Chambers/Clover Creek Watershed Archives Project
Donation Procedures and Guidelines

Project Description and Goals

The purpose of this project is to assemble a collection of records relating to the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed for long term preservation and access. The collection will consist of physical materials, born digital records (materials that were originally created and/or distributed in a digital format,) and digitized content (materials scanned from a physical format). Physical materials will be housed within the Archives and Special Collections at Pacific Lutheran University. All content will be arranged and described according to archival best practices. The collections will be publicly accessible to all researchers following established access procedures. Access to digital files and archival descriptions will be available through the Archives' searchable [database/collections management system](). After the project's completion, the Collection will be used for educational purposes including classroom instruction, community outreach, exhibits, etc. Additional content will continue to be added to include newly created or located materials.

Members of the Chambers/Clover Creek Watershed Council and community members with connections to the Watershed will be asked to identify, gather, and transfer both physical and digital materials, along with relevant information about the materials, to the Archives. When the content has been identified, the donating council or community member will complete one or both of the transfer forms described below. Arrangements will be made for donors to safely drop off materials or for a member of the Project Team to pick up materials for the Collection.

Once the materials have been received and evaluated, a member of the Project Team will follow up with donors for any additional information that may be needed and to request that the donor sign a Deed of Gift transferring ownership of the materials to the PLU Archives and Special Collections.

The materials will then be properly arranged, described, and preserved according to archival best practices. Content determined to have high research and information value will be digitized. The descriptions of the collection, along with any files available digitally, will be accessible through the Archives' database/collection management system. For an example of what a completed archival finding aid looks like in this system, see the following:

[Bjug Harstad Papers]()
[*Saga* Yearbooks]()
[*New Land, New Lives* Oral History Collection]()

Project Team

Claire Todd, Professor of Geosciences and Environmental Studies, will serve as Project Co-Director and Subject Area Expert (toddce@plu.edu)

Anna Trammell, Archivist and Special Collections Librarian, will serve as Project Co-Director and Archival Processing and Preservation Lead (trammell@plu.edu)

Josh Smith, Digital Preservation Specialist, will serve as Online Access, Description, and Digital Preservation Manager (jds@plu.edu)

Student Archives Assistant, under the supervision of Trammell and Smith, will serve as Archival Processing and Metadata Technician

Kris Kauffman, Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Historian, will serve as a liaison between the Council and the Project Team (waterrightsinc@msn.com)

What to Donate

The Archives and Special Collections preserves unique materials that possess enduring historical, evidential, and/or research value. All archives have limited storage space. Even with the decreased physical storage requirements of digital records, too many items in a collection can make it very difficult for users to locate the content that may be most useful for their research purposes. Archivists work with donors to determine what items are the best candidates for long term preservation.

Because the record creators and subject area experts are the most informed about the content of the materials and potential future research uses, archivists rely on their input in making these decisions. While it is impossible to provide a definitive list of what types of materials should be preserved, the following guidelines should be kept in mind when determining what items to transfer to the Archives.

Generally, materials should be transferred to the Archives in the format in which they were created. This means that items that were created and distributed digitally (email, digital photographs, etc.) should be transferred as digital files (rather than being printed and then transferred as physical items). Materials that were created and/or distributed in a physical format (flyers, newspaper clippings, etc.), should be transferred as physical items (rather than being scanned and sent to the Archives). If there is content of high research value that cannot be transferred in its original form, this information should be communicated to the Archivist.

When determining what items to transfer to the Archives, consider the following questions:

1. Is it unique or is it widely accessible?
2. Is it directly related to the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed or the activities of the Council?
3. Does this item contain personally identifiable information or other sensitive content?
4. Is this item something I could imagine researchers using in the future?

Items that are generally not a good fit for the Archives:

- Widely circulated/widely available books or periodicals
- Three dimensional artifacts (trophies, plaques, sculpture, tools, etc.)
- Photocopies or scans of original items

Items that are generally appropriate for the Archives:

- Meeting minutes and agendas
- Correspondence
- Photographs (with identifying information)
- Video/audio tapes or files (with identifying information)
- Personal memoirs or journals
- Newsletters
- Newspaper clippings
- Reports or field notes
- Datasets

Copyright, Property Rights, and Restricted Content

Once the transfer process has been finalized, each donor will be asked to sign a Deed of Gift. This Deed will ask you to transfer property rights to the materials to the Archives and Special Collections, identify any known copyright holders besides the donor, and indicate any content that may need to be restricted for a period of time.

Transferring Physical Materials

To transfer physical materials to the Archives, follow these steps:

1. Take a look at the materials that may be relevant and evaluate these items based on the guidelines described above.
2. Create an inventory listing the materials you plan to transfer. This will provide the Project Team with information that will help us appropriately assess and describe the materials.

Examples might include: "Council Newsletters, 1992-1999" or "Photograph of council members Jane Doe and John Doe from the Fall 2001 Council Meeting."

