

## Natural Resource Information System

July 14 – Sep 29, 2001

### **Goal 1: Acquire, integrate, maintain and ensure accuracy of spatial and natural resource data and information needed for managing Montana's natural resources and environment.**

Added a new 'enhanced' land ownership coverages to the NRIS Thematic mapper. This data layer, which is maintained by the Heritage program, provides more detailed land ownership information than earlier layers and included information about conservation easements and special designations in addition to ownership.

NRIS developed and deployed a special Fire Information Resource Page to improve GIS professionals' access to GIS data that NRIS maintains that can be used for fire response purposes. The page can be viewed at <http://nris.state.mt.us/fire>.

Added new data themes from the Census 2000 data including high school and elementary school district boundaries, Census blocks with housing unit data, and Census 'designated and incorporated places'.

Built and deployed on the web a new statewide ownership map in PDF format showing ownership and township data. Available at <http://nris.state.mt.us/nsdi/nris/ab105/owners.pdf>.

Updated the USGS Geographic Names Information System GIS coverage.

The Heritage Program posted [The Inventory of Important Biological Resources for the Upper Yellowstone River Watershed](#) on the NRIS/Heritage web site as a PDF file.

### **Goal 2: Effectively disseminate natural resource data and information, ensuring broad accessibility, utilizing current technologies, and maintaining a strong emphasis on customer service.**

Distributed the 2001 Montana Plant Species of Concern report, an annual update published by Heritage with input from resource specialist around the state. It is posted on the NRIS Website at <http://nhp.nris.state.mt.us/plants/index.html>.

Continued work on DNRC water right data access system.

Continued significant enhancements to FWP Montana River's Information System.

Continued to enhance the NRIS thematic mapper with additional coverages and features.

The water and GIS web sites were very busy as usual during the period. The NRIS web pages (Water and GIS) took a combined load of nearly 1,292,000 hits during this period.

Continued to add to and enhance the new Montana Drought 2001 web page. Staff created this page for the statewide Drought Monitoring Committee. The page has been well received and heavily used.

Answered numerous mediated data requests.

**Goal 3: Ensure that NRIS products, services, and expertise are broadly known, effectively used, and highly regarded by those who require natural resource information and spatially referenced data.**

Attended and presented at monthly Drought Monitoring Committee meetings.

Staff attended the quarterly ITWG meeting in Kalispell.

Continued working with library and planning faculty at MSU to plan and conduct an outcome-based evaluation of NRIS' web services and resources. This assessment is in accordance with the requirements of our grant from IMLS to serve GIS data and tools over the web.

Secured a temporary employee, Anastasia Burton, to begin specific work on NRIS outreach products and plans.

**Goal 4: Establish, maintain and continually improve the program structure, resource(s), staff and operation required to successfully implement NRIS mission, vision and goals.**

A planning meeting is scheduled for September 27, during which the State Librarian will facilitate the development of a strategic plan that integrates with the plans developed for all other library departments. The existing plan, now approaching two years old, will be made current and modified to reflect changes at NRIS over the past two years.

**Goal 5: Secure adequate and stable funding to successfully accomplish NRIS' mission and goals.**

Proposed Interagency Agreements were provided to the five source agencies to facilitate the transfer of funding mandated by the legislature to support NRIS core services. Three are now signed by both parties; we are still awaiting word from DEQ and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education as to their approval of the agreement.

Fourteen additional contracts with state and federal agencies and the IMLS grant round out the funding for this fiscal year. Funding appears to be adequate to support our full staff load, and workload remains high. Additional possible contracts are in the discussion phase.

Heritage secured end-of-FY agreements with FWP Department for continued support of stewardship mapping and interagency data coordination/development for animal species of concern.