

Laboratory of Archaeology Repatriation Guidelines for First Nations

The Laboratory will respond to all requests from First Nations groups for repatriation of materials in its collections. Each request will be reviewed by the Laboratory of Archaeology (LOA) Committee and be considered on its own merits.

How to Request Information

Requests for information about materials in the collection should be addressed to the Director, Laboratory of Archaeology, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of British Columbia, 6303 N.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6T 1Z1.

Since archaeological sites are classified and materials are stored by geographic location, LOA requests either:

- a complete list of sites by Borden grid designation for the area of concern (list may be obtained from the B.C. Archaeology Branch in Victoria), or
- a topographical map noting geographic features, latitudes and longitudes for the area of concern.

The LOA will provide inventories of any catalogued materials from sites in the collection within the requested territory.

An archaeological collection is more than the artifacts recovered. Maintaining the integrity of a collection is important and is dependent upon keeping all materials (i.e., documentation, photographs and matrix samples, as well as the artifacts) together. All transfer requests should include a plan that describes how the integrity of the collection will be maintained.

Repatriation Process

The Laboratory of Archaeology (LOA) is a repository for archaeological materials collected under permit and as such is legally responsible for them. Therefore, before initiating the formal process of repatriation, the LOA requires an official resolution from the group (e.g., Band Council) requesting the transfer of specific collections. Requests for transfer of material usually follow after information about collections has been obtained from the LOA.

The Laboratory will also ask the requesting group to post a public notice (e.g., in a local newspaper) notifying neighboring groups who may have an interest in the transfer that the repatriation request has been made. In the case of materials that are claimed by two or more groups, the Laboratory will require release from all such groups before the materials can be returned to a particular group.

Upon official written request for repatriation, LOA will advise the B.C. Archaeology Branch about the requested release archaeological materials collected under permit. In cases where the Branch objects to the transfer, the Laboratory will ask the Branch to enter directly into negotiations with the First Nation group making the request.

The Laboratory will prepare a Legal Transfer Agreement, which must be approved and signed by the appropriate representatives of both the LOA (and in the case of donated material the University of British Columbia) **and** the institution or group requesting repatriation.