items may be stabilized or covered to ensure their protection. The superintendent must initiate consultation about the inadvertent discovery.

The activity that resulted in the inadvertent discovery may resume 30 days after the superintendent certifies receipt of the written confirmation of notification, if that resumption is otherwise lawful. The activity may resume in less than 30 days if a written agreement is executed between the NPS and the affiliated Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization that allows the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony to remain safely *in situ* or that adopts a recovery plan for the excavation or removal of the remains and objects.

The disposition of all human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony must be carried out according to the priority listing in the regulations [43 CFR 10.6]. See Section 7.c. below for detailed information about priority of ownership/custody.

Intentional Excavations

Intentional excavation means the planned archeological removal of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony found under or on Federal or tribal lands after November 16, 1990 [43 CFR 10.2(g)(3)]. Regulatory requirements for intentional excavations [43 CFR 10.3] include excavation of items according to scientific standards per ARPA; consultation with Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations; and disposition of objects in accordance with priority of custody as described in 43 CFR 10.6. Such excavation can only proceed after consultation with the appropriate Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. Proof of consultation must be shown to the superintendent or other official responsible for the issuance of the required permit. See Figure 3 for a model of the intentional excavation process.

Superintendents must take reasonable steps to determine whether any planned activity may result in the excavation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. If it appears that such items may be encountered, potentially affiliated Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations must be notified in writing. In addition, any present-day Indian tribe which aboriginally occupied the area of the planned activity and any other Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations that are likely to have a cultural relationship to the cultural items must be notified. The notice must describe the planned activity, its general location, the basis upon which it was determined that Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony may be excavated, and the basis for determining likely custody pursuant to § 10.6. The notice must also propose a time and place for consultations to further consider the activity, the proposed treatment of human remains or objects that may be excavated, and the proposed disposition of any excavated human remains or objects.

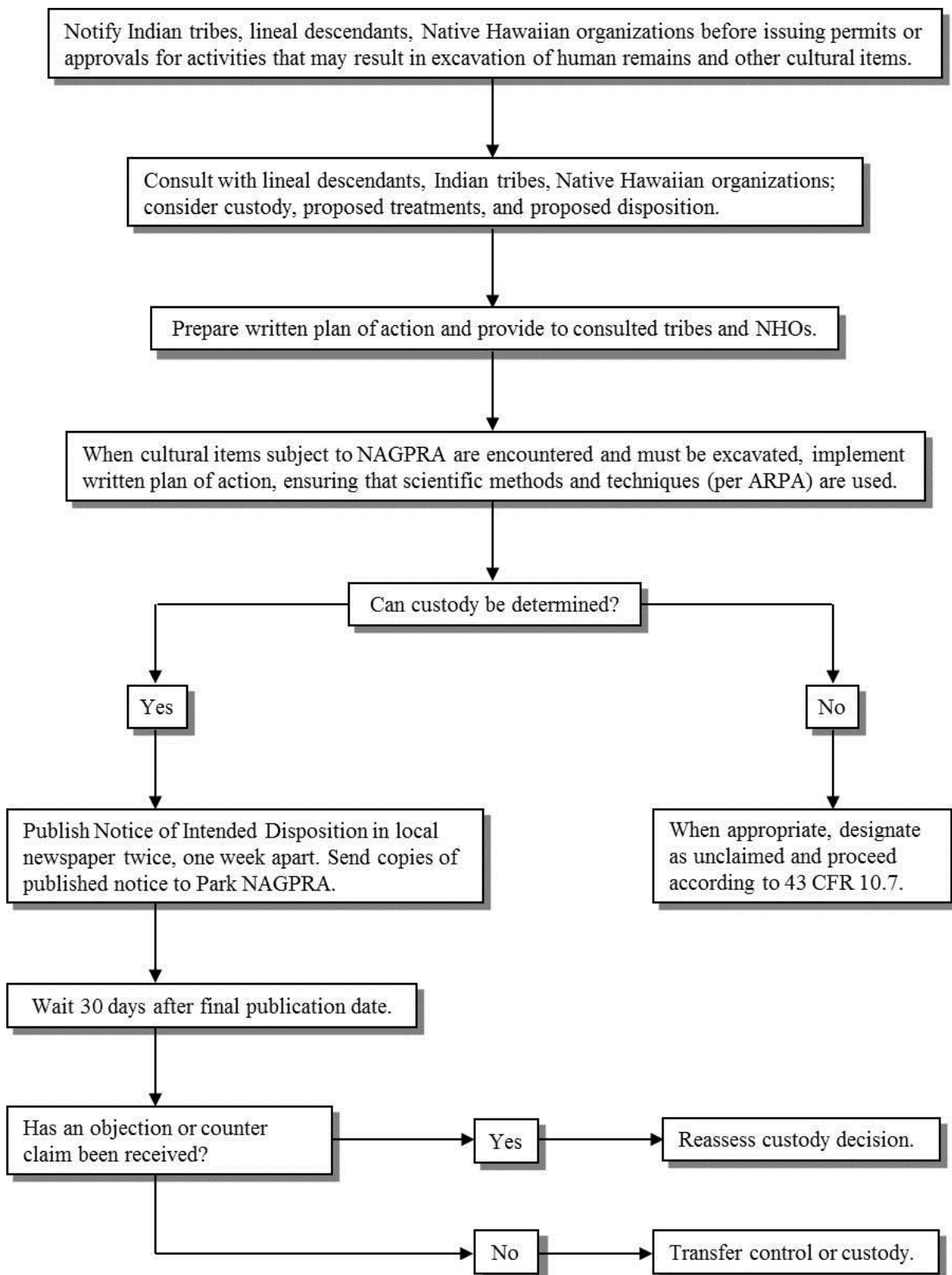
If the planned activity is also subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 306108), consultation and any subsequent agreement for compliance conducted under that Act should be coordinated with the requirements of § 10.3(c)(2) and § 10.5.

Written Plans of Action

A written plan of action is required for both intentional excavations and inadvertent discoveries [43 CFR 10.5(e)]. Developed following consultation, the plan of action must be approved and signed by the superintendent and, in the case of inadvertent discoveries, may document the intent to leave remains and objects *in situ*. A copy of the plan must be provided to the lineal descendants, Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. Lineal descendants and Indian tribal official(s) may sign the written plan of action as appropriate. For intentional excavations, the plan of action must at least comply with 43 CFR 10.3(b)(1) [ARPA requirements] and must document—

- the kinds of objects to be considered as cultural items;
- the specific information used to determine custody;
- the planned treatment, care, and handling of human remains and other cultural items;
- the planned archeological recording of the human remains and other cultural items;
- the kinds of analysis planned for each kind of object;

Figure 3. Intentional Excavation Process Model



- any steps to be followed to contact Indian tribe officials at the time of excavation or inadvertent discovery of specific human remains and other cultural items;
- the kind of traditional treatment, if any, to be afforded the human remains and other cultural items by members of the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization;
- the nature of reports to be prepared; and
- the planned disposition of human remains and other cultural items.

Excavation or Removal

Excavation or removal of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony discovered inadvertently or excavated intentionally as part of a planned activity must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) (16 USC 470aa et seq.) and its implementing regulations. Superintendents must ensure that scientific methods and techniques are used for the physical removal, recording, and analysis of cultural items and that a descriptive and interpretive report of the excavation is produced. While analysis is not required, if undertaken it must be done according to ARPA. Any human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony collected as a result of intentional excavation or inadvertent discovery should **not** be accessioned into NPS collections. Excavation records and items not covered by NAGPRA should be accessioned and curated in NPS collections [43 CFR 10.3(b), 43 CFR 10.4(d)(1)(v)].

Notification

Before the disposition of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony excavated or discovered inadvertently on park lands after November 16, 1990, can occur, a notice must be published in local newspapers [43 CFR 10.6I]. However, if the human remains and other cultural items will not be moved, a notice is not required. Notification provides information about a pending agency action to potentially affected parties, providing them with an opportunity to respond. Notification is not a primary means of communication with potential claimants but is a last chance to notify any claimants that may have been overlooked.

Notice of Intended Disposition

A Notice of Intended Disposition must be published two times, at least one week apart, in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony were excavated or discovered inadvertently and, if applicable, in a newspaper of general circulation in the area(s) in which potentially affiliated Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations are geographically located. Disposition of human remains or cultural items may not occur until at least 30 days after publication of the second notice. Copies of the newspaper notice with information on when and in what newspaper it was published must be sent to the Park NAGPRA program.

The Notice of Intended Disposition should minimally include the following information –

- circumstances of the excavation or inadvertent discovery;
- minimum number of individuals represented by human remains;
- number and types of funerary objects;
- a brief description (including number) of sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony; and
- evidence that supports determinations of lineal descent, cultural affiliation, or aboriginal territory.

Unclaimed

Final regulations (43 CFR 10.7) effective December 7, 2015, outline procedures for the disposition of unclaimed human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. The rule applies *only* to cultural items removed from Federal lands after November 16, 1990.

Definition [43 CFR 10.2(h)]

“Unclaimed cultural items” are defined as Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony removed from Federal lands after November 16, 1990, but not transferred to any lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization because either—

- a claim has not been received from an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, or no lineal descendant has responded, within one year of publishing a Notice of Intended Disposition (43 CFR 10.2(h)(2)(i); or
- no Indian tribe, Native Hawaiian organization, or lineal descendant could be reasonably identified as a potential claimant within two years of the inadvertent discovery or intentional excavation of the items (43 CFR 10.2(h)(2)(ii).

Reporting [43 CFR 10.7(b)(1)]

The rule requires Federal agencies that have unclaimed cultural items as of December 7th, 2015, to submit a list of those items to the National NAGPRA program by December 5th, 2016. In addition, after December 5th, 2016, Federal agencies must submit such lists to National NAGPRA within one year of items becoming unclaimed. These lists of unclaimed items must include the location of discovery or excavation; the nature of the unclaimed cultural items; and a summary of consultation efforts. NPS reporting of unclaimed cultural items is done on a service wide basis in December of each year by the Park NAGPRA program.

