The Mississippi Connecting to Collections Planning Project engaged more than one-half of the state’s 430 cultural collections institutions in a multi-faceted project that analyzed their preservation needs through an online needs assessment survey, provided onsite consultations at seventeen repositories, and engaged and educated collections custodians in workshops and meetings. The high participation rate indicates a great commitment to improving the long-term preservation of cultural collections through additional collaborative projects involving museums, libraries, and archives, especially in the areas of training, emergency preparedness, collections management and storage, environmental controls, digitization, and cooperative funding.

Activities & Audience

In 2008 the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), with the support of the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries and Mississippi Library Commission, began an ambitious Connecting to Collections (C2C) project that would accomplish three outcomes:

1. A survey of the state’s cultural heritage collections, preparedness for emergency, and training deficits will contribute to an enhanced knowledge of shared cultural resource issues and avenues for improvement among the state’s cultural heritage professionals, as well as among state agencies dealing with public policy, funding, and emergency management.
2. Coordinated disaster planning and recovery partnerships will result in more efficient and effective response to disaster.
3. Cooperative partnerships and a statewide plan will guide staff training and collections care efforts.

As evident from its five-year duration, Mississippi’s C2C project initially moved very slowly. In October 2008 the project director led a lively session at the Mississippi Library Association annual meeting, approximate thirty persons representing academic, public, and special libraries, discussed their needs and training relating to collections care, emergency preparedness needs and partnerships, possibilities for collaborative projects, and statewide information-gathering and planning. They confirmed what project partners had expected:

a. Statewide, library collections are very diverse.
b. Many collections in small-medium public libraries are in great need of professional care and basic housing, arrangement, and description.
c. Many public libraries hold works of art that need conservation.
d. Resources to support collections preservation are very limited; most libraries are understaffed and have funds only to manage essential, basic services.

e. Because of more immediate responsibilities, it is difficult for libraries to participate in collaborative, “extra” projects unless there are direct, tangible results.

The project director and MDAH staff identified more than 430 institutions with publicly-accessible cultural collections. By 2010 this list included 54 public library systems that totaled 238 locations, 77 museums, 17 community colleges, 22 academic libraries/special collections, and 25 other institutions (e.g., historical and genealogical societies; government, tribal, or religious archives; and national parks, zoos, and historical homes/sites). MDAH began communicating, through periodic emails and occasional hard-copy mailings, with these institutions about training and grant opportunities, and other shared collections-related concerns. This information network continues to be the primary ongoing link among Mississippi’s archives, libraries, museums, and other cultural heritage organizations today.

During the first three years of the C2C project, before the C2C survey assessing needs, project partners began addressing known training needs of cultural collections custodians by participation in other grant-funded projects. The Archival Training Collaborative (ATC), also funded by IMLS, spearheaded the development of low-cost educational programs for staff and volunteers in historical repositories in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama. With its central location, MDAH hosted ATC board meetings from 2008-2012 and the C2C project director was an active board member. Ten Mississippi archivists (from the University of Southern Mississippi, Delta State University, MDAH, Indianola Public Library, and Columbus-Lowndes Public Library) attended train-the-trainer workshops and then conducted workshops in the state. As deputy coordinator of the Mississippi Historical Records Advisory Board (MHRAB), the C2C project director was able to leverage MHRAB grant funds from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission as modest stipends to support ATC trainers. From 2008 through early 2011, nine one-day, no/low-cost workshops for cultural collections staff and volunteers were offered, covering such topics as Basic Archives, Processing and Preservation of Archival Collections, Preservation of Books and Archival Materials, and Digitization of Materials & Managing Digital Collections. Approximately 160 individuals from forty counties, representing all types of cultural collections repositories, attended. As a result of participation in ATC and these workshops, by 2011 Mississippi had begun to forge a fledgling, informal network of cultural collections custodians.

After three years, however, Mississippi had not conducted its needs assessment survey, the primary component of its C2C project. In fall 2011 IMLS graciously granted an extension and approved a revised work plan to include the hiring of a project consultant to conduct an online needs assessment survey, lead a one-day statewide preservation conference, and prepare a report summarizing the findings of these activities. In addition, in order to provide tangible benefits to at least a few repositories, onsite consultations would be conducted at a few institutions. The advisory committee, expanded to engage a wider variety of individuals and organizations and especially museums, began to meet frequently, both in person and via email. Members of the committee were Beth Batton (Mississippi Museum of Art), Gerald Chaudron (Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, and vice-president, Society of Mississippi Archivists), Cindy Gardner (Museum Division, MDAH), Bo Miller
The Mississippi C2C contracted with Tom Clareson, LYRASIS Digital and Preservation Services Consultant, who had worked on numerous other Connecting to Collections projects, enabling it to capitalize on his knowledge and experience and complete the proposed activities in six months, from September 2011-February 2012. After input from and review by the advisory committee, Clareson mounted a needs assessment survey instrument on the LYRASIS website in October. There were questions in seven categories:

Q 1-11 Institutional type, budget, and staffing
Q 12-26 Collections holdings
Q 27-36 Preservation policies and resources
Q 37-55 Preservation environment, security, and disaster preparedness
Q 56-61 Collections management and preservation
Q 62-67 Digital collections and practices
Q 68-79 Needs and future initiatives

All institutions in the MDAH statewide cultural collections network were contacted, several times and in numerous ways, requesting their completion of the survey. The intense promotion to encourage wide participation paid off. After one month, 115 survey responses were submitted, out of the approximately 450 institutions, for a response rate of 25.5%. When adjusted for the regional public library system headquarters that answered for all of their branches, the responses covered 230 institutions in 66 of the state’s 82 counties. This response rate of 51% was one of the highest in the Connecting to Collections projects in the nation.

As explained and analyzed in detail in Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project, 2008-2013: Overview and Findings (see Attachment 1), the online needs assessment survey identified several significant trends and needs among Mississippi’s cultural collections institutions, which may be summarized as follows:

1. Institutions recognize areas in which they need to develop their preservation programs, and are willing to do so.
2. Education on disaster preparedness and recovery, with a focus on disaster plan development, is a primary need.
3. Education on environmental factors for cultural heritage institutions, and ways to monitor and improve environmental conditions, should be an area of emphasis.
4. There is a great need for education in digital preservation, and digital preservation policy development.
5. Preparing disaster plans, and overall long-term institutional preservation policies, is of primary importance.
6. Making onsite surveys more widely available in Mississippi would benefit many institutions.
7. Offering organizations that who have not inventoried, processed, or cataloged their special collections and archival materials some training and assistance also would be beneficial.

8. Identification and stronger utilization of state, federal, donor, and foundation grants and funding is central to moving preservation forward in Mississippi.

9. A statewide program offering inexpensive information, education, and policy examples, focused on disaster preparedness, environmental control, collection storage and space planning, and digitization/digital preservation, would assist many institutions.

