HJR 16: State-Operated Institutions
Expanding Crisis Intervention and Jail Diversion Services

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for the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee
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Background

In March, the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee asked for estimates of the costs of expanding two programs that support mental health crisis intervention and jail diversion services. The committee specifically is looking at ways to develop these services in areas of the state that lack such services.

Using historical budget and grant information from the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), this briefing paper provides:

- information about the historical costs of the two programs; and
- examples of ways to estimate the potential costs of increasing those services.

The 2009 Legislature created the two programs by passing House Bill 130 and House Bill 131.

House Bill 130 Costs

HB 130 created a grant program to help counties develop crisis intervention and jail diversion services or options for short-term inpatient treatment. DPHHS has awarded 28 grants totaling about $3.6 million since passage of HB 130. Counties have used the money to build and remodel facilities, plan for mental health services, train law enforcement officers and others, and provide direct services to individuals.

In all, nine counties have received HB 130 grants, with some of them partnering with other counties for regional services. Three of the nine counties have received grants in each of the five fiscal years since the program was started: Yellowstone, Missoula, and Ravalli counties. Valley County has received grants in the past four fiscal years, while Lewis and Clark County has received grants in three of the five years. Blaine, Gallatin, Hill, and Lake counties received grants for the first time this fiscal year.

Simple math shows the average grant award has been $130,036. However, actual awards have ranged from a high of $386,728 in FY 2011 for the Billings Community Crisis Center to a low of $10,610 to Valley County for a variety of purposes in both FY 2012 and FY 2013.

Looking at averages based on county population and types of activities may provide a better measure of the amount of money required to expand community-based crisis services.

County Population: For this analysis, Montana's 56 counties were grouped into three categories: large counties, with more than 50,000 residents; medium counties, with 15,000 to 50,000 residents; and small counties, with fewer than 15,000 residents. Four large counties have received HB 130 grants: Yellowstone, Missoula, Gallatin, and Lewis and Clark. Two medium counties — Ravalli and Lake — also have received grants, while two small counties have received awards — Valley and Blaine.

The table below shows the average grant awards by county population. Both medium counties received relatively large grants to build crisis stabilization facilities, so averages are shown both for all grant awards and for nonconstruction awards to those counties.

	Large Counties	Medium Counties All Grants	Medium Counties Non-Construction	Small Counties
Average Grant	$188,371	$93,481	$62,454	$13,500

Type of Activity: Sixteen of the 28 grants were awarded solely or primarily for direct services to individuals, while two grants were awarded solely for training activities. Two grants helped pay for new buildings. The remaining grants covered a mix of activities.

Grant awards for direct services and facility construction are generally higher than grants awarded for other activities, as shown below.

	Direct Services	Construction	Training	Mixed Uses
Average Grant	$162,136	$187,500	$67,054	$67,215
Range	$10,610 - $386,728	$125,000 - $250,000	$61,608 - $72,500	$14,000 - $116,414

The table below shows the average grant amounts by both county population and type of activity.

	Large Counties	Medium Counties	Small Counties
Direct Services	$225,205	$63,356	$13,393
Construction	--	$187,500	--
Training	$72,500	$61,608	--
Mixed Uses	$91,940	$61,975	$14,000

HB 131 Costs

HB 131 allowed DPHHS to contract for secure detention beds in the community. DPHHS pays crisis stabilization facilities a flat rate of $500 for each day that all of their secure detention beds are unoccupied. The payments are designed to ensure that the facility can pay for its ongoing operational costs even when the secure beds are empty. When the facility is treating someone, it can bill for the services it provides. Payment sources included Medicaid, Medicare, the Mental Health Services Plan, private insurance, and payments from individuals.

DPHHS has paid about $1 million to three facilities since it began contracting for secure beds in FY 2010. The Hays Morris House in Butte began receiving payments in August 2009, while the

Hope House in Bozeman began receiving payments in April 2010 and the West House in Hamilton in April 2011.

