

Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP)
MSL Commission Report
December 2014

Goal One – Content - Montana State Library (MSL) acquires and manages relevant quality content that meets the needs of Montana library partners and patrons.

- The Wetland and Riparian Mapping Center of the MTNHP has updated its status map, which can be found at http://mtnhp.org/nwi/images/wetland_status.jpg. To date, over 2.7 million acres of wetlands and riparian areas have been mapped by the center.
- Karen Newlon, MTNHP Ecologist/Project Manager, and Jamul Hahn, MTNHP Wetland Mapping Coordinator, completed a major update of the MSDI Wetland and Riparian Framework. It will be available for download from the web and accessible via a live map service.
- MTNHP Information staff Completed Species Occurrence (SO) updates for vertebrate species. 120 species were updated for a total of over 11,000 new SO's. Species Occurrences are used every day in providing reports for documented species occurrences as part of project reviews.
- MTNHP Information staff updated conservation easement county summaries, and continued working with GeoInfo staff to collaborate on data management and dissemination of all Land Management GIS data layers

Goal Three – Training - MSL provides appropriate trainings and training resources so that the best use can be made of the resources offered.

- Allan Cox (Lead Program Manager) and Karen Coleman (Biological Data Systems Coordinator) provided a day long training to the GIS and environmental program staff at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls on November 7th. The workshop included an overview of MTNHP data and services and training on how to find and use information through MTNHP web apps.

Goal Four – Consultation and Leadership - MSL provides consultation and leadership to enable users to set and reach their goals.

- MTNHP will be hosting its annual Partners Meeting December 3rd in Helena. We will report on the results of the meeting in the next Commission report.
- Allan Cox (Lead Program Manager) and Bryce Maxell (Senior Zoologist) attended the meetings of the Montana Forest Council and the Montana Wood Products Association Resource Committee meetings in Missoula on November 13th. They presented information on the program services and on the bat monitoring project

MTNHP is conducting.

- Andrea Pipp (MTNHP Program Botanist) provided verification of a federally-listed plant (*Spiranthes diluvialis*), information to various agencies on several plant species of concern, and review on the Montana Wetland Council's Draft Strategy for Aquatic Invasive Species, and is populating the Plant Field Guide with photographs.
- Andrea Pipp (MTNHP Program Botanist) participated in the Friends of the University of Montana herbarium board meeting and the Northwest Scientific Association board meeting.

Goal Five – Collaboration - MSL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its users.

- MTNHP Senior Ecologist Linda Vance and Aquatic Ecologist Dave Stagliano are working with scientists from state and federal agencies, as well as the private sector, to identify critical hydrologic thresholds for wetlands in the Prairie Pothole Region of northeastern Montana. Determination of these thresholds is a key piece of information for wildlife managers, especially waterfowl managers.
- Andrea Pipp (MTNHP Program Botanist) met with BLM, USFS, and USFWS staff. Items discussed during the meetings included the revised BLM Sensitive plant list, potential BLM plant training project, the revised USFS process for determining Sensitive plants, providing MTNHP with USFS data, and current projects with each of these agencies.

Goal Six – Sustainable Success - MSL is efficient and effective (measured against user outcomes), and is engaged in fulfilling its mission.

- Andrea Pipp of Helena began work as the MTNHP Program Botanist on October 6th. Andrea has a career in biology spanning 28 years. She has an MS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana with an emphasis on plant and lichen ecology. She has extensive experience in the private sector and has also worked for the USFS and BLM.
- MTNHP received a National Conservation Innovation Grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to facilitate the conservation and management of several bird species of concern (SOC) by linking habitat information provided by Ecological Site Descriptions with the habitat requirements of these species.
- MTNHP received the renewal of its annual service agreement with the Montana Department of Transportation. The agreement includes financial support (\$10,000) for the program and provides direct GIS access to the MTNHP Species Occurrence database for the MDT environmental planning staff.