



Library Information Services

Traditional library professionals:

- Manage state and federal publications (print and electronic)
- Manage journals (print and electronic)
- Handle reference/research needs and have intimate knowledge of online subscription databases
- Have the content knowledge and training necessary to help patrons find the answers they need

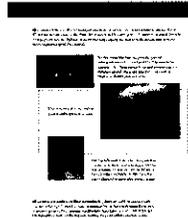


The first section (after my letter of introduction), the Montana Index and the following three pages, represents research conducted by our Library Information Services staff relating to Montana as a whole. This represents the work of our traditional library staff. These are the people who manage state and federal publications, select and maintain electronic journals and on-line subscription databases for use by our patrons, and who have the content knowledge to help you find the answers you need from the overwhelming amount of information available to you.

These segments contain interesting statistics that we hope you can use as you consider the bills you'll be faced with this session.



The Natural Heritage Program is the state source for information on native animals and plants, emphasizing species of concern and high quality habitats such as wetlands.



The next page in your report is wildlife information particular to the region that contains your district and it was provided through our Natural Heritage Program. Montana's natural resources are critical for our citizens and economy and are central to our quality of life. Good information is necessary to maintain this heritage as the state grows and develops.



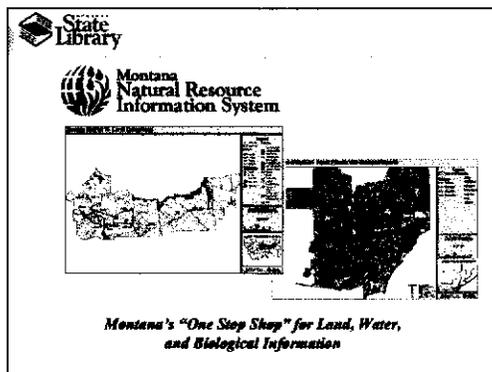
Natural Heritage Program

Scientists and information specialists:

- Assimilate existing information on Montana's plant and animal species in comprehensive plant and animal databases
- Conduct field surveys that assist agencies in filling data gaps
- Provide information for a broad range of uses, including: mining, timber sales, subdivisions, utility and pipeline corridors, oil and gas developments, weed management, highway construction, growth planning, and habitat conservation

As part of the Digital Library, The Natural Heritage Program helps avoid later complications because developers can identify sensitive species and areas early in the planning process.

Two of our more popular on-line applications are the Heritage Program's Plant and Animal Field Guides, where users can find descriptions, photos, range maps, and even sound recordings of Montana's wildlife.



The final section of your report contains District-specific statistics provided by our Natural Resource Information System (NRIS), which provides comprehensive access to data about Montana's natural resources through the acquisition, storage and dissemination of location-relevant information in meaningful formats. NRIS staff works with a number of state and federal agencies to acquire the most current information available. We then work on ways to aggregate this information and share it in an easily referenced format.



Natural Resource

Information System (NRIS)

- Data gathered, combined and cross-referenced from 11 state and 8 federal agencies
- Primary point of access for geospatial information for use in GIS applications
- National leader using the Internet as a means to disseminate agency information
- Extensive on-line map library includes the Montana Digital Atlas/Topofinder
- Montana Water Information System

Currently eleven state and eight federal agencies routinely provide updated data to NRIS for distribution. This is information not generally available in published reports and constantly changes as the agencies who own these databases make updates.

An information summary such as you'll find in your report would not be possible without the cooperation of these agencies, who routinely transfer their data to the library for distribution. The last page of this section provides a list of the information sources for this report (which, I'd like to point out, represents only a fraction of the information available in the Digital library).

These tables show the power of integrating information from multiple sources, making it relevant by placing it in context, and allowing users to view data for a particular geographic area, be it a legislative district, a county, a watershed, and many other user-selectable areas.

Depending on the size of your district, the map included as the last page in your packet displays either an aerial photo overlaid with schools and airports, or land use for your district. These maps are only one example of the hundreds of map themes provided by other agencies and made available through our Digital Library's NRIS program. These maps can be displayed on-line, customized to display user-selected information, or downloaded for printing.