

FROM PERMIT TO NEW KNOWLEDGE: IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND USER ACCESS BY TRACKING DOCUMENTATION FROM RESEARCH PROJECTS IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

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✦ INTRODUCTION

In Summer 2011, the author undertook a number of projects for the Museum & Archives in the Science and Resource Management division of Grand Teton National Park (GRTE¹). Alice Hart, Museum Curator and Archivist for the Park, supervised the work, which was part of an internship for graduate credit². The two major project categories were 1) Research Permits and 2) Biological Science Program Files.

Some of the projects were completed, while for others, the scope and parameters of what needs to be done was established and recorded. This article provides a summary of what was accomplished, and a pathway to completion of the projects, and it is based on reports presented in memo form to Alice Hart at the end of the internship (Phalen 2011a), and a final report for the graduate course (Phalen 2011b).

The work was done at National Park Service (NPS) offices at the Colter Bay Visitor Center, about 3 miles from the AMK Ranch, and also at the temporary Park headquarters complex in Moose, in the southern part of the Park.

The goal at the outset of these projects was to improve NPS accountability for specimens and reports, as well as other documents that result from decades of scientific and cultural research conducted under Park permits and to increase access to those assets for Park staff and researchers. When scholarly works can be matched to specific Park permits, NPS has direct evidence of how permits lead to new

knowledge. The variety of different projects focusing on this goal reflects the diversity of sources about permit work on file in the Archives.

✦ PROJECT CATEGORY I: RESEARCH PERMITS

This category of projects centers on decades of permits for doing research in the Park, which are mostly within a processed collection, Catalog number GRTE 55552, series: Research Program Records and Permits (Figures 1 and 2). In the July 2011 draft **Finding Aid**, the scope note indicates the series permits and other types of documents that relate to the “Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks research program between 1958 and 2001” (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service Intermountain Region Museum Services Program, 2011, p.15). The **Finding Aid** lists permits by date, title or purpose of research project, and investigator name(s), in addition to its series, subseries, and file unit number.

For a majority of the investigators whose permits are listed in the **Finding Aid**, the following two categories of documentation are either not on file, or at least not readily accessible: 1) the final reports the Park requires investigators to submit at the conclusion of permit work; and 2) other associated scholarly works that were derived from permit work. These two categories are important because they demonstrate how research authorized by NPS through its permit system leads to new knowledge. It appears that over the decades, final reports may have been separated from permits, or in

some cases, they may not even have been submitted. Since the Park formalized its Archives program, in 2006, these problems are more avoidable because the organization of such important information now has specific professional oversight.



Figure 1. Catalog Number GRTE 55552. The permit records that are the focus of the first category of projects are primarily within these eight records boxes. This is in the Archive Room at the Colter Bay.



Figure 2. File folders from Box Number 2 in Catalog Number GRTE 55552. Pulled up is Series 001.003, Folder 001, titled “Master Lists of Collecting Permits, 1997-2001”.

In the proposal for this internship, the majority of the time was projected to be spent contacting researchers whose permits lack follow-up documentation, and/or check repositories that house their research materials to record what specimens they had taken and scholarly works written. However, as the work progressed, it became clear that it would not make sense to start contacting people until the various information sources were documented.

The full cycle of documentation stemming from research done under permits from NPS could include the following, listed in the order in which they are usually generated: proposal => permit application/permit => annual report(s) => final report => other papers (e.g., thesis/dissertation; journal article; book chapter; conference paper; other report). Although examples of each document type were found, final reports were only rarely encountered.

Figure 3 is an example of an application/permit, for insect specimen collection, submitted in 1964 by Howard Evans of Harvard University. The late Dr. Evans is remembered by The National Academies Press as “one of the twentieth century’s leading entomologists and insect natural historians” (West-Eberhard, 2004). This original permit is but one example from the vast amounts of primary and secondary source material on important research that the GRTE Museum and Archives collects, maintains, and provides access to.

