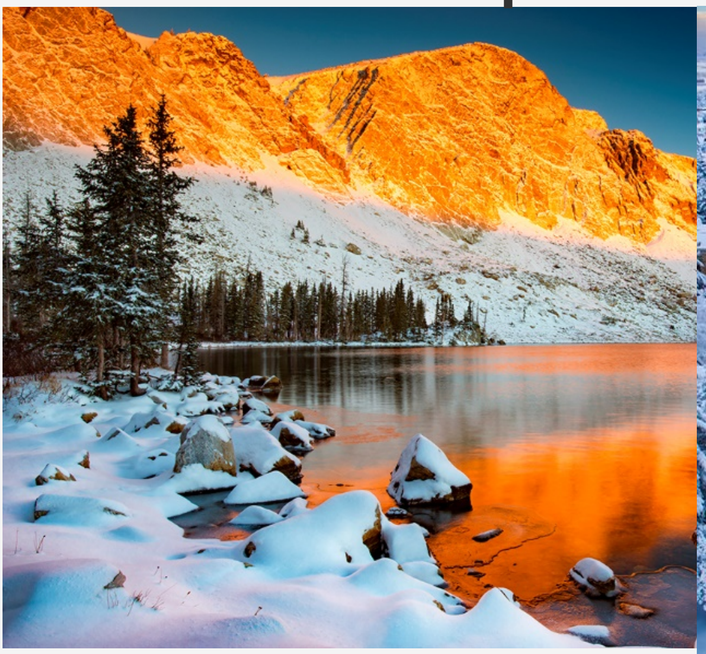
Timeline and institutional support of collections repositories at the University of Wyoming



Chad Hutchens | chutchen@uwyo.edu

Collections @ UW

UW Libraries

Libraries Digital Collections
(Islandora & DSpace repositories)

UW Geological Museum

~40,000 Paleontological Specimens
(Specify)

