

# Campbell County Rockpile Museum



## Rockpile Museum Code of Ethics

Approved by the Rockpile Museum Board of Directors

February 16, 2016

A large, 3D-rendered graphic of a ribbon or banner, colored in shades of blue and grey, spanning the width of the page. The number "2016" is printed in a large, black, sans-serif font on the right side of the ribbon.

2016

# Campbell County Rockpile Museum Code of Ethics

## GENERAL PROVISIONS:

The Campbell County Rockpile Museum (CCRM) is a member of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH). All board members, Rockpile Museum Association (RMA) board members, staff, and volunteers shall adhere to the AAM Code of Ethics and the AASLH Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics except where superseded by the **CCRM Code of Ethics** as stated below or in the **Campbell County Government Personnel Guidelines Manual**.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

### Mission Statement

The CCRM serves as the local history center for residents of and visitors to Campbell County with the mission of collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Campbell County and northeast Wyoming.

The CCRM achieves its mission by collecting objects, photographs, and documents important to the county's history, and utilizing these materials to support exhibits, educational programs and events, and research opportunities related to Campbell County's past and present.

## GENERAL ETHICAL DUTIES:

The CCRM recognizes that serving the public over the individual and the institution is paramount and it is our commitment to serve the people of Campbell County, both now and in the future. It is our responsibility to preserve the collections, history, and stories in our stead as the priceless inheritance of future generations. The CCRM is a public trust and holds its collections and information as a benefit to the people of Campbell County, Wyoming. The CCRM board, staff, and volunteers are committed to the interests of the residents of Campbell County.

The CCRM and its board, staff, and volunteers shall strive to abide by this CCRM Code of Ethics in all aspects of its mission of collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Campbell County and northeast Wyoming. This includes, but is not limited to: governance and management of museum and Campbell County Government resources, the acquisition and preservation of collection objects and other historical resources, the deaccession of artifacts, public access to museum collections, and the interpretation of Campbell County and northern Wyoming history.

All actions of interpretation, collections management, and exhibition must be governed by an informed respect for the cultural property concerned, its unique character and significance, and the person or people who created or owned it. While recognizing the right of society to make appropriate educational use of cultural property, the CCRM shall serve as an advocate for the preservation of cultural property. The CCRM shall recognize a responsibility for preventive conservation by endeavoring to limit damage or deterioration to artifacts, providing guidelines for their continuing use and care, requesting appropriate environmental conditions for storage, exhibition, and loans, and ensuring proper procedures for handling, packing, and transporting artifacts.

The CCRM will remain loyal to its mission and to the people of Campbell County. Where conflicts arise – actual, potential, or perceived – the duty of loyalty must never be compromised.

#### **A. Governance:**

The primary responsibility for governance, institutional policies, financial stability, and legal accountability of the CCRM rests with the CCRM Board of Directors whose members are appointed by the Campbell County Commissioners. Operational responsibility rests with the staff. The RMA has no governance authority over the CCRM or staff. This body exists solely as a non-profit support organization.

CCRM governance is a public trust responsible for the institution's service to society. Therefore:

1. The CCRM Board of Directors is a statutory board appointed by the Campbell County Commissioners according to Wyoming Law (§18-10-103).
2. The CCRM Board of Directors ensures that all who work for or on behalf of the CCRM understand and support its mission and public trust responsibilities. The board will also ensure that its members understand and fulfill their trusteeship and act corporately, not as individuals.
3. The CCRM Board of Directors will also ensure that the CCRM's collections and programs, and its physical, human, and financial resources are protected, maintained, and developed in support of the CCRM's mission.
4. The CCRM Board of Directors ensures that professional standards and practices inform and guide CCRM operations. Policies are articulated and prudent oversight is practiced.
5. The CCRM Board of Directors will maintain a relationship with staff in which shared roles are recognized and separate responsibilities are respected. Working relationships

among board members, employees, and volunteers are based on equity and mutual respect.

