

**Washington Preservation Initiative
of the Washington State Library**

**2004 Preservation Planning
Survey Report**

July, 2004

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I. Executive Summary

The Washington Preservation Initiative (WPI) Survey project consisted of a mail survey and a targeted series of telephone interviews. This report presents findings for each part of the project, and a discussion of possible applications of the results.

The return rate of 21% is considered excellent for a mail survey sent to an audience which may be unfamiliar with preservation, the WPI, or both.

While the findings of the survey showed a low priority, low funding level, and low staffing levels for preservation (similar results to many previous statewide preservation surveys done in other states), other results showed the immediate impact of the WPI as a trusted information resource, education provider/sponsor, and an advocate for preservation. The feedback from the mail and telephone surveys combined is a strong endorsement of the WPI as an instrument to change the level of preservation awareness and impact in the state of Washington.

Information and training on a wide variety of subjects — from book repair to digital imaging — is in growing demand in the state, and the WPI is seen as an important source. Institution-level preservation surveys are also needed.

Education and surveys can help address the preservation needs of library formats such as scrapbooks, ephemera, and photographs, which were rated in fair or poor condition by a majority of respondents. These efforts may also help to address the low number of institutions having disaster plans, by spurring libraries to complete these documents.

There is a growing interest in Statewide services for locating and securing preservation grants, and book and paper conservation were also seen as strong statewide needs in the mail survey.

While the telephone survey provided further strong support for continuing WPI efforts, it also uncovered some additional needs, including tools or resource people to help libraries identify unique materials to be selected for preservation. The need for continuing funding for preservation, and the WPI's role in helping libraries locate and apply for that funding, was also emphasized.

In moving forward to further address the preservation needs of the state, the Washington Preservation Initiative can take a leadership role in advocacy and funding for preservation and the development of institutional preservation plans. As the WPI program grows, it can look to model programs in states such as New Mexico, California, and North Carolina as possible initiatives to emulate.

II. WPI Mail Survey

A. Objectives

The Washington State Library and OCLC conducted a mail survey among Washington libraries to determine the preservation needs of libraries in the state, and the potential market for preservation services. The intent was to learn about libraries' use of preservation services and training over the past three years and their needs for assistance in preserving their collections over the next three years.

The main objectives of this study were to determine:

- Current preservation environment
- Preservation information sources
- Preservation training

- Preservation issues
- Disaster planning and response
- Preservation services needed
- Library characteristics

B. Respondents

The sample for this study was supplied by Washington State Library and consisted of 514 libraries. Questionnaires were sent to library directors with a cover letter from the Washington Secretary of State.

Questionnaires were mailed on February 17, 2004, to library directors of 514 libraries in the state of Washington. Reminder postcards were sent the week of March 8. By the survey deadline (March 29), 110 libraries had completed questionnaires, for a response rate of 21%. This return rate is considered excellent for a survey going to an audience which may not be familiar with the Washington Preservation Initiative — the organization that is the sponsor of the survey — or may not be familiar with preservation in general.

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by library type. Surveys were completed by 43 Public libraries (39%), 31 Academic libraries (28%), and 36 Other types of libraries (33%). The “Other” category included respondents from school libraries, government agencies, law, medical and tribal libraries, archives, historical societies, and other types of special libraries.

Although the overall response rate for Archives, Historical Societies and Tribal institutions was low, and is included in the “Other” category for the majority of this report, information on these institutions was broken out in some crosstabulations reported below.

TABLE 1. SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY LIBRARY TYPE

| LIBRARY TYPE | SURVEYS DISTRIBUTED | | RESPONDENTS | | PERCENTAGE BY TYPE COMPLETED |
|--------------|---------------------|------|-------------|------|------------------------------|
| | # | % | # | % | % |
| Public | 277 | 54% | 43 | 39% | 15% |
| Academic | 62 | 12% | 31 | 28% | 50% |
| Other | 175 | 34% | 36 | 33% | 20% |
| TOTAL | 514 | 100% | 110 | 100% | |

C. Summary Findings

1. Current Preservation Environment

A lack of funding for preservation activities, and a low priority placed on preservation are the top obstacles to preservation among the libraries surveyed.

Priority Placed on Preservation

Preservation has low priority in most libraries (67%), compared to other library activities, and average priority for another 22%. Only 6% of respondents say their library places a high priority on preservation.

Respondents were asked to explain why their library places low or average priority on preservation:

- For the 74 respondents where preservation has low priority, the main reasons are the nature of their collections (57%), lack of funding (54%), lack of staff (53%), and the mission and goals of the library (49%).
- For the 24 respondents with average priority for preservation, the top two reasons are lack of funding and lack of staff (75% each).

- Breaking Archives/Historical Societies out of “Other,” all ranked priority medium or high.
- Whether or not the library had a preservation survey/assessment did not change the general ranking.

Funding for Preservation

Source of Funding

The library’s own budget is a source of preservation funding for seven in 10 respondents (70%)—this includes 52% with no other source of funding and 18% with other sources. Another 5% rely exclusively on outside sources, and one-fourth of respondents have no funding for preservation (24%) or don’t know (2%). The library’s own budget is a funding source more frequently among Academic (90%) than Public (65%) or Other (58%) libraries, and more often among those with 50,000 or more volumes (87%) than those with less than 50,000 volumes (59%).

Preservation Budget

Respondents were asked what percentage of the library’s annual budget is allocated for preservation activities—including staff costs, contract binding, microfilming, conservation, supplies and equipment.

For the majority of libraries (77%), only 1% or less of the library’s budget is allocated for preservation, as shown in Table 2: this includes 43% who say the percentage is zero (0) and another 34% who say the percentage is 1% (or a fraction of that). For less than one in 10 respondents (8%), the portion of the budget earmarked for preservation is 2 to 5%; for another 3%, the figure is 10 to 30% of the total budget. The remainder say they don’t know (3%) or did not answer the question (10%).

