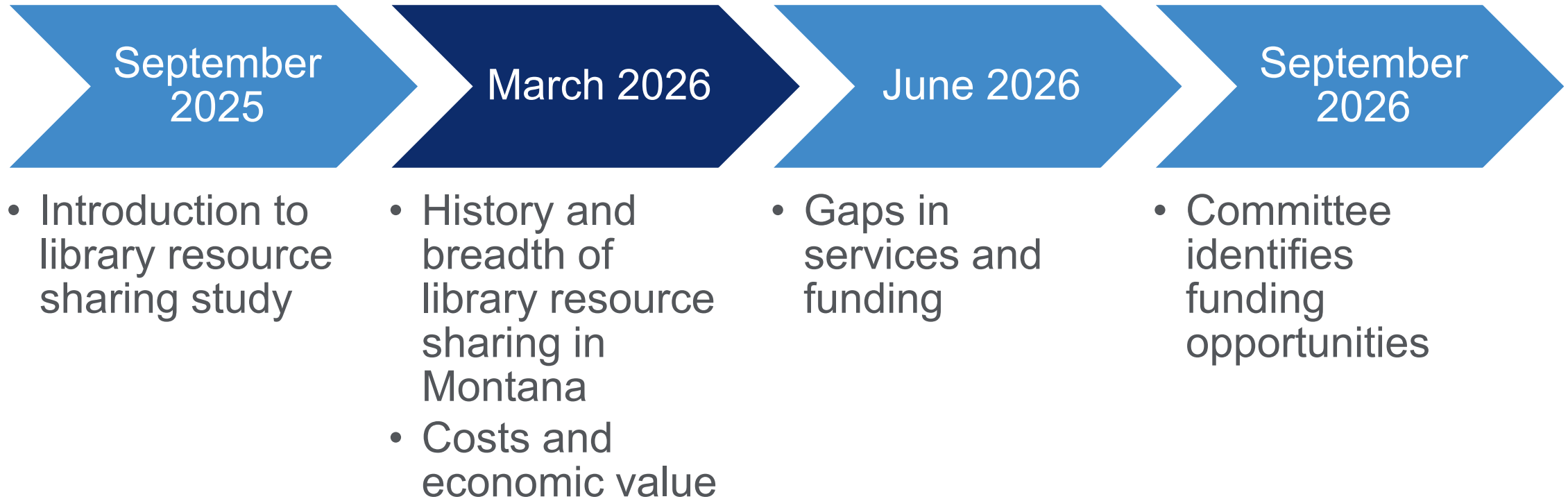




# Library Resource Sharing Study

March 18, 2026

# Education Interim Budget Committee Library Resource Sharing Study



# Lorcan Dempsey's Model



Innovate solutions in  
scalable and  
repeatable ways

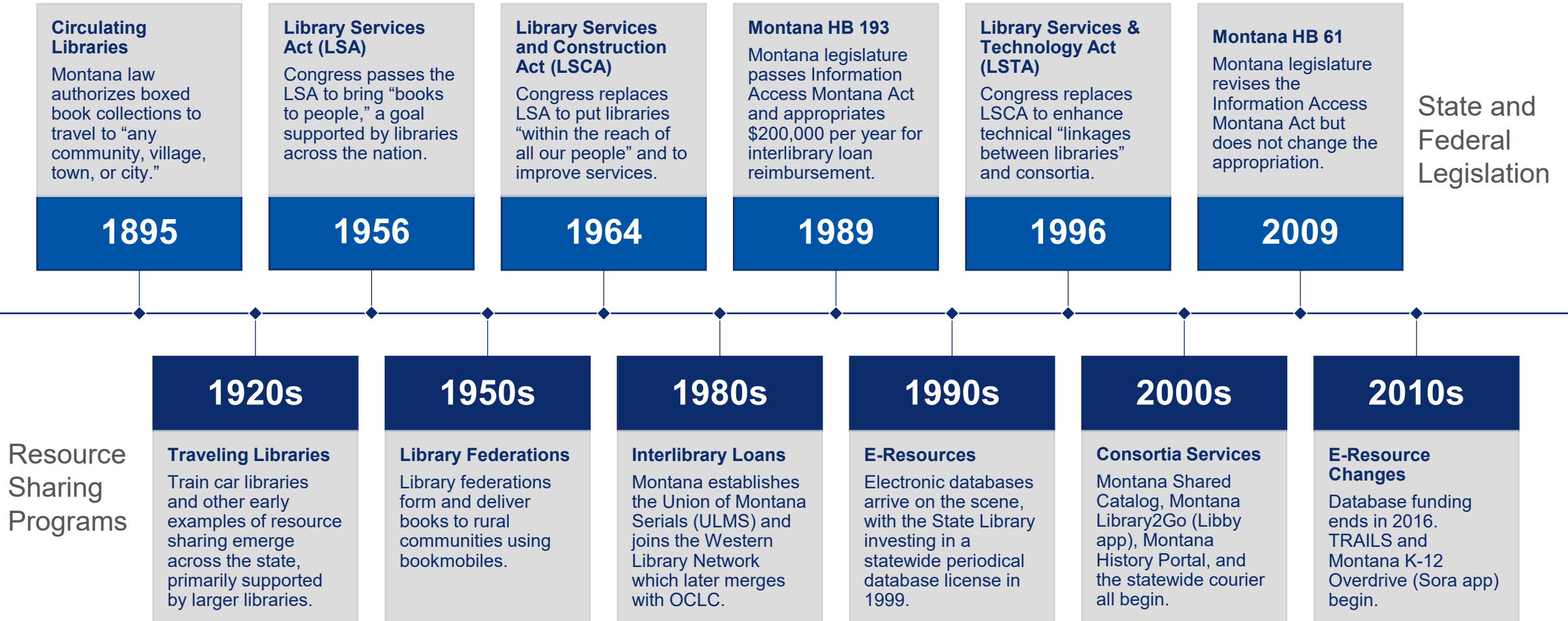


Right-scale  
infrastructure

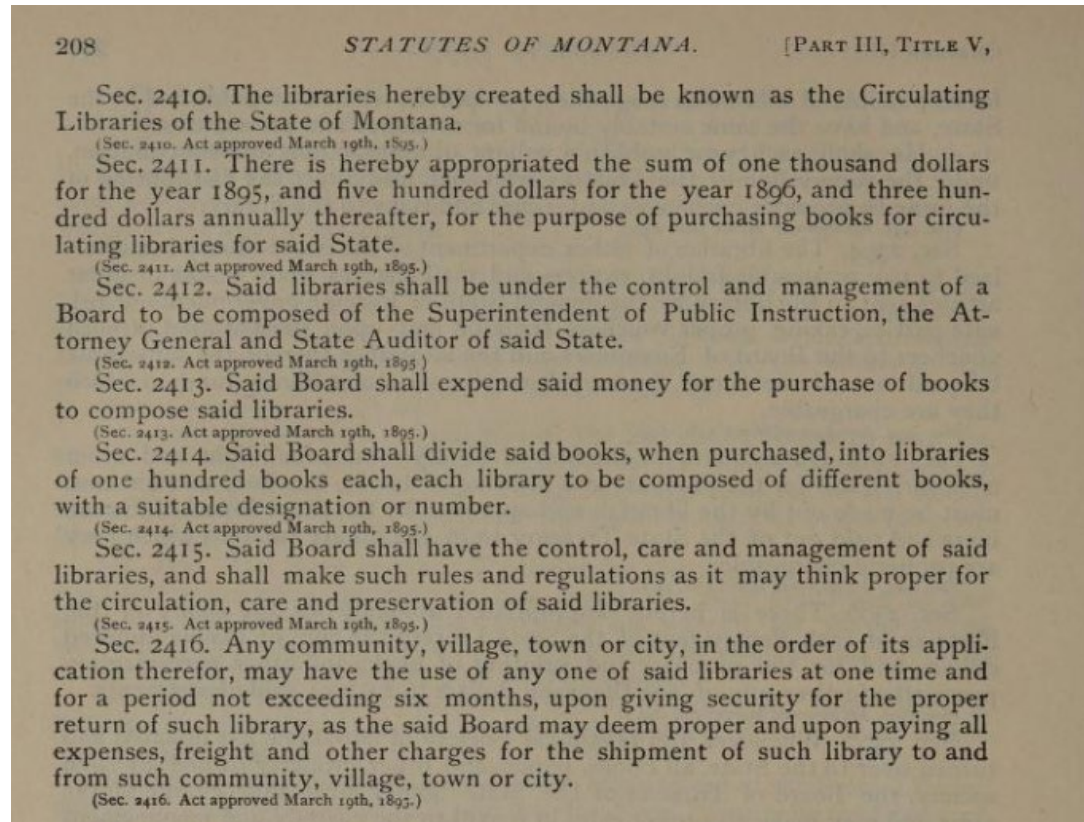


Focus on citizen  
engagement

# Library Resource Sharing Timeline



# 1895 Montana circulating libraries

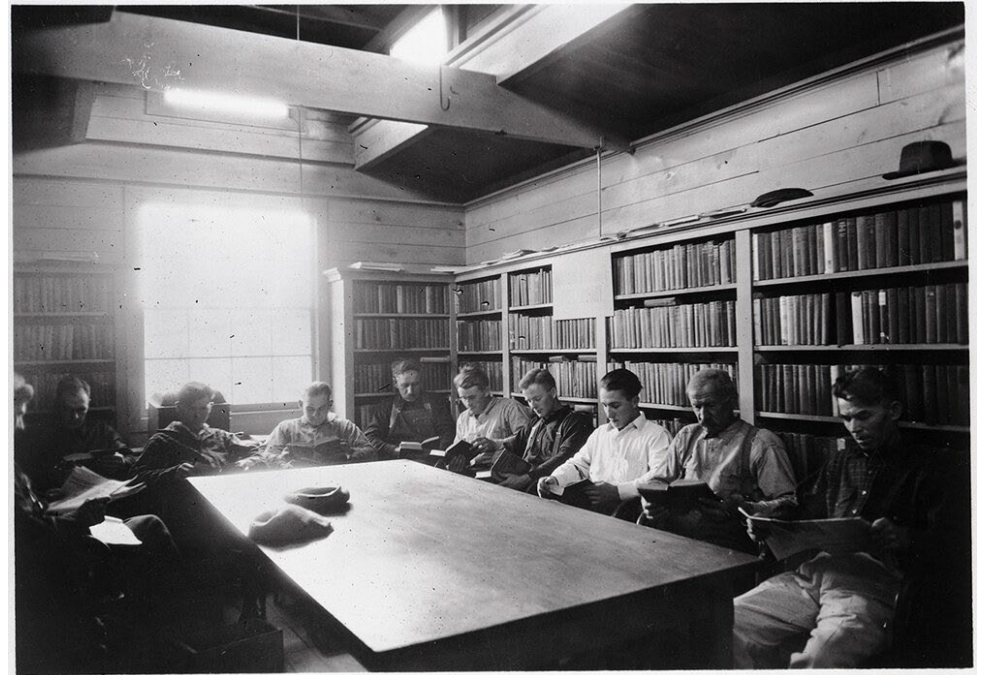


- Montana Legislature passed law to establish state circulating libraries consisting of 100 books each to travel to “any community, village, town or city.”
- It’s a mystery if this program actually launched.