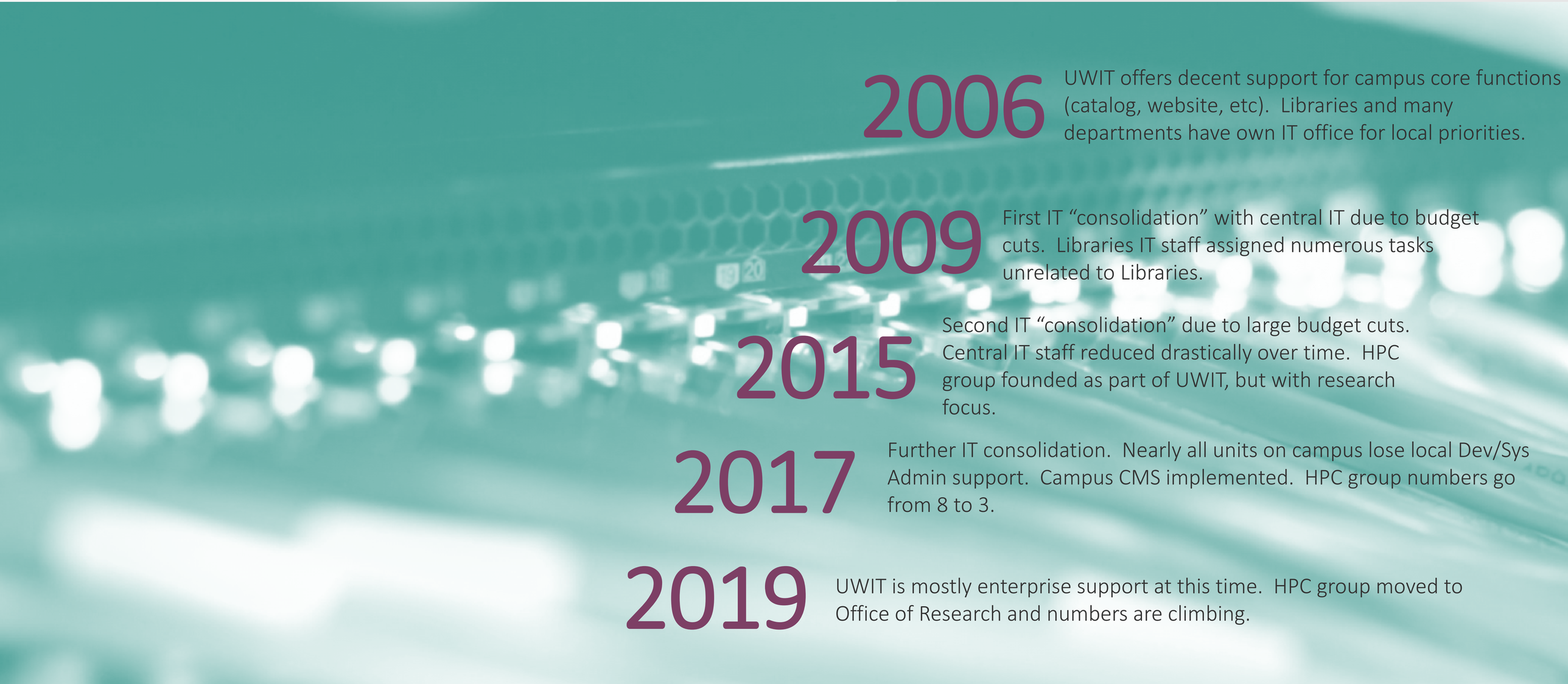
UWAR

State/UW Cooperating agency
(Homegrown Repository Application)

Berry Biodiversity Center

Digital Herbarium (homegrown),
UWYMV (Arctos)

Some context @ central IT



2006 UWIT offers decent support for campus core functions (catalog, website, etc). Libraries and many departments have own IT office for local priorities.

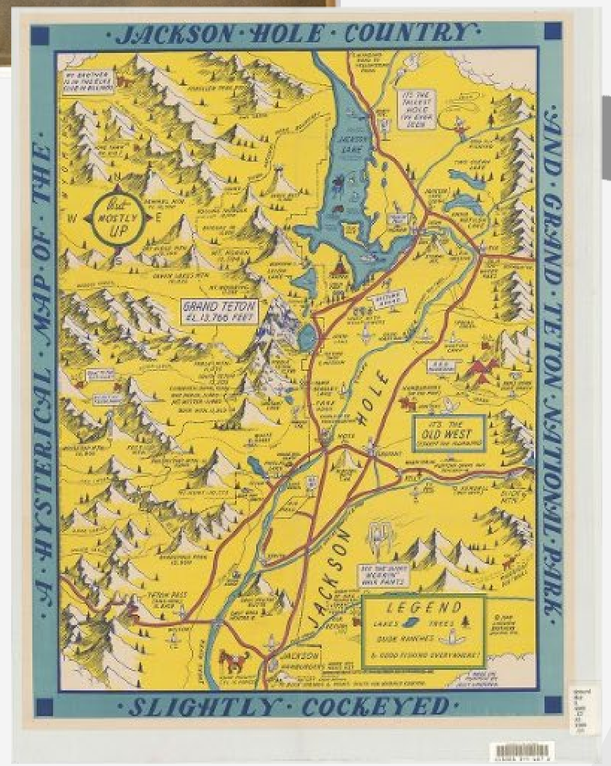
2009 First IT “consolidation” with central IT due to budget cuts. Libraries IT staff assigned numerous tasks unrelated to Libraries.

2015 Second IT “consolidation” due to large budget cuts. Central IT staff reduced drastically over time. HPC group founded as part of UWIT, but with research focus.

2017 Further IT consolidation. Nearly all units on campus lose local Dev/Sys Admin support. Campus CMS implemented. HPC group numbers go from 8 to 3.

2019 UWIT is mostly enterprise support at this time. HPC group moved to Office of Research and numbers are climbing.

Libraries Digital Collections



~150K Digital records

~14TB Disk usage

2006 Islandora hosted at CARL with 1 Dev/Sys Admin and 1/4fte Digital Collections Mgr. Libraries also has own IT/Systems group.

2009 UW Digital Collections Office opens. Staffed with 1FTE Digital Collections Librarian and 1 fte staff.

2015 Migrated Islandora to UWIT, 1 Dev Sys Admin and 1 Digital Collections Mgr dedicated to Digital Collections in addition to unit head.

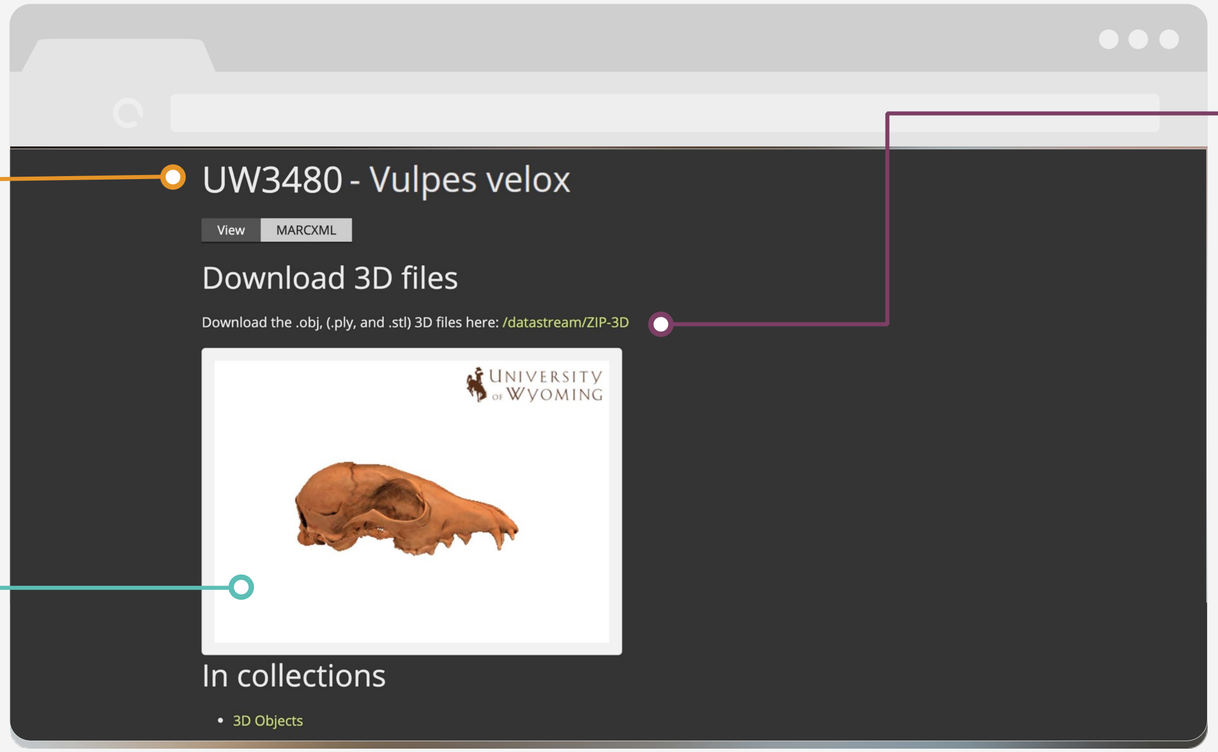
2017 At the same time campus loses local dev/sys admins, Digital Collections loses own dev/sys admin for Islandora. 3D repo customizations end.

2019 Islandora has become unstable, begin migration to externally hosted solution at Born-Digital/AWS. Further 3D customization unlikely.

3D models in Islandora (a kludge)

UW specimen number and species

Animated GIF



Zip archive download
Includes low and high-res models in three file formats (stl, ply, obj)

Rocky Mtn Digital Herbarium

~300K Digital specimens

.25 Developers/ Sys Admins

2006 Homegrown system built by graduate student. Hosted by Libraries IT.

2017 System hacked. Down for ~2 months. Platform is end of life but records still being added.

2019 Considering moving to Symbiota. No easy path for migration.

UW Geological Museum

Est. 1887

2002 Homegrown web accessible metadata only database of specimens built.

2009 Budget cuts temporarily close museum to public. Promises made not to dispose of collections. Folks are not happy!

2015 Work to move metadata from homegrown database to Specify begins. Hosted by UW Libraries IT.

2017 IT consolidations and lack of support prompt Specify move to hosting at Kansas where it remains.

UW Archaeological Repository

Est. 1967

Cooperating UW/State of WY agency. Largest archaeological repository in the state.

2016 No public web-based access to collections. Work begun to move local database records to CollectionSpace for public access.

2017 Contracting agency performing IT work opts to build homegrown system.

2020 Publicly available system still not available for various reasons.

Where do we need help?

Web and dark storage. Campus solutions exist, but fees are fairly high.

Dev/sys admin work is hard to come by, but funding does exist to outsource.

Aggregation and discovery solution of some kind. Similar to “DPLA Local” initiative.

3D rendering, web-derivative creation, and possibly support for AR/VR capabilities.

Showing value of digital collections to leadership at the highest levels.

Some positives…

UW is the only research university in the state of Wyoming

Access to policy makers & resource allocation at highest levels

Outreach & education at the state level (ex. endorsement of state science plans)

Coalescence around digital Natural Science collections with the Biodiversity Institute & Libraries

Contact & Questions

Chad Hutchens

chutchen@uwyo.edu

UW Libraries

UW