



Strategic Plan 2016 - 2020 Hi-Desert Nature Museum

“A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”

ICOM (*International Council of Museums*) Statutes, adopted during the 21st General Conference in Vienna, Austria, 2007





Where to go from here...

The Museum, located in the Yucca Valley Community Center Complex, is open three days per week. A staff of two employees secures and displays educational temporary exhibits, produces a quality summer camp and two Family Fun Days, organizes Earth Day, books speakers for lectures and offers a positive museum experience for up to 150 visitors per day.

The 2014–16 strategic plan focused on basic museum housekeeping. Collections care, which included inventory and taxidermy treatments were performed, as well as limited programing. Museum staff, with the help of a few volunteers, has accomplished the major tasks and staff is now ready to move forward.

The Museum's new strategic plan strives to keep the museum *interesting and relevant* for the local community, as well as enticing for tourists. This requires a shift in thought and practice from previous practices. Traditionally, the Museum has displayed collections in a more eclectic fashion with casual interpretation. In the future the Museum will interpret the Morongo Basin's natural and cultural history through a variety of relevant permanent and travelling exhibits in a space that is organized in a logical and coherent manner. Exhibits will be accessible for local residents and national and international tourists alike.

In addition to the Museum's own Mission Statement the following plan is in line with the Town of Yucca Valley's Mission and Vision Statements, the Town's Park Master Plan, the General Plan, as well as the recently adopted Town of Yucca Valley Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT - Hi-Desert Nature Museum

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum is dedicated to the process of education by exploring the natural, artistic, and cultural heritage of the Morongo Basin and High Desert. The Museum seeks to inspire wonder, discovery, understanding, and responsibility in its community and visitors through exhibitions, programs and collections in the arts, history, and natural sciences.



Town of Yucca Valley Vision 2035

“While maintaining our small town atmosphere, the Town of Yucca Valley is a unique, desirable place to live, the economic hub of the Morongo Basin, and a sought after place to visit.

As a destination, visitors are drawn to our desert environment, arts and culture, recreation, history, night skies, active open space, and shopping and hospitality opportunities.

Our range of community services and facilities, efficient infrastructure, safe and established neighborhoods, unique character, and diversity define our community and quality of life.

Our commitment to balanced growth, environmental stewardship, fiscal sustainability, active citizen participation, and property rights are the cornerstones of our community.”

Town of Yucca Valley General Plan 2014



MISSION STATEMENT - Town of Yucca Valley

“The mission of the Town of Yucca Valley is to provide a government that is responsive to the needs and concerns of its diverse citizenry and secures a safe and secure environment while maintaining the highest quality of life.”

Moving Forward as a Community

Establish the Town as a welcoming community to businesses, residents, and visitors alike

Town of Yucca Valley, 2015 Approved Strategic Plan

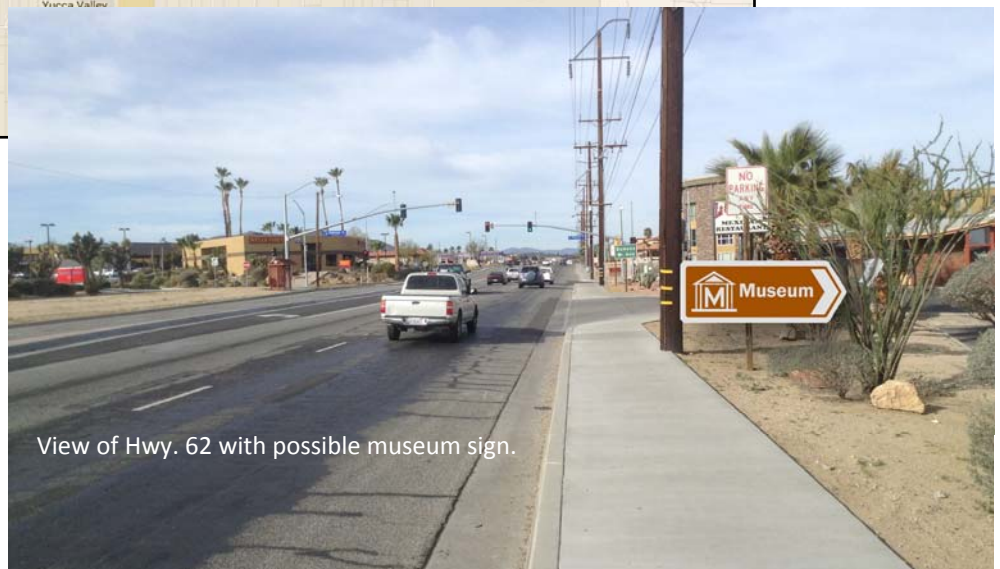
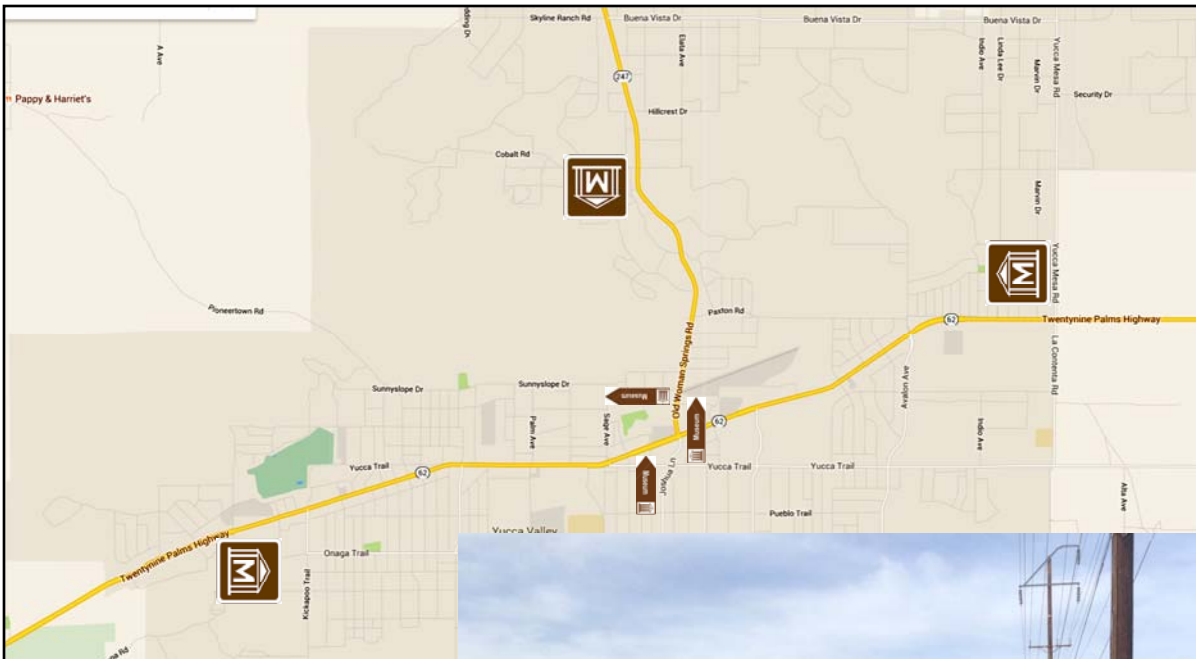
The Museum and Tourism

