NATIVE AMERICAN LIBRAY SERVICES ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Sample Application NAE-259241-OLS-25

Sealaska Corporation

Amount awarded by IMLS: $99,268

The Sealaska Heritage Institute will develop Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier project to digitize radio recordings from Sitka and Wrangell's local radio programs and support the contemporary documentation of current rural Alaskan life. The radio recordings produced for local public radio feature the voices and narratives of rural Alaskan people in the 1960s through 1990s. The collections contain interviews with local community elders, political figures, and organizations documenting community events, social life, and Alaska Native issues. The project will also fund the purchase of recording equipment that will be utilized during Celebration 2026 to establish and host Sealaska Heritage Institute's first "pop-up" recording studio. Visitors will be able to use the recording equipment to tell stories, sing songs, or conduct interviews with loved ones. Submitted recordings will be collected and made into the Voices of Celebration 2026 archival collection. This project will help build a greater understanding and insight into rural Southeast Alaska life.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Tribal Profile
- Narrative
- Schedule of completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Tribal Profile

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANSCA) of 1971 was a legislative settlement of aboriginal claims to Alaska. As one of thirteen regional Alaska Native shareholder corporations established by ANSCA, and a federally recognized tribal organization, the Sealaska (Sealaska) Corporation serves the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian tribes in 21 communities spread over 35,000 square miles within Southeast Alaska. Sealaska provides benefits to more than 26,000 shareholders and to their lineal descendants and has accepted the responsibility to care for and promote its people's education, culture, and way of life. To further this effort Sealaska created Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) in 1980 as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. SHI's mission is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures to promote cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding. SHI currently employs a staff of 78 full-time employees.

SHI is governed by a 13-member tribal Board of Trustees and receives guidance from its Council of Traditional Scholars, an appointed group of tribal Elders. SHI fosters language revitalization, hosts leadership institutes for Native youth, develops culturally responsive curriculum for K-12 students, provides arts trainings, engages in academic research projects, and operates a public library, archive, and museum at its 29,000 square foot Walter Soboleff Building. In the early 1990s, SHI assumed the responsibility of managing Sealaska Corporation's ethnographic collection. With the passage of the Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act in 1990, the SHI's collections increased as cultural objects were returned to tribes. In response, SHI developed policies to care for its collections as a professional museum, academic library, and archival repository. SHI updates these policies as needed to meet best standards and in response to the donations of photographs, audio recordings and manuscript papers, and cultural objects received each year.

SHI's current collection constitutes of 3,100 linear feet of material and includes manuscript materials (primarily historical), 60,000 photographs (historical and contemporary), 5,000 audio and video recordings (historical and contemporary), 2,500 books (historical and contemporary), and 950 art/cultural objects, which come to SHI through donation and purchase on a regular basis. The collections housed by SHI are nationally and internationally significant in their content, and SHI's archival collection includes the largest available audio collection of Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian oral traditions and languages in the world. SHI serves the general and academic Native and non-Native community by making its extensive library, archival, and ethnographic collections available to the public for research and educational purposes, hosting an annual public lecture series, mentoring visiting scholars and researchers, publishing academic essays and books, and SHI staff present papers at scholarly conferences. SHI's culture and history, language, education, and art departments also rely on its library and archival collections in the development of their activities/publications.

SHI's Archives and Collections Department is staffed by SHI's Archives and Collections Director, Emily Galgano (Project Manager for the proposed ***Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier*** IMLS NAE grant project), a Records Manager, and a Curator. SHI contributes to the documentation of oral traditions through major publications, often in partnership with the University of Washington Press. It also publishes the Box of Knowledge series, consisting of essays, reports, and books that the institute considers should be made available as a contribution to studies on Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures, history, and languages. Furthermore, SHI collaborate with other scholars to develop and publish books on topics pertinent to the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, and to the public at large.