Form 10-741 (Rev. 5-7-73)		United States Department of the Interior National Park Service	
APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT SPECIMENS OF PLANTS, ROCKS, MINERALS, AND ANIMALS			
Name of Area	Date		
Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyoming	July 7, 1964		
Name of Applicant	Home Address		
Dr. Howard E. Evans	Harvard University		
Representing (Name of Institution)	Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University		
Type of Specimens to be Collected			
Insects			
Class of Collecting*	Check for Class B Permit	Period of Collecting	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class A <input type="checkbox"/> Class B	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid Employee <input type="checkbox"/> NPS Collaborator	From July 3, 1964, to Sep 7, 1964	
Reason for Collecting			
Research			
Place Where Specimens are to be Deposited: Museum of Zoology Harvard University and Grand Teton National Park			
I, the applicant, having read the conditions on the reverse of the permit relating to collections in areas administered by the National Park Service, agree that, if the permit is granted, I will comply with all the conditions stated therein.			
Signed			
TO BE FILLED IN BY ISSUING OFFICE ONLY--DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE			
Approved for Collecting Following Specimens			
Insects			Class
Locality of Collecting Limited to Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyoming			A
Expiration Date			
September 7, 1964			
Special Conditions or Restrictions			
None			
Recommended by (Signature and Title)	Approved by (Signature and Title)		Date Approved
Willard W. Miller, Chief Park Naturalist	Luther T. Peterson, Jr., Asst. Sup.		
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service			
COLLECTING PERMIT		CLASS A	
In Accordance with the Conditions and Restrictions Appearing on the Back Permission is Granted			
Name of Collector	Area	Date Issued	
Dr. Howard E. Evans	Grand Teton National Park	July 3, 1964	
To Collect the Following Specimens			
Insects			
Locality of Collecting Limited to Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyoming			Expiration Date
			September 7, 1964
Special Conditions or Restrictions			
None			
Approved (Signature)	Title		
Luther T. Peterson, Jr.	Assistant Superintendent		
* Two classes of collecting may be conducted under this permit:			
Class A - That required for public exhibits and for research undertaken by persons who can establish their connection with public museums or other scientific or educational institutions. Specimens collected may be insects (Hexapoda), spiders (Araneida), plants, rocks, or minerals, as designated in the permit.			
Class B - That undertaken by Federal employees only for scientific or educational purposes. Specimens collected may be plants, rocks, minerals or animal life as designated in the permit.			
The collecting of endangered or vanishing species of animals, if permitted at all, will be allowed only where the required approval has been obtained from the Director of the National Park Service.			
THIS PERMIT MUST BE CARRIED AT ALL TIMES WHILE COLLECTING. SEE REVERSE FOR CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS.			

Figure 3. Application/Collecting Permit for Dr. Howard E. Evans of Harvard University, to collect insect specimens. The Application portion was submitted in July 1964 (the top part), and the Permit was approved in September of that year (the bottom third). From Box Number 3; Series number 001.003; Folder Number 060; Catalog Number GRTE 55552 U.S. Department of the Interior, 1964).

Of the various sources consulted in searching for documentation, perhaps the most intriguing is the *Bibliography on the Ecology of Grand Teton National Park*, a 1982 computer printout, on accordion-folding paper with holes on the sides! That is the only known copy, as no electronic file is known to exist. There were numerous matches from the *Bibliography* (U.S. Department of the Interior 1982) to the lists of permits, which have been processed and organized in a **Finding Aid**.

In the final report to the Archivist on this internship (“permit memo” hereinafter) (Phalen 2011a), the Research Permits category was subdivided into distinct projects, re-worded here for clarity:

1. Finding Aid Revision (Attempted)

A number of errors were found in the draft finding aid for the collection of permits, so a draft revision was created, with alterations and additions suggested.

Unfortunately, the attempted revision failed and there was no time to correct it. Formatting and other problems emerged throughout the draft revision, indicating the file had been corrupted. To facilitate quick reconstruction of the revision to that point, the specific problems were listed in the permit memo, with references to an appendix handwritten record of all changes and additions to the draft finding aid.

2. Finding Aid Container List Cross-Referenced with 1982 Bibliography on the Ecology of Grand Teton National Park

The *Bibliography* is a list of resources, published and unpublished, resulting from research in GRTE. Though once saved in electronic format, today there is only one hardcopy version known to exist, and it is an accordion-folded computer printout with holes along each side edge, dated 1982, and housed in a simple binder custom-fit for such printouts (Figure 4). It turned out to be a productive resource for this project. Each bibliographic entry is numbered, making it easy to refer to.

