

Montana State Digital Library (MSdL)

June through July 2009

Prepared for the August 5th, 2009 Commission meeting by Jennie Stapp, Digital Library Division Administrator. This report represents accomplishments of:
Library Information Services (LIS),
Montana Natural Heritage Program (NHP),
Natural Resource Information System (NRIS).

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

This spring, NHP biologists reviewed and updated status ranks for many plant and animal Species of Concern (SOC). For animals, 14 SOC were dropped or downgraded to Potential SOC, and 10 were upgraded from Potential SOC to SOC. Another 26 were downgraded in rank (denoting less risk) but retained with the same status, and just 3 were upgraded in rank. The updated Animal SOC report is available on-line at: http://mtnhp.org/Reports/MASOC_2009.pdf For plants, a thorough review was conducted of over 100 lichens that were ranked in the past as SOC with virtually no substantiating documentation. With the help of a local lichen specialist and experts across the region, this number was reduced to 34 lichen SOC with information documenting Montana occurrences, as well as basic habitat descriptions for each species and photos for 15 of them. These updates keep NHP information accurate and reliable -- one of the strengths that our users value most.

As previously reported the federal document collection is being revitalized. In fiscal year 2009, LIS added 4,190 federal documents to the catalog. These documents, classed for many years using the federal SuDoc system, were findable only by walk-in patrons. By the end of the 2009 calendar year, the entire collection will be discoverable for the first time ever via the online library catalog. Working with the regional depository librarian from the University of Montana, LIS heavily weeded federal publications outside our natural resource information scope. Furthermore, between 100-125 historic U.S. Geological Survey publications, all 90 years and older, were recently rebound making them once again ready for circulation. During the annual federal selection cycle months of June/July, LIS increased its selection rate to include US House and Senate materials that reference natural resource information. These items are highly relevant to state employees, particularly those in natural resource agencies. However, these items are only otherwise available electronically, through paid databases. For this reason no other library in Helena makes them available. After two years, LIS will review their usage rates to guide future selection.

NRIS and LIS are working to develop a Spatial Data Collection Development Policy that can be integrated with the MSL Collection Development Policy. As an initial step towards achieving this, NRIS is pursuing a full inventory of its spatial data holdings. MSdL is also researching President Obama's Open Government Initiative with specific interest in the overlap between the mission of the Montana State Library and the goals of Data.gov <http://www.data.gov/>. The push for greater transparency in government is pushing us to explore what electronic data the library should be hosting (beyond digital versions of traditional library materials).

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.

The state publications digitization project for FY09 was completed on budget and, thanks to the tireless efforts of LIS staff, ahead of schedule. Over 9,000 legacy publications were digitized. LIS is nearly finished processing the returned print items which are being offered to the Montana Historical Society Research Center under the terms of our existing memorandum of understanding. All items are now viewable at the Internet Archive (<http://archive.org>). Two staff members have worked extensively with OCLC to also make the digital objects accessible from the Montana Memory Project. To better appreciate the variety and number of publications, see the "Subject Guide to Digitized Montana State Publications" included in the literature sampler in this month's library commission meeting materials.

In June the Governor announced the release of Montana's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) website (<http://recovery.mt.gov>) used to report state ARRA spending and to show transparency in government. At the top of this website is an interactive map of the state that anyone can use to see the total amount of reinvestment money going to each Montana county. The map application was launched by NRIS with the help of the Governor's Office, the Base Map Service Center (BMSC) and ESRI. It is hosted and maintained at NRIS with assistance from BMSC.

MSdL is currently migrating to new server hardware that will use new advanced technology to access geospatial data and services. In addition to the inherent benefits of new hardware (under warranty, more robust than previous machines) we will restructure the hardware/software environment to ensure that internal use of applications and data will not impede external users' experience accessing data through our web based tools.

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

In early June, NHP Systems & Services Manager Allan Cox provided training to 9 staff from the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), in the use of our Natural Heritage Tracker and other information resources. USFWS is an important user of NHP

information, with responsibility for species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act. USFWS staff review hundreds of federal agency projects each year for potential impacts on listed species, making NHP data business-critical for the agency. However, USFWS does not currently provide financial support to NHP, as do other major federal agency users such as the Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service. We hope that the recent training session and more active data coordination with USFWS will result in some funding to help with the costs of providing NHP services -- especially needed in light of our state funding cut for the next biennium.

Diane Papineau, NRIS GIS Analyst, attended a meeting of northwest Montana GIS professionals to promote the GIS Portal. As a new member to the board of the Montana Association of Geographic Information Professionals (MAGIP) she is also working to develop a mentoring program for GIS professionals in the state.

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

NRIS hosted a meeting of the NRIS Advisory Committee. NRIS partners and core funding agencies attended. Among the topics discussed were the status of the Montana GIS Portal, NRIS outreach plans, the Spatial Data Collection Development Policy plans, and NRIS coordination with the BMSC to provide assistance to stewards of Montana spatial data infrastructure (MSDI) framework layers. Additionally, NRIS submitted for signature memorandums of understanding (MOU) with all core funding agencies (Dept. of Environmental Quality, Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation). A draft MOU was presented at this meeting for discussion. The decision to once again request signed MOUs from core funders is a reversal of a decision made a few years ago. While the funds received from these agencies are essentially pass through funds which do not require signed contracts, use of MOUs gives us a mechanism for communication with the agencies to emphasize the valuable services they receive from NRIS and NHP.

Evan Hammer, NRIS Manager recently attended the US Geological Survey (USGS) Central Region National Map Partner's Meeting in Ft. Collins, Colorado as a guest of the Montana State Geographic Information Officer (GIO). The meeting included representatives from 15 states that discussed collaborative opportunities within the USGS geospatial program.

A plan developed by NRIS and the BMSC to provide assistance to stewards of Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) framework layers was presented to the Montana Land Information Advisory Council (MLIAC) at their June meeting. The plan reaffirms NRIS as a recognized provider of assistance to stewards of Natural Resource framework layers and does much to clarify the relationship between NRIS and the BMSC which has been the source of much consternation in recent years.

As part of the NRIS role as steward of the Hydrography MSDI Framework Layer and co-steward of the Orthoimagery MSDI Framework Layer NRIS announced the creation of MAGIP Special Interest Groups for Hydrography and Imagery. Initial work group meetings are planned this summer with follow up meetings to occur at the MAGIP fall workshop in Kalispell this October.

Staff of MSdL co-hosted a digital summit and preservation planning meeting attended by libraries around the state that actively create and manage digital content. Attendees shared ideas and needs that will further shape the development of the Montana Memory Project. This meeting also resulted in the formation of two proposals to develop statewide long-term access programs in Montana. One proposal is to grant statewide access to the OCLC Digital Archive product for digital master preservation. The other proposal is to participate in a grant through Bibliographic Center for Research (BCR) which, if funded, will create a Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe (LOCKSS) regional partnership known as the Meta-Archive West. These proposals were presented to the Network Advisory Council at their June 30 meeting.

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.

The Montana State Library and the University of Montana once again negotiated a contract to carry on the work of NHP. Due to financial constraints the negotiated contract amount is slightly less than that of the previous biennium. (The affects of that reduction are discussed under the budget information provided elsewhere). This contract is in final legal review and should be signed before the August Commission meeting.

We are very pleased that Duane Lund, who was seriously injured in a bicycle accident in May, has now returned to work. His skills and abilities as a GIS Analyst and system administrator were greatly missed during his absence, but more importantly staff missed his steady demeanor and kind, funny presence. Welcome back, Duane.