Because inadvertent discoveries and intentional excavations occur in parks service wide and can neither be predicted nor coordinated, cultural items found on NPS lands may become unclaimed at any time. In order to report unclaimed items at the appropriate time, the Park NAGPRA program must track inadvertent discoveries and intentional excavations on an ongoing basis. Therefore, **all inadvertent discoveries and intentional excavations must be reported to the Park NAGPRA program**. Parks should contact the regional NAGPRA coordinator at the time of an inadvertent discovery or intentional excavation. Regional coordinators are responsible for notifying Park NAGPRA.

Care [43 CFR 10.7(b)(2-3)]

Federal agencies must also care for and manage the unclaimed items consistent with 36 CFR 79 and consider and respect, to the maximum extent feasible, the traditions of any potential claimants identified in a published notice including, but not limited to, traditions regarding housing, maintenance, and preservation.

Disposition [43 CFR 10.7(c)-(e)]

Federal agencies may, upon request, transfer unclaimed items to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization that is not a potential claimant as long as the tribe or Native Hawaiian organization agrees to accept them and to treat them according to their respective laws and customs. Federal agencies also may reinter unclaimed items according to applicable interment laws.

However, before any unclaimed items are transferred or reinterred, the Federal agency must first –

- submit the list of unclaimed items described above to National NAGPRA;
- publish a notice of the proposed action (twice, at least a week apart) in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the unclaimed cultural items were excavated or discovered, and removed, and, if applicable, in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which each potential claimant now resides; and
- send a copy of the published notice to the National NAGPRA program.

The transfer or reinterment may not take place until at least 30 days after publication of the second notice to allow time for any claimants under the priority of custody in 43 CFR 10.6 to come forward.

c. Collections

The regulations also require Federal agencies and museums to inform Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in their collections prior to November 16, 1990, [43 CFR Subpart C] or in new collections received or located after completing summaries and inventories as required by § 10.8 and 10.9 [43 CFR 10.13].

Summaries

Summaries are written descriptions of collections that may contain unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony [43 CFR 10.8]. Summary information for all park units was distributed to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations in November 1993. This served as a simple notification to each Indian tribe and Native Hawaiian organization of the nature of the collections held by NPS. The summary was an initial step to bring Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations into consultation with NPS. See Figure 4 for a model of the summary process.

If a claim is made for unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, the superintendent must determine that the object claimed fits the definition of the specified NAGPRA category. Identification of specific unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony must be done in consultation with Indian tribe representatives and traditional religious leaders who may have special knowledge regarding these categories of objects.

Inventories

Inventories are item-by-item descriptions of human remains and associated funerary objects. Unlike the summaries, inventories must have been completed in consultation with Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations and represent a decision by the superintendent as to the cultural affiliation of particular human remains or associated funerary objects [43 CFR 10.9]. Culturally unidentifiable human remains and associated funerary objects are also identified in an inventory. See Figure 5 for a model of the inventory completion process.

Notification

Before the repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in NPS collections, a notice must be published in the *Federal Register* [43 CFR 10.8(f) and 10.9(e)]. Notification provides information to potentially affected parties of a pending agency action, providing them with an opportunity to respond. Notification is not a primary means of communication with potential claimants but is a last chance for claimants that may have been overlooked to voice their concerns.

Notice of Inventory Completion

A Notice of Inventory Completion summarizes the contents of an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects and their geographical and cultural affiliation in sufficient detail to enable individuals, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to determine their interest in claiming the inventoried items. The notice is published in the *Federal Register* when a park has made a determination of cultural affiliation or lineal descent for human remains and associated funerary objects in its possession or control. Repatriation may not occur until at least 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

The Notice of Inventory Completion should minimally include the following information –

- names of all Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations that were consulted or invited to consult;
- name of site, county, and state from which the cultural items originated;
- minimum number of individuals represented by the human remains;
- number and types of associated funerary objects;
- the circumstances surrounding the removal and all subsequent transfers until the remains and other cultural items came into the park's possession;
- dates and additional information about the human remains, any known earlier group/phase, and how/why these individuals have been determined to be Native American;
- evidence for present-day cultural affiliation with the earlier identifiable group, for example, any historical records, continuity of occupation, continuity of ethnographic materials, and so forth; and
- tribal evidence of cultural affiliation, for example, oral history, manner of interment, known/named village/camp, etc.

Notice of Intent to Repatriate

A Notice of Intent to Repatriate is published after a park receives, reviews, and accepts a claim by a tribe or lineal descendant for unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. The notice describes unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony being claimed in sufficient detail to enable other individuals, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to determine their interest in the claimed objects. Repatriation may not occur until at least 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

The Notice of Intent to Repatriate should minimally include the following information –

- a brief description (including number) of the object(s);
- the dates and circumstances of acquisition;
- the evidence for cultural affiliation; and
- evidence from consultation with the tribe supporting the definition of these cultural items as unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony as defined under NAGPRA

NOTE: The Notice of Inventory Completion and the Notice of Intent to Repatriate are distinct and unrelated. Notices of Inventory Completion include only human remains and associated funerary objects and must be published whether or not a claim has been received. Notices of Intent to Repatriate include only unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony and are published after a claim has been received, evaluated, and accepted. A Notice of Intent to Repatriate is not intended as notification of the repatriation of human remains and/or associated funerary objects that may occur after the publication of a Notice of Inventory Completion. Both types of notices must be developed in cooperation with the Park NAGPRA program.

Future Applicability

Final regulations (43 CFR 10.13) effective April 20, 2007, outline procedures for dealing with cultural items subject to NAGPRA received or located after the 1993 and 1995 statutory deadlines.

New acquisitions

If a park or unit receives cultural items subject to NAGPRA after April 20, 2007, **or** locates cultural items subject to NAGPRA in its collections after April 20, 2007, then a summary of possible unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony must be provided to any potentially affiliated tribes within 6 months of receipt or discovery and an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects must be completed, in consultation with affiliated tribes, within 2 years of receipt or discovery.

Newly recognized Indian tribes

If a park or unit has possession or control of cultural items subject to NAGPRA when a new tribe that is potentially affiliated with those items is added to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) list of federally recognized tribes, then a summary of possible unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony must be provided to that tribe within 6 months of the tribe's placement on the list and an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects must be prepared in consultation with the tribe within 2 years of the group's placement on the list.

Amendment of previous decision

If the cultural affiliation or number of cultural items listed in a previously published Notice of Inventory Completion or Notice of Intent to Repatriate changes, then a correction to that notice must be published in the *Federal Register*.

Figure 4. Summary Completion Process Model

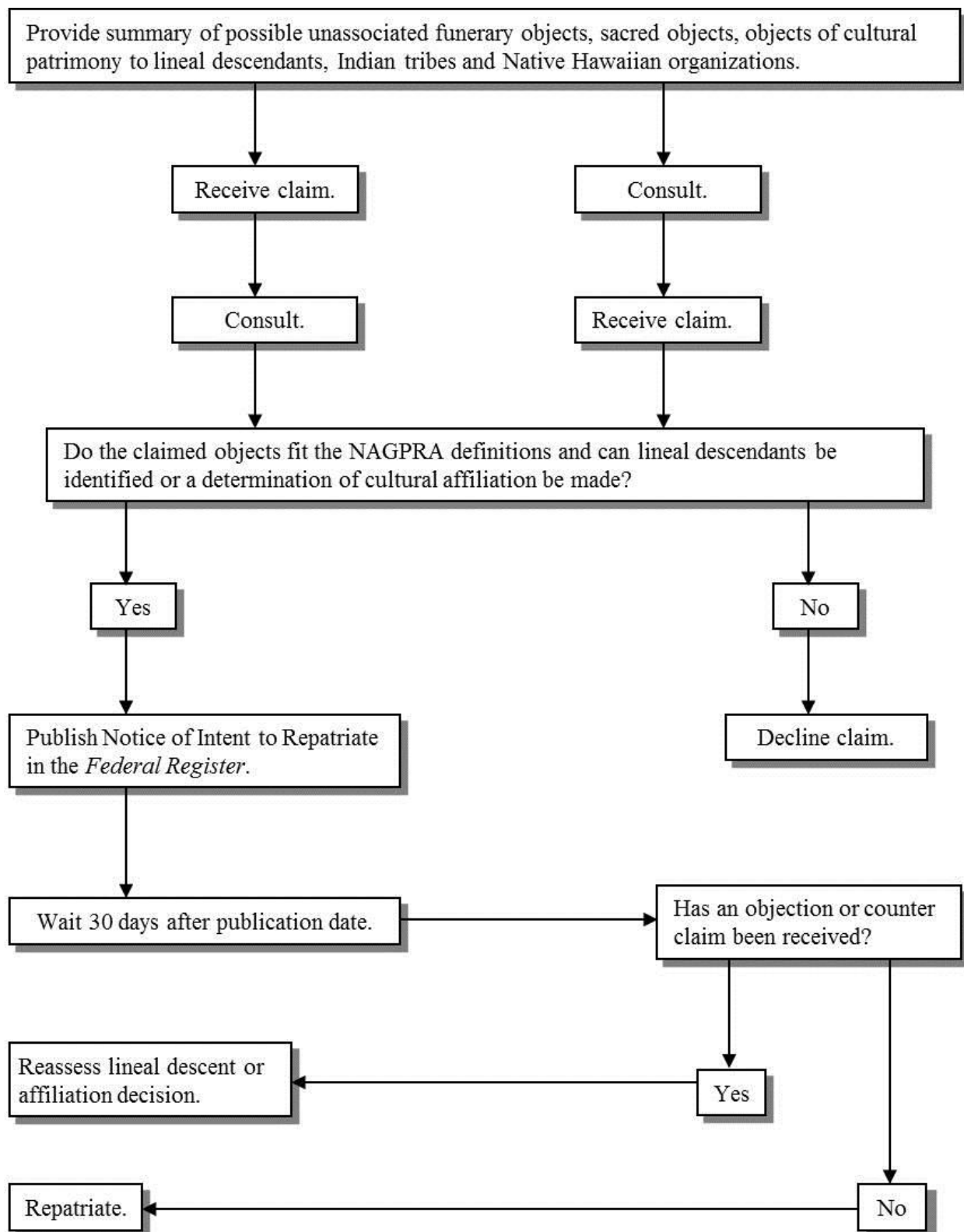
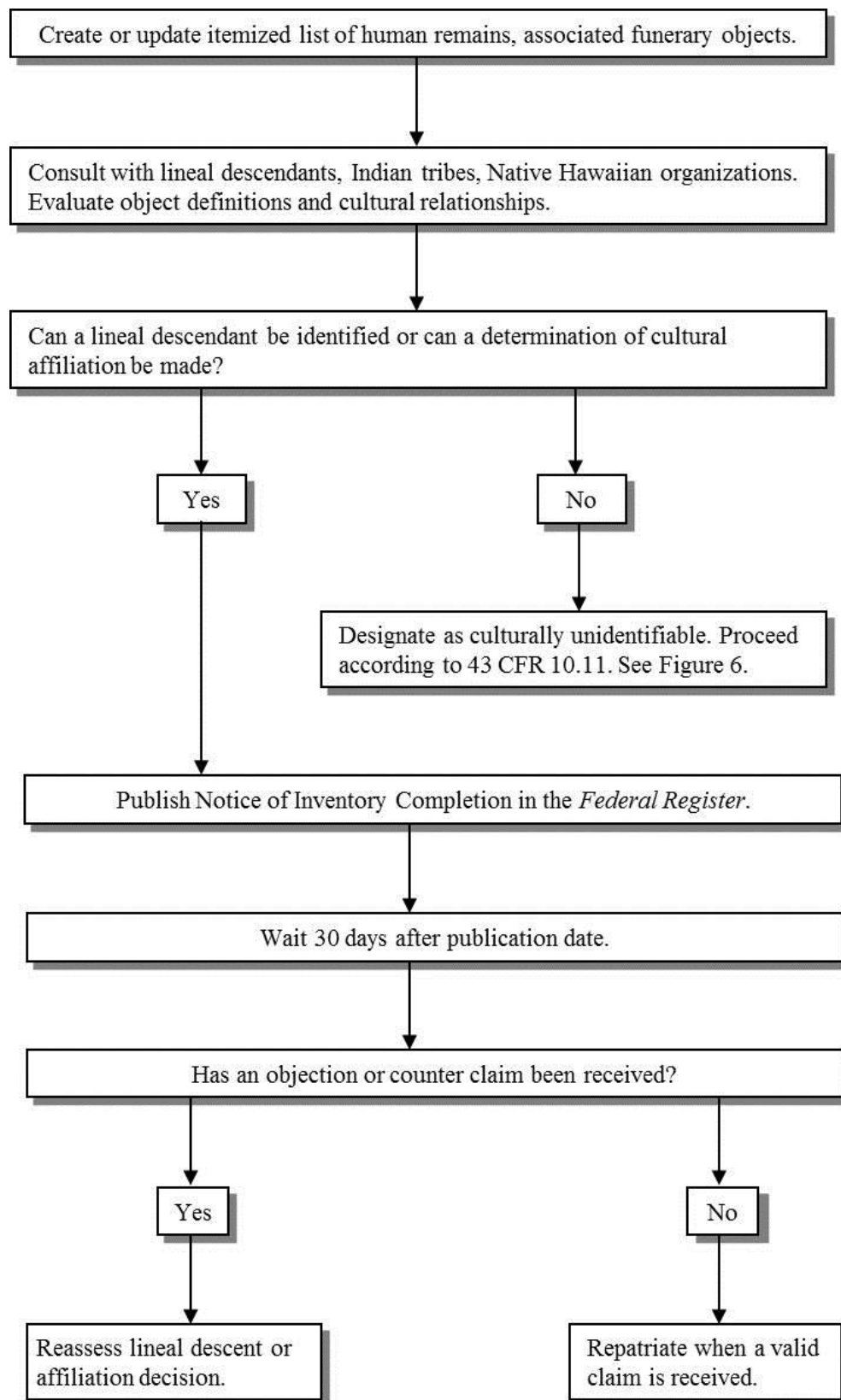


