



MEMO

To: Montana State Library Commission

From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian, and Rebekah Kamp, Data Coordinator

Subject: FY27 Preliminary Work Priorities

Date: June 1, 2026

FY27 Preliminary Work Priorities

This memo presents a list of preliminary work priorities for FY27, organized by the Montana State Library's three programs: Central Services; GIS, Data, and Information Services; and Patron and Library Development Services.

For each project, lead staff have identified the anticipated duration and effort level using the following definitions.

Duration

The time span staff plan to work on the listed objective, calculated from the target date and the date work commences.

- Short – 1 to 2 months
- Medium – 3 to 6 months
- Long – 7 to 12 months

Effort level

Relative size of the work required to meet the objective.

- Small – up to 40 team hours of work; minor effort that fits easily around other responsibilities.
- Medium – 41 to 160 team hours; moderate effort requiring some planning and coordination.
- Large – 161 to 400 team hours; significant effort that will impact team capacity over multiple weeks or months.
- Extra Large – more than 400 team hours; major effort that will dominate team capacity and likely span a substantial part of the year.

Central Services

Count Week

Work area: Data Coordination

Owner: R. Kamp

Other staff: T. Cook

Objective: By March 31, 2027, implement two statewide Count Weeks in Montana public libraries (September 2026 and March 2027) with at least 75% library participation and one library training that equips participating staff with the skills to use and share the resulting data.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 4/30/2027

2027 Legislative Session

Work area: State Librarian

Owner: J. Stapp

Other staff: M. Briggs, E. Hammer, R. Kamp

Objective: By May 1, 2027 have presented budget testimony and appropriate testimony for legislation under the direction of the Legislature and Governor's Office.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 5/1/2027

Revise 10.55.1159 ARM

Work area: State Librarian

Owner: J. Stapp

Other staff: T. Cook

Objective: By December 31, 2026 revise 10.55.1159 ARM and adopt revised rules.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 12/31/2026

GIS, Data, and Information Services

ASPeN upgrades and replacements

Work area: Information Products

Owner: K. Ketner

Other staff: N. Beckstrom, C. Bartow, T. Cook, G. Poelsma

Objective: Documents -> FileNet & MSLTools; Events -> Outlook & MSLTools & Cascade CMS; CE & Certification -> MSL Learn / Moodle; Person, Position, Organization -> Library Directory (new); Committees -> MSLTools & Cascade CMS. By the end of FY27

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

GIS Data List and Hub Site

Work area: Information Products

Owner: K. Ketner

Other staff: M. Burns, M. Trebesch, B. Holliday, T. Blandford

Objective: Implement the new Data List application as an ArcGIS Online Hub Site (if possible) by 2027.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 1/1/2027

Montana Cadastral enhancements

Work area: Information Products

Owner: K. Ketner

Other staff: B. Holliday, M. Fashoway

Objective: Add new functionality to Montana Cadastral application: additional basemaps, optimized owner search, and alternative address search by Q3 2026.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 9/25/2026

Improve MSDI geospatial data value – Land Themes

Work area: Land Information

Owner: M. Fashoway

Other staff: M. Burns, J. Hedstrom, B. Holliday

Objective: Complete MSDI Data Improvement Plans for: Administrative Boundaries, Cadastral, Mapping Control, Structures and Addresses, and Transportation. Milestones for each Data Improvement Plan are: 1) write a draft plan, 2) organize and lead a working group to review draft plan, 3) present the plan to the Montana Geospatial Information Council, and 4) publish the plan to the MSL website.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Migrate to GIS cloud infrastructure

Work area: Land Information

Owner: M. Fashoway

Other staff: M. Burns, J. Hedstrom, B. Holliday

Objective: Migrate data and workflows to ROK-hosted GIS cloud infrastructure. Themes to migrate: Administrative Boundaries, Cadastral, Mapping Control, Structures & Addresses, Transportation