The Morongo Basin is famous nationally and internationally for art, culture and most importantly for its amazing natural beauty. Twentynine Palms and Joshua Tree are the main locations for visual and performing arts, with galleries, theaters, music venues and restaurants. With two million tourists visiting Joshua Tree National Park and over 600 Airbnbs in Joshua Tree and Yucca Valley alone, Yucca Valley has an opportunity with its Hi-Desert Nature Museum to capture more of those visitors.

Attracting Tourists to Yucca Valley

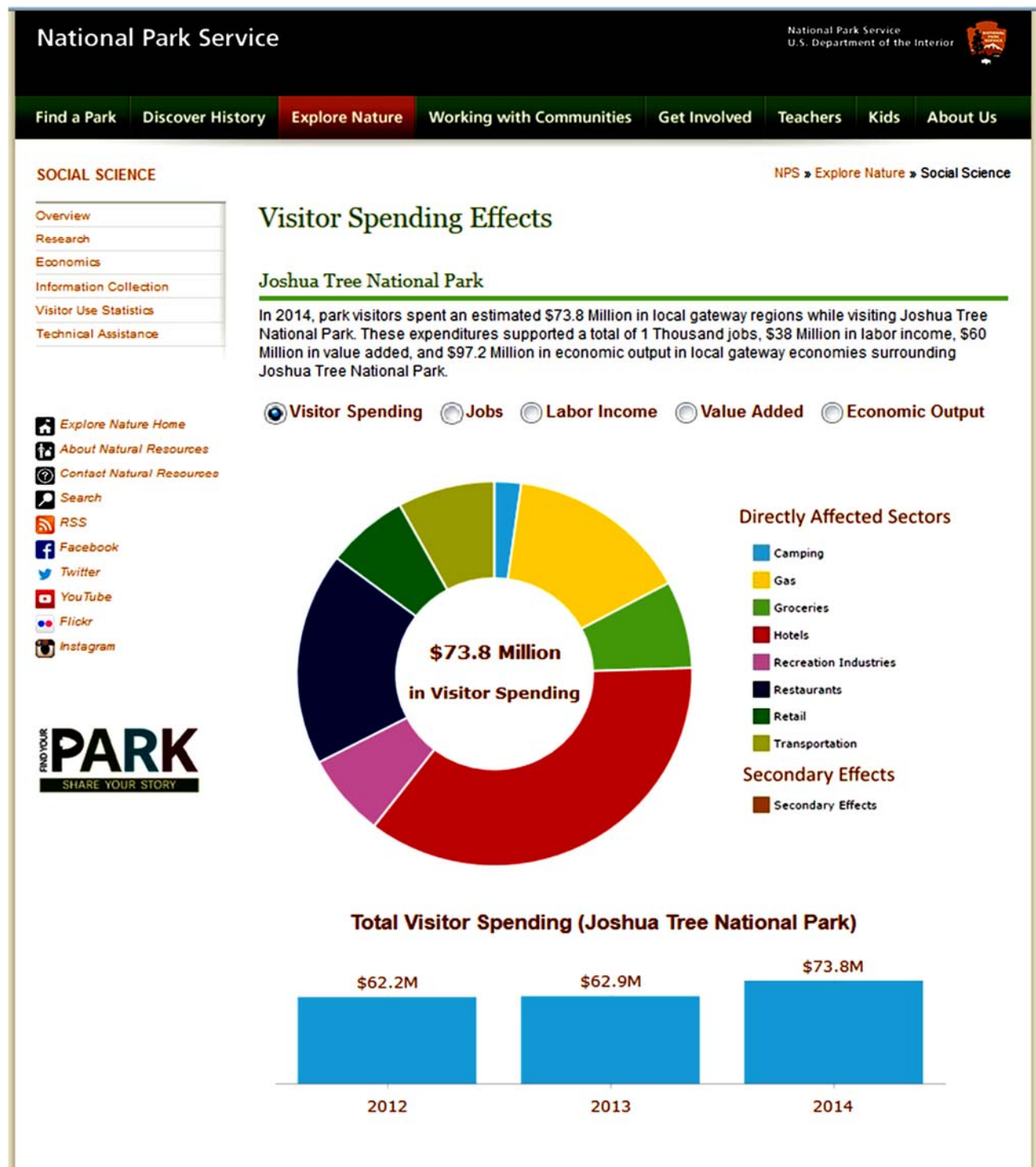
“Situated on State Highway 62 where it is intersected by State Highway 247, Yucca Valley is the hub of the Morongo Basin communities and a host of recreational opportunities and tourist attractions. The community is a frequent stop for travelers en route to the Colorado River vacation destinations.” (Town of Yucca Valley website)