SHI's Archives and Collections Department is open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday and also schedules appointments for individuals conducting archive/collections research. The Department is staffed by SHI's Director of Archives and Collections (MLIS), Collections and Curatorial Manager (PhD), contractors, college interns, and volunteers. The department offers Wi-Fi and computer access to its patrons and hosts special events, lectures, curated exhibitions, and catalogs its books/archival collections in OCLC WorldCat and the Alaska Library Catalog. In 2024, SHI sponsored nearly 20 lectures, which were also live streamed on SHI's YouTube channel. In total. SHI delivered/sponsored programs benefitting 60,777 people from 120 communities in Alaska, the Lower 48, Hawaii, Canada, and beyond in 2024. Of that amount of people served, SHI's Archives and Collections Department served 10,115 individuals (e.g., exhibit tours and research requests). SHI also uses its website (79,472 unique visitors), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to communicate with its constituents and the public. In 2023 [SHI's 2024 communications data is currently being compiled], SHI's social media audiences grew to 39,498 (14% increase from 2022). SHI made 566 Facebook posts for a total reach of 1.6M. SHI also clocked 327,440 video views of its published videos (18% increase from 2022), wrote and distributed 49 press releases, and 106 news stories were published or broadcast about SHI's programs in 2023.

I. Project Justification

Sealaska Corporation (Sealaska) is an Alaska Native regional corporation based in Juneau, Alaska, and established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.). Sealaska is an eligible entity to apply for the Institute of Museum and Library Service's Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants Program (NAE) Grant program. Sealaska serves more than 26,000 Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian shareholders and their lineal descendants, many of whom reside in their ancestral lands of Southeast Alaska.

Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI) was conceived by tribal elders attending the first Sealaska Elders Conference held in 1980. Sealaska established SHI as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1980 with a mission to perpetuate and enhance the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures. SHI is headquartered at its Walter Soboleff Building (WSB) located in Juneau, Alaska's capital city and Southeast Alaska's most populous town. SHI operates a public library, archives, and museum at its WSB. SHI will carry out the *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project on behalf of Sealaska Corporation.

Nearly 21% of Juneau's 32,255 residents are of Alaska Native heritage; the region is home to 71,000 people, 24% of whom are Alaska Natives. SHI delivered/sponsored programs benefitting 60,777 people from 120 communities in Alaska, the Lower 48, Hawaii, Canada, and beyond in 2024. Sealaska respectfully seeks $99,268 in IMLS funding to support the *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project to enhance efforts to revitalize Southeast Alaska Native cultures through sharing content of unique value within and beyond Native communities.

The two-year project digitizes and makes available content from 242 reels, 5 DAT tapes, and 17 cassettes. The project also creates and makes available a Voices of Celebration 2026 archival collection.

The Need Addressed by the Project and How the Project was Identified

Southeast Alaska encompasses a geographic area roughly the size of the state of Maine and is comprised of a thin strip of mainland and the Alexander Archipelago, a group of 1,100 islands. With few exceptions, the region's communities are isolated from each other and are accessible only by air or water. Local radio stations in rural America have always held a vital role in such remote communities. Serving as an irreplaceable method of communication in towns that are only accessible by boat or plane – and located in a region of Alaska where the seas are rough, and planes cannot always land – these stations were often the primary source of news and community updates in the time before social media.

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project will digitize two collections from the SHI Archives of radio recordings originating in two remote, isolated villages in Southeast Alaska. Sitka's radio station, KCAW radio, and Wrangell's, KSTK radio, donated their archival recordings to SHI in 2013 and 2012, respectively. These recordings produced for local public radio feature the voices and narratives of rural Alaskan people in the 1960s through 1990s. Both collections contain interviews with local community elders, political figures, and organizations; they document community events, social life, and Alaska Native issues. Local radio is vital element of rural Alaskan life. As KCAW's current general manager, Mariana Robertson, described in 2024: *"I know it sounds strange, but the thing I love most about community radio are the silences – knowing that I'm hearing someone live figuring out what to say or play next. It's such a feeling of connection to be in a moment of pause like that with someone whose voice I've come to know and appreciate.*" Local radio fosters community engagement.

This project was identified due to a combination of factors. In addition to the importance of the content on these recordings as described above, the archivist maintains a list of collections in the archives that are in outdated formats and ready for digitization. These recordings are on a variety of outdated formats including reel-to-reel, DAT, and cassettes. Even if SHI owned or purchased the players

necessary to listen to these recordings, magnetic media is particularly at risk of degradation at this time; playing these recordings would put them further at risk of damage. Furthermore, the project's primary audience/s would need to travel to Juneau from their rural communities to access the players and the recordings. Recently, there have been requests for recordings from both KCAW and KSTK collections. SHI prioritizes the digitization of collections that have been requested by stakeholders and researchers.