With input from the advisory committee, a healthy mix of seventeen museums, historical societies, public libraries, and academic libraries/special collections, including several at historically black colleges/universities, which were geographically dispersed and known to have significant holdings, were selected for onsite consultations. (The state archives and several large museums and university libraries, whose facilities and holdings were well known, and five museums that had participated in the recent Heritage Preservation pilot Risk Evaluation and Planning Program were specifically omitted.) Onsite surveys were conducted at four public libraries: Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library (Brookhaven), Carnegie Public Library (Clarksdale), Sunflower Public Library (Indianola), and Pontotoc Public Library/Dixie Regional Library (Pontotoc); at six museums: Amory Regional Museum (Amory), Ida B. Wells Barnett Museum (Holly Springs), Natchez Museum of African-American History and Culture (Natchez), Union County Heritage Museum (New Albany), African-American Museum (Woodville), and Wilkinson County Museum (Woodville); at six repositories at four colleges: Leontyne Price Library, Rust College, (Holly Springs), The Margaret Walker Center and University Archives & Special Collections, Jackson State University (Jackson), J.D. Boyd Library, Alcorn State University, (Lorman), and McLendon Library and Holtzclaw Library, Hinds Community College, (Raymond and Utica); and at the Yalobusha County Historical Society Library (Coffeeville).

Clareson and a local preservation consultant Linda Overman (Southern Preservation and Consulting, Inc.) followed the same procedures: Each institution completed a pre-visit questionnaire; the consultant made a 2.5-3 hour visit, touring facilities, reviewing collections, monitoring environmental conditions, and discussing preservation policies and practices; and within a month of the visit, the consultant provided a 2-3 page report of findings and recommendations. These site visits provided points of emphasis to the overall survey findings, and furnished each institution with valuable information about ways in which it might better preserve its collections.

The statewide preservation conference, held in January 2012 at the Mississippi Library Commission, provided an opportunity for cultural collections custodians to learn about overall survey findings and share possible solutions to common challenges. Conference participants included representatives from seven museums/sites, twelve public library systems, several community colleges, and six universities. After an overview of the online needs assessment survey and onsite consultations, participants broke out into small groups to discuss six preservation challenges and solutions: environmental controls, collections storage, collections inventory, preservation education, digitization, and grants. Next there were short concurrent
sessions on four high-interest topics: Connecting Collections through the Mississippi Digital Library, Inexpensive Alternatives to “Best Practices” in Collections Management, Another One? Preparing and Reacting to Disasters, and Preservation Grant Writing Tips and Resources. Finally, all participants convened for a wrap-up session, to summarize ideas heard during the day and to identify useful strategies and resources for future actions. The conference was very successful and evaluations were quite positive. Several new staff and institutions attended, and for many it was the first opportunity to meet colleagues from diverse types of cultural collections institutions throughout Mississippi, to identify shared concerns and challenges. Several participants noted that the conference addressed real needs in their institutions, and many said they were inspired to make improvements in their institution’s preservation planning and activities.

To meet one of the greatest needs identified throughout the project, Claresson returned to Mississippi in February 2013 and taught a one-day workshop on grant-writing. Twenty-four individuals from throughout the state attended this training in Jackson.

In January 2012 Claresson prepared a detailed report analyzing the data from the online preservation needs assessment survey. After the January 2012 preservation conference, he submitted a very brief report summarizing his work on the project, including survey findings, information from onsite consultations and the conference, and offering recommendations. To bring Mississippi’s C2C Project to a more beneficial conclusion and improve the overall ongoing use of the information gathered, the two reports were combined and edited to comprise one comprehensive document titled Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project, 2008-2013: Overview and Findings (see Attachment 1). After final editing, addition of images, and reformatting by a graphic designer, this report will be mounted on the MDAH website and distributed to Mississippi cultural collections institutions. With the addition of links to helpful supporting documentation, institutional websites, and other related information, this will form the basis for a Mississippi cultural collections preservation website.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Despite its very slow start, the Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project was a success. Quantitatively, the impact of the project can be measured in several ways (see Attachment 2 for the Final Report, Part 2 – Quantitative). Approximately 230 (51%) cultural collections institutions took the time, and made the effort to analyze the overall preservation needs relating to their collections. Seventeen institutions benefited from an onsite consultation and follow-up report by a preservation professional. And an estimated 200 cultural collections custodians (professionals, staff, and volunteers), representing a wide array of museums, libraries, and archives from throughout the state, participated in a workshop, conference, or meeting related to the project. All of this points to the high interest and commitment of the state’s cultural collections institutions to the preservation of their holdings.

Although the survey did not reveal any particularly new or startling trends, the data it provided and the needs it identified will inform future collaborative projects to address shared needs. This is already evident in the participation of staff from several museums, archives and
libraries in the multi-week Regional Emergency Response Network (RERN) training series sponsored by LYRASIS in spring 2012 and in a two-day statewide planning meeting/workshop sponsored by the Mississippi Digital Library in May 2013. While the C2C project would have progressed much more quickly if it had initially included funds for a consultant, the involvement of MDAH and Mississippi’s other cultural collections institutions and professionals in related statewide projects, although delaying C2C, ultimately strengthened its long-term outcomes and contributions.

Although no formal partnerships and statewide plans emerged from the C2C project, several informal networks and partnerships are evident. The MDAH information network continues to link the state’s archives, libraries, museums, and other cultural heritage organizations. Participants in the RERN training noted above are collaborating on disaster preparedness and response. And the Mississippi Digital Library is working to unite cultural collections organizations in several ways. It is expected that the detailed *Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project, 2008-2013: Overview and Findings* will serve as a springboard for continuing actions and future projects.
THE MISSISSIPPI CONNECTING TO COLLECTIONS PROJECT

2008 – 2013

OVERVIEW AND FINDINGS

Sponsored by the Institute for Museum and Library Services and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History

((use IMLS logo -- http://www.imls.gov/recipients/logos.aspx, and one or the other of the following MDAH logos))
1) PHOTO CREDITS

((insert photo credits inside front cover, on back cover, or wherever you think best))

Middle Archaic small turtle effigy bead from the Denton site. Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Historic Preservation Division

George E. Ohr (1857-1918), no title (Untitled vase with handles), circa 1900, clay with glaze. 8.25 in. x 4.25 in., Purchase. (1978.004), Collection of Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson

Quilt from Canton, MS (MSJE-1885), Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life

Sadie Salome, 1909. Charles Templeton Sr. Sheet Music Collection, Mississippi State University Libraries

Photograph of the Ole Miss Varsity baseball team, 1930 (UM-001). Special Collections, University of Mississippi Libraries

Margaret Walker Alexander personal journal (#41, May-June 1951, p.7). Margaret Walker Alexander Personal Papers, Margaret Walker Center, Jackson State University

Other photos courtesy of the Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project.
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  Collections Management and Preservation
  Digital Collections and Practices
  Preservation Needs and Future Initiatives

Onsite Preservation Survey Findings

Statewide Preservation Conference Results

Consultant's Comments and Recommendations

Next Steps for Mississippi (March 2013)

Add Appendix A Advisory Committee Members

Add Appendix B Mississippi Connecting to Collections Statewide Preservation Needs Assessment Survey Instrument - Online

Add Appendix C Mississippi Connecting to Collections Preservation Conference Agenda
One of the many salient lessons from the 2005 hurricanes Katrina and Rita was the realization that more comprehensive knowledge about cultural collections institutions was needed: as individual institutions: holdings, preparedness, contact lists, training needs, etc. comprehensively: which ones were in which counties, who were natural leaders and allies, etc.

