

Montana District Courts

Caseload and Workload Information

Presented to:
Judicial Redistricting Commission
September 2015

Background

- Montana's 56 District Courts
 - **Since 2001 Shared Funding:**
 - State appropriations cover the cost of judges, judges' direct staff, youth court and certain court costs (witness, jury, travel, etc.)
 - County appropriations cover the cost of courtroom and office space and the individual Clerk of the District Court offices in each county

Why HB435?

- Responsibility to manage taxpayer resources in an efficient manner
- Responsibility to equalize – to the degree possible – the workload
- Public policy decision about how the districts can best be configured
- Access (i.e. how long you have to wait for your day in court) is critical

District Court Financials

- 2016-17 biennial District Court budget - \$57 million
- Personal services - 90% of the District Court budget
- Percentage of funding invested in personal services requires careful planning and management of resources

Historical Perspective:

- State assumption created the need for a consistent method for managing court files and counting cases across the District Court system and,:
 - Meaningful caseload data to support an accurate analysis of workload and resource need in each of the state's 22 Judicial Districts

How We Got Here

Uniform Case Filing Standards

Counting court cases the same in all counties

Adoption of Minimum Staff Standards

Consistency across all districts (*not in place*)

Workload Study

Assessing the workload – not just counting cases

Developing Case Processing Measures

Giving judges tools to manage the workload

Equitably Distributing the Work

Judicial Redistricting Study

13 Case Types

Criminal

Civil

Adoptions

Guardian & Conservator

Juvenile

Child Abuse and Neglect

13 Case Types

Probate

Domestic Relations

Paternity

Commitment, Developmental Disability

Commitment, Mental Illness

Investigative Subpoena

Search Warrant

(Treatment Court Cases)*

What Does this Mean for Workload?

Caseload

How many cases?

What type of cases?

How long does it take to “judge” those cases?

Other Work

How much travel?

How many hours is a day?

How much non-judicial time for training, staff supervision, community work?