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Build customer base

Work area: Montana State Reference Network

Owner: K. Arifuzzaman

Other staff: E. Hammer

Objective: To reach the goal of 150 subscribers in FY27 we aim to have at least 100 paid subscribers by the end of calendar year 2026. MSL is working with a vendor to improve

outreach messaging to existing and potential users. We are currently targeting the Survey and Agricultural user communities to grow a user base in those two key industries.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Grow network coverage

Work area: Montana State Reference Network

Owner: K. Arifuzzaman

Other staff: E. Hammer

Objective: While MDT is primarily responsible for building new stations, it is MSL's responsibility to add them to the MTSRN and ensure the network is providing high quality solutions. This is achieved in part through having nodes available to add stations. The operator also monitors the network performance and regularly updates station data to maintain high quality solutions. We hope to add at least 15 new stations in FY27.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Improve the network

Work area: Montana State Reference Network

Owner: K. Arifuzzaman

Other staff: E. Hammer

Objective: Update the network with the new Multi Year CORS Solutions (MYCS3) in the summer of 2026. MYCS3 has been implemented in May, 2026. However, as new stations are added to the network, a final MYCS3 adjustment will be implemented by the end of 2026. We also expect the new NATRF datums to become available late in the year and we want to begin broadcasting a data stream based on the new datums when that happens. Our plan is to cast both the current and new streams concurrently until users can transition their workflows.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Create new information dashboards to meet the needs of natural resource managers and planners

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: B. Maxell

Other staff: K. Kaskie

Objective: Finalize State Wildlife Action Plan dashboard. Complete dashboard to Summarize Inventory and Monitoring Needs for Vertebrates

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 6/30/2027

Deploy Open Water Classification Scheme

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: B. Maxell

Other staff: B. Burkholder, D. Ratz

Objective: Edit and deploy the open water classification scheme in accounts on the Montana Field Guide and spatially on the state GIS Data List and in the Map Viewer web application

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Develop and begin to deploy new Invasion Risk and Impact Assessment scoring for non-native species

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: B. Maxell

Other staff: B. Burkholder, D. Ratz

Objective: Develop invasion risk and impact assessment methodology, data tables, and reports for non-native species that are currently not yet documented in Montana and deploy summaries of this information to weed coordinators and other invasive species managers

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Develop new Adaptive Capacity metric for native species

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: D. Bachen

Other staff: B. Maxell, B. Burkholder, D. Ratz

Objective: Develop adaptive capacity data tables and reports for vertebrate species that identify their ability to cope with, or adjust to, environmental stressors and publish these and associated graphical summaries in species accounts on the Montana Field Guide

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Fully develop the About Us pages of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's (MTNHP) website

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: B. Maxell

Other staff: B. Burkholder, D. Ratz

Objective: Create a new page that provides a history of the MTNHP including founding legislation, development of the data system, strategic plans, and a list of staff that have served the program. Finalize development of a page summarizing laws, executive orders, rules, regulations, processes, policies, and permits that are informed by information from the MTNHP.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 6/30/2027

Revise Conservation Status Ranks for 400 species.

Work area: Natural Heritage Program

Owner: D. Bachen

Other staff: A. Pipp, B. Burkholder, B. Maxell

Objective: Revise the state conservation status ranks for a minimum of 400 species with a focus on priority vascular plants, invertebrates, and mosses.

Duration: Long
Effort level: Large
Target date: 6/30/2027

Complete PSAP boundary layer

Work area: Next Generation 9-1-1

Owner: M. Fashoway

Other staff: B. Cochran

Objective: Coordinate with all PSAPs in Montana to complete and validate statewide PSAP boundaries.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

PSAP visits

Work area: Next Generation 9-1-1

Owner: M. Fashoway

Other staff: B. Cochran

Objective: By June 30th, 2027, finish visiting remaining 12 PSAPs that MSL has not been to.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Small

Target date: 6/30/2027

Improve communication for GIS coordination - Phase 2

Work area: Statewide GIS Coordination

Owner: E. Fashoway

Other staff:

