

## Study questions answered

Questions	Comments
<p><b>Funding &amp; Capacity</b> Financial analysis of program income generated vs. additional cost</p>	
<p>What additional staff capacity is necessary to successfully administer the program?</p>	<p>In order to successfully administer the program, MSL plans to hire a budget analyst/accountant, and human resources staff person, and a contracts manager. These positions would serve the needs of all of MSL.</p>
<p>Forecast for indirect dollar availability to program?</p>	<p>The completed financial analysis demonstrates that, based on a 3 year average, indirect rates would be remain largely the same and be used to fund overhead costs and staff at essentially the same level. MSL is committed to investing those dollars in the program.</p>
<p>What is typical indirect rate that MSL charges?</p>	<p>MSL does not have a negotiated indirect rate. It takes several years to demonstrate a history of indirect need. MSL will negotiate an indirect rate when that history can be proven. The completed financial analysis demonstrates that, based on a 3 year average, indirect rates would be remain largely the same</p>
<p>How can we best replicate the reserve/SPABA account?</p>	<p>MSL would evaluate how best to set up a special revenue account to meet the intent of the SPABA account.</p>
<p>What is the definition of “core services”?</p>	<p>All services provided by the program are important to the program's mission of providing reliable information and expertise to support stewardship of our native species and habitats, emphasizing those of conservation concern. Core Services are those paid for by the core contract as well as supplemental core funding provided by partners. These funds currently support portions of the following positions: Program Coordinator, Finance and Grants Administrator, Biological Data Systems Coordinator, Biologist/Biological Data Analyst, Biologist/Information Specialist, Web Projects Manager, Botany Program Manager, Senior Zoologist, Senior Ecologist, Spatial Analysis Lab Director. In any kind of administrative change, these priorities would continue to be funded through the MSL budget, rather than a contract.</p>
<p>Why can't the core contract get present law adjusted?</p>	<p>Operations budgets are not included in the existing legislative process by default.</p>

## Study questions answered

How have MSL FTEs fluctuated in the past 10 years?	MSL laid off staff due to budget cuts in 2017. Funding levels for FTE have been restored and staff is currently recruiting to fill vacant positions. Prior to the cuts MSL's permanent staff remained steady at approximately 30 FTE. Actual number of staff reflects project and funding priorities.
How can we ensure that positions won't be lost the way they were during FY18-19 budget cut?	We can't promise anything, but there is no guarantee that remaining a contractor will protect positions either. To the extent possible, MSL would continue to seek project dollars for work priorities to keep positions intact. Many MSL staff are currently funded through multiple funding streams including general fund and grants or contracts from state, federal and private partners. Additionally, MSL can enter into agreements where MSL funds contract positions in other agencies.
Ability to cooperatively fund positions?	
How would required project match be handled?	The MSL Central Services Office monitors match requirements for MSL agreements. Any program agreements would be handled in the same manner. Ultimately the MSL Commission, but that is no different than the current model. Budgeting for the program will occur within the larger agency budget as informed by Bryce and the MSL Leadership team.
Who would decide MTNHP budget allocations?	
How was program able to get regular budget increases from 1994 to 2002; why is that route not seen as viable at this point?	The nature of public funding has changed dramatically over the last two decades and is affecting all state government services.
Potential loss of \$50,000 UM contribution to supplemental core?	Any loss of current income will be considered in the overall financial analysis of a decision.
	MSL sets an annual budget based on legislative appropriation. New appropriation is added as new grants and contracts are received. Leads communicate regularly with Jennie, Evan, and Malissa about the status of their budget and any changes that are necessary. Leads also receive monthly budget reports. The Commission receives quarterly financial reports. This year's budget is linked here:
What is the budgeting timeline and process (e.g., quarterly, monthly...)?	<a href="http://ftp.aspen.msl.mt.gov/EventResources/20190826090010_14747.pdf">http://ftp.aspen.msl.mt.gov/EventResources/20190826090010_14747.pdf</a>

## Study questions answered

What MOUs need to be updated?/How would current individual grants transfer?

MSL is developing a timeline to transfer contracts and agreements over an 18 month period. Because the languages of the agreements vary they would be reviewed and handled on a case by case basis. In general we would expect any new funding to run through MSL instead of UM unless there are special circumstances. For example, in the case of agreements with the Spatial Analysis Lab, we would want collaborations on campus to be maximized so agreements that are collaborations with University faculty or researchers or those that are limited to educational institutions and collaborations between educational institutions could be run through UM if appropriate.

