

Gunflint Trail Historical Society Acquisitions and Collections Management Policy

Statement of Mission, Purpose, and Vision

Mission: The Gunflint Trail Historical Society (GTHS) builds community by connecting people to the Gunflint Trail region by sharing its cultural and natural history.

Purpose: The Gunflint Trail Historical Society shall preserve the history of the Gunflint Trail and its early settlers for residents, guests, travelers and future generations.

Vision: The Gunflint Trail Historical Society is the primary resource for history of the Gunflint Trail region. The role of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society is threefold: preservation, presentation, and participation.

Preservation of the cultural and natural history of the Gunflint Trail through

- Collecting and storing historical artifacts, photographs, audio and visual stories and documents (including electronic storage)
- Cataloging, describing, interpreting, and mapping historic sites of the Gunflint Trail
- Observing and documenting the natural history of the Gunflint Trail through recordings and citizen-science-based activities

Presentation of the cultural and natural history of the Gunflint Trail through

- Exhibits and the library collection at Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center, the historic Watercraft collection, and the cabin replica, and *structures planned for future expansion*
- Science based displays and the extensive field guide and reference library at Chik-Wauk Nature Center
- Beautiful, well-maintained grounds and gathering places in a backdrop of native forest
- Speaker programs

Participation in the cultural and natural history of the Gunflint Trail through

- Providing opportunities to stimulate and inspire lifelong learning
- Interactive displays
- Hands-on multigenerational activities, both indoors and outdoors
- Hiking trails through the forest and along the lake where aquatic life, trees, wildflowers, birds and animals may be observed
- Opportunities to explore views of geological formations, waterways and large-scale landscape settings

I. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society is responsible for the collection, preservation, and dissemination of historical knowledge about the Gunflint Trail. The corporation shall have the authority to disseminate historical information as it deems advisable, including the operation of a museum, nature center, watercraft exhibit building, cabin exhibit building, and other interpretive sites developed by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center is governed under the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.

Historical items include artifacts and stories of prehistoric peoples, First Nation people including Ojibwe, trappers, Voyageurs, loggers, miners, resort owners, residents, guests, and travelers, as well as interpretive information about the natural history of the area.

The building, formerly Chik-Wauk Lodge, now known as Chik-Wauk Museum is included in the National Register of Historic Places. The building itself is owned by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service.

The surrounding 50 acres of grounds are under a special use agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Hiking trails offer visitors an experience similar to within the "Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness". The acreage includes an ADA accessible trail in the bay area. The Nature Center building houses guides to wildflowers, trees, birds, mammals, and geology of the region, as well as educational displays, activities, and equipment for life-long learning experiences. It is the responsibility of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society to maintain and preserve these grounds, buildings, and exhibits and building contents.

"Campus" is a term used to include the 50-acre parcel and its buildings.

"Tickler file" is a term used in a database file to remind Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees and staff of a potential need for an action, especially as it might pertain to dates.

II. Scope and Use of Collections

- A. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society will perform its mission through exhibits of artifacts, oral history audio and videos, interactive exhibits for children and rotating exhibits. The main and oldest structure of the campus is the preserved lodge previously belonging to the disestablished Chik-Wauk Resort.
- B. The nature of objects and artifacts collected by, or loaned to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society are those items in support of the mission that are suitable for being placed on exhibit currently or in the near future.
- C. A collection object is an item that has been, or is in the process of being accessioned into Gunflint Trail Historical Society collections.
- D. Detailed guidance regarding specific questions that may arise when the following sections do not seem to provide necessary guidance may be obtained by consulting relevant sections of "A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections".

III. Accession of Objects, Artifacts, and Other Items

- A. "Accession" is the formal process used to accept and record an item as a collection object that may include objects, artifacts and other items in support of the mission of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society. Objects, artifacts and other items may be added to the museum collection by

means of gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, fieldwork acquisitions or any other transaction by which title to the objects passes to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.