Objective: Continuation of FY26 work. Continuing to work with Esri on technical support issues we have discovered for hub integration. Finalizing workflows for information publishing. Working to address each MSDI Theme Page advancement.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Improve geospatial data governance through policies and best practices - Phase 2

Work area: Statewide GIS Coordination

Owner: E. Fashoway

Other staff:

Objective: Continuation of FY26 work. Through partnership with the CIO's office, we are currently in process of integration of our two GIS Enterprise environments into one, following best practice. Starting the review of the State's Metadata best practice. With the State GIS Manager's forum, we are working to create GIS Accessibility policies and best practices. Working to understand Esri Web Accessibility tools to create procedures. Implementation of these tools and best practices will be phased into phase 2.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Improve MSDI geospatial data value - Phase 2

Work area: Statewide GIS Coordination

Owner: E. Fashoway

Other staff:

Objective: Continuation of FY26 work. We continue to make progress, slow moving for a few themes, due to theme data maintenance. Working Group Meetings were held throughout the year. Data improvement matrices have been completed for 7 MSDI Themes. Theme Leads are working on writing their theme plans, this will into the next phase.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Drought Impact Reporter technology upgrade and enhancements

Work area: Water Information System

Owner: T. Blandford

Other staff: M. Burns, P. Jackson

Objective: By October 1, 2026 upgrade the Montana Drought Impact Reporter Dashboard to Experience Builder and add enhancements per discussions with the DNRC/Montana Drought and Water Supply Subcommittee.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 10/1/2026

Elevation-derived hydrography through the USGS 3D Hydrography Program

Work area: Water Information System

Owner: T. Blandford

Other staff: E. Fashoway

Objective: Submit, as lead or project partner, at least one hydrography project application to the USGS Data Collaboration Announcement by September 22, 2026.

Duration: Short

Effort level: Large

Target date: 9/22/2026

Lidar Workshop

Work area: Water Information System

Owner: T. Blandford

Other staff: M. Trebesch, G. Weichel, P. Jackson, M. Burns, E. Fashoway

Objective: Develop an introduction to lidar workshop by September 30 and offer the workshop at least twice in FY2027, including a training for the Fort Peck Tribes.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 5/31/2027

Patron and Local Library Development Services

Manage public library standards, federation, and state aid process

Work area: Consulting

Owner: C. Orban

Other staff: T. Cook, C. Sloan, R. Kamp

Objective: Answer policy questions regarding public library standards, review and assist with deferrals, assist with federation reporting, answer questions about standards, federations, and state aid. Create state aid spreadsheet and work with Central Services to release funding.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 12/1/2026

Offer 4-6 regional workshops focused on succession planning, MSL topics, and board work

Work area: Consulting

Owner: T. Cook

Other staff: C. Sloan, C. Orban, B. deMontigny

Objective: Identify learning outcomes. Work with other MSL staff to identify locations and topics. Manage registrations. Provide workshops. Evaluate.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 4/30/2027

Offer an AI series for libraries

Work area: Consulting

Owner: C. Sloan

Other staff: C. Bartow, T. Cook, C. Orban

Objective: Identify learning outcomes. Find presenters. Design virtual workshops. Manage registrations. Support learners in implementing goals.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Small

Target date: 4/15/2027

Offer an HR series for libraries

Work area: Consulting

Owner: T. Cook

Other staff: C. Orban, C. Bartow

Objective: Identify learning outcomes. Find presenters and/or design virtual workshops. Manage registrations. Support learners in implementing goals.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 9/30/2026

Support directors with online cohorts

Work area: Consulting

Owner: C. Orban

Other staff: C. Sloan, T. Cook

Objective: Schedule topics and online meetings. Facilitate conversation. Provide resources.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Small

Target date: 6/15/2027

Visit each main library and answer questions from libraries to address problems or increase skills in library administration.