6. CCRM governance will promote the public good rather than individual financial gain.
7. The CCRM Board of Directors members shall not attempt to act on behalf of the CCRM in their individual or professional capacities.
8. The CCRM Board of Directors members shall maintain in confidence information learned during the course of their CCRM activities, when that information concerns the administration or activities of the CCRM that is not generally available to the public, as covered by the Wyoming Public Records Act.
9. A critical responsibility of the CCRM Board of Directors derives from its relationship to the CCRM Executive Director. The selection of that executive and the continuing oversight of his/her activities are primarily board responsibilities, which cannot be delegated and which must be diligently and conscientiously fulfilled with all due care.
10. Individual CCRM Board of Directors members who are experienced and knowledgeable in various fields of endeavor related to CCRM activities can be of great assistance to the CCRM, but conflicts-of-interest, or the appearance of such conflicts, may arise as a consequence of these interests or activities. In general, each board member must endeavor to conduct all of his or her activities including those relating to persons closely associated with him or her and to business or other organizations, in such a way that no such conflict will arise between these other interests and the policies, operations, or interests of the CCRM. The appearance of such conflicts also should be avoided. All conflicts-of-interest, or apparent conflicts-of-interest, must be disclosed and addressed in a manner in full compliance with those policies and procedures set forth in this CCRM Code of Ethics.
11. CCRM Board of Directors members have an obligation to define the rights, powers, and duties of the Executive Director. Members of this body shall be charged to work with the Executive Director, who represents their chief executive officer, in all administrative matters, and to deal with him/her openly and with candor. CCRM Board of Directors members should avoid giving directions to, acting on behalf of, or soliciting administrative information from staff personnel, unless such actions are in accord with established policy and procedural guidelines or in a circumstance where the Executive Director is fully apprised of the matter. Staff members should communicate with CCRM/RMA Board of Directors members through the Executive Director or with the Director's knowledge.
12. The Executive Director has an obligation to bring before the CCRM Board of Directors any matters involving policy questions not already determined by formal approval and

common practice, and to keep this body informed on a timely basis about all other significant or substantial matters, or intended actions affecting the institution.

13. The Executive Director must carry out the policies established by the CCRM Board of Directors, and adhere to the budget approved by the board and Campbell County Commission. Whenever it shall prove necessary or advisable to deviate from established policies, or to alter or exceed budget guidelines, the Executive Director shall notify the CCRM Board of Directors and Campbell County Commissioners in advance and request appropriate approval.
14. At no time shall any board member or staff personnel knowingly misrepresent the mission, objectives, policies, programs, proceedings, or motives of the CCRM.
15. Neither CCRM Board of Directors members nor CCRM employees may compete with the CCRM in collecting activities, nor may they take advantage of privileged information obtained as a result of their position to permit others to make use of information otherwise unavailable to the public for furthering personal interest or gain.

**B. Professional/Staff Conduct:**

1. The CCRM staff shall be cognizant of laws and regulations that may have a bearing on professional activity. Among these laws and regulations are those concerning the rights of artists and their estates, copyright of original material, occupational health and safety, sacred and religious material, excavated objects, endangered species, human remains, and stolen property.
2. The CCRM staff should follow appropriate standards for safety, security, contracts, fees, and advertising. The CCRM may enter into contractual agreements with individuals, institutions, businesses, or government agencies provided that such agreements not conflict with principles of the CCRM Code of Ethics, Campbell County Government policy, or the laws of the state of Wyoming.
3. CCRM staff is responsible for work delegated to other professionals, students, interns, volunteers, subordinates, or agents and assignees. Work should not be delegated unless staff can supervise the work directly, can ensure proper supervision, or has sufficient knowledge of the practitioner to be confident of the quality of the work.
4. CCRM employees shall avoid any kind of public comment which reflects adversely upon the CCRM. Employees may not speak to the media as an official spokesperson of the CCRM or any of its respective programs without prior clearance from the Executive Director. All inquiries from the media should be referred to the Executive Director.

