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WASHINGTON – The National Park Service today announced more than $1.5 million in grants under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) to assist museums, Indian tribes, and Alaska native villages to document and return human remains and cultural objects to their native people.

Grants were awarded both to support the efforts of museums, Indian tribes, Alaska native villages and Native Hawaiian organizations in the documentation of NAGPRA-related objects (consultation/documentation grants), and to pay for the costs associated with the return of the remains and objects to their native people (repatriation grants). This year, 29 grants totaling $1,471,625.00 are going to 24 recipients for consultation/documentation projects, and $95,423.40 is going to eight repatriation projects.

“NAGPRA provides an opportunity to correct the mistreatment of native peoples' ancestral dead by returning the sacred objects and cultural heritage that have been removed from their communities,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. “These grants will continue the process by which more than 10,000 Native American human remains and one million sacred objects that have been returned to tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations.

Projects funded by the grant program includes consultations to identify and affiliate individuals and cultural items, training for both museum and tribal staff on NAGPRA, digitizing collection records for consultation, consultations regarding culturally unaffiliated individuals, as well as the preparation and transport of items back to their native people.

Enacted in 1990, NAGPRA requires museums and federal agencies to inventory and identify Native American human remains and cultural items in their collections, and to consult with federally recognized Indian tribes, including Alaska Native villages, and Native Hawaiian organizations regarding the return of these objects to descendants or tribes and organizations. The Act also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants to assist in implement provisions of the Act.

For additional information regarding these awards, contact Sherry Hutt, National NAGPRA Program Manager, at 202-354-1479 or via e-mail at sherry_hutt@nps.gov.