Montana State Library
Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report

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Goals and Objectives

The Montana State Library helps all organizations, communities, and Montanans thrive through excellent library resources and services.

Goal One: Foster partnerships

Partnerships are necessary to ensure that Montanans thrive. Through partnerships, MSL and those we serve will continue to move Montana forward.

Goal Two: Secure sufficient and sustainable funding

We have the funds and capacity to meet the expectations of our partners and Montanans. We are an innovative, forward thinking, and fiscally responsible organization in fulfilling our mandates and meeting the expectations of our partners and Montana citizens.

Goal Three: Create a useful information infrastructure

Montanans have the information and library services they need to understand and influence change in their community. Others follow Montana's model of open, transparent, cooperative information management practices.

Year in Review

Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 21) was a challenging and rewarding year for the Montana State Library (MSL). Our staff continued to demonstrate remarkable resilience and leadership during the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic. While continuing to primarily work remotely, staff supported and enhanced a variety of pandemic-related services designed to inform and improve Montanans lives. And with new funding appropriated by the 2021 Legislature as well as federal pandemic relief funds, we look forward to continuing to grow and improve the services we offer.

Our GIS staff continue to support data collection and information dissemination for the Montana COVID-19 Map. When vaccination rollouts began, staff worked to integrate vaccination information into the COVID-19 dashboard along with continued enhancements to case reporting. Prior to the pandemic, 470,000 visitors per month used our GIS services. With the launch of the dashboard, that number skyrocketed to more than 2.4 million users a month. In total, MSL served nearly 30 million visitors in 2020.

Originally envisioned as a pilot project, MSL rapidly scaled our mobile Wi-Fi hotspot program to serve libraries statewide. By the end of FY 21, more than 800 hotspots and 300 mobile tablets were circulating throughout Montana, bringing internet services where it was most critical, including a vaccination clinic

in Missoula. With American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, MSL will be able to fund this program through at least December 2022.

After a several month delay, MSL resumed our rewrite of Montana's Public Library Standards. These standards exist in the Administrative Rules of Montana and must be met in order for libraries to receive state funding. MSL was in the process of collecting public comments about new draft standards when the pandemic hit. Because the pandemic itself dramatically impacted library service models in unanticipated ways, the Public Library Standards Task Force felt it was necessary to take time to reflect on the nature of these changes and how they might shape the future of library services in ways that should inform the revised standards. The MSL Commission was seeking final public comment to adopt the new standards into Administrative Rule at the conclusion of the fiscal year.

The 2021 Legislative Session was very successful for MSL. In addition to adopting the Governor's budget recommendations for MSL, the Education Budget Committee appropriated $924,000 in one-time-only funding from the Montana Land Information Account to support the development of a Montana Real Time Network. A pilot network is currently supported by Washington State, and Montana must migrate that network by the end of December 2021.

Additionally, House Bills 49 and 50 were passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. House Bill 49 doubles the recordation fee that is the revenue source for the Montana and local government Land Information Accounts. This increased revenue will sustain and enhance GIS coordination and the development of the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure. House Bill 50 creates a statutory appropriation from Montana 9-1-1 funds to fund statewide coordination for Next Generation 9-1-1 GIS data assessment. This work will commence in Fiscal Year 2022.

Finally, MSL and Montana libraries will benefit from about $2.23 million in ARPA dollars funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services and appropriated by the Legislature. These monies will be used to sustain the hotspot lending program, improve internal networks in Montana libraries so that they have the infrastructure to support robust broadband, and increase online access to e-learning resources, including Montana related content through the Montana Memory Project.

Despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the gains made in Fiscal Year 2021 will position MSL to continue to lead into the future.

Finances

Revenue

Category	Amount
Coal Severance Tax	$368,739.09
Digital Library Services	$281,541.00
General Fund	$2,976,137.49
LSTA	$1,420,107.48
Montana Land Information	$735,837.03
Montana Shared Catalog	$439,673.27
Other	$1,715,770.76
Total	**$7,937,806.12**

Expenditures

Category	Amount
Central Services	$1,816,184.80
Consulting and Learning	$1,196,036.50
COVID Funding	$836,385.33
Information Management	$1,028,407.06
Information Products	$458,526.67
Land Information	$469,742.42
Natural Heritage Program	$441,018.47
Patron Services	$522,879.80
Statewide Projects	$1,164,864.58
Talking Book Library	$3,760.49
Total	**$7,937,806.12**

Programs

Central Services

Central Services staff provide accounting, human resources, and information technology assistance, as well as general administrative support.