Statistics compiled by the agency show that the facilities billed for anywhere from 131 days to 294 days of unoccupied beds in a year. However, the statistics also show that the number of days billed declined for each facility between FY 2012 and FY 2013; it appears the trend will continue in FY 2014.

The table below shows the total number of unoccupied days for each facility, the number of months each has billed the state for HB 131 funds, and the average number of unoccupied days per month.

	Hope House	**Hays Morris House**	**West House**
Unoccupied Days	568	845	685
Months Billed	46	55	35
Average Days/Month	12.3	15.4	19.6

Additional Considerations

As currently written, the laws establishing the county grant program authorized by HB 130 allow any county to apply for and receive funding for crisis services if the county:

- develops and submits a strategic plan for services;
- has a detailed plan for how it will collaborate with other entities to provide local funds for crisis intervention or jail diversion services;
- participates in any available statewide or regional county insurance plan for precommitment costs;
- participates in any available statewide or regional jail suicide prevention program; and
- collects and reports information on its services as required by DPHHS.

If the committee wants to ensure that additional grant funds are used to expand services beyond the counties that have received grants, it would need to amend the law to either:

- specify that additional funds appropriated after a certain date must be used for expanded services; or
- establish priorities for the awarding of grants, with development of new services in unserved areas receiving higher priority than continued funding of existing services.

Committee Decision Points

If the committee wants to expand crisis intervention and jail diversion services, members may want to consider and decide the following questions to provide guidance for a bill draft.

1. Should the Legislature increase the amount of money for the HB 130 grant program?
   a. What amount of funding would meet the committee's goal of increasing access to services? The committee could propose an appropriation that:
      i. reflects the average HB 130 grant of $130,036; or
      ii. contains a mix of funds based on county population, types of activities, or both.

   The table below provides examples of options that could be considered if the committee wants to base an appropriation on county population or types of activities.

Funding Goal	Total
Grants to one large county, one medium county, and three small counties	$291,325
One grant each: direct services, construction, training, mixed use	$483,905
One construction project, one large-county training grant, one medium-county training grant, five small-county mixed-used grants	$391,608

2. Should the Legislature revise the grant award guidelines to encourage development of services in unserved areas of the state? Legislation could:
   a. establish priorities for the awarding of future grants;
   b. specify that grant awards made on or after July 1, 2015, be used only to expand services;
   c. specify that additional funds appropriated on or after July 1, 2015, be used to create services in unserved areas of the state; or
   d. include other criteria as determined by the committee.

3. If the statutes governing grant awards are revised, should they include provisions to ensure that efforts funded in the past can be continued?

4. Should the Legislature increase the amount of money for contracting for secure crisis beds as allowed under HB 131?
   a. What amount of funding would meet the committee's goal of increasing access to services? At the current payment rate of $500 per day of unused beds, the annual cost for making payments to one additional facility would be:
      i. $90,000 for an average of 15 days per month;
      ii. $120,000 for an average of 20 days per month; or
      iii. $150,000 for 25 days per month.
   b. Are other incentives needed to encourage existing facilities to create secure detention beds?

Next Steps

If the committee decides to consider legislation for expanding crisis services, staff will develop a bill draft based on the responses to the questions raised above.

The bill draft would be presented to the committee for review and public comment at the June 20 meeting. The committee could request further changes for consideration at the final meeting on Aug. 18 and would decide at that meeting whether to introduce a bill in the 2015 Legislature.

