

DP 4 Library Courier/Delivery Service Pilot – OTO

Definition

“A dependable, reliable and predictable delivery service that, with a desired level of frequency and security, physically moves library materials from one library to another or from a library to a library patron.”

Need

The most recent figures collected show that in 2007, over 110,000 individual items moved between Montana libraries, compared to 36,000 in 1990.

The cost per item of moving materials via a statewide courier service would be considerably less than the per item cost via the U.S. mail service. Surrounding states that have moved to a library courier system have seen per item cost drop from \$2.00-\$3.00/item to between .25 to .60/item.

How It Works

The proposed routes for a Montana library courier system include drop sites (distribution hubs). Participating local libraries served by these drop sites will independently determine the frequency and the method of delivery between them and their assigned drop sites.¹

Items can be checked out and returned at any library most convenient for the user. The delivery and return of the item is reliable, often faster than traditional mail, and more cost effective for both libraries involved.

Benefits

A courier system will improve library resource sharing across the state and enhance the Montana patron's library experience. Libraries choose to participate and patrons will get more for less.

A courier service will lower the overall costs of resource sharing among libraries. Libraries lacking sufficient budgets to adequately build their local collections will benefit substantially from increased sharing of materials, giving their users a substantially larger pool of resources.

Cost

The \$200,000 per year cost is based on current and anticipated demand, population served, delivery alternatives, and information obtained from research of library courier systems operating in other states.

Sustainability

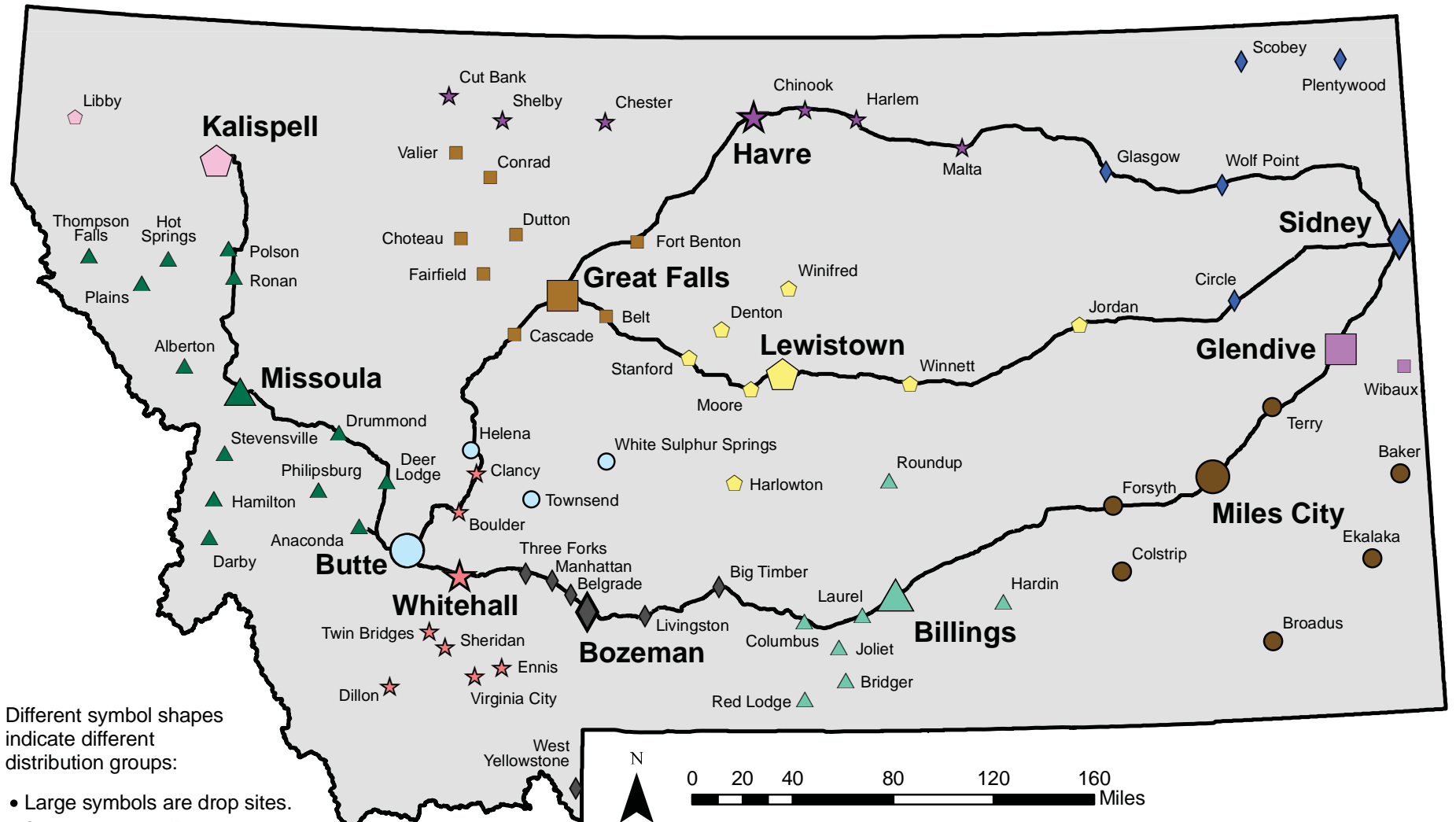
The sustainability of a courier system beyond the pilot period is predicted to be about 50% of the initial effort. With the cooperation of already identified courier-assisted libraries, this pilot will demonstrate the potential sustainability of an expanded library materials courier/delivery service capable of helping many more libraries than are currently benefiting from local courier access.

Montana libraries of all types currently participate in several statewide projects that are sustained by successful, shared cost formulas. A primary goal of the courier pilot would be to create a similar cost structure, with the aim of making courier services affordable to any library desiring those services.

¹ A statewide courier pilot in Montana will by necessity include some amount of movement of materials by mail.

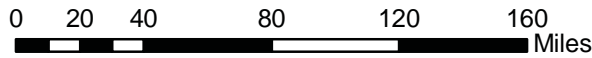
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Libraries with Possible Drop Sites and Courier Routes*



Different symbol shapes indicate different distribution groups:

- Large symbols are drop sites.
- Small symbols of the same shape are libraries served by that drop site.



A proposed pilot by  Montana State Library

* Library distribution routes determined by libraries and contractors