With the Town’s goal of becoming a welcoming community and in order to attract more visitors en route to Joshua Tree National Park, it is vitally important to increase the Museum’s visibility. One step towards reaching that goal is to establish appropriate signage on Highway 62 and 247. Strategically important sites for raising awareness are the west and east end of Hwy. 62, as well as Hwy. 247 heading south. Street signs with arrows should be placed all around the turn at Dumosa Ave. (see map).



Joshua Tree National Park is unquestionably the areas most important and popular tourist attraction with two million national and international visitors in 2015. The graphic below shows the financial impact Joshua Tree National Park has on its gateway communities. The Museum will be an additional reason for travelers to stop and spend time in Yucca Valley. In the fall of 2016 the Museum and JTNP are partnering in an exhibit for the National Park Service Centennial. The Museum is planning an ongoing close partnership with JTNP.

An American Alliance of Museums study revealed that 78% of all leisure travelers participate in cultural and heritage activities. Theses travelers - including visitors to museums - spend 63% more on average than other leisure travelers.



The Museum and Community Visitors

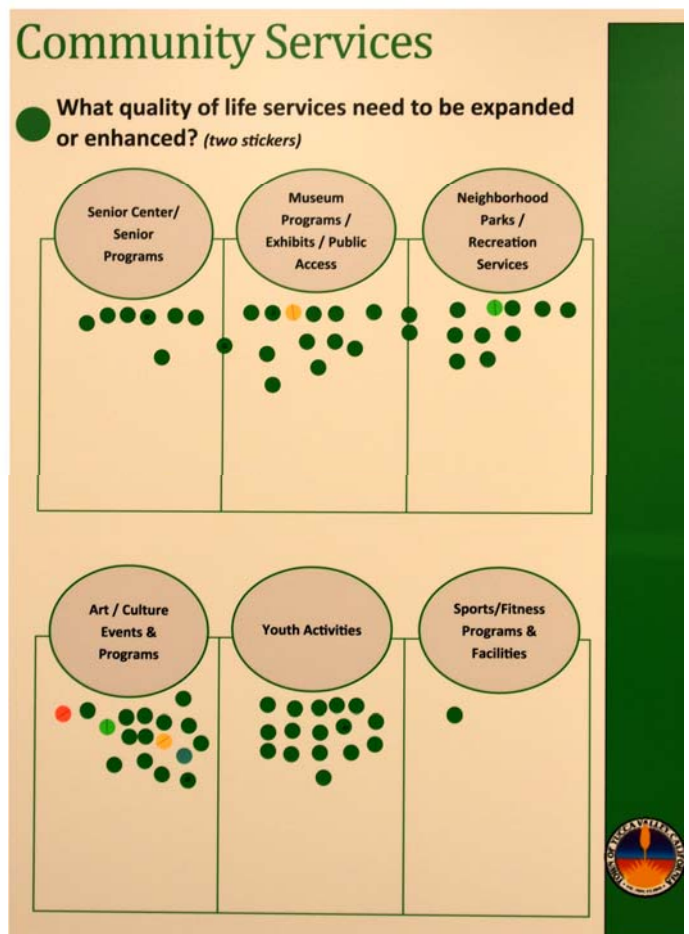
Approximately 60,000 residents make the Morongo Basin their permanent home, as well as about 36,000 military personnel and their families who are a mostly temporary population.

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum is the only Town Program/Facility that provides entertainment and education to visitors of all ages, for no admission. The Museum offers frequently changing exhibits, information on local history, natural science education, an interactive Kids Corner, a Mini-Zoo, and a variety of special programs. The Museum provides a space for parents to meet, activities for children, a place for seniors to enjoy lectures and leisurely strolls through the exhibits, and a safe place in which young people can spend time together.



In a recent strategic planning meeting, the community and Town Council were given the opportunity to voice an opinion on Town of Yucca Valley quality-of-life services they would like to see increased. The outcome is visible in graphic 1. The Hi-Desert Nature Museum is the only town facility that has offerings in three of the listed categories:

- Museum/Programs,
- Art/Culture Events and
- Youth Activities.



Graphic 1: Opinion Board from 10/20/2015
Town of Yucca Valley strategic planning meeting.

Exhibit Spaces

Displays and temporary exhibitions, physical or electronic, should be in accordance with the stated mission, policy and purpose of the museum. They should not compromise either the quality or the proper care and conservation of the collections. ICOM (*International Council of Museums*) Statutes, adopted during the 21st General Conference in Vienna, Austria, 2007



After assessing the exhibits on permanent display, staff considered the focus as well as the flow within the exhibit spaces. The Museum has defined three focus areas in its mission statement: the main focus is local natural history, followed by local history and local art. These priorities are reflected within the collections. The current arrangement of exhibits within the Museum are not organized by subject matter. Natural history, art, and local history are intermingled within the same gallery. Staff determined it is necessary to reorganize the galleries to present the collections to the public in a more intentional and logical way.

