#### National Archives and Records Administration

Federal Records Management Level 1: Maintenance and Use

Participant Guide

Module 1 – Records Inventory

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# Module 1: Participate in a Records Inventory

## Module 1 Checklist

* Complete the online module.
* Complete the Planning a Records Inventory and Brainstorming Functions and Record Series worksheets in this guide.
* Complete the optional Records Inventory Practice module.
* Consider: Where might a records inventory help your office or program? What elements (scope, support, supplies, and station locations) should be involved?

## Module Objectives and Agenda

* Given a situation requiring a local records inventory, you will be able to develop a complete and accurate inventory of paper and electronic records for your office or program.

## Why inventory records? Notes

## How do schedules, inventories, and file plans fit together?

## Importance and Use of Inventories – Notes

## Inventory Preparation

Scope

Support

Supplies

Station Location

## Activity: Inventory Preparation

**Scenario 1: Moving Day**

Jeremy’s office is moving to a new building. He and the Move Team are trying to determine how many boxes of paper files must travel to the new building.

Jeremy’s inventory goals include:

* Identify files that can legally be destroyed before the move.
* Identify files for transfer to off-site storage.
* Identify permanent records eligible for transfer to NARA.
* Track paper records that must be moved.
* Scope
* Support
* Supplies
* Station Location(s)

**Scenario 2: Digitize!**

Charlotte’s agency wants to be fully electronic in its records storage and management.

Charlotte’s inventory goals include:

* Get an accurate picture of the types of information held at the agency.
* Identify and reduce unnecessary duplication.
* Identify file types and collections to be digitized.
* Scope
* Support
* Supplies
* Station Location(s)

### **Inventory Preparation, continued**

**Scenario 3: Shared Drive Clean-up**

Manuel and his team have chosen the agency’s shared drives as a good place to begin their quest to tame the information chaos.

The team is about to move storage of working files, records, and reference materials to the cloud. While storage space is cheap, they want to be sure that only relevant material is moved online.

Their goals:

* Identify and consolidate collections of electronic records.
* Create file plans and structures for storing official e-records.
* Identify unneeded non-record e-files and expired electronic records.
* Scope
* Support
* Supplies
* Station Location(s)

## Planning a Records Inventory Worksheet

Think about your own office, program, or division. How could a records inventory help your team manage its records or improve the way information is managed?

Describe what scope is appropriate for your inventory, what types of support you will need, what supplies you might need for the project, and what station location(s) you will need to visit.

Your inventory goals:

Scope

Support

Supplies

Station Location(s)

## Record Series

Units of files, documents, or other information

* Relate to a particular subject or type
* Result from the same activity
* Document a specific type of transaction

## Business Functions and Records Series – Notes

## Practice: Brainstorming Record Series

For each topic listed, brainstorm a list of the potential record types and information systems that support this type of work in your agency.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Human Resources | Continuity of Operations & Security | Information Technology |
|  |  |  |

## Brainstorming Functions and Record Series

Think about the functions your office or program performs. First, list some of those functions in the worksheet below. Then, for each function, brainstorm a list of the records series that document and support that work.

| **Function** | **Record Series** |
| --- | --- |
| Example: Motor Vehicle Maintenance | Example: Vehicle inspection logs, vehicle warranty records, vehicle service and repair requisitions, vehicle service and repair logs. |
|  |  |
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## Gathering Inventory Information

Choose information collection methods that support your inventory’s scope, record locations, and team members and contributors.

You may want to use a combination of visits to review the records, discussions with record creators/users, and questionnaires or forms. Check with your records management network to see what tools are already available.

## Records Inventory Worksheet (Example)

| **Type of Information** | **Information Collected** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Date of inventory** | January 10, 2020 |
| 1. **Name of person conducting inventory** | U.R. Self |
| 1. **Office(s) maintaining records** | Human Resources |
| 1. **Subject matter expert (name of person providing information about the records)** | Jane Hathaway |
| 1. **Record locations (room, file cabinet, file/folder path)** | Human Resources Division, Room 5320, Cabinet 1, Drawers 1-3 |
| 1. **File Code (if known) and Series Title** | 2.16, Employee TSP elections |
| 1. **Notes about the series (e.g., series description, relation to other records, finding aids or indexes to the records?)** | Form TSP-1 authorizing deduction of employee contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan. |
| 1. **Date range covered by the records (indicate if ongoing)** | 01/11/2011 to present |
| 1. **Disposition information** | Destroy when superseded or after separation of employee  N1-62-97-01 |
| 1. **Medium (paper, video, audio, etc.)** | Paper |
| 1. **How records are filed (by name, number, geographically, etc.)** | By employee ID number |
| 1. **Volume** | 4.5 cubic feet |
| 1. **Access/use restrictions** | Payroll employees only |

## Estimating Records Inventory Volume – Job Aid

(All amounts are approximate.)

