

# Montana State Digital Library (MSDL)

**August and September 2008**

Prepared for October 15, 2008 Commission meeting by Jennie Stapp, Digital Library Division Administrator. This report represents accomplishments of:

Natural Resource Information System (NRIS),  
Library Information Services (LIS),  
Montana Natural Heritage Program (NHP).

**Goal One, Content:** MSL acquires and manages relevant quality content that meets the needs of Montana library partners and patrons.

The MSL project to digitize its entire legacy print collection of Montana state publications with its partner the Internet Archive is in high gear. We are advancing through the collection in Dewey Decimal System Order and we have reached the 330 section on our shelves. We are also using this opportunity to do some much-needed weeding of this collection. We have sent 7 shipments representing 36 boxes containing a total of 2,427 state publications. Thus far, we have received back our first shipment of 9 boxes amounting to a total of 24,405 scanned pages. These digital publications are now available, full text, at <http://www.archive.org>. They will soon be uploaded to the statewide digital archive, the Montana Memory Project (<http://www.mtmemory.org>). Staff is working hard to develop an automated process to accomplish this that will minimize the staff time involved. All these publications are part of our holdings in the Montana Shared Catalog.

See this video for more information about the Internet Archive digital library that the Montana State Library is a contributor.

[http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/brewster\\_kahle\\_builds\\_a\\_free\\_digital\\_library.html](http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/brewster_kahle_builds_a_free_digital_library.html)

**Goal Two, Access:** MSL provides libraries, agencies, and its partners and patrons with convenient, high quality, and cost-effective access to library content and services.

MSDL launched two major access tools this period. In late August, Natural Heritage staff rolled out the first major upgrade of the very successful Tracker web application (<http://nhp.nris.mt.gov/Tracker/NHTMap.aspx>), which provides both decision-makers and the public direct access to the extensive NHP databases (at appropriate levels of precision). This version, which has been undergoing testing with users since late spring, offers a number of important additions and new capabilities, including:

- the addition of Species Occurrences. Occurrences encompass the habitat area occupied by a species rather than just the point where an Observation was made. This information is critical for environmental review and planning;
- data on plant Species of Concern as well as animal species;
- greatly improved Land Stewardship data, with separately-viewable layers for public lands, conservation easements, and special designation lands, as well as improved labeling;

- a new Identify Tool that allows users to quickly point and click to identify visible map layer and data;
- improved data usability including the ability to save the map display to a JPG image file; ability to export both the map and report to a Adobe PDF file; and the ability to export the report to a MS Excel file;
- expanded and updated Help files;
- conversion to the standard state government style template, for consistency with the rest of the State Library website;
- improved performance and speed.

Use of Tracker has remained strong, and we have observed increases in both access and data submissions following training sessions given by Systems & Services Manager Allan Cox.

Between July 22 and September 26, Tracker received just over 1,820 hours of use, about half of that by users who logged in either as agency personnel or members of the public. By logging in, agency personnel can view detailed species information and precise locations; public users may record and keep track of their own observations. New Observations submitted by users (agency or public) totaled 138 in July, 29 in August and 168 so far in September.

Additionally, in mid-September NRIS staff announced the availability of the Montana GIS Portal (<http://gisportal.mt.gov>). The GIS Portal is a searchable metadata repository for Geographic Information System (GIS) data available from Montana organizations. The initial release of the Portal contains records of the data collections of NRIS, the Montana Base Map Service Center, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and the Flathead County GIS department. These records represent 400 databases and over 200 sample maps. State Library staff will be visiting other agencies to assist them in the process of completing their metadata and uploading it to the Portal.

The Portal includes an on-line map browser that provides access to a map of Montana and allows users to look at the mapped versions of the data they discover in the Portal. In the future, the map browser will be upgraded and will replace the Library's Digital Atlas and Topofinder applications, and a significant portion of the State's map data that are now only available as downloadable data for professional GIS users will be made available for on-line browsing by the public.

**Goal Three, Consultation and Leadership:** MSL provides consultation and leadership to enable its patrons and partners to reach their goals.

Natural Heritage staff teamed up with staff from Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the Governor's Riparian Task Force to make two presentations at the Montana Association of Planners meeting in Bigfork. The presentations focused on information and maps available for county-level planning. At least 50 people attended these sessions, about half of whom had already used Natural Heritage data in the past. The sessions were well-received and attendees were excited about new wetland and riparian maps, as well as improvements to Tracker that will enable planners to query Species of Concern Occurrences by section.

**Goal Four, Collaboration:** MSL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its partners and patrons so that their information needs can be met.

MSDL staff participated in a number of conferences and meetings that allowed them to share information about State Library resources, to network with colleagues and to learn new and valuable information that will continue to benefit the Library. Examples include the ESRI Users' Conference in San Diego, the Montana Digital Government Summit, the Montana Federal Depository Library annual meeting and the quarterly meeting of the Water Monitoring Work Group.

**Goal Five, Sustainable Success:** MSL is a well-run organization and a sought-after employer; it is efficient and effective (measured against partner and patron outcomes), and successfully engaged in its ongoing mission.

LIS hired Ann Retzinger to fill the position of State Publications Content Specialist. Ann is a recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where she earned a Master degree in LIS with an emphasis in Archives and Records Management. As a student Ann worked as a student intern at the Digital Research Library at the Library Resource Facility in Pittsburgh. There she worked to digitize resources from the Darlington Library and the Historic Pittsburgh Text Collection. Ann will join our staff on October 6.

MSL also accepted a request for reassignment from Gerry Daumiller. Gerry will return to his previous position of GIS Analyst, filling this last remaining position. The NRIS Manager position is currently advertised; the closing date for applications is November 7.