Focus 1: Natural History Wing (Room 3)

Room 3, the largest gallery space in the Museum will become the Natural History Wing. This will enable the Museum to double its natural history exhibits, interpretation and make the space coherent. The museum owns several small professionally produced natural science exhibits. Subject matters include tortoises, desert volcanoes, reptiles, fear of animals, rattlesnakes, scorpions, etc. The museum also possesses framed herbarium specimens, botanical prints, nests and eggs, skulls, pinned insects and much more. These collection are not display. The added space for natural history in room 3 will allow the natural history exhibits and collections to be available to the public.

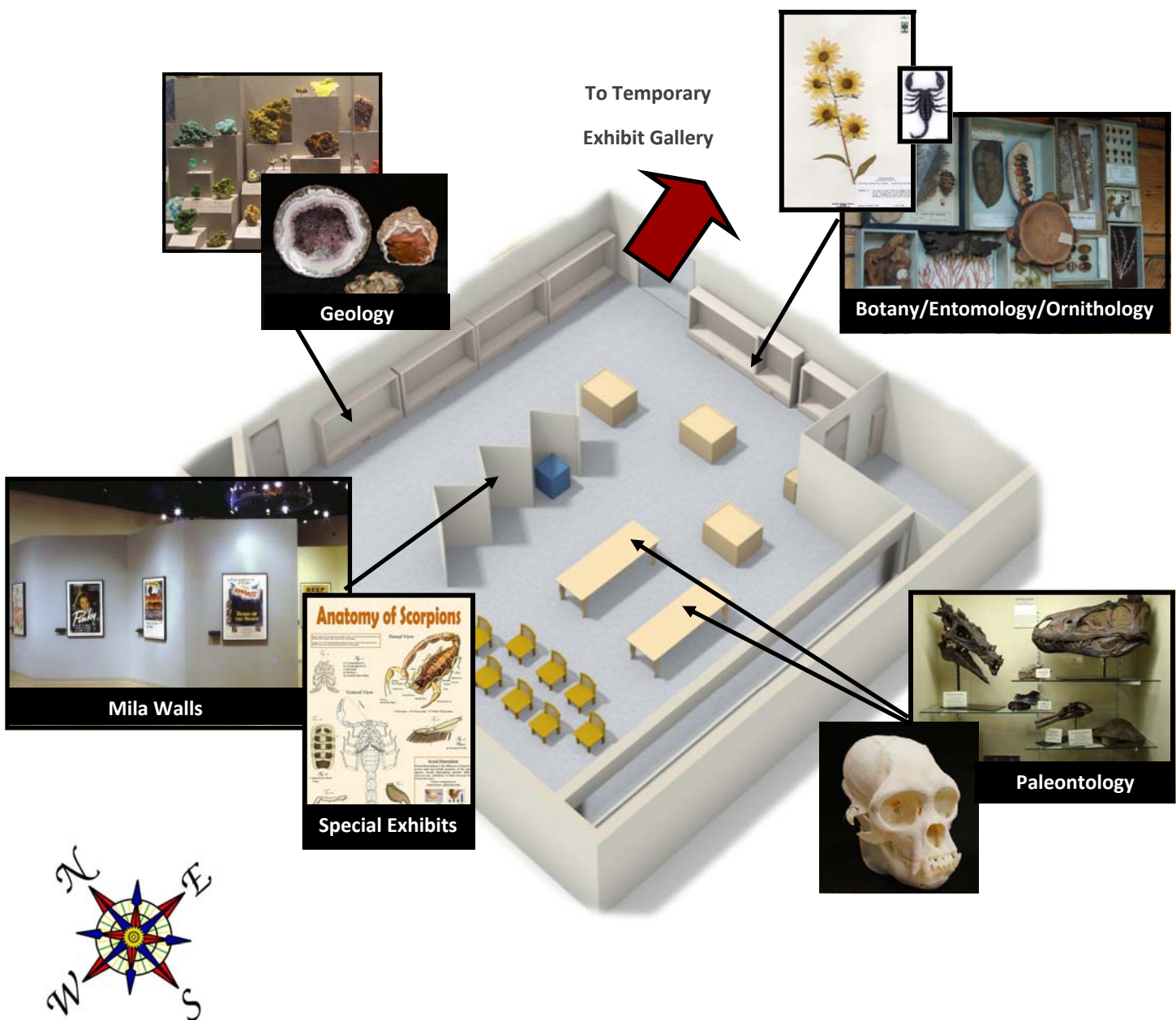
The Museum has added to its collection of native taxidermy with donations from the Palm Springs Desert Museum and the Agua Caliente Museum. These accessions include a mountain lion, a young coyote and several native songbirds. The Museum also has the opportunity to acquire a bighorn sheep mount. After accessing the mounts it became clear that the existing diorama cases will not offer sufficient space or security for the collection. An updated diorama is needed to accommodate the display of the native fauna taxidermy.

Focus 1 - Natural History Wing (Room 3)

The exhibits in the Natural History Wing will be pertinent to the Mojave Desert, informative for tourists, and educational and relevant for frequent and local visitors.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

