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Cultural resource management on the Web

Explore the dynamic field of CRM

What is cultural resource management, or CRM as it is referred to by practitioners? The birth of the field started with the passage of the Antiquities Act in 1906. This established the nation's first general-purpose cultural resources law to protect and prevent the removal of antiquities from federal lands without a permit. Ten years later, the National Park Service (NPS) was created and given the responsibility of conserving natural and cultural resources. With enactment of the Historic Sites Act in 1935, the NPS was authorized to record, document, acquire, and manage places important to the interpretation and commemoration of the nation's history. After World War II, interest in history and cultural resources peaked, eventually leading to the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966. The NHPA authorized the NPS to expand and maintain the National Register of Historic Places, which includes properties of historical, cultural, and architectural significance on the local, state, or national level.

CRM was developed in the 1970s by archaeologists to describe work done outside of academia in response to these national laws and regulations. The phrase cultural resource management is most often used by archaeologists, historic preservationists, architectural historians, and other related disciplines to refer to the management of historic places. The world of cultural resources is very broad and involves the entire scope of the cultural milieu, which includes human traditions and values, the built and natural environments, religious practices, historical

objects and documents, and archaeological resources.

Acknowledged as a career path many students will take, colleges and universities now incorporate CRM training into anthropology, archaeology, and historic preservation programs. This article brings together a variety of resources available on the Web and will serve as a starting point for students, faculty, and librarians exploring the wide and dynamic field of cultural resource management.

Note: The spelling *archaeology* and *archeology* are both acceptable. I have used the former spelling throughout this article except when the latter has been used by the Web site originator.

Indexes and databases

AnthroSource. Developed by the American Anthropological Association (AAA), AnthroSource provides over 100 years of anthropological scholarly materials online through one interface with a search engine and personalization features. Institutions can subscribe for online access through JSTOR; AnthroSource is provided to members of AAA. Access: <http://www.anthrosource.net/>.



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National Archeological Database (NADB). The NADB is composed of three separate databases and was established to provide streamlined access to activities of interest to archaeological and historic preservation professionals nationwide. The first database, the reports module, contains bibliographic data on over 350,000 hard-to-find gray literature reports contributed from a variety of state and federal agencies. Although still in development, the second database, the permits module, currently provides information about major archaeological and paleontological projects carried out using permits issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior. And finally, the NADB-Multiple Attribute Presentation System (MAPS) provides GIS layers related to archaeological data from across the United States. All three are maintained through a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (CAST) at the University of Arkansas. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/TOOLS/nadb.htm>.

National NAGPRA databases. The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a federal law passed in 1990 that provides a formal process for museums and federal agencies to return Native American cultural items to lineal descendants, culturally affiliated Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations. A variety of databases are provided by the National Park Service to supply information on NAGPRA-related subject matter. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nagpra/onlinedb/index.htm>.

National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is the nation's official list of cultural resources valuable enough to preserve under the guidelines of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Register is part of a national program administered by the National Park Service to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and

protect historic and archaeological resources. Search the National Register Information System (NRIS) to locate listed and eligible properties. *Access* National Register Site: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nR/index.htm>; *NRIS Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nR/research/>.

Organizations and associations

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). The ACHP is an independent federal agency that promotes the preservation, restoration, and use of the nation's historic resources. The ACHP advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy and is the only organization tasked with responsibility to encourage federal agencies to factor historic preservation into federal project requirements. *Access:* <http://www.achp.gov/>.



American Anthropological Association (AAA). The AAA was founded in 1902 and is the world's largest professional anthropological organization. Representing the discipline internationally, the AAA brings together anthropologists from all subfields and specializations corresponding to over 50 sections and interest groups. *Access:* <http://www.aaanet.org/>.

American Cultural Resources Association (ACRA). ACRA is a nonprofit organization that incorporated in 1995 to serve the needs of the cultural resources industry. ACRA's mission is to promote professional, ethical, and sound business practices. *Access:* <http://www.acra-crm.org/>.

National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust was founded in 1949 by Congress to provide leadership and education to save the nation's diverse historic places and revitalize communities. The trust also encourages public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings, and objects

significant in American History. Access: <http://www.nationaltrust.org/>.



Society for American Archaeology (SAA). The SAA was founded in 1934 and is an international organization with over 7,000 members dedicated to the research, interpretation, and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. Access: <http://www.saa.org/>.

Society of Architectural Historians (SAH). The SAH is an international organization founded in 1940 with over 3,500 members. Membership is open to anyone interested in the study and preservation of the built environment. Access: <http://www.sah.org/>.

Laws and practice

National Park Service (NPS), Laws, Regulations & Standards Web Site. The most comprehensive Web site containing all laws, regulations, executive orders, standards, and guidelines concerning cultural resource management is hosted by the National Park Service. Resources are hyperlinked to the full text in HTML or PDF format for ease of use. Access: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/linklaws.htm>.

U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards. Although linked to from the above Web site, this site is important enough to single out as a separate entry. In 1983, the National Park Service issued professional qualification standards that define minimum education and experience required to qualify for certain employment opportunities in cultural resource management activities for the government. Many nonstate/federal agencies now also require potential job applicants to meet these standards, which have been published in the Code of Federal

Regulations, 36 CFR Part 61. Access: <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/shpo/profqualifications.htm#profqual>.

Training, fieldwork, and internships

Archaeologyfieldwork.com. In its ninth year of operation, this Web site provides discussion forums, job postings, announcements, student resources, and more. Registration required to post. Access: <http://www.archaeologyfieldwork.com/>.

