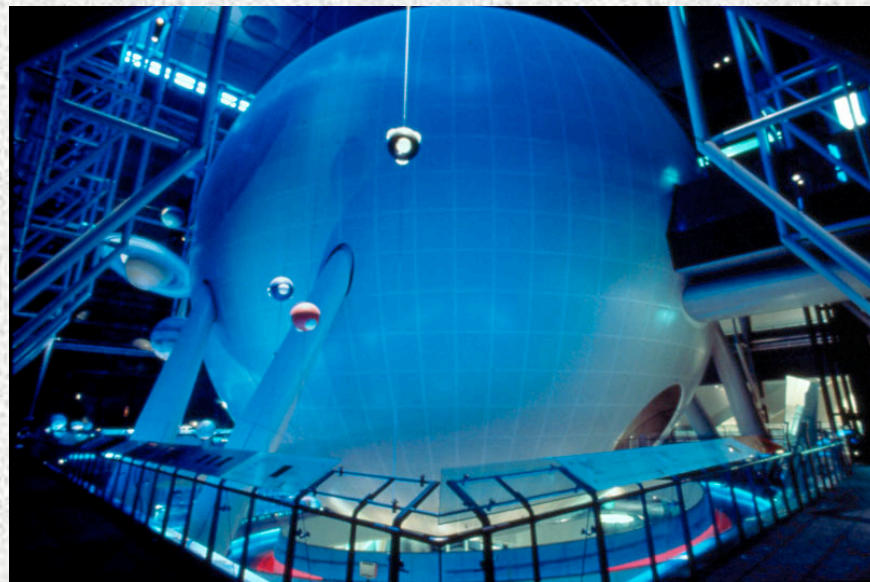


# Disaster Recovery at the American Museum of Natural History: An Interdisciplinary Approach Realized

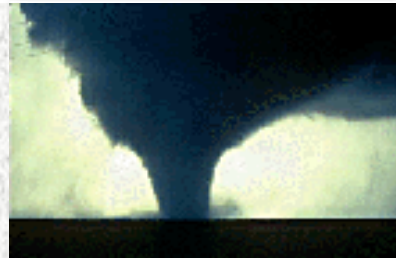
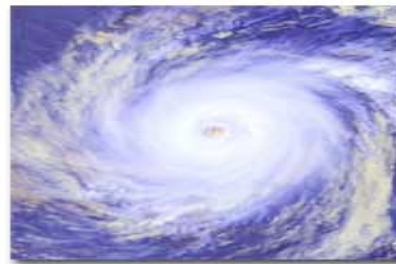


Paul Schuchert, Lisa Kronthal,  
Kala Harinarayanan & Michael Benedetto

Prepared for NYC Alliance for Response forum, October 27, 2004, Afternoon Panel,  
Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery: Building Internal Alliances and External Partnerships

# Background

- Existing Emergency Management Plan
- September 11 – executed the Emergency Management Plan





# Existing Emergency Management Plan

- Main Focus - Life Safety
  - Evacuation Captains and Wardens
  - Staff Training
  - Drills
  - Living document
  - Used for initial response to emergency



# Aftermath of September 11th

- Realized need for long term plan to manage the longer term effects of a significant disaster
- Created a Disaster Recovery Task Force
- New Focus: Business Continuity