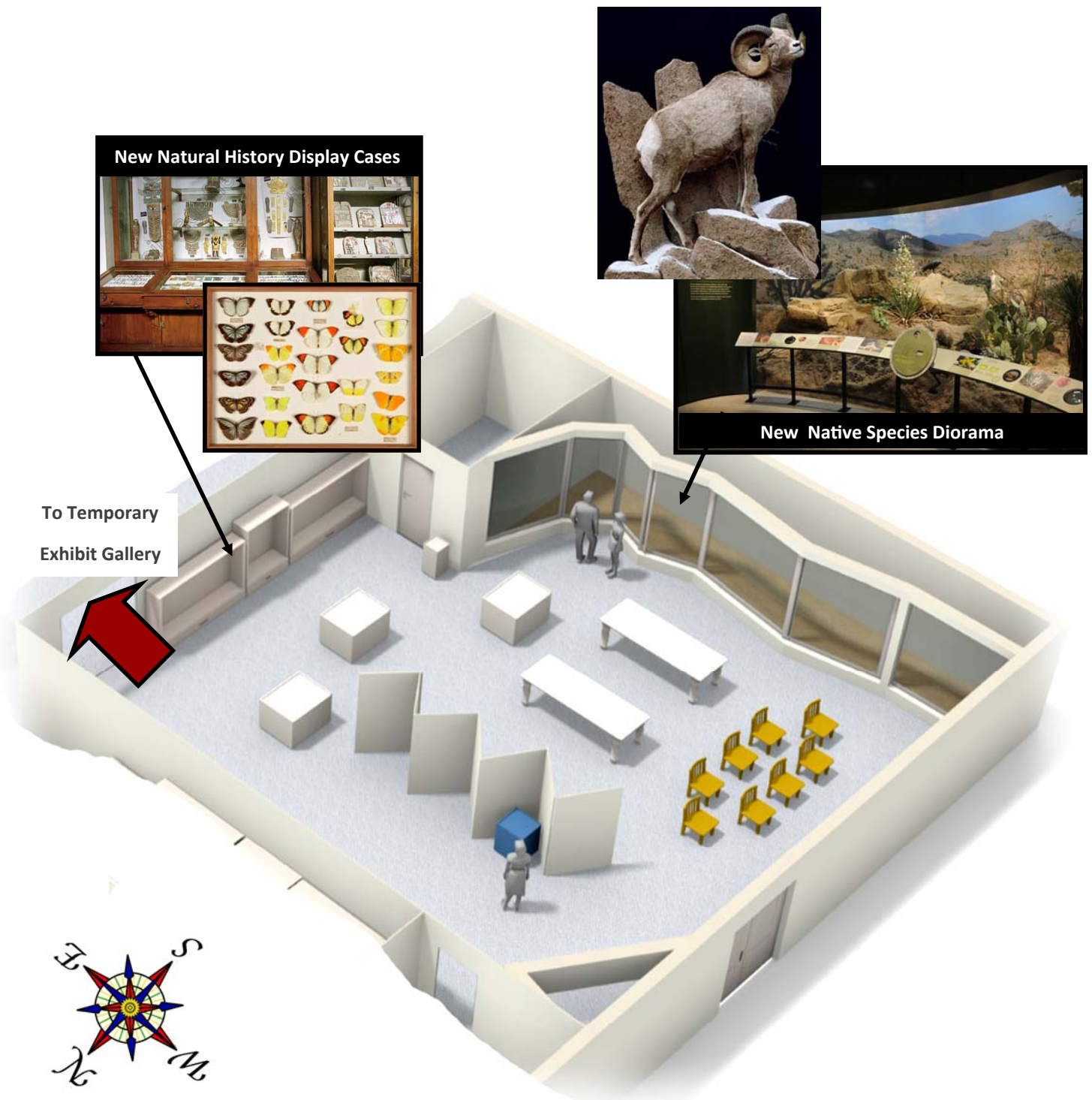
- Review and evaluate natural history displays
- Move display cases in room 2 and 3 to separate natural and cultural history exhibits
- Refinish existing exhibit cases
- Procure temporary walls for small scale natural history exhibits
- Procure museum quality display cabinets for entomology (insects), botany (plants) and ornithology (birds)



Focus 1 - Natural History Wing (Room 3)

LONGTERM ACTIONS

- Install museum quality glass diorama to display and interpret the museum's extensive collection of native fauna taxidermy
- Curate the new exhibit cases and the new diorama
- Expand availability of the natural history collection for research and fieldtrips