IMLS Agency-Level and Program-Level Goals and Objectives Addressed by the Project

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project aligns with Agency-Level Goal 3: Advance Collections Stewardship and Access, and its Objective 3.2: Promoting access to museum and library collections. The project also aligns with NAE Program Objective 3: Providing access to and preservation of information and collections. Digitizing these recordings will allow SHI to make more than 260 recordings documenting rural Alaskan life publicly available that are currently inaccessible – including 242 recordings made using obsolete reel-to-reel technology.

It is imperative that these recordings are not lost to the ravages of time and the inevitable breakdown of audio reels. This collection is remarkable in that it is comprised of, was created by, and centers on a medley of unfiltered voices speaking directly from rural Alaskan villages in a way that anthropological or ethnographic studies cannot. The recordings also document an exciting time in contemporary Southeast Alaska Native history, the people who participated in these radio programs as hosts or interviewees fostered the Native language and culture revitalization of the modern era in Southeast Alaska. Many of the elders featured in the program have now "walked into the forest" and can no longer share their stories. The loss of this recorded information would be devastating to the cultural memory of the peoples in Southeast Alaska.

The conditions of the collections were assessed in 2012 and 2013 by the archivist at the time when they were accessioned and by the current archivist in 2025. Each reel is housed in a reel case, and they are stored in archival boxes in SHI's archives and collections vault. The climate-controlled vault has helped to stabilize the most egregious forms of decay, but there is evidence of brittle film, breakages, and slight vinegar syndrome in the oldest reels, as is anticipated with any cellulose film. Some film will need to be spliced by the digitizing company.

The recordings in this collection were created and edited by KCAW radio station and KSTK radio station as part of their radio programming. The stations signed over all rights and permissions to SHI with the donation of the recordings. SHI adheres to the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials, and desires to honor Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian traditional cultural belief that clans retain the intellectual property rights to clan stories or songs. Since the recordings were released publicly by KCAW and KSTK in their initial use, any clan owned information or property would have been chosen with publication and public access in mind. Thus, there are no anticipated issues related to culturally sensitive information.

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project has two main objectives: to (1) digitize the radio recordings from Sitka and Wrangell's local radio programs and (2) support the contemporary documentation of current rural Alaskan life. This project will fund the purchase of recording equipment that will be utilized during Celebration 2026 to establish and host SHI's first "pop-up" recording studio to be featured at one of SHI's four-day biennial Celebration events. Visitors will be able to use the recording equipment to tell stories, sing songs, or conduct interviews with loved ones. They will have the option to receive and/or deposit copies of their recordings into the SHI archives. Submitted recordings will be collected and made into the Voices of Celebration 2026 archival collection that will be processed and a finding aid written in the second year of the project.

Primary Audience for the Project and its Involvement in Project Planning

The radio programs are of high value to scholars, educators, and the general public seeking greater understanding and insight into then-contemporary rural Southeast Alaska life and concerns. These recordings provide a window into the recent past that is of great value to social and cultural historians, anthropologists, cultural specialists, members of the Native community, Native and non-Native students, and the general public seeking greater understanding of Native life in this period as articulated by participants and presented from the Native point of view. The recordings will also be valuable for researchers and students with interest in radio, local politics, local governance, community issues, and rural Alaskan life. A recent genealogy researcher in the SHI Archives lamented that we could not share the contents from the KSTK reels, as their relatives were likely featured in the recordings.

The *Voices of Rural America* specifically serves **three target audiences**. The first is comprised of **KCAW listeners**: KCAW serves the rural community of Sitka, population 8,458, of whom 24% are Alaska Natives (US Census, 2020). KCAW also serves 7 extremely rural villages: Angoon (357), Elfin Cove (24), Kake (543), Pelican (98), Port Alexander (78), Tenakee Springs (116), and Yakutat (657); 63% of the combined 1,873 residents in these 7 communities are Alaska Natives. KCAW has over 1200 members and 100 active volunteers. In the past three decades, KCAW has trained 750+ on-air volunteers (75 Sitkans/ week are on the air). Several of its former staff/volunteers are now award-winning national producers.