HABS/HAER Summer Program, NPS. The Heritage Documentation Program offers 12-week paid internship opportunities with the Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record, and Historic American Landscapes Survey. Application required and positions are open only to U.S. citizens. Access: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/habs/haer/joco/summerjobs.htm>.

Historic Preservation Internship Training Program, NPS. Short-term paid internships are available to undergraduate and graduate students during the summer or school year around the United States. Opportunities are available for students in a variety of disciplines. Application required. Access: http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/hpit_p.htm.

• **National Center for Preservation Technology & Training (NCPTT), NPS.** The NCPTT offers summer training programs in Natchitoches, Louisiana, in the areas of archaeology, architecture, and cemetery monument conservation. Space is limited, so apply early. Many programs have fees associated, although a few do have competitive scholarships available. Access: <http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/>.

National Park Service, Archeology Program Distance Learning. Learn at your pace from your computer. The NPS offers three online courses: Managing Archeological Collections, Archeology for Interpreters, and Interpretation for Archeologists. All are great resources and allow you to test your knowledge before going on that first dig. Access: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/tools/distLearn.htm>.

• **National Preservation Institute (NPI).** Founded in 1980, the NPI offers seminars across the nation on historic preservation and cultural resource management laws and issues. Many seminars are recognized by the American Institute of Architects, and attendees may earn Continuing Education (CE) credits. *Access:* <http://npi.org/>.

Passport in Time (PIT) Program, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. A volunteer archaeology and historic preservation program, PIT offers summer opportunities across the United States. Volunteers are expected to commit to a full session (typically 5 days, occasionally longer), meet age and physical ability requirements, and stay in areas with limited facilities. *Access:* <http://www.passportintime.com/>.



Newsletters, magazines, journals, and technical briefs

Archeology Technical Briefs. Hosted by the National Park Service, these short reports published between 1988 and today discuss technical and methodological issues in archaeology. The reports are available in HTML format with bibliographies for further reading. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/pubs/techbr/index.htm>.

CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship. Previously published as *CRM* magazine, this relatively new full-text biannual publication by the National Park Service covers the depth and breadth of cultural resource disciplines by publishing peer-reviewed articles, interviews, book reviews, and more. Available online and in print. *Access CRM journal:* <http://www.crmjournal.cr.nps.gov/crm/>; *Access back issues of CRM magazine:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/crm/>.

Common Ground. An online and print magazine published quarterly by the National Park Service covering heritage preservation in the United States. *Common Ground* focuses on both the preservation initiatives and the

people making it happen. *Access:* <http://commonground.cr.nps.gov/>.

Conserve O Grams. Leaflets created for National Park Service personnel to care for collection management of museum items including artifacts and documents. Current topics include labeling natural history collections, re-safety, and caring for outdoor bronze plaques. Each leaflet is available in PDF format. *Access:* http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/consveogram/cons_toc.html.

Preservation Briefs. The Technical Preservation Services group of the National Park Service assists homeowners and preservation professionals with the treatment and care of historic properties. The forty-three preservation briefs cover a variety of topics including weatherization, seismic retrofits, and lead-paint hazards. They are available online and may differ from the printed counterparts which can be purchased from the Government Printing Office. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>.

Preservation Tech Notes. Also published by the Technical Preservation Services group of the National Park Service, there are currently 18 Tech Notes available online. This complementary set to the Preservation Briefs provides technical information to preservation architects, contractors, and homeowners. The Tech Notes may differ from the printed counterparts that can be purchased from the Government Printing Office. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/technotes/tnhome.htm>

Gateways and miscellany

ArchNet, WWW Virtual Library of Archaeology. Maintained by the Archaeological Research Institute at the University of Arizona, the ArchNet Web site links to hundreds of Web sites dedicated to the discipline of archaeology and the preservation and interpretation of cultural resources. Access is free and coverage spans the globe. *Access:* <http://archnet.asu.edu/>.

CRM Acronyms. Each discipline has a unique jargon. Although not an exhaus-

tive list, this Web page from the American Cultural Resources Association provides a list of frequently used acronyms specific to the CRM industry that will prove extremely helpful for the new student. *Access:* <http://www.acra-crm.org/acronym.html>.




eCultural Resources, Cultural Resources Network. This expansive Web site provides fresh content on a daily basis for the CRM practitioner. Whether interested in historic preservation, ethnography, current events, finding a job or a field school, this site has it all. Fees are required to post some information; weekly e-mail newsletter is free with registration. *Access:* <http://www.eculturalresources.com/>.

Preservation Directory. Focusing on historic preservation and building restoration, the main goal of this site is to provide free


information to CRM professionals. This site is full of directories, lists, and links including sections covering endangered history resources and a photo gallery. *Access:* <http://www.preservationdirectory.com>.

PreserveNet. Hosted by Cornell University, PreserveNet is a regularly updated Web site featuring employment, educational, and professional opportunities. Unique aspects of this site include the economics section, which lists funding agencies and grants, and the awards section, which highlights scholarships and fellowships in historic preservation disciplines. *Access:* <http://www.preservenet.cornell.edu/>.

State archeology programs. Find out more about CRM and archaeology by participating in your state's archaeology month, week, or day's activities. Access the National Park Service Web site to find contact information in your local area and get involved. *Access:* <http://www.cr.nps.gov/archeology/PUBLIC/Statearc.htm>. *W*



Nature Protocols – a new authoritative source of scientific protocols across a broad range of disciplines launched in June 2006. This interactive website will present researchers with a significant resource of high quality, peer-reviewed, step-by-step protocols. In addition, the scientific community will have the ability to search and post comments on protocols authored by their peers.



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