Western water-resource collection moves to Southern California; Cal State San Bernardino and UC Riverside will manage the collection collaboratively

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By Public Affairs Staff

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. - The premier collection of information and materials about water development in California and the West will soon move to a new home: Southern California.

The nationally acclaimed Water Resources Center Archives is being transferred from its previous location at the University of California, Berkeley to the libraries at the University of California, Riverside and California State University San Bernardino, the University of California's Agriculture and Natural Resources division announced Friday, July 16.

Founded in 1958 by the legislature as part of the California Water Resources Center, WRCA contains historical and contemporary water-related materials of great value to water agencies, governmental bodies, environmental groups, engineering firms, attorneys, historians and researchers.

With the closing of the statewide Water Resources Center (which was located at UCR) because of state budget cuts, ANR sought new guardians for the center's archives. CSUSB and UCR developed an innovative and collaborative plan for joint management of the collection.

"Water is the lifeblood of this state, and it's vital that all students of water issues and decision makers have access to this material," said Timothy P. White, chancellor of UCR. "As guardians of knowledge and centers of water research, our campuses have an obligation to preserve and disseminate this material."

"This collaboration between UCR and CSUSB will serve all campuses of our two systems, as well as the public," said Albert Karnig, president of CSUSB. "It's further evidence of the close cooperation between the state's two systems of higher education and the importance placed on our state and region's water legacy."

Both institutions have strong water-resource centers already in place. UCR is home to the Water Science and Policy Center, which works to facilitate sound water policy solutions for California. CSUSB is home to the Water Resources Institute, which serves as a regional center for research and public policy analysis and houses the Joseph Andrew Rowe Water Resources Archives. The acquisition of the new collection coincides with the California State University system-wide Water Resources and Policy Initiative, which facilitates water-related research capabilities within the 23 CSU campuses.

The collection will be divided between UCR's Orbach Science Library and CSUSB's John M. Pfau Library. It will be evaluated to determine which components would best be housed in each location. The libraries' administrations - UCR
University Librarian Ruth Jackson and CSUSB Library Dean Cesar Caballero - will jointly manage the archive, expanding accessibility state- and nationwide.

"We have a strong interest in preserving and digitizing the collection for the future," said Jackson, "to ensure the widest research access to all of the archive's contents." She anticipates that a fee to non-UC/CSU remote users for access to the archive's holdings, along with external funding from grants, will support the WRCA's infrastructure.

Startup funding is being provided by UCR's College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences, ANR and CSUSB's College of Natural Sciences. Access to print and photographic materials will be continued through normal Interlibrary Loan and Tricor document delivery services.

The WRCA 's current advisory board, made up of water experts and UC faculty, will be expanded to include members from UCR and CSUSB water advisory boards. The new board will "help set priorities, provide support for fundraising and assist in outreach efforts," according to Susan Longville, director of the CSUSB Water Resources Institute.

"We are committed to providing the same level of outstanding service that was established by UC Berkeley for so many years," she said.

The Water Resources Center Archive currently consists of approximately 200,000 technical reports, 1,500 specialized newsletters, 5,000 maps and videos, 2,200 serials, 25,000 land photographs and 4,500 aerial photographs of coastlines, totaling more than 7,000 linear feet. Transfer of the archive and its operations to the downstate campuses will begin this fall.

Founded in 1999, the Water Resources Institute of Cal State San Bernardino is an academic partnership with the Southern California communities that it serves. The Institute is driven by the vision that sustaining water resources rests on sound research, analysis and public policy collaboration. The Institute is active in the areas of science, public policy and history, and serves as a regional hub for providing information on water resources.

For more information, go to the WRI web site.

For more information about Cal State San Bernardino, contact the university's Office of Public Affairs at (909) 537-5007 and visit news.csusb.edu.