*The Complete Codes and Statutes of the State of Montana: In Force July 1, 1895.* Political Code Part III, Title V, Chapter III, Article II, Sections 2410-2416 (pages 207-208). Available on the [Internet Archive](#).

# 1920s Montana traveling libraries

- Anaconda Company's library train car or the "Lumberman's library" brought books to loggers in partnership with the Missoula County Free Library
- The library moved from one camp to another every few weeks throughout Missoula County from 1921 to the late 1950s ([Library Car, Fort Missoula Museum](#)).



"Library Car of Anaconda Company." University of Montana Mansfield Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

# 1956 Congress passes the Library Services Act



Congressman Lee Metcalf  
Says Fewer Than  
Half of Montanans  
Have Adequate  
Library Service

Meaning of Library Services  
Bill to Montana  
Lee Metcalf

Books to people — this is a goal for which librarians all over our nation have been working for a number of years. Yet there are still some twenty-seven million Americans in the United States who do not have access to a local public library and about fifty-three million more who receive only inadequate public library service. These facts were brought out in May of last year when a Subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee held hearings on the Library Services Bill.

- **“Books to people – this is a goal for which librarians all over our nation have been working for a number of years.”** Congressman Lee Metcalf, 1956

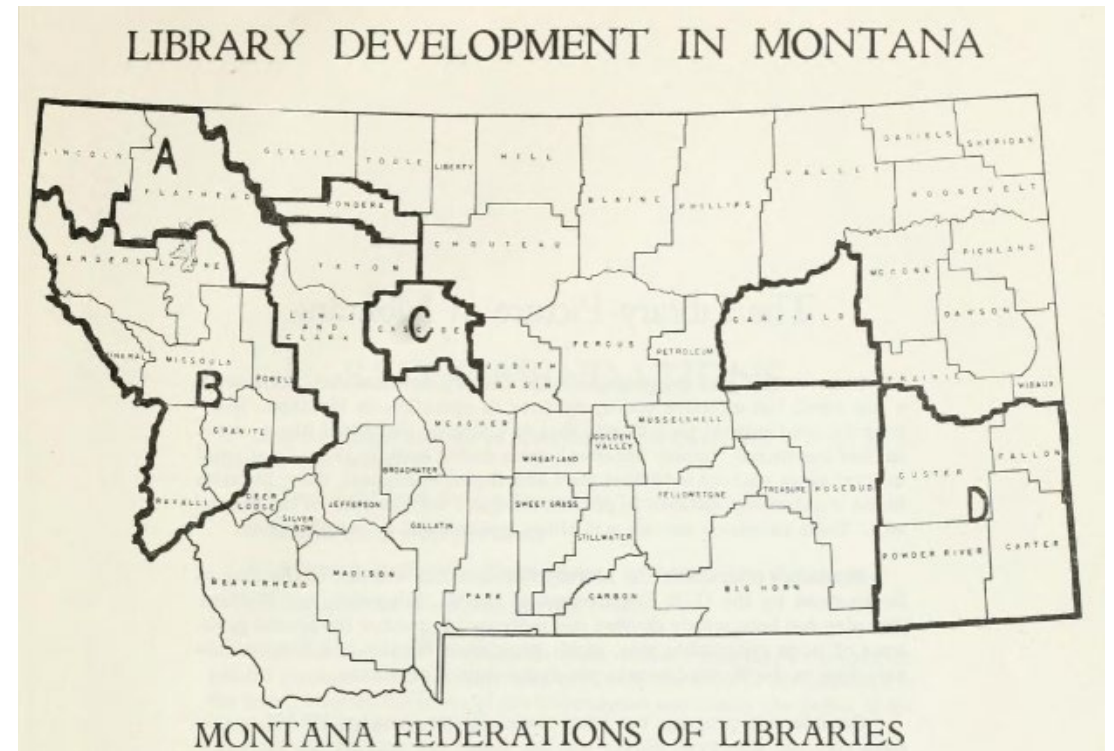
“1956-01 – Montana Libraries – Volume IX, Number 2.”  
Montana State Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

# 1950s Federations deliver services at scale

- In the 1950s, federations had bookmobiles, shared book buying, and centralized book processing.
- “The increased use of books and library services in every community is convincing testimony of the success of the [Library Services Act] plan in Montana.” (Biennial Report, pg. 16)

A: Northwest, B: Five Valleys, C: Great Falls, D: Sagebrush

“Biennial report.” Montana Library Extension Commission (1960). Available on the [Internet Archive](#).



# 1950s Federation bookmobile routes connect communities

- Funds from the Library Services Act led to expanded routes and more frequent stops for federation bookmobiles
- Federation bookmobiles played a critical role in bringing books to rural Montana

“Loading the Missoula Public Library Bookmobile with books (ca. 1957).” Missoula Public Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).



# 1964 Library Services and Construction Act

## The Library Services and Construction Act

President Johnson signed the Library Services and Construction Act on Tuesday, February 11, 1964, in the White House Cabinet Room. Dignitaries, Librarians and representatives from the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare were present to witness the signing and to hear President Johnson's stirring statement:

"We are proud and delighted to have this distinguished company with us this morning in the White House. There are few Acts of Congress which I sign with more pleasure, and certainly none with more hope than this new Library Services and Construction Act.

"A true university," observed Carlyle, "is a collection of books." This wise Englishman never wrote a truer statement. Anything we can do to enlarge the number and the quality of libraries is, I think, an act of national achievement.

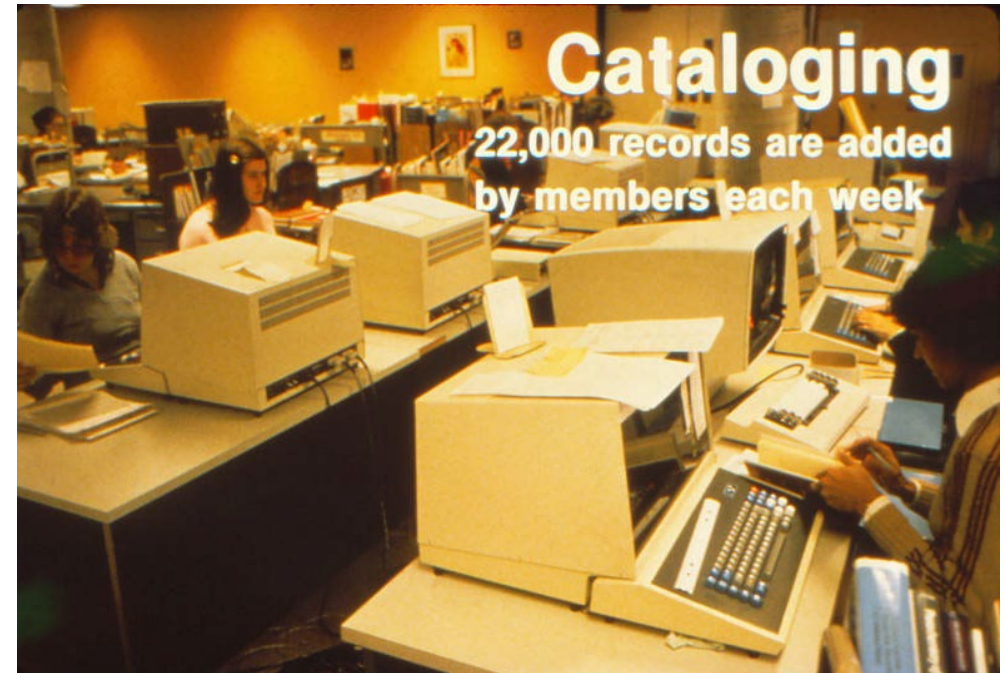
Good public libraries must be placed within the reach of all of our people. Libraries are not just for the young and the curious about an exciting world. They are not just for our youth preparing for their careers. They are not just for busy people looking for information to do their jobs. Libraries are for everyone and therein lies their real value.

- Replaced the LSA to provide funds for improvement of facilities and services
- "Good public libraries must be placed within the reach of all of our people...Libraries are for everyone and therein lies their real value."  
President Johnson, 1964

"1964-04 Montana Libraries – Volume XVII, Number 3."  
Montana State Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

# 1980s Interlibrary loan networks develop among Montana libraries

- Libraries statewide collaborated to track holdings of journals and magazines for interlibrary loan.
- MINITEX began producing Union List of Montana Serials (ULMS) on microfiche in 1977, expanding through the 1980s.
- Six university libraries and Montana State Library joined the Western Library Network (WLN).
- This regional network of the Online Computer Library Center, the precursor to today's OCLC, simplified cataloging and locating books across libraries.



“Bringing Information to People June 1981.” OCLC Library, Archive and Museum. Available through the [OCLC Film and Photo Archive](#).