- B. Accession of potential objects, artifacts or other items for use in the museum or nature center are to be approved by Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or those members of the staff so designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Accession of items that are not consistent with the guidelines may be approved or disapproved by a majority vote of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
- C. Guidelines to approve accession of potential objects, artifacts, and other items:
 - 1. The potential item must be consistent with the mission.
 - 2. The potential item should be so unusual that it presents an exceptional opportunity that it should be given preferential treatment. Until additional storage space is obtained the item should be consistent with replacing an item currently on exhibit.
 - 3. If the potential item is offered for sale, one should consider whether it or a comparable object be obtained by gift or bequest prior to the purchase.
 - 4. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society must be capable of providing proper care of the potential item. Factors such as size or extent of objects, value, cost of maintenance, and restrictions may be causes for rejection of a potential item. If uncertainty exists, the approving official shall refer the matter to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - 5. Provenance of the potential item must be unquestionable. It is the responsibility of the approving official to clearly establish the provenance. If the approving official is uncertain about establishing the provenance, approval for accession must be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Specific areas of concern that cause difficulties to museums when accessing items include: stolen property, confiscation by Nazis, objects improperly removed from their countries of origin, Native American items, laws protecting plants and wildlife, and laws protecting antiquities and historic properties.
 - 6. Donor imposed conditions for use of a potential item must be consistent with the overall policies of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society and not so restrictive as to inhibit cost-effective management by Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or the staff. If the approving official is uncertain about the effect of the imposed conditions, approval for accession must be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - 7. Items that may have restricted use or are encumbered (1) by an intellectual property right (copyright, patent, trademark, or trade name) or (2) by its nature (for example, obscene, defamatory, potential invasion of privacy, physically hazardous, etc.) must not inhibit cost-effective management. If the approving official is uncertain about the effect of the restrictions or encumbrances, approval for accession must be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - 8. Accession of potential items requiring a future expansion of the facilities may only be approved by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - 9. Except for potential loan items, the donor must agree to transfer all rights, title and interest including all copyright, trademark and related interests for all objects, artifacts and other items comprising the donation to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society. See attachment 1 for the Deed of Gift which must be completed by the donor and the officer so designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - 10. The nature of Oral History items (subject's voice on tape, video of subject, transcription of oral tape, etc.) lend themselves to easy reproduction. Therefore special forms will be used to indicate that the subject has agreed to transfer all rights, title and interest including all copyright,

trademark and related interests for the donation to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society. See Attachment 2 for these forms which must be completed by the subject of the interview and the interviewer.

11. Items will not be accepted that may be of historical nature, even if in support of the mission, but are not amenable to be displayed until suitable storage space is available.
 12. Donors will provide the necessary object descriptive and provenance information required to complete an Object Monitoring Record (see attachment 3) for the donated item.
 - D. A description of records required to be maintained of those items accepted through the accession process is contained in Section VIII below.
 - E. It is the policy of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society that the value of gifts will be mutually agreed upon by the donor and Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Donors are responsible for the expense of appraisals.
 - F. Adequate provision for insurance to cover the potential object must be available.
- IV. Deaccession of Objects, Artifacts, and Other Items
- A. Deaccessioning is the formal process used to remove an object from the Gunflint Trail Historical Society collections permanently or, when an object has been lost or destroyed, the formal process used to document the loss in the collection records.
 - B. Deaccession of potential objects, artifacts or other items for use in the museum or nature center are to be approved by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or those staff so designated by Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Deaccession of items that are not consistent with the guidelines may be approved by a majority vote of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - C. Guidelines to approve voluntary deaccession of potential objects, artifacts, and other items:
 1. Review the collection record to determine if there are any restrictions or encumbrances that may prohibit removal. If the approving official is uncertain about the effect of restrictions or encumbrances, approval for deaccession must be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 2. The object under consideration for deaccession must be no longer relevant and useful to the purposes and activities of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.
 3. There is a danger that the Gunflint Trail Historical Society may not be able to preserve the object properly.
 4. The object has deteriorated beyond its usefulness.
 5. There is a need to eliminate redundant objects.
 6. It is doubtful that the object can be used in the foreseeable future,
 7. There is a need to improve or strengthen another area of the collections in order to further the goals of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.
 8. The interests and potential reaction of the public must be considered prior to approving deaccession of an object.
 - D. Non-voluntary deaccessions:
 1. Collection objects may be lost or stolen with little hope of retrieval or it may become known that the Gunflint Trail Historical Society does not possess a clear and unambiguous title to a collection object. In these situations it may be prudent to remove the object from the collection. This will be done through the deaccession process.