### C. Collections

1. The CCRM ensures that if offered artifacts, the legal quality of which it has reason to doubt, it will contact the competent authorities of the place of origin in an effort to help safeguard any region's heritage.
2. Gifts and bequests of artifacts should only be accepted by the CCRM with a condition that, in the event of any object proving to have been illicitly obtained, the authorities of the CCRM should be empowered to take actions which will be in the best interests of the artifact's rightful owner.
3. The CCRM will ensure that its collections are not treated as capitalized or financial assets; that the collections in its custody support its mission and public trust responsibilities; and that the collections in its custody are protected, secure, unencumbered, cared for, and preserved.
4. The CCRM will ensure that the collections in its custody are regularly accounted for and documented and that access to the collections and related information is permitted and regulated.
5. The CCRM will ensure that acquisitions, deaccessions, and loan activities are conducted in a manner that respects the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources and discourages illicit trade in such materials; and that acquisition, deaccession, and loan activities conform to its mission and public trust responsibilities.
6. All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that artifacts systematically collected, scientifically important, or historically unique should remain in the public domain. Artifacts deaccessioned from the CCRM's collection should, when possible, be transferred to the collections of another Wyoming museum whose mission they help fulfill. If no Wyoming museum can be found in need of the deaccessioned material in question, it may then be offered to museums outside the state.
7. The CCRM staff shall consider relationships with the owner, custodian, or authorized agent of an artifact not in the CCRM's collection as confidential. Information derived from examination, scientific investigation, or other use of the artifact should not be published or otherwise made public without written permission from the owner, custodian, or authorized agent. CCRM staff shall not engage in appraisals of artifactual material.
8. The CCRM, recognizing the cultural importance of human remains and/or sacred material, shall strive to assist in the proper repatriation of human remains and/or sacred material whenever possible.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:**

While actively engaged in the discharge of their duties, and/or while representing the CCRM directly or indirectly, staff owes their primary professional and academic allegiance to the CCRM. By entering into employment with the CCRM at any level, staff members are expected to act, at all times, in the best interests of the CCRM. In particular, in instances where a conflict-of-interest is likely to occur between the CCRM and the staff member, the best interests of the CCRM must always take paramount and singular importance. Staff members are expected to make known any personal conflicts-of-interest to supervisory personnel or the CCRM Board of Directors members as soon as they become aware of the conflict, to recuse themselves from any debate, discussion, or decision-making process related to said conflict-of-interest, and to ameliorate this conflict by whatever means recommended and approved by the CCRM Board of Directors members and/or senior supervisory personnel.

### **D. Personal Collecting**

1. No staff member may compete with the CCRM in any personal collecting activity. They should not collect artifacts with a known provenance related to the natural history, prehistory, or history of Campbell County or Northeast Wyoming.
2. CCRM employees must inform the appropriate officials about their personal collecting interests, and report all acquisitions to their personal collections. The CCRM must have the right, for a specified and limited period, to acquire any object which would benefit the CCRM's mission that was purchased or collected by any staff member at the price paid by the employee. Objects obtained prior to the staff member's employment by the CCRM, prior to the adoption of this policy, objects that are a bequest or genuine personal gift, are to be exempt from the CCRM's right to acquire.
3. Staff must also furnish information on prospective sales and exchanges related to their personal collections in a timely manner.
4. No staff member may use their CCRM affiliation to promote his/her or anyone else's personal collecting activities. No staff member may participate in any dealing (buying or selling of artifacts for profit as distinguished from occasional sale or exchange from a personal collection).
5. Under no circumstances shall artifacts removed from the CCRM collections be obtained by CCRM staff, volunteers, senior employment workers, their families, or members of the governing boards.

