

Special Libraries for Historical and Government Research

by Andrea L. Hamilton, Abby Lindquist, and Andrea McCullough

Several government and quasi-government libraries in or near Colorado provide public access to a broad collection of current and historical materials, including law-related materials.¹ These include public, court, genealogical, and archaeological records; government agency documents; maps and photographs; and legislative history collections. This article provides a summary of some of these libraries and their plentiful offerings.²

Colorado Joint Legislative Library

The Joint Legislative Library³ is a valuable resource for researching the Colorado legislative process—both current and historical—as well as for learning more about Colorado legislators. The library collection comprises the *Colorado Revised Statutes*, *Session Laws of Colorado*, and Colorado House and Senate Journals from Territorial times to the present. In addition, the collection includes public policy documents, reports, and analyses. Other unique print resources available in the library include copies of the Colorado “blue books,” or ballot analyses, 1954 to the present; “pink books,” or legislative directories, for most years from 1956 to the present; and Colorado press books from 1960 to the present.⁴ A more complete list of the library collection is available on the Colorado Legislative Council’s website.⁵

The Colorado Joint Legislative Library provides reference services to members of the General Assembly and their staff, state and national governmental agencies, and members of the public via phone, e-mail, and in person. Users are welcome to visit the library and access its collection; however, print items do not circulate outside the library.⁶

Special Collections

There are two helpful legislative resources available on the Internet, each developed by Legislative Council staff. The first is the Colorado Legislators Past and Present website,⁷ which provides a legislative profile of each member of the General Assembly from Territorial times to the present. Each member entry includes when the person served, in which chamber(s) he or she served, party affiliation, and committee membership. The second website is Presidents and Speakers of the Colorado General Assembly, which is a biographical portrait of each Colorado Senate President and Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1876 to the present.⁸

The Joint Legislative Library also has audio recordings of Colorado committee meetings and House and Senate floor debates on legislation from 2002 to the present. Users may come to the library for assistance in downloading recordings to their own personal CDs or jump drives at no charge. Users are asked to have the bill number(s) and dates and times of the recordings they need to download before coming to the library.⁹

Document Delivery Services

Because the library does not circulate items, local users are encouraged to visit the library. Information is provided via phone and e-mail to users who are not local.

Colorado State Archives

The Colorado State Archives¹⁰ is the legal repository for select historical and contemporary records generated by state and local



About the Authors

Andrea L. Hamilton is Library and Information Resources Manager for Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP—andrea.hamilton@dgsllaw.com. Abby Lindquist is Reference Librarian for Holland & Hart LLP—amindquist@hollandhart.com. Andrea McCullough is Research Librarian for Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP—andrea.mccullough@dgsllaw.com.

This Department, published quarterly, is sponsored by the Colorado Association of Law Librarians (CoALL) to provide helpful information about legal research. Readers are welcome to send research questions to CoALL, Legal Research Corner, at www.aallnet.org/chapter/coall. CoALL members will attempt to answer questions individually or as part of this Department.

The information provided in this Department is for educational purposes only and is not intended as legal advice. No endorsement or recommendation is made of any product named in articles. Department coordinators are CoALL members Andrea Hamilton, Legal Research Corner articles chair; Madeline Cohen, Lorelle Gianelli, John Moss, and Cecily Nicewicz. For more information about CoALL, visit www.aallnet.org/chapter/coall.

government in Colorado. Approximately two-thirds of the repository comprises records from Colorado district and county courts, as well as the vast majority of Colorado Court of Appeals and Supreme Court case files. Research requests can be made by phone or by completing the “Ask An Archivist” form,¹¹ but it is suggested that the researcher conduct any extensive research at the Colorado State Archives Research Room whenever possible.¹²

Records deposited at the Archives are available for use subject to restrictions or limitations imposed by law or executive order. Staff will assist researchers in identifying records that meet their information needs and will make copies of records on request; there is a pull limit of ten records daily, and records may not be withdrawn from the Archives. The Historical Records Index online database¹³ can be searched by name, record type, and date, but does not include all of the records physically held by the Archives.