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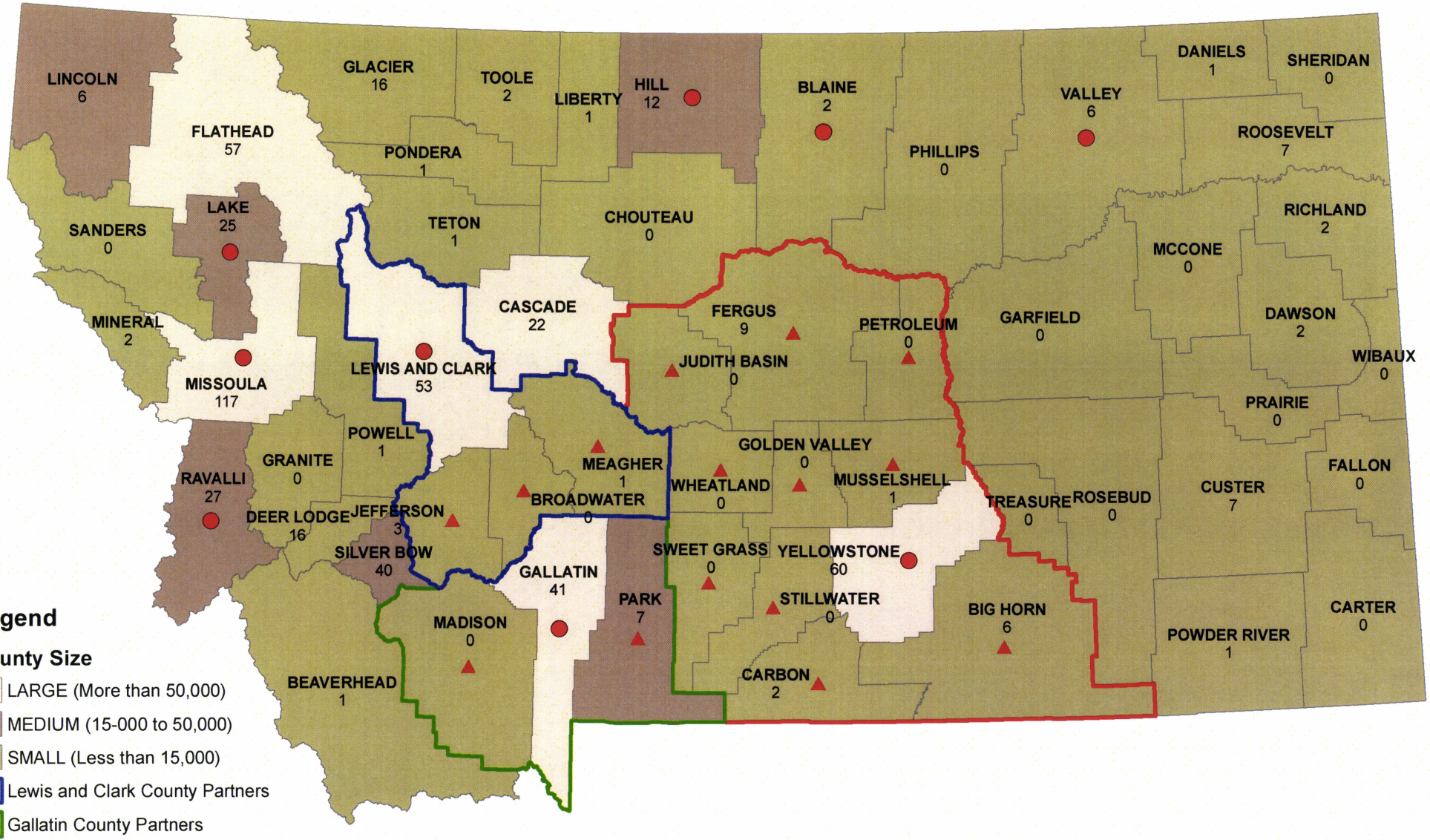