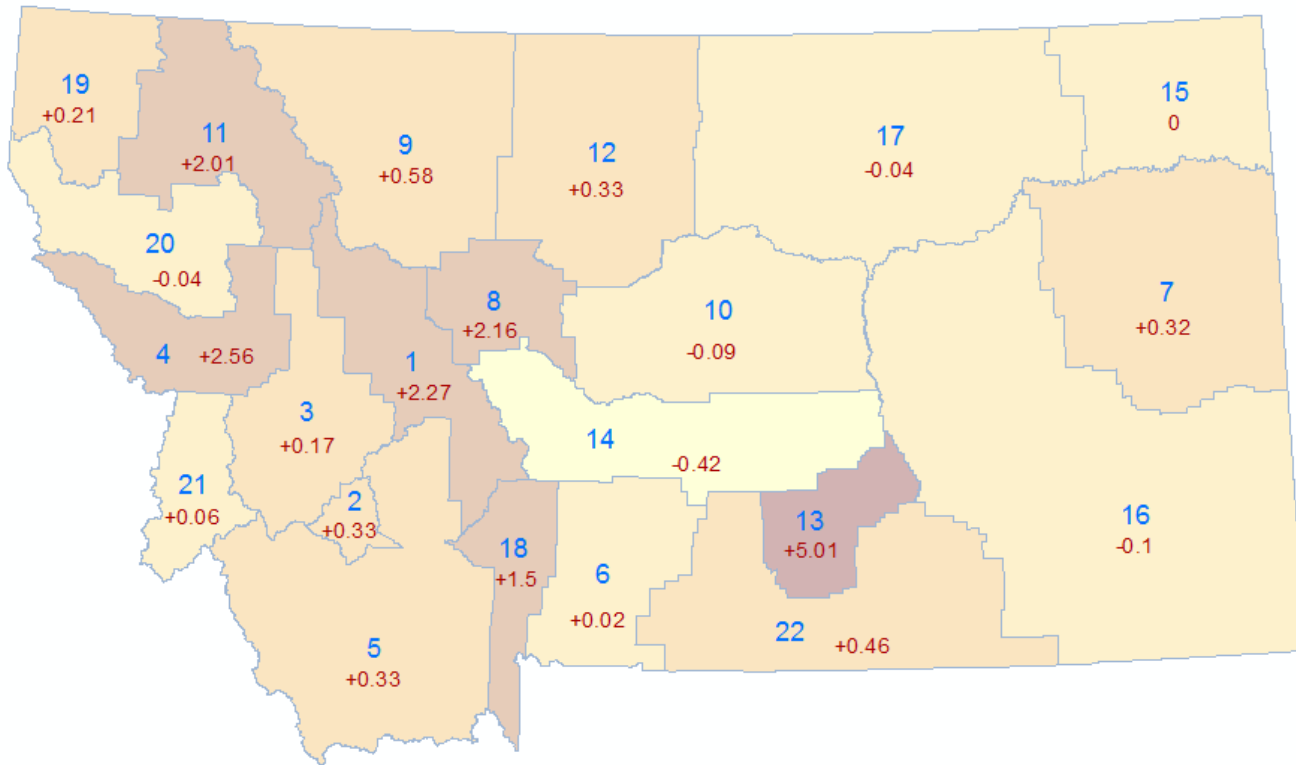
Weighted Workload Study

- The Gold Standard for court case management studies
 - Studies conducted and calculated by the National Center for State Courts in 2006 and 2014
 - Updated yearly with new caseload and travel information
- How is the work measured?
 - A “judge year” is established allowing time for leave, education, staff supervision, etc.
 - Judges recorded time worked for 8 weeks on a 15-minute basis
 - NCSC aggregated the time to establish an average time per minute for each case type
 - Travel was added based on reported time and actual mileage

Workload Study Spreadsheet

- Caseload and workload analysis
 - Case weights by case type
 - District by district judicial need
 - Annual travel
 - Analyze judicial need in single-judge districts versus multi-judge districts
 - Timeliness and access
 - Judicial substitution

Judicial Need by District (2014)



Judicial Need by District (2014)

Judicial District	CY2008	CY2009	CY2010	CY2011	CY2012	CY2013	CY2014	Sparkline
13	1.67	2.21	3.10	1.77	2.91	3.75	5.01	
4	0.53	1.28	1.37	1.47	1.89	2.02	2.59	
1	1.67	2.82	2.74	1.45	1.82	1.84	2.27	
8	0.93	1.28	1.06	0.94	1.27	1.67	2.16	
11	1.44	2.61	2.77	1.53	2.16	2.29	2.01	
18	1.29	1.30	0.78	0.42	0.43	0.69	1.50	
9	0.47	0.58	0.54	0.46	0.55	0.68	0.58	
22	0.65	0.59	0.53	0.43	0.42	0.50	0.46	
5	0.51	0.57	0.61	0.57	0.40	0.48	0.33	
12	0.21	0.40	0.35	0.34	0.46	0.45	0.33	
2	0.42	0.35	0.33	0.23	0.27	0.23	0.33	
7	0.17	-0.09	0.07	0.12	0.22	0.34	0.32	
19	0.22	0.26	0.37	0.38	0.35	0.32	0.21	
3	0.34	0.34	0.24	0.24	0.26	0.31	0.17	
21	0.38	0.31	0.36	0.29	0.24	0.40	0.06	
6	0.25	0.32	0.32	0.27	0.33	0.24	0.02	
15	-0.15	-0.15	-0.12	-0.17	-0.11	-0.07	0.00	
20	0.29	0.41	0.43	0.34	0.27	0.34	-0.04	
17	0.02	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.19	0.18	-0.04	
10	0.04	0.16	0.18	0.05	0.00	0.10	-0.09	
16	0.04	0.14	0.12	0.01	0.10	0.06	-0.10	
14	-0.26	-0.22	-0.21	-0.20	-0.21	-0.22	-0.42	
ALL	11.13	15.56	16.00	11.07	14.22	16.60	17.63	