Special Collections

Archives has records relating to the history of water use policy and law that are reflected in court cases, governor’s records, and legislation. It also contains agency records from the Colorado Departments of Natural Resources, Public Health and Environment, Agriculture, and Local Affairs, and the Secretary of State’s Office. Additionally, an extensive collection of Colorado legislative history resources—such as General Assembly Engrossed Bills from 1876 to present, Committee Summaries from 1973 to present, Colorado Revised Statutes, Session Laws, and House/Senate Journals—is held at the Archives. Legislative audio recordings from 1973 to 2001 can be accessed but first must be transferred to CD format by trained archival staff. The researcher should call ahead for availability.¹⁴ Audio recordings from 2002 to 2011 are readily accessible at the Archives Research Room.

Document Delivery Services

Requests can be sent via the “Ask An Archivist” form;¹⁵ response time can take up to two weeks, depending on staff availability. Delivery format options include hard-copy and electronic. Research and reference functions are cash-funded activities of state government; fees for services apply.

Colorado State Publications Library

The mission of the Colorado State Publications Library¹⁶ is to provide free public access to state government documents. The goal is to archive almost everything published by Colorado state agencies designed for public consumption. The collection includes: consumer information on a wide range of topics, including diabetes, adoption, bicycle safety, visiting state parks, preventing identity theft, and bullying and violence prevention; annual reports from all branches of the state government, as well as state institutions of higher education; statistical publications from state agencies specific to topics such as transportation and roadway accidents, crime, school enrollment, and water quality; legislative reports; maps; and DVDs, mostly from the Division of Wildlife specific to hunting and fishing. In addition to print publications, there is a repository of digital state publications.

The Colorado State Publications Library is open to the public and there is a research area available for walk-in customers. Library staff provides reference services in person, by phone, and via

e-mail.¹⁷ The library’s online catalog, Pandora, includes both digital and print titles.¹⁸

Special Collections

Researchers should think of the Colorado State Publications Library when looking for information generated by Colorado state agencies. The staff can save the researcher time by tracking down publications and navigating through state government websites. The collection is particularly strong in the areas of auditor reports, education, mining history, and geological studies.

A portal is available in the library for those specifically interested in online publications.¹⁹ Remote users can search the digital repository by title, date, subject, and full text, or may browse the collection by state agency. Subject-specific resource guides are available online,²⁰ as is a listing of new reports and state sources that may be related to current events.²¹

Document Delivery Services

Except for a nominal photocopy fee, there is no charge for walk-up reference service. Most of the collection is available for lending. Items also can be requested through interlibrary loan.²²

Colorado Supreme Court Library

The Colorado Supreme Court Library²³ serves the appellate and trial court bench, the statewide bar, and the general public. Operational since Territorial times, the Supreme Court Library opened its newest location in December 2012. The library holds 85,000 volumes, 12% of which are accessible for browsing in an artfully decorated 5,500 square-foot public space; the rest are in closed stacks and are available on request. The collection spans Colorado’s legal history and contains, among many other titles, complete sets of Colorado statutes, regulations, and formal state Attorney General opinions. A staff of professional law librarians, many of whom are licensed Colorado lawyers, are available to ensure a thorough research process.

Free online access to Westlaw,²⁴ LexisNexis,²⁵ HeinOnline,²⁶ and Fastcase²⁷ is provided. The general public is invited to use these resources for up to one hour per day. Statewide trial dockets are also available in the library via the Integrated Colorado Courts E-filing System (ICCES) program.²⁸ Legal counsel providing *pro bono* assistance to others are eligible for additional services.²⁹

Special Collections

The library has the original, handwritten Colorado Constitution from 1876 on display through April 2015. It also manages the Colorado Judicial Learning Center,³⁰ which is 4,000 square-feet of space dedicated to civics education. Designed for adults and children of all ages, it is an interactive environment focusing on the rule of law through the eyes of judges. The Judicial Learning Center is open during the same hours as the library and access is free.

Document Delivery Services

The print collection does not circulate nor is library staff allowed to provide legal advice. Nevertheless, document delivery services by phone or e-mail are available to those able to provide a specific citation,³¹ and onsite visitors may make copies or print research results from the public computer terminals for a nominal fee.

Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center

Located on the second floor of the History Colorado Center, the Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center offers free access to public researchers.³² The scope of its materials is Colorado-exclusive, across history, genealogy, architecture, and archaeology.

One of the major collections with legal relevance is the newspapers, including more than 1,700 titles on microfilm, covering every county, as well as ghost towns.³³ Many of them are available in their complete run. The Library & Research Center also holds more than 30,000 books from Colorado authors and publishers on a wide array of state history topics.

