

<p>Date: 8 January 2007 Site: Montana Department of Transportation Library Staff: Lisa Autio, Librarian Sue Sillick, Research Manager</p>

Site Visit Summary

History & Overview

The Montana Department of Transportation Library has been part of MDT since as early as the 1980s. Research Manager Sue Sillick estimates that the library's inception predates the cataloging of the collection in OCLC by at least two decades. Prior to joining OCLC MDT had no catalog or database of library materials. Without any library science training, Sue taught herself copy cataloging and in 2002 was one of the founders of the Montana State Network's (MLN) shared catalog project to automate libraries statewide by purchasing a group license for the SirsiDynix integrated library system. There were 17 Montana libraries participating when the project began, and there are now over 80 libraries (including branches) using the [Montana Shared Catalog](#). The MLN offers its members a wide range of benefits including the shared catalog, access to a variety of databases and fixed-fee OCLC subscription pricing. Sustained by Institute of Museum and Library Services and Library Services and Technology Act funds, MLN is able to enhance access to library resources and services for professionals and the public statewide. To learn more about MLN, see [Montana Libraries in 2020](#).

Staff

Lisa Autio is the new Librarian at MDT. She joined the department in April 2006 and brings professional experience in special libraries (medicine) to her new role as a transportation librarian. As a solo librarian within MDT, Lisa's priorities since assuming her new job have been organizing the library and learning the intricacies of transportation and interdisciplinary subjects. Lisa is very interested in the newly organizing Western Transportation Knowledge Network (WTKN) and sees it as another vital link for solo librarians, much as the pooled fund and MTKN are now. She expressed feeling much more connected after the annual meeting and seeing everyone face-to-face.

Sue Sillick is Manager of Research Programs at MDT and oversees the library as part of the technology transfer initiatives in her Section.

Jeanne Nydegger is the Administrative Assistant to the Research office and assists part-time with book processing and shelving.

In the past year, the library has absorbed other collections, cleaned up a substantial backlog with contract catalogers, and made use of temporary staff to complete projects, such as cleaning up call numbers in the catalog. New projects in 2007 include the indexing of the serial collection, which is sizable.

Physical Space

The MDT library is located in the agency's headquarters in Helena. At about 250 square feet, the library makes use of compact shelving for its collection.

Collection & Services

There are about 22,500 items in the collection.

12,180 Monographs

1,011 Videocassettes

139 CDs

73 Kits

9,104 Electronic titles through NetLibrary, provided through Montana State Library

46 DVDs

Sue has promoted customer service over the years and has offered to catalog and house satellite collections within MDT. Recently, the organizational development collection has been absorbed, as well as aeronautics, construction, planning, and traffic engineering items. The organizational development collection is housed in the main library, but the Human Resources Division assumes responsibility for collection development and purchasing. Lisa would like to promote it by developing pathfinders. The video collection is similar to most other DOT libraries with a concentration on safety and CIT videos. As with most other DOT libraries, the main collection consists heavily of highway materials with some rail and aeronautics, safety, and state reports. Deer-vehicle data and habitat preservation also figure prominently. Planning and pedestrian and bicycle information are areas Lisa would like to develop.

Customer service is a strong focus for the MDT library, as is outreach. Some effective internal marketing strategies Lisa and Sue employ are highlighting new resources in the "Library Corner" of the [quarterly research newsletters](#). More than a corner, the newsletter devotes an entire page to the topics and resources Lisa would like to highlight in each issue. The library also posts to the bimonthly internal employee newsletter, participates in new employee orientation, where Sue gives a presentation with an overview of the library and its services. Lisa offers library instruction quarterly and upon request to individual employees. She also makes a presentation to the management training participants as a part of MDT's year-long management training program. Library training includes searching the catalog, setting up user IDs, databases available through the state library and TRIS, RiP and TLCat. Internal marketing brochures such as "[Top 10 Reasons to Find it @ Your MDT Library](#)" are also used to promote awareness of the library and its services.

MDT Expectations for the Pooled Fund Study

Lisa's priorities for the pooled fund study going forward are:

- Developing a toolkit, consisting of the tools a new transportation librarian would find useful in building a new collection of resources and services
- Determining benchmarks and performance measurements, or indicators of progress toward expressed goals.
- Maintaining communities of practice or networks, and staying in touch with the very specialized community of librarians that deal in transportation information and using their experience and ideas.
- Determining best practices that have been shown as the most effective models for others to follow.

Sue and Lisa are both very committed to the concept of transportation library networks. Participation in the pooled fund has made Lisa - a solo librarian working with a new subject matter - feel more connected to other transportation librarians. She would like to continue with the pooled fund if an extension is feasible. Sue also expressed the desire to continue, but would prefer to concentrate on the newly forming WTKN if it came to a choice between the two. She also indicated uncertainty about MDT's willingness or ability to fund their participation in the pooled fund beyond November 2007. The beginning stages of organization for the WTKN are

encouraging and MDT will be a very effective member of the regional network. The pooled fund will coordinate and lead a WTKN teleconference later in February or March 2007.



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