2008 awarded first-round C2C grant from IMLS

2005 – 2010 Mississippi responding and recovering

thought we could maximize the impact of the $$s by doing the work ourselves, but work never got done!

Finally, fall 2011: Tom Clareson, Lyrasis, suggested that he manage the project; extensive experience (16 other such statewide surveys) – had managed similar projects in numerous other states;

Scaled back to what was doable: 1) statewide online survey, 2) onsite consultations at selected institutions, & 3) statewide preservation conference

This report is a consolidation of two reports submitted by Tom Clareson: Survey Report, submitted January 12, 2012; and the Final Project Report, submitted February 27, 2012.

The 2011-2012 Mississippi Connecting to Collections Project (MCCP) included an online statewide preservation needs assessment survey, brief onsite preservation surveys at seventeen institutions, and a statewide preservation conference, which had presentations and discussion sessions on the future of preservation activity in the state. Funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the project was administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH). An advisory committee of leaders from the library, archives, museum, and historical society communities contributed to the success of the project through constant communication with their constituent groups; a list of the advisory committee members is included as Appendix A.

Mississippi’s Cultural Collections Institutions
The online MCCP survey provided a holistic view of the preservation and conservation needs within the state. Available from October 11 to November 18, 2011, the online survey attracted 115 responses out of a universe of 450 cultural institutions in the state for a response rate of 25.5%. However, when adjusted for regional public library systems answering for all of their branches, the responses cover 230 institutions and the response rate rose to 51%, one of the best Connecting to Collections survey results in the country. A copy of the survey instrument is included as Appendix B.

Institutional Information
Organizations from 50 of Mississippi’s 82 counties responded, providing good geographic representation in the survey.

Organizations from eleven categories of cultural heritage institutions participated. The top institutional types were:

- Public libraries: 50 responses (45%)
- Academic libraries/archives: 27 responses (25%)
- General museums (two or more disciplines): 9 responses (8%)
- Historical houses or sites: 8 responses (7%)

Seven other institutional types had one or more responses; these were government archives, special library, historical society, art museum, archaeological repository or research collection, cultural center, and independent, non-profit archives.

Within this report, a number of questions have been analyzed by the type of responding institution, or institutional operating budget size. When looking at respondents’ organization affiliation, there were a variety of responses:

- Public library systems: 47 (42%)
- College, university, or other academic entity: 31 (27%)
- Private non-profit (non-governmental) organizations: 18 (16%), these had the smallest annual operating budgets
- State government: 7 (6%)
- Local, municipal, or county government: 6 (5%)

Two federal government agencies and one tribal organization also answered.

For the question about institutional operating budget, most organizations reported about fiscal year 2010. There was quite a wide range of budget levels. The largest budgets were reported by seven academic libraries and the state archives. Institutions with the smallest budgets comprised primarily public and academic libraries, and historical societies and houses/sites. Budget range distribution is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Annual Operating Budget
A majority of the responding organizations (70 organizations or 62% of the total responding organizations) are open 41 hours or more each week. The second highest response (15 or 13%) was from institutions open 31-40 hours each week.

Reviewing staff levels, 33 organizations (31%), the majority of which are public and academic libraries, had 2-5 paid, full-time staff. Twenty-two (21%) had 6-10 such staff. Thirty-eight institutions (40%) had 2-5 part-time paid staff members, and 24 (25%) had one part-time paid staff person. Twenty-two organizations (30%) also relied on volunteers, reporting 2-5 part-time volunteer staff members. And three institutions operated with only a full-time, unpaid volunteer.

When asked about professional memberships, by far the highest number of respondents, 64 (66%), were members of the Mississippi Library Association; 16 (16%) were Mississippi Museum Association members; and 13 (13%) were members of the Society of Mississippi Archivists. Many respondents listed other organizations, including the national American Library Association. This information may be useful when scheduling future preservation training or presentations.

**Collections Holdings**

((use the following photo in the Collections Holdings section: Middle Archaic . . . – turtle effigy bead))

Respondents were asked to identify the types of materials that are part of their permanent holdings and for which the institution has accepted preservation responsibility. Libraries were asked to limit their answers to materials in their historic, special, or Mississippiana
collections. This information can be used to determine material types on which future educational, information, and actual repair or conservation work might focus.

The leading formats held at cultural heritage institutions, especially at the highest budget levels, included:

- Books/monographs: 92 (85%)
- Bound manuscript materials (ledger books, minute books, scrapbooks): 80 (74%)
- Newspapers: 63 (58%)
- Serials/periodicals: 62 (57%)

Higher budget-level institutions also reported sizeable holdings of unbound, generally archival, materials, including:

- Archival records and manuscripts: 61 (59%)
- Maps: 48 (47%)
- Oral history transcripts: 40 (39%)
- Architectural drawings/blueprints: 36 (35%)

Photographic collections held in Mississippi cultural heritage institutions included:

- Black and white prints (all processes): 67 (66%)
- Color prints, negatives, positives (including transparencies and slides): 59 (58%)
- Microfilm and microfiche: 55 (54%)

Moving image collection types held were:

- Discs (laser, CDs, DVDs, minidisks): 62 (60%)
- Magnetic tape (beta, VHS, digital): 48 (46%)
- Motion picture film (reels or cans): 33 (32%)

Recorded sound collections held were those on:

- Optical media (CD, DVD): 50 (50%)
- Magnetic media (cassette, open-reel tapes, DAT): 43 (43%)

Digital collection media held were:

- CDs/DVDs: 68 (67%)
- Floppy discs: 23 (23%)
- Online collections: 19 (19%)

Mississippi’s cultural heritage institutions, especially the general museums, hold a wide variety of historic artifacts. Institutions with the lowest annual budget levels particularly reported holding a wide variety of materials. Major collection types held include:

- Textiles (costumes, flags, rugs, quilts, etc.): 48 (49%)
- Furniture: 37 (38%)
- Ceramic and glass (including stained glass): 35 (36%)
- Domestic items (dolls/toys; frames; household machines and tools; musical instruments): 31 (32%)
- Metalwork (arms, armor, coins): 30 (31%)

Art objects were another collection type where there was a wide range of material types held across many kinds of institutions with budgets ranging from the smallest to largest sizes:

- Paintings (on canvas, panels, plaster): 74 (69%)
- Art on paper (drawings, prints, watercolors): 57 (53%)
- Sculpture (indoor, outdoor, carvings): 35 (33%)
- Posters: 31 (29%)

Several collections types were not held by a majority of the responding organizations; these were ethnographic objects, archaeological collections, transportation vehicles, and natural science specimens.

Thus, as shown in Figure 2, more than half of all respondents are responsible for the preservation of a wide array of material types that often includes books/monographs, bound and unbound archival materials, newspapers, serials/periodicals, black and white prints, color prints/negatives/positives, microfilm and microfiche, digital media, paintings, and works of art on paper.

