

# **Internet Technician Report V**

## **On The Stevens County Crossroads on the Columbia Digital Archive**

For April 2011

*By Joseph Barreca*

This is the fifth in a series of reports on this project.

May is National History Month and a proclamation celebrating the occasion locally has been issued by Stevens County. This comes at a key time for the Stevens County Crossroads on the Columbia Digital Archive Project. As documented below, we have most of the kinks worked out in going from scanned images to digital archive items with metadata attached worked out. The real questions ahead have to do with public involvement and timing. We can use History Month and upcoming events such as the Bicentennial of the First Contact between David Thompson and Tribes at Kettle Falls in June to raise awareness of our project, local history in general and the need for help in preserving and promoting our historical assets. Here is what we have accomplished so far:

- We have acquired or gained access to hardware and software to do the jobs we need to the specifications expected by the Washington State Archives.
- We have created and registered Domain names for “crossroadsarchive.org” and “crossroadsarchive.net”.
- We have fleshed out these websites with content descriptions, pertinent documents and the ability to post comments with links and discussions about the content of the websites on our .org website built with Wordpress content management software; and collections and exhibits for over 2000 images and pages of content on our .net website built with Omeka software.
- We have scanned around 3000 images at 4 different sites.
- We have inventoried holdings at four out of 20 potential sites with the biggest museum in the County on the schedule for the next inventory.
- We have set up compensation procedures for contributing museums.
- We have established rights links on our websites for high-resolution archival copies of our images.
- We have documented procedures for the work we do and made them available on our websites.
- We have backed up our images on separate computers and external hard drives.
- We have begun mapping with a map of 123 old towns based on post office records for Stevens County.
- We have established user permissions for our volunteer history detectives to access a limited number of item records in our archives while extracting handwritten text and verifying names and other information contained in the images.

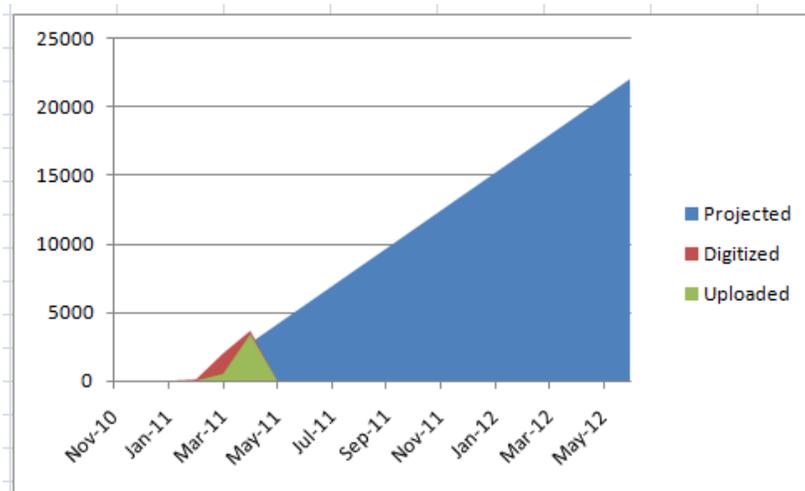
We are a long way down the road toward our goals but now we need to turn the corner, impart what we have learned to more people, find more people to help, learn to delegate whatever we can to those people and educate more of the County and the State about our historical heritage. In line with our overall objectives, we need to face up to some of our shortcomings to date.

- We have inventoried a relatively small number of museums and other organizations to date.
- We have not created or attended any public meetings with groups who could further our cause with volunteer help.
- We have relied mainly on museum staff and those closely related to the few museums we have worked with for volunteer support.
- We have had very little publicity about our efforts.
- We still do not have a working relationship with the Washington State Archives. (This is not principally our fault since the State Budget has been in flux.)

- We have not trained volunteers in tasks that would help our work.
- We do not have procedures in place that will assure equitable distribution of our archiving and compensating efforts. A key component of any such procedure is to have at least preliminary inventories of all the expected contributing institutions.