Work area: Consulting

Owner: T. Cook

Other staff: C. Orban, C. Sloan

Objective: Visit each main library. Provide strategic plan facilitation. Provide board trainings. Provide support to new directors. Answer questions from librarians, board members, and local government.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Work with libraries to support Good Neighbor Day

Work area: Consulting

Owner: C. Sloan

Other staff: T. Cook

Objective: Educate librarians about Good Neighbor Day. Work with librarians to create templates and plans for offering programming during Good Neighbor Day. Work with other state partners to identify ways for librarians and partners to work together on community initiatives.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 10/15/2026

Manage transition to new certification program

Work area: Continuing Education

Owner: C. Bartow

Other staff: T. Cook, C. Sloan, C. Orban

Objective: Create public facing course catalog. Create process for managing course approval and additions. Update MSL Learn to become the location for course credit management. Create new process for tracking credits. Create new process for awarding certification. Answer questions from librarians.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Update MSL Learn and course content

Work area: Continuing Education

Owner: C. Bartow

Other staff: T. Cook, C. Sloan, C. Orban, B. deMontigny

Objective: Review course content. Update and add new courses. Share information. Respond to questions. Manage registrations and credits.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Manage MLN Virtual Program Series

Work area: Lifelong Learning

Owner: B. deMontigny

Other staff:

Objective: Identify presenters. Schedule and share information about sessions. Support presenters and librarians. Facilitate sessions.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 4/30/2027

Offer early literacy training and programming support for librarians

Work area: Lifelong Learning

Owner: B. deMontigny

Other staff: C. Sloan

Objective: Identify learning outcomes. Find presenters. Design virtual workshops. Manage registrations. Support learners in implementing goals. Work with state partners and local libraries to support early literacy efforts. Support library use of Beanstack for reading challenges. Answer questions from librarians. Work with Treasure State Foundation on Dolly Parton Imagination Library initiatives.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/15/2027

Provide training and support for library services to older adults.

Work area: Lifelong Learning

Owner: B. deMontigny

Other staff: M. Bennett, C. Orban

Objective: Offer continuing education for serving older adults. Manage creative arts in libraries program.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 3/1/2027

Support librarians efforts with lifelong learning services and programming

Work area: Lifelong Learning

Owner: B. deMontigny

Other staff: T. Cook, C. Sloan, C. Orban, M. Bennett

Objective: Support library use of LevelAll to provide programming for emerging adults. Answer questions about programming. Connect libraries to state partners, local, and regional partners to provide programming support for health, literacy, and technology.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

AI metadata improvements

Work area: Montana History Portal

Owner: J. Birnel

Other staff: Z. Coe

Objective: Crawl the site for specific errors and improve the metadata in the Subject field, Geographic Coverage field and others. These fields have specific vocabulary requirements that

have not been used consistently. Matching the content to an established schema would greatly improve search and discoverability.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

LEGO Challenge expansion (planning)

Work area: Montana History Portal

Owner: J. Birnel

Other staff: Z. Coe

Objective: Engage partners and invite ideas for how to make the LEGO Challenge a state-wide contest held in local communities with winners advancing to a state competition. Establish rules of engagement, offer support tools such as those currently offered in the virtual trunk, establish a timeline, develop partnerships. The State competition will require a large venue (Heritage Center?), a schedule of activities - including displays from master builders, Judging of entries, and Prizes for the winners. This goal may take until FY28 to complete and implement the first state-wide challenge.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Portal gamification

Work area: Montana History Portal

Owner: Z. Coe

Other staff: J. Birnel

Objective: Develop a game to invite users to engage with the Portal content and learn tips and tricks to use the Portal better as you play. Completing the game will have a direct reward -TBD. This may include creating new pages in the Portal to guide the gamers or it could be created as app outside the Portal - this will be determined as part of the development plan.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Update the Portal website

Work area: Montana History Portal

Owner: J. Birnel

Other staff: Z. Coe

Objective: Update some of the existing pages in the Portal and create some new ones to improve user access and discovery. This work will include updating the Help page with a FAQ format and updated articles and videos, updating the Exhibits landing page with more background information and featured content, and add a new page for programming ideas which currently exist as a virtual trunk on the MSL site.