# 1989 HB 193 Reimbursement for Interlibrary Loans

State of Montana  
Office of the Governor  
Helena, Montana 59620  
(406) 444-2111

STAN STEPHENS  
GOVERNOR

May 15, 1989

The Honorable John Vincent  
Speaker of the House  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620

The Honorable Jack Galt  
President of the Senate  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Representative Vincent and Senator Galt:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of Montana, I hereby make the following line-item veto to House Bill 193, "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES; PROVIDING FOR A DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES BY THE STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION ON A PER CAPITA AND PER SQUARE MILE BASIS; PROVIDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR INTERLIBRARY LOAN LENDING; PROVIDING THAT SUCH AID MAY NOT BE USED TO SUPPLANT LOCAL OPERATING SUPPORT OF LIBRARIES; PROVIDING FOR BASE GRANTS TO LOCAL LIBRARIES FOR SUPPORT OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES THROUGH FEDERATIONS; PROVIDING FOR A STATE MULTILIBRARY CARD; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AMENDING SECTION 22-1-301, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

The importance of public libraries in the state of Montana cannot be understated. They are the few facilities where our citizens, young and old, gain access to the nation and the world. They are vital links and are a part of our social fabric.

The State of Montana's financial assistance to local libraries has been non-existent. Montana is one of five states which do not provide state aid to public libraries. Our libraries are closing more often, reducing staff and discontinuing orders and subscriptions. A compelling public policy interest has been demonstrated to me for State participation in maintaining this vital resource.

- HB 193 established reimbursement for interlibrary loans totaling \$400,000 per biennium.
- Governor Stephens line-item vetoed an additional \$1.1 million from HB 193.
- In 1989 public libraries sent 20,063 books to other libraries.
- In 2024 public libraries sent 432,423 books to other libraries. This does not include the large volume of books that move in between branches in county systems like Missoula or Flathead.

Legislative Bill History, Ch. 670, L. 1989.

# 1990s Electronic resources open new research frontiers for Montana library patrons.

- Databases, delivered by CD-ROM and later online, gave patrons new options for finding authoritative information.
- In 1999, Montana State Library invested in a statewide database license.
- Over the following biennia, the State Library increasingly relied on LSTA for statewide database services.
- In 2016, Montana State Library ended its long-standing statewide database subscription due to budget constraints and rising costs.

*American Libraries*, Vol. 25, No. 8 (Sep. 1994), p. 9. Available through [JSTOR](#).



The advertisement features a collage of CD-ROMs and a keyboard. One CD-ROM is labeled 'ACADEMIC FULL TEXT EDITION Disc 1'. Another is labeled 'ACADEMIC FULL TEXT EDITION Disc 2'. A CD-ROM case is labeled '250 CPI EBSCO PUBLISHING'. A keyboard is visible in the top right corner. The text 'EBSCO CD-ROM' is visible on a CD-ROM case in the bottom right.


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# 1996 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)

## National News

**LSCA/LSTA news:** On September 30, 1996, President Clinton signed into law the final version of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) which replaces the expiring Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). This law establishes the Institute of Museum and Library Services that will administer the program. The law directs states to use LSTA funds to establish or enhance electronic linkages among libraries to share and receive resources. The funds are also intended to target library services to persons with disabilities and to under served urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty lines.

- LSCA becomes LSTA, emphasizing the importance of technology in modern libraries and the need for shared resources.
- “Establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among or between libraries”
- “Encouraging different types of libraries to establish consortia and share resources”

“1996-12 Montana State Library News Update – Number 48.”  
Montana State Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

# 2000s Montana's resource sharing consortia link libraries across the state.

- In 2002, the Montana Shared Catalog launched with 17 libraries.
- That decade also saw the start of Montana Library2Go (Libby app), Montana History Portal, and the statewide library courier.
- Today, these shared services remain core infrastructure for libraries and patrons statewide.

"2002-05 – Big Sky Libraries, Volume 76." Montana State Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

## Shared Catalog's Data Loading, Training

The Montana Shared Catalog's (MSC) initial data load yielded 398,000 unique bibliographic records from 572,000 bibliographic records. MSC librarians have met the myriad deadlines with efficiency and good cheer.

April and May were busy for the seventeen MSC member libraries. They completed data mapping and conversion. That is, they've redefined their current record data structures to conform with SIRSI's, and have looked over their bibliographic records, and in some cases their patron records as well, then shipped them off to SIRSI for data conversion.

The Unicorn application is installed on the State's big server installation in Helena, and test data has been loaded awaiting the upcoming classes. Kudos for all involved in this classic 'five minute project', in particular Bill McClendon and Wendy Pemberton from SIRSI, and Tony Noble and Scott Bryson from the State Information Services Division.

Training sessions for MSC staff members will be presented by SIRSI in Missoula, Kalispell, and Helena. Training will include searching, circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, and serials control.

Many MSC members have to re-bar code their collections, or need to bar code them for the first time. "We work with giants," proclaimed Bruce Newell, after hearing librarians' positive and determined responses to the news that their collections needed to be re-bar coded. "It is a rare privilege to work with such people."

MSC Member's Council meets in Missoula May 29. All are welcome to attend.

The MSC has four working groups: Users & Circulation; Technical Services; OPAC & System Administration; and Training. Each working group plays a major role in the implementation process. There is also an Implementation Team overseeing the creation of the new catalog.

The MSC is expected to go live during the week of July 29.



*"We work with giants," proclaimed Bruce Newell, after hearing librarians' positive and determined responses to the news that their collections needed to be re-bar coded.*



# 2009 HB 61 Statewide interlibrary resource-sharing program

(b) Title 7.

(4) "State multilibrary card" means a card that is issued to a Montana resident by a public library created under Title 7 or under 22-1-303 and that may be used for library services in every public library in the state."

Section 2. Section 22-1-328, MCA, is amended to read:

"22-1-328. ~~State Statewide interlibrary loan reimbursement program~~ ~~reimbursement~~ ~~eligibility.~~ (1) Each Montana library eligible for reimbursement under this section for participation in the statewide interlibrary loan program must be reimbursed according to the rules adopted by the commission:

(2) Libraries eligible for interlibrary loan reimbursement under this section include The commission shall establish a statewide interlibrary resource-sharing program. The purpose of the program is to administer funds appropriated by the legislature to support and facilitate resource-sharing among libraries in Montana, including but not limited to public libraries, public library districts, libraries operated by public schools or school districts, libraries operated by public colleges or universities, tribal libraries, libraries operated by public agencies for

STATE INTERNET COPY

- 1 -

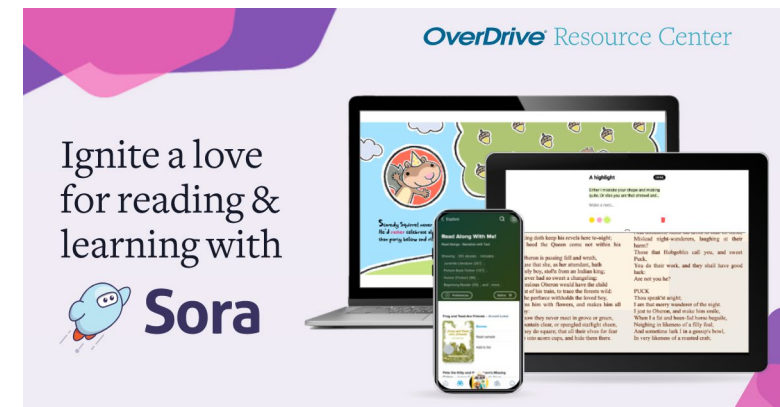
HB 61

- HB 61 revised the interlibrary loan reimbursement program, making it a resource-sharing program.
- No new funds were appropriated.
- ARM 10.102.4001 split the existing 1989 appropriation, putting \$100,000 toward the Montana Shared Catalog and \$100,000 toward OCLC.
- In FY 2026, MSL still budgets \$100,000 for each service despite no direct appropriation.

Legislative History – Montana Session Law, Chapter: 47, Session L: 2009, Bill Number: HB 61.

# 2010s New e-resource solutions for Montana's universities and schools

- With the sunset of shared databases through the State Library, new e-resource collaboratives emerged.
- TRAILS launched in 2016 to provide a unified content management system for Montana's academic libraries.
- In 2017, 56 Montana K–12 schools launched a statewide shared OverDrive collection of ebooks and audiobooks, now accessed through the Sora app.



How has “books to people” developed over time?

# For centuries, people have used libraries to get the information they need



“Children reading at Bonner Branch of the Missoula Public Library (ca. 1958).” Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

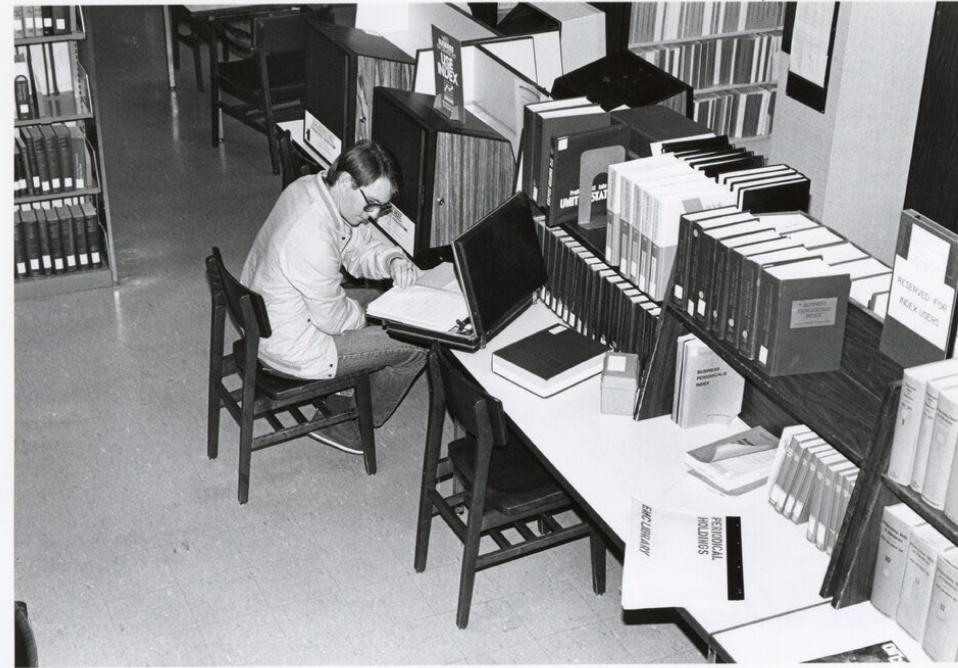


Annie and Cam from White Sulphur Springs learning about elephants with books from across Montana (2025).