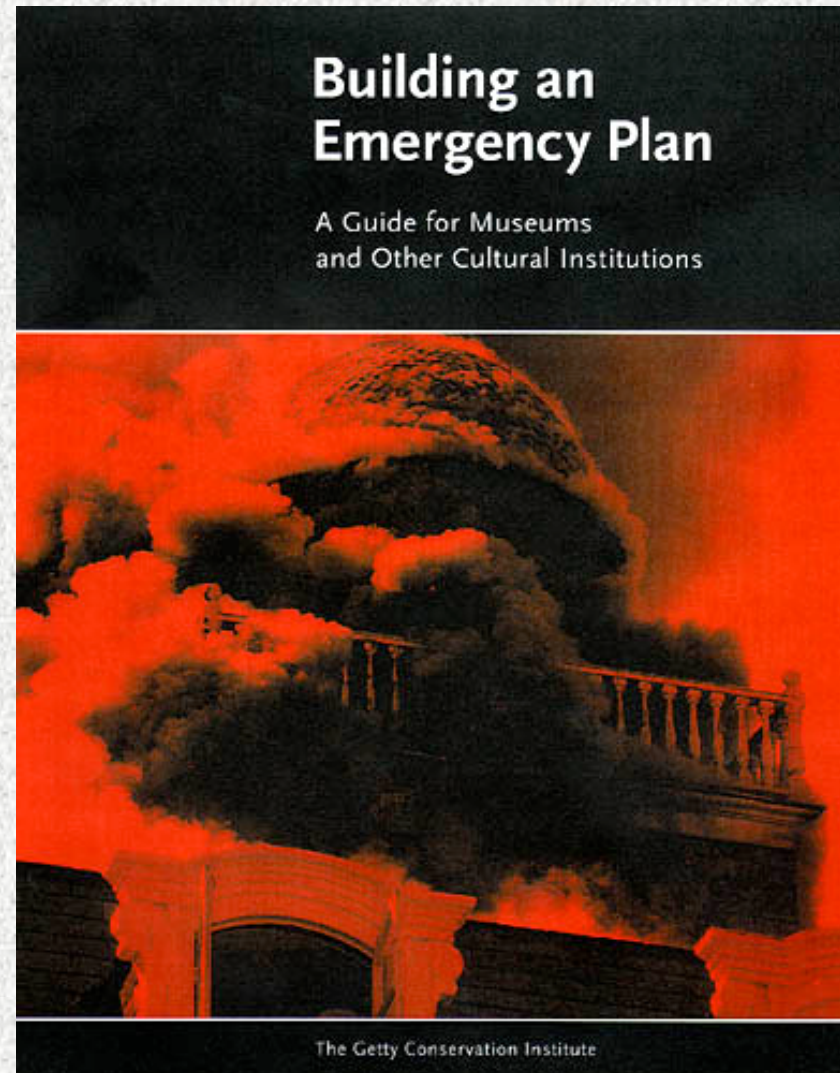


# AMNH Disaster Recovery Task Force

- Chair: Senior Vice President for Operations and Government Relations
- Committee consists of staff from:
  - Facilities & Construction
  - Human Resources & Safety
  - Information Technology
  - Operational Planning
  - Science & Collections
  - Security
- This is an interdisciplinary approach! Collections team involved from start of process and working within an institution wide framework

# Sources

- Other museum plans
- Publications:
  - Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction, FEMA, 1998
  - Building an Emergency Plan – A Guide for Museums and Other Cultural Institutions, Getty Conservation Press, 1999
- External disaster recovery companies
- Canadian Museum of Nature – Risk Assessment





# Process – 3 phases

- Internal assessment & Audit
- Extended Disaster Recovery Plan
- Disaster Recovery Plan for the Scientific Collections



# Internal Assessment & Audit

- Develop & administer questionnaires to all departments
- Compile & review responses
- Create critical department resources document

[illegible]



# Extended Disaster Recovery Plan

- Protect Critical Documents
- Ensure Open Lines of Communication and Access to Electronic Records and Information
- For Critical Operational Functions create a Contingency Plan and Identify Alternate Locations.

# Disaster Recovery Plan for the Scientific Collections

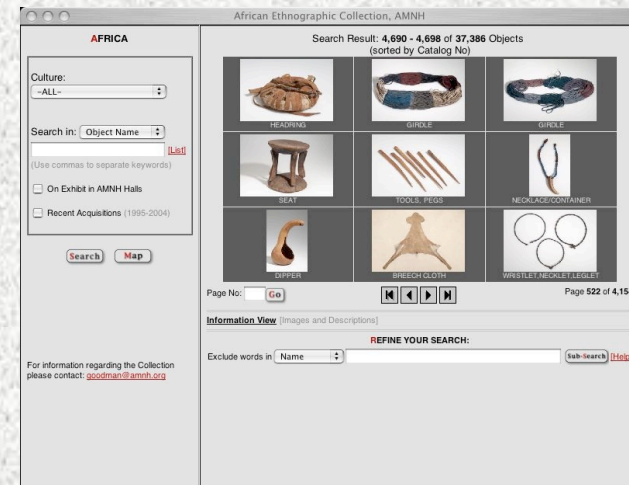
- Create a plan for the inventory of collections records
- Develop response procedures
- Assess risks to scientific collections from various events