One letter-size file drawer holds 1.5 cubic feet of records

One letter-size lateral file drawer holds 2 cubic feet of records

One legal-size file drawer holds 2 cubic feet of records

One legal-size lateral file drawer holds 2.5 cubic feet of records

One 36” long shelf of letter-sized files holds 2.4 cubic feet

One 36” long shelf of legal-sized files holds 3 cubic feet

One standard records storage box (10” x 12” x 15”) holds 1 cubic foot

One letter-size archives box holds 0.35 cubic feet of records

One legal-size archives box holds 0.43 cubic feet of records

Fifty 35 mm microfilm reels equal 1 cubic foot

One hundred 16 mm microfilm reels equal 1 cubic foot

One cubic foot contains approximately 2,000 sheets of paper

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## Activity: File Station Inventory – Interview with Jane Crawley

05/12/2020

Interview with Jane Crawley, Agency for Natural Resources Protection, Environmental Research Staff, Insect and Arachnid Division. Jane is responsible for managing records related to insect populations for the Environmental Research Staff’s Insect and Arachnid Division.

### Inventory interview with Jane Crawley, part 1

We have Insect Population Studies, which include data reports and draft and final insect population outlook reports. The reports document the research we do to study insect population increases, decreases, and migrations.

The files are kept in the Central Files Area in room 205 and in the agency warehouse. The records in the Central Files Area are kept in cabinet 5, in the top 3 drawers (drawers 1-3). We also have several boxes in the warehouse; I believe there are 21 boxes of these records there. We also keep these files electronically on our Environmental Research shared drive. I:\EnvironmentalResearch\InsectArachnidDivision\InsectStudies\PopulationStudies

I’m not sure, but I think they are eventually supposed to be destroyed. We have files from 2015 to the present. We file them by month collected and then by each insect’s scientific name. For example, files on the bumble bee would be named Bombus terrestris.

### Inventory interview with Jane Crawley, part 2

We also have Insect Population Tracking Data. These files are kept for each year and contain all the raw data collected in the field. At the end of the fiscal year the data is compiled into a report that is incorporated into the Insect Population Studies records. We have these from 2015 to the present. These are only kept digitally. They’re on the same shared drive as the Insect Population Studies files, but in the PopulationTrackingData folder. I know we are supposed to delete the older files, but I’m not sure how often. I’ve just been keeping them because they don’t take up much space on the drive. We have about 10 gigabytes of these files.

There is no secured access to any of these files because they are not private or sensitive. In fact, most of the data ends up being published or put on our website.

## Practice: File Station Inventory – Records Inventory Worksheet 1

| **Type of Information** | **Information Collected** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Date of inventory** | May 12, 2020 |
| 1. **Name of person conducting inventory** |  |
| 1. **Office(s) maintaining records** | Insect and Arachnid Division |
| 1. **Subject matter expert (name of person providing information about the records)** | Jane Crawley |
| 1. **Record locations (room, file cabinet, file/folder path)** |  |
| 1. **File Code (if known) and Series Title** |  |
| 1. **Notes about the series (e.g., series description, relation to other records, finding aids or indexes to the records?)** |  |
| 1. **Date range covered by the records (indicate if ongoing)** |  |
| 1. **Disposition information** |  |
| 1. **Medium (paper, video, audio, etc.)** |  |
| 1. **How records are filed (by name, number, geographically, etc.)** |  |
| 1. **Volume** |  |
| 1. **Access/use restrictions** |  |

## Practice: File Station Inventory – Records Inventory Worksheet 2

| **Type of Information** | **Information Collected** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Date of inventory** | May 12, 2020 |
| 1. **Name of person conducting inventory** |  |
| 1. **Office(s) maintaining records** | Insect and Arachnid Division |
| 1. **Subject matter expert (name of person providing information about the records)** | Jane Crawley |
| 1. **Record locations (room, file cabinet, file/folder path)** |  |
| 1. **File Code (if known) and Series Title** |  |
| 1. **Notes about the series (e.g., series description, relation to other records, finding aids or indexes to the records?)** | Raw data collected by human and digital insect counters throughout the U.S. as part of insect population studies. The data is used in a yearly Combined Data Report that is incorporated into the Insect Population Studies file for that year. |
| 1. **Date range covered by the records (indicate if ongoing)** |  |
| 1. **Disposition information** |  |
| 1. **Medium (paper, video, audio, etc.)** |  |
| 1. **How records are filed (by name, number, geographically, etc.)** |  |
| 1. **Volume** |  |
| 1. **Access/use restrictions** |  |

## Records Schedule for File Station Inventory Activity

**Agency for Natural Resources Protection, Environmental Research Office Records Schedule**

**2.6-001 Waterfowl Conditions Maps**

Maps documenting bird migration patterns throughout the United States

Disposition: Permanent. Transfer to the Records Center 15 years after the year in which created. Send to NARA 25 years after creation. N1-64-86-3

**2.6-010a Insect Population Studies**

Combined data reports; draft outlook reports; final outlook reports documenting research used to study insect population increases, decreases, and migrations.

