



# Guidelines for Depository Libraries: Superseding Depository Publications

## Introduction

Many U.S. Government publications distributed through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) are superseded by later or revised editions. GPO first issued guidance on what titles supersede in 1984 through the inclusion of a superseded list as Appendix C to the *Instructions to Depository Libraries*. Since that time the Superseded List has been updated infrequently, with the last major update occurring in 2002. Accompanying the Superseded List were guidelines that addressed the criteria used to determine if a publication superseded.

GPO has refined the supersession guidelines and incorporated examples for reference purposes to help you determine if a publication meets the criteria for supersession. With this revision to the guidelines, GPO does not plan to undertake an update of the 2002 Superseded List but would be willing to consider a partnership if a group of depositories wished to review and maintain the list. The 2002 Superseded List and all previous editions were developed by members of the Federal depository library community and based on the collections in the libraries of the volunteers.

Materials falling under the criteria described below may be discarded according to your professional judgment under provisions of Title 44, United States Code, §1912 without submitting them on a weeding list for regional depository approval. Depositories should note that they are not required to dispose of superseded materials if they do not wish to do so. All collection development decisions should be made to meet the Federal Government information needs of the depository's users.

## Supersession Criteria

A depository library may withdraw a publication prior to the five-year retention period, without submitting it on a weeding list for regional depository approval, when a publication is:

- Dated material that may be discarded when expired;
- Revised by a later edition/issue;
- A reprint and the depository received the original edition;
- Replaced by a cumulative edition;
- Replaced by a corrected copy; or
- A publication that only requires the current year be retained.

If you are uncertain about supersession of a particular publication, please contact your regional depository library for guidance.

## **Questions to Consider When Determining if a Publication Can Be Superseded**

You should use your professional judgment in determining titles that can be superseded. Titles and types of publications appearing below are not the only titles that can be superseded; they are provided as representative examples of the types of titles that may be superseded.

### **What are the indicators that a publication is dated and may be discarded after that date?**

Publications that are dated may be discarded after the expiration of the event advertised. Those publications that are of a current awareness nature and that appear likely to have a limited lifespan should be checked for an expiration or effective date. While this date could be in various locations on the publication the most likely include:

- Title page;
- Cover page;
- Back cover; and the
- Prefatory material.

Publications of this type include, but are not limited to:

- Press releases;
- Dated posters;
- Calendars;
- Announcements of seminars;
- Workshops, meetings, or events;
- Announcements of products or publications; and
- Grant applications.



**Fiscal Year 2008**

**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE  
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM**

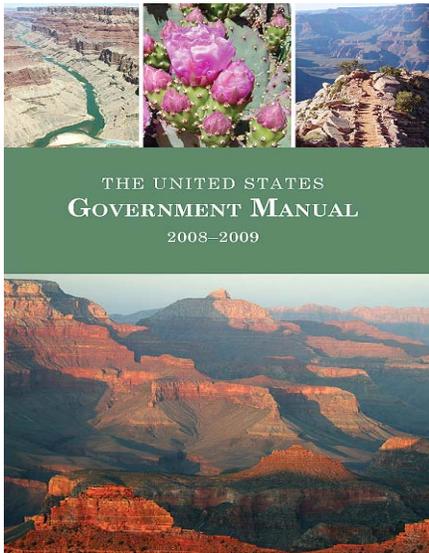
**(CFDA NUMBER: 84.116B)**

**Form Approved: OMB No. 1840-0514, Expiration Date: 5/31/2009**

Publications that have an effective expiration date may be discarded after expiration of the event. In addition, items, such as publication announcements that may not have a specific date on them, may be discarded 90 days after receipt.

**How do you know if a publication is revised by a later edition or issue?**

Many publications contain statements on the cover(s) or in the prefatory material indicating that the publication revises or supersedes one or more previous editions.



Revised June 1, 2008

Raymond A. Mosley,  
*Director of the Federal Register.*  
Allen Weinstein,  
*Archivist of the United States.*

On the cover: 100 years of celebrating the Grand Canyon as a national monument.