### **E. Appraisals/Authentications (referrals)**

Referrals of any nature may be made to qualified, neutral, reputable individuals and organizations on a case-by-case basis, but any and all relationships between individuals affiliated with the CCRM and said referral parties must be made explicit and reported to the CCRM Board of Directors members. No CCRM Board of Directors member or CCRM staff shall attempt to obtain personal or monetary profit or gain from said referral.

### **F. Using Museum Assets for Personal Gain**

No CCRM Board of Directors member or CCRM staff shall attempt to utilize any CCRM asset (collections, financial, physical plant, etc.) for personal gain or monetary profit. Likewise, no CCRM Board of Directors member, or CCRM staff personnel shall employ the CCRM's name or reputation, or the RMA's name or reputation for any non-CCRM-related business. Said use is to be strictly confined to CCRM-related business, is to be reported to, and must be approved by the respective body in question.

### **G. Gifts, Favors, Dispensations, etc.**

No CCRM Board of Directors members or RMA Board of Directors members shall accept any pay, stipend, salary, or other remuneration while engaged in board business on behalf of the CCRM. Individual CCRM Board of Directors members or RMA Board of Directors members may be contracted for odd jobs related to their personal business, but shall adhere to the rules governing bidding and contracting set forth by Campbell County. No CCRM Board of Directors member, RMA Board of Directors member, or CCRM staff personnel shall seek to obtain individual monetary benefit from any fundraising activities engaged in by the CCRM or RMA activities undertaken on behalf of the CCRM. No CCRM Board of Directors member, RMA Board of Directors member, or CCRM staff personnel shall solicit or accept any gift, favor, or dispensation for any action or proposed action taken on behalf of, and under the auspices of the CCRM.

### **H. Outside Activities and Affiliations**

CCRM employees should disclose to the CCRM Director the facts concerning any planned outside employment or consulting arrangements as outlined in Campbell County Government Personnel Guideline #208. If approval is given for outside employment by the CCRM Director, the following ethical guidelines apply:

The name of, and the employee's connection with the CCRM, should be sparingly and respectfully used in connection with outside activities. CCRM professionals should conduct

themselves so that their activities on behalf of community or public service organizations do not reflect adversely on the reputation or integrity of the CCRM.

Occasionally, individuals affiliated with the CCRM may be asked to serve in a professional capacity on boards or commissions. To eliminate conflicts-of-interest, or the appearance of potential for conflicts, such service should be reported in writing to the Executive Director and/or the assembled CCRM Board of Directors, as appropriate procedure dictates. Such service is to be performed on the individual's personal time, except as authorized in writing by the Executive Director or representative quorum of the CCRM Board of Directors, as appropriate procedure dictates. Individuals associated with the CCRM may serve on bodies affiliated with outside organizations so long as the activity does not impair the individual's ability to act with total objectivity regarding the CCRM's interests, or interfere with his/her job performance on behalf of the CCRM. The Executive Director shall report the outside services of any subordinate CCRM staff to the CCRM Board of Directors. Volunteer activity will likewise be reported to the CCRM Board of Directors, to avoid even the appearance of a conflict-of-interest to a disinterested third party.

### **I. Political Activity**

CCRM Board of Directors members, RMA Board of Directors members, and CCRM staff may participate in political activity as private citizens. However, any political activity undertaken on behalf of the CCRM shall be guided by all applicable federal, state, and county laws and regulations regarding lobbying and political activity.

As private citizens, CCRM employees have the right to be members of political parties and other political, special interest, or community groups. However, it is necessary for employees to consider whether involvement as members of such groups could lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest and have an impact on CCRM's reputation. If employees become aware that a potential conflict of interest has arisen or might arise, they should disclose the matter to the CCRM Executive Director immediately and may have to stop the activity or withdraw from the areas of their work where the conflict is occurring.

### **J. CCRM Property**

All CCRM property, particularly collections materials, belongs in perpetuity to the citizens of Campbell County, and cannot be sold or purchased. Relevant exceptions to this statement concerning the deaccessioning and disposal of collections items shall be conducted in full accordance with those policy and procedural guidelines approved and adopted by the CCRM Board of Directors, and enumerated in the "Campbell County Rockpile Museum Collections Policy."