E. Deaccession guidelines:

1. Objects may be disposed of by exchange, donation, sale or destruction.
 2. Preferences to any particular type of deaccession will be dependent upon such factors as material condition of the object, expressed desire for the object, financial value of the object, nature of the potential recipient, etc.
 3. Scholarly or cultural organizations will be given preference over private individual or commercial organizations as potential recipients of an object.
 4. Local, state and national interests will be considered in order of preference as potential recipients.
 5. In the event that there are not any potential recipients of an object, or it has seriously deteriorated, other uses should be considered for an object prior to destruction.
 6. Donor(s) of objects being considered for deaccession whom may still be alive, and for whom there is a current address, will be advised of the deaccession actions and will be given an opportunity to reacquire the object.
- F. Disposition of funds that are realized from sale of a collection object being deaccessioned will be determined by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
- G. The deaccession of collection objects shall be entered into the record of the object. Data included in the record will provide the reason for the deaccession, the disposition method of the object, any funds realized from the deaccession, and the person authorizing the deaccession.

V. Loan of Objects, Artifacts, and Other Items

- A. Loans are temporary assignments of collection objects from the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center or temporary assignments of similar objects to the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center for stated purposes such as exhibition or research. These assignments do not involve a change in ownership.
- B. Outgoing Loans
1. As a general policy, collection objects in the collection will only be loaned to similar institutions that ensure sufficient environmental protection, have adequate safety precautions, will encourage research on and public enjoyment of the object, and will avoid use of the object for private gain.
 2. Guidelines for an outgoing loan of a collection object:
 - a. Loans of collection objects from the museum or nature center are to be approved by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or those members of the staff so designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. Loan of items that are not consistent with the guidelines or for which uncertainty exists by the approving official will be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - b. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees will approve any unusual conditions that may be placed on the outgoing loan of a collection object.
 - c. Collection objects will not be loaned if there is a question whether the object(s) can withstand travel, extra handling or climate change.
 - d. Loans will be made for specified periods of time. Provisions may be made for options to renew the period. This data shall be included in the loan agreement.
 - e. Provisions for a "tickler file" will be included in the records to enable the staff to monitor end dates of loans. Monitoring of the "tickler file" will be performed by the staff. The recipient of an outgoing loan will be reminded of the upcoming expiration date at least 4 weeks prior to the date.

The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees will be advised of overdue loan objects no later than 4 weeks after the expiration of the loan. It will then be the responsibility of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees to take appropriate action to resolve the problem.

- f. The approving official must take action to obtain proof that the recipient of the loan has adequate provisions for the safety, security, and handling of the collection object.
- g. Adequate provision for insurance to cover the outgoing object must be available.
- h. The required record for outgoing loan objects is described in Section VIII below.

B. Incoming Loans

1. Guidelines for Incoming loans are:

- a. Except as specified below, guidelines for incoming loans are similar to those for outgoing loans.
- b. Objects may be borrowed for inclusion in temporary exhibits on the campus.
- c. The approving official must take action to obtain proof that the Gunflint Trail Historical Society has adequate provisions for the safety, security, climate control requirements, travel, handling and exhibit spaces for the incoming loan object.
- d. Adequate provision for insurance to cover the incoming object must be available.
- e. The required record for incoming loan objects is described in Section VIII below.

VI. Objects, Artifacts, and Other Items Placed in the Custody of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.

- A. Definition: Objects placed in the "custody of museums" are items that are not owned by the museum but are left temporarily in the museum for other than loan purposes, such as for attribution, identification, or examination for possible gift or purchase.
- B. Objects may be placed in custody of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society upon approval by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or those members of the staff so designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. If the approving official is uncertain about accepting custody of an object, approval must be referred to the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
- C. As a general policy, objects will not be placed in the custody of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society until there is adequate provision for storage and there is a clear advantage to the Society to take custody.

VII. Care of the Objects, Artifacts and Other Items in the Museum

- A. At all times, staff members should be aware of their responsibilities to preserve and protect collection objects. It is the responsibility of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees to monitor this consideration.
- B. The collection objects, whether on exhibit or in storage, must have adequate protection against fire, theft, vandalism and natural disaster, as well as harmful light, temperature extremes, humidity, and dirt. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees, or the designated staff member, will establish procedures for handling such emergencies and ensuring proper conditions. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees will approve these procedures. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees shall oversee the execution of the procedures.

- C. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees will define the delegation of responsibilities to staff members to monitor conservation needs.
- D. Appropriate attention must be given to the packing and shipping of collection objects moving in or out of the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees will define the delegation of responsibilities to staff members to accomplish this care.
- E. An entry will be made in the record for a collection object whenever it is moved from its assigned exhibition or storage spot.

