

# Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure Framework Data Selection Criteria

**Background:** *The Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure or “MSDI”* is defined as the technology, policies, standards, and human resources necessary to acquire, process, store, distribute, and improve the utilization of geospatial data in Montana.

*A Montana Framework Data Layer* is a State recognized, commonly needed and digitally formatted representation of land information features, natural and cultural that are coordinated, developed, integrated, maintained, and distributed through a community based effort over the geographic area of Montana and are, in the determination of the Montana Land Information Advisory Council and the Geographic Information Officer, significant to a broad variety of users within Montana and the Nation.

The Montana Framework Data can and does include data themes identified in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure and where collaborative opportunities exist, presents an ability to support framework data for the nation.

The MSDI Framework Data selection process should consider these definitions within the context of the defined requirements, qualifiers and criteria.

In order to be considered for inclusion as a MSDI Framework Data layer, data must meet all three (3) Mandatory Requirements. In addition the proposed theme must also qualify under the Automatic Qualifiers section <or> meet the minimum point criteria.

**Theme Name:** Geographic Names

**Sponsor (Name(s) and Agency(s):** Gerry Daumiller, Natural Resource Information System  
Lance Clampitt, U.S. Geological Survey

**Theme Summary:** The Federal Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) and the Montana Names database are feature-based geographic databases containing information about physical and cultural geographic features. Geographic Names contain three primary attributes: the official feature name, a unique feature ID, and the official geographic point location of that feature. Geographic Names are important because without a database of geographic names, a map is limited as to its usefulness. If geographically referenced names are not part of a map or mapping application you would not be able to search, query, or identify a feature by its name. In addition, numerous other geographic features such as structures points and hydrography features are currently being integrated with geographic names making names a necessary component of all geospatial information.

The Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) is the Federal and national standard for geographic nomenclature. The U.S. Geological Survey developed the GNIS in support of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as the official repository of domestic geographic names data, the official vehicle for geographic names use by all departments of the Federal Government, and the source for applying geographic names to Federal electronic and printed products.

The Montana Names Database is a replication of the Federal GNIS populated within an expanded data model and with data and attribute enhancements specific to Montana.

### **Mandatory Requirements**

- Is the layer based on state-wide collection and maintenance? and
- Is the layer considered the state recommendation or source for a given theme? and
- Does the layer have a documented “best practice” or standard?

Yes – proceed to automatic qualifiers or criteria

No – the theme cannot be considered as an MSDI theme

**Automatic Qualifiers:** A digitally formatted land information theme automatically qualifies for recommendation if it meets the mandatory requirements listed above and meets one or more of the following qualifiers:

1. an existing NSDI Framework layer  
(Documented NSDI layers include: Elevation, Hydrography, Geodetic Control, Cadastral, Transportation, Governmental Units, and Orthoimagery) <or>
  2. a represented layer on a official State Base Map or U.S. Geological Survey topographic map <or>
  3. a mandated geospatial layer by state law
- Is the layer an existing NSDI Framework layer; part of a standard USGS 1:24,000 scale topographic map or official State Base Map; or mandated geospatial layer by state law?

Yes – Layer may be proposed as an MSDI theme. Please submit to the Montana Geographic Information Office.

No – Layer may still be proposed as a MSDI layer if it meets the minimum criteria point total below.

**Criteria:** If the layer meets the mandatory requirement above but none of the automatic qualifiers it may still qualify as a proposed Framework Data layer by meeting the minimum 24 criteria points established below. \* Please document answers on summary page.

A.  Is the layer a critical component in one or more core state business processes or applications?

- Part of 1 business process or application [2 points]
- Part of 2-4 business processes or applications [5 points]
- Part of 4 or more business processes or applications [10 points]

\*List each core business process or application

B.  Does the theme have other state/federal stakeholders

- 1 other stakeholder [2 points]
- 2-4 stakeholders [5 points]
- 4 or more stakeholders [10 points]

\*List stakeholders and theme

C.  Are MSDI Framework Data layers dependent on <or> does this layer underpin other MSDI layers? Which layers? Explain. [5 points]

D.  Does the layer provide a benefit to the public? List benefits. [5 points]  
What segments of the 'public' benefit most? Why?

E.  Is the theme part of the state Land Information Plan? Explain [5 points]

F.  Is the theme currently maintained by a state or federal agency? [5 points]  
Which agency?

G.  Does the layer have a state sponsor/steward? Who? [5 points]

Criteria Point Total: [ 35 ]

# Summary Page

Add supporting documentation here:

A. Geographic Names are a primary attribute used in geospatial search engines. Imagine trying to locate a street name, mountain ridge or small town using Google Map, Microsoft Virtual Earth, MapQuest, Expedia, or the Montana GIS Portal without named geographic features. Numerous applications and business services both public and private rely on a maintained set of accurate geographic names. Known State business processes and application include: Montana Topofinder application – State Library; Montana Wildland Fire Base Map – National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis, University of Montana; National Hydrography Dataset – Montana State Library.

B. Other State and Federal Stakeholders include: MTDOA-Public Safety Services Bureau; MT State Library-NRIS, MTDOA-BMSC, MT-DEQ, MT-DNRC, MTFWP, UM-NCLFA, USFS, USGS, BLM, Library of Congress; Department of Homeland Security; U.S. Postal Service; Department of Defense; Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Census; Others....

C. Geographic Names has been integrated into and many existing MSDI / NSDI layers are dependent upon geographic names. These include transportation and addressing, structures, hydrologic units, and hydrology.

D. Benefit to the public. Most of these benefits have been described in sections A and B above. Specifically the geo-locational value of geographic names supports the public sector through emergency response, navigation, and informational applications.

E. No

F. The Federal Geographic names Information System is maintained by the U.S. Geological Survey with stewardship assistance support being provided by numerous local, state and Federal partners. The state geographic names database is informally being maintained cooperatively by the MT-BMSC and the University of Montana - National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis. The State Names Advisor sets within the MT-State Library and provides guidance to both the state Geographic Names as well as the Federal Board on Geographic Names.

G. Informally the University of Montana - National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis, MT-BMSC and MT-NRIS provide stewardship over this layer. Formal MSDI recognition as well as assigned stewardship responsibility is sought through this proposal.

# MSDI Framework Data Decision Process

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