3. Complete the [Transfer Form for Physical Materials](#).
4. A member of the Project Team will follow up with you within 5 business days to arrange for a convenient and safe pick up/drop off and to ask you to share the inventory describing the content you intend to transfer.
5. After the materials have been assessed, a member of the Project Team will contact you about signing a Deed of Gift.

Transferring Digital Materials

To transfer digital materials to the Archives, follow these steps:

1. Take a look at the materials that may be relevant and evaluate these items based on the guidelines described above.
2. Create a document listing any additional information that may be helpful for archivists when processing the materials. For more information, see the Metadata and File-Naming information below.
3. Rename your files according to the Metadata and File-Naming information below.
4. Complete the [Transfer Form for Digital Materials](#). A member of the Project Team will follow up with you with a link to a shared file where you can add your items. The title of this folder will be your name.
5. Provide some additional descriptive information with your files following the instructions below. You have the option to add a description to each item OR create a separate document listing the descriptions associated with each file.
6. After the materials have been assessed, a member of the Project Team will contact you about signing a Deed of Gift. If you donated both physical and digital files, you will only need to sign one Deed of Gift for both sets of materials.

Metadata and File-naming for Digital Materials

It is important that the Project Team obtains all the information necessary to properly describe the materials in a way that will allow users to locate and contextualize items in the Collection.

"Metadata" is defined as "data about data." In other words, this is the information about the files you are transferring. It may be helpful to think about this information as a caption: a concise, clear statement about the digital item that includes relevant details about the content (who, what, when, where). An image of unidentified individuals at an unidentified location or event will have little research value for future users. This information can be communicated to the Archives in one of two ways:

1. Create a metadata document describing your files and upload it to the shared folder sent to you by the Project Team. This can be a word document you create and upload to your

folder or you can create a new Google Doc within the existing folder. This document should identify the file being described and include any relevant information about that file. For example, if I uploaded four files to the my shared folder, I would also upload a document with the descriptions of those three files:

11122004_AnnualMeetingSlideShowPresentation.ppt: This powerpoint presentation was delivered at the Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Annual Meeting, November 2004.

02191999_Meeitng Minutes.pdf: Meeting Minutes from the monthly council meeting, February 1999.

05052009_WaterQualityPresentation001.jpg: Council members deliver a presentation to the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, May 2009. (L-R: Jane Doe, John Doe, Jill Doe, Jim Doe).

05052009_WaterQualityPresentation002.jpg: Council members deliver a presentation to the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, May 2009. (L-R: Jane Doe, John Doe, Jill Doe, Jim Doe).

2. Add descriptive information directly to the items you have uploaded following these instructions:
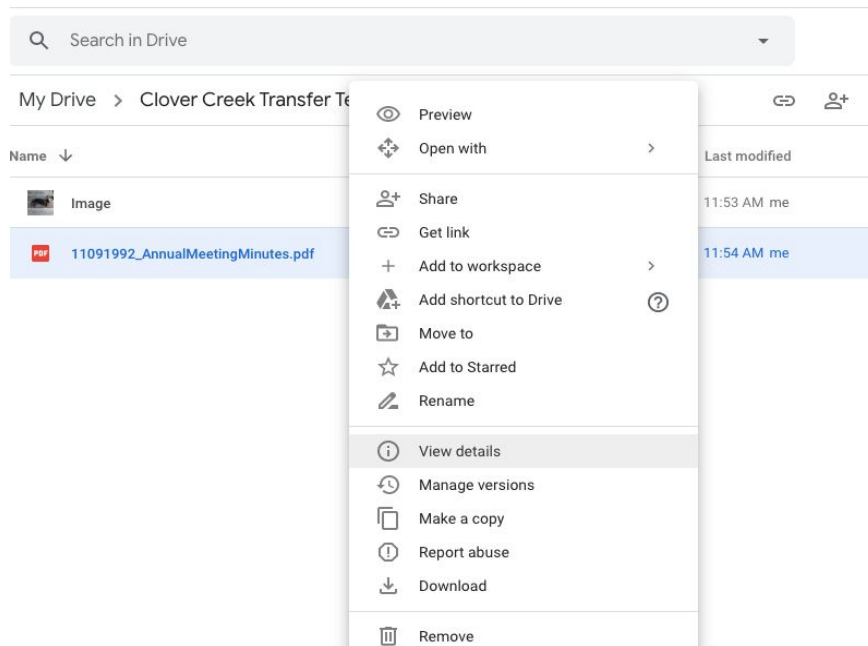
Right click on the file you wish to describe. Then select "view details."

Select the pencil icon beside "Add a description."

Enter your description. When you are finished, press enter to save.

