



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## National Park Service

[N7002; NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0042356; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]

### Notice of Intended Repatriation: Museum of Natural History and Planetarium, Providence, RI

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of sacred objects and that have a cultural affiliation with the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice.

**DATES:** Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**].

**ADDRESSES:** Send additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to Matthew Becker, Curator of Collections, Museum of Natural History and Planetarium, 1000 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI 02907, email [mbecker@providenceri.gov](mailto:mbecker@providenceri.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA. The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium and additional information on the determinations in this notice, including the results of consultation, can be found in the summary or related records. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

#### **Abstract of information available**

A total of 28 cultural items have been requested for repatriation. The 28 cultural items include a collection of tapa cloths and tapa decorating tools, fish hooks and lines, stone pounders, small figurines, a ukulele, a fan, a wooden spear, a bowl, and a necklace. The 28 items were donated between 1909 and 1956. The majority of the items, particularly the tapa cloths and tapa decorating tools, were received during the 1950s from Brown University and the Bishop Museum

as gifts or as part of exchange. The remaining items fall into two camps: either they were singular items donated by individual collectors residing in Rhode Island, or they lack donor data entirely and are listed as “Donor Unknown.” All items are listed as being from Hawaii.

### **Determinations**

The Museum of Natural History and Planetarium has determined that:

- The 28 sacred objects described in this notice are specific ceremonial objects needed by a traditional Native American religious leader for present-day adherents to practice traditional Native American religion, according to the Native American traditional knowledge of a lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization.
- There is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and the Hui Iwi Kuamo’o.

### **Requests for Repatriation**

Additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice must be sent to the authorized representative identified in this notice under ADDRESSES. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or a culturally affiliated Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization.

Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]. If competing requests for repatriation are received, the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the cultural items are considered a single request and not competing requests. The Museum of Natural History and Planetarium is responsible for sending a copy of this notice to the Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice and to any other consulting parties.

**Authority:** Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3004 and the implementing regulations, 43 CFR 10.9.

Dated: March 11, 2026

**Melanie O'Brien,**  
*Manager, National NAGPRA Program.*

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