# Prior to the 1980s, how people found and consumed information was solely analog

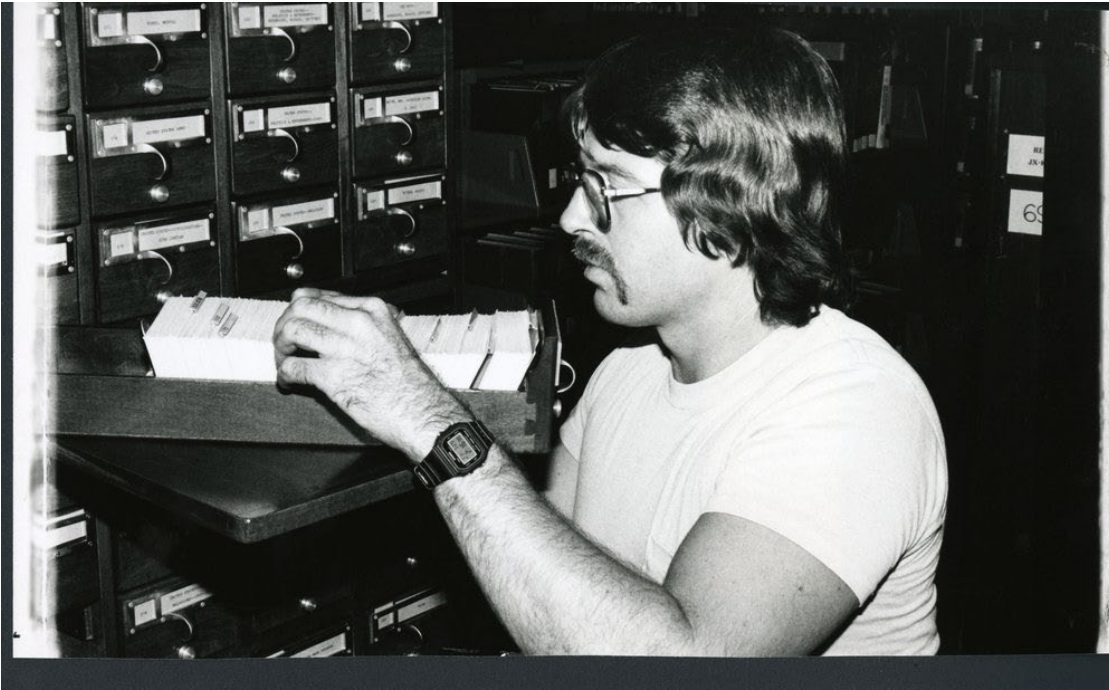


“Library Users, 1980.” Students using the microfilm reader. MSU Billings Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).



“Students using the business periodical index in the EMC Library.” MSU Billings Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

# And how libraries delivered information was also analog



“Library Users, 1980.” Student using the library card catalog. MSU Billings Library. Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).



“Bringing Information to People June 1981.” OCLC Library, Archive, & Museum. Available through the [OCLC Film and Photo Archive](#).

# 1989 interlibrary loan reimbursement funded analog library services

## Interlibrary Loan Reimbursement

Sept. 30 was the end of the first quarter for the new Interlibrary Loan Reimbursement program funded as a result of the passage of HB193. Fifty-two libraries submitted a total of 7,610 transactions for reimbursement, at \$5.50 per transaction, for a grand total of \$41,855 to be paid to Montana libraries for sharing their resources with other Montana libraries. The total amount available in FY '90 for ILL reimbursement is \$200,000.

“1989-11 Montana State Library News – Volume 18, Number 6.” Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

FISCAL SUMMARY				
	FY 2010 Difference	FY 2011 Difference	FY 2012 Difference	FY 2013 Difference
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Revenue:</b>				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Impact-General Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Description of fiscal impact:** There is no fiscal impact to the state related to HB 0061.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### Assumptions:

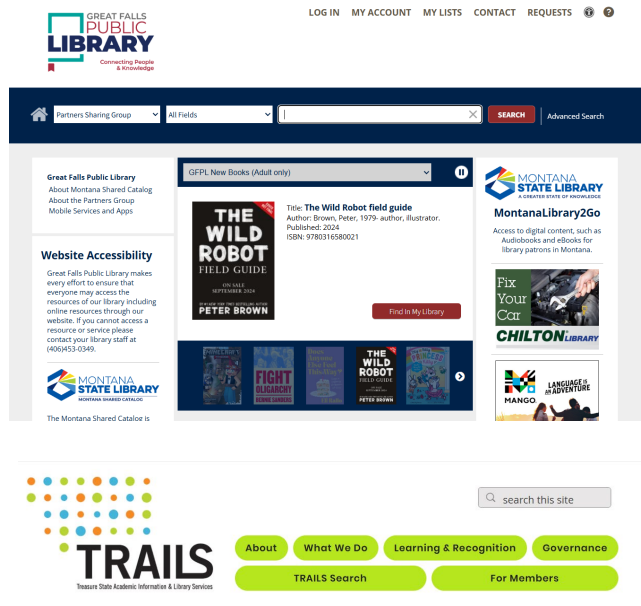
HB 61 revises certain provisions of the Information Access Montana Act; replaces the interlibrary loan reimbursement program with a statewide interlibrary resource-sharing program; and replaces the state multilibrary card with a statewide library access program. Currently there is an appropriation of \$197,771 for the interlibrary program included in HB 2 and there is no current funding for the multilibrary card program. HB 61 does not change the appropriation.

Legislative History – Montana Session Law, Chapter: 47, Session L: 2009, Bill Number: HB 61. Fiscal Note, prepared by Governor’s Office of Budget and Program Planning.

What does “books to people” mean in 2025?

# Current state of library resource-sharing

## Scalable Innovation



Administer library technology under shared contracts that save money and streamline support.

## Right-size Infrastructure



Move books to where they're needed instead of buying duplicate copies.

## Citizen Engagement



Support Montanans around the clock with digital collections, e-resources, and apps.

# What resource sharing options are available now?

Montana Shared  
Catalog

OCLC Group  
Services

Montana Courier  
Program

Montana History  
Portal

Montana Library2Go  
(Libby app)

Montana K-12  
Overdrive (Sora  
app)

Treasure State  
Academic  
Information &  
Library Services  
(TRAILS)

E-Resources

Resource Sharing  
Support Staff

# Montana Shared Catalog

The Montana Shared Catalog is a Library Management System for libraries and a Digital Card Catalog for patrons.

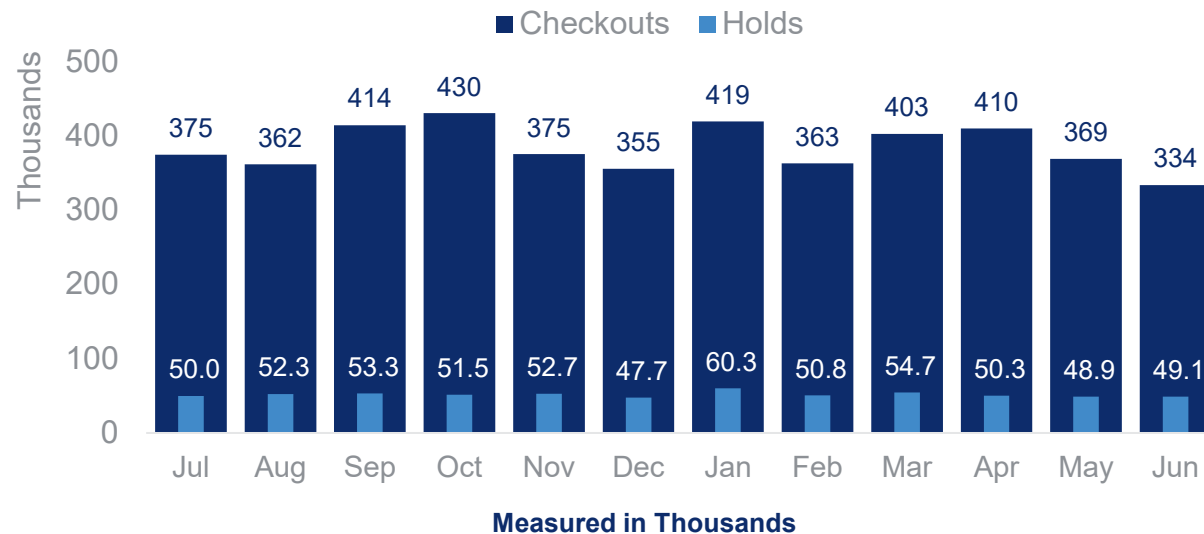
Statewide RFP	X
Statewide Contract	X
Statewide Platform	X
Shared Collection	P
Shared Expertise	X

Fiscal Year 2025 Montana Shared Catalog Data



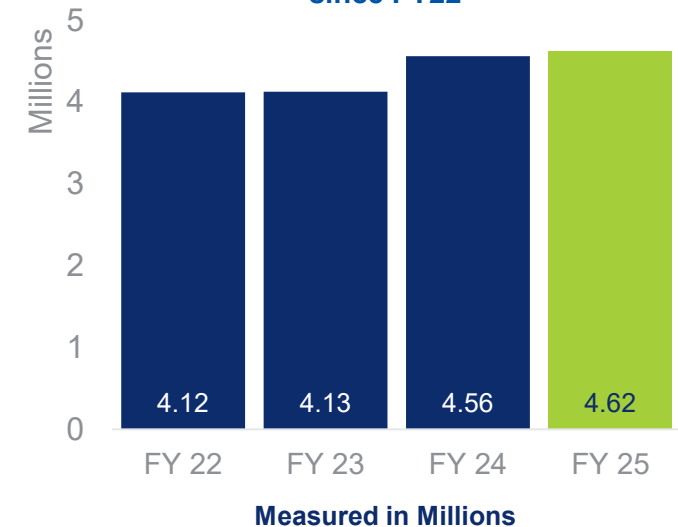
MSC Checkouts/Holds FY25:

Holds: 13%



MSC Checkouts:

12% Increase since FY22



# Montana Shared Catalog



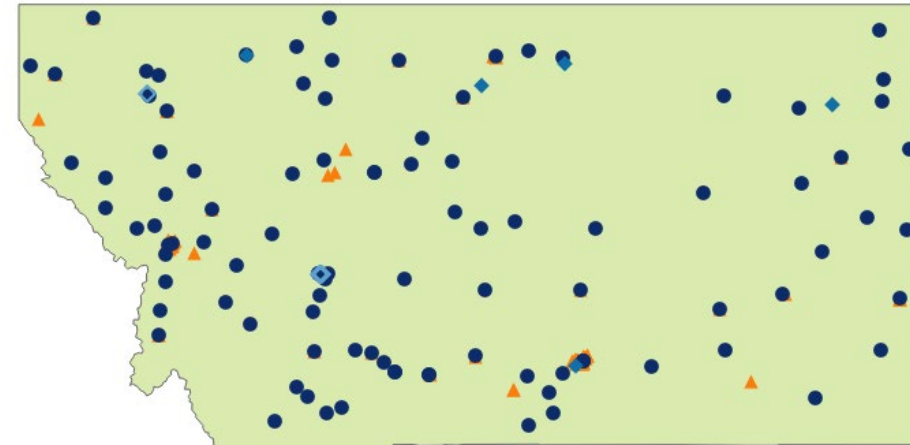
**Above: Harlowton Public Library Staff**

The Harlowton Public Library joined the Montana Shared Catalog in 2023. Harlowton saw a **13%** increase in checkouts in less than 3 years. Next step is to join the courier.



**Montana Shared Catalog-Partners Group Catalog from the Glendive Library.**

## Montana Shared Catalog Members



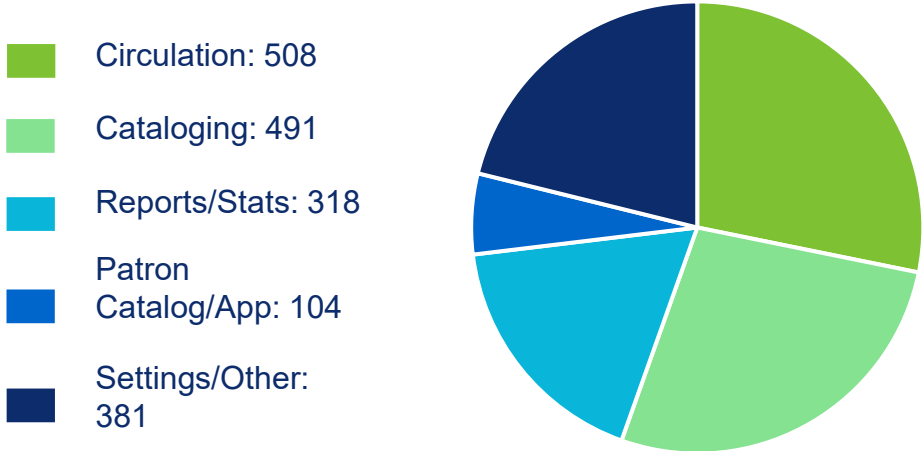
- ◆ Academic/Tribal (5)
- Public (100)
- ◇ Special (7)
- ▲ School (90)

The Montana Shared Catalog makes it easier for Montanans to explore and find the books that ignite their passions. What will you find?



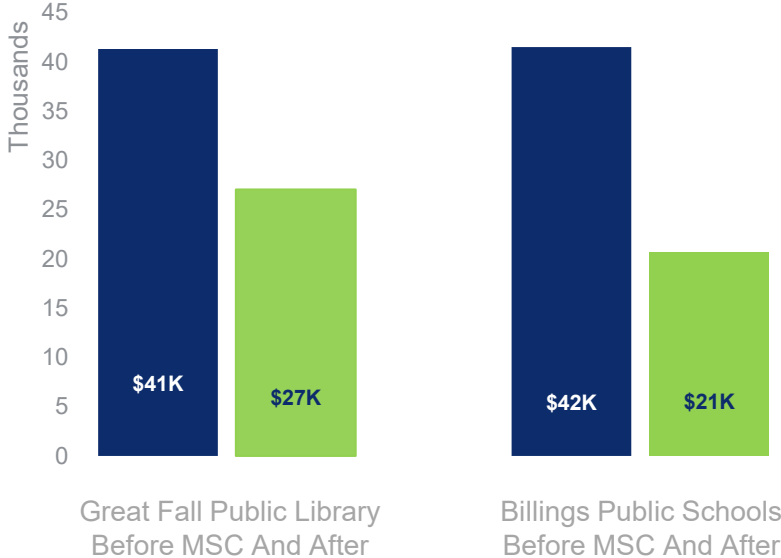
# Montana Shared Catalog: Financial benefit

MSC Staff Support Questions: FY25



77% of Montana public libraries have 3 or less full-time staff. They benefit from the support of 5 Montana State Library staff dedicated to the Montana Shared Catalog. The expertise of MSC staff to support local libraries with questions, trouble shooting, or new staff training is utilized daily and saving local dollars on specialized staffing needs, which is critical support for rural communities.

MSC Cost Savings Examples



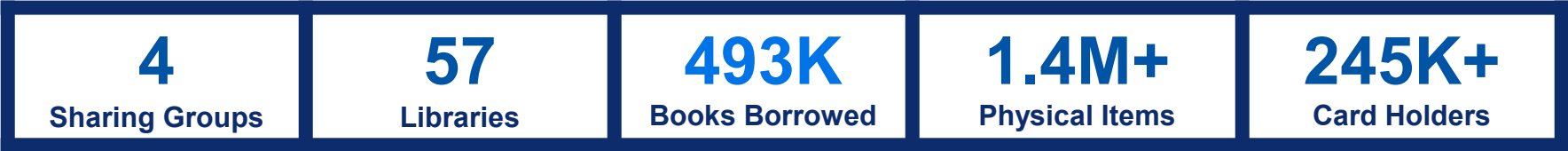
Larger Montana communities see direct cost savings in their Digital Card Catalog and Library Management Systems. Great Falls and Billings School District were using the same system, but switching over to MSC saved them thousands of dollars annually. Other large communities have seen savings through no longer needing inhouse servers, 3<sup>rd</sup> party tech support, or reporting services.

# MSC Resource Sharing Groups

Montanans choose their topics of interest and libraries collaborate to better meet their needs.

Statewide RFP	X
Statewide Contract	X
Statewide Platform	X
Shared Collection	P
Shared Expertise	X

## Fiscal Year 2025 Montana Sharing Group Data



Sharing groups increase the size of library collections exponentially



**Left: Whitefish, MT**  
**Population: 7,751**  
**Card Holders: 6,847**  
**Sharing Group Books Borrowed FY25: 20,828**



**Left: Drummond, MT**  
**Population: 272**  
**Card Holders: 529**  
**Sharing Group Books Borrowed FY25: 1,024**



**Left: Columbus, MT**  
**Population: 1,857**  
**Card Holders: 1,552**  
**Sharing Group Books Borrowed FY25: 4,403**



**Left: Terry, MT**  
**Population: 562**  
**Card Holders: 440**  
**Sharing Group Books Borrowed FY25: 1,083**

Books Borrowed FY25:



Other Books Borrowed: 14,914 **3%**

# Montana Courier Program

The Courier puts in the miles to deliver books to waiting Montanans.

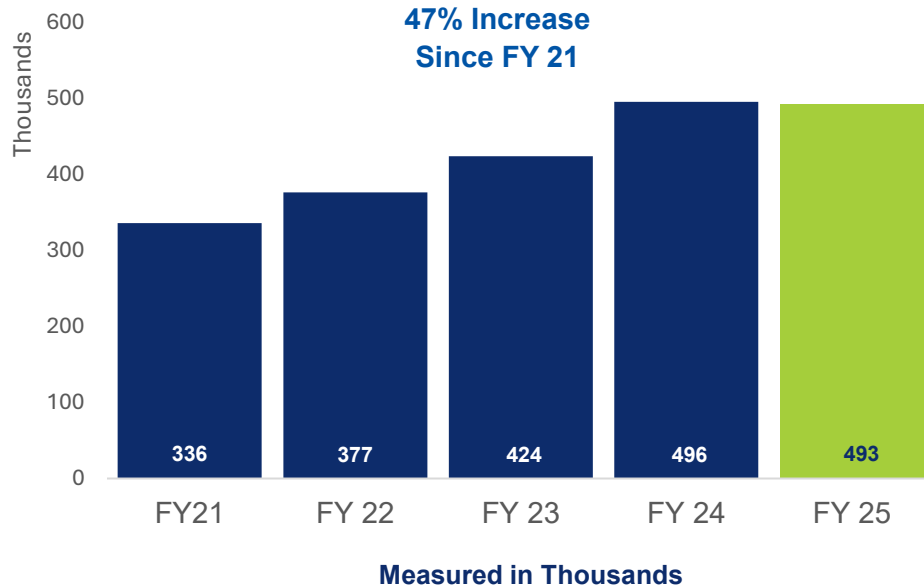
Statewide RFP	P
Statewide Contract	P
Statewide Platform	P
Shared Collection	X
Shared Expertise	X

## Fiscal Year 2025 Montana Courier Data



The courier serves 19 Montana libraries directly. 36 libraries have secondary access through volunteers and staff delivery.

## Books Shared Using Courier & MSC



**Left:** Annie and Cam from White Sulphur Springs learning about Elephants with books from across Montana!



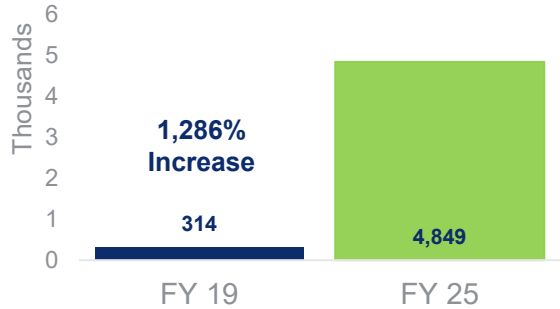
**Center:** Collection of books about bears from across Montana.