Disposition: Permanent. Cut off at the end of each fiscal year. Send to the Records Center 5 years after cutoff. Send to NARA 10 years after cutoff. N1-64-87-1

**2.6-010b Insect Population Tracking Data**

Raw data collected by human and digital insect counters throughout the U.S. as part of insect population studies. The data is collected monthly, resulting in a single yearly Combined Data Report that is incorporated into the Insect Population Studies file for that year.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off data files at the end of each fiscal year.

Create a new digital folder for each fiscal year, with sub-folders for each geographic location’s data. Retain the raw data for 5 years after cutoff, then delete. N1-64-87-1

**2.6-020 Research, Testing, and Technical Miscellany Policy**

Material which serves to establish policy or precedents pertinent to future and continuing actions for research, testing, and technical miscellany activities.

Disposition:Permanent. Place in inactive file when cancelled, superseded, or revoked. Cut off file at the end of the calendar year policy was cancelled, superseded, or revoked. Transfer to Archives 3 years after cutoff. N1-64-90-4

**2.6-030 Lake Recreation Studies**

Files documenting the environmental impact of the recreational use of natural and manmade lakes throughout the U.S. Files include water quality testing reports, photographs, videos, maps and nautical charts, and final documents reporting study results.

Disposition: Permanent. Close files at the end of the Fiscal Year in which the research is completed. Send files to the Records Center 5 years after closure. Send to NARA 5 years after sending to the Records Center. N1-64-91-1

**2.6-040 Publications, Status of Reports.**

Computerized list of status of reports.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off file at end of fiscal year. Destroy in agency at end of fiscal year. N1-64-91-2

**2.6-045 Reports Publication, Financial Records.**

Requisitions, bills, and statements kept in binders and ledgers documenting cost of publishing reports.

Disposition: Temporary. Destroy in agency when three years old. N1-64-92-4

**2.6-060 Boat Operator Case Files**

Paper case file for boat operators containing training records, certifications, medical records and CPR, First Aid, and mandatory forms.

Disposition: Temporary. Once the case file record becomes inactive (operator is inactive) it can be transferred for storage to the Records Center and retained for a period of 65 years and then destroyed. N1-64-93-1

**2.6-070 Environmental Impact Assessments**

Documents that record the effort to protect the environment in carrying out federal programs. Includes a description of the proposed project, a description of the existing environment of the project, an analysis of the project's possible environmental effects, and an examination of alternative courses of action.

Disposition: Permanent. Close at the end of the calendar year in which the project is completed. Transfer to NARA 25 years after the calendar year in which the file was closed. N1-64-95-1

**2.6-080 Water Data Records**

Inland waters studies’ data including temperature, aeration and flow, gaging station data, and well logs.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off files at end of fiscal year. Retire to the Records Center after active reference ceases. Destroy 30 years after retirement to Records Center. N1-64-95-1

**2.6-085 Technical Research Reports, Manuals, and Standards**

Summary or technical research reports pertaining to research projects, testing, design standards, technical manuals and miscellany.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off files at the end of fiscal year in which research ends. Transfer to the records center. Destroy 5 years after cut off. N1-64-95-1

**2.6-090 Aerial Photographic Negatives**

Photo negatives documenting stream and channel conditions at particular points in time; extreme hydrologic events such as floods, mudflows, and volcanic eruptions which can and have altered the characteristics of streams.

Disposition: Permanent. Send to Records Center when no longer needed for active reference in the agency. Transfer to NARA after 10 years. N1-64-95-1

**2.6-095** **Digitized Aerial Negatives**

Digitized negatives of aerial photography documenting stream and channel conditions at particular points in time; extreme hydrologic events such as floods, mudflows, and volcanic eruptions which can and have altered the characteristics of streams.

Disposition: Temporary. Cut off files at the end of each fiscal year, Create a new digital folder each year for each geographical region. Retain the raw digitized photos for 10 years after cutoff, then delete. N1-03-17-1

# Module 1 Assignments

Your assignments for Module 1 are:

* Consult your agency’s procedures and your records management network to see if there are inventory forms or other tools you could use to perform an inventory in your office or program.
* Use the Planning a Records Inventory worksheet and Brainstorming Functions and Record Series worksheet you completed in this Participant Guide to plan an inventory for your own program or office.