While the majority of Public, Tribal, and other respondents allocated 0% of their budget to preservation, 55% (17) Academic respondents and 35% (15) Public Libraries allocated 1% of their budget. One public library and two archives/historical societies (29%) reported allocating 5% of their budget to preservation; one archive reported a 50% allocation and one “other category” institution reported a 30% budget allocation. All institutions reporting an allocation of 25% or more were located in the Seattle/Western Washington region. Surprisingly, four libraries reporting 5% or larger allocations were among the smallest respondents (\$250,000 and below budget).

When asked the dollar amount allocated for preservation, 43% say the amount is zero (0). Nearly one-third (31%) have less than \$10,000, including 13% with less than \$1,000 and 18% with \$1,000-9,999. Only 11% have \$10,000 or more allocated for preservation. The remainder say they don’t know (5%) or did not answer the question (10%).

TABLE 2. PRESERVATION BUDGET - DOLLAR AMOUNT & PERCENT OF TOTAL BUDGET

| PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET | DOLLAR AMOUNT | | | | | TOTAL % | |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|--------|---------|------------|
| | Zero (\$0) | \$1-\$999 | \$1,000-\$9,999 | \$10,000 or more | DK/ NA | | |
| Zero (0%) | 43% | — | — | — | — | 43% | 77% |
| 1% or less | — | 9% | 14% | 7% | 4% | 34% | |
| 2% - 5% | — | 1% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 8% | |
| 10% - 30% | — | 1% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 3% | |
| Don't know/No answer | — | 2% | 2% | 0% | 9% | 13% | |
| Total - Dollar Amount | 43% | 13% | 18% | 11% | 15% | 100% | |
| | | 31% | | | | | |

Staffing for Preservation

Respondents were asked the size of the library’s staff and the preservation staff in permanent full-time equivalents (FTEs) in four categories: professionals, support staff, student assistants, and volunteers.

Few respondents have any preservation staff members in three categories: professionals (15%), student assistants (10%), or volunteers (7%), as shown in Table 3. Slightly more than one-fourth have preservation support staff (27%), including only 5% with more than one support staff FTE.

By totalling responses in each category, the survey determined there are approximately 11 professional staff, 24 support staff, 9 student assistants, and 17 volunteer FTE preservation staff statewide.

TABLE 3. LIBRARY STAFF AND PRESERVATION STAFF

| PRESERVATION STAFF IN FTEs | TOTAL STAFF | | | | | TOTAL PRESERV. STAFF |
|---|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| | NONE | 1-3 | 4-10 | > 10 | DK/NA | |
| PROFESSIONALS: PRESERVATION STAFF | | | | | | |
| None | 7% | 31% | 16% | 3% | 4% | 61% |
| Any professionals (total) | 0% | 4% | 5% | 6% | 0% | 15% |
| 0.1-0.5 | 0% | 1% | 4% | 3% | 0% | 7% |
| 0.6-1 | 0% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 0% | 5% |
| More than 1 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 2% |
| Don't know/No answer | 4% | 8% | 3% | 0% | 10% | 25% |
| TOTAL PROFESSIONAL STAFF | 11% | 43% | 24% | 9% | 14% | 100% |
| SUPPORT STAFF: PRESERVATION STAFF | | | | | | |
| None | 9% | 10% | 9% | 4% | 5% | 36% |
| Any support staff (total) | 0% | 4% | 8% | 13% | 3% | 27% |
| 0.1-0.5 | 0% | 3% | 8% | 6% | 1% | 18% |
| 0.6-1 | 0% | 1% | 0% | 3% | 1% | 5% |
| More than 1 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 4% | 1% | 5% |
| Don't know/No answer | 5% | 6% | 2% | 3% | 21% | 36% |
| TOTAL SUPPORT STAFF | 14% | 20% | 19% | 19% | 28% | 100% |
| STUDENT ASSISTANTS: PRESERVATION STAFF | | | | | | |
| None | 22% | 10% | 5% | 1% | 10% | 47% |
| Any student assistants (total) | 0% | 4% | 3% | 4% | 0% | 10% |
| 0.1-0.5 | 0% | 4% | 2% | 2% | 0% | 7% |
| 0.6-1 | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| More than 1 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% | 2% |
| Don't know/No answer | 7% | 5% | 1% | 1% | 28% | 43% |
| TOTAL STUDENT ASSISTANTS | 29% | 19% | 8% | 5% | 38% | 100% |
| VOLUNTEERS: PRESERVATION STAFF | | | | | | |
| None | 30% | 6% | 1% | 1% | 12% | 50% |
| Any volunteers (total) | 2% | 3% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 7% |
| 0.1-0.5 | 0% | 3% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 4% |
| 0.6-1 | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| More than 1 | 2% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 4% |
| Don't know/No answer | 7% | 6% | 1% | 0% | 28% | 43% |
| TOTAL VOLUNTEERS | 39% | 15% | 3% | 2% | 41% | 100% |

- A majority of respondents in all types, sizes, and locations of institutions believe staffing for preservation functions is not adequate (60%), including 30% who have ideas on where they would add staff: book repair (6%), support staff (4%), professional staff (3%), archives (3%), and a wide variety of other suggestions. One-fourth say that staffing is adequate (26%), and the rest did not answer the question (14%).

Key Findings – Current Preservation Environment

- Preservation has low priority in most libraries in Washington, mainly due to nature of collections, lack of funding, lack of staff, and library mission and goals.
- The library's own budget is the major source of preservation funding. However, for the majority of libraries, only 1% of the library's budget is spent on preservation activities, and many libraries (43%) said they allocated \$0 to preservation, and 30% said they budgeted less than \$10,000.
- Few respondents have professional preservation staff, student assistants, or volunteers for preservation activities. Over 25% of the libraries surveyed have preservation support staff.
- Most of the respondents felt preservation staffing is inadequate.

2. Preservation Information Sources

PreserveNW Listserv

Only 14% of respondents subscribe to the PreserveNW listserv. Half do not subscribe (49%), one-fourth say they were not aware of the listserv (26%), and the remainder don't know (9%) or did not answer the question (2%).

Current and Preferred Information Sources

Respondents were asked where they currently obtain preservation information, and how they would prefer to get it.

