Stephanie Simms recently joined the California Digital Library as a Research Data Specialist where she will manage the DMPTool and other services to support UC researchers throughout the data lifecycle. Her own experiences with research data management during archaeological field projects in Mexico and Guatemala (Ph.D. 2014, Boston University) involved plenty of spatial data: creating maps, integrating historical maps and remotely sensed data in a GIS, modeling and spatial statistics, handling sensitive spatial data, etc. Concerns about how to manage and share these data led her to a position as a CLIR (Council on Library and Information Resources) Postdoctoral Fellow at UCLA where she primarily worked on an archaeological data publication initiative with the Digital Library and the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press.

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Perspective Statement

At UCLA I worked with various stakeholders to develop workflows for publishing open access archaeological data in tandem with traditional print monographs. For the pilot project we conducted interviews with researchers about their current data management practices, evaluated the usability of existing disciplinary repositories and publication platforms, identified metadata standards, and recommended policies for managing data in the Digital Library Collection system. A larger goal was to assess digital projects and data management in the context of library collections development, especially in a local sense (e.g., faculty research data and the UC Open Access policy). One of the most challenging aspects of the project was figuring out how to represent spatial-temporal data (i.e., place names and chronological periods), even for a single monograph, in a coherent manner. Historical gazetteers (e.g., Pelagios, PeriodO) are the key to linking these data sets while preserving their nuance and granularity. I look forward to exploring how the ADRL can coordinate with ongoing efforts to aggregate and link spatial data, especially from the humanities and social sciences that by their nature resist standardization.