Figure 5. Inventory Completion Process Model



Culturally Unidentifiable

Final regulations (43 CFR 10.11) effective May 14, 2010, outline procedures for the disposition of culturally unidentifiable human remains. The rule applies only to human remains in collections and only where cultural affiliation cannot be determined or where cultural affiliation is with an Indian group that is not federally recognized.

The rule describes when consultation must be initiated, who must be consulted, who is entitled to control of the remains after consultation is completed and in what priority order, and what a Federal agency or museum may do if no Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization agrees to accept control. See Figure 6 for a model of the culturally unidentifiable process.

Consultation [43 CFR 10.11(b)]

Parks must consult with Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations –

- from whose tribal lands the human remains and associated funerary objects were removed; and
- from whose aboriginal lands the human remains and associated funerary objects were removed.

For the former, the land must have been tribal land at the time of removal. For the latter, aboriginal occupation may be recognized by a final judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court of Claims, or a treaty, Act of Congress, or Executive Order.

NOTE: If the geographic origin of the remains is unknown or if no Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization meeting these criteria can be identified, then the culturally unidentifiable rule (43 CFR 10.11) does not apply. In this case, parks may request a recommendation for a proposed disposition of culturally unidentifiable human remains from the Secretary via the NAGPRA Review Committee.

Within 90 days of receiving a request to transfer control of culturally unidentifiable human remains, parks must initiate consultation with the requesting Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization. The final rule requires that museums and agencies initiate consultation with “...**all** Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations...” (emphasis added) that meet the 43 CFR 10.11(b) criteria. Therefore, parks must make a good faith effort to identify any other Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations that meet those criteria and initiate consultation prior to any offer to transfer.

Parks should be proactive in implementing 43 CFR 10.11. If no request for culturally unidentifiable human remains is received, it is recommended that parks identify the appropriate Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations per 43 CFR 10.11(b)(2) and initiate consultation regarding the disposition of any culturally unidentifiable human remains and associated funerary objects in collections. Funding for such NAGPRA projects can be requested from the Cultural Resources fund source during the annual Servicewide Comprehensive Call.

Parks must provide in writing to all Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations that are consulted –

- a list of all tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations consulted;
- a list of Indian groups not federally-recognized that are known to have a relationship of shared group identity with the human remains; and
- an offer to supply original inventory and additional documentation.

During consultation parks must request from tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations, as appropriate –

- the name and address of the Indian tribal official to act as representative in consultations;
- the names and appropriate methods to contact traditional religious leaders;
- temporal and geographic criteria that should be used to identify human remains and associated funerary objects for consultation;
- the names and addresses of other Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, or Indian groups that are not federally-recognized who should be included in the consultations; and
- a schedule and process for consultation.

Disposition [43 CFR 10.11(c)]

Parks must offer to transfer control of culturally unidentifiable human remains to certain Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations if the park cannot prove right of possession. NPS, as a matter of policy, does not claim right of possession over cultural items subject to NAGPRA. Therefore, parks must offer to transfer control of culturally unidentifiable human remains to Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations in the following priority order –

1. The Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization from whose tribal land, at the time of the excavation or removal, the human remains were removed.
2. The Indian tribe or tribes that are recognized as aboriginal to the area from which the human remains were removed.

If none of the Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations identified above agrees to accept control of the human remains, which should be documented by the park, there are several options that a park may pursue, though none are required. Parks may transfer control to other Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations or, after receiving a recommendation from the Secretary or authorized representative, parks may transfer control to an Indian group that is not federally recognized or reinter the human remains according to State or other law.

To receive a recommendation from the Secretary in support of a proposed disposition of culturally unidentifiable human remains, parks must request that recommendation from the NAGPRA Review Committee. Parks must go before the Committee and provide proof that the Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations specified above were consulted and that the Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations consulted do not object to the proposed disposition. It's recommended that parks consider the last two options carefully before moving forward. Regional NAGPRA coordinators and Park NAGPRA program staff can assist with the process.

Transferring funerary objects associated with culturally unidentifiable human remains is voluntary. However, the Secretary recommends that museums and Federal agencies transfer control as long as no other Federal or State law precludes it. The National Park Service conveys associated funerary objects to Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations pursuant to 54 U.S.C. 102503(g) through (i) and 54 U.S.C. 102504 (Title 54 – National Park Service and Related Programs).

Notification [43 CFR 10.11(d)]

As is the case for affiliated human remains and associated funerary objects, disposition of culturally unidentifiable human remains cannot occur until at least 30 days after the publication of a Notice of Inventory Completion in the *Federal Register*.

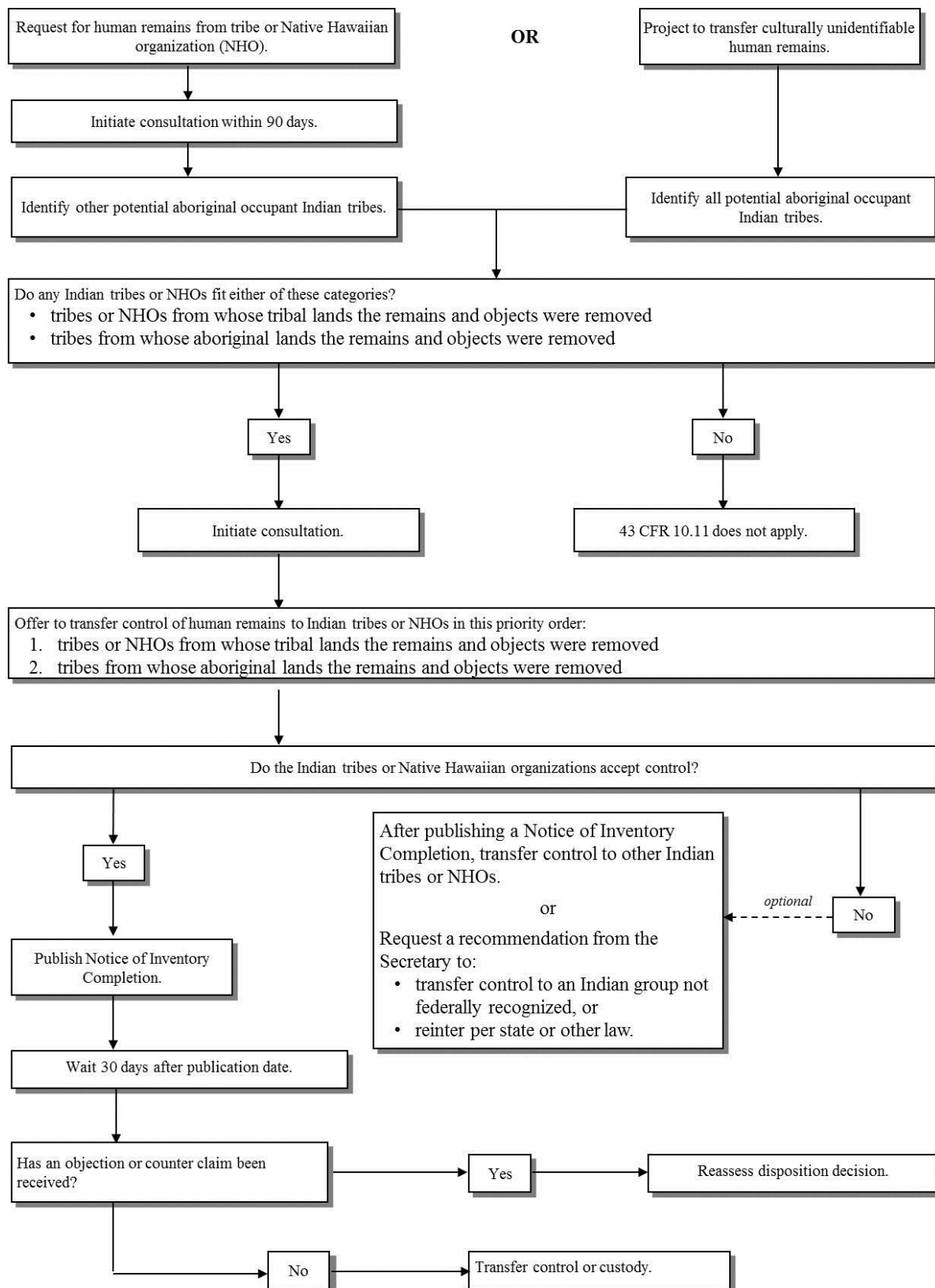
4. WHO HAS STANDING TO CLAIM NAGPRA ITEMS?

Lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations may request cultural items subject to NAGPRA [43 CFR 10.2(b)]. See Section 7 below for more detailed information regarding priority of custody and which cultural items may be claimed by which group.

a. Lineal Descendants

The regulations implementing NAGPRA [43 CFR 10.2(b)(1)] define lineal descendant as an individual tracing his or her ancestry directly and without interruption by means of the traditional kinship system of the appropriate Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization or by the common law system of descentance to a known Native American individual whose remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects are being claimed.

Figure 6. Culturally Unidentifiable Process Model



b. Indian Tribes

The statute [25 U.S.C. 3001(7)] defines Indian tribe as any tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village (as defined in, or established pursuant to, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) [43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.], which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

c. Native Hawaiian Organizations

The regulations implementing NAGPRA [43 CFR 10.2(b)(3)] define Native Hawaiian organization as any organization that serves and represents the interests of Native Hawaiians, has as a primary and stated purpose the provision of services to Native Hawaiians, and has expertise in Native Hawaiian affairs. Native Hawaiian organizations need not comprise mostly Native Hawaiian members. The regulations specifically identify the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Hui Malama I Na Kupuna 'O Hawai'i Nei, as Native Hawaiian organizations, but give neither organization special status. Hui Malama I Na Kupuna 'O Hawai'i Nei dissolved in December 2014.

5. WHO DOES NOT HAVE STANDING TO CLAIM NAGPRA ITEMS?

Individuals, except in the case of lineal descendants, cannot make claims for human remains or other cultural items. Indian groups that are not federally recognized *do not* have standing to claim cultural items under the statute. Human remains in NPS collections for which a relationship of shared group identity can be shown with a particular Indian group that is not federally recognized are considered culturally unidentifiable under NAGPRA. See Section 3.c. above for more information about culturally unidentifiable remains.

Even though Indian groups that are not federally recognized do not have standing to make claims under NAGPRA, NPS personnel may communicate with them as appropriate and in accordance with NPS Management Policies 5.2.1.

NPS is not precluded from communicating with Indian groups that are not federally recognized, even if an Indian tribe objects. However, to be respectful of the government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes, NPS should not consult with Indian groups that are not federally recognized without first raising the issue with Indian tribes. If an Indian tribe objects to including an Indian group that is not federally recognized in consultation, then separate consultations should be considered.

6. CONSULTATION

The regulations require consultation throughout the process: before intentional excavations, before the completion of inventories, upon the completion of summaries, immediately after inadvertent discoveries, after a request for culturally unidentifiable human remains is received, and before any offer to transfer control of culturally unidentifiable human remains. The statute and regulations require consultation to be initiated through a formal written request [43 CFR 10.5(b)]. The formal request should be followed by personal contact and interaction.

a. Identifying Consulting Groups

The first step in any consultation effort is to identify the appropriate consulting groups. This step is particularly critical when an inadvertent discovery occurs on park land. Upon notification of the inadvertent discovery, the superintendent has only three working days to contact the appropriate lineal descendants, Indian tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations [43 CFR 10.4(d)(1)]. It is therefore helpful to have an

existing list of contacts. Many parks have established relationships with tribes either as a result of NAGPRA or the requirements of other statutes and regulations.

Federally recognized tribes that are traditionally associated with the park should be among the initial contacts in beginning the consultation process. See Section 7 below for a discussion of the distinction between traditional association and cultural affiliation. In addition, the implementing regulations [43 CFR 10.5(a), 10.8(d), 10.9(b), and 10.11(b)] stipulate that all of the following individuals, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations must be consulted:

- Potential lineal descendants. These individuals may have already contacted the park or been identified by the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization. In cases where the identity of the individual whose remains or other cultural items are being discussed is known, it may be appropriate to publish a notice in a newspaper of general circulation in the area in which the affiliated Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations now reside to ensure that all potential lineal descendants have been identified. See Section 7 below for more information about lineal descendants.
- Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations that are or are likely to be culturally affiliated with, or that have a demonstrated cultural relationship to, the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. See Section 7 below for more information about cultural affiliation.
- Indian tribes from whose tribal lands the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony originated.
- Indian tribes on whose aboriginal lands the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony were or are expected to be found. See Section 7.c. below for more information about aboriginal lands.

Some online resources for assistance in identifying federally recognized tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, official tribal contacts, and aboriginal lands include—

(Note: links are current as of May 2017.)

- [BIA list of federally recognized tribes \(January 17, 2017\)](#)
- [DOI Office of Native Hawaiian Relations, Native Hawaiian Organization List](#)
- [BIA Tribal Leaders Directory](#)
- [Indian Land Areas Judicially Established 1978](#)
- [Indian Land Cessions 1784-1894 \(National NAGPRA\)](#)
- [Indian Land Cessions 1784-1894 \(Library of Congress\)](#)

b. Initiating Consultation

Initial contact with lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations can take several forms. Written correspondence is essential to document the consultation process for the administrative record. However, initiating consultation with a telephone call, with written confirmation, is an effective way to avoid misunderstandings that could result from exclusive use of written communication. Inadvertent discoveries require telephone notification with written confirmation. No matter what form is used, initial contact should outline the nature of the situation to be discussed, identify who will represent the NPS, request information on the appropriate tribal representatives to contact, and propose a time for consultation. The most effective initial contact is short and to the point. In light of the government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States, initial contact by NPS units should originate with the superintendent and be directed to the head of tribal government. Subsequent consultation may be delegated to professional staff if appropriate.

Each Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization has authority to select a representative. Care should be taken to ensure that an individual claiming to represent these entities is authorized by the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization. If there is any doubt, call the tribal chair, governor, president, chief, or other top elected official to verify that the individual is acting on behalf of the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization.

Follow-up is critical to successful consultation. Indian tribal and Native Hawaiian organization officials are busy and may not respond to the initial letter or telephone call in a timely fashion. If a response to the initial communication is not received within two weeks, the superintendent or other staff should call the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization official to verify that they received the communication.

c. Consultation Meetings

Face-to-face consultation meetings are one of the most effective forums for obtaining the advice or opinion of Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. A number of factors need to be considered when planning consultation meetings.

The complex and sensitive issues that are dealt with during consultation make it unlikely that discussions will be completed with a single meeting. Initial meetings provide an opportunity for the participants to get acquainted and review legal requirements. Subsequent meetings build on this foundation to address more substantive issues. Initial meetings often accommodate larger numbers of people representing various Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and the NPS. Later meetings focusing on particular human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are best limited to a small number of representatives of the NPS and an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization. It is vital that the NPS offer to meet one-on-one with individual tribes since some issues may be too sensitive to discuss in a group setting.

Initial meetings should be convened in a location that is mutually convenient to participants. Subsequent meetings may be held at or near the location of the site or repository where the objects under discussion were found or are currently held. Care should be taken to ensure that the meeting place is culturally appropriate to the Indian tribe representatives.

Some Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations have their own meeting protocol that should be taken into account when planning consultation meetings. Tribal representatives may wish to open the meetings with a prayer. Some topics may require comment from more than one individual; discussions of other topics may be limited to specific individuals; and some information may only be communicated at certain times of the year. Tribal representatives may need to relate the details of the meetings to their governing officials, traditional religious leaders, and other community members before decisions are made. Such factors make it essential that all participants discuss and agree on the form and content of consultation meetings, as well as on the time needed for reaching decisions.

d. Maintaining Consultation

Parks may find that once consultation has been initiated, a regular pattern of communication is beneficial. The compliance requirements of other statutes and regulations, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, also will have resulted in extensive networking and relationship building among parks and tribes that can be utilized and enhanced when specific NAGPRA issues arise.

e. Documenting Consultation

All consultation should be documented and include copies of all written correspondence between the parties involved, a log of all telephone conversations, and summaries or transcripts of all consultation meetings.

f. Cost of Consultation

The NPS is required to consult with lineal descendants and representatives of Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations before reaching decisions regarding the repatriation or disposition of cultural items subject to NAGPRA under agency control. In order to facilitate consultation, and subject to available funding, it may be appropriate for the NPS to pay the travel and per diem expenses of lineal descendants and Indian tribe and Native Hawaiian organization representatives. Consultation fees may also be

appropriate for individuals with special expertise, such as traditional religious leaders and translators. Park and support office administrative personnel may be able to suggest mechanisms to pay for such costs.