For this project, all pre-1983 permits listed for each investigator in the 5552 **Finding Aid** were cross-referenced with entries in the *Bibliography* to look for documents that appear to be authored or co-authored by the listed investigator, and on or very close to the topic of the permit in the Finding Aid. Matches, or at least possible matches, were found for an estimated 15 to 20 percent of the permit entries.

Cross-references to entry numbers in the *Bibliography* were recorded in pencil across from the research topic and investigator’s name on a photocopy of the **Finding Aid’s** Container List section. This project was completed.

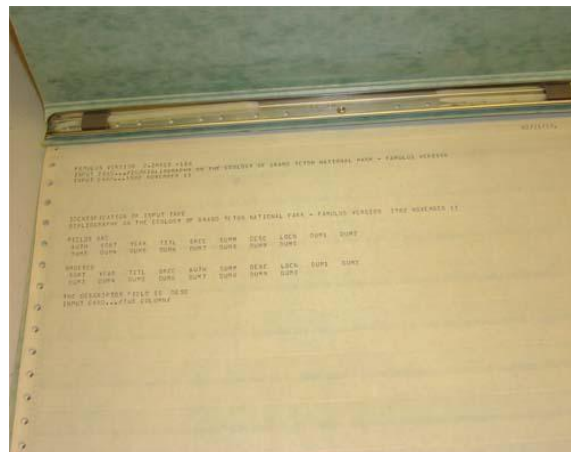


Figure 4. Detail from the first page of the only copy known to exist of GRTE’s *Bibliography on the Ecology of Grand Teton National Park* (1982). The meaning of the designation “Famulus Version” is not known as of this writing (May 2012).

3. Master Lists Cross-Referenced with Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS) Database

Photocopies were made of several “Master Lists of Collecting Permits” (1997 through 2001, from one of the folders in the 5552 **Finding Aid**) (U.S. Department of the Interior 2001). These simply list the investigator name, topic of research, and permit number. It appears that the original permits listed may not have been retained. The names of the investigators on the lists were checked in the Research Permit & Reporting System (RPRS) Database, at rprs.nps.gov, using “IAR” (Investigator Annual Report) searches, with the “Park” field set to “Grand Teton NP”. Report number and Permit number were recorded for each potential match to a report that could have been written based on work done under the permit listed. This work was about half-way completed.

4. Finding Aid Container List Cross-Referenced with Uncataloged Theses list

Electronic “Find and Replace” searches were conducted in the MS Word document of the 5552 finding aid, using author names from the bibliographic entries on the printout from an internal Excel spreadsheet listing theses owned by the GRTE Library (U.S. Department of the Interior 2011). When a match was found, the series and folder

number(s) were listed in pencil to the right on the printout. This work was completed.

5. Finding Aid Container List Cross-Referenced with Materials Transferred list

Electronic “Find and Replace” searches were conducted in the electronic version of the Word document of the 55552 **Finding Aid**, using author names from the bibliographic entries on the printout from an internal Excel spreadsheet listing literature that the Archives had moved from a prior location.

Some matches were found, and these were recorded by handwriting on the printout. This work was about 20 percent completed.

6. Finding Aid Container List Cross-Referenced with online Greater Yellowstone Bibliography (GYB)

The University of Wyoming Libraries maintains the Greater Yellowstone Bibliography (GYB) (VanArsdale and Hert, 2000). The GYB is an electronic resource accessible via the UW Libraries' website. According to the website, the GYB includes “over 28,900 bibliographic citations to scholarly, popular, professional, and creative literature about the greater Yellowstone region...” (Figure 5).



Figure 5. University of Wyoming's “Greater Yellowstone Bibliography” search interface page. Accessible via UW Libraries - www-lib.uwyo.edu - under Research Tools => Articles and Databases. Text at bottom has been highlighted for easier reading. Accessed September 2011.