Duration: Medium

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 12/31/2026

Advantage + pilot launch and track

Work area: Montana Library Network

Owner: S. Sill

Other staff: G. Poelma

Objective: By July 15th, 2026 we will officially launch and begin monthly/quarterly tracking of the Advantage + Program for MontanaLibrary2Go. We will gather data for 1 year, but plan to present findings thus far in April 2027 as a Training at MLA.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 6/30/2027

Courier sharing group additions

Work area: Montana Library Network

Owner: S. Sill

Other staff: G. Poelma, A. Marchwick

Objective: We currently have 8 interested Libraries in joining Partners. We will add these libraries in 3 chunks over the next year and half. In the next FY we hope to add 3-4 Libraries. All of those should be direct courier locations. We have a few current sharing group libraries that can now be served by the courier. If budgets/trustee's vote to add as a direct stop, we will be able to add those locations within a month. My hope is that we will be able to add 2-3 current sharing group libraries to be direct courier stops next FY.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 3/15/2027

IMLS 5-Year Evaluation

Work area: Montana Library Network

Owner: S. Sill

Other staff: R. Kamp, T. Cook

Objective: By June 31st, 2027 complete the IMLS 5-year evaluation process. This will be a full fiscal year with a bulk of prep work and early implementation in the first two quarters. The final quarter will be finalization.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Extra Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

MontanaLibrary2Go authentication

Work area: Montana Library Network

Owner: S. Sill

Other staff: G. Poelma, A. Marchwick

Objective: By September 15th, 2026 Authentication for Montana Library2Go will go through some changes with Webservices through Sirsi. We will give libraries the opportunity to adjust their rules and blocks to 3 different groupings. If a library is making a significant change to rules and blocks, they may need more support through November 2026.

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 9/15/2026

BLUEcloud Mobile 2 rollout

Work area: Montana Shared Catalog

Owner: A. Marchwick

Other staff: M. Carroll, K. McGregor, L. Tretter

Objective: By June 30th, 2027 upgrade the Montana Shared Catalog mobile app to the new version, including configuration of new framework and migration of library profiles and then rollout to librarians and patrons

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

MSC catalog and bibliographic maintenance

Work area: Montana Shared Catalog

Owner: A. Marchwick

Other staff: M. Carroll, K. McGregor, L. Tretter

Objective: Throughout Fiscal Year 2027, maintain and improve Montana Shared Catalog bibliographic holdings both locally and in OCLC via 12 monthly delta updates and 2 full holdings update and associated database and bibliographic record cleanup and edits after each update

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

MSC support & training

Work area: Montana Shared Catalog

Owner: A. Marchwick

Other staff: M. Carroll, K. McGregor, L. Tretter, L. Poser-Brown

Objective: Throughout Fiscal Year 2027, support Montana Shared Catalog member librarians in their use of the Shared Catalog ILS through 4 monthly office hours for live drop-in consultations and 4 quarterly scheduled, recorded in-depth trainings on specific topics with related updated knowledgebase articles

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027

Adding and promoting digital resources for State employees

Work area: Research Resources

Owner: M. Bennett

Other staff: J. Birnel

Objective: Work with Digital Librarians to continue to crosstrain and collaborate. Look into additional resources for State employees. A goal is to add an additional resource and streamline processes by FYE

Duration: Long

Effort level: Medium

Target date: 6/30/2027

Continue adding Montana titles to BARD by utilizing contracts with commercial recording studios and Potomac Talking Books

Work area: Talking Book Services

Owner: M. Bennett

Other staff:

Objective: Continuation of FY26 work. Will continue to record Montana titles, with priority given to Tribal content. Local recording studios and mobile recording equipment will be used. A goal of 5-8 books to be recorded by FYE

Duration: Long

Effort level: Large

Target date: 6/30/2027