- The top four current sources are training workshops (34%), Web sites (32%), books (32%), and communication with resource people by telephone or e-mail (30%). Other sources used by more than 5% are printed newsletters or journals (22%) and listservs (19%). One-fourth of respondents (24%) have no current source of information, and 18% did not answer the question.
- Half of respondents would prefer to get preservation information from training workshops (50%), including 30% who do not currently get information from that source. About three in 10 respondents would prefer to get information from communication with resource people by telephone or e-mail (31%) or Web sites (29%)

Topics in Greatest Demand

Five preservation topics stand out as the most urgently needed types of information:

- The top two are digitization/imaging (39%) and care and handling of library/ archival materials (38%), followed closely by book repair (33%), disaster preparedness and recovery (30%), and grant funding/fund-raising for preservation (27%). While *Digitization* was the top information need for Academic (48% or 15), Public (37% or 16), and Archives/Historical Societies (57% or 4), "Other" institutions needed *Book Repair* information the most (39% or 11). *Care and Handling* and *Book Repair* were also high needs by each institution type.
- Other types of information needed by more than 20% are conservation and electronic records preservation (22% each). Only 2% say they don't need any information.
- This question related to delivery of preservation information and did not specify the method. Smaller libraries needed *Book Repair* (40% or 25) and *Care and Handling* information; medium and large institutions were most interested in *Digitization*. *Care and Handling* (45% or 27) and *Digitization* were the topics that most interested those in Seattle/Olympia/Western; *Digitization* (43% or 26) and *Electronic Records Preservation* (36% or 15) were ranked highest in Central/Eastern Washington.
- For libraries that had a survey/assessment, Disaster Preparedness and Recovery, Preservation of Photographic Materials, and Scrapbook Preservation were the most popular future workshops; for those who had not, Care and Handling, Basic Book Repair, Preservation Needs Assessments, and Digitization were the most popular.

Key Findings – Preservation Information Sources

- Only 14% of the respondents subscribe to the PreserveNW listserv, while 26% were not aware of the listserv and half do not subscribe.
- Top current preservation information sources are training workshops (34%), Web sites (32%), books (32%), and telephone or e-mail contact with preservation resource people (30%). Preferred resources are training workshops (50%), communication with resources by phone or e-mail (31%), and websites (29%).
- Digitization, Care and Handling, and Book Repair were the top areas of information need, with larger libraries seeking digitization information and smaller needing Book Repair and Care and Handling. Those libraries which had conducted a preservation survey needed information on topics reflecting seemingly different concerns, including disaster preparedness, photograph preservation, and scrapbook preservation.

3. Preservation Training

Staff members have attended educational programs on preservation issues in the past three years at more than one-third of the libraries surveyed (37%). More than half of respondents did not attend (52%) preservation training, and the remainder don't know (8%) or did not answer the question (3%).

Training Topics - Past Three Years

The topics of preservation training received by respondents over the past three years are varied:

- The top two are disaster preparedness and recovery (24%), digitization/ imaging (20%).
- Other training topics named by 10% or more are basic book repair (13%), awareness of preservation issues (12%), and pest management (10%).

Training Topics - Next Three Years

Many respondents are interested in training topics over the next three years:

- The most popular topic for future training is book repair—40% are interested in basic (30%) or advanced (25%) book repair or both (15%).
- Several other topics generate interest among more than 20% of respondents: care and handling of library/archival materials (31%), followed by digitization/imaging (25%), preservation needs assessments for collections (25%), grant funding/fund-raising for preservation (23%), and preservation of photographic materials (21%).
- Among Academics, *Basic* (42% or 13) and *Advanced* (32% or 14) *Book Repair* were the top training needs. *Care and Handling* (28% or 12) and *Grantwriting* (28% or 12) were tops among Public Libraries. *Preservation of Magnetic Media*, *Preservation of Sound Recordings*, and *Preservation Needs Assessment* were tied among Archives and Historical Societies; in fact, *Needs Assessment Training* was a popular response across all library types.
- *Basic Book Repair* was far and away the highest training need for small libraries (37% or 23); *Care and Handling* and *Digitization* both garnered 40% or 10 responses. Large libraries need *Care and Handling* and *Advanced Book Repair* (38% or 8). *Care and Handling* was the top need in Western Washington (38% or 23); *Grantwriting* in Central/Eastern Washington (29% or 12).

Preferred Format for Training

The most preferable format for preservation training is a workshop (85%), far ahead of a distance learning course (14%) or a college or university course (4%). In addition, most respondents prefer a short workshop (65%), lasting one day (43%) or half a day (28%).

Preferred Location for Training

A majority of respondents would prefer training in Seattle/Olympia/Western Washington (55%), including 40% who prefer Seattle. Nearly four in 10 respondents prefer Central/Eastern Washington (38%), including Spokane (17%) and Central Washington (15%). Evaluating these results, the WPI needs to continue its practice of holding each of its workshops in at least two locations in the state. All types and sizes of libraries preferred Seattle/Olympia/Western Washington as a training location over Central or Eastern sites.

Barriers to Training

Cost and time are the major barriers to sending staff members to preservation training. More than one-third of respondents cite cost-related reasons—travel costs too much (35%) or registration costs too much (34%)—and nearly as many say they can't spare the staff time (31%). One-fourth of respondents say that workshops aren't available in Washington (25%). The biggest training barriers by type were “*Registration costs too much*” for academic libraries (45% or 14), “*Can't spare staff time*” (37% or 16) for public libraries; and “*Travel costs*” for Tribal and Other libraries. *Travel* and *Registration* costs were chief concerns by size of library and location as well. These results show that further awareness of the wide variety of topics and the free training registration costs of WPI-sponsored sessions needs to be built.

Key Findings – Preservation Training

- Just over one-third of the survey respondents attended training on preservation issues during the past three years, with disaster preparedness and recovery and digitization/imaging.
- For the next three years, basic and advanced book repair are the top training needs. Care and Handling, Digitization, and Preservation Needs Assessments were other top choices. There are numerous differences in top training needs by type of library.
- Short (one-day) workshops are the preferred preservation training format, and Seattle/Olympia/Western Washington was the preferred location, with 40% of the respondents specifically preferring Seattle.
- Travel costs, registration costs, and inability to spare staff time were the most prominent barriers to training. These results show that further awareness of the wide variety of topics and the free training registration costs of WPI-sponsored sessions needs to be built.