(( PLEASE make Figure 2 Holdings that shows the 11 categories held by 51% or more: books/monographs (92), bound manuscript materials (80), paintings (74), digital media (68), black and white prints (67), newspapers (63), serials/periodicals (62), archival records and manuscripts (61), color prints/negatives/positives (59), art on paper (57), and microfilm and microfiche (55). ))

FIGURE 2 HOLDINGS

Preservation Policies and Resources

((use the following photo in the Preservation Policies and Resources section: MMA-Ohr . . . -vase))

Development of policies, procedures, and trusted information resources for preservation are key aspects of building a preservation program on both an institutional and statewide level.

When asked if their institutional mission statement supported the preservation of their collections, 60 organizations (54%) said yes, and 30 institutions (27%) said no. Institutions across all types and budget sizes, especially in the academic library and historic house/site communities, had mission statements including preservation. This is one of the most positive
responses to this question in the seventeen statewide surveys completed to date, and is a strong foundation upon which preservation programs may be built. ((insert Figure 3 pie chart: "Does your institutional mission statement ...?")

Figure 3 Institutional Mission Statement Supporting Preservation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Do not have institutional mission statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Equally positive, 60 institutions (54%), from all budget levels, reported having a written institutional collection/acquisitions policy and a vast majority said they had updated the policy in the past three years. Fifteen other organizations were currently developing this type of policy, and only seventeen (15%) responded that they did not have a collections/acquisitions policy. These findings were reflected across many institution types.

Results were not as positive for several other questions in this area. When asked about the presence of a written, long-range preservation/conservation plan for the maintenance, care, repair, and protection of collections, only historical homes/sites and general museums had a good response rate. Fifty organizations (45%) did not have such a keystone document.

Likewise, the completion of a formal preservation or conservation survey of the condition of their collection, another important component of preservation planning and infrastructure, was also shown to be a need. Only 17 institutions (15%), primarily historical houses/sites and art museums, had completed this significant activity; 75 institutions (67%) had not and 20 respondents (18%) did not know.

((insert Figure 4: "Has a formal preservation/conservation survey ...?")
((can you switch the colors, so the answers connote the same as in the pie chart above?: green/yes, red/no, yellow/don’t know ))
As in many states, there are few human and financial resources available to work on preservation activities in Mississippi. Forty-one institutions (37%) had no staff assigned to preservation activities, and only 42 (38%) had up to one full-time equivalent (FTE) staff person. Nineteen organizations (17%) had 1-2 FTE, and less than 10% had more than 2 FTE total.

There was a wide range in the amount of funds annually budgeted for preservation/conservation activities. Sixty-two respondents (55%) spent $0-500 on preservation per year; these included many public and academic libraries, and institutions with both the smallest and largest annual budgets. Eighteen institutions (16%) spent $501-1000. On the opposite end of the spectrum, seventeen organizations (15%) spent $5,001 and above on preservation annually; these were primarily historical houses/sites and academic libraries.

((insert Figure 5 “Most recently completed fiscal year …”))
When asked the source of ongoing preservation funding, sixty-eight organizations (61%), across all sizes of annual operating budgets, said it came from their institution’s own budget. This can be a double-edged sword, because preservation funds are often reduced or eliminated if an institution’s overall budget is cut; and some institutions do not keep ongoing, documented accounts for preservation funds when times are difficult. Donor funding was another large funding source named especially by general museums and academic libraries/archives; this also was cited by organizations with varying budget sizes.

The survey also asked from which sources the cultural heritage institutions had received money to implement conservation/preservation projects in the past five years. Thirteen institutions (12%) identified their institution’s operating budget; twelve (11%), mostly from the mid-range budget categories, utilized individual contributions dedicated to conservation/preservation projects; and ten (10%) used private foundation funding. The relatively few organizations that had used federal funding had received grants from the following organizations:

- Institute of Museum and Library Services (direct grant to recipient): 5 (5%)
- Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funding: 5 (5%)
When asked if they had made grant applications (successful or unsuccessful) for preservation and conservation funding in the past five years, twenty-eight organizations (25%), mostly public and academic libraries, and representing all budget sizes, reported that they had submitted applications.

However, the vast majority, 67 respondents (60%), had not applied. Non-applicants identified several reasons why they had not made grant applications: thirty (43% of those who had not applied) needed more information about funding sources; thirty (43%) lacked staff time to complete applications; twenty-nine (42%), including a majority of the responding historical homes/sites, needed additional project planning or preparation before applying for a grant; and twenty-four (35%) lacked expertise to complete an application. This low level of application for and utilization of external grant sources highlights opportunities for future work, and the need for information and education on grant writing and fundraising for preservation projects to be made available.

**Preservation Environment, Storage, Security, and Disaster Preparedness**

(Systems and policies for environmental control, security, and disaster response are key components of an institution's preservation infrastructure. Since a majority (84 organizations or 79%) own their buildings, improvement in these areas is possible if they are institutional priorities and funds are available.

Fifty-two institutions (47%), across many types, controlled temperature levels in all areas of their buildings and 37 (34%) controlled it in some areas. Light level was the next best-controlled threat, with 31 organizations (29%) controlling light in all areas and 53 others (49%) controlling this factor in some areas. Unfortunately, 37 organizations (35%) reported not controlling humidity and 43 institutions (41%) said they did not control air quality in any areas. As might be expected, institutions with larger annual operating budgets were better able to control environmental factors. Thus while most Mississippi institutions have at least some control over temperature, many need to improve their control of light, humidity and air quality in order to better preserve their collections.

Organizations were asked what types of equipment they used to monitor their collections storage environment. Top types of equipment were:

- Thermometers: 29 (27%)
- Pest traps: 25 (23%)
- Hygrometers: 12 (11%)

*Note:* The text is truncated and contains some incomplete sentences and possible errors in the formatting, making it difficult to provide a complete and accurate representation of the document content.
Unfortunately, 42 organizations (39%), across almost all budget size categories, reported not using any type of monitoring equipment.

In a question that excluded environmental factors, respondents were asked what percentage of their collection is stored in areas considered to be adequate, with safe access to collections, on appropriate storage furniture, and large enough to accommodate current holdings. Responses, spread across the spectrum, were as follows:

((This is the only list that isn’t bulleted and where the figures are aligned. You may leave it as is or change it to match the other lists.))

- None adequately stored: 13 (11%)
- 1-24% adequately stored: 19 (17%)
- 25-49% adequately stored: 14 (13%)
- 50-74% adequately stored: 20 (18%)
- 75-99% adequately stored: 28 (28%)
- 100% adequately stored: 17 (15%)

Those citing lower percentages of adequate storage were mostly libraries and/or institutions with smaller annual operating budgets.

When asked how much additional space they would need, at their present rate of growth over the next ten years, to adequately store their collections, responses in Mississippi were much better than in many other states. Twenty-two organizations (20%) said they have enough space for their collections, 26 needed 50% more, and 23 (21%) needed 25% more. ((insert Figure 6: bar graph: “How much additional space would you need …?”))

