

Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council Business Meeting

9:00 a.m., May 15, 2025

Online Only – Zoom

Executive Summary

Recording is found at:

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/YYj0g6kKsvM>

Attendees:

Council Members Present

Allen Armstrong (U.S. Interior Department Representative), Adam Carpenter (Chief Information Officer's Designee), Maureen Celander (County/Municipal Government Representative), Karen Coleman (DNRC Designee), Valentijn Hoff (Montana University System Representative), Lee Macholz (Local Government Representative), Jennie Stapp (Council Chair, State Librarian)

Council Members Absent

Brian DeMarco (Tribal Government Interests Representative), Eric Spangenberg (GIS Professionals Representative), Joe Kauffman (Montana Association of Registered Land Surveyors Representative), Jonathan Lewis (Private Business (Active in GIS) Representative)

MSL Staff

Erin Fashoway, Nikki Lepinski, Bryce Maxell, Kazi Arifuzzaman, Evan Hammer, Rebekah Kamp, Ashley Kanduch, Michael Fashoway

Public

Jackson Rose, Nathan Perry, Steve Varro, Logan Swanson, Tom Kohley, Jake Black, Robert Eadie

Agenda: [May 15, 2025](#)

(00:00:00) Call to order and introductions

(00:04:01) **Business Items**
Meeting Minutes
[January 16, 2025 - Meeting Minutes](#) – Action

Motion made by Maureen Celander; seconded by Lee Macholz to approve meeting minutes of January 16, 2025, and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Items

(00:05:32) [MGIA Internal Grant Review](#) – Sean Anderson

Due to reduced funding the grant has not been awarded for the past two cycles. The grant review committee is determining areas to best focus grant priorities, streamline processes, and create consistent procedures. More information will be presented about this in coming meetings to prepare for the next grant cycle.

[\(00:20:17\) Improving Spatial Data Value](#) (Strategic Goal)

[Memo MSDI Updates Improving Spatial Progress Review of to-date](#)

The memo contains a link to updates staff provided from their recent working group meetings. The working group meetings have not been as well attended as hoped and there may be a need to revisit how the invitations for those meetings are sent out so the target audience is reached and can attend. Working groups are an important part of the strategic plan.

[\(00:33:48\) 2025 Legislative Session Update – Jennie Stapp](#)

MSL didn't have too many items that were directly affected by this legislative session. The main change that happened was our organizational structure was broken into three main categories for budgetary purposes. This will not change the amount of funding we receive but will better reflect the vast amount of work the State Library does.

[\(00:38:33\) Montana Legislative Bill Tracker – Bill Text 192](#)

[HB192 Increases](#) – This bill increased the portion we receive from recordation fees through the counties.

[\(00:48:07\) Federal Funding](#)

[Institute of Museum & Library Services Funding](#) – Jennie Stapp

This federal funding accounts for about 20% of our overall funding. There has been a lot of uncertainty about the federal funding since March, but it appears we will receive our full award for FY26.

[\(00:54:27\) Natural Resource Project Funding – Jennie Stapp/Bryce Maxell](#)

There is a lot of uncertainty about federal funding right now. Several grants had been frozen, but the funds have been unfrozen again. There is a lot of restructuring happening on the federal level that is affecting how states manage natural resource programs.

[\(01:08:37\) Montana Geospatial Information Plan Updates – Erin Fashoway](#)

[Memo - New Geospatial Information Plan Schedule](#)

We are slightly behind on the planning process but plan to present the plan for public comment no later than May 23rd so action can be taken on it at the July 10th meeting.

[\(01:15:19\) Draft Plan](#) – The plan is mostly the same, but some stories that share the impact of geospatial data collection were added to give context to the project. Some goals were merged because it makes sense to complete them at the same time. A 5-year Budget Costs and Priorities worksheet was added to help the public understand the costs associated with geospatial goals. Stapp says the financial gap analysis will equip us to be ready when grants become available to make a case for why we are requesting the funding. Questions regarding the meaning of the Base category on the MGIA 5-Year Budget Planning table. Erin explained the Base funding is the amount we could receive each year, but the Collections reflect what we receive. The numbers for FY28 and FY29 are unknown, and the projections for FY26 and FY27 will be updated to reflect the amounts passed through legislation.

Standing reports

[\(01:33:52\)](#) **MAGIP Report** – Jackson Rose, MAGIP Vice President

The MAGIP elections went well and all roles have been filled. The Geocon conference was the highest attended since the pandemic and they are looking forward to next year's conference in Whitefish.

[\(01:38:40\)](#) **Quarter 3 Financial Report** – Malissa Williams/Ashley Kanduch/Jennie Stapp

Had some underspending this year. We can leave unspent cash in MGIA account to provide a buffer for next year. Most of the spending is on target or a little under.

[\(01:42:11\)](#) **MGIA Collections Report** – Erin Fashoway

This report shows we are tracking overall better than last year. The cuts we put in place last year are important and we need to plan for a different amount of revenue going forward. Collections are reported by the counties within 1-2 months after they are received.

[\(01:51:31\)](#) **GIS Coordination Report** – Erin Fashoway

Accessibility GIS 101 webinar hosted by NSGIC was one of the highest attended and registered webinars they have done. NSGIC has resources available for people to learn how to create accessible maps.

ESRI Updates – major shift in licensing model. Concurrent use licensing is going away March 1, 2026. Single use code will be okay, but ArcGIS desktop version will be gone. The state is working with ESRI to be on new model by next fiscal year.

Strategic Planning – a little behind on goals but doing well with all the uncertainty going on.

Underestimated the amount of time it would take to fulfill the objectives. We hit max capacity in storage so that took some time to figure out.

Working groups – will have each theme lead do a working group meeting.

Hexagon was awarded a contract for imagery. NAIP 2025 imagery projected. Montana has been prioritized for 30 cm imagery. Big deal because we will have great imagery statewide. However, it multiplies the amount of storage needed for the data.

Meeting adjourned at: 11:26 a.m.

These minutes were prepared by Nicole Lepinski on May 15, 2025