

## Samish Collections Access and Revitalization Project

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The Cultural Resources Department currently manages three different collections and provides access to these collections for tribal, community, and student bodies who are interested in learning about, and researching, Samish culture. The collections are used to enhance and preserve the Samish culture, aid other Samish programs, and assist the tribal administration and government with research and informed decision making. The collections are comprised of Archives, Object, and Education Collections. As the Department and collections have grown, care of the Object Collection has began to receive more attention from the community and staff, but a lack of training and funding has delayed progress towards creating museum standards in our facility and creating new exhibits and displays. The Object Collection of the department includes archaeological artifacts and samples produced during archaeological excavations, objects donated by Samish members, contemporary art and craft items made by Samish members, and other northwest coast items. The creation of a Collections Management Policy and a needs assessment has moved us further towards our goals of achieving better standards for our collection. Our assessment of need paired with the objectives of the Samish community and the Tribal Council led Cultural Resources staff to prioritize the preservation and accessibility of the Samish collections as the most important immediate program goal.

In October the department was awarded a grant in the amount of \$45,877.00 from the Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Grant Program of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov). The Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Grant Program funds a variety of activities and services, including those that support the educational mission of a museum; build the skills and knowledge of individuals who provide museum services; or improve museum services, such as disaster preparedness, strategic planning, improvement of technology, collections care and management, and hiring of staff. This year we were one of 22 applicants who were awarded funds from the Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Grant Program. The program awarded a total of \$1,028,035.00 in grant money to the 22 grant recipients.

The Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program Grant project has allowed us to hire Paragon Research Associates of Seattle, Washington to assist in the collections rehabilitation, cataloging, and training of Cultural Resources Program Manager, Diana Barg. To learn more about Paragon Research Associates, please visit <http://paragonresearch.net>. The initial stage of this grant project will consist of the reprocessing of the collections to meet museum standards. We will also be mailing out a survey asking what you would like to see in a display or learn more about. As the initial phase of the project is completed, relevant object information and a photograph of each cataloged item will be entered into the Past Perfect Museum Software which we use to store information on each item we have in the collection. The last phase of the project is the production of an exhibit and informational pamphlet. Paragon Research Associates will provide training on exhibit production and Diana Barg will produce the exhibit. The goals of a new exhibit are to showcase objects owned by the Tribe, train staff in museum exhibition and care, and expand opportunities for the public and tribal community to learn about the Samish. During all phases of the project, Paragon Research Associates will be providing advice and training on the proper methods for care and display of collections and associated materials. Once this project has been successfully completed, Diana will create a procedures manual as a reference for future curation projects and employees.

This project will result in several tangible outcomes including: 30 cubic feet of material from the Object Collection reorganized, properly stored and cataloged into the Past Perfect Museum Software, a new exhibit, an exhibit pamphlet, and a procedurals manual. Staff will receive training on the proper methods for care, processing and display of the collections, allowing us to sustain the procedures into the future. This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services