4. Preservation Issues

Preservation Survey - Overall

Only 7% of respondents say their library has done a preservation survey or assessment—typically including building condition, collection condition and preservation policies. Another 5% say a survey is planned, but the overwhelming majority have not done a survey (81%). Of the eight respondents who have done a survey, five specified the year the survey was done (1998-2003) and six specified who did the survey (three were done by staff members). Only one respondent had used a preservation or conservation center.

Preservation Survey - Part of Collection

Fifteen percent of respondents say the library has done a preservation survey for part of their collections, including rare book collections (4%), microforms (2%), and 12 other portions mentioned by 1% each. Three-fourths of all respondents have not done even a partial survey (75%).

Steps Taken to Prolong Collection Life

Virtually all respondents (91%) have taken steps to prolong the life of their collections, most commonly book repair (70%), followed by binding (48%). More than a third have developed policies on food and drink (37%). Other steps taken by more than 20% include: improved collection security (27%), made preservation photocopies (24%), upgraded storage supplies (23%), and microfilmed newspapers or other collections (22%). Only one in 10 respondents have taken no steps (9%).

Of the 100 respondents who have taken steps to prolong collection life, about one-third have written policies or guidelines (32%) on any of those steps, most frequently policies on food and drink (12%), book repair (9%), binding (9%), or a disaster plan (9%). The majority of these 100 respondents do not have written policies (63%), and 5% did not answer the question.

Both libraries that had a survey or were planning it, and those who had not, took steps to prolong the life of their collections, including *Basic Book Repair, Binding, and Food and Drink Policies*.

Overall Condition of Library’s Holdings

Respondents were asked the overall condition of 11 types of items in their library’s holdings: Good, Fair, or Poor. The results appear in Table 4.

- Of those with each type of materials, a majority rate the condition of four types as Good: the top two are books (70%) and microfilm/microfiche (65%), followed by periodicals (59%) and moving images (including videos) (53%)
- Six types of materials are in Fair or Poor condition according to a majority of respondents: photographs (80%), graphic/paper (79%), scrapbooks (79%), ephemera (73%), manuscripts (68%), cartographic materials (61%), and sound recordings (52%).
- The overall collection condition of *Books, Microfilm/Microfiche, and Periodicals* in all types of collections was good. Conditions for *Moving Image Materials* and *Sound Recordings* was good to fair. Overall condition of *Cartographic Materials, Manuscripts, Photographs, and Scrapbooks* was seen as fair. While no format was seen as generally being in poor condition, a sizeable number of public libraries noted that their *Ephemera, Graphic/Paper, and Scrapbook* collections were in poor condition.
- *Books, Microfilm/Microfiche, Moving Images, and Periodicals* were ranked in “Good” in condition by all sizes and locations of libraries. *Cartographic, Graphic/Paper, Manuscript, Photograph, and Scrapbook* material ranked “fair” by size of library and location, although a good deal of poor-condition *Ephemera* and *Scrapbook* material was noted, especially in libraries in the Western portion of the state.

TABLE 4. RATING OF OVERALL CONDITION OF ITEMS

| FORMAT | RATING | | | FAIR/POOR TOTAL | %S BASED ON: |
|----------------------------|--------|------|------|-----------------|--------------|
| | GOOD | FAIR | POOR | | |
| Books | 70% | 29% | 1% | 30% | 108 |
| Microfilm/microfiche | 65% | 34% | 1% | 35% | 68 |
| Periodicals | 59% | 38% | 3% | 41% | 98 |
| Moving images | 53% | 45% | 1% | 47% | 73 |
| Sound recordings | 48% | 46% | 6% | 52% | 65 |
| Cartographic materials | 39% | 47% | 15% | 61% | 62 |
| Manuscripts | 32% | 58% | 10% | 68% | 31 |
| Ephemera (pamphlets, etc.) | 27% | 63% | 11% | 73% | 64 |
| Graphic/paper | 21% | 62% | 18% | 79% | 39 |
| Scrapbooks | 21% | 48% | 30% | 79% | 33 |
| Photographs | 20% | 61% | 20% | 80% | 46 |

Note: Percentages in this table are based on those respondents who answered about each type of item, excluding those who checked Not Applicable or did not answer the question.

Key Findings – Preservation Issues

- Seven percent of the libraries have done a preservation survey/assessment on building and collection condition and preservation policies; 15% have done a survey on portions of their collections.
- Almost all the respondents have taken some preservation steps to prolong the life of their collections,

most often book repair, binding, and development of food and drink policies. About one-third of these respondents have written guidelines or policies on these steps.

- The condition of Books, Microfilm/Microfiche, and Periodicals was rated good by a majority of respondents. Photographs (80%), scrapbooks (79%), graphic/paper materials (79%), ephemera (73%), manuscripts (68%), cartographic materials (61%), and sound recordings (52%) were most often seen as being in fair or poor condition.

5. Most Serious Preservation Problems

Respondents identified 44 specific types of problems when asked about the three most serious preservation problems in their library.

The problems reported most by respondents were:

- deterioration and preservation needs of rare materials and historical collections (19 respondents)
- lack of funding (12 respondents)
- lack of time (11 respondents)
- book mending and repair needs (11 respondents)
- lack of awareness/training (10 respondents)
- lack of space (10 respondents)
- lack of staff (9 respondents)
- photo deterioration (8 respondents)
- environmental problems (7 respondents)
- newspaper deterioration (6 respondents)
- audiovisual material deterioration (6 respondents)

See Appendices B and C for the raw data and a content analysis of these responses.

6. Disaster Planning and Response

Environmental Controls

Three-fourths of respondents (75%) have controls for environmental conditions in all or some facilities. Only temperature controls are installed in a majority of libraries.