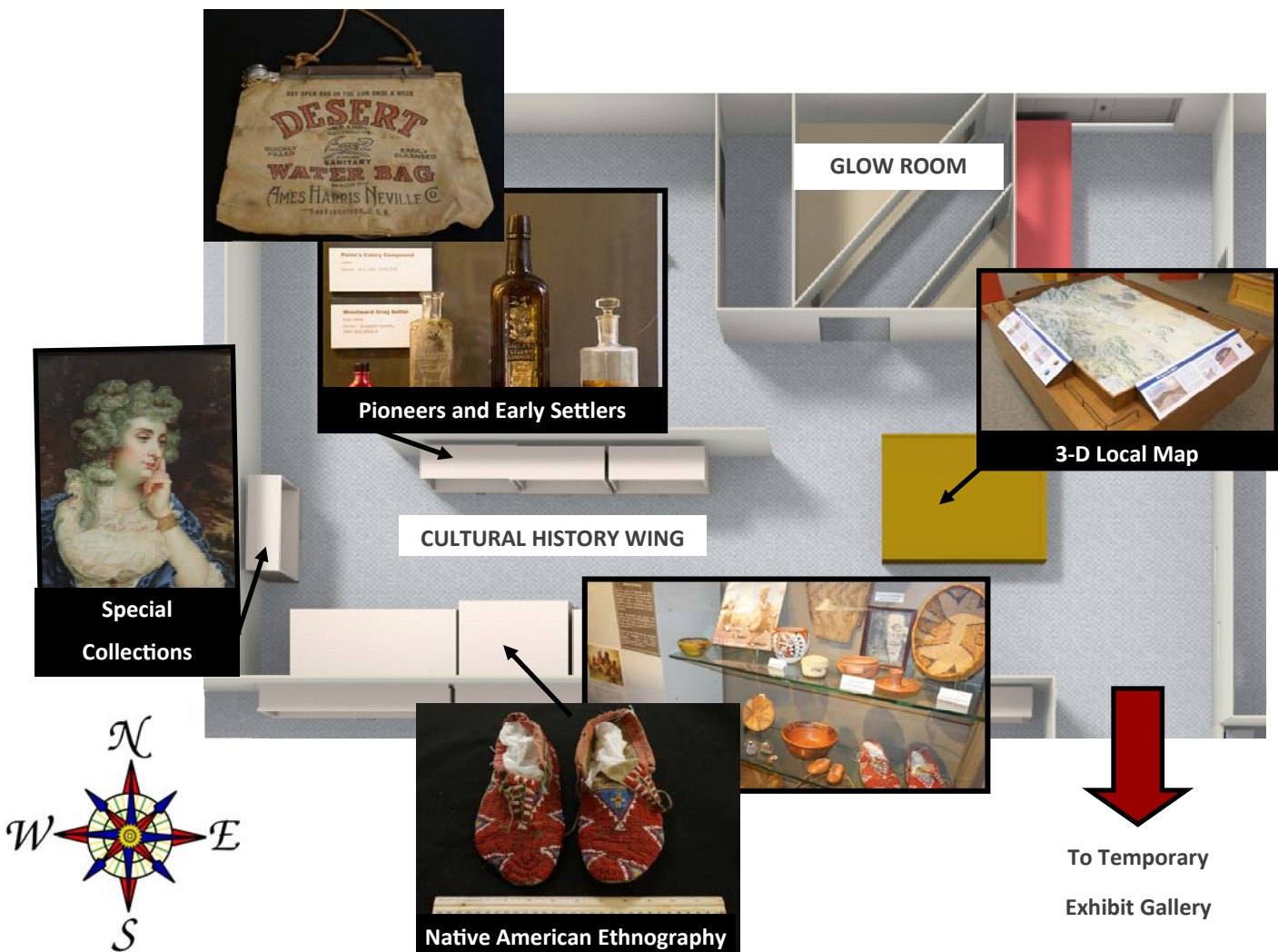
Focus 2 - Cultural History Wing (Room 2)

Currently, Room 2 is occupied by the gem & mineral, and paleontological exhibits. Room 2 will become the Cultural History Wing. It will show and interpret the local history, from its native inhabitants through settlers, homesteaders, miners to its current occupants. The Museum holds Native American pottery and basket collections, as well as collections pertaining to local mining, early homesteading and several other special collections. Displaying the progression of the cultural history in one gallery will allow community members to gain an understanding of and respect for the challenges and achievements of previous inhabitants and feel pride for their community. The gallery will also give tourists a quick insight into the history and development of the Morongo Basin.

The Cultural History Wing will relate to the Community's past and future and offer a sense of place and be informative for tourists.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

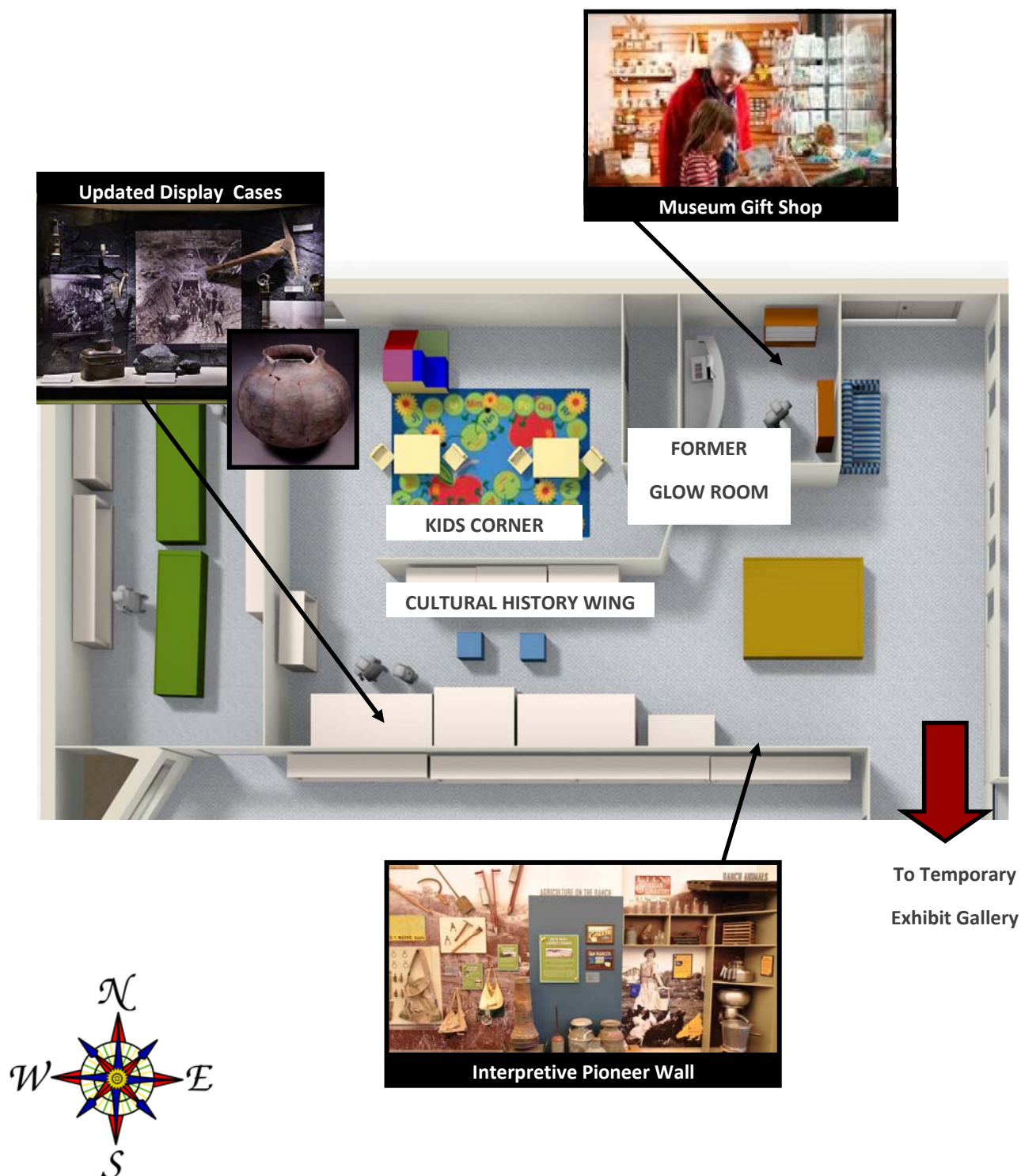
- Review existing display cases and consider which stories to tell (mining, settlers, homesteaders, industry etc.)
- Move display cases in room 2 and 3 to separate natural and cultural history exhibits
- Rotate exhibits and interpretation regularly to make better use of the cultural history collection