Digital Library

The Digital Library collects and provides access to multiple types of information of interest to state employees, federal partners, and the citizens of Montana.

Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure

The Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure is made up of fifteen "framework" geographic databases vital for making maps of Montana and understanding its geography. MSDI datasets are generally accepted as the best available, standardized, statewide data that meet the essential, digital geographic information needs of Montana's citizens, its government, commerce, legislature, area researchers, and more.

Natural Resource Information System

Established in 1985 by the Montana Legislature, the Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) was designed to simplify the task of identifying and acquiring natural resource information. NRIS's mission is to make information on Montana's natural resources easily and readily accessible.

Montana Natural Heritage Program

The Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP) 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. MTNHP strives to provide easy access to information in order for users to save time and money, speed environmental reviews, and inform decision making. The MTNHP currently manages information on nearly 12,600 native and non-native species and more than 120 biological communities which can be accessed on the Montana Field Guide, Natural Heritage Map Viewer, Species Snapshot, and Species of Concern web pages and applications.

Research Resources

MSL provides research and professional development resources for state employees and contractors as well as for Montana library staff.

State Publications

MSL makes a concerted effort to create citizen access to state publications to fulfill MCA 21-1-212: "The state library shall administer a state publications depository library program to identify, acquire, catalog, preserve, and provide access to state publications."

Digitized publications are available via the Internet Archive and state web pages dating back to 1996 are archived at MT.GOV Connect.

Talking Book Library

The Talking Book Library program works with the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled to provide free library services to Montanans who cannot read standard print due to a visual, physical, or reading disability.

The program aims to improve patron quality of life and offer ease of access to reading materials so that patrons have opportunity to educate themselves and become informed voters connected to society, make informed and healthy decisions to be productive in the workforce, and contribute to society.

Library Development

The Montana State Library provides leadership and guidance to libraries in order to improve programs, services, and facilities.

Consulting, Training, and Lifelong Learning

MSL provides consulting services, continuing education opportunities, and learning programs for library employees across Montana. These resources, training sessions, and professional development opportunities help library staff meet the needs of their patrons and create thriving opportunities for their communities.

MontanaLibrary2Go

MontanaLibrary2Go is an online service that offers registered library patrons of participating libraries free access to a collection of over 61,000 contemporary, classic, and bestseller audiobooks and e-books (books in electronic, or digital, format).

These books check out just like a physical book or audio CD, except that users can check them out at any time, from anywhere – an online library "to go." Registered library patrons can download the books to their electronic devices or computers, or they can read or listen to books in an online browser. There are

currently 118 MontanaLibrary2Go member libraries (including branches) with a total of 1,138,921 checkouts during FY2021.

Montana Memory Project

The Montana Memory Project (MMP) supports the creation of, and provides free access to, digital collections of items relating to Montana's cultural heritage and government. Libraries, museums, local government agencies, and historical societies across Montana contribute content to the website.

Montana Shared Catalog

The Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) is a consortium of 183 multi-type libraries and branches across 105 Montana municipalities, allowing libraries to share an online catalog and system administrator staff.

The libraries that enjoy the greatest benefit from MSC membership also participate in sharing groups in which library patrons can seamlessly place holds on items from dozens of libraries around the state and pick up the item soon afterward. This program is made cost-effective through the use of a courier service, in which crates of items are delivered from library to library.

Commission and Councils

Montana State Library Commission

The State Library Commission is the governing body of the State Library in accordance with 22-1-101, Montana Code Annotated. The seven-member Commission seeks advice from a number of standing advisory councils and ad hoc task forces on issues of importance to the communities served.

Montana Land Information Advisory Council

The Montana Land Information Advisory Council (MLIAC), as required by statute, advises the State Librarian and the State Library Commission on issues related to land information, on the priority of land information, including data layers to be developed, on the development and management of the Montana Land Information Act grant process and on the distribution of funds collected in the Montana Land Information Account.

Network Advisory Council

The [Network Advisory Council (NAC)](#) represents the interests of all types of Montana libraries and maintains the perspective of statewide geographical balance as it explores technology resources, assists with the official procurement process of those resources, reviews and evaluates the feasibility, design, and outcomes of statewide library projects; assists with statewide planning, and advises the State Librarian and the State Library Commission as appropriate.

