Best Practices Defined: Best practices have been variously defined as techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have proven to reliably lead to a desired result; procedures that are generally agreed upon but not legislated; or commendable actions and philosophies that successfully solve problems, can be replicated, and demonstrate an awareness of professional standards.

Function: To assemble and disseminate best practices associated with natural history collection care and to provide infrastructure that allows the development and evolution of best practices in response to innovations within the field

Leadership: Two co-chairs

Composition: At minimum, 10 members representing the diverse backgrounds, disciplines, and nationalities, in the natural history field (including but not limited to preservation, conservation, digitization, and collections management), but size can vary depending on needs

Committee Goals:

1) Assemble content associated with the preservation, conservation and management of natural history collections from both society members and published resources
2) Standardize content for dissemination to society members
3) Develop technology-based ways to present and promote content to society members
4) Encourage discussion on ways to improve the preservation, conservation and management of natural history collections through technology-based platforms, social media, and SPNHC sessions and workshops at annual meetings
5) Develop partnerships with other organizations and institutions to collaborate on the development of best practices for the community

Subcommittees: Subcommittees of the Best Practices Committee include Citations, and the addition of ad hoc committees as necessary

Citations Subcommittee Purpose: To assemble and distribute relevant literature related to best practices and the history of past practices in natural history

Citations Subcommittee Leadership: one chair, who can solicit interested members

Citations Subcommittee: At minimum, 5 members, but size can vary depending on needs

Calendar Items:

January: Citation submissions provided to Citations Subcommittee Chair by the end of the month.
February: Co-Chairs submit Committee report to Newsletter; Subcommittee Chair submits summary of citations to Newsletter.

March: Assessment of progress on tasks set for Committee at previous Annual Meeting. Subcommittee Chair submits citations to Webmaster for inclusion online.

April: Development of agenda items for Committee meeting at Annual SPNHC Meeting. Co-Chairs prepare report on activities for the year for the Annual SPNHC Meeting.


July: Update Committee tasks, membership, and Leadership Manual following Annual Meeting. Citation submissions provided to Citations Subcommittee Chair by the end of the month.

August: Co-Chairs submit Committee report to Newsletter and Subcommittee Chair submits summary of citations to Newsletter.

September: Subcommittee Chair submits citations to Webmaster for inclusion online. Transfer important papers and items of committee business to the Archives Committee.

Revised by Jessica Cundiff, Breda Zimkus and Margaret Landis, May 2016