7. EVALUATING REPATRIATION REQUESTS

Upon the request of a lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization, NPS must expeditiously return human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony if **all** of the following criteria apply:

- the claimant has standing;
- the claimed item conforms to a class of cultural items covered by the statute; and
- a relationship conforming to those recognized in the law can be demonstrated between the claimant and the cultural item(s).

a. Standing

Lineal descendants, federally recognized Indian tribes, including Alaska Native villages, and Native Hawaiian organizations have standing to request human remains, funerary objects, and sacred objects [43 CFR 10.2(b)]. Only Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations have standing to claim objects of cultural patrimony. Lineal descendants cannot claim objects of cultural patrimony, since by definition objects of cultural patrimony are the communal property of a tribe.

b. Object Categories

In addition to human remains, three types of objects can be claimed under provisions of the statute: funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. Claimed objects must conform to the object categories as defined in the statute and the regulations (25 USC 3001; 43 CFR 10.2).

Funerary Objects

Funerary objects are items that, as part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture, are reasonably believed to have been placed intentionally at the time of death or later with or near individual human remains [43 CFR 10.2(d)(2)]. Funerary objects must be identified by a preponderance of the evidence as having been removed from a specific burial site of an individual affiliated with a particular Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization or as being related to specific individuals or families or to known human remains. Funerary objects may be either “associated” or “unassociated.”

Associated Funerary Objects

A funerary object is associated if the human remains from the same burial are in the possession or control of any museum or Federal agency. The human remains and the funerary objects do not need to be held by the same museum or Federal agency. For example, if the objects removed from a burial are in a park’s collections but the human remains from that burial are in the collections of another agency or museum, those objects are associated. In addition, the law states that objects that we know were made exclusively for burial purposes or to contain human remains are also associated funerary objects.

Unassociated Funerary Objects

A funerary object is unassociated if the human remains from the same burial are not in the possession or control of any museum or Federal agency. Some examples of when this situation may occur include: the human remains were left in the ground, the human remains are missing, or the human remains have already been repatriated.

NOTE: Because repatriation at the Smithsonian Institution is governed by the National Museum of the American Indian Act of 1989, the Smithsonian is not considered a Federal agency or museum as defined by NAGPRA. Where human remains are held by the Smithsonian and funerary objects are held by NPS,

the funerary objects are considered unassociated and should be repatriated through the summary process rather than the inventory process. See Section 3.c. above.

Sacred Objects

Sacred objects are specific ceremonial items needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of traditional Native American religions by their present-day adherents [43 CFR 10.2(d)(3)]. While many items, from ancient pottery sherds to arrowheads, might be imbued with sacredness in the eyes of an individual, the regulations limit this category to objects that were devoted to a traditional Native American religious ceremony or ritual and which have religious significance or function in the continued observance or renewal of such ceremony.

Objects of Cultural Patrimony

Objects of cultural patrimony are items having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization as a whole, rather than being property owned by an individual tribal or organization member [43 CFR 10.2(d)(4)]. These objects are of such central importance that they may not be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual tribal or organization member. Such objects must have been considered inalienable by the culturally affiliated Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization at the time the object was separated from the group. Objects of cultural patrimony include items such as Zuni War Gods, the Confederacy Wampum Belts of the Iroquois, and other objects of similar character and significance.

c. Relationships

An individual or group with standing must demonstrate a relationship with the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony being claimed. Potential relationships are –

- lineal descent,
- tribal lands,
- cultural affiliation,
- aboriginal lands, and
- a stronger cultural relationship than the tribe determined to have occupied the land aboriginally.

Which type of relationship has priority differs depending on whether the items are part of a park collection or are excavated or discovered inadvertently on park land after November 16, 1990.

Collections

Relationships of lineal descent, cultural affiliation, tribal lands, and aboriginal lands apply to human remains and items in NPS collections. Individuals who can show lineal descent have priority over Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations that have been determined to be culturally affiliated.

If the human remains and items are culturally unidentifiable, tribal lands will have priority over aboriginal lands. See Section 3.c. above for more information about culturally unidentifiable remains and objects.

Inadvertent Discoveries and Intentional Excavations

Relationships of lineal descent, tribal land, cultural affiliation, aboriginal lands, or stronger cultural relationship than aboriginal lands apply in situations of intentional excavations or inadvertent discoveries, after November 16, 1990.

Priority of custody is in the order listed here [43 CFR 10.6(a)] –

Lineal Descent

An individual must be able to trace ancestry directly and without interruption to a known Native American individual whose remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects are being claimed. The line of descent must be direct and without interruption according to the traditional kinship system of the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization or by the common law system of descentance [43 CFR 10.14(b)]. An Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization can often provide information on its traditional kinship system to assist in

verifying claims of lineal descent. Lineal descendants do not have to be members of a federally recognized Indian tribe.

Tribal Lands

Tribal lands are all lands within the exterior boundaries of any Indian reservation; all dependent Indian communities; any lands administered for the benefit of Native Hawaiians pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920 and section 4 of Public Law 86-3 [25 USC 3001(15)]. Indian tribes on whose tribal lands the cultural items were excavated or discovered inadvertently would have priority of custody if there are no lineal descendants.

Cultural Affiliation

Cultural affiliation is a relationship of shared group identity that can reasonably be traced historically or prehistorically between members of a present-day Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and an identifiable earlier group. Many different types of evidence may be evaluated to document such a relationship, including geographical, kinship, biological, archeological, anthropological, linguistic, folklore, oral tradition, historical, and other information or expert opinion [43 CFR 10.14(e)]. There are three elements that must be considered when investigating whether or not a relationship of cultural affiliation can be determined. There must be a present day Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, an identifiable earlier group, and a relationship of shared group identity between these two groups.

Unlike claims of lineal descent in which the relationship between the claimant and the individual whose remains or items are claimed must be direct and without interruption, determination of cultural affiliation is based on an overall evaluation of the totality of the circumstances and evidence and should not be precluded because of some gaps in the record. Determinations of cultural affiliation should be as precise as possible, and should result from the critical evaluation and careful weighing of all available evidence. Parks should avoid affiliating all cultural items in park collections with all traditionally associated Indian tribes unless the evidence supports that determination. See Section 7.d. below for a discussion about evaluating lines of evidence.

Traditional Association and Cultural Affiliation: In making determinations about cultural affiliation under NAGPRA, park managers must recognize the difference between traditional association and cultural affiliation. Under NPS management policies, “Traditionally associated peoples” are groups with special cultural interests in a National Park that precede the establishment of the park unit and that have endured for at least two generations (40 years). These may include park neighbors, traditional residents, and former residents who remain attached to the park area despite having relocated. Not all traditionally associated peoples are Native American, though many Indian tribes are considered traditionally associated. Traditionally associated peoples regard park resources as essential to their development and identity as a culturally distinct group. For traditionally associated peoples, specific places or resources within parks, such as sites, structures, objects and landscapes hold significance, as they may be closely associated with the peoples’ sense of purpose, existence as a community, heritage, and development as an ethnically or spiritually distinctive group. These places may, for example, have supported subsistence or ceremonial activities, represent birthplaces, or mark migration routes.

Whereas traditionally associated peoples have a relationship connecting contemporary people to **places** with which they have ancestral ties, cultural affiliation is a demonstrated relationship between contemporary Indian tribes and the **earlier group** from which the human remains or cultural items originated or were acquired. Prior geographic association of a tribe to park lands may not, in itself, be enough for a determination of cultural affiliation.

Traditional association and cultural affiliation are not mutually exclusive. Sometimes an Indian tribe can be both traditionally associated through an ongoing cultural connection to a park and culturally affiliated with an earlier group that lived on or used park lands.

Aboriginal Lands

For intentional excavations and inadvertent discoveries when lineal descent and cultural affiliation cannot

be demonstrated, disposition may be made to an Indian tribe that – according to a final judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the U.S. Court of Claims – aboriginally occupied the Federal land from which the human remains or objects were removed [43 CFR 10.6(a)(2)(iii)]. An online map of Indian land areas established by the Commission is available at the National NAGPRA program's website.

Stronger Cultural Relationship

This term is not defined in the statute or regulations, but clearly constitutes a weaker relationship than lineal descent or cultural affiliation. The concept of “stronger cultural relationship” is considered **only** in those cases where lineal descent and cultural affiliation cannot be demonstrated **and** where an Indian tribe has been identified – according to a final judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the U.S. Court of Claims – as having aboriginally occupied the land from which the human remains or objects were removed. If it can be demonstrated that a different Indian tribe has a stronger cultural relationship with the human remains and other cultural items than the tribe designated as the aboriginal occupant, the former has priority of custody. Situations where the concept of “stronger cultural relationship” comes into play are rare.

d. Evaluation of Evidence

NAGPRA requires careful consideration of evidence when assessing if human remains are Native American, whether objects fit into the categories defined by NAGPRA, and if relationships of lineal descent or cultural affiliation can be determined. NAGPRA requires that cultural affiliation be determined based on geographical, kinship, biological, archeological, anthropological, linguistic, folkloric, oral tradition, historical, or other relevant information or expert opinion.

The preponderance of the evidence is the standard of proof needed to evaluate claims made under the statute [43 CFR 10.14(f)]. “Preponderance of the evidence” is a legal term, defined in Black’s Law Dictionary as “...evidence which as a whole shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.” (1991, abridged 6th edition, p. 819) Claimants do not have to establish their claims with scientific certainty.

It is the superintendent’s responsibility to determine whether the evidence satisfactorily substantiates the claim. In evaluating claims the park should seek information from the claimants and from as many other sources as are available, including academic disciplines and other expert opinion. The park should hold each type of evidence to the standards of the particular discipline or source. In the case of scholarly and scientific disciplines, the assistance and/or review of subject matter experts should be sought. In the case of non-academic sources of information, such as expert opinion from a tribal religious leader, the park should verify the person’s authority.

Once the evidence is compiled and evaluated, the superintendent must decide whether a preponderance of the evidence supports the claim for human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. The reliability and relevance of evidence should be evaluated for each case. A reasonable determination that a relationship of shared group identity exists is required. “Reasonable” according to Black’s Law Dictionary (1991, abridged 6th edition, p. 874), means: “fair, proper, just, moderate, [and] suitable under the circumstances.” Regional NAGPRA coordinators, Park NAGPRA program staff, support office or center archeologists, ethnographers, curators, and Native American liaisons can assist in the decision-making process. Superintendents must document their evidence evaluation and decision-making processes as completely as possible.