City and county directories provide a list of residents and contain biographical information; Denver's directory coverage goes back to 1866.³⁴ The Colorado State Business Directories (1875 to 1956) include details on location and employees, as well as public office holders.³⁵

The manuscript collection³⁶ covers records for businesses and organizations, plus the personal papers of famous Coloradans, such as Governor Ralph L. Carr. The maps collection comprises railroad routes, mines and mining claims, city maps, and locations of American Indian tribes at various points in history.³⁷

The Library & Research Center has an online catalog. Materials do not circulate.³⁸

Special Collections

History Colorado's photography collection has more than one million images from 1840 to the present.³⁹ Of note, the collection includes the work of landscape photographer William H. Jackson and the archives of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. A selection of photographs has been digitized in partnership with the Denver Public Library.⁴⁰ An online digital gallery of images from the photograph, archives, and artifact collections is scheduled to launch later this year.

In the 1930s, the Civil Works Administration created town guides and county histories and conducted interviews with pioneers. The Library & Research Center has a large collection of this material.⁴¹

Document Delivery Services

The Library & Research Center offers research services for patrons unable to visit in person; one half hour of research and up to five photocopied or scanned pages are included at no charge. Additional research is charged on an hourly basis. The institution also offers an onsite photography studio that will produce publication-quality digital images or prints on demand.⁴² Rates and contact information are posted online.⁴³

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Also located within the History Colorado Center, the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) administers a variety of programs to monitor and preserve historical resources in the state.⁴⁴ The office provides access to documents on properties, homesteads, mines, and other cultural sites.

OAHP guides property owners through the process of listing buildings or sites of historical and architectural significance with the National Register of Historic Places and the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties.⁴⁵ Listed properties are then eligible for grants from the History Colorado State Historical Fund.⁴⁶

OAHP provides Section 106 compliance reviews for federal agencies when their activities could affect cultural resources.⁴⁷ Projects range from highway improvements to land transfers, and the records are maintained by OAHP.

OAHP offers free in-house access to Compass, an online database with information about cultural resources, including those listed on the National Register and Colorado State Register of Historic Places; subscription accounts are also available.⁴⁸ Compass allows users to find information on archaeological sites, historical buildings, cemeteries, and other cultural heritage sites. Each site record includes details on site reports and survey documentation stored in the OAHP.

Special Collections

Recent listings on the National and State Registers are posted on the OAHP website with photographs and descriptions.⁴⁹ A comprehensive source of all Colorado properties in the Registers can also be accessed.⁵⁰

Document Delivery Services

Researchers can request a records search from Colorado's Cultural Resources Database, which covers more than 230,000 archaeological, historical, and paleontological sites, or they may request reproductions of the hard copy documentation of the file.⁵¹ Fees are posted online.⁵²

National Archives at Denver

Part of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Rocky Mountain field office⁵³ contains historical records from federal agencies and courts in Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The field office's new location in Broomfield opened in October 2012. The building has 63,000 cubic feet of storage and a stack capacity of 75,000 cubic feet.⁵⁴

One of the most frequently used collections is the U.S. District Court records for civil, criminal, and bankruptcy cases. Court records become the responsibility of the Archives once they are twenty-five years old. The agency documents for the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation, along with those of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, are also very popular with

researchers.⁵⁵ Additionally, photographs, maps, and architectural drawings created by federal agencies are available.

The Genealogy Research Room offers access to Ancestry.com and other genealogical databases, such as FamilySearch; the Archives provide naturalization and homesteading records for digitization to such genealogical organizations. A second research room accommodates text-based study.

An online catalog from NARA can be narrowed using the Advanced Search tool to look for materials in the Colorado location.⁵⁶ Archival finding aids and guides⁵⁷ describe the holdings for easier access.

Special Collections

The earliest records come from Territorial Santa Fe, New Mexico cases of the late 1840s. The Archives also provides access to case files from the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals from its inception through the mid-1970s.