What Drives the Growth

Case Types

Child Abuse and
Neglect Cases

Criminal Cases

Rebound in Civil Cases

Other

Probate

Search Warrants

Drug Treatment Courts

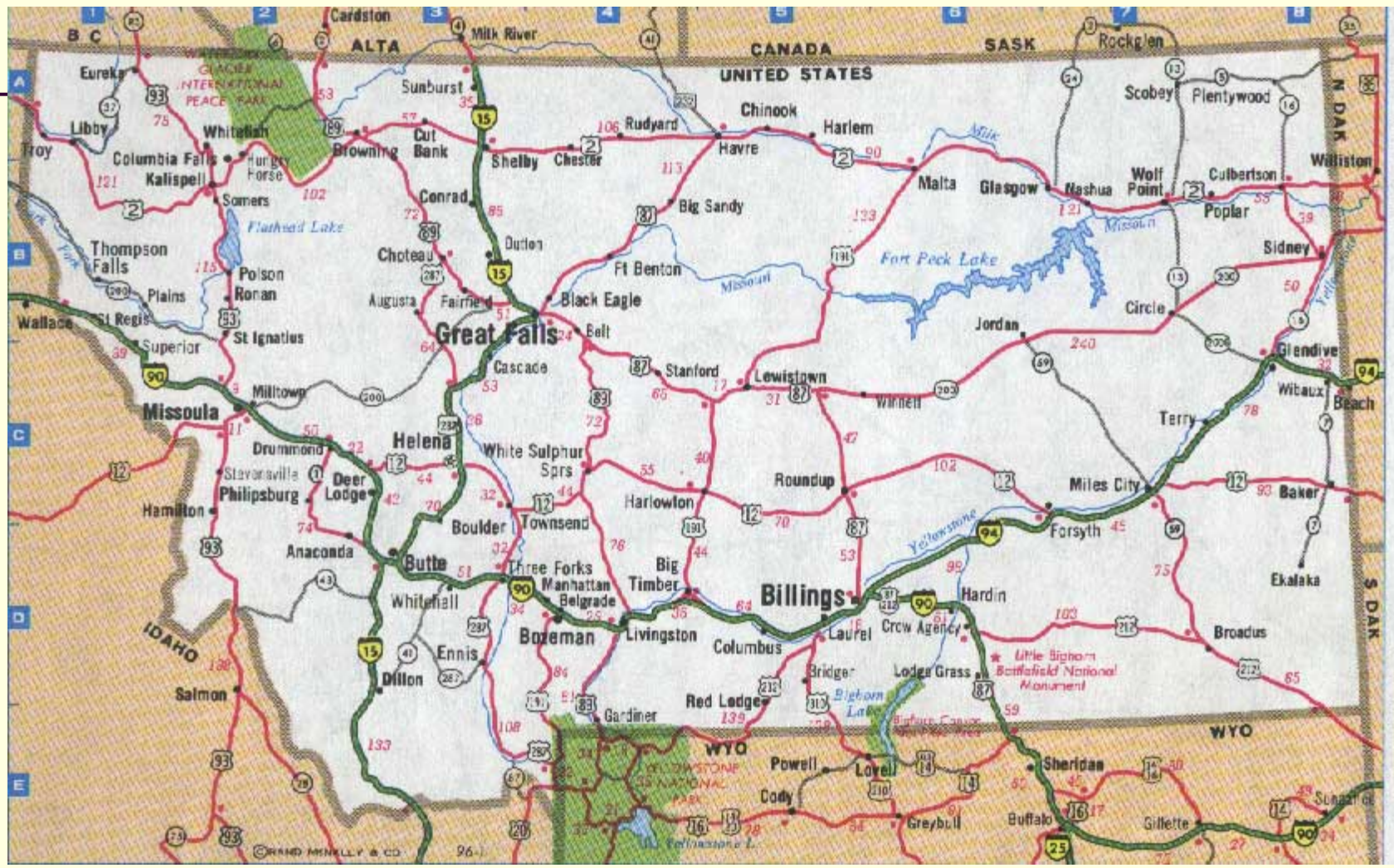
Managing the Current Growth

■ Steps taken

- Court Help Program
- Videoconferencing
- Drug Treatment Dockets
- Standing master

■ Targeted impact

- Self-Represented Litigants
- Reduce travel
- Time-intensive but reduce repeat offenders
- Removing cases from judge



Additional Information

- 2015 case numbers and workload study by mid-January
- Travel information
- Additional caseload information
- Other information as requested