

APPENDIX B: Indigenous Standards

The information included in this section will provide useful tools in the museum's efforts to understand and implement the standards related to the care and interpretation of Indigenous collections.

"Sensitive" Items

The term "sensitive" can be described as:

- Anything used in ceremony;
- Anything that a person used that reflected the spiritual power of that person;
- Items used in ceremonies;
- Items found at grave sites;
- Items found at sacred sites, left as offerings;
- Cultural items that have ongoing historical and/or cultural importance to an Aboriginal community;
- Items are sensitive when their treatment and handling by a museum offends or is recognized or known to be inappropriate to the people who know and understand the use/history/meaning of the item.

Examples of "sensitive" items include but are not limited to:

- Medicine bundles;
- Pipes and stems, associated pipe bags;
- Eagle feathers and fans;
- Drums (except those made for display);
- Human skeletal remains;
- Items known to be grave goods;
- Ceremonial bundles;
- Umbilical cord packages;
- Items with red ochre on them;
- Moccasins with beading on the bottom;
- Items known to come from a sacred site that were left as an offering at the site;
- Material that was left to the elements after a Sun Dance;
- Pieces of cloth or leather tied together and filled with tobacco or medicine;
- Pictographs and petroglyphs in rock, and stones known to come from effigies or used for ceremonial purposes;
- False Face masks;
- Rattles;
- Bone whistles;
- Sweetgrass;
- Painted tipis;
- Backrest banners;
- Hawk feather fans;
- Staffs;
- Headdresses.

Note: The sensitivity and/or sacredness of items, sites, etc. are dependent upon the culture and context from which they come. Even within a particular culture the sensitivity and/or sacredness may be dependent upon an individual, a family or a group of that culture, and should be consulted. The items listed above are frequently considered sensitive and/or sacred. If a museum holds one or more of these

items in its collections and has no specific information about the sensitivity and/or sacredness of these items, they should seek out help and treat these items in a sensitive and respectful manner according to the standards.

Developed Sites

A development site is a natural environment site that will:

- A. Have existing facilities;
- B. Have programming;
- C. Be under the authority of a registered group (examples – the provincial government, municipality, etc)

Traditional Practitioners

Traditional practitioners may be described as:

- Individuals who are recognized by the community as Elders and respected for their cultural expertise;
- Individuals who practice the traditional rituals of his/her people and are knowledgeable about the use/storage of sacred items;
- Respected Elders;
- Pipe Holders;
- Cultural Elders;
- Oskapeewis/Oskhapewis; translation: an Elder who gives assistance.

Indigenous Resources

The following list is not exhaustive but is meant as a guide to reliable reference books and journals. Books marked with asterisk (*) can be found in the MAS library. Where possible Internet addresses have been provided.

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