- More than two-thirds of respondents (68%) have temperature controls in all (49%) or some (19%) facilities, as shown in Table 5.
- Nearly half have light controls (48%), about one-third have dirt and dust controls (35%), and only about one-fourth have controls for humidity (27%) or pests and vermin (25%).

TABLE 5. CONTROLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

| CONDITION | ALL FACILITIES | SOME FACILITIES | ALL/SOME TOTAL |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Temperature | 49% | 19% | 68% |
| Light | 33% | 15% | 48% |
| Dirt and dust (air filtering) | 26% | 8% | 35% |
| Humidity | 13% | 15% | 27% |
| Pests and vermin | 18% | 7% | 25% |
| Other | 1% | — | 1% |
| None | 25% | 25% | 25% |
| No answer | 2% | 2% | 2% |

Fire Prevention Equipment

Fire prevention equipment is more common than environmental controls among these respondents. Virtually all respondents have some type of equipment (95%).

- The vast majority of respondents (87%) have fire extinguishers in either all (80%) or some (7%) facilities, as Table 6 shows. Most (65%) say the fire extinguishers are inspected regularly.
- Other commonplace types of equipment are fire alarms (81%) and smoke detectors (75%).
- Less than half have wet-pipe sprinklers (42%), and fewer than 10% have any other types of equipment.

TABLE 6. FIRE PREVENTION EQUIPMENT

| EQUIPMENT | ALL FACILITIES | SOME FACILITIES | ALL/SOME TOTAL |
|---|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Fire extinguishers (total) | 80% | 7% | 87% |
| Inspected regularly | 61% | 4% | 65% |
| Not inspected regularly | 1% | 0% | 1% |
| Inspection not specified | 18% | 4% | 22% |
| Fire alarms | 68% | 13% | 81% |
| Smoke detectors | 67% | 8% | 75% |
| Wet-pipe sprinklers | 31% | 11% | 42% |
| Non-aqueous fire-suppression systems, e.g., Halon | 3% | 5% | 8% |
| Dry-pipe sprinklers | 5% | 3% | 7% |
| Heat detectors | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Other | 4% | 2% | 2% |
| None | 5% | 5% | 5% |

Disasters That Damaged Materials – Past Five Years

Three in 10 respondents (30%) say the library has experienced a disaster that damaged materials in the past five years; two-thirds (67%) have not had such a disaster.

Of the 33 respondents whose libraries have experienced disasters:

- Two-thirds were caused by a water leakage (67%), half by an earthquake (52%). Other causes are fire (6%) and temperature control malfunction (1%).
- Virtually all used internal staff for cleanup or repair (94%)—either internal staff only (64%) or internal staff and others (30%), such as commercial disaster recovery vendors or external consultants. The main reasons for enlisting the help of outside sources are the scope of the disaster (15%) and lack of expertise or lack of facilities (9% each).
- For most, the disaster did not force the library to close (61%), but the library was closed temporarily for 39%. For one respondent (3%), the library was closed permanently.

Disaster Planning

About two-thirds of respondents (67%) have no written disaster plan for the recovery of damaged materials. Only 14% have a written disaster plan, including 6% who have had a disaster in the past five years and 6% who have not. Another 10% say a plan is being prepared (4% of those have had a disaster; 5% have not), the remainder don’t know (9%) or did not answer the question (2%). Whether or not the library had a preservation assessment/survey did not change the percentages noticeably.

Key Findings – Disaster Planning and Response

- A majority of respondents have environmental control systems in all or a part of their facilities, most

often temperature and light controls.

- Virtually all of the libraries surveyed have some type of fire prevention equipment, most often fire extinguishers and alarms, or smoke detectors. Only about 40% have any type of sprinkler systems.
- Thirty percent of the respondents have had a disaster in the past five years, mostly due to water leaks or earthquakes. These disasters resulted in temporary closure for almost 40% of the affected institutions. Most utilized staff for cleanup.
- A very low level (14%) of institutions have a written disaster plan, and another 10% say a plan is being prepared.

7. Preservation Services

Services Contracted With Vendors – Past Three Years

Half the respondents (50%) have had contracts with preservation vendors over the past three years:

- Respondents most frequently used preservation vendors for binding (36%).
- Other services used by more than 5% are microfilming (17%), digital imaging (10%), training and education (7%), and conservation assistance (6%).

One-third of respondents have had no vendor contracts (34%), and the other 16% did not answer the question.

Services Needed – Next Three Years

A majority of respondents (56%) expect they will need preservation services over the next three years:

- One-third of respondents expect to need binding (33%) over the next three years, and one-fifth want training and education (21%), which represents a large increase in need.
- Several other services will be required by more than 5% of respondents: microfilming (18%), digital imaging and conservation assistance (15% each), grant preparation assistance and preservation site survey/consulting (11% each), and disaster preparedness (8%).
- In descending order, *Binding, Training and Education, Microfilming, Imaging, and Conservation Assistance* were the most-needed services during the next three years for all types of libraries. While the three top vendor needs held across size of library as well, *Conservation Assistance* ranked ahead of *Imaging* in smaller libraries, by size in general and by location. For “Services Required in the Next 3 Years”, *Binding* and *Training and Education* were ranked highest among libraries that had a preservation survey and those that had not.

About one-fourth of respondents will require no services (26%) over the next three years, and the remaining 17% did not answer the question.

Statewide Preservation Services

The vast majority of respondents (85%) would like to see one or more statewide preservation services available in Washington—the other 15% did not answer the question.

- Nearly six in 10 respondents want a place to contact for preservation information (59%).
- Three services appeal to nearly half of respondents: ongoing state support for preservation grants to individual libraries (46%), assistance with disaster planning and recovery (46%), and ongoing state subsidies for preservation workshops (45%).
- Four in 10 respondents would like to see a statewide contract to provide access to a vacuum freeze-drying facility for libraries (40%), and three in 10 want help with preservation surveys (30%).

Preservation Center Facilities

A majority of respondents (61%) are interested in proposed facilities at a preservation center established to offer statewide services. The remainder did not answer the question (36%), don't know (2%), or want none of the proposed facilities (1%).