### Human Resources

How do MTNHP staff salaries compare to current state pay ranges?

Exact wages would be determined using the appropriate position classification and the state broadband pay ranges. Based on a rough comparison, it appears that most current employees' salaries are comparable to state salaries or a little lower than equivalent state salaries.

Will pay increases be needed to the point that it hinders project work?

We will evaluate salaries based on position classification and the MSL Broadband pay plan policy requirements.

What will the recruitment process look like to hire MTNHP staff?

Staff will have to apply for positions with MSL. We have evaluated options to streamline the process. For example employees may be able to submit emails of interest in lieu of applications.

Will employee benefits changes have a negative impact on MTNHP Staff

There are some differences in benefits that may negatively impact some staff depending on individual circumstances. There are also positive benefits to staff, most notably the addition of longevity pay increases.

Are there options to mitigate any potential negative impacts to MTNHP employee benefits

In most cases, no.

Impacts of comp time to science and field staff?

MSL staff need to better understand the accumulation of comp time by staff to determine how this need might change the current comp time policy. In general, MSL understands the need to accrue comp time to complete work priorities but also needs to minimize agency liability and encourages staff to practice good work/life balance through enforcement of a comp time policy

## Study questions answered

What is the vision for integration with existing MSL staff?	With the exception of the business office, no change to organizational structure of MTNHP are being proposed as part of this change but we do expect that this change will provide opportunities for greater interaction
Will anyone lose pay with a transfer of administration?	No
Concerns on integration and answering to people we aren't used to.	With the exception of the business office, no change to organizational structure of MTNHP are being proposed as part of this change but we do expect that this will provide opportunities for greater interaction
Can staff work remotely (e.g., Bozeman)?	Yes
How quickly can we hire someone?	There are options to get people on board rapidly. Postings for permanent positions require five days notification. Staff can be hired more quickly through temp agencies.
Can we give merit-based raises or bonuses?	Merit-based pay is allowed under the current MSL Broadband Pay Plan policy.
Can we give raises for reasons of retention?	Retention pay is allowed under the current MSL Broadband Pay Plan policy. We will evaluate opportunities to maintain a contract with UM for the operation of the Spatial Analysis Lab; this may create opportunities to maintain access to the university hiring pool. MSL will also evaluate how other state agencies attract field workers. While not on the same scale as MTNHP, MSL does regularly hire student interns (paid and unpaid) and this relationship has been very beneficial to MSL, the schools, and in many cases, state agencies that have later hired the employees. We are very interested in finding ways to maintain this valuable connection to UM and other colleges and universities in MT
Loss of University hiring pool?	Jobs will be posted via the state job site and any other appropriate recruitment sites including the University.
How and where can job announcements be posted?	
Is a Wednesday through Wednesday 8 x 10 hour field stint doable?	Tuesday through Tuesday would work better with state pay periods but we can make this work. Staff would accrue additional comp time depending on how the days worked align with the Saturday through Friday state pay period.

## Study questions answered

What is hiring process for permanent & temporary?	The State may hire permanent, contract, temporary, seasonal, and student interns. Information about these types of positions is available online at: <a href="http://hr.mt.gov/Portals/78/newdocs/guidesandforms/Employee_Definition_Guide_April_2017.pdf">http://hr.mt.gov/Portals/78/newdocs/guidesandforms/Employee_Definition_Guide_April_2017.pdf</a> . MSL will provide training to MTNHP staff on the human resources policies of the State including the hiring process.
Comp time for summer field assistants; does camping or travel time qualify for comp time?	Much like the State travel policy, employees will be in work status while traveling to field sites and while conducting field work. Employees will not be in work status while in camp unless they are performing work tasks. Certain Governors require the Gov Office to sign off on out of state travel, but that is rare. Staff will follow the state travel policy. The only restrictions regarding lodging are cost.
Travel restrictions out of state (Governor, AirBnB)?	
<b>Spatial Analysis Lab Operation</b> Can State Library employees work out of the Spatial Analysis Lab; if not it presents barriers to current workflow?	What are the perceived barriers? We are evaluating opportunities to maintain a contract with UM for the operation of the Spatial Analysis Lab that could include both MSL and UM employees working from the Lab.
Some staff at the Spatial Analysis Lab have worked on projects managed by both the Spatial Analysis Lab Director and the Senior Ecologist; could that continue and how?	Yes, we anticipate that core product agreements would be managed by MSL to fund staff in Helena and at the SAL. The details of such arrangements will be detailed in a Memorandum of Agreement with the University.
Spatial Analysis Lab Director needs to stay a Research Faculty in order to be eligible to apply for higher education grants and leverage the position to its intended and full potential in meeting MTNHP's programmatic goals! How do we maintain present-law adjusted support of this position?	MSL agrees that this is an important element of the relationship with the University and will negotiate an agreement that maintains the status of the SAL Director.
Indirect rate charged to Spatial Analysis Lab projects?	This rate would be negotiated with the University
Would the Spatial Analysis Lab be more vulnerable to losing space on campus?	This need would be negotiated with the University