Focus 2 - Cultural History Wing (Room 2)

LONGTERM ACTIONS:

- Install museum quality interpretive panels
- Curate the new exhibit cases with changing cultural exhibits
- Update Kids Corner with new furniture and educational toys
- Reinstall a museum gift-shop in the former glow room



Focus 3 - Temporary Exhibits Gallery

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum has always provided excellent temporary exhibits. The museum developed a general exhibit schedule during the last strategic planning period that reduces the changing exhibits from six per year to four per year.

January-February:	short period rental exhibit
March - May:	local art exhibits
June - September :	interactive youth rental exhibit
October - December:	short period rental exhibit

The Museum is a member of several exhibit provider networks and staff has been very resourceful in finding affordable rental exhibits. However, the rental fees for exhibits have been rising along with prices for shipping. The Museum has offered interactive youth exhibits for the last two years. Local families have been taking advantage of free access to first rate interactive and educational exhibits, and the feedback has been positive throughout.



As a professional standard, museums strive to secure exhibits at least two years ahead. Museum staff has done an exceptional job in finding and securing temporary exhibits that are of local interest and comply with the museum's mission statement. This common practice has great benefits for long term scheduling in the museum, but it is difficult to budget. The time frame from the first down payment to the final shipping payment can span more than two fiscal years.



Focus 3 - Temporary Exhibit Gallery:

- New (unrepeated), educational, seasonal, and interactive exhibits appropriate for all audiences and in agreement with the museum's mission.
- Temporary exhibits are aimed primarily at local audiences, since they visit the museum throughout the year and appreciate a frequently changing gallery.

CONTINUOUS ACTIONS:

- Research high quality rental exhibits from reputable museums and/or lenders that align with the HDNM's mission
- Follow best practice in museum procedures, scheduling exhibits two years in advance
- Review rental agreements and secure exhibits two years in advance

Upcoming Youth Exhibits

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum has booked the summer exhibits through 2017 and has started looking at 2018 bookings. This summer's (2016) exhibit, "Framed: Step into Art" is produced by the Minnesota Children's Museum.

"Experience art like never before in *Framed: Step into Art*™. This engaging exhibit transports visitors to a world where paintings leap off the canvas and invite children inside the art experience. As visitors play and move through the exhibit, they are challenged to ride a giant chicken, set up camp in the Canadian Rockies, and prepare dinner for a group of hungry farmers."



For the summer 2017 the Museum secured the exhibit "Conservation Quest" produced by the Stepping Stones Museum for Children in Norwalk, CT.

Learn about energy—what it is, where it comes from, how we use it and why it's important to use it wisely. *Conservation Quest* delivers important energy conservation messages, inspiring visitors to make thoughtful choices about energy use to help protect the planet and promote healthy living.



Educational Programs

Museums provide opportunities for the appreciation, understanding and promotion of the natural and cultural heritage.

Principle: museums have an important duty to develop their educational role and attract wider audiences from the community, locality, or group they serve. Interaction with the constituent community and promotion of their heritage is an integral part of the educational role of the museum. (*Code of Ethics, International Council of Museums, 2004*)

The Hi-Desert Nature Museum has always provided excellent educational programs to the community, but with current staffing educational programs will remain limited. With careful scheduling the Museum can maintain its mandate to be available for local school groups visiting the museum for educational programs. These programs are scheduled on days the Museum is closed to the public.

The Museum, together with the Recreation Department, will offer a summer camp for children in conjunction with the youth exhibit on display. The 2015 summer camp was very well received by the children and the parents. With funding in place to secure interactive youth exhibits we are planning to continue to offer summer camps in conjunction with the summer exhibits.



Museum Education
1920's



1960's



Hi-Desert Nature Museum Education
2015

Focus 4 - Educational Programs:

Expand the depth and reach of Hi-Desert Nature Museum education programs for visitors of all ages and for schools throughout the region.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

The Museum hopes to add a 20-hour part-time Museum Aide position to allow an additional open day per week and aid in conducting youth programs.

LONGTERM ACTIONS:






- Expand on-site education program offerings to reach new and underserved markets with afternoon tours, preschool and after-school programs, teacher training opportunities, and summer programs.
- Collaborate with teachers to develop partnership programs that support statewide learning requirements and specific school district curriculum.
- Formalize evaluation and the use of educational assessment tools.