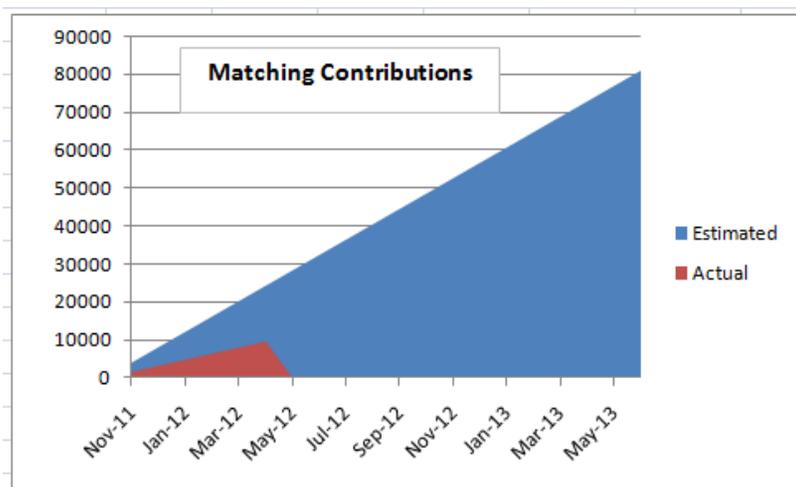
In order to keep our eye on the ultimate goals of the project, we need some simple graphic charts to see where we are in relation to the overall goals and timelines. We can use these charts internally but also in maintaining close communication with the project's governing board and the County Commissioners. Along these lines I suggest three main charts: Images, Donations and Funds. I have created a spreadsheet to demonstrate these estimated goals and actual accomplishments for these objectives. Because of the 7 month delay between the nominal beginning of the project and the time when staff were hired and at work, I have stretched the timeline out to June 2013. If we cannot extend the project that far or we consistently achieve results demonstrating a shorter timeline, we will need to adjust these charts accordingly. In the grant application there was a startup period where techniques and tools were to be developed. I have taken that front-end period off from the estimated accomplishments.

### Archived Images:



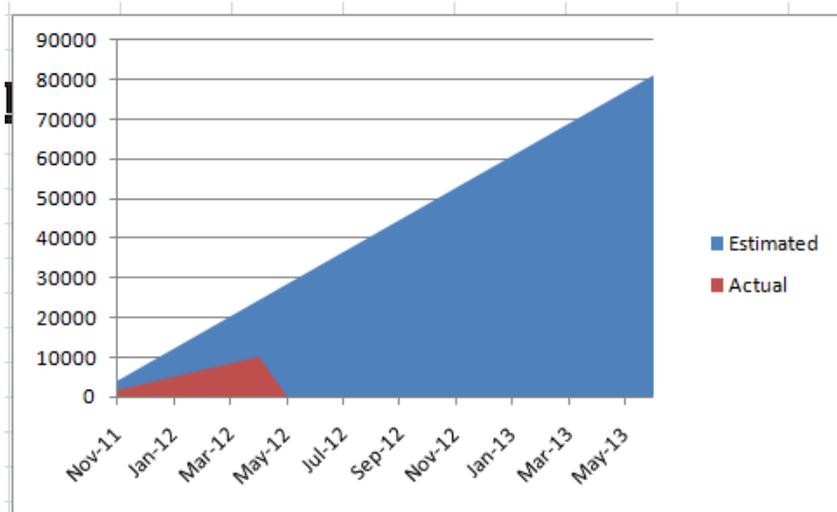
This first chart demonstrates projected and actual archive growth. These figures are correct to date.

### Volunteer Donations (time, mileage, equipment...)



This second chart is based on a perfectly even distribution of \$81,000 and an actual volunteer contribution of \$11,000 over 6 months.

## Actual Funds Expended over the first 6 months



This last chart is again based on an even distribution over 18 months and an actual distribution for the first 6 months. Technically the period of the grant began April 1, 2010. Since no actual money was distributed until November 2011, hopefully the grant period itself can be extended to match the actual period of work.

In summary, progress on building the archive is at or above the expected pace. Volunteer donations and actual fund expenditures are below expected. When museum curator funds begin to be paid, volunteer donations will need to increase in order to support the added expense.