VIII. Records

- A. The records required to be maintained are:
 - 1. The original and one copy of signed Deeds of Gift documents will be maintained as hard copies. The original will be maintained in the museum office and the copy maintained in a remote location as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. This file is named the Deed of Gift file. The format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 1.
 - 2. Records of Oral History Deed of Gift and Informed Consent completed forms will be maintained as hard copies in the Oral History File. The original will be maintained in the museum office and the copy maintained in a remote location as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. The format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 2.
 - 3. Records of objects acquired through the accession process, or owned by means of previous processes, by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society for use on the campus will be maintained electronically. This file is named the Object Monitor File. One set will be maintained in the office and the second in a location remote from the museum as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. The format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 3.
 - 4. Data pertaining to objects disposed of through the deaccession process by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society will be maintained electronically. This data will be entered into the appropriate record in the Object Monitor File.
 - 5. The original and one copy of signed outgoing Loan Agreement documents will be maintained as hard copies. The original will be maintained in the museum office and the copy maintained in the remote location as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. This file is named the Outgoing Loan Agreement File. The format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 4. In addition, data regarding the loan of this object will be entered onto its appropriate Object Monitor File record and onto the Tickler File.
 - 6. The original and one copy of signed incoming Loan Agreement documents will be maintained as hard copies. The original will be maintained in the museum office and the copy maintained in the remote location as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. This file is named the Incoming Loan Agreement File. In the event that the Loaning Organization does not provide its copy of a Loan Agreement, the format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 5. In addition, data regarding the loan of this object will be entered into a temporary record in the Object Monitor File and into the Tickler File.
 - 7. The original and one copy of signed Custody Agreement documents will be maintained as hard copies. The original will be maintained in the office and the copy maintained in the remote location as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. This file is named

the Custody File. The format and required data content of these records is displayed in Attachment 6.

8. Records of deadlines for objects loaned by, or loaned to, the Gunflint Trail Historical Society will be maintained electronically. This file is named Object Tickler File. Records of deadlines for objects accepted for custody by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society will be maintained electronically and included in the Tickler File. One set will be maintained in the office of the Chik-Wauk Museum and the second in a location remote from the museum as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. The format for the Loan Tickler File is at the discretion of the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees, or a designated staff member.
 9. Insurance records may be maintained either in document or electronic mode depending upon the practice of the pertinent insurance firm. Depending on the nature of the individual contracts, an original and one copy or backup electronic copy will be maintained in the Insurance Document or Electronic File. One set will be maintained in the office of the campus and the second in a location remote from the museum as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 10. Data pertaining to conducted inventories, whether full or partial, will be maintained in an electronic file named the Inventory File. One set will be maintained in the campus office and the second in a location remote from the campus as designated by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees. The format and content of inventory records shall be determined by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees, or a designated staff member.
- B. The original and copy of all agreements will be filed immediately following receipt of the completed documents. A new record with appropriate data will be entered into the Monitor File following each accession, Incoming Loan object, or acceptance of an object on a custodial basis. Appropriate data will be entered into appropriate record in the Monitor File promptly following deaccession, outgoing loan, location change, returned loan object, return of an incoming loan object, and other transactions regarding an object in the campus.

IX. Insurance

- A. The property, roads, trails, and structures comprising Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center are owned by the United States Government through the Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society maintains insurance as required by the Forest Service. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society does have ownership, or custody, of all collection objects contained in the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center campus buildings and all buildings constructed by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.
- B. Insurance coverage is included in general operations expenses. In determining the amount of insurance coverage the Gunflint Trail Historical Society Board must consider on a continuing basis:
 1. The proper allocation of funds between insurance requirements, protection, conservation, packing and transportation requirements.
 2. Whether to insure collections at full or partial value.
 3. Insurance on outgoing loan collection objects.
 4. Insurance on incoming loan collection objects.
 5. Insurance on items accepted for custody by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society.
 6. The required records of insurance coverage are described in Section VIII above.

X. Inventories

- A. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or the designated member of the staff will establish inventory procedures. These procedures shall address several topics such as:
 - 1. A uniform method of maintaining inventory records.
 - 2. Periodic comprehensive inventories
 - 3. Spot-checking of inventories
 - 4. Procedures to be followed if collection objects appear to be missing.
 - B. The inventory procedures will be approved by the Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees.
 - C. The required record of inventories is described in Section VIII above.
- XI. Access to the Objects, Artifacts and Other Items in the Museum
- A. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees or the designated staff members shall establish procedures for access to its collections. This includes physical access to the objects as well as the collection records of the museum. The procedures:
 - 1. Shall include when access may be denied and who may deny such access.
 - 2. Shall define when and if fees will be charged for reproduction of Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center material.
 - B. The Gunflint Trail Historical Society board of trustees shall approve these procedures.