**Figure 6 Additional Storage Needs**

| How much additional space would you need (at your present rate of growth) over the next 10 years to adequately store your collections? (Select one) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Don't know | More than 100% more | 100% more | 75% more | 50% more | 25% more | Currently have enough space for collections |
| 0 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 |

In addition to being responsible for collections, several respondents are also responsible for the preservation of a historically significant structure that houses its collections or is part of its
Twenty-seven institutions (27%) had such a building and four respondents claimed multiple buildings (2, 3, 4, and 8).

The survey also looked at institutional security. The practices and systems most often used in all types of cultural heritage institutions and at all budget levels, were:

- Secure doors and locks: 71 (71%)
- Control of items brought into the collections: 66 (65%)
- Control of access to the collections: 63 (61%)
- Staff observation: 63 (61%)
- Written policies and procedures: 60 (60%)
- Alarm systems: 45 (45%)

The fire safety systems in Mississippi’s cultural heritage organizations were mostly for detection and manual suppression. Fire extinguishers were used in 96 organizations (86%); smoke detectors in 74 (67%); and fire alarms in 71 (64%). Twenty-five (25%) institutions, mostly academic and public libraries, also utilized wet-pipe sprinklers. Unfortunately, 65 institutions (65%), across all types and budget sizes, with fire extinguishers said staff had not been trained on their use, even though the extinguishers were inspected regularly.

An emergency/disaster plan is an important cornerstone in an institutional preservation program. Only twenty institutions (18%) have a current disaster plan, updated in the past three years; another 15 organizations (13%) said they have a plan but it is not up-to-date. Twenty-one institutions (19%) are developing a plan. Disturbingly, 43 institutions (38%) did not have an emergency/disaster plan, and 13 (12%) respondents did not know if they had a plan. Another concern is that even at the institutions that do have a plan, less than half said staff was ready to implement it.

((insert Figure 6 pie chart: “Does your institution have a written emergency …?”))

Figure 6 Written Emergency / Disaster Plan
When asked why their organization did not have an emergency/disaster plan, respondents said they

- Did not have the time to write a disaster plan: 27 (37%)
- Did not have the expertise to write a disaster plan: 19 (26%)
- Did not see it as an institutional priority: 16 (22%)
- Were unaware of the need for a disaster plan: 11 (15%)

These responses were especially prevalent in the institutions with the lowest annual budget levels, although lack of time was also cited by institutions with higher budget levels.

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), to allow institutions to quickly resume their regular business, is also important. Only 17 (17%) institutions either had or were developing a COOP. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents either did not have a COOP (48 or 43%), or did not know if they had one (34 or 30%).

When a disaster had occurred, 76 organizations (78%), across all organizational types and budget levels, reported that staff had cleaned up and/or repaired damaged materials. Fourteen (15%) respondents, including public and academic libraries, a cultural center, and four “other” respondents, said they had worked with external consultants and/or disaster recovery vendors, because of a lack of staff expertise and/or training, the scope of the disaster, or lack of facilities. These answers came particularly from institutions with the smallest budgets.
Two questions related to disaster preparedness netted positive responses. Ninety-eight (88%) institutions reported that they had a working relationship with local emergency responders such as police and fire departments. Nearly two-thirds of respondents said they had copies of some (36; 32%) or all (33; 29%) important records such as inventories/catalogs and insurance policies stored offsite. Twenty-one organizations (18%) across most budget size and institution type boundaries, however, had not completed this step; and 11 responded that they did not know.

The need to fully develop and keep current disaster/emergency and COOP plans, and to train staff on their implementation is vital, so that an organization will be able to implement them and respond on a moment’s notice. Disaster planning education and sharing of model plans between institutions should be a priority action in Mississippi.

Collections can be damaged quickly in a disaster, or more slowly over time from environmental factors. A majority of responding institutions, regardless of budget size, reported some damage to or loss of items in their collections. They cited the following factors:

- Physical or chemical deterioration (e.g., brittle paper, cracked leather, flaking paint, or electronic media degradation): 68 (64%), five public libraries reported significant damage/loss
- Light (fading or discoloration): 63 (59%), reported across many institutional types
- Water or moisture (stains, warping, mold): 44 (40%), four public libraries reported significant damage
- Obsolescence of playback equipment, hardware, or software: 42 (40%)
- Poor storage or enclosures: 39 (38%)
- Handling by staff and/or users, or in shipment: 38 (37%)

In addition, although pests did not cause damage at most institutions, two academic libraries reported significant damage and loss because of pest problems.

**Collections Management and Preservation**

((use the following photo in the Collections Management . . . section: MSU-Sadie . . . – sheet music cover))

Add some charts/graphs, etc. to this section

Enhance introduction to this section:

In-depth information about specific materials in its collection will help an organization respond to collection damage from both sudden disasters and long-term deterioration. Mississippi organizations reported a wide range of information about their holdings.

| Add percentages
Nearby half of institutions reported that 50% or more of their historical collections were processed (archival collections arranged and described) or accessioned (museum collections). Eleven institutions reported 100% of holdings processed or accessioned; 28 reported 75-99%
processed or accessioned; and 14 had 50-74% of holdings processed or accessioned. However, 9 organizations said that none of their collections were processed or accessioned, 23 had only 1-24%, 10 had 25-49%, and 11 did not know.

When asked the estimated percentage of their collections that were cataloged or indexed, either on paper or in a computer system, the results were similar. Nineteen organizations had 100% cataloged or indexed, 35 had 75-99%, and 14 had 50-74%; but many had less than half of their collections cataloged or indexed: 11, including academic libraries/archives, and historical societies, had none; 19 had 1-24% and 14 had 24-49%.

Respondents utilized a variety of methods to describe and provide access to their holdings. Sixty-one, primarily those with the largest budgets, maintained a catalog and/or indexes in an integrated library system/ILS, such as SirsiDynix, Endeavor, Follett, Koha, or Evergreen; forty-nine (45%) utilized paper or hard copy catalogs and indexes; 19 (17%) used off-the-shelf software like Access or Excel; and 12 (11%) used cataloging software specifically for museums or archives (PastPerfect, Willoughby, or Re:discovery/Proficio). Ten respondents said they did not have a catalog or indexes.

When asked what percentage of their catalog external users could access via the Internet, 28 institutions (25%) reported that their entire catalog was so available, and eighteen others said that 75-99% of their catalog was accessible online to offsite users. In contrast, 43 organizations (38%), across all budget sizes but primarily historical societies and historical houses/sites, said that their catalog was only available onsite.

Respondents across various institution types and budget levels reported that paid staff performed a variety of preservation/conservation activities. The nine most frequently mentioned ones were:

- Special care and handling of collections: 74
- Advocacy/fundraising/grant writing: 49
- Moving collections: 49
- Exhibits: 48
- Preservation management (administration, planning, assessment): 48
- Re-housing (re-folding, re-boxing): 47
- Preservation of digital files (databases, websites, and image files): 43
- Use of preservation-standard storage furniture (shelving, cabinetry): 43
- Environmental monitoring: 42

Other activities included digitization/imaging (39), disaster preparedness and recovery (38), collections conservation/physical treatment (36), pest and mold management (36), and preservation reformatting (35). About 20% of respondents reported contracting for conservation/preservation services or collections conservation. Twenty institutions (21%) also
reported contracting for building design/construction/renovation and 33 (33%) for pest management; these two practices were true across all institutional types and budget levels.