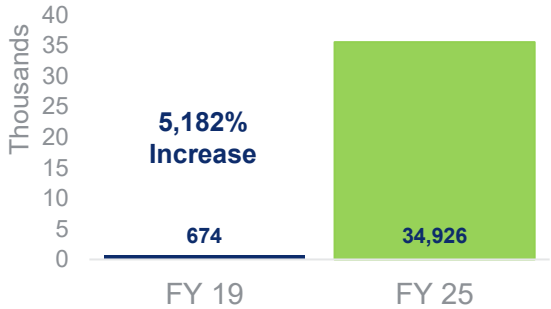
**Right:** Library Staff grabbing books to share with other Montanans.

# Montana Courier Program

**White Sulphur Springs  
Books Borrowed**



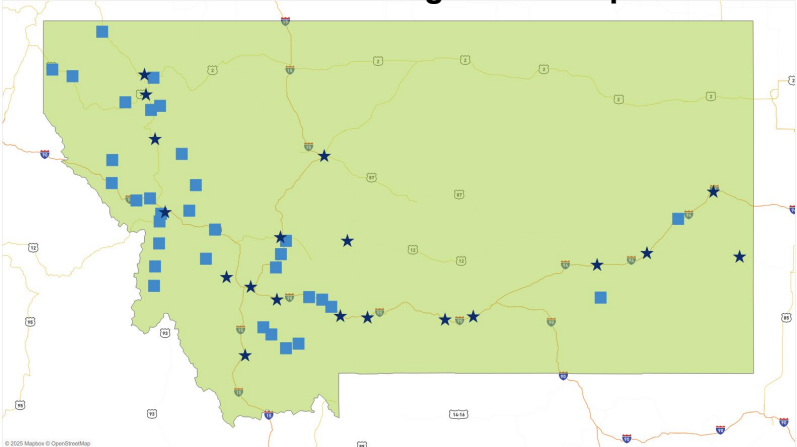
**Great Falls  
Books Borrowed**



The graphs above highlight the impact of access to the Courier and Sharing Groups. Great Falls and Meagher County are the newest libraries to join the Courier.



**Montana Courier Program Participants**



Library with direct courier service (19)

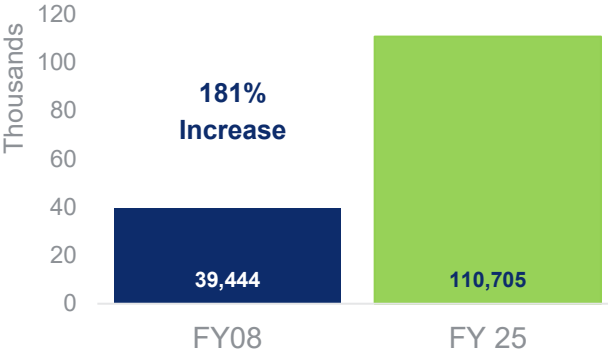


Library that relies on a local courier and/or volunteers (36)

**Glendive to Kalispell:  
569 Miles  
9 Hour Drive**

**Baker to Eureka:  
667 Miles  
11 Hour Drive**

**All Flathead County Libraries:  
Books Borrowed**



# Montana Courier Program: Financial benefit

**\$4.2 Million  
Saved on Shipping  
Costs FY25**

**\$7.9 Million  
Saved on Book  
Purchases FY25**

Shipping savings is based on the price of USPS Media Mail/Library Commercial vs Current Courier Contract Prices. The savings for book purchases is based on the average cost of books in 2023. Figures supplied by Follett and Baker & Taylor for the School Library Journal's Average New Title Prices Report. Average \$19.07.

	<b>USPS: Media Mail Rate</b>	<b>Courier-WPL</b>
Price Breakdown	\$4.25 1 Package, 1 Book Under 1 Lb.	\$126,579 FY25 Shipping \$15,000 Shipping Crates 508,107 Items
Cost to Send & Return Per Item	<b>\$8.50</b>	<b>\$0.28</b>

<b>Annual Comparison</b>
USPS: Media Mail Rate: \$4,318,909.50 Courier: \$141,579
<b>Annual Savings: \$4,177,330.50</b>

# Montana Courier Program: Hubs

## Primary Sorting Hubs

- **Missoula** receives from 32 libraries and sends to 28 locations. Weekly Books Sorted: 15,703
- **Kalispell** receives from 22 libraries and sends to 13 locations. Weekly Books Sorted: 8,549
- **Miles City** receives from 13 libraries and sends to 10 locations. Weekly Books Sorted: 1,026

## Sorting Centers in the Future

The new courier can add 42 additional stops at \$35, but **not having central sorting facilities available to libraries limits future expansion capabilities**. Sorting centers could...

1. Address limited square footage of libraries
2. Alleviate the additional cost and workload of primary hubs

## Lincoln & Ravalli Counties

Lincoln and Ravalli Counties have the highest number of books received per capita, but **both counties do not have direct access to the courier**.

- **Lincoln County** Send/Receive 46,161 books annually or 888 books weekly.
  - \$80 per stop vs \$35
- **Ravalli County** Send/Receive 82,997 books annually or 1,596 books weekly.
  - 2 days a week, but Ravalli County would need stops 4-5 days a week.



# MontanaLibrary2Go

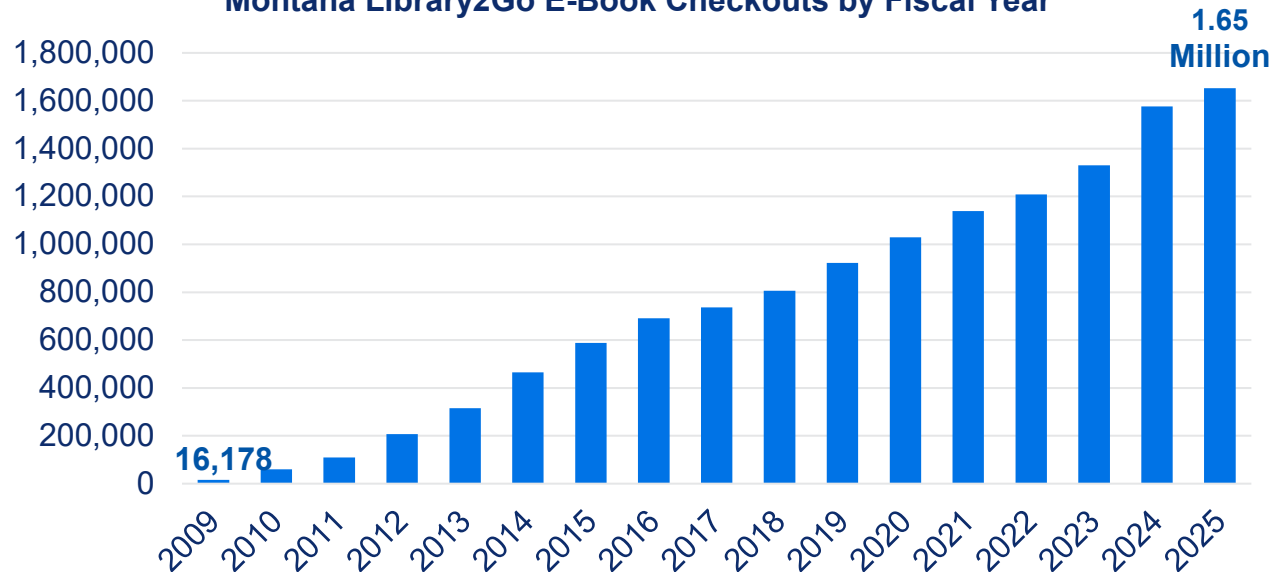
MontanaLibrary2Go is a shared collection of nearly 70,000 audiobooks and e-books, including contemporary, classic, and bestsellers, that Montanans can download from anywhere in the world.

Statewide RFP	X
Statewide Contract	X
Statewide Platform	X
Shared Collection	X
Shared Expertise	X

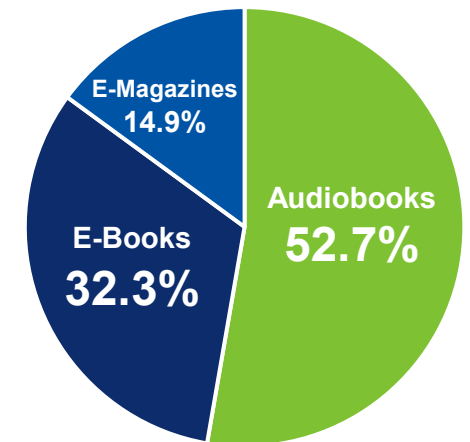
## Fiscal Year 2025 MontanaLibrary2Go Data



Montana Library2Go E-Book Checkouts by Fiscal Year

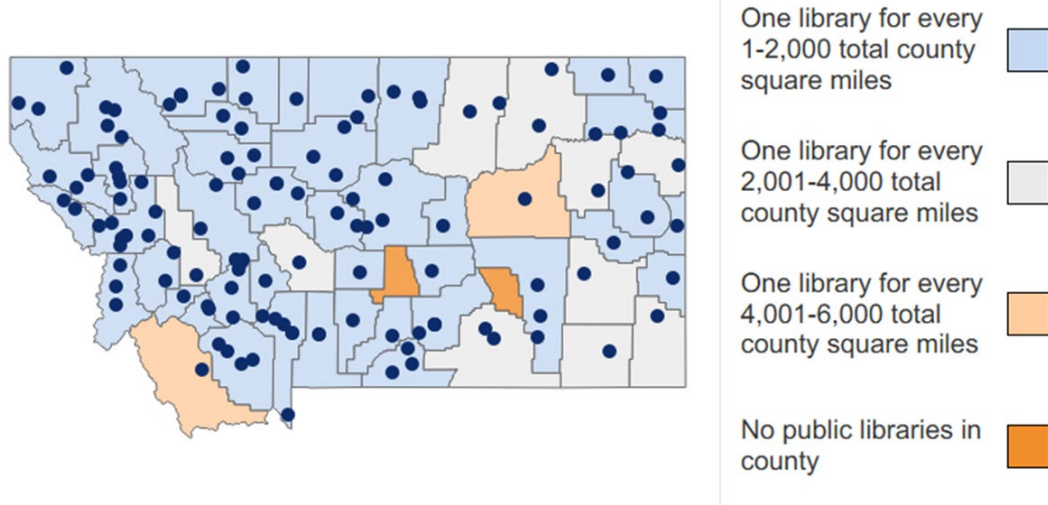


Collection breakdown



# MontanaLibrary2Go

## Library Access by County



Counties colored by how many public and tribal college libraries serve their residents compared to the county's total square miles. Dots show libraries.