- The most appealing facility would offer book conservation services (42%), followed by one with paper conservation services (31%). These were also the top responses when looking at libraries that had a survey and those which had not.
- Three other facilities generate interest among more than 10% of respondents: a photograph laboratory/dark room to provide copy services and photograph conservation (16%), a facility for conservation and storage of moving images (12%), and a sound reformatting facility (11%).
- Only 8% are interested in a facility offering cold storage for photographic material.

Top Five Preservation Goals

Respondents were asked the top five things they would do with a hypothetical but significant increase in preservation funding, and most (86%) have plans for such an increase. Only 9% have no plans, and the other 5% did not answer the question.

- The top three goals would be to digitize selected materials (41%), send a staff member for extensive training (40%), and do conservation work on local history collection (35%).
- Four other preservation activities are goals of at least 20% of respondents: contract for a preservation survey of our library (25%), hire more preservation staff (21%), acquire additional equipment for conservation activities (20%), and photograph conservation (20%).
- If the responding libraries received a significant increase in funding for preservation, they would, across all types, use it for digitizing selected materials, sending a staff member for extensive training, contract for Conservation work on local history collections, and contract for a general preservation survey. A large number of public libraries put *Conservation Work on Local History Collections* as their top response. For medium-to-large sized libraries, *Extensive Training* was the top response, while *Digitization* and *Conservation of Local History Collections* topped the list for small libraries. *Digitization* and *Extensive Training* were also the highest choices across all locations, and among libraries that had surveys or had not.

Key Findings – Preservation Services

- Half of the survey respondents have had contracts with preservation vendors over the past three years, most frequently for binding, but that is still a low percentage using this basic service.
- Over half expect to need preservation services over the next three years, including binding and a large increase (from 7% to 21%) in those needing training/education.
- Statewide services needed include: a resource for preservation information (59%); support for preservation grants (46%); disaster planning and recovery assistance (46%); and ongoing subsidies for preservation workshops (45%). If a statewide preservation center/facility is developed, book and paper conservation services are most requested.
- The top three goals with a hypothetical but significant increase in preservation funding would be digitization of selected materials (41%); sending a staff member for extensive training (40%); and doing conservation work on local history collections (35%).

8. Additional Comments

In the final question, addressing other information respondents wanted to supply about their preservation needs, lack of awareness/training/knowledge was by far the largest concern expressed. A number of respondents thanked the Washington State Library for doing this survey project.

9. Sampling Error

Table 7 shows sampling error at the 95% confidence level for all respondents and each sample group.

TABLE 7. SAMPLING ERROR

| PERCENTAGE* | TOTAL | LIBRARY TYPE | | |
|-------------|---------|--------------|----------|--------|
| | | PUBLIC | ACADEMIC | OTHER |
| | N = 110 | N = 43 | N = 31 | N = 36 |
| 10% or 90% | ±5.6% | ±9.0% | ±10.6% | ±9.8% |
| 20% or 80% | ±7.5% | ±12.0% | ±14.1% | ±13.1% |
| 30% or 70% | ±8.6% | ±13.7% | ±16.1% | ±15.0% |
| 40% or 60% | ±9.2% | ±14.6% | ±17.2% | ±16.0% |
| 50% | ±9.3% | ±14.9% | ±17.6% | ±16.3% |

*Note on how to read this table: If 10% of all respondents gave a particular answer, we would expect that response to vary by no more than ±5.6% percentage points.

This sampling error is based on the 95% confidence level, meaning that if the study were repeated 100 times, we would expect the response to fall within that range 95% of the time. The sampling error can be used in projecting results to the total target population, including those who were not surveyed.

III. Telephone Survey

A. Respondents

Two sets of respondents were selected for a series of telephone interviews held between April 19 and May 4, 2004. The first set of 10 respondents was composed of respondents to the mail survey who expressed interest in further development of their institution’s preservation program in mail survey question # 36: “is there anything else you would like to tell us about your preservation needs?” The other set of 7 respondents were members of the Washington Preservation Initiative Advisory Group.

All respondents were polled on a basic set of questions about the preservation activities at their libraries; their involvement with the WPI and its training sessions; the need for preservation surveys; the biggest preservation challenges statewide and how the challenges should be addressed; and questions on preservation funding and collaboration with other cultural heritage institutions in their area on preservation activities. In addition, Advisory Group members were asked about their 3-5 year vision for Statewide Preservation activities in the state, and the potential for cooperative preservation activities with other states.

B. Summary Findings

The telephone survey questions yielded some fascinating information, from immediate needs to long-range planning. Highlights of the responses are provided below, following each question.

1. Can you tell me about the preservation program or activities at your library?

Many of the answers to this question simply provided more details to the profile of the respondent’s institution than could be gained through the mail survey.

However, further discussion on this topic uncovered some basic needs, particularly from the “non-Advisory” respondents expressing interest in preservation program development. Many respondents expressed a need for a tool or a consultant that could help them identify unique materials to be preserved. Especially for historical and local government documents, these respondents need assistance in selecting which materials should be preserved by document type, age, or other selection methods. The WPI should consider developing a Web list

and/or handout characterizing the types of materials which libraries “must consider preserving” – local history, vital records, etc. Another concern was care, handling, and preservation of electronic formats, especially CD-ROMs and audiovisual materials. Finally, a number of institutions which were concerned about lack of staffing for preservation activities asked that the WPI assist in identifying preservation work that needs to be done, and/or do the work for institutions that are shorthanded. “We feel as though we have important materials that are crumbling,” one rural library director said, “and we would appreciate it if big brother could come in and do something about the situation – swoop in and do it. Their first activity could be to assess the collection and tell us if we really have anything worth keeping.” This sentiment was echoed by many respondents, and points to a key role for the WPI.

2. Are you or your staff involved in the Washington Preservation Initiative?

Almost all of the respondents, Advisory Group members or not, had attended WPI-sponsored training, and they were positive about the variety and quality of the workshops. This was the respondents’ main exposure to WPI.

The other thing that respondents appreciated was “access to someone regionally with preservation expertise.”

