

State Librarian's Report

Prepared for August 18, 2010 Commission Meeting

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Some additional details about the BTOP grant award and project.

On July 2, 2010 the Montana State Library (MSL) received notification of the funding award for our Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) Grant Application which was submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), U.S. Department of Commerce on March 14, 2010 and is entitled: "Enhancing Computing Centers at Montana Public Libraries".

By investing in public libraries, MSL's BTOP project will make sustainable broadband enhancements available to 86% of the Montana population. We will achieve this by increasing average facility broadband speeds at participating libraries to 21 mbps. We will also cut computing center wait times in half by increasing the total number of workstations from 439 to 634 and by increasing library operation hours by 5% overall. Our project will provide improved access to the disabled through a combination of American Disabilities Act (ADA) recommended software, hardware, and furniture, and through minor construction projects aimed at increasing accessibility of computing center facilities. We plan to increase computer literacy by offering a combination of face-to-face and online courses for librarians and patrons. To extend the reach of our project to include citizens living far away from existing computing center locations, MSL plans to build a mobile computer lab in partnership with Missoula Public Library. The mobile computing lab will serve as a model for other large libraries interested in increasing their reach into the most rural communities.

The Montana State Library staff wrote the grant with assistance from Boston-based consultants, CSMG, who were contracted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The entire grant application can be found at: http://msl.mt.gov/BTOP/MSL_FINAL_MT_BTOP_APP031410.pdf

U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will be providing \$1,829,473.00 towards funding the grant.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided \$665,000 in financial support that was used toward NTIA's matching funds requirement. This support includes both a grant of \$590,000 for project activities and consultant assistance in the development of the BTOP application.

MSL, Missoula Public Library, and a few other libraries that have remodeling projects will provide \$202,231 of in-kind matching funds. The bulk of this \$202,231 funding is Missoula Public Library's operating costs for the new mobile lab at approximately \$142,800 and MSL's portion is approximately \$54,000 in personnel time.

The following libraries will all receive a direct benefit from the grant in terms of new computers, additional funding to pay for increased or improved broadband access, minor construction, staffing, training, etc:

NAME OF LIBRARY	CITY
Hearst Free Library	Anaconda
Belt Public Library	Belt
Big Sandy Branch Library	Big Sandy
Carnegie Public Library	Big Timber
Parmly Billings Library/MSU-B College of Technology	Billings
Parmly Billings Library	Billings
Bozeman Public Library	Bozeman

Bridger Public Library	Bridger
Browning Branch Library	Browning
Butte Public Library	Butte
Liberty County Library/Chester, MT	Chester
Bicentennial Library of Colstrip	Colstrip
Conrad Public Library	Conrad
Glacier County Library	Cut Bank
Darby Community Public Library	Darby
Fairfield Public Library	Fairfield
Rosebud County Library	Forsyth
Chouteau County Library	Fort Benton
Geraldine Branch Library	Geraldine
Glasgow City-County Library	Glasgow
Great Falls Public Library	Great Falls
Lewis & Clark Library	Helena
Highwood School and Community Library	Highwood
Preston Hot Springs Town/County Library	Hot Springs
Flathead County Library	Kalispell
Laurel Public Library	Laurel
Lincoln County Public Libraries	Eureka
Lincoln County Public Libraries	Libby
Lincoln County Public Libraries	Troy
Livingston-Park County Public Library	Livingston
Phillips County Library	Malta
Miles City Public Library	Miles City
Missoula Public Library	Missoula
Sheridan County Library	Plentywood
Polson City Library	Polson
Red Lodge Carnegie Library	Red Lodge
Ronan City Library	Ronan
Sidney-Richland County Library	Sidney
Judith Basin County Free Library	Stanford
North Valley Public Library	Stevensville
Broadwater School and Community Library	Townsend
Thompson-Hickman County Library	Virginia City

Exact amounts of benefits to each library are not known at this time because the grant request was built from estimates. For example, the cost of computers when we go out for formal bid to buy them this year and next year may be less or more the estimate prepared for the grant application. The grant award is a final amount so if computers cost less, more computers can be provided using the same monies, but if the cost has gone up then fewer computers will be provided. Estimated profiles are being developed for each of the public libraries which will provide more detailed estimates of what each library can expect to receive.

How were the libraries selected for this grant? Initial interest was gauged by online surveys. Follow ups were made by email, regular mail and phone calls. Reasons libraries opted out included for example bad timing (conflict with library construction projects, a period of significant staff and/or board turnover, current budget uncertainties, etc.) and perceived inability to meet grant deadlines and reporting criteria.

The State Library will hire two full time temporary positions to lead the project. We have been working

on job descriptions for a project director and a compliance officer. These two positions will be on staff for the full three year grant cycle. Additional staffing will be hired part time or via contracts to provide for technology consulting and training.

Our project creates a resource that will empower state and local organizations, allowing them to extend the reach of their services to those in the most need. To ensure this happens effectively, MSL has formed partnerships with organizations across the public sector, private sector, and in local communities to ensure investments in public library computing centers translate into improved wellbeing for Montanans. We have established partnerships with the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA), the Montana Supreme Court, AARP Montana, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) Workforce Services Division, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), and the Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC). Once these partners' contributions and activities are established for the 42 public libraries directly participating in our project, we anticipate that it will be possible to extend many of the benefits brought to our project by these partners to all Montana libraries. Additionally, our project includes MSL becoming a state partner with WebJunction which will provide our 42 participating libraries with an array of online training opportunities that will assist them in reaching our project goals. Because the only cost effective way to make this purchase through the grant is through a statewide partnership in WebJunction, these online trainings will additionally be available to all Montana libraries.

The funding and implementation of this grant will take place over the next three years, with some libraries beginning to receive new computers, etc. this fiscal year and some next fiscal year. The grant award runs from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2013.

We will officially launch the project on October 12-13, 2010 at an event entitled "Connect@ your library", which will be funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This hosted event will bring together the state library agency, program partners, participating libraries, and community leaders to strengthen partnerships that can help successfully launch, implement and sustain the improvements to Internet access and computing centers and information this project will provide to Montanans.

Montana State Library staff has spent the first month of the grant award:

- Getting connected to not one but three federal sites/databases where fiscal transactions and reporting will be accomplished.
- Reviewing and signing grant agreements with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Reading, studying, and learning from the various manuals and handbooks provided such as Federal Reporting Quick Reference Guide, Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Recovery.Gov "Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight" Recipient Reporting Data Model v3.0, and BroadbandUSA Connecting America's Communities Broadband Technology Opportunities Program BTOP Recipient Handbook FY2010.
- Planning and preparing for the Connect @ your library launch.
- Making appropriate contacts with participating libraries and partners to share the good news and to try to answer their questions.
- Writing job descriptions for the Project Director and Compliance Officer.
- Preparing and releasing appropriate and approved media releases.
- Smiling in disbelief – congratulating ourselves, our partners, and the participating libraries as well as helping each other through the panic moments as we prepare for all the work ahead.