Another valuable way to communicate this information is by using consistent and informative file names. Some files, such as digital photographs, may be automatically named using a string of numbers or characters that provide no information about the file (for example, IMG_2307.JPG). Renaming files so that identifying information is included in the filenames ensures that the information stays with the file at all times. If possible, file names should follow this structure:

YYYYMMDDSpringAnnualMeeting.jpg

This includes the date in a clear and consistent format and identifies the basic subject of the image. It will often not be possible to include all relevant details in the file name (for example, names of individuals pictured). That information can be included in an additional metadata document described above. If there are a number of images that all share the same date and general topic, an identifier with leading zeros should be added to the end of the file name, as in the following example:

YYYYMMDDSpringAnnualMeeting001.jpg
YYYYMMDDSpringAnnualMeeting002.jpg

The file naming structure may be modified as needed based on the content. In general, follow these guidelines:

1. Include the most complete date possible following the YYYYMMDD structure. If the date is unknown, do not include this information in the file name. If you are unsure about the date, please indicate that in the metadata document.
2. Avoid using special characters or spaces in your file names. Each new word may be capitalized to make the file name easier to read.

You can change the names of your files before or after you upload them. To change the name of your files once they have been uploaded to your shared folder, follow these steps:
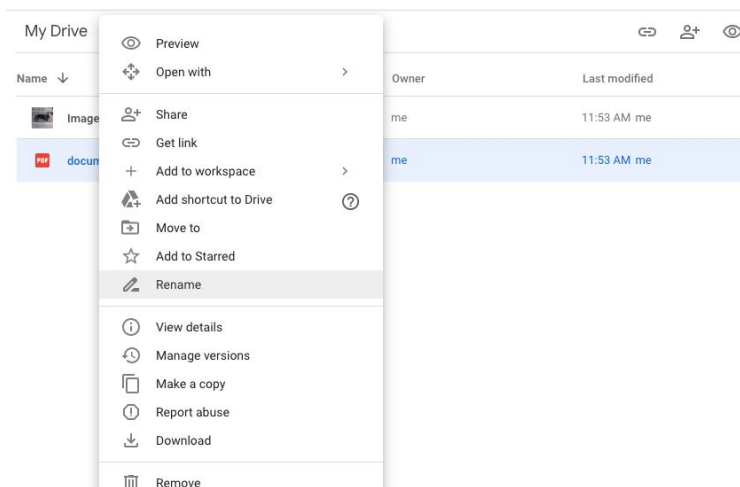
Right click on the file you wish to rename. Select "rename."
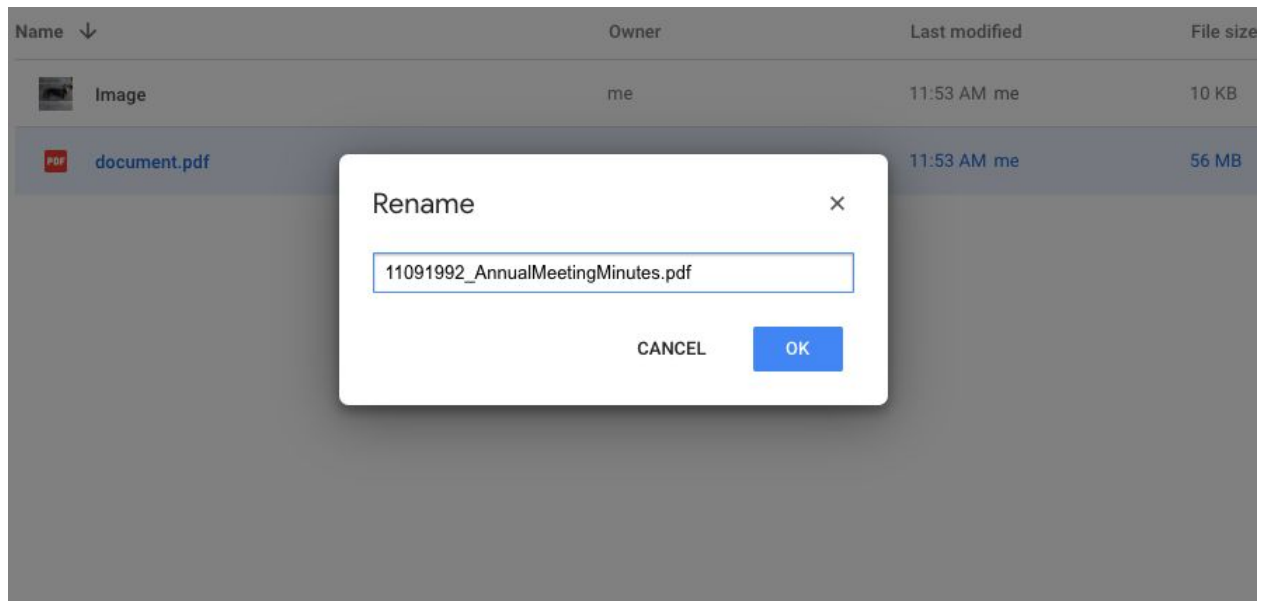
Enter your new file name, then select "OK."