*"I am basically home bound and use the ebooks often... The overall library is vital to my quality of life as a 71 year old. I must emphasize that- vital to my quality of life and as a lifeline to the world. Thank you!"*

**-Anonymous Patron Survey Response (2022)**



**Left: Valier, MT**  
**Population: 530**  
**Libby Checkouts**  
**FY25: 3,479**

**Right: Thompson Falls, MT**  
**Population: 1,526**  
**Libby Checkouts**  
**FY25: 10,618**



**Left: Red Lodge**  
**Population: 2,257**  
**Libby Checkouts**  
**FY25: 11,206**

**Right: Lewistown, MT**  
**Population: 5,952**  
**Libby Checkouts**  
**FY25: 20,057**

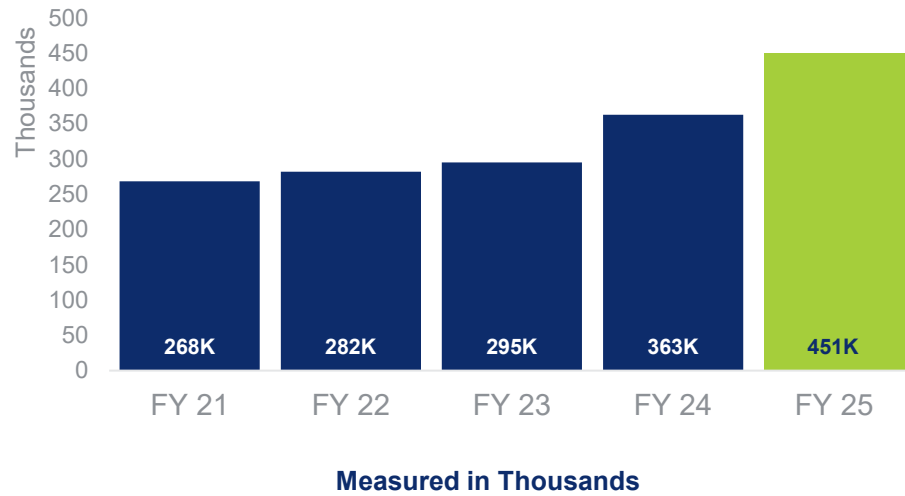


**MontanaLibrary2Go**  
**QR Code**

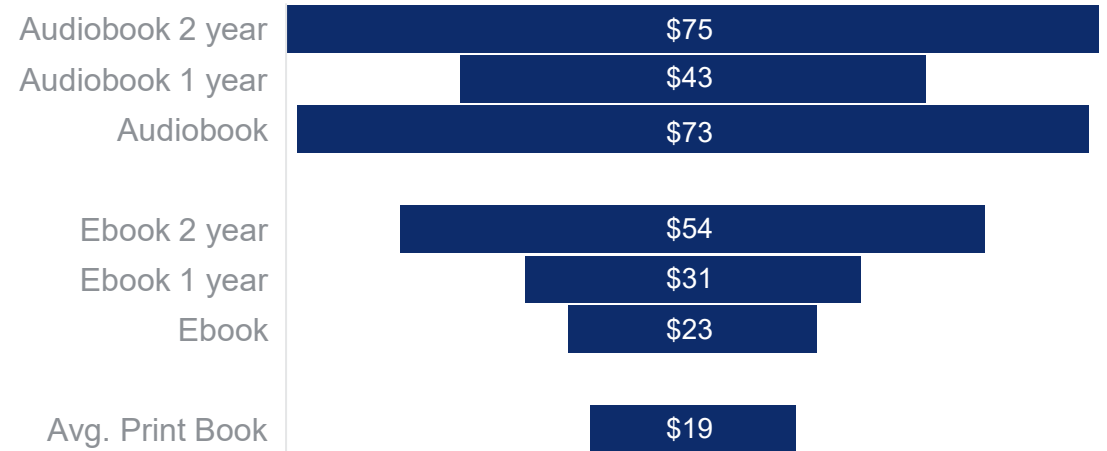


# MontanaLibrary2Go: Financial benefit

## Local Funding



## Average Cost by Book Type FY25



**40%+**

Annual funding goes towards books/audiobooks with a waitlist, yet the average number of days to wait for a title is 64 days and 45% of checkouts required a wait.

### Plentywood, MT

Population: 1,669

Checkouts: 7,129

FY25 Cost: \$1,490.25

Estimated Titles Contributed in FY25: 33-35 Titles

Access to 70,000+ Titles



# MontanaLibrary2Go: Purchase Models

## Purchase Models FY25

### Permanent:

1. OC/OU: 1,742 Titles (28%)

### Rental:

1. 1 Year: 1,539 Titles (25%)
2. 2 Year: 2,175 Titles (35%)
3. 100 Checkouts: 728 Titles (12%)  
-simultaneous use that helps reduce wait times.

**Not** all purchase models are an option for each title. Some provide choices, but many only provide 1 purchase model.

Ideally, MontanaLibrary2Go would like to purchase a permanent option for each title to remain in the collection, followed by rental purchase options to help reduce wait times and better meet the current need of Montanans.

## One Book Montana: A Community Read

This year One Book Montana is:

*"Becoming Little Shell: A Landless Indian's Journey Home"*  
by Chris La Tray, a Montana Author.

In the last year 1,047 Audiobooks have been checked out.

**100 Checkouts: \$79.92**

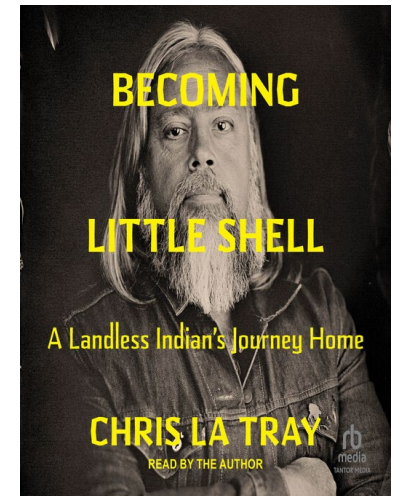
– \$799.20: 1,000 Checkouts

**OC/OU: \$49.95**

– \$49,950: 1,000 Checkouts

**Saved: \$49,150.80**

By purchasing one OC/OU this title will forever remain in our collection, but then purchasing ten of the 100 Checkout rental options allowed 1,000 additional Montanans to participate in the Community Read over the last 6 months. Humanities of Montana Purchased 700 of the checkouts this year.



# Montana History Portal

The Montana History Portal is an online source for digital collections about Montana’s cultural heritage and history.

Statewide RFP	X
Statewide Contract	X
Statewide Platform	X
Shared Collection	X
Shared Expertise	X

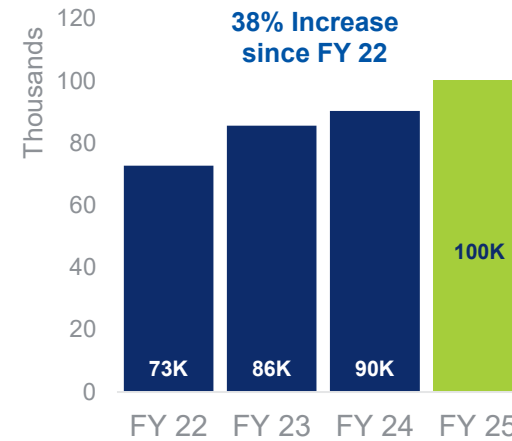
## Fiscal Year 2025 Montana History Portal Data



Above: Montana History Portal LEGO Challenge. Left-Right: Fire Lookout by West, Bannack by Abby, and Anaconda Smelter by William

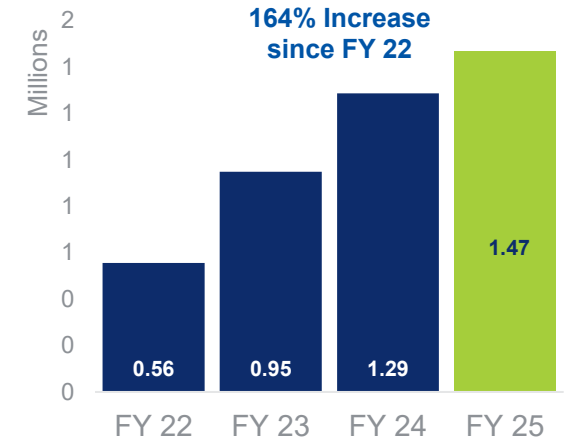
The Montana History Portal brings Montana history into the 21st century. Activities like the Lego Challenge combine history and STEAM learning, and writing contests build a love of history while enhancing writing skills.

### Items added to Portal



Measured in Thousands

### Portal Page Views



Measured in Millions

# Montana History Portal



The photo to the left is from the Native American Boarding Schools Exhibit, which saw 10,996 visits in FY25. Photo: Cut Bank Boarding School, year unknown. *Contributor: University of Montana Mansfield Library.*



A combine caravan in Sheridan County in 1952. This was a Facebook post with 1.6K likes and hundreds of comments from Montanans sharing their own harvest stories. *Contributor: Montana Historical Society Library and Archives.*

The Montana History Portal provides no-cost access to primary sources materials for Montana students of any age.

## Montana Collections: Document, Image, and Oral

The Montana History Portal has worked with hundreds of Montanans and institutions across the state to build a single platform with a wide variety of collections to represent our state.

**Document Collections:** Boone and Crocket Club Records, Grazing Districts, Enlistment Cards, Evalyn Cameron, and more!

**Image Collections:** Montana Historical Society, University of Montana Archival Photographs, Sheep Ranching in Judith Basin County, and more!