Highlights

3D Elevation Program Funding for Lidar

Coordination efforts led by MSL staff resulted in a successful application to the US Geological Survey Broad Agency Announcement for 3D Elevation Program (3DEP). This is the third 3DEP award that Montana has received. The agreement will result in the collection of approximately 17,000 square miles of lidar data (~$3M) in Flathead County, Missoula County, Lake County, Pondera County, Teton County, Cascade County, Chouteau County, Gallatin County, Flathead Indian Reservation, and Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation. In addition to the 3DEP award, a direct federal partnership will acquire 9,400 square miles of lidar data (~$2M) across the Hi-Line and northeast Montana. The USGS 3DEP and ten Montana partners contributed funding to 2021 lidar acquisitions: USDA NRCS, U.S. Forest Service Northern Region, Lolo National Forest, Flathead National Forest, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, Glacier National Park, and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service.

CadNSDI (PLSS) Improvements

Coordination with federal, state, local, and private partners resulted in improvements to the spatial accuracy of the CadNSDI, the digital representation of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), in 28 counties across Montana. Since the PLSS is the base on which many other geospatial layers are mapped, these improvements also resulted in spatial accuracy improvements to tax parcels, conservation easements, public lands, and administrative boundaries. The improvements were largely a result of new survey control, some of which was funded by Montana Land Information Act grants to local governments.

COVID-19 Dashboard

MSL's Geographic Information staff continue to support Montana's response to the COVID-19 pandemic response. The GIS Coordinator and GIS staff provide geospatial leadership and guidance to the DPHHS' Communicable Disease Program. Staff have created, maintained and supported the geospatial efforts since April 2020: dashboards, maps, scripts and documented processes, geospatial data, web services, associated metadata. The team will work to implement new technology to allow citizens to easily access information products that feed the dashboard and maps.

Geo-Enabled Elections

The Montana Secretary of State's Office & the Montana State Library Geo-Enabled Elections Team have been working together for the past two years to coordinate the integration of GIS and MSDI into the existing elections processes. The Secretary of State's office is in the process of instituting a new election management system (EMS), which includes GIS and mapping components. The SOS's goal is to utilize the GIS components and the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) data to better validate and locate voters addresses and appropriately assigning of districts and splits for elections. This will assist with upholding the integrity of Montana elections.

Hotspot Program

In June 2020, MSL began the first stages of a new program to distribute mobile Wi-Fi hotspots to public and academic libraries. These libraries check out hotspots to their patrons to increase their internet access at home and on the go. During FY2021, the program expanded to include 83 libraries across the state, and hotspots were checked out nearly 5,000 times. Users report that the hotspots have enabled them to attend school and complete homework, apply for employment, keep informed of current events, complete government forms, access health information and telehealth information and more.

MLIA Grant Projects

In accordance with the Montana Land Information Act (MLIA), MSL administers an annual grant program to distribute accumulated funds from the Montana Land Information Account, established by the MLIA. Grant applications are evaluated by the State Library and the Montana Land Information Advisory Council, and follow the MLIAC Grant Subcommittee Code of Ethics. Grant criteria are established based

on the original intent of the MLIA and the goals and objectives of the annual Montana Land Information Plan.

In Fiscal Year 2021, MSL awarded 11 grant recipients across Montana a total of $210,869.

Montana Shared Catalog Mobile Application
In November 2020, the Montana Shared Catalog debuted its new mobile application for both Apple and Android devices. The app allows users to manage their account and perform catalog searches using their mobile device, and also facilitates minimal contact services for some libraries via self check-out and a curbside pickup module. Since its release, the app has been downloaded onto over 3,500 devices and has had over 60,000 launches.

Montana Shared Catalog New Libraries
Two new libraries joined the Montana Shared Catalog: Great Falls Public Library in Great Falls and Toole County Library in Shelby. Great Falls Public Library went live in September 2020, and Toole County Library will go live after their migration process is completed. MSC System Administrators migrated library patron information and bibliographic records to the catalog, created an online access interface for patrons, and trained library staff on how to use the new system.

Ready2Read Goes Wild
During FY2021, MSL reintroduced its Ready2Read Goes Wild program, which had previously been placed on hiatus. This program, a joint project between MSL and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, uses nature and Montana animals to spark kids' interest in language, literacy, math, science, and the natural world in general. Themed trunks of materials and books are sent to libraries, who use them to develop story times and other programs of interest.

Virtual Fall Workshops
In November 2020, MSL held a series of virtual fall workshops open to library staff and boardmembers across Montana. These professional development sessions focused on topics such as self-care and wellness, community engagement, customer service techniques, and serving the underserved. There were 77 registrants, which included some entire library staffs attending together, bringing the total

registration to around 100. More than 70% of attendees represented public libraries serving less than 10,000 people. Almost 10% of respondents were attending a statewide training for the very first time, and 87% reported that they were likely to attend another virtual conference.