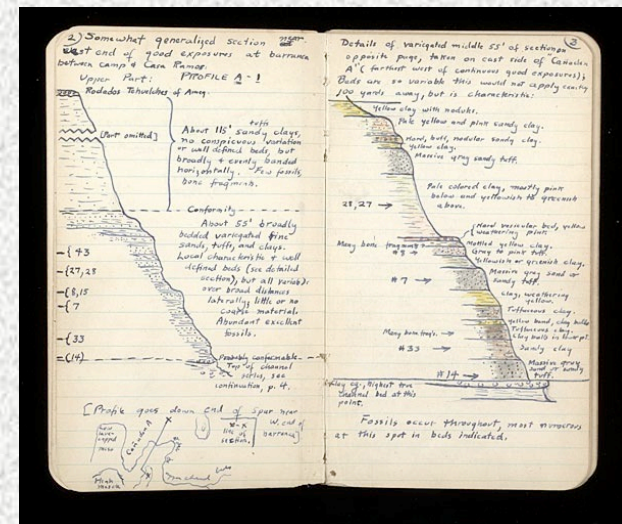


# Science: Inventories

- Databasing & Imaging Collections & Records



- Catalog Assessment and Duplication project



# Science:

## Response Procedures & Techniques

- Set guidelines for moving objects or data - Create fact sheets with routes and maps for consistent response
- Stock emergency supplies and equipment
- Outline salvage procedures
- Post disaster assessments
- Ensure that appropriate security, facilities, and custodial staff participate in the development of the response procedures.



# Science: Collections Risk Assessment

- Method for assessing risks to large collections in a rational, quantifiable way - Allows for priorities to be developed for resource allocation – very attractive to senior management!
- Canadian Museum of Nature method (CPRAM) developed by Rob Waller ([www.nature.ca](http://www.nature.ca)) - 2-day workshop at AMNH – attended by staff in Science and Operations
- Pilot assessment for Mammalogy – accomplished as a *team effort*: AMNH collections and operations staff & CMN staff (Waller & Meuthing)

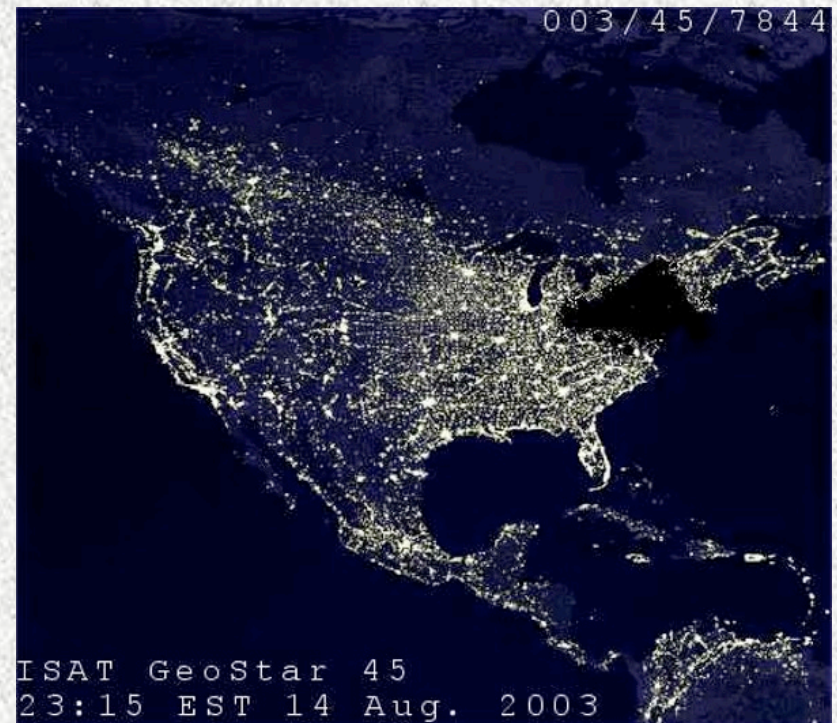
# Results

- Created an Extended Disaster Recovery Plan for the Museum.
  - Protected documentation, communication protocol, and alternative operating locations for critical Museum functions
  - Prioritized additional critical disaster recovery needs across the Museum including collections
  - Estimated costs for addressing those needs
- Actively completing each element of the plan as funding becomes available



# Test – Blackout of August 2003

- Emergency Management Plan successfully executed again
- We were prepared to implement long-term plans including:
  - Transfer of critical IT functionality to alternate site location
  - Move delicate collections to alternate site
  - Initiate procedures to ensure critical financial functions continue uninterrupted



# Successes

- Involved all critical departments from the start of the process
- Right Team
- Senior Administrative Support
- Standardized Formats and Questions
- Rating System



# Lessons Learned

- More Up Front Planning
- Point Person in Each Department
- More Targeted Information Gathering Questions
- Faster Process

# Funding - Recommendations

- Break Needs into Small Amounts
- Prioritize Each Need
- Separate Operating Needs from Capital Needs
- Piggyback on Other Initiatives
- Look at Alternative Solutions



# Conclusions

- Planning process was a success as:
  - Risks have been identified
  - There is a plan to mitigate risks
  - We know where we need more investigation (Science)
- Implementation of plan is partially complete as:
  - Funding is issue
  - Day-to-Day work takes precedent
- Long implementation but will be successful