Document Delivery Services

The Archives can accommodate requests for copying or scanning court records at a nominal fee.⁵⁸ For a more comprehensive study, researchers should contact the Archives to confirm document availability and then conduct their research on-site.⁵⁹

U.S. Courts Library for the Tenth Circuit

In addition to providing reference services and resources for the judges, law clerks, and staff of the federal courts within the Tenth Circuit, the U.S. Courts Library⁶⁰ provides basic reference services to the public. The Denver library has federal primary and secondary legal research materials, as well as state legal materials from the six states within the Tenth Circuit.⁶¹

The print collection does not circulate, but researchers may come to the library during open hours and use any materials on the shelves. One public computer terminal with an Internet connection, word-processing software, and access to the library's catalog is available for use by library visitors; password-protected Wi-Fi is also accessible (user name and password are available from the reference desk). If unable to physically visit the library, public patrons may call or e-mail the library; the library staff will conduct a search for materials within the collection.⁶² For security reasons, public patrons are not allowed to download or upload to flash drives, but documents may be e-mailed or printed. A copy machine is available, and public patrons are allowed to print or copy up to thirty pages for free per day.

All visitors to the courthouse are required to go through security, similar to Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screening at the airport (visitors may need to remove such items as shoes, belts, and jewelry). There are no cameras or recording devices allowed in the courthouse, but cell phones are permitted. A valid form of government-issued identification with a photograph must be shown (for example, a passport, driver's license, or government employee ID).

Special Collections

The library is the repository for archival and current Tenth Circuit history. A climate-controlled archives room is accessible by appointment for research purposes.

Document Delivery Services

The library does not have the capability to collect money from the public, so limited document delivery services are provided to the public on a case-by-case basis. If the document can be obtained for free from other circuit courts, the request may be accommodated.

Wyoming State Law Library

The Wyoming State Law Library⁶³ provides a variety of services to meet the needs of the Wyoming Supreme Court and the entire Wyoming judiciary, state legislators, attorneys, *pro se* litigants, and citizens. The print collection includes case reporters, current federal and state statutes, Wyoming Attorney General Opinions, legal periodicals and newspapers, all available material published on Wyoming law, and more. WYLDCAT, the library's catalog, can be accessed online, and many items in the print collection can be requested via ILL or Prospector through public libraries.⁶⁴ Two computers with Internet access are available for public use. The computers are equipped with Microsoft Excel and Word, and provide access to subscriptions databases, including Westlaw Classic,[®] WestlawNext,[®] HeinOnline,[®] and Shepard's.^{®65}

Special Collections

An extensive historic legal collection is available at the Wyoming State Law Library. It includes superseded statutes from all fifty states and U.S. territories, pre-West state reports, a British collection, and many other historical treatises.

Document Delivery Services

Depending on the timing and the material requested, copies and scans may be provided. Phone calls for material requests are encouraged; every effort will be made to accommodate them.

Conclusion

Legal researches in and near Colorado have a wealth of historical and government materials available to them. This article provides a preliminary introduction to the caretakers of these collections, but readers are encouraged to explore these valuable resources in greater depth by contacting the organizations directly or visiting these locations in person.

Notes

1. This article was written as a companion piece to Hamilton *et al.*, "Colorado Libraries for Mining, Environmental, Natural Resources, and Energy Researchers," 42 *The Colorado Lawyer* 117 (Nov. 2013).

2. The authors extend their gratitude to the following individuals for sharing details about their organizations: Diane Forge Bauersfeld, State Law Librarian, Wyoming State Law Library; Eric Bittner, Archivist, National Archives at Denver; Eileen Bolger, Director, National Archives at Denver; Stephanie Boktor, Site Records Manager, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado; Lance Christensen, Digital and Audio Archivist, Colorado State Archives; Madeline Cohen, Circuit Librarian, U.S. Courts Library for the Tenth Circuit; Dan Cordova, Colorado Supreme Court Librarian, Colorado Supreme Court Library; Samantha Hagar, Librarian, Colorado State Publications Library; Molly Otto, Manager of Library Services, Colorado Joint Legislative Library; Laura Ruttum Senturia, Library Director, Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, History Colorado.

3. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1200536134922.