**Oral Histories:** Native Americans in the “Hi-line Metis”, farmers from the “Huntley Irrigation Project”, “Bud Moore”, a historical forester/trapper from the Bitterroot, and more!

History Portal



Facebook



# Montana History Portal: Financial benefit

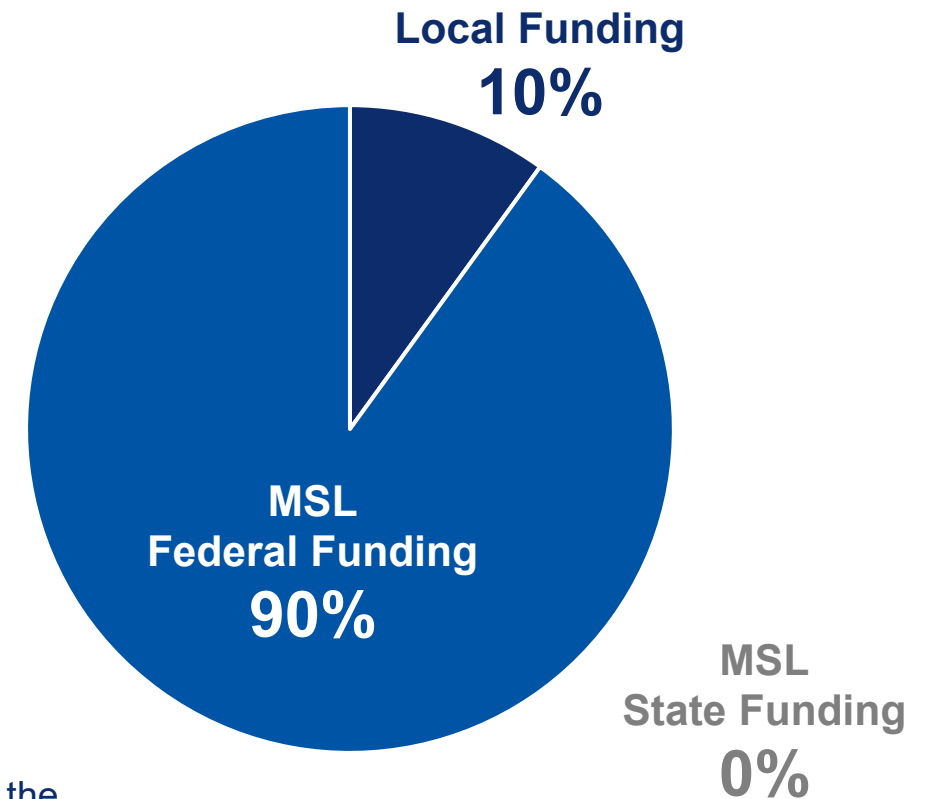
## Cost

- Platform: \$35,800
- Two Full Time Staff: \$190,500 (estimate)
  - Montana State Library-State Funding: \$0.00; 0%
  - Local Funding: \$17,000; 10%
  - Montana State Library-Federal Funding: \$153,189; 90%

Montana History Portal is supported by two MSL staff.

The Montana Historical Society pays the “Local Funding” of \$17,000 going towards the platform cost.

## Financial Contribution Proportions

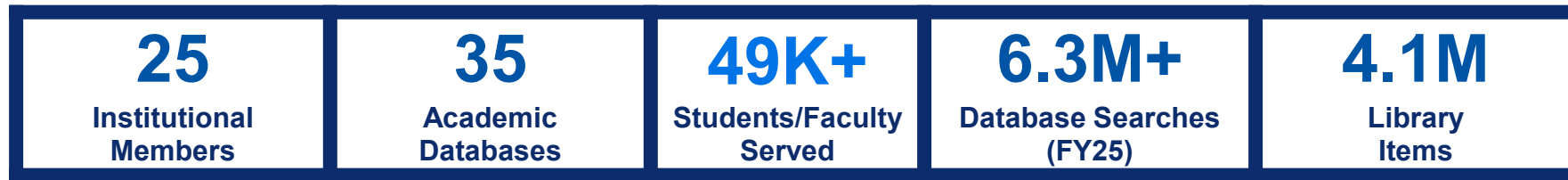


# TRAILS

Treasure State Academic Information and Library Services provides collaborative licensing and group purchasing of a library management system, E-resources and online databases.

Statewide RFP	X
Statewide Contract	P
Statewide Platform	P
Shared Collection	P
Shared Expertise	P

## TRAILS Data



### Return On Investment:

Maximizing the quality and quantity e-journals and research databases while supporting institutional accreditation requirements.



### Improved User Experience:

Students are set up for great success no matter their location because of increased familiarity with consistent resources, services, and interfaces shared across institutions.



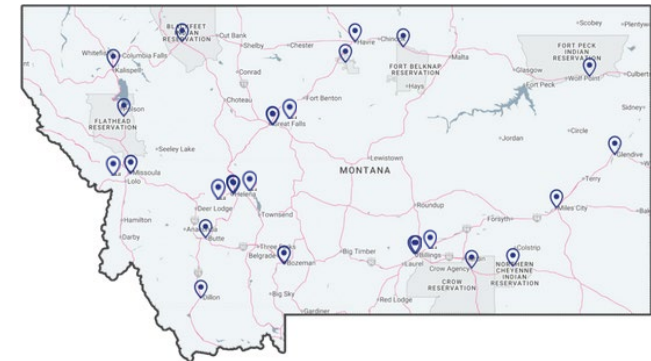
### Shared Expertise:

Members benefit from sharing knowledge via the consortium's committees, online forum, and professional development opportunities.



### Enhanced Teaching & Research:

Collection sharing facilitates the development of statewide available materials critical for research and development.



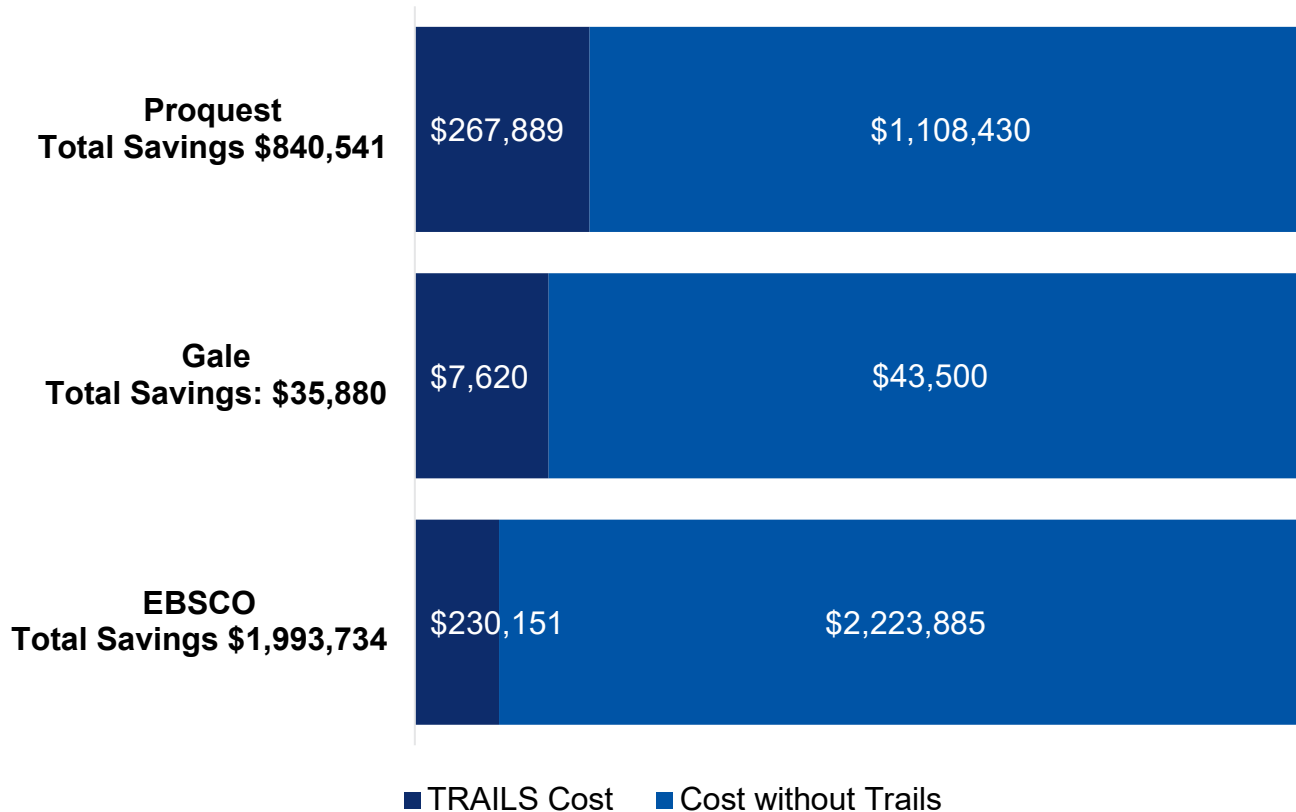
*"TRAILS ensures that I have access to the best possible books I need to keep learning and growing as an instructor and provide my students with the best education possible."*

**Matthew Hill, Ph.D.**

Great Falls College - MSU

# TRAILS: Financial benefit

## TRAILS Cost vs Cost without Trails (2024)



*“TRAILS allows the Corette Library at Carroll College to punch above our weight! The cost-effective shared resources significantly expand students’ access to vital resources.”*

**-Jenn Oates**  
Carroll College Library Director

*“Given the small campus size of Dawson Community College, the TRAILS consortium allows the Jane Carey Memorial Library to offer a wide variety of digital access that it otherwise could not afford. DCC students are able to access database formats that prepare them to transfer on to a four-year university with ease in research. The TRAILS members also offer wonderful support and are readily available to answer any questions!”*

**-BreAnn Miller, M.Ed.**  
Director of Academic Affairs and Library  
Dawson Community College

**TRAILS saves member institutions \$3,000,000+ annually.**

# E-Resources

There are numerous educational databases to support K-12 education, academic research, post-secondary education, professional and workforce development.

Statewide RFP	N
Statewide Contract	N
Statewide Platform	N
Shared Collection	N
Shared Expertise	N

