

Role of the Montana State Library Commission

The role of the State Library Commission is to set forth policies and funding priorities that empower the State Library to meet its mission and statutory obligations and to advocate for the State Library and the Montana library and information communities whenever possible.

About the Montana State Library

The Montana State Library is committed to strengthening libraries and information services for all Montanans through leadership, advocacy, and service. Our **Digital Library Division** supports, local government, state and federal employees, the natural resource community and the general public. It provides vast quantities of unique information, such as that created by state government, as well as natural resource and geospatial data about Montana, that are accessible with the click of a mouse. This kind of ready access saves people, state and federal agencies, and business owners incredible amounts of time and money.

Access to information is the foundation of good government and government accountability; an informed citizenry; a strong business community; and a progressive educational foundation. Without the Montana State Library and its many services to our citizens, businesses, and government employees, the state of Montana would lack in information resources.

Permanent Public Access to State Government Information: MSL is a national leader in providing free permanent public access to state government information via our digital repository and web archive. Our collection of current and historic state publications supports Article II, Section 9 of the Constitution of Montana concerning the public's right to know.

Digitization Leader: MSL is halfway through a project to digitize its entire collection of 37,000 historic print state publications. Over 19,236 print state publications totaling 1,518,007 pages as of August 28, 2013 are now freely available online through the Internet Archive.

Natural Resources and Geographic Information: Geographic Information and the Montana Natural Heritage Program use online resources to provide immediate access to high quality information about Montana's natural resources including information about Montana's land, rivers and streams, and species and ecological diversity. Using geographic information systems (GIS) this information is available in mapped formats to facilitate spatial analysis and inquiry. The State Library is increasingly using GIS to inform library services and is encouraging Montana libraries to do the same.

Montana Natural Heritage Program: The Montana Natural Heritage Program is the state's source for reliable, objective information and expertise to support stewardship of our native species and habitats, emphasizing those of conservation concern. It is a program of the Montana State Library and is operated as a special program under the Office of the Vice President for Research and Development at the University of Montana, Missoula. The Natural Heritage Program is part of NatureServe--a network of over 80 similar programs in states, provinces and nations throughout the Western Hemisphere, bringing to Montana the "big picture" information on the true status of species and habitats.

Services Provided through Your Montana State Library

Our **Statewide Library Resources Division** supports all Montana citizens through 1) the consulting and training we provide to community libraries; 2) our statewide purchases for content and collaborative resources that ensure that all libraries can offer their patrons up-to-the-minute accurate information on everything from health care to business management and industry-leading services; 3) our innovative programs that get informational materials into Montanans' hands more quickly and efficiently; and 4) our provision of reading materials for those who would not be able to read otherwise.

OCLC Group Services provide statewide cataloging and Interlibrary Loan tools to enrolled Montana libraries and the Montana Shared Catalog.

Montana Memory Project is a collection of digital collections and items relating to Montana's cultural heritage. Thirty-four Montana libraries, museums, archives, and cultural institutions added or are in the process of adding materials to this collection. As of August 30, the MMP includes 504,256 items on the MMP from 51 active collections 374,642 items, an increase of nearly 130,000 items since January. (Jennifer Birnel, MMP Director)

MSC New Libraries: The Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) is a library consortium that shares knowledge, skills, and resources among its membership as well as a shared library catalog. Created in 2002 with the participation and financial commitment from 17 initial, multi-type libraries, the MSC now includes over 165 Montana libraries. The Montana State Library hosts the computer systems that run the MSC and provides office space for the MSC administration staff. (Ken Adams, MSC Administrator)

MontanaLibrary2Go: This subscription service offers a collection of more than 14,000 downloadable audio and E-book titles to patrons of participating libraries. Titles are available for download on MP3 players, iPods, iPads, Kindles and other playing and reading devices. Eighty-four public, academic, and special libraries, representing 467,000 patrons, currently participate in this project, with new libraries added throughout the year.

Literacy Projects: These include Children's Services, such as the very popular statewide Summer Reading Program and the Early Learning Statewide Initiative (Ready 2 Read and Ready 2 Read Goes Wild). Sixty-five public and tribal libraries participated in the Ready2Read program in FY12. Participating libraries receive extensive training on early childhood development and learn how to effectively share that information with parents and caregivers. Libraries also received high-quality early childhood materials like books and toys to help Montana's public libraries realize their potential as community hubs for healthy child and family development by affording all parents of young children access to age appropriate reading materials and a 21st Century learning environment that will reap rewards for society far into the future.

Montana Talking Book Library: MTBL ensures that all qualified Montana residents who, because of a disability, are not able to use standard print resources, have free and easy access to reading materials. Their collection includes a wide range of materials in a variety of formats that are appropriate and available for all ages and reading levels.

Marketing: The Montana State Library provides a range of marketing materials for Montana libraries. These include statewide events like Montana Library Week that raise awareness of Montana's libraries, and contests, such as the "Treasure Hunt for the Treasure State", an online scavenger hunt that promotes use of the online databases. Additionally, many tools are created that promote library programs and services (for example, television and radio ads, bookmarks, posters, flash drives, brochures, and more). These materials are provided to Montana libraries either through statewide purchases of media time, printing materials for libraries to provide to their patrons or through download of a range of professionally designed and written marketing materials.

Statewide Consulting: The Montana State Library's consultants travel throughout Montana and meet one-on-one with librarians and library trustees across the state, assisting with everything from training and technology to applying Montana library law and fundraising. In the last fiscal year, MSL's consultants traveled over 45,000 miles, made over 5,000 contacts and completed over 200 visits with Montana's library community.

Training Coordinator: The Montana State Library's Training Coordinator provides training for MT librarians on a wide variety of topics that enable them to better serve their communities and help their patrons become more information literate. She also provides information and activities that promote individual and organizational learning, and strengthens the library as a learning center in the community.

Statewide EBSCO databases: the cost of these subscriptions is covered through an allocation from the Montana Legislature. These statewide databases offer all Montana library patrons access to hundreds of databases and thousands of full text articles in the areas of health information, business and career resources, scientific, medical, legal and environmental research, automotive repair and many other areas. Patrons of 764 libraries had free access to statewide periodical databases. In the last fiscal year Montanans searched the databases almost 534,000 times and used the live tutoring and skill center resources of Homework Montana in nearly 12,000 sessions.

Use of Montana libraries:

In 2012, 4,678,960 people visited public libraries in Montana; 7,535,351 (up from 6,244,116 in 2009) items circulated, which is 7.58 items per capita. Montana libraries also offered 14,117 programs for all ages. The total number of public services hours for public libraries was 173,534.