4. The press books, formerly published by the Colorado Press Association, provided brief biographical profiles of General Assembly members, including birthplace, where they went to school, occupation(s), and hobbies. The Colorado Press Association stopped producing the press books in 2005–06; they have been replaced by Circuit Media's *Colorado Legislative Gold Book*, www.circuitmedia.com/gold-book-2.
5. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, Library Collections, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1200536136337.
6. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, Library Services and Policies, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1200536136327.
7. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, Colorado Legislators Past and Present, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1200536136308.
8. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, Presidents and Speakers of the Colorado General Assembly: A Biographical Portrait From 1876, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1251614774476.
9. Colorado Joint Legislative Library, Legislative Research Fundamentals, www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CGA-LegislativeCouncil/CLC/1200536136342.
10. Colorado State Archives, www.colorado.gov/archives.
11. Colorado State Archives, Ask An Archivist, coloradoc2.prod.acquia-sites.com/archives/ask.
12. Colorado State Archives, Contact Us, coloradoc2.prod.acquia-sites.com/archives/contact-us-1.
13. Colorado State Archives, Archives Search, www.colorado.gov/pacific/archives/archives-search.
14. Colorado State Archives, Legislative Audio Recordings Request Form, www.colorado.gov/pacific/archives/form/legislative-audio-request.
15. Colorado State Archives, Ask an Archivist, coloradoc2.prod.acquia-sites.com/archives/ask.
16. Colorado State Publications Library, www.cde.state.co.us/stateinfo.
17. Ask the Colorado State Publications Library Staff a Question, www.cde.state.co.us/stateinfo/slstpask.
18. Colorado State Publications Library, Pandora: The Library Catalog, athena.cde.state.co.us/screens/opacmenu_s1.html.
19. Colorado State Publications Library Digital Repository, cospl.coalliance.org.
20. Colorado State Publications Library, Information Resources, www.cde.state.co.us/stateinfo/slstpcollection.
21. Colorado State Publications Library, cospl.blogspot.com.
22. About the Colorado State Publications Library: How can I borrow print publications?, www.cde.state.co.us/stateinfo/slstpfaq#How_can_I_borrow_print_publications.
23. Colorado Supreme Court Library, cscl.colibraries.org.
24. Westlaw, www.westlaw.com.
25. LexisNexis, www.lexisnexis.com.
26. HeinOnline, home.heinonline.org.
27. FastCase, www.fastcase.com.
28. ICCES, www.courts.state.co.us/Administration/Unit.cfm?Unit=efile.
29. Contact the library for details regarding *pro bono* representation verification.
30. Colorado Judicial Learning Center, www.cjlc.org.
31. Services of the Supreme Court Law Library, cscl.colibraries.org/about-us/services-of-the-supreme-court-law-library.html.
32. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Hours, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/hours.
33. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Newspapers, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/newspapers.
34. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Magazines, Journals, and Directories, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/magazines-journals-directories.
35. *Id.*
36. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Manuscript Finding Aids, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/manuscript-finding-aids.
37. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Maps, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/maps.
38. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Library Catalog, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/library-catalog.
39. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Photographs, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/photographs.
40. Denver Public Library Digital Collections, digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/search/collection/p15330coll21.
41. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Special Collections, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/special-collections.
42. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Photo Services, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/photo-services.
43. Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center, Research Services, www.historycolorado.org/researchers/research-services.
44. OAHP, www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/office-archaeology-historic-preservation.
45. OAHP, National and State Registers, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/national-state-registers.
46. State Historical Fund, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/state-historical-fund.
47. OAHP, Review and Compliance, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/review-compliance.
48. OAHP, Compass, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/compass.
49. OAHP, Recent Listings, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/recent-listings-national-state-registers.
50. OAHP, Listed Properties, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/listed-properties.
51. OAHP, File Search, www.historycolorado.org/oahp/file-search.
52. OAHP File Access Request Form, Service and Price List, www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/SI_File_Access_Request_and_Price_List.pdf.
53. National Archives at Denver, www.archives.gov/denver.
54. National Archives at Denver, Contact Us, www.archives.gov/denver/contact.
55. National Archives at Denver, Our Archival Holdings, www.archives.gov/denver/holdings.
56. National Archives Catalog, www.archives.gov/research/search/index.html.
57. National Archives at Denver, Finding Aids, www.archives.gov/denver/finding-aids.
58. National Archives at Denver, Court Records, www.archives.gov/research/court-records/bankruptcy.html.
59. National Archives at Denver, How to Use the Archives, www.archives.gov/denver/archives/use.html.
60. U.S. Courts Library for the Tenth Circuit, www.ca10.uscourts.gov/library.
61. The Tenth Circuit comprises Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming.
62. U.S. Courts Library for the Tenth Circuit, www.ca10.uscourts.gov/library.
63. Wyoming State Law Library, courts.state.wy.us/LawLibrary.
64. *See* courts.state.wy.us/LawLibrary.
65. More information about the databases available at the Wyoming State Law Library can found at courts.state.wy.us/LawLibrary/databases.aspx. ■

