

Natural Resource Information System (NRIS)

July 27, 2004 – September 22, 2004

Goal 1: To fulfill its mandate to be the source for natural resource information in Montana, NRIS acquires, integrates, maintains, and documents natural resource data and information needed for understanding, managing and utilizing Montana's natural resources, and environment.

Updated the Cadastral/CAMA data in both August and September.

Continued to play an active role to encourage and support the development and refinement of priority datasets, serving on most of the Montana Geographic Information Council (MGIC) Implementation Teams (I-Teams) and chairing four.

Began test processing for new high resolution imagery being collected this year as part of a Homeland Security grant administered by Department of Administration. Through this grant, Positive Systems, a Montana firm specializing in collecting and processing aerial imagery, is collecting high resolution photography covering Montana's urban areas. This imagery will be post-processed, housed, and made available through the MSdL/NRIS clearinghouse.

Obtained and began integrating large datasets on prairie dogs and sage grouse into the Natural Heritage database; made progress on entering and quality-controlling backlogged Heritage data and began the process of hiring two short-term Biological Information Specialists to assist in entering substantial new information and upgrading existing data to the new Biotics database.

Made changes to the "EO Portal" web application (demonstrated at previous Commission Meeting) to upgrade/expand features for users and to resolve timeout problems from NRIS server migrations. The EO Portal provides on-line access to detailed species of concern data to certain users.

Heritage staff completed data collection phase of several projects focused on a variety of species and habitats of high importance to agency partners.

Goal 2: A broad range of user groups can easily locate data in effective formats. Users find that this information is augmented with related datasets to increase its value. Potential NRIS users are well informed of information available through the clearinghouse and trained in the use of NRIS tools. Staff assistance is available when needed to assist users in locating and utilizing data.

Web Use and Requests: Jul 2004 – Aug 2004

	Jul-Aug FY04	Jul-Aug FY05	% Change
Mediated Data Requests			
Total Active Users*	1205	1117	-7.9%
NRIS State Requests	203	212	4.4%
NHP Requests	130	67	-48.5%
Web Services			
NRIS State			
Static Page Views	461,141	435,457	-5.9%
Dynamic Page Views	407,638	539,216	24.4%
GIS Files Downloaded	50,896	77,561	34.4%
Visitor Sessions	103,830	132,493	21.6%
NHP			
Static Page Views	31,791	36,345	12.5%

Dynamic Page Views	24,114	43,897	45.1%
Visitor Sessions	18,970	25,599	25.9%

* An active user is defined as one who has made a request within two years prior to the last month shown in the column heading.

Services:

Continued updates and maintenance of the MT drought monitoring page, attended monthly drought monitoring meetings.

Completed a cooperative project with Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (FWP) to produce new electronic private and public land ownership map resources for the State of Montana. Two new maps are available, one highlighting private land ownership and the other highlighting public land ownership. (<http://nris.state.mt.us/gis/ownmaps.asp>) Map ownership information is current as of July 2004, and will be updated on an annual basis.

The Natural Heritage web site community ecology section was updated to conform to the NHP web standard and to add additional information on ecological sections in Montana. A new section was also added to present the Stewardship land management information.

Outreach:

Staff met with National Weather Service (NWS) personnel to discuss data sharing opportunities and demonstrate NRIS products to NWS.

Natural Heritage staff met with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFS) staff to present web and mediated services available for their use.

Hosted a seminar on the National Hydrography Dataset conducted by US Geographic Services personnel.

Conducted two hour training session for the State Emergency Response Commission, Tribal Emergency Response Commission, and Local Emergency Planning Commission (SERC / TERC / LEPC) meeting in Polson.

Goal 3: In order to fulfill its mandate as described under Issues 1 and 2, NRIS secures adequate and stable funding.

NHP worked with Bureau of Land Management and USFS on end-of-year project agreements that will fund several data development projects.

Personnel Notes:

Karen Walker joined the NRIS-Heritage Program staff as Biological Data Systems Coordinator -- one of the core IT positions for Heritage, responsible for overall management of the spatial and tabular databases that comprise Biotics.

Kristina Gurrieri, NRIS GIS analyst, announced her intention to resign her position effective mid-October. Her husband has taken a position in Utah.

Aaron Mook, MSL Systems Administrator, announced his intention to resign his position effective mid-October. Aaron has taken a position with the Montana State Fund.