## Study questions answered

### Operational

How would MTNHP and MSL staff integrate (e.g., desktop support, requests, websites)?

With the exception of the business office, the only thing the org change would impact is IT support, but MSL already treats MTNHP the same as other staff, so no real change expected there. Requests and website would not be addressed directly as part of this change, but we will work together to address these items as a single agency when time comes to address these. That would likely happen even with a contract in place.

Barriers to seamless Helena-Missoula work environment?

We currently have staff across the state as does MTNHP. A change in administration would have no impact.

Software license costs (ESRI, Java, etc.)?

There will be some up front costs for MSL but these costs would ultimately be built into the MSL budget

Computer purchases?

MTNHP equipment would become part of the overall MSL IT planning process  
Like MSL remote staff, MTNHP remote staff would have access to all MSL software including Esri products.

Software use off of state network (ESRI, etc.)?

Like MSL remote staff, MTNHP remote staff would have a state-owned device for professional use at a home or other remote office.

Computer hardware use off of state network?

All purchasing would be made following MSL's internal controls and coordinated through Central Services. A procedure for staff who need to make purchases while in the field would be created and added to Internal Controls.

Purchases of supplies...approved vendors only?

How can we purchase marketing materials like pens, USB data sticks, and calendars to market our program to our partners?

Marketing materials are purchased following the same agency purchasing procedures

Purchases with procards for all science staff and some admin?

MSL typically discourages the use of pro-cards. Purchases should be made through Central Services. In an emergency staff may use personal cards and request reimbursement. For costs associated with travel, staff may request advances. We can revisit this need on a case by case basis.

Access to peer reviewed literature is excellent through UM and essential to our jobs; what about MSL?

MSL is working with UM and MSU to provide access to the databases licensed through the University.

## Study questions answered

Butte Super Computer access if off of University Network?

MSL has never used it but it came up as an option a few years ago. MTNHP may want to research this question further.

### Contracts and Agreements

Can MSL handle all types of agreements MTNHP has had over time?

Based on the agreement examples provided to date, MSL has the ability to handle MTNHP agreements

Can MSL handle agreements in a timely manner?

Yes, we do regularly. Our experience has been that our business office is much more efficient and timely than UM

Can MSL handle MTNHP's volume of agreements?

Yes, and we would manage business office staff appropriately to ensure we can continue to do so.

Ability to work across state boundaries?

No different from current model - it would not be done just to be done, but if it fit the larger program goals there is no reason we could not

What, if any, agreements has MTNHP had that MSL would not be eligible to apply for?

MSL would not be able to apply as an educational institution for those types of agreements but can and does partner on those kinds of agreements now. The program may still be able to apply for those kinds of agreements through a

Insurance coverage for agreements?

The state is self-insured to its statutory cap of \$750,000 per claim, \$1,500,000 per occurrence for liability.

### Reputation

Would the identity/mission of MTNHP be watered down or altered?

No. The work and mission of the program would not change. Any changes would be made with the intent of adding additional resources for the work.

How does the mission of MTNHP interact with the mission of MSL?

They are 100% compatible. MTNHP is a statutory program of MSL. MSL and MTNHP as very positive political traction with the Legislative Finance Committee; legislators themselves are looking toward providing funding through less volatile sources than is currently the case. Moreover, it could actually be beneficial to MTNHP if more legislators recognize that cuts to MSL could impact MTNHP.