Based on this positive feedback, WPI needs to continue its workshop series, its information dissemination and promotion via the PreserveNW preservation listserv, and consider the idea of providing more access to preservation information – possibly further phone reference and/or **virtual** discussion or chat sessions.

3. Are you satisfied with the quality of the preservation training available in Washington State? How about the number of sessions?

Responses to these questions reflected the answers in question 2. However, some of the respondents went beyond discussion of training activities to note that “the WPI has been good in comparison to some other State Library-funded initiatives” because it has “delivered a lot of ‘product’ quickly – surveys and training.”

4. Do you feel your institution needs the services of a preservation consultant to assist with preservation surveys of your building or collections? To assist with preservation planning?

A number of respondents were interested in having a preservation survey – at least one asked to have her request passed on as soon as possible so that her institution’s new building project could include preservationally-sound design. Another interested respondent said the survey process could provide “immediate assistance,” and it would be helpful if the surveyor could teach volunteers or work-study interns basic activities such as boxing materials, and could leave behind preservation supplies. Several institutions suggested a surveyor could cover several local libraries in one day. Another institution asked for preservation plans or policies to be posted online, while others asked for help in determining the value of their collections.

Several institutions which had already received a general survey expressed a need for specialized help in developing a preservation plan and addressing or improving environmental concerns. Some conservators in the state also expressed interest in performing the surveys.

**5. What do you personally feel are the biggest preservation challenges statewide?
—and—**

6. How do you think these statewide preservation concerns should be addressed?

Most of the respondents cited funding for preservation as the biggest challenge. Some libraries said they did not have operating funds to support preservation activity. Suggested solutions for this concern, explored more in-depth in question 7, included WPI providing help in writing grants and identifying new sources of preservation funding.

Other respondents saw a need to raise the profile of preservation and to target some education and advocacy efforts toward library directors. Several respondents were especially concerned about preservation of their

local history materials, the format most often mentioned being newspapers. Some respondents felt learning how to “undo messes” caused by previous book repair staff was important, with one even suggesting item-by-item surveys to determine current condition and identify harmful previous repairs.

7. Funding... is considered a problem at this point. Do you have ideas to increase funding for preservation?

Concerns about lack of funding were amplified here, but so were some possible solutions. Suggestions included:

- WPI forming a subcommittee to research funders and publicize opportunities
- WPI developing “talking points” to justify preservation expenditures – information akin to the “Slow Fires” video, to share with presidents and trustees, even the local Chamber of Commerce or service clubs.
- A number of respondents suggested identifying and approaching private or corporate foundations.
- Educating the State Legislature, which one respondent said “seems to have no interest in culture” may be a difficult activity, but several respondents believe this is a good potential funding source.
- One of the biggest concerns was the possibility that the WPI might lose its State Library funding. This will be addressed in Section III of this report.

8. Are you currently, or are you interested in, cooperating with other types of cultural heritage institutions on preservation activities?

Very few library respondents are currently collaborating with other state or local museums, historical societies, or archives on preservation activities. Most are collaborating more on digital projects than on preservation.

Those who are already collaborating are exploring even further outreach to school districts and radio/television outlets. Some reasons given for the general lack of cross-institutional cooperation are differing missions and the inconsistent funding status of potential partners.

Two questions were asked specifically of WPI Advisory Group members.

A-1) What kind of cooperative activities with other states in the region are you interested in?

Advisory Group members felt this may be a way to develop “larger coalitions” to address “amalgamated concerns” shared by cultural heritage institutions in the Northwestern States, and the majority of respondents were supportive of these multi-state interactions.

Becoming familiar with and developing partnerships with other statewide preservation groups for training and other needs was seen as a key activity. Outreach to groups like the Pacific Northwest Historians Guild can benefit both organizations.

A number of respondents also suggested closely monitoring the work of the ORBIS/Cascade Consortium to see if it might be a good partner. While ORBIS/Cascade focuses on four-year academic institutions, their narrow focus/target population may help the group identify some ways to address key preservation issues. Then, ORBIS/Cascade could work with the Washington Preservation Initiative and other preservation-oriented organizations to collaboratively implement these efforts.

A-2) Discuss your 3-5 year vision for Statewide Preservation activities in Washington.

Continuing the WPI’s current grant program was seen as the highest future priority by the most Advisory Group respondents. Growing the program to rival the stature of a well-established program like the New York

State Library Conservation/Preservation Grant program, which funds preservation activities for large academic libraries and provides discretionary funding as well, was seen as a good model.

Continuing the current workshop program was also seen as key, with one respondent suggesting important classes such as Basic Book Repair should be held at 3-4 or more locations in the state, even if this effort was more expensive than other workshops offered.

Building the preservation web presence for the state was also mentioned by a number of respondents; including a variety of disaster plans and preservation policies online and even building the site to the level of “Washington Conservation Online” was mentioned.

Providing supply kits, or at least lists of vendors who offer “preservation-friendly” supplies was seen as another information-provision step for WPI.

In addition, a special outreach effort to address the preservation needs of tribal libraries was also suggested.

Key Findings – Telephone Survey

- A chief need expressed in the telephone surveys was the need for a tool or consultant to help libraries identify unique materials to be preserved.
- The majority of telephone interviewees had attended training sponsored by the Washington Preservation Initiative and were very positive about the experience. Also appreciated was a state-based resource for preservation information.
- Preservation surveys and assessments were also needed — in some cases, the need was immediate. Several institutions which had already had surveys wanted specialized help on environmental issues or preservation planning.
- Funding was the largest Statewide preservation concern noted by this group, and a number of respondents also noted a need to raise the profile of preservation within the State. To address funding issues, respondents suggested the WPI has key roles in researching funders and developing “talking points” for preservation justification.
- WPI Advisory Group members felt that work with other groups and states in the region, such as the Pacific Northwest Historian’s Guild and ORBIS/Cascade would be helpful.
- In the next 3-5 years, continuing and enhancing the Washington Preservation Initiative’s grant and workshop programs were seen as key efforts by the advisory group.
- Another concern was the care, handling, and preservation of electronic formats, especially CD-ROMs and audiovisual materials.
- Several respondents were especially concerned about preservation of their local history materials, the format most often mentioned being newspapers. This need echoes the mail survey response to top preservation goals.
- Some of the respondents went beyond discussion of training activities to note that “the WPI has been good in comparison to some other State Library-funded initiatives” because it has “delivered a lot of ‘product’ quickly – surveys and training.”