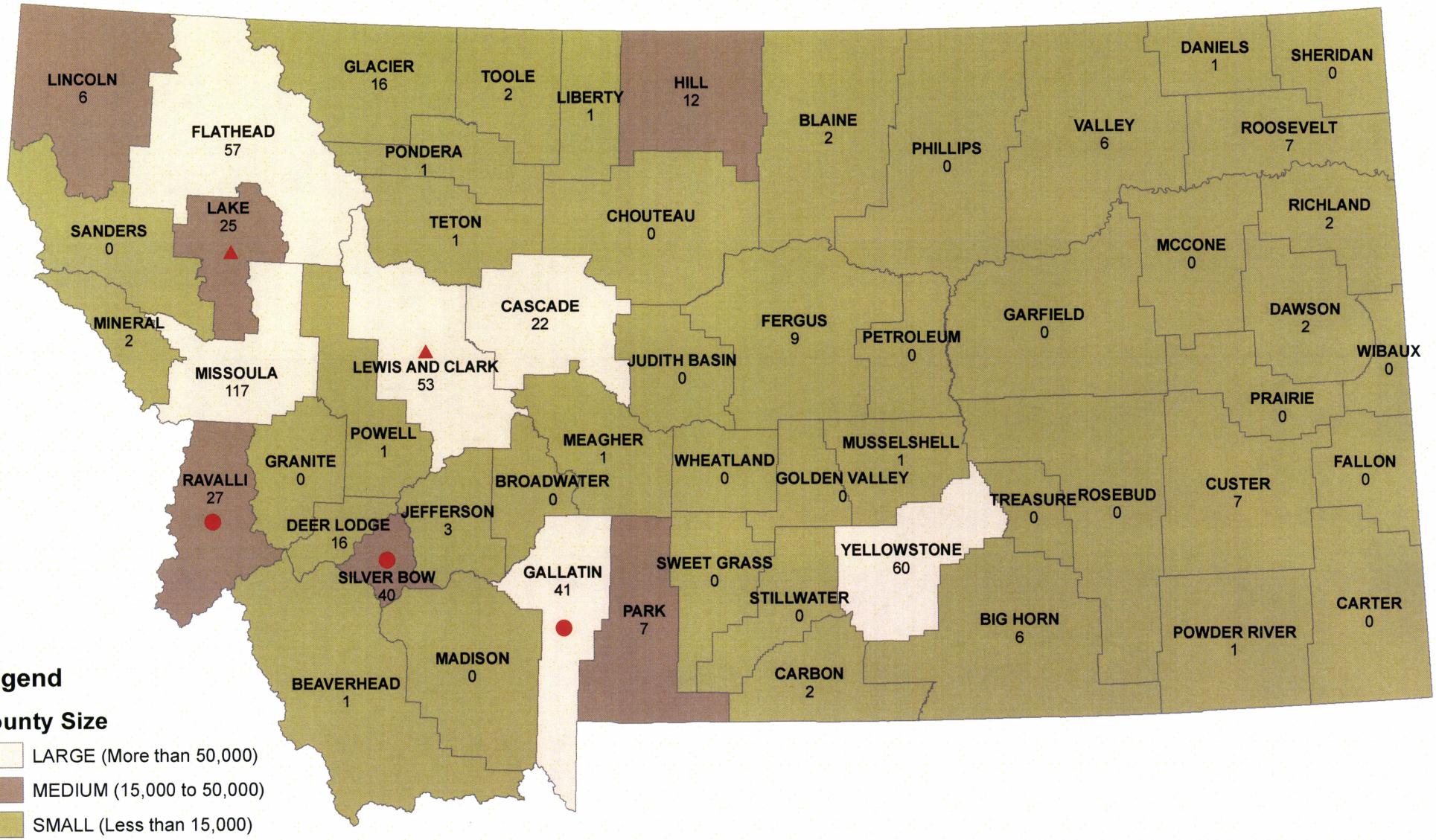
HB 130 Implementation Status by County, 2014