KSTK listeners: KSTK serves the rural community of Wrangell, population 2,127, of whom 31% are Alaska Native (US Census, 2020). Recordings in the KSTK collection include interviews with revered Tlingit elders and fluent speakers Esther Shay and Walter Soboleff. Dr. Soboleff (Kaajaakwti) served on SHI's Board of Trustees from 1985-2011. SHI's Walter Soboleff Building (WSB), which houses its Archives, honors his legacy; content sharing his knowledge is highly sought and valued and also serve the **research community**. For example, in 2024, a researcher wrote: "*I'm interested in accessing the papers of the late Rev. Dr. Walter Soboleff …*" This project shares previously inaccessible "live" interviews with Kaajaakwti.

The **third target audience** will **create** the project's **Voices of Celebration 2026** archival collection. SHI hosted its first biennial Celebration in 1982. Celebration 2024 drew 5,470 attendees, of whom 1,600 are Tlingit, Haida, and/or Tsimshian dance group members (29%) and 22,846 online viewers. SHI's 4-day Celebration is one of Alaska's largest gatherings of Indigenous people sharing their dances, songs, and languages; through songs and dance, generations of adults and children have continued those traditions. Celebration fosters story sharing and reconnecting with relatives from throughout the region, state, and Lower-48. SHI estimates **50 people** will use the project's **Voices of Celebration 2026** recording booth.

Project Work Plan

The KCAW radio recordings collection consists of 38 reels, 5 DAT tapes, and 17 cassettes. The KSTK radio recordings collection consists of 204 reels. The project plan is primarily focused on the shipping of these materials to and from the digitizing company and streamlining access to the existing finding aid and item level description. The project will also fund the purchase of recording equipment to be used to document current rural Alaskan life at Celebration 2026.

Objective 1: Prepare and ship 264 recordings.

- 1.1: Project Director (PD) contracts a digitizing company.
- 1.2: PD packs the 264 recordings and prepares itemized box lists.
- 1.3: PD ships the boxes of recordings to the digitizing company.

Objective 2: Digitize the recordings.

- 2.1: The digitizing company digitizes the recordings following industry best practices.
- 2.2: The digitizing company compiles additional metadata of the recordings.

- 2.3: The digitizing company returns uncompressed .wav files and compressed .mp3 files on external hard drives and the original physical media.
- 2.4: PD reviews digitized recordings and conducts quality control.

Objective 3: Support contemporary audio documentation.

- 3.1: PD purchases recording equipment
- 3.2: PD prepares waivers, deeds of gift, rules/policies, sample interview questions, etc.
- 3.3: PD hosts recording booth at Celebration 2026.
- 3.4: PD reviews audio and sends participants copies of their audio files.
- 3.5: Deputy Communication Department Director (DCD) writes press release about the Voices at Celebration 2026 event, including commentary from participants.

Objective 4: Update the finding aids and make the recordings digitally available.

- 4.1: PD incorporates newly compiled metadata into the existing finding aids and creates a finding aid for the new Celebration interview collection.
- 4.2: PD updates item level description in the finding aids after ensuring that the contents of the recordings match the descriptions.
- 4.3: PD uploads mp3 copies of the digital recordings to Proficio.
- 4.4: DCD prepares a press release announcing the Voices of Celebration 2026 recording booth recordings are accessible on Proficio; DCD compiles stakeholder input generated by the press release to PD and announcing the release of the KCAW and KSTK digitized
- 4.5: DCD prepares a press release recordings, accessible via Proficio.

Objective 5: Long term storage and final reporting.

- 5.1: PD uploads high-resolution master copies and low-resolution access copies to the QNAP system for long term storage. PD also makes a copy on an external hard drive of the low-resolution access copies for use in the SHI archive's reading room.
- 5.2: PD makes copies on external hard drives of the high-resolution files for current KCAW radio and KSTK radio staff and sends those hard drives to the respective station's General Manager.
- 5.3: PD prepares and submits final reporting to IMLS.

Key Staff

The **Project Director** (PD - 15%FTE) is SHI's Director of Archives & Collections, Emily Galgano. The PD holds a MLIS degree, has worked at SHI since 2019, earned a Digital Archives Specialist Certificate awarded by the Society of American Archives (SAA) in 2023, and enhanced SHI's basic digital preservation procedures by creating and implementing SHI's comprehensive Digital Preservation Policy for long-term preservation, sustainability, and online access to its collections.