IV. Future Considerations for the WPI – Short-Term

There are many activities the Washington Preservation Initiative can focus on after a review of the mail and telephone survey results. A number of these findings can be used to generate successful short-term WPI programs and initiatives.

- First, in the area of evaluating current WPI activities, the variety, quality, and regularity of WPI workshops was received extremely well, making the continuation, strengthening, publicizing, and even

greater geographic dispersal of these workshops a high priority.

- Building awareness of the benefits of and need for preservation in Washington Libraries may help to bring the topic to a higher priority (the current low priority rating is similar to the findings of the majority of other statewide preservation programs) and may also help to improve low funding and staffing for preservation.
- Development of information, including workshops, about starting a preservation program on a limited budget will be helpful for most of the institutions responding to the survey, and might help libraries better establish staffing levels needed for preservation.
- The low number of survey respondents who are subscribers to the PreserveNW listserv shows a need for additional publicity for this resource. Suggestions to build the list include contacting the Washington Library Association and other statewide and regional library, archives, museum, and historical society organizations to run a message promoting PreserveNW or send some sample messages to these groups.
- One-day workshops were highly preferred by respondents. Holding sessions in both Eastern and Western locations is seen as important as well. Book repair and care and handling information and workshops are in the highest demand. The demand for workshops rose greatly in projections for future preservation activity. Because over 50% of the respondents said collections formats including photographs, graphic/paper material, scrapbooks, ephemera, manuscripts, cartographic materials, and sound recordings were in fair or poor condition, workshops focused on these topics would also be useful. In addition, preservation of local history material was raised as a concern in several parts of the survey, and should be addressed as a workshop topic.
- Although a number of libraries reported collection-damaging disasters, very few have written disaster plans. Development of disaster plans is of key importance, and is another role in which the WPI can assist. This can be accomplished through targeted workshops and preservation surveys.
- Another long-term goal for the WPI is planning for and implementation of statewide services such as grants assistance, as requested by survey respondents. Finally, responses to the list of preservation goals if funding increases provides a further priority activity list for the WPI.
- Additionally, a specific survey targeted toward tribal libraries should be conducted as response from this group was extremely low.
- Because of the dramatically strong need expressed by telephone survey respondents for a tool, list, or publication which can help librarians decide which materials to select for preservation, this should be an initial work product of the WPI. Possibly this can be a building block of an enhanced WPI Web site. In addition, the development and offering of a “Selection for Preservation” workshop is of key importance.
- Demand for preservation surveys was also high. An “enhanced” survey program with preservation instruction provided to volunteer or other staff at the time of the survey visit would have an even greater effect on the preservation program growth in selected libraries.

V. Long-Term Program Directions

To build on the momentum created by the WPI workshop series, site surveys, and even this survey project, the Washington Preservation Initiative Advisory Group must act quickly to discuss and prioritize the key findings from this project.

Funding was seen as the biggest preservation challenge to the libraries surveyed, and WPI was urged to both continue its grant program, identify new preservation funding sources, and assist its constituents in writing grants. There were calls for a subcommittee to study the concern and propose viable solutions.

A suggestion on how to distribute the work to address some of the most pressing concerns discovered in the survey would be for the WPI as a whole to address long-term strategy -- deciding on which program components to concentrate and, since there are only eight people on the Advisory Group, formation of two subcommittees or task forces should be considered:

- 1) **Advocacy:** Educating library directors, legislators, other types of cultural institutions, and the general public about preservation
- 2) **Funding:** In addition to building the funding program for libraries by identifying more resources and offering assistance with grant-writing or review, this subcommittee must also concentrate on getting funding to keep the WPI active and sustain its current momentum. Possible funding sources include the State Legislature; corporate, community, or family foundations; and the Institute of Museum and Library Services National Leadership Grant program.

There is not a great deal of collaborative preservation work among or between libraries, museums, historical societies and archives in Washington, nor is there much activity with surrounding states. It is likely that both of these results are due to the status of preservation programs at individual institutions – most are short-staffed, with trimmed budgets and a relatively low priority. As a result, building institutional plans must be done before further cooperative activities can begin.

In the future, the WPI may “morph” into a number of different structures. There are three models of collaborative statewide preservation programs which might provide useful touchstones. Additional information about these initiatives is included in Appendix D.

- 1) **California Preservation Clearinghouse.** (<http://cpc.stanford.edu/index.html>) This group has concentrated on training trainers to lead workshops and perform site surveys. They have a well-developed website. This effort has received funding for the past five years from the California State Library via a Library Services and Technology Act grant. General information on the program and its consulting services appear in the appendix.
- 2) **NC-ECHO (North Carolina – Exploring Cultural Heritage Online).** (<http://www.ncecho.com>) This group, developed to assist in statewide digitization activities, has received notice because project staff is visiting every cultural heritage institution in the state (over 700 sites) to determine the condition and scope of collections before preservation and digitization activities begin. Since 1999, the group has been funded by a state LSTA grant. General information on the effort and specific information on the survey project appear in the appendix.
- 3) **New Mexico Preservation Alliance.** A relatively “loose confederation” of cultural heritage institutions, this group concentrates on workshops, publications, and on-site disaster assistance. Since it was founded in 1991, this group has remained a volunteer organization with participating institutions funding the travel and project time of their staff. The group does not have a website, although Cariño Conservation of Albuquerque, NM (<http://www.carinoconservation.com>) has noted that its site is the future home of New Mexico Preservation Alliance information.

The ultimate goal of all three models, and a goal to which the Washington Preservation Initiative should aspire, is service to small, often rural, short-staffed libraries (defined here as those with under 50,000 volumes). This is a key constituency, with varied and often important holdings, who desperately need preservation assistance. Attracting this group to utilize WPI services can ensure long-term impact of the program.

VI. Appendices