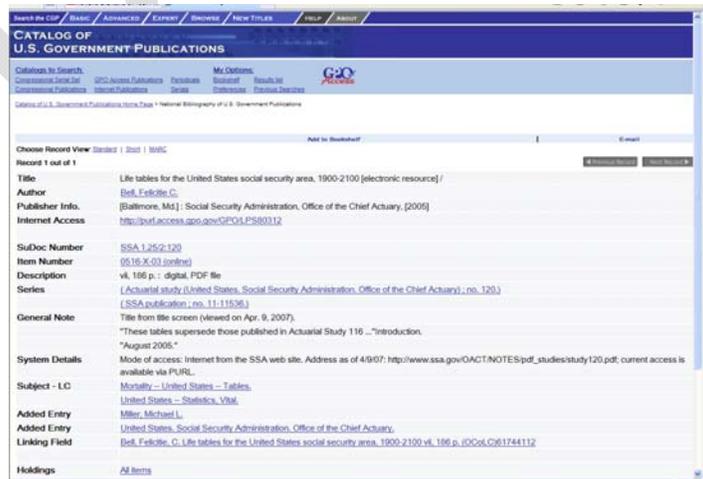
As one of the most majestic sites in the world, the Grand Canyon (Canyon), located in Grand Canyon, Arizona, overwhelms the imagination with its magnitude and captivating beauty. Its dimensions are immense and its grandeur timeless, measuring 1 mile deep, up to 18 miles wide, and 277 river miles long. Many scientists conclude that the gorge of the Grand Canyon was shaped by the Colorado River in Arizona and parts of Nevada over a period of more than 6 million years.

The Canyon is dubbed one of the natural wonders of the world largely because of its splendid natural features. It boasts exotic plant life, ancient pueblos, stunning multi-colored rocks, colorful water, and magnificent waterfalls. Also, vast species of mammals, reptiles and amphibians, fish, and birds exist at the Canyon, many threatened or endangered but protected under the Endangered Species Act.

President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed Grand Canyon National Monument (Monument) on January 11, 1908, to protect the Canyon from uncontrolled development. The Monument was managed by the U.S. Forest Service until 1919 when it was proclaimed a national park and management transferred to the National Park Service.

In the case of a base manual, loose-leaf pages replaced by new pages are considered superseded and may be discarded.

Be sure to also check the bibliographic record in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications <<http://catalog.gpo.gov/>>. In accordance with GPO cataloging policy, if the publication is identified as superseded this information will be included in the bibliographic record.



Another resource to check is the publishing agency's Web page, which may contain information about the publication.

Please note that if a later edition is distributed through the FDLP, the superseded edition may be discarded by the depository, even if that depository has deselected the item number and does not possess the new edition. In order to determine if a later edition has been distributed, the depository should search the CGP. Additionally, transmittals, corrections, changes, errata, etc., to a base text or manual that the depository has not received are considered superseded after being retained for one year.

A final environmental impact statement (EIS) does not supersede the draft version. Typically, the final EIS cites, by reference, information included in the draft. In order to review the information cited, the user needs access to the draft EIS.

### Can reprints be superseded?

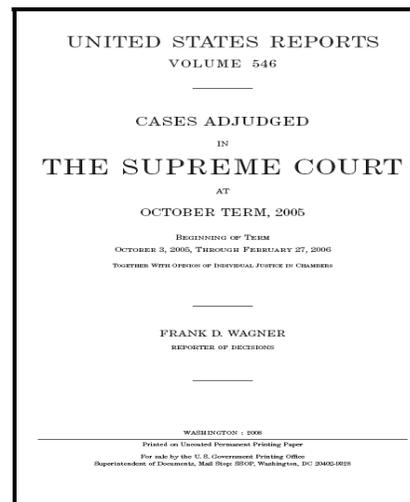
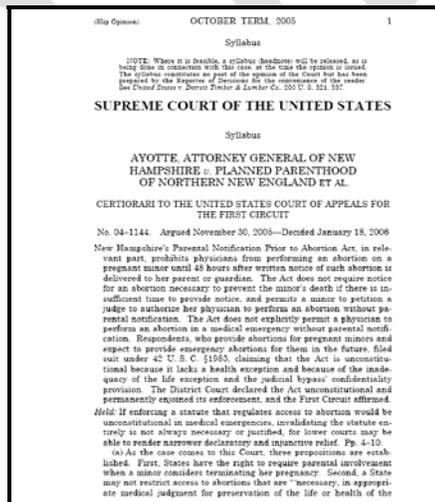
Yes, reprints can be superseded if the depository has received the original edition. If the depository did not receive the original edition, the reprint must be retained and normal disposal guidelines followed.