In one of the most important questions in the survey, an open-end inquiry in which responding organizations were asked to list their three most serious preservation problems, the six top concerns were the following:

- Lack of funding/money for preservation: 26
- Lack of staff for preservation activities: 19
- Problems with environment & heating/ventilation/air conditioning: 18
- Lack of or improper storage space: 18
- Lack of general space within facility: 16
- Lack of staff time for work on preservation activities: 15

Digital Collections and Practices

((use the following photo in the Digital Collections . . . section: UM-001 – baseball team))

Need to add a chart/graph to this section

When asked about the born digital formats collected, answers from Mississippi’s cultural heritage institutions were again wide-ranging:

- Video/audio: 40 respondents (37%), especially in public and academic libraries and art museums
- Photographs: 37 (35%), across many types of institutions
- Sound recordings: 32 (30%)
- Books: 32 (30%)
- Documents: 30 (28%)
- Newspapers: 21 (20%)

Interestingly, many of these institutions collected born digital formats despite being in the lower annual operating budget categories. Thirty-six institutions (34%)-said they collected no materials in born digital format.

Discussing the collections they digitize, or convert to digital format, 57 (51%) respondents said they do not do this activity. Of those that do perform digitization, top formats digitized include:

- Photographs: 38 (34%)
- Documents: 29 (26%)
- Newspapers: 17 (15%)
- Video/audio: 14 (13%)
- Books: 13 (12%)
• Sound recordings: 12 (11%)

While born digital materials are being accepted into collections, and some digitization activities are being done, the preservation of these digital materials is an area where significant work is needed. Over three-quarters of respondents (86 or 78%), across all types and budget sizes of institutions, do not have a written plan for long-term digital preservation. A majority of institutions (46 or 45%) with digital collections, and especially public libraries and historical societies, do not know how often back up files are created. And 39 (41%), especially public libraries, general museums, and academic libraries/archives, do not know where backup files are stored. In contrast, 20 institutions (21%) reported storing backup files offsite and/or in multiple locations.

Digital project development is another area in which room for growth is evident. Except for academic libraries and archives, a vast majority of responding institutions did not provide online access to their collections in a digital library or archive, online exhibits, or finding aids.

Preservation Needs and Future Initiatives

((use the following photo in the Preservation Needs . . . section: MWC-mwa journal . . . — journal page))

Need to add some charts/graphs, etc. to this section

Responding organizations were asked to indicate their level of need in a number of important areas of preservation program development. This information will be especially important for future programming, grant development, and other statewide, collaborative efforts.

Need was expressed in almost all program components. Across all respondents, regardless of budget size, the top areas of need cited were:

• Staff training in preservation: 71 (66%)
  • Particularly strong in historical societies, historical houses/sites, and public and academic libraries
• Conservation treatment: 66 (64%)
• Emergency preparedness/disaster planning: 65 (61%)
• Collection policy and procedure creation or updating: 64 (61%)
• Condition assessments/surveys of collections: 59 (56%)
  • Especially strong in public and academic libraries
• Preservation of digital collections: 55 (53%)
• Cataloging or finding aids for collections: 52 (48%)
• Preventing light damage: 51 (50%)
• Environmental controls (temperature/humidity): 43 (41%)
• Security: 41 (39%)

Numerous institutions characterized their need as “urgent” in five of these areas:
- Environmental controls (temperature/humidity): 27 (26%)
- Cataloging or finding aids for collections: 24 (22%)
- Condition assessments/surveys of collections: 20 (19%)
- Staff training in preservation: 18 (17%)
- Emergency preparedness/disaster planning: 18 (17%)

There were only two areas not cited as a need by a majority of respondents: integrated pest management (40 or 39%) and patron training in preservation (36 or 35%).

If additional funding specifically for conservation or preservation were available over the next three years, institutions would spend the funds in several ways; chief among these were:

- Digitization: 44 (40%)
- Cataloging/inventory: 38 (35%)
- Storage supplies and materials: 34 (31%)
- Professional conservation treatment of collection materials: 29 (26%)
- Staff training: 25 (23%)

These areas of expenditure were especially popular with public and academic libraries, and among those with both the lowest and highest annual operating budget levels.

When asked for which collection types their institution most needed preservation training, a majority of respondents, across all budget levels, mentioned the following formats:

- Books and bound volumes (monographs, serials, newspapers, scrapbooks, albums, pamphlets): 63 (58%)
- Unbound sheets (archival records, manuscripts, maps, oversize items, ephemera, broadsides, philatelic and numismatic artifacts, and other paper artifacts): 56 (52%)
- Photographic collections (microfilm, microfiche, photographic prints, negatives, slides, transparencies, daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, glass plate negative, lantern slides): 54 (50%)
  - 19 institutions (18%) characterized this as an “urgent” need.
- Art objects (paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, decorative arts including fine metalwork, jewelry, timepieces, enamels, ivories, and lacquer): 52 (50%)
- Digital material and electronic records collections (floppy discs, CD-R, DVD-R, data tape, online collections): 43 (42%)
- Textiles/costumes: 41 (39%)
- Moving image collections (motion picture film videotape, laserdisc, CD, DVD, minidisk): 39 (36%)

When asked to identify the preservation topics on which their staff needed training, a majority of topics were selected, and many were cited as “urgent” by numerous respondents, especially by general museums, academic libraries/archives, and public libraries, and at across all budget levels. Topics of high priority included:
Five topics—disaster preparedness, preservation reformatting, environmental monitoring, advocacy/fundraising/grant writing, and digitization—all received 16 or more “urgent” responses.

The most frequent types of preservation training programs, services, or self-studies that survey respondents reported being involved in during the past three years were workshops (66 or 60%), peer advice (48 or 44%), and conferences/meetings [add stats]. The preferred length of a workshop was either a whole day (43 or 39%) or a half-day (29 or 26%).