The PD is responsible for project planning, implementation, and management. She will review the Schedule of Completion and identify/mitigate challenges ensuring the project is completed on schedule/within budget; implement the project's performance measurement plan; attend annual IMLS grantee meetings; and prepare/submit IMLS grant reporting.

SHI's **Deputy Communication Department Director** (**DCD** – 60 hours, 0.03% FTE equivalent), Kathy Dye, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and has worked for SHI for more than 20 years. She oversees outreach about the work being conducted by SHI staff and its departments, creates content for SHI's website, social media outlets, e-newsletters, writes press releases, video scripts, annual reports, and produces/narrates SHI's annual highlight video for shareholders and the public. She will manage public outreach for the two-year *Voices of Rural American* project via social media and press releases.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders such as KCAW and KSTK radio stations have been involved in the planning process for this project. The KCAW general manager, Mariana Robertson, has expressed interest in utilizing digitized recordings in their regularly scheduled programing. Specifically, KCAW is extremely motivated for recordings in the collection to be digitized [supporting doc 1]. KCAW plans to rebroadcast recordings in the collection that document the conversational use of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian languages. Since 2019, KCAW has hosted a one-hour, weekly radio show, "*Gunalchéesh!"* ("*Thank you"* in the Tlingit language). The show features Alaska Native languages, especially the endangered Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian languages of Southeast Alaska. Created and hosted by KCAW's Development Director, who is of Haida heritage, *Gunalchéesh!* seeks to normalize hearing Indigenous languages with little translation. The KSTK general manager, Cindy Sweat, has written the attached letter of support [supporting doc 2] citing to the way in which the KSTK collection (recordings span the 1960s through the 1990s) bridges the era prior to/commencing Southeast Alaska's cultural revitalization and plans to rebroadcast interviews.

SHI's Archives responds to frequent requests from tribal members, many of whom cannot travel to Juneau to access physical/in-person resources; they also cannot listen to these recordings remotely because they are not digitized. The *Voices of Rural America* project responds to the value stakeholders place on access to recordings that document their and their relatives' participation in Celebration. For example, SHI has been digitizing and making accessible the footage of past Celebrations, beginning in 1982, with funding from IMLS (NG-03-15-0022-15) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (PW-269451-20). Viewing this footage on YouTube has elicited a deluge of comments. "*Watching these videos has been amazing. Hearing our Ancestors voices again is a gift,*" wrote Gail Young Dabaluz. "*I cried, and in a good way, remembering those beautiful people who have left us,*" wrote Nancy Barnes.

The project's **Voices of Celebration 2026** recording booth will allow stakeholders to document memories being made as interviewers/interviewees reflect on prior Celebrations and relationships with each other and their Indigenous cultures, arts, and languages. Stakeholders will have access to these born digital recordings; SHI's Archivist will send participants a copy of their recording, create a finding aid for the collection, and make the recordings available through SHI's online collections database, Proficio. SHI's Deputy Communications Director will prepare/disseminate a press release about availability of the Voices of Celebration 2026 collection and document/provide input generated from the press release to the Archivist who will incorporate stakeholder involvement through assisting stakeholders to navigate use of Proficio and to generate future projects responsive to the needs/interests shared by stakeholders.

Existing Resources

SHI has a number of existing resources and assets that will aid in the success of the *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project. The collections housed by SHI's archives are nationally and internationally significant in their content and include the largest available audio collection of Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian oral traditions and languages in the world.

The project utilizes and expands upon highly productive, existing cross-departmental partnerships between SHI's Archives & Collections Department, SHI's Communications & Publications Department, and Sealaska Corporation's IT Department. These partnerships have been developed and strengthened through SHI's past projects in collections management, digitization and research, and are essential to this project's deliverables. The Archives and Collections Department is staffed by 3 full-time, professional staff including the department director and project director, who holds a terminal degree (MLIS: Masters in Library and Information Science, with a concentration in Archives Management) and a Digital Archiving Specialist certification from the Society of American Archivists. This expertise will be vital to ensure that the recordings are as secure and accessible as possible, following industry best

practices and standards. The Communications & Publications Department staff have extensive knowledge and experience with press releases and social media. This will be useful in sharing out the project results and lessons learned and for obtaining stakeholder input. The Sealaska IT Department supports SHI's IT needs, including maintaining the long-term digital storage capacity for SHI's archives.