Would MTNHP be more vulnerable politically?

MSL greatly values our partners. We can only successfully meet our mission if we collaborate with partners and stakeholders.

Ability to collaborate with all partners?

## Benefits Questions

Questions	Comments
Compensation (longevity pay eligibility 1.5%, 3.5%, 5.5%, 7.5%)	MTNHP have would have to apply for positions at MSL. Initial salary would be based on the state pay ranges and years of experience in accordance with the State Library Broadband Pay Plan. This policy is available online at <a href="https://mslservices.mt.gov/About_the_Library/Policies/default.aspx">https://mslservices.mt.gov/About_the_Library/Policies/default.aspx</a> . Although Universtiy staff do not currently earn longevity pay, they do accrue longevity which would transfer to the State. This longevity would be used to calculate future longevity increases.
Retirement (TIAA vs. Empower or Pension...vesting, insurance buy in)	University employees are immediately vested in the University contributions to their retirement account. The State offers a defined contribution retirement option described online: <a href="http://mpera.mt.gov/MEMBERS/DCRP">http://mpera.mt.gov/MEMBERS/DCRP</a> . State employees must work for the State for five years to be vested in the State contribution.
Health Insurance Premiums (Medical, Dental, Vision)	The State of Montana currently pays \$1,054 per month per eligible employee towards the cost of the comprehensive benefits plan.
Copays (Medical, Dental, Vision)	Complete benefit information is available online at:
Medical Deductibles	<a href="http://benefits.mt.gov/">http://benefits.mt.gov/</a>
Prescriptions	<a href="http://benefits.mt.gov/">http://benefits.mt.gov/</a>
Disability	Disability Insurance is available through the State of Montana.
Holistic treatments (massage, acupuncture, etc.)	State of Montana Benefits offer limited acupuncture coverage but does not cover massage;
University Tuition Waiver for Dependents and Staff	The State of Montana does not offer tuition waivers
Vacation transfer (accumulated and earning rate)	The Department of Administration confirmed that accumulated leave and longevity transfer. The earning rate increases with added longevity.
Sick leave transfer (accumulated and earning rate)	The Department of Administration confirmed that accumulated leave transfer. The earning rate is 4.62 hours per two week period for full time employees.



## Benefits Questions

Medical travel reimbursement	The State of Montana does not offer medical travel reimbursement
Life Insurance	Life Insurance is available through the State of Montana.
Comp time	All employees who more more than 40 hours in state pay week (Saturday through Friday) earn comp time. Exempt employees earn comp time, hour for hour. Non-exempt employees earn time-and-a-half. When non-exempt employees leave they are paid out for any unused comp time, exempt employees are not. The State Library encourages employees to keep comp time to less than 40 hours.
Discounts	State of Montana employee discounts are describe online
Leave without pay or sabbaticals allowed	Leave without pay is an option in emergencies and must be approved by the State Librarian. The State does not offer sabbaticals.

## Study Questions pending

Questions		Answers/Notes/Comments
<b>Organization and Human Resource</b>	What are relevant State employment classifications, including exempt vs. non-exempt status?  Use of volunteers for field work...workers comp?	The Department of Administration is preparing a cross-walk of current employee job descriptions to State of Montana classifications.  MSL staff will research applicability of volunteer insurance to volunteers for field work.

## Need More Info

Questions	Answer/Notes/Comments
Concerns over flexibility & bureaucracy!	Any change is not intended to change the mission or work of the program. MSL Leadership would appreciate specific examples to better understand the nature of this question.
Loss of academic freedom and independence?	Any change is not intended to change the mission or work of the program. MSL Leadership would appreciate specific examples to better understand the nature of this question.
Attraction of qualified people with appropriate science backgrounds?	Any change is not intended to change the mission or work of the program. MSL Leadership would appreciate specific examples to better understand the nature of this question.
Potential loss of science credibility?	Any change is not intended to change the mission or work of the program. MSL Leadership would appreciate specific examples to better understand the nature of this question.

## Out of Scope

Question	Answer/Notes/Comments
Best strategy for House Bill 2 associated FTE (numbers, positions)?	Should MSL change the administration of the program, we will evaluate how best to address budgetary needs of the program during the Executive Planning and Legislative process