

Video Documentation Proposal
Kennewick Man Skeleton
June 14, 2005

The National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Smithsonian Institution, has agreed to provide a video team and equipment to film part of the taphonomic investigations of the Kennewick Man skeleton currently scheduled for July 6-15, 2005. The purpose of the video film is to document the steps used by the investigating scientists during this important phase of the study process.

The video documentation team will be led by Mr. Dan Sonnett, a video producer formerly working with the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. Mr. Sonnett has extensive experience in documenting forensic anthropology cases and archeological sites. He has worked with Dr. Douglas Owsley and his forensic team on several occasions. The other members of the video team will be a camera operator and a sound recorder, who will be selected from a pool of experienced local video professionals in Seattle.

The master files of the resulting video footage will be deposited in the Human Studies Film Archives of NMNH's Anthropology Archives, officially known as the John Wesley Powell Library of Anthropology. A complete copy of the film footage in standard VHS format will be given, without charge, to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for its archival record of the Kennewick Man skeleton.

To insure the highest possible quality of the resulting video footage, High Definition (HD) video equipment will be used to film the taphonomy study session. The equipment necessary for this process includes the following:

- Panasonic Varicam HD video camera and accessories
- Funinon 20x HD lens
- Two 8.6" HD video monitors
- O'Connor 1030B tripod
- Tungsten lighting kit with chimeras for diffusion
- C stands for lights
- Four wireless microphones
- Shotgun microphone on boom pole (if needed)
- Portable audio mixer
- Audio headphones

Unless the study room is unusually dark, four tungsten photography lights should be sufficient to provide adequate lighting to the study area. Mr. Sonnett's team will work closely with the government's conservators and Mr. Roy Clark to coordinate lighting and to ensure that the filming process does not interfere with study of the skeleton. Tungsten lights of the kind to be used by Mr. Sonnett's team are commonly used for professional

video productions in museum situations. They will not create any heat risk to the study participants or the remains being studied.

Dr. Owsley and other key participants in the taphonomic studies will be fitted with wireless microphones so that their comments during the study can be recorded. This will help to ensure that no important information is lost. Should it be necessary to capture additional audio, the sound recorder will use a shotgun microphone and an overhead boom pole during the study. Both techniques are standard practices for professional video productions and will not present any risk to the remains.

The video documentation team will not photograph any government, Burke Museum or other personnel who do not wish to be included in the film record.

It would be highly preferable for all the members of the video production team to be present in the study room during filming as that will enable them to coordinate more effectively to ensure the quality of the footage that is captured. However, if crowding becomes a concern, it would be possible to have only the camera operator remain in the room while the video and audio signals are monitored by Mr. Sonnett and the sound recorder from a room adjacent to the study area.

Because of the high costs involved, it is anticipated that only the first four days of the taphonomy session will be filmed. This should be sufficient to provide a comprehensive overview of the methods used by the investigating scientists and the questions addressed during this phase of the study process. The video footage obtained will be a valuable part of the existing physical anthropological and biomedical literature documenting research in skeletal biology, paleopathology, forensics and human variation.