

Coming soon:



**The Geologic Collections Management System (GCMS)—
A Master Catalog and Collections Management Plan
for USGS Geologic Samples and Sample Collections**

A Report by The Geologic Materials Repository Working Group

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) is widely recognized in the earth science community as possessing extensive collections of earth materials collected by research personnel over the course of its history. Currently, however, determining where samples are located or how to access them or their associated data is difficult. The National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP), established in the USGS by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (*Public Law 109-58, Sec. 351*), provided the opportunity to remedy this situation. In 2006, a Geologic Collections Inventory was conducted within the Geology Discipline (GD) to determine the extent and nature of its sample collections. In 2008, a working group was convened to examine ways in which these collections could be coordinated, cataloged, and made available to researchers both inside and outside the USGS. Most group members were active research scientists or collections managers who had practical experience with the issues surrounding the organization and preservation of geologic materials.

The charge to this working group was to evaluate the proposition of creating a **Geologic Collections Management System (GCMS)**, a centralized database that would (1) identify all existing USGS geologic collections, regardless of size, (2) create a virtual link among the collections, and (3) provide a way for scientists and other researchers to obtain access to the samples and data in which they are interested. Additionally, the group was instructed to develop criteria for evaluating current collections and to establish an operating plan and set of standard practices for handling, identifying, and retaining future sample collections. Policies and procedures would be based on extant best practices established by the National Science Foundation and Smithsonian Institution (SI).

After two years of extensive research, discussion, and development this working group created the GCMS and wrote a white paper for USGS upper management. Selected individuals utilized the contents of this document for two more years and now, this working group has its document in SPN and well on its way to becoming a USGS publication. It is anticipated that this publication will be available by the end of the summer.