### What types of publications are replaced by a cumulative edition?

Publications with cumulative or bound volumes include but are not limited to:

- Slip opinions;
- Slip laws;
- Slip treaties; and
- Advance or preliminary reports.

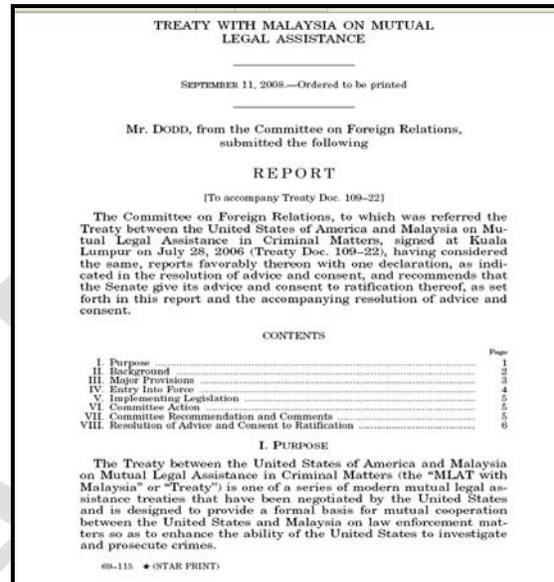
They may be superseded and discarded only upon receipt of the bound volumes or cumulated issues or products.



## What are the procedures for dealing with corrected copies?

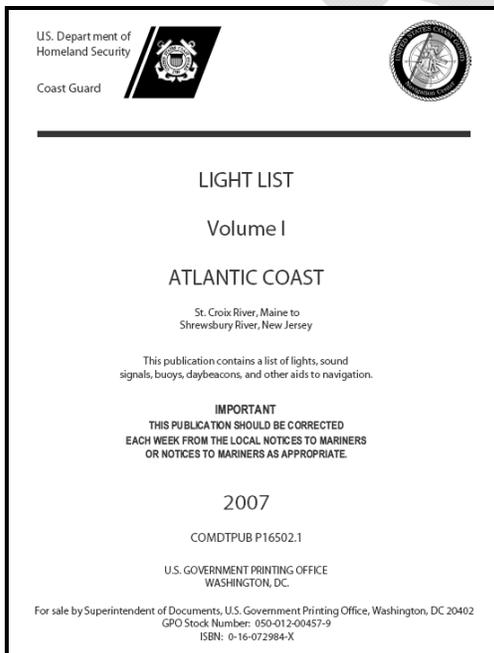
A corrected copy replaces a publication previously distributed through the FDLP. The publication that was initially distributed should be removed from the collection and disposed of accordingly. This is done in order to prevent misinformation from being disseminated to the public.

If the corrected copy is a Congressional publication, it is referred to as a star print. They are identifiable by stars printed at the lower left-hand corner of their title pages or covers. Sometimes the words “star print” also appears adjacent to the star. Copies of all types of corrected publications are identifiable by the /CORR at the end of the Superintendent of Documents classification number.



## Are there certain publications that only require the current year be retained?

Examples of these types of publication include but are not limited to:



- Sales catalogs;
- Bibliographies upon receipt of complete new editions; and
- Lists and indexes of publications of various agencies upon receipt of complete new editions.

Upon receipt of a new issue, the previous issues of this type of publication may be superseded.

Please note that this does not apply to annual publications such as annual reports of departments and agencies, which cover the activities of the organization for a specific period of time.

### **Can tangible publications be superseded by an online version?**

Tangible material can be superseded by an online version if the publication meets the supersession criteria. For example, the last tangible issue of *Journals Indexed in Agricola* can be superseded by the online version