8. DISPUTES

In some cases, it may not be possible for NPS and the interested individuals, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations to agree on the disposition or repatriation of particular human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

NAGPRA does not have a formal administrative appeals process. A lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization may decide to present more evidence following a superintendent's decision not to return particular objects. Such additional evidence should be given full consideration by the superintendent and the decision revised if necessary. Superintendents' decisions are subject to standard administrative review procedures.

Disputes may be brought to the attention of the NAGPRA Review Committee. The Review Committee is charged with facilitating the resolution of disputes among lineal descendants, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, museums, and Federal agencies relating to the return of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. The Review Committee will consider requests to facilitate the resolution of a dispute from any of the involved parties. If the Review Committee decides to attempt to facilitate the dispute, it will initially request written documentation regarding the dispute from all involved parties. This information will be reviewed and, if appropriate, the disputing parties will be invited to appear before the Committee. Review Committee recommendations and findings are not binding.

9. TRANSFER OF CONTROL OR CUSTODY

Transfer of control or custody can only occur after the required public notice has been published and the designated waiting period has elapsed. See Section 3 above for a more detailed discussion of notification requirements. Preparation for transfer must involve additional consultation with the appropriate lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization to determine the place and manner of delivery [25USC 3005(a)(3)]. After the required 30 day waiting period, the superintendent or the designated NAGPRA coordinator should contact the lineal descendant or appropriate tribal official(s) to discuss the transfer. During this consultation, if possible, parks and the recipient should establish a specific timeline for the transfer. Arrangements should take into consideration the sensitive nature of the transfer and any particular cultural or religious proscriptions.

When transferring control or custody of cultural items in collections, the superintendent must ensure that the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony are deaccessioned according to NPS procedures, including assigning deaccession numbers, updating accession and catalog records, completing a deaccession form, and filing all documentation in the accession or optional deaccession file. (For further guidance on deaccessioning, consult Part II of the *NPS Museum Handbook*) In addition, the park may create and maintain a transfer document for its records. This document could outline the conditions (timeframe, place and manner) of the transfer, be signed by the NPS and the lineal descendant or authorized tribal representative, and serve as part of the permanent record for the park files. See Figure 7 for a sample repatriation agreement for culturally affiliated cultural items in collections from the *NPS Museum Handbook*.

NOTE: Under Section 3 of the statute (25 USC 3002) and Subpart B of the regulations (43 CFR 10.3-10.7), which cover inadvertent discoveries and intentional excavations, “transfer of control or custody” does not mean that parks should accession the cultural items or that tribes must physically take possession of the items before they can be reburied. In fact, parks should not accession human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony inadvertently discovered or intentionally excavated after November 16, 1990, into collections.

10. REBURIAL ON PARK LANDS

Once human remains and associated funerary objects have been repatriated under NAGPRA, many Indian tribes request to have their ancestors reburied as close as possible to the locations from which they were removed, such as within national park units.

Reinterment of human remains in the same park unit from which they were removed is allowed and may include remains that were removed prior to establishment of the park unit from lands now within the park unit (*Management Policies 2006*, 5.3.4 and 8.6.10.3). Issues that should be considered and agreed upon by the park and the tribe(s) before reburial include the exact nature of the reinterment, the way in which the reinterment will be conducted, the place of reburial, future uses of the same or adjacent areas, special access to the reburial location, security, long term care and maintenance, and tribal concerns that the remains not be disturbed in perpetuity.

In recent years, tribes have received repatriated human remains that were removed from sites on private, state, or other lands, and have been unable to rebury the remains at the original burial locations. Because protection from further disturbance is a high priority, tribes are requesting that these human remains be reburied on park lands.

Current NPS policies do not permit the reburial within a park of human remains that were not removed from that park's land. However, according to a memo from the Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science to Regional Directors issued in December 2012, if NPS has control or possession of human remains that were not recovered from a park and therefore is responsible for their repatriation, allowing reburial at a park may be appropriate if requested by the culturally affiliated tribe or tribes. The regional NAGPRA coordinator and the regional director should be consulted prior to approving such reinterments.

If a park superintendent feels that approving a tribal request to rebury remains that are not from park lands and that were not in NPS possession or control, and therefore not repatriated by NPS, is warranted by specific cultural and historical circumstances, the superintendent, in concert with the regional director, may request a waiver of *Management Policies (2006)* from the Director through the Office of Policy.

Repatriation Agreement

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) provides definitions and procedures for the repatriation of certain Native American human remains and cultural items, as defined in 25 U.S.C. 3001-3013, in the possession of federal agencies and museums that receive federal funds to lineal descendants, Indian tribes, and native Hawaiian organizations; and

The representatives of the National Park Service _____ [NPS unit] have engaged in consultation with representatives of _____ [The TRIBE] and have determined the applicability of these definitions and procedures to objects currently in the possession of the National Park Service _____ [NPS unit].

The National Park Service _____ [NPS unit] and _____ [The TRIBE] do hereby agree to the following:

1. That _____ [The TRIBE] is recognized as eligible for the special programs and service provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians, and thus has status to make a claim for repatriation under NAGPRA;
2. That all cultural items described on the attached list meet the criteria outlined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 USC 3001-3013) and 43 CFR 10.2 (b), such that:
 - a. all *human remains* are of Native American ancestry and do not include remains or portions of remains freely given by the individual from whose body they were obtained;
 - b. all *funerary objects* are known or reasonably believed to have been placed intentionally at the time of death or later with or near individual human remains;
 - c. all *sacred objects* are specific objects needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the current practice of traditional Native American religions by their present-day adherents;
 - d. all *objects of cultural patrimony* have ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to _____ [The TRIBE], rather than to an individual tribal member and, as such, may not be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by an individual Tribal member; and such object shall have been considered inalienable at the time the object was separated from _____ [The TRIBE];
3. That all cultural items described on the attached inventory were produced or used by an identifiable earlier group;
4. That evidence exists of a shared group identity that can be reasonably traced between _____ [The TRIBE] and the earlier group;
5. That a Notice of Inventory Completion concerning the human remains or associated funerary objects, or a Notice of Intent to Repatriate concerning unidentified funerary objects, sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony described on the attached list has been published in the *Federal Register*. In the time since that publication [at least thirty days] neither the National Park Service _____ [NPS unit] nor _____ [The TRIBE] has become aware of any competing claim;
6. That, effective on the date of execution of this Repatriation Agreement, the National Park Service _____ [NPS unit] transfers to _____ [The TRIBE] all responsibility associated with the items described on the attached inventory.
7. That this Repatriation Agreement releases the National Park Service from any future claims by _____ [The TRIBE] regarding the objects described on the attached inventory.

Figure 7. Sample Repatriation Agreement – page 1 (from NPS Museum Handbook).

Repatriation Agreement (Continued)

Signatures

This agreement shall become binding upon its execution by the authorized representative of each party. Each party warrants that it has the requisite authority to execute, deliver, and consummate the transactions contemplated by this agreement.

For the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE:

Recommended: _____

Curator	Signature	Date

S0 Curator [Please print]	Signature	Date

S0 Archeologist [Please print]	Signature	Date

S0 Ethnographer [Please print]	Signature	Date

Approved: _____

Superintendent [Please print]	Signature	Date

NPS Unit: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

For the TRIBE:

Approved: _____

Official Representative or Lineal Descendant [Please print]	Signature	Date

Title	Tribe/Organization	

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ FAX: _____

Follow-up Contact: _____ Telephone: _____

Name [Please print]	FAX: _____

Figure 7 (continued). Sample Repatriation Agreement – page 2.

11. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

NPS may temporarily retain control or custody of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony that would otherwise be returned to a lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization if—

- the item is part of an NPS collection and is indispensable to the completion of a specific scientific study, the outcome of which is of major benefit to the United States [43 CFR10.10(c)(1)]; or
- there are multiple disputing claimants [43 CFR10.10(c)(2)].

a. Scientific Study of Major Benefit to U.S.

If human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony that are part of a collection are indispensable to the completion of a specific study, the outcome of which is of major benefit to the United States, then NPS may temporarily retain control of the items. In such circumstances, the items must be returned to the appropriate lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization no later than 90 days after completion of the study.

b. Multiple Disputing Claimants

If there are multiple disputing claims and NPS cannot determine by a preponderance of the evidence which requesting party is the most appropriate recipient, then NPS may retain control of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony until the requesting parties mutually agree on the appropriate recipient or the dispute is otherwise resolved. There is no set time during which multiple claims must be resolved.

12. DOCUMENTATION

a. The Administrative Record

The administrative record must document all disposition or repatriation actions. It must include documentation of the human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony under consideration and copies of all written correspondence, a log of all telephone conversations, documentation of all consultation meetings, and copies of all agreements between the relevant parties. The original file should be retained by the park as part of the museum archive collection and, if appropriate, the archeological site file. A copy should be sent to the regional office or center that maintains records concerning park archeology or museum collections. These files should be retained even after the disposition or repatriation of the relevant human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

b. Confidentiality

In some situations, the information needed by the superintendent to make a decision regarding applicability of the statutory terms to particular objects may be considered extremely sensitive by Indian tribe and Native Hawaiian organization representatives. The NPS has a limited ability to protect sensitive information from public disclosure.

The Freedom of Information Act gives any person the right to access Federal agency records, except to the extent that such records are protected from disclosure by one of nine exemptions or three special law enforcement record exclusions. There is no specific provision in NAGPRA that protects sensitive information from public disclosure. Other disclosure limitations, such as those in the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the National Parks Omnibus Act, may provide some flexibility in protecting sensitive information from public disclosure. ARPA requires that information concerning the nature and location of any archeological resource whose excavation or removal requires a permit is not made available to the public without the consent of the appropriate

Federal land manager pursuant to the conditions outlined at 16 USC 470hh. The National Historic Preservation Act requires the head of a Federal agency or other public official to withhold from disclosure to the public information about the location, character, or ownership of a historic resource if the Secretary of the Interior and the agency determine that disclosure would cause a significant invasion of privacy, risk harm to the resource, or impede the use of a traditional religious site by practitioners [54 U.S.C. 307103]. The National Parks Omnibus Act authorizes withholding information on the nature and location of objects of cultural patrimony in National Park System units [54 U.S.C. 100707]. See also Management Policies 5.2.3.

