“Mapping the Southwest” Project: Collaboration for Curation of Wide-format Items

Daniel Gelaw Alemneh
University of North Texas Libraries
Introduction

- Mapping the Southwest Project Background:
  - 3-year project (2010 to 2013) funded by NEH We the People grant.
  - The UNT Libraries partner with the UTA Library’s to digitize 5,000 historically-significant and rare maps.
  - Available online for free public access via The Portal to Texas History gateway.

- Project Plan:
  1. Catalog maps without existing MARC records.
  2. Prepare the maps for transport.
  3. Capture and process digital images of the maps.
  4. Create software to automate import of MARC data to populate the metadata template.
  5. Create or enhance metadata.
  6. Assess quality of the digital images, cataloging, and metadata.
UTA’s involvement includes:

- Cataloging maps without existing MARC records
- Preparing the maps for transport
- Creating and enhancing Metadata according to UNT metadata standards: [http://www.library.unt.edu/digitalprojects/metadata/descriptive-metadata](http://www.library.unt.edu/digitalprojects/metadata/descriptive-metadata)

UNT’s major areas include:

- Capturing and processing images
- Uploading digital images of the maps
- Continuing quality control (pre-and-post ingest enhancements activities to ensure completeness, consistency, etc.)
Lessons Learned and Project Impact

Challenges

- Digitization of large-format items presents many challenges:
  - Inter-institutional differences in priorities, workflows, etc.
  - Map handling and scanning: folded, oversized, and fragile maps
  - Equipment maintenance and software updates
  - Metadata and related workflow issues

Project Summary:

- The UNT-UTA collaborative project was able to meet the challenges and share the rich cartography collections of the region widely:
  - More than 80,000 uses.
  - Besides showcasing the cartography of the region, the project promotes best practices:
    - Advance the capacity of academic libraries to reliably curate and provide seamless access to such large-format items.

Project Contacts

UNT
- Cathy Hartman, PI [Cathy.Hartman@unt.edu]
- Mark Phillips, Technical & workflow management [Mark.Phillips@unt.edu]
- Daniel Alemneh, Project manager [Daniel.Alemneh@unt.edu]

UTA
- Ann Hodges, Project Coordinator at UTA [ann.hodges@uta.edu]
- Ben Huseman, Maps handling and related activities [huseman@uta.edu]
- Carolyn Kadri, Cataloging and metadata quality [kadri@uta.edu]