Additionally, SHI has experience with large scale digitization projects and excellent existing relationships with multiple digitizing companies. Past projects SHI has worked on include IMLS project NG-03-15-0022-15 to digitize Celebration footage from the 1980s, NEH project PW-269451-20 to digitize Celebration footage from the 1990s to 2016, and CLIR project RAR_008_976 to digitize KTOO's Southeast Native Radio recordings. With the CLIR project to digitize KTOO recordings, SHI developed a strong relationship with the station KTOO. SHI foresees enduring relationships forming with the stations KCAW and KSTK resulting from this project.

Sharing Results and Lessons Learned

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project results will be shared with KCAW and KSTK radio stations for use with their regularly scheduled programming. They will also be shared with the general public via SHI's online database which will be highlighted on SHI's social media channels and in a press release.

SHI will similarly share copies of recordings made through the Voices of Celebration 2026 project component with the creators of that born digital content and make the collection available through SHI's online database which will be highlighted on SHI's social media channels and in a press release.

The lessons learned through this project will be compiled for the final report for IMLS, which will be saved in SHI's archives for reference for future similar projects. This type of documentation is used regularly by current staff and will be a valuable resource for future staff working in the archives.

II. Project Results

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project results will include three finding aids uploaded to the online database following industry best practices including DACS. The existing, but limited, finding aids for the KCAW radio recordings and KSTK radio recordings collections will be updated with item level descriptions and confirmed content descriptions. A new finding aid will be written for the Voices at Celebration 2026 recordings collection.

Over 260 historical recordings will be digitized and added to their respective finding aids in the online database. An additional unknown number of born digital recordings will be added from the Celebration pop-up recording booth.

The digitized content will be gratis and publicly available on the world wide web via SHI's online database (Re:discovery, Proficio) and the recordings will be available to on-site researchers at SHI's facility. SHI allows its collections to be used for research and educational purposes. For entities or individuals that wish to publish, format into for-profit films, or use in a similar fashion, they must obtain the permission of SHI and are charged a small fee. All relevant rights and permissions information will be stated on the finding aid and in SHI's researcher policies and protocols.

Defining and Evaluating Success

The *Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier* project will be a success when all of the results and products described above are completed. The original obsolete media will be digitized and all recordings accounted for and uploaded to the online database, finding aids will be completed, and new recordings (the Voices of Celebration 2026 project component) will be created and cataloged. These are measurable products that will be described in the final reporting.

A less measurable element of success is the emotional impact on the primary audience. SHI

recently completed a three-year project (2021-2023) that provided public access (via SHI's YouTube channel) to 741 videos of song/dance performance spanning SHI's public biennial Celebration events from 1982-2016. Below is just one example of the feedback SHI has received in response to making those previously inaccessible videos accessible:

"*This was so great to watch... I got to see so many aunties and uncles as well as my grandpa speak as well as see the Deer peace dance. I remember singing and dancing to this song as a young child around 8 and I loved this song...but until now did I realize how strong that song was and what a privilege it was for me to be asked to dance to it then. Gunalchéesh* [Thank you] *SHI for preserving this for their grandchildren and my grandchildren*."

By the end of 2023 (project completion), the Celebration videos had been viewed **112,755 times** and SHI had **received 243 comments** from individuals who had watched the videos, illustrating the importance of making previously "hidden" recordings available to tribal members. SHI will similarly compile comments received from stakeholders responding to the availability of the Voices of Celebration 2026 collection, the KCAW radio recordings collection, and the KSTK radio recordings collection.

Disseminating Results to the Primary Audience

SHI's Deputy Communication Department Director will write two press releases announcing the release of the digitized and digital recordings and their accessibility on the online database. The recordings will be viewable and searchable in SHI's online database as part of a digital finding aid described to the item level. SHI's online database is hosted by Re:Discovery, Proficio, Proficio's sophisticated searching capabilities and ability to attach digital objects, such as mp3s or jpegs, directly to the finding aid makes it an ideal platform for this digital collection. There is also a featured collection function where the radio recordings collections will be highlighted upon completion of the project.