Collections

Museums that maintain collections hold them in trust for the benefit of society and its development

Principle: museums have the duty to acquire, preserve and promote their collections as a contribution to safeguarding the natural, cultural and scientific heritage. Their collections are a significant public inheritance, have a special position in law and are protected by international legislation. Inherent in this public trust is the notion of stewardship that includes rightful ownership, permanence, documentation, accessibility and responsible disposal.

(Code of Ethics, International Council of Museums, 2004)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	Object ID #	Old ID #	Object Name/ Description	Image	Found in Location	Basic Condition	Cataloged?	Inventoried by	Date Inventoried	Notes	Quantity
1	1988.003.0010	MA 4670 a	basket woven tray		R3 ES	Good	Y	JC, VC	11/5/2014		
2	1988.003.0001	MA 4662	basket woven bowl		R3 ES	Good	Y	JC, VC	11/5/2014		
3	1988.003.0006	MA 4667	basket woven tray w/ red/orange detail		R3 ES	Good	Y	JC, VC	11/5/2014		
4			basket woven tray w/ colorful filigree on base		R3 ES	Good	Y	JC, VC	11/5/2014		
			basket woven tray		R3 ES	Good	Y	JC, VC	11/5/2014		



Object

Inventory Spread Sheet in Excel

Since the last strategic plan, museum staff has managed to restore several functions essential for safeguarding both the intellectual and physical components of the museum's collections. In addition to enacting several key measures that help to physically stabilize the museum's collections, like establishing regular maintenance and monitoring systems for galleries, museum staff also set out to conduct a wall-to-wall inventory of the museum's permanent collections. The undertaking only took two years, and the inventory was completed in the spring of 2016. All of the key performance indicators detailed in the last strategic plan had been completed well within the amount of time specified.

The last fully executed inventory of the museum's permanent collections was completed in 1993. In the early 2000s, the museum purchased a computerized cataloging program, Past Perfect. Past Perfect works with a trinomial numbering system for objects, which was adopted by the museum. In order to fully implement the program, staff has to manually input information from the museum's previous paper based system and re-number every object while creating accession and object records in the program. Several attempts to catalog the museum's collections had been made over the years, by different museum employees and volunteers utilizing a variety of strategies. Consequently there was much left in question due to inconsistencies made during those attempts. The most current inventory's purpose was not only to identify, locate and assess the condition of what the museum currently claims as part of its permanent collection (which includes permanent and long-term loans) , but also to reveal how best to approach the museum's next step in reconciling all of the museum's collections record systems. The inventory identified just over 2,500 permanent collections objects, and only approximately one third of these objects have been cataloged in Past Perfect.

Focus 5 - Collections

In moving forward, museum staff will begin to reconcile data gathered during the inventory with Past Perfect, and hard-copy records. Some of the intricate tasks will include creating accession/loan and object records in Past Perfect containing baseline information (i.e., number, donor, condition, description, and a picture) for the remaining acquisitions that have yet to be cataloged, and updating the existing records with current location following and condition statuses. This will make each object “searchable.”

Basic cataloging will be followed by research for more prevalent information like provenance and historical or scientific significance of each object and integrate the findings in each object’s record. These tasks are usually very time consuming. However, the ultimate outcome will then be a cohesive and

NATURE MUSEUM
HI-DESERT PARK
Phone 365-2102
55080 ONAGA (AT HOP) YUCCA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

DESCRIPTION OF SPECIMEN

Description 108 SEA SHELLS - FROM THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA & THE PACIFIC COAST.

Estimated Value \$ 100.00 - 200.00

Specimen ☒ Gift to Museum Signature CHARLES POWELL Date 4-16-70

Specimen ☐ Placed on Loan Signature _____ Date _____

Address 2505 E. SANTA FE, FULLERTON, CALIF.

Specimen No. PR 1010-1117 Received by EVELYN G. CONKLIN

Specimen Returned _____ Date _____

1087-1088-4-16-70

MAINTAINED BY THE YUCCA VALLEY PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

14 - 10025 - 792

Original Donation Document

File Edit Uninstall

Photos Catalog

Screen View: Photos, Custom

Other Views: Appraisal, Condition, Lexicon, Location, Notes & Legal, People - Subjects, Classification, Search Terms, Relations, Source, Lists, Virtual Exhibit

Collection: Hanley Family Collection

Object ID: 2003.1.8

Object Name: Print, Photographic

Date: 1945

Year Range: 1945 thru 1945

Catalog Date: 01/15/2004

Cataloged by: Meyers, Pamela

Status Date: 01/15/2004

Status by: Meyers, Pamela

Status: OK

Other#:

Old#:

Accession#: 2003.1 Hanley, Kristopher K.

Home Location: PastPerfect Museum Archives:Cabinet 2:Photo Storage Box 1

Photos

Description: Gunner at battle station on the 1601.

PC-1601 (USS Fierce)

PC-1568 class Submarine Chaser (ex Adroit class Minesweeper);

Displacement: 450 tons

Length: 173'8"

Provenance: The photographer of these WWII Pacific Theater photographs is Claire Norton Hanley. Claire Hanley was a young naval officer during WWII. He served on the ship in the above photograph as Lieut. (jg) in the Pacific Theater. His ship participated in major naval operations at the end of WWII including the invasion of Iwo Jima.

Title: Gunner

Photographer: Hanley, Clair N.

Studio:

Place:

Event: WWII

Medium:

Slide#:

Frame#:

Neg Location: Copy Negative Storage Box 2

Neg#: C2004

Orig/Copy: Original

Print Size: 2" x 3"

Film Size:

Dimension Details:

Copyrights:

Record 26 of 35

Include in Web Export

Updated by: Unknown

Updated: 01/21/2010 02:29 PM

Update History

Sample of Completed Catalogue Sheet in Past Perfect