The number under each county name is the number of civil commitments to the Montana State Hospital from that county.

Legislative Services Division

HB 131 Implementation Status by County, 2014



Legend

County Size

- LARGE (More than 50,000)
- MEDIUM (15,000 to 50,000)
- SMALL (Less than 15,000)

HB 131 Implemented

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HB 131 Pending

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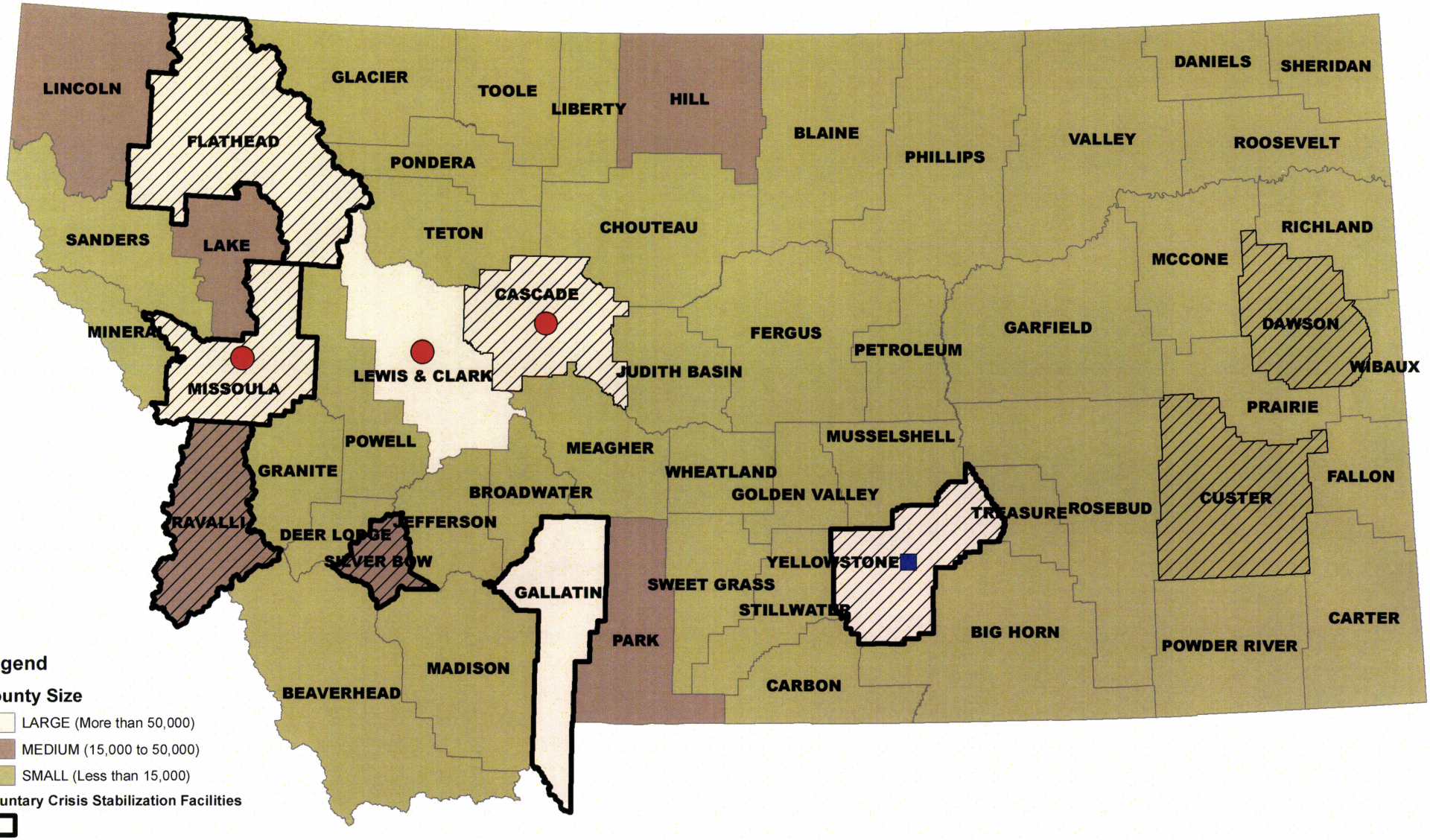
The number under each county name is the number of civil commitments to the Montana State Hospital from that county.

Community Mental Health Resources by County, 2014



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