## **K. Loans**

Although loans of collections and/or objects to the CCRM from CCRM Board of Directors members, RMA Board of Directors members, and CCRM staff shall be permitted, in all circumstances said loans shall be undertaken only in a circumstance wherein the loan meets the most rigorous standards of professional scholarship, principally serves to the benefit of the CCRM and the general public, does not confer upon the lender any personal or monetary benefit, and wherein the loan is documented according to the policy and procedural guidelines adopted and approved by the CCRM Board of Directors, and enumerated in the “Campbell County Rockpile Museum Collections Policy.” In circumstances where the lender may receive some personal or monetary benefit due to the exhibition of loaned materials, these items may identify the lender as “Anonymous,” so as to preclude even the possibility of creating in the mind of a disinterested third-party the appearance of a conflict-of-interest.

## **L. Confidentiality**

Respecting the privacy of our clients, donors, members, staff, and volunteers is a basic value of the CCRM. Personal and financial information is confidential and should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without expressed permission or authorization from the CCRM Board of Directors or Executive Director.

CCRM Board of Directors members, CCRM staff, and CCRM volunteers shall maintain in the strictest confidence information learned during the course of their CCRM activities, when that information concerns the administration or activities of the CCRM and is not generally available to the public. Neither CCRM Board of Directors members, nor RMA Board of Directors members, nor CCRM staff or volunteers may take advantage of privileged information obtained as a result of their position, nor may they permit others to make use of said information otherwise unavailable to the public for furthering personal interest or gain.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this code of ethics and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline.

## **M. Ownership of Scholarly Material**

Any artifact, its documentation, and all additional documentation accrued or developed on county time subsequent to its acquisition are the property of the CCRM. They may not be used by CCRM staff, for personal or financial gain. Any other materials written, designed, or produced by CCRM staff on county time is the property of the CCRM. Ownership of, or

remuneration for, scholarship created on personal time must be approved by the CCRM Executive Director.

#### **N. Responsibilities of Employees after They Leave CCRM**

CCRM employees should not allow themselves or their work to be influenced by plans for, or offers of, employment outside of CCRM. If they do, there is a conflict of interest and the integrity of the employee and CCRM is at risk.

Employees and volunteers leaving CCRM's employment should ensure that they do not accept employment or engage in activities which would allow them to make improper use of information gained as a consequence of their employment with CCRM or which may cast doubt on their integrity or that of CCRM. Former employees should not use, or take advantage of, confidential information that may lead to gain or profit obtained in the course of their official duties, until it has become publicly available.

All employees should be careful in their dealings with former CCRM employees and make sure that they do not give them, or appear to give them, favorable treatment or access to privileged information.

#### **VOLUNTEERS:**

CCRM staff should be supportive of volunteers, receive them as fellow workers, and willingly provide appropriate training and opportunity for the volunteers' intellectual enrichment. Access to the CCRM's inner activities is a privilege, and the lack of material compensation for effort expended on behalf of the CCRM in no way frees the volunteer from adherence to the standards that apply to paid staff. The volunteer must work toward the betterment of the CCRM and not for any personal gain other than the natural gratification and enrichment inherent in CCRM participation. Conflict of interest restrictions placed upon staff must be explained to volunteers and, where relevant, observed by them. Volunteers must hold confidential matters of program function and administration.

#### **CODE OF ETHICS REVIEW:**

Formal review of this Rockpile Museum Code of Ethics will take place at least once every five years from the date of last approval. Following this review, the Campbell County Rockpile Museum Board of Directors should reaffirm or revise this Code of Ethics as needed.

**This code was first adopted by the Campbell County Rockpile Museum Board of Directors on February 16, 2016. It should be reviewed again by February 16, 2021.**