Some barriers were mentioned that might prevent institutions, especially public and academic libraries and historical houses and sites, from sending staff to a preservation/conservation workshop or training course:

- Travel costs: 81 (74%)
  - across all budget levels
- Registration costs: 69 (63%)
  - again, regardless of annual operating budget size
- Training unavailable in the institution’s area: 60 (55%)
- Cannot spare the staff time: 37 (34%)

When asked the maximum amount they or their institution would be willing to pay for staff to attend conservation/preservation training, the top levels were quite realistic in comparison to the average training registration costs in the field:

- $100-199: 34 (31%)
- $50-99: 21 (19%)
- $200-299: 18 (17%)
- $25-49: 17 (16%)
- $0: 12 (11%)
Figure __ Maximum Amount to Attend a Training Event

What is the maximum amount you or your employer would be willing to pay to attend a training event on conservation/preservation (please combine travel costs and tuition)? (please select one)

- $200-299
- $100-199
- $50-99
- $25-49
- $1-24
- $0

The top cities selected for convenient training locations included:

- Jackson: 53 (48%)
- Hattiesburg: 32 (29%)
- Oxford: 25 (23%)
- Tupelo: 18 (16%)
- Columbus/Starkville: 17 (15%)
- Southaven: 16 (15%)
- Cleveland: 15 (14%)

Two final questions dealt with interest in preservation services. If a statewide approach were available, preservation services that institutions would use would include:

- State-sponsored preservation workshops: 77 (67%)
- Ongoing state support for preservation grants to individual institutions: 70 (63%)
- Assistance with disaster planning and recovery: 67 (60%)
- On-site visits by a preservation professional: 65 (59%)
- Preservation/disaster response supplies: 58 (52%)
- Place to contact for preservation information: 56 (50%)
- Help with general conservation/preservation surveys: 51 (46%)
- Disaster recovery (vacuum freeze drying and on-site cleanup): 50 (45%)
- Collection storage: 35 (32%)
- Loan of environmental monitoring equipment: 34 (31%)
- Electronic data storage: 34 (31%)

Interest in these services was particularly high among general museums, historical houses/sites, academic libraries/archives, and public libraries. The service offerings appealed to all budget levels.

Finally, institutions were asked about their level of interest in a number of collaborative preservation projects. Those attracting the most interest were:

- Mentoring (in mentor, protégé, or both roles): 55 (52%)
- Collaborative exhibitions: 54 (52%)
- Mutual assistance agreements for disaster response: 51 (50%)
- Setting up a regional special interest group: 50 (49%)
- Collaborative grant proposals: 46 (44%)
- Collaborative digital collections building: 37 (36%)

These collaborative projects were popular among the same type of institutions as the services listed directly above, and among all budget levels. The only selection in which there was relatively little interest was shared collections storage facilities.

**Comments on Preservation Needs**

At the conclusion of the questionnaire, participants in the MCCP online survey had an opportunity to comment further about their preservation needs. Many of the 21 comments received dealt with items or collections of importance to the responding institution, or specific needs in preservation education.

**Onsite Preservation Survey Findings**

((Use the following three images in the Onsite Preservation Survey Findings section:
DSCN2087 – stored well on archival shelving;
DSCN2059 – stacked on floor;
DSCN2085 – stacked on filing cabinets))

In order to provide direct assistance to at least a few institutions, and to supplement the online survey results with tangible evidence, the project advisory committee, director and consultant...
selected a healthy mix of museums, historical societies, public libraries, and academic libraries/special collections, including several at historically black colleges/universities, which were geographically dispersed and known to have significant holdings, for onsite consultations. The state archives, large museums, and several university libraries— institutions whose facilities and holdings were well known—and five museums that had participated in site assessments in the recent Heritage Preservation pilot Risk Evaluation and Planning Program were specifically omitted. Consultations were completed at seventeen institutions:

Public Libraries
- Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale
- Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library, Brookhaven
- Pontotoc Public Library, Pontotoc
- Sunflower Public Library, Indianola

Community College and University Libraries and Special Collections
- J. D. Boyd Library, Alcorn State University, Lorman
- McLendon Library, Hinds Community College, Raymond
- William H. Holtzclaw Library, Hinds Community College, Utica
- University Archives & Special Collections, Jackson State University, Jackson
- Margaret Walker Center, Jackson State University, Jackson
- Leontyne Price Library, Rust College, Holly Springs

Museums
- African American Museum, Woodville
- Amory Regional Museum, Amory
- Ida B. Wells Barnett Museum & Cultural Center of African American Heritage, Holly Springs
- Natchez Museum of African-American History & Culture, Natchez
- Union County Heritage Museum, New Albany
- Wilkinson County Museum, Woodville

Historical Societies
- Yalobusha County Historical Society (Coffeeville)

Local preservation professional, Linda Overman (Southern Preservation Services, Inc.) was added to the MCCP as a consultant. Together, Clareson and Overman completed the site visits in October and November 2011. They conducted an initial consultation together and followed the same procedures, in order to ensure consistency. Prior to a visit, they distributed a “pre-visit questionnaire” to gather information about each institution’s building, and current preservation activities and policies. When onsite, the consultants spent 2-3 hours touring an institution, monitoring environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, and visible and ultraviolet light, assessing collection condition, and discussing the preservation policies and practices at each organization. They provided each institution with a 2-3 page report on the
key findings of the site survey visit. Their general findings presented below may or may not be attributable to every institution listed below.

From the pre-visit questionnaires, the consultants noted trends including a lack of preservation planning documents, especially disaster plans; the absence of regular Fire Department inspections or fire drills at many institutions; concern among institutional staff about lack of environmental controls and water leakage problems; and a lack of cataloging or inventory control of some collections.

These concerns were amplified in the field. During their visits, the consultants noted the need to develop basic policies that document institutional activities such as collection development and collection de-accessioning, which are fundamental to for collection preservation. At a majority of the institutions visited, visible and ultraviolet light readings were taken and registered as high, and water leaks were noted. Staff members at the institutions were very interested in establishing environmental control programs to monitor temperature, relative humidity, light, and water leaks.

While there was not a great deal of concern expressed in the online survey about institutional security needs, when the consultants were onsite, these needs were more evident and discussed more fully. Many of the surveyed institutions were focused on the need to improve the care of their photographic collections and staff had a desire to perform photographic digitization to provide further access to those collections.

Additional policy development work was needed for disaster planning, and staff at the institutions expressed interest in training for disaster preparedness and recovery. They also expressed the need for assistance in preservation and conservation funding development, and there was a specific interest in exploring preservation-related grants such as the Institute of Museum & Library Services/Bank of America "American Heritage Preservation Grants” and National Endowment for the Humanities “Preservation Assistance Grants.” An interesting solution expressed by some institutions was the recruitment of student interns or student workers to assist with preservation activities.

At almost all of the institutions, staff directly involved with the collections expressed a need to raise awareness of the importance of preservation among all other staff members, management/administration, volunteers, Boards of Trustees, allied organizations, and regional groups. Many of them planned to use the brief site survey reports to highlight their institution’s specific preservation needs to these varied audiences. Beyond raising awareness among their peers, managers, constituents, and allies, staff expressed interest in gaining further training and knowledge in areas of preservation including disaster preparedness/mitigation/recovery; basic archival practices/archival holdings maintenance; grant development for preservation; environmental controls and monitoring; inventorying and cataloging of collections; best practices in security for cultural organizations; photographic preservation and digitization; and development of preservation policies. The institutional representatives felt that inventory and processing was important for space planning, storage planning, collection valuation, insurance purposes, and for prioritizing collections for disaster preparedness and recovery.
The findings from the site survey visits provided points of emphasis to the online survey findings, and foreshadowed many of the key discussion topics at the January 2012 statewide preservation conference. From all of these methods of information-gathering, the basics of a preservation program for the State of Mississippi began to emerge.