SHI regularly posts on social media with materials from the archives. Given the nature of the collections being made accessible to the project's stakeholders, it is highly likely that the digitized recordings from this project will be used for many of SHI's social media posts going forward.

Sustaining the Project Benefits Beyond the Period of Performance

SHI owns and operates its Walter Soboleff Building and its archives and collections storage vault is constructed to federal repository standards, ensuring the safety of all of SHI's archives and collections and their availability for onsite for research. The archives are also managed by a professionally trained Archivist. SHI's Communications and Publications Department manages and maintains SHI's website and SHI seeks additional professional website support as needed.

Under the scope of a recent IMLS NANH Museum Services Grant (MN-251880-OMS-22) SHI has upgraded the archive's digital storage capabilities. The master backups of the digital products of this IMLS NAE grant will be stored on the new QNAP system. Access copies will be stored on separate hard drives in a separate location. The original reels and tapes will be stored in perpetuity in the archives as additional backups.

SHI's Digital Preservation Policy spells out a process of regular review of digital files, ensuring multiple copies exist at separate locations, and watching file types for their longevity amid software adaptations over time [supporting doc 3]. Data redundancy is a key component to SHI's digital asset preservation strategy. Working files will also be backed up on a daily basis to ensure no loss. Checksums will be performed on preservation files as well to ensure data integrity over time. In addition, Dublin Core metadata will be collected and documented to support long-term preservation of the digital assets that are created as part of this project.

Voices of Rural America: Digitizing Interviews from the Last Frontier	Year 1: 2025-2026											
	September	October	November	December	January	Februrary	March	April	May	June	July	August
Objective 1: Prepare and ship 264 recordings.												
Activity 1.1: Project Director (PD) contracts a digtizing company.												
Activity 1.1: PD packs the 264 recordings and prepares itemized box lists.												
Activity 1.2: PD ships the boxes of recordings to SceneSavers.												
Objective 2: Digitize the recordings.												
Activity 2.1: SceneSavers digitizes the recordings following industry best practices.												
Activity 2.2: SceneSavers compiles additional metadata of the recordings.												
Activity 2.3: SceneSavers returns uncompressed .wav files and compressed .mp3 files on external hard drives and the original physical media.												
Activity 2.4: PD reviews digitized recordings and conducts quality control.												
Objective 3: Support contemporary audio documentation.												
Activity 3.1: PD purchases recording equipment.												
Activity 3.2: PD prepares waivers, deeds of gift, rules/policies, sample interview questions, etc.												
Activity 3.3: PD hosts recording booth at Celebration 2026.												
Activity 3.4: PD reviews audio and sends participants copies of their audio files.												
Activity 3.5: Deputy Communication Department Director (DCD) writes press release about the Voices at Celebration 2026 event, including commentary from participants.												
Activity 3.6: PD submits annual reporting to IMLS												
	Year 2: 2026-2027											
	September	October	November	December	January	Februrary	March	April	May	June	July	August
Objective 4: Update the finding aids and make the recordings digitally available.												
Activity 4.1: PD incorporates newly compiled metadata into the existing finding aids and creates a finding aid for the new Celebration interview collection.												
Activity 4.2: PD updates item level description in the finding aids after ensuring that the contents of the recordings match the descriptions.												
Activity 4.3: PD uploads mp3 copies of the digital recordings to Proficio.												
Activity 4.4: DCD prepares a press release announcing the Voices of Celebration 2026 recording booth recordings are accessible on Proficio; DCD compiles stakeholder input generated by the press release to PD.												
Activity 4.5: DCD prepares a press release announcing the release of the KCAW and KSTK digitized recordings, accessible via Proficio.												
Objective 5: Long term storage and final reporting.												
Activity 5.1: PD uploads high-resolution master copies and low-resolution access copies to the QNAP system for long term storage. PD also makes a copy on an external hard drive of the low-resolution access copies for use in the reading room.												
Activity 5.2: PD makes copies on external hard drives of the high-resolution files for current KCAW radio and KSTK radio staff.												
Activity 5.3: PD submits final reporting to IMLS.												