For purposes of this project, the most useful search in GYB is by author. Comparison of the GYB, which was completed in 2000 and last updated in 2001, with the 1982 computer printout bibliography (for the pre-1982 period covered by both) showed some overlap in listings between the two, but also numerous unique entries in each

resource. Some attempts to cross-reference author search results in GYB with permits or other research in the **Finding Aid** yielded possible matches. As an example, Figure 6 shows the results from a GYB author search for “Berger, J.” That search returned seven results, of which, two were possible matches to permits listed in the **Finding Aid**.



Figure 6. GYB search result list for Author search on: “Berger, J.”

Cross-referencing these results with permits or other research for Joel Berger in the **Finding Aid** for Catalog Number GRTE 55552 yields the following possible matches: a) #1 in the above Results list might be based, at least in part, on research done under the permits listed in the finding aid as: “Carnivores - Pyare/Berger, 2000” (Series 001.001, Folder 011), and “Wolves/Coyotes/Antelope - Berger/Pyare/Snow, 1999-2001” (Series 001.004, Folder 186); b) #4 in Results above, highly likely correlates with **Finding Aid** listing: “Brucellosis in Bison/Bison Ecology - Berger/Cain, 1997-2000” (Series 001.004, Folder 038).

However, using the GYB was generally a frustrating process overall. For example, a GYB author search for “Cole, G.” returned a full 52 results, yet none of them correlates with permits listed in the **Finding Aid** for Glen Cole, a prolific researcher. In fact, the only entry in the finding aid attributed to Cole is for work with bald eagles, but that work is not in GYB. It is important to consider that many of the GYB listings for Cole stem specifically from research in Yellowstone National Park, not Grand Teton.

It might seem unlikely that a substantial number of matches will be found through the GYB, but this work is far from complete. In fact, only a sampling of author names was searched in the GYB,

since there was a limited amount of time that could be spent using it. Also, only the **Finding Aid** container list was checked, and to complete this project, the Master Lists should also be checked for matches.

◆ PROJECT CATEGORY II. GRTE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM FILES

Inventory of the Senior Biologist's files

A preliminary inventory was completed for approximately 25 linear feet of material, from three four-drawer cabinets in Senior Wildlife Biologist Steve Cain's office in the temporary Science & Resource Management office building in Moose (Figures 7 and 8).



Figure 7. Senior Biologist Steve Cain, in his office in Moose, Science and Resource Management building, temporary GRTE headquarters complex, Moose, Wyoming.

The material mostly contained files on various animals in the Park, with major entries for Bison, Elk, Grizzly Bear, and Wolves. For each file cabinet drawer, an Excel spreadsheet file was created, with a concise descriptive line of data for each folder. Contrary to modern spreadsheet data entry conventions, which call for separate columns for each data category, a single field was used for several categories of descriptive data: Transcribed Folder Label; Subject; Format; and Inclusive Date(s) (Figures 9 and 10). This was necessary to maintain consistency in formatting with prior preliminary inventories.



Figure 8. GRTE Biological Science Program Files. These are the cabinets where Senior Biologist Steve Cain kept the files. Science and Resource Management building, temporary GRTE headquarters complex, Moose, Wyoming.

 A screenshot of an Excel spreadsheet showing a list of file folders. The spreadsheet has columns for file information. Several rows are highlighted in red, indicating preservation alerts. The text in the spreadsheet is small but includes file titles and dates.

File Cabinet	Drawer	File Name	Notes
4	4	18	...
4	4	19	...
4	4	20	...
4	4	21	...
4	4	22	...
4	4	23	...
4	4	24	...
4	4	25	...
4	4	26	...
4	4	27	...
4	4	28	...
4	4	29	...
4	4	30	...
4	4	31	...
4	4	32	...
4	4	33	...
4	4	34	...
4	4	35	...
4	4	36	...
4	4	37	...
4	4	38	...
4	4	39	...
4	4	40	...
4	4	41	...
4	4	42	...
4	4	43	...
4	4	44	...
4	4	45	...
4	4	46	...
4	4	47	...
4	4	48	...
4	4	49	...
4	4	50	...

Figure 9. Preliminary Inventory of GRTE Biological Science Program Files: Screen capture showing excerpt of Excelspreadsheet file for File Cabinet 4, 4th drawer from top. Preservation alerts are in red.

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◆ **LITERATURE CITED**

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