**Statewide Preservation Conference Results**

On January 25, 2012, the Mississippi Connecting to Collections Preservation Conference was held at the Mississippi Library Commission Auditorium in Jackson. More than 60 representatives of all types of cultural heritage institutions attended the conference session. The conference agenda (attached as Appendix C) included a report on the online and onsite survey results; concurrent sessions on high-demand educational topics such as digitization, collections conservation, disaster preparedness and recovery, and preservation funding, which were presented by in-state experts and the project consultant; and most importantly, facilitated discussion on the next steps for preservation activity in Mississippi. Add more detail: break out group titles, key points from discussion groups, analysis of the conference evaluations

**Recommendations**

In both the MCCP statewide preservation needs assessment survey and the onsite preservation survey visits made in the autumn of 2011, and at the Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference and the statewide preservation conference, the consultants and Advisory Committee for the project noted an important result which bodes well for further preservation action within the state: Institutions recognize areas in which they need to develop their preservation programs, and are willing to do so.

For example, in the online survey, it was found that many preservation activities are already being carried out at some level in the responding institutions. However, there were strong expressions of need for further education on many preservation topics, and interest in the continued development of many preservation program elements. The negative findings in the survey, such as a lack of disaster response or COOP plans to restore their ability to perform vital business functions were balanced by positive findings such as the majority of responding institutions having good relationships with local emergency responders such as police, fire, and county emergency management officials. Providing education on disaster preparedness and recovery, with a focus on disaster plan development, is a primary recommendation for the state. During the onsite visit phase of the project, interest was expressed in developing some loanable disaster kits or even caches of shared disaster supplies in quadrants or sections of the state. To battle the leaks which many institutions were complaining about, centralized or discounted purchasing of water detectors and other preservation supplies was suggested at the statewide conference.
Environmental factors such as heat, humidity, light, and poor air quality, can have long-term detrimental effects on all types of collection materials. When spikes to high levels of any of these factors occur at an institution, they can quickly cause disastrous damage such as mold or warping of pages. In Mississippi, factors such as humidity and air quality are not controlled at a majority of the responding institutions. Even in public libraries and public library systems where local history collections that warrant preservation activity are not housed, environmental monitoring and control are essential to the preservation of the general collection. For that reason, 

**education on environmental factors for cultural heritage institutions, and ways to monitor and improve environmental conditions, should be another area of emphasis for Mississippi’s statewide preservation efforts.** A further step in this area could be the development of kits for loan to institutions in the state to monitor their environments. Activities suggested during the onsite visits and at the statewide preservation conference included development of environmental monitoring “loaner kits” where institutions, particularly those that could not afford to buy their own equipment, could borrow a kit for a 2-3 month period to check their environment. Institutions also expressed interest in having a centralized resource for environmental monitor readings and analysis, so there would be a trusted source on a statewide or regional level that could help to read and interpret the environmental findings.

Strong need was expressed for scanning or digitizing material to provide improved access for users and staff. Education on this topic is an important component in increasing the number of institutions engaged in this activity, and in building a statewide corpus of digital material. A closely-related finding is that very few Mississippi cultural organizations have a plan to preserve the materials which they are digitizing which is necessary to insure the institution’s digital assets. A great need for education in digital preservation, and digital preservation policy development, was revealed by the survey results. A better grasp on logistical aspects of digital preservation, such as knowledge of an institution’s digital backup schedule, is important. One positive finding here is the number of organizations which store their digital or electronic collections offsite or in multiple locations; both means of storage considered to be good digital preservation practice. Development of digital preservation plans is just one area of preservation policy development which is needed in the state. Preparing disaster plans, and overall long-term institutional preservation policies, is of primary importance.

Having a preservation consultant perform an onsite preservation needs assessment survey, or conducting a self-assessment, will often point out specific preservation needs to be addressed in these policies. Making onsite surveys more widely available in Mississippi is highly recommended, and providing access to well-crafted preservation policies from Mississippi institutions, upon which other organizations may model their policy, is a vital part of preservation program development in the state. During the onsite surveys, several institutions expressed strong interest in being able to access a centralized project website which would have model preservation policies and best practices mounted. In addition, offering organizations who have not inventoried, processed, or cataloged their special collections and archival materials some training and assistance in these activities will provide another building block in the establishment of strong institutional preservation programs and overall preservation capability statewide. Finally, during the onsite visits, and at both conferences, the
need was expressed for help in recruiting or placing student interns or student workers at cultural heritage collection-holding institutions to assist on preservation projects.

Preservation-related document development, onsite preservation surveys, and educational offerings in preservation often come with a price tag attached. Identification and stronger utilization of state, federal, donor, and foundation grants and funding is central in moving preservation forward in Mississippi. In an open-ended question in the online survey, respondents were asked to list the three most serious preservation problems within their institutions. The concerns of the greatest number of respondents were lack of funding/money for preservation; lack of staff and staff time for preservation; lack of or improper overall and specific storage space within cultural heritage facilities; and problems with environmental equipment and factors. Developing preservation policies and budgets to deal with these concerns are the fundamental means of improving the condition of, and conditions for, the preservation of Mississippi’s prized cultural collections.

As illustrated by the online and onsite survey findings, a statewide preservation program offering inexpensive information, education, and policy examples can assist the state in moving preservation activity forward across all types of cultural collections institutions. Focusing this program on disaster preparedness, environmental control, collection storage space planning, and digitization/digital preservation will answer many of the needs expressed in the online and onsite survey reports, and by cultural heritage institution staff and administration at both the Mississippi Library Association and Mississippi Connecting to Collections Preservation Conferences.

In February 2012, Mississippi and Louisiana developed and submitted a joint, two-state Connecting to Collections Implementation Grant Proposal. The reasoning behind this joint proposal was because some similar preservation program needs had been noted in both states, and because these states have a long history of working together on preservation and collections-related projects such as the Archival Training Collaborative. Although this proposal was not successful, there is also an interest from the project Advisory Committee and the leading institutions in the state to proceed with preservation program development in Mississippi, no matter what sources of funding need to be utilized. In fact, some of the ideas from the findings from this report (such as a project website with model preservation policies) can be achieved with little or no additional funding, and some other key needs may be addressed by other programs, such as the Spring 2012 Regional Emergency Response Network training series sponsored by LYRASIS.

1. Institutions recognize areas in which they need to develop their preservation programs, and are willing to do so.

2. Providing education on disaster preparedness and recovery, with a focus on disaster plan development, is a primary recommendation for Mississippi.

3. Education on environmental factors for cultural heritage institutions, and ways to monitor and improve environmental conditions, should be an area of emphasis.
4. There is a great need for education in digital preservation, and digital preservation policy development.

5. Preparing disaster plans, and overall long-term institutional preservation policies, is of primary importance.

6. Making onsite surveys more widely available in Mississippi is highly recommended.

7. Offering organizations that have not inventoried, processed, or cataloged their special collections and archival materials some training and assistance is recommended.

8. Identification and stronger utilization of state, federal, donor, and foundation grants and funding is critical to moving preservation forward in Mississippi.

9. A statewide preservation program offering inexpensive information, education, and policy examples would be beneficial. This program should focus on disaster preparedness, environmental controls, collection storage and space planning, and digitization/digital preservation.