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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

[N7365; NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0043331; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]

Notice of Intended Repatriation: Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Portland Art Museum intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony 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 Kathleen Ash-Milby, Senior Curator of Native American Art, Portland Art Museum, 1219 SW Park Ave, Portland, OR 97205, email k*athleen.ash-milby@pam.org*, and Donald Urquhart, Director of Collections and Exhibitions, Portland Art Museum, 1219 SW Park Ave, Portland, OR 97205, email *donald.urquhart@pam.org*.

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 Portland Art Museum 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

In a letter dated May 6, 2026, the Navajo Nation submitted a claim for repatriation for 14 cultural items under NAGPRA and identified them as "sacred objects/objects of cultural patrimony." The Tribe identified these as eight Navajo jish (#2003.65.14, #2003.65.15, #BL1300, #BL1409, #BL1411, #BL1582, #BL1603, #BL1710), which are bags or bundles containing

sacred objects, plus two masks (#85.113.1, #BL1240), clothing (#BL629a-n) and accouterments (#89.52.40, #2003.65.9, BL1579a-c) used in ceremony, primarily for healing and restoring hózhó (a state of beauty, harmony, and balance in the universe). Navajo jish and sacred items are not owned by individuals but are cared for and utilized by hatathli (or medicine men) in ceremony on behalf of the Tribe. Several of the items are associated with specific ceremonies, including the Night Way, Enemy Way, Mountain Top Way, and Blessing Way. These ceremonies are still widely practiced by members of the Navajo Tribe. These items entered the Portland Art Museum's collection as donations from private collector Elizabeth Cole Butler. Objects #85.113.1 and #89.52.40 were donated to the museum in 1985 and 1989. The additional objects were loaned to the museum before 1998. Three of these became donations in 2003 (#2003.65.9, #2003.65.14, and #2003.65.15). The remaining nine objects became donations through bequest in 2004 but were not accessioned into the permanent collection. No additional provenance before Butler's possession has been identified.

Determinations

The Portland Art Museum has determined that:

- The 14 sacred objects/objects of cultural patrimony described in this notice are, according to the Native American traditional knowledge of an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, specific ceremonial objects needed by a traditional Native American religious leader for present-day adherents to practice traditional Native American religion, and have ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group, including any constituent sub-group (such as a band, clan, lineage, ceremonial society, or other subdivision).
- There is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and the Navajo Nation, Arizona, New Mexico, & Utah.

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 Portland Art Museum 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 Portland Art Museum 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: July 20, 2026.

Melanie O'Brien,
Manager, National NAGPRA Program.

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