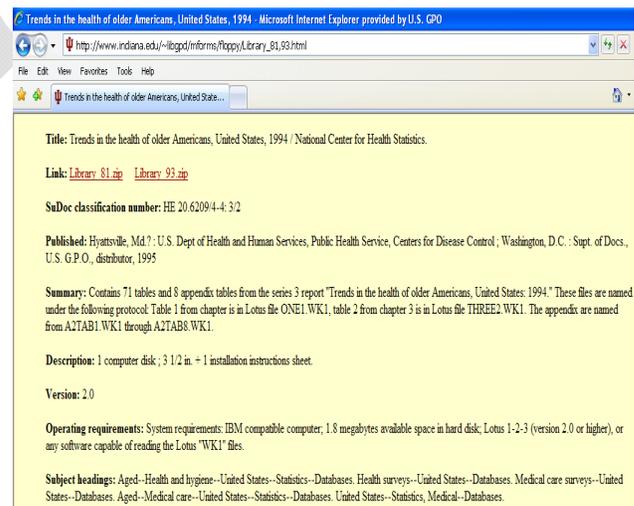
<<http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS33875>>.

A thorough review of the online version of a publication must be conducted prior to superseding the tangible for the online version. There may be discrepancies between the two versions. If this is the case, the tangible may not be superseded by the online version.

### **Do Floppy Disks and CD-ROMs/DVDs supersede?**

If the tangible electronic product meets the supersession criteria, it can be superseded. Depositories must make sure that all the information contained on the floppy disk, CD-ROM, or DVD supersedes. Some agencies make CD-ROMs available to depository libraries that are compilations of publications. While some titles on the CD may be superseded, this may not be true for all the titles contained on the disc. Additionally, the disc may contain monographs that are not superseded.

Floppy disks included in the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Floppy Disk Project <<http://www.indiana.edu/~libgpd/mforms/floppy/floppy.html>>, a FDLP partnership with Indiana University, Bloomington, are considered superseded by the partnership copies and may be discarded without further permission.



### **Issues and Best Practices to Consider Before Superseding**

You should carefully consider the particular needs of your library's users and collection development policies at your library before discarding any material. While the guidelines are useful in identifying obsolete, dated, or ephemeral publications for removal from shelves, map cases, and microfiche and CD-ROM storage cabinets, you are not required

to dispose of material that meet the supersession criteria if you do not wish to do so. For example, in order to serve the research needs of the depository's users, there may be certain subject areas or Federal agencies where superseded material is retained. You are encouraged to document these types of decisions in a collection development policy.

You should also understand the differences between supersession and official substitution of tangible publications to properly manage the depository collection. Under the substitution guidelines <<http://www.fdlp.gov/collections/collection-maintenance/141>>, a selective depository is permitted to replace tangible versions with online equivalents of depository materials provided the library has held the publication for at least one year and your regional depository has approved the substitution and the disposal of the tangibles. There may be occasions when a publication will fall under both the supersession and substitution guidelines. If that occurs, you may choose which of the guidelines to apply. For more information, consult the Guidelines for Depository Libraries: Substituting Online for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications by Selectives <<http://www.fdlp.gov/collections/collection-maintenance/141>>.

If you are unable to make a determination regarding whether or not a title supersedes, set it aside and consult with your regional depository.

### **Use of the 2002 Superseded List**

You may continue to use the 2002 Superseded List as a reference source for additional examples of the type of publications that superseded if you wish to do so. Please note that the List is not current and many titles marked as active may no longer be available or may only be disseminated in an electronic format. Additionally, most titles added to the FDLP since 2002 are not included in the List.

### **Information for Regionals**

If your library is a regional depository, you must permanently retain at least one tangible copy of every publication received through depository distribution, except for those publications that meet the supersession criteria defined in these guidelines.

Regional depositories have agreed that some superseded materials should be retained for long-term public access. This is a consensus agreement between the regionals, not a legal requirement of 44 U.S.C. §1912.

### **Procedures for Retaining a Superseded Publication**

A depository library may choose to retain superseded publications if they will continue to be useful to the library's users.

Depositories that retain superseded material are strongly encouraged to:

- Include a note such as "later edition may be available" in the bibliographic record to indicate that the publication has been superseded.
- Stamp or otherwise identify, on the publication itself, superseded publications as such (i.e., stamp as "superseded" or "not current").

## **Application**

*Guidelines for Depository Libraries: Superseding Depository Publications* may be applied to Federal depository materials held by all depository libraries. Federal agency libraries and the library of the highest state appellate court may follow their specific depository procedures.

## **Related resources**

- List of Classes
- National Needs & Offers List
- Substituting Electronic for Tangible Versions of Depository Publications
- WEBTech Notes
- Documents Data Miner 2 (non-GPO resource)