

Memo

To: Karen Strege, State Librarian, Montana State Library Commission
From: NRIS management sub-committee of the NRIS Advisory Committee
Date: 12/18/2007
Re: Recommended actions regarding management structure at NRIS

At our first meeting April 17, the sub-committee discussed a variety of issues regarding the current management structure of NRIS. Within those discussions, we came to the unanimous decision that NRIS needs a strong Director, and that the State Library should begin recruiting that position as soon as possible.

At our second meeting, April 20, we reiterated unanimous support for immediate action to begin recruitment for a new NRIS Director. The successful recruitment of this position is even more imperative given the resignation (effective May 12) of Ted Chase, the current GIS Coordinator. We would further recommend the State Library pursue, as aggressively as possible, a salary range commensurate with the duties associated with the Director position, and one that would hopefully draw a group of highly qualified candidates.

We also continued to discuss the issue of NRIS management (specifically the issue of whether the staff structure proposed in the Strategic Plan is too management heavy). After discussion, we arrived at the consensus that it appears that the management proposed in the current version of the Strategic Plan (1 Grade 18 and 2 Grade 17's) appears to be appropriate, but with the vacancy at the Grade 17 level, we would recommend that this position not be filled until a new Director is in place and the issue can be more closely examined. This strategy would have several benefits: 1) it would allow implementation of the new plan to begin and some time to see how it 'shakes out', 2) it would give the new Director an opportunity to provide input and direction into how the Program should be managed, and 3) would give us some time to see how successful the budget proposals are fairing, which will impact management needs in the next biennium.

In summary, we have two recommendations:

- 1) Proceed with the recruitment and hiring of a Director as soon as possible
- 2) Leave the Strategic Plan management structure in place, with the caveat that the second Grade 17 position be filled only after the new Director is in place, and the management issues are reexamined.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Johnson, State Library Commission Chair
Bonnie Lovelace, NRIS Advisory Committee Chair
Janet Hess-Herbert, NRIS Advisory Committee Member
Sue Crispin, Director, Natural Heritage Program
Duane Anderson, Water Information System Coordinator, NRIS
Gerry Daumiller, NRIS Staff
Dave Highness, NRIS Staff