

TO SAVE OR NOT TO SAVE

All USFWS stations have their own heritage or history within the Service. For instance, the year that they were founded may date back over a hundred years, or just a few years, but some sort of documentation probably exists about or around the time of their founding date. Founding documentation is an integral part of that station's heritage. Saving important documents and objects housed in refuge or hatchery offices, regional offices, and other Service facilities is an important task that we should all give some thought to. The USFWS Heritage Committee wants to help in any way possible, to insure that the remnants and reflections of our proud heritage are not lost forever.

The First thing to remember in the preservation biz is that 'If it is treated as junk, it becomes junk.' Therefore, knowing what is junk is important. There are no real hard and fast rules of identifying what is important, and what is not, just general guidelines that can point you in the right direction.

IF A DOCUMENT OR OBJECT IS ASSOCIATED WITH, OR SIGNED BY A SIGNIFICANT FIGURE, IT SHOULD BE SAVED.

A significant figure could be a president, Service director, prominent conservation figure, or other person important to a station, cause, program, etc.

IF A DOCUMENT OR OBJECT IS ASSOCIATED WITH A SIGNIFICANT EVENT, PROGRAM, OCCURRENCE, OR ACTIVITY, IT SHOULD BE SAVED.

An example of this could be a station's founding or the condor recovery program.

IF A DOCUMENT OR OBJECT IS RARE, OLD, OR VALUABLE, IT SHOULD BE SAVED.

IF A DOCUMENT OR OBJECT REPRESENTS A COMMON ACTIVITY THAT WAS USED IN THE MISSION OF A STATION OR THE SERVICE, REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES SHOULD BE SAVED FOR POSTERITY.

For instance, the cannon net from Swan Lake NWR, Fish hatching jars, and banding pliers represent what we do, and how we accomplish our day to day activities.

Objects like these should be represented in our Service museums.

A DOCUMENT OR OBJECT SHOULD BE KEPT, IF YOU HAVE A GUT FEELING THAT IT IS HISTORIC AND OF IMPORTANCE TO THE HERITAGE OF THE SERVICE. YOUR INSTINCTS ARE OUR BEST RESOURCE!

For assistance with identifying and preserving historic items, please contact the Museum Curator or Service Historian at the National Conservation Training Center Museum:
www.nctc.fws.gov/history/index.html or call (304) 876-7285 or 7276.