It is important to be candid with Indian tribe and Native Hawaiian organization representatives about the limited protection that can be given to sensitive information. During consultation, NPS officials should not request more information than is needed to decide whether remains or objects fit into NAGPRA categories, to make determinations of cultural affiliation, or to support other decisions regarding the disposition or repatriation of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

13. GLOSSARY

Aboriginal land – The regulations [43 CFR 10.6(a)(2)(iii)] refer to aboriginal land as Federal land that is recognized by a final judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court of Claims as the aboriginal land of an Indian tribe. For culturally unidentifiable human remains, aboriginal land may be recognized by a final judgment of the Indian Claims Commission or the United States Court of Claims, or a treaty, Act of Congress, or Executive Order [43 CFR 10.11(b)(2)(ii)].

Associated funerary objects – See Funerary Objects.

Control – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(a)(3)(ii)] define control as having a legal interest in human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony sufficient to lawfully permit the museum or Federal agency to treat the objects as part of its collection for purposes of NAGPRA whether or not the human remains or objects are in the physical custody of the museum or Federal agency. Generally, a museum or Federal agency that has loaned human remains or objects to another individual, museum, or Federal agency is considered to retain control of those human remains or objects.

Cultural affiliation – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(e)] define cultural affiliation as a relationship of shared group identity which can reasonably be traced historically or prehistorically between members of a present-day Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and an identifiable earlier group. Cultural affiliation is established when the preponderance of the evidence—based on geographical, kinship, biological, archeological, linguistic, folklore, oral tradition, historical evidence, or other information or expert opinion—reasonably leads to such a conclusion.

Culturally unidentifiable – The regulations [43CFR 10.2(e)(2)] define culturally unidentifiable as referring to human remains and associated funerary objects in museum or Federal agency collections for which no lineal descendant or culturally affiliated Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization has been identified through the inventory process.

Custody – See Disposition.

Disposition – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(g)(5)] define disposition as the transfer of control over human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony by a museum or Federal agency.

Repatriation – The term repatriation is used for the transfer of human remains or other cultural items in collections to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations.

Disposition – The term disposition is used for the transfer of culturally unidentifiable human remains in collections.

Custody – The term custody is used when determining the rightful recipient of human remains or other cultural items inadvertently discovered or intentionally excavated after NAGPRA was enacted (November 16, 1990) [43 CFR 10.6].

Funerary objects – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(2)] define funerary objects as items that, as part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture, are reasonably believed to have been placed intentionally at the time of death or later with or near individual human remains. Funerary objects must be identified by a preponderance of the evidence as having been removed from a specific burial site of an individual affiliated with a particular Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization or as being related to specific individuals or families or to known human remains. The term burial site means any natural or prepared physical location, whether originally below, on, or above the surface of the earth, into which, as part of the death rite or ceremony of a culture, individual human remains were deposited, and includes rock cairns or pyres which do not fall within the ordinary definition of gravesite.

Associated funerary objects – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(2)(i)] define associated funerary objects as those funerary objects for which the human remains with which they were placed intentionally are also in the possession or control of a museum or Federal agency. Associated funerary objects also means those funerary objects that were made exclusively for burial purposes or to contain human remains.

Unassociated funerary objects – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(2)(ii)] define unassociated funerary objects as those funerary objects for which the human remains with which they were placed intentionally are not in the possession or control of a museum or Federal agency. Objects that were displayed with individual human remains as part of a death rite or ceremony of a culture and subsequently returned or distributed according to traditional custom to living descendants or other individuals are not considered unassociated funerary objects.

Human remains – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(1)] define human remains as the physical remains of a body of a person of Native American ancestry. The term does not include remains or portions of remains that may reasonably be determined to have been freely given or naturally shed by the individual from whose body they were obtained, such as hair made into ropes or nets. For the purposes of determining cultural affiliation, human remains incorporated into a funerary object, sacred object, or object of cultural patrimony, as defined below, must be considered as part of that item.

Indian tribe – The statute [25 U.S.C. 3001(7)] defines Indian tribe as any tribe, band, nation, or other organized Indian group or community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village as defined in or established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

Lineal descendant – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(b)(1)] define lineal descendant as an individual tracing his or her ancestry directly and without interruption by means of the traditional kinship system of the appropriate Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization or by the common law system of descentance to a known Native American individual whose remains, funerary objects, or sacred objects are being claimed.

Native Hawaiian organization – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(b)(3)] define Native Hawaiian organization as any organization that serves and represents the interests of Native Hawaiians, has as a primary and stated purpose the provision of services to Native Hawaiians, and has expertise in Native Hawaiian affairs. The statute specifically identifies the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Hui Malama I Na Kupuna 'O Hawai'i Nei, which was dissolved in December 2014, as being Native Hawaiian organizations. Native Hawaiian organizations need not comprise mostly Native Hawaiian members.

Notice of Intended Disposition – A notice of the proposed disposition that is published in newspapers by the Federal agency official responsible for cultural items excavated or removed from Federal lands after November 16, 1990.

Notice of Intent to Repatriate – A notice that is published in the *Federal Register* when a museum or Federal agency receives, reviews, and accepts a claim by a tribe for sacred objects, unassociated funerary objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

Notice of Inventory Completion – A notice that is published in the *Federal Register* when a museum or Federal agency has made a determination of cultural affiliation for human remains and associated funerary objects in its possession or control.

Objects of cultural patrimony – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(4)] define objects of cultural patrimony as items having ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization itself, rather than property owned by an individual tribal or organization member. These objects are of such central importance that they may not be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed

by any individual tribal or organization member. Such objects must have been considered inalienable by the culturally affiliated Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization at the time the object was separated from the group. Objects of cultural patrimony include items such as Zuni War Gods, the Confederacy Wampum Belts of the Iroquois, and other objects of similar character and significance to the Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization as a whole.

Possession – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(a)(3)(i)] define possession as having physical custody of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony with a sufficient legal interest to lawfully treat the objects as part of its collection for purposes of NAGPRA. Generally, a museum or Federal agency would not be considered to have possession of human remains or objects on loan from another individual, museum, or Federal agency.

Repatriation – See Disposition.

Preponderance of evidence – *Black's Law Dictionary* (1991, abridged 6th edition, p. 819) defines preponderance of evidence as "...evidence which as a whole shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not. ...That which best accords with reason and probability." (p. 819)

Sacred objects – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(d)(3)] define sacred objects as items that are specific ceremonial objects needed by traditional Native American religious leaders for the practice of traditional Native American religions by their present-day adherents. While many items, from ancient pottery sherds to arrowheads, might be imbued with sacredness in the eyes of an individual, these regulations are specifically limited to objects that were devoted to a traditional Native American religious ceremony or ritual and which have religious significance or function in the continued observance or renewal of such ceremony. The term traditional religious leader means a person who is recognized by members of an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization as being responsible for performing cultural duties relating to the ceremonial or religious traditions of that Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, or exercising a leadership role in an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization based on the tribe or organization's cultural, ceremonial, or religious practices.

Traditionally associated peoples – *NPS Management Policies 2006* defines traditionally associated peoples as "...social/cultural entities such as tribes, communities, and kinship units, as well as park neighbors, traditional residents, and former residents who remain attached to a park area despite having relocated... They are 'traditionally associated' with a particular park when (1) the entity regards park resources as essential to its development and continued identity as a culturally distinct people; (2) the association has endured for at least two generations (40 years); and (3) the association began prior to establishment of the park" (p. 159).

Unassociated funerary objects – See Funerary Objects.

Unclaimed cultural items – The regulations [43 CFR 10.2(h)] define unclaimed cultural items as Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony removed from Federal lands after November 16, 1990, but not transferred to any lineal descendant, Indian tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization because either a claim has not been received within one year of publishing a Notice of Intended Disposition, or no Indian tribe, Native Hawaiian organization, or lineal descendant could be identified as a potential claimant within two years of an inadvertent discovery or intentional excavation.

14. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BASICS

Must potential or identified lineal descendants be members of a federally recognized tribe?

No. Lineal descendants as defined under NAGPRA need not be members of a federally recognized tribe [43 CFR 10.14(b)].

What's the difference between possession, control, physical custody, and custody?

The terms 'possession' and 'control' are used when determining which museum or agency is responsible for NAGPRA compliance for human remains or other cultural items held in collections prior to the enactment of NAGPRA (November 16, 1990).

- 'Possession' means that the remains or objects are part of a museum's or agency's collections and are in its physical custody.
- 'Control' means that the remains or objects are part of a museum's or agency's collections, whether or not the institution has physical custody.
- 'Physical custody' simply refers to the actual location of those human remains or other cultural items.

The term 'custody' is used when determining the ownership or control of human remains or other cultural items discovered on or excavated from Federal lands after NAGPRA's enactment (November 16, 1990).

What is "cultural affiliation" and how is it determined?

Cultural affiliation is a relationship of shared group identity which can reasonably be traced historically or prehistorically between members of a present-day Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and an identifiable earlier group. It is a relationship to the people, not a connection to the place. Cultural affiliation is established when the preponderance of the evidence reasonably leads to such a conclusion. A determination of cultural affiliation is based on an overall evaluation of the totality of the circumstances and evidence and should not be precluded because of some gaps in the record. See Sections 7.c. and 7.d. above.

Is regional or national technical assistance available for parks dealing with NAGPRA issues?

Yes. Each region should have a designated regional NAGPRA coordinator who will provide technical assistance to parks. Assistance is also available at the national level through the Park NAGPRA program. Contact information can be found at Park NAGPRA's SharePoint site.

Is technical assistance available to tribes?

Technical assistance regarding the NAGPRA process is available to tribes through the National NAGPRA program.

CONSULTATION

How does a park determine which tribes should be consulted on issues associated with NAGPRA?

Depending on the specific situation, a park must consult with—

- individuals who are determined to be lineal descendants as defined by the law;
- Native Hawaiian organizations;
- Indian tribes (on a government-to-government basis)—
 - that are potentially affiliated with the cultural items subject to NAGPRA;
 - from whose tribal lands the cultural items were, or will be, removed; and
 - from whose aboriginal lands the cultural items were, or will be, removed.

Many parks have long-standing relationships with multiple tribes that are traditionally associated with the park. Those tribes are a good starting point when determining who should be consulted regarding NAGPRA. In addition, online resources are available and regional NAGPRA coordinators or the Park NAGPRA program can provide assistance. See Section 6.a. above.

COLLECTIONS

We have NAGPRA items in our collections and have notified the appropriate tribes but they have not made a request. What should we do?

For inventory items (Native American human remains and associated funerary objects), if consultation has occurred and the required Notice of Inventory Completion has been published, but no culturally affiliated tribe has submitted a claim, the park is in full compliance. For summary items (unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony) Notices of Intent to Repatriate are not published without consultation and receipt of a claim. Claiming cultural items subject to NAGPRA is at the discretion of the tribe(s). Parks should not push any tribe to submit a claim, but it may be appropriate to raise the topic at other regularly scheduled meetings and consultations.

Who is responsible for NAGPRA compliance on collections obtained from lands prior to the lands being under the stewardship of the NPS (i.e., in cases of federal land transfers)?

The issue of who has control under NAGPRA can be complicated. Land ownership at the time the cultural items subject to NAGPRA were removed from that land is critical in determining control. Generally, if the land was NPS managed land at the time of removal, then NPS is responsible for NAGPRA compliance. If the land was managed by another agency at the time of removal, but transferred to NPS at a later date, then the other agency will likely have responsibility for NAGPRA compliance. However, other factors may need to be considered such as the specifics of any land transfer agreement. If land was privately owned at the time of removal, and the items were subsequently donated to a park, then NPS will likely be responsible under NAGPRA. It's recommended that the regional NAGPRA coordinator and the Park NAGPRA program be consulted on a case by case basis to work out issues of control.

What are the reporting requirements for NAGPRA items found in park collections that were not previously reported in inventories or summaries?

Any cultural items subject to NAGPRA that are found in collections, or newly acquired, are subject to the Future Applicability rule (43 CFR 10.13). See Section 3.c. above.

How should human remains and other cultural items that have been seized as a result of an ARPA investigation be handled?

Once the investigation is complete, cultural items subject to NAGPRA that have been seized as a result of an ARPA investigation and are in the possession or control of NPS should be handled pursuant to the Future Applicability Rule (43 CFR 10.13) that became effective on April 20, 2007. See Section 3.c. above.

INADVERTENT DISCOVERIES & INTENTIONAL EXCAVATIONS

When is a Plan of Action for an inadvertent discovery required?

A Plan of Action is required after every inadvertent discovery of cultural items subject to NAGPRA on federal land after November 16, 1990. Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations must be informed of, and consulted about, any inadvertent discovery on federal land. After consultation, the park must prepare, approve, and sign a Plan of Action. The plan is specific to each discovery; describes the actions that will be taken as a result of the discovery (whether that is intentionally excavating the items or protecting them and leaving them in place); and must be provided to the Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. See Section 3.b. above.

When is a Plan of Action for an intentional excavation required?

A Plan of Action is required prior to any intentional excavation of cultural items subject to NAGPRA from federal lands after November 16, 1990. Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations must be informed of, and consulted about, any planned activity that may result in the intentional excavation of cultural items subject to NAGPRA before its approval. After consultation, the park must prepare, approve, and sign a Plan of Action. The plan is specific to that activity, describes how excavation will be conducted if it occurs, and must be provided to the Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. See Section 3.b. above.

What should park staff do when human remains are removed and brought into the park office by visitors or staff?

If the remains are removed from the park lands and immediately brought to park officials, treat them as an inadvertent discovery under 43 CFR 10.4. Determine whether they are human and Native American, notify the appropriate tribes, and initiate consultation. Consult with law enforcement to ascertain whether visitors might have violated any laws. See Section 3.b. above.

CLAIMS

Must a request for repatriation (claim) be in writing?

According to NAGPRA regulations [43 CFR 10.15(1)], a “timely claim” is required. For these purposes, a “timely claim” means the filing of a written claim with a responsible museum or Federal agency official. The claim must be from a recognized lineal descendant or an authorized tribal official. See Section 4 above and 43 CFR 10.2(b) for more information about parties with standing to claim NAGPRA items.

How do I know if a claim is valid?

A request for Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony must be in writing and –

- the claimant must have standing under NAGPRA (lineal descendants, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, as defined by the law and regulations) to claim the human remains or cultural items; and
- the items being claimed must meet the definitions established in the regulations at 43 CFR 10.2; and
- the claimant tribe must be culturally affiliated or identified as an aboriginal occupant of the land from which the items were removed, depending on the specific circumstances. See Section 7.c. above for additional information.

What do we do if no claim is received for cultural items subject to NAGPRA that have been identified and described in a published notice?

Notices of Intent to Repatriate, which describe unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony, are not published without a claim. Notices of Inventory Completion, which describe Native American human remains and associated funerary objects, are published whether a claim has been received or not. It is up to the culturally affiliated tribe(s) to decide when or if they are ready to claim. Parks can periodically ask about claims, but the decision to move forward should be left to the tribe(s). Until a claim is received and repatriation occurs, the remains and objects should be stored securely and cared for respectfully.

What happens if there are two or more consulting tribes and they disagree regarding repatriation or disposition?

If the tribes have all been determined to be culturally affiliated with the cultural items, have submitted competing claims, and the most appropriate claimant cannot be determined, then the cultural items in question may be retained until the competing claimants resolve their disagreements. Because all culturally affiliated tribes are entitled to claim cultural items subject to NAGPRA and there is no

guidance for determining the “most appropriate claimant,” NPS will, as a general rule, hold onto the items and offer to facilitate resolution of the issues.

NOTICES

Must a Notice of Intended Disposition be published in local newspapers if the human remains or other cultural items discovered inadvertently are left in situ (not moved from their place of discovery)?

No. A Notice of Intended Disposition need not be published in local newspapers if, after consultation and preparation of a written plan of action, it has been determined that the human remains or other cultural items will be left *in situ*. However, the safety of the human remains and other cultural items must be ensured. See Figure 2 above.

Must a Notice of Intended Disposition be published in local newspapers in situations where the human remains or other cultural items discovered inadvertently cannot be left in situ, for example remains washed up on a beach?

Yes. A Notice of Intended Disposition is required any time human remains or other cultural items are moved from their place of discovery. See Figure 2 above.

Must a Notice of Intent to Repatriate be published in the Federal Register prior to repatriating human remains and/or associated funerary objects?

No. A Notice of Intent to Repatriate is not intended as notification of the repatriation of human remains and/or associated funerary objects. Notices of Intent to Repatriate cover only sacred objects, unassociated funerary objects, or objects of cultural patrimony and are published after a claim has been received, evaluated, and accepted. A Notice of Inventory Completion is the proper form of notification for human remains and/or associated funerary objects. As long as a Notice of Inventory Completion has been published, thirty days has passed since its publication, a claim has been received, and no other claimants have come forward, repatriation of human remains and/or associated funerary objects may proceed.

Does our responsibility end with the publication of a notice or must repatriation occur?

Once the required notice has been published, NPS is in compliance until a written request (claim) for cultural items subject to NAGPRA is received. Repatriation must take place within 90 days, but not before the 30 day wait period after notice publication, of receipt of a valid written claim from lineal descendant(s), culturally affiliated Indian tribe(s), or Native Hawaiian organization(s) (43 CFR 10.10). NAGPRA's goal is repatriation, but NPS is not responsible for ensuring that cultural items subject to NAGPRA are claimed. Periodically consulting with potential claimants regarding their ability and/or desire to move forward is, however, encouraged.

REBURIAL

May human remains or other cultural items be reburied without transfer of control or custody?

Control and/or custody of human remains and other cultural items must be transferred to the appropriate lineal descendant, Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization before reburial may take place (See Section 9 above), with the following exceptions –

- If the remains and items are unclaimed, they may be reinterred by the Federal agency according to applicable interment laws and subject to the requirements of 43 CFR 10.7. See Section 3.b. above.
- If the remains and items are culturally unidentifiable, transfer of control has been offered to appropriate Indian tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations, and no tribe or Native Hawaiian organization has agreed to accept control, they may be reinterred by the Federal agency according to state or other law and subject to the requirements of 43 CFR 10.11. See Section 3.c. above.

May human remains or other cultural items be reburied on park land?

Yes, reburial on park lands is allowed in certain circumstances. NPS policy (NPS Management Policies 2006, section 5.3.4) allows human remains to be reburied at a park if they were removed from that park, even if the land was not park land at the time of removal. Issues that must be considered include the nature of the reinterment, how the reinterment will be conducted, the place of reburial, future use of the area, and future protection of the area. See Section 10 above.

NAGPRA REVIEW COMMITTEE

What is the role and function of the NAGPRA Review Committee?

Created by Section 8 of the statute, the Review Committee's primary responsibilities include

- monitoring the process conducted under sections 5 and 6 (inventory and summary) to ensure a fair, objective consideration and assessment of all available relevant information and evidence;
- reviewing and making findings related to the identity or cultural affiliation of cultural items, or the return of such items;
- facilitating the resolution of disputes among Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, or lineal descendants and Federal agencies or museums; and
- compiling an inventory of culturally unidentifiable human remains that are in the possession or control of each Federal agency and museum and recommending actions for their disposition.

When should a matter go before the NAGPRA Review Committee?

The Review Committee can address disputes between a tribe and a museum or agency, assist parties with findings of fact, and consider requests for recommendations regarding proposed dispositions of certain culturally unidentifiable (CUI) human remains. Generally, NPS will only take CUI requests before the NAGPRA Review Committee; disputes will not be initiated by NPS. Tribes may bring a dispute with NPS before the Committee.

The regulations governing disposition of CUI human remains (43 CFR 10.11) specify in which situations recommendations from the Committee are required. Briefly, if no tribe accepts the CUI remains and a park wants to either transfer them to Indian groups that aren't federally recognized or rebury the remains, approval from the Secretary via the Review Committee is required. If the remains are not covered by 10.11, but a proposed disposition has been developed in consultation with Indian tribes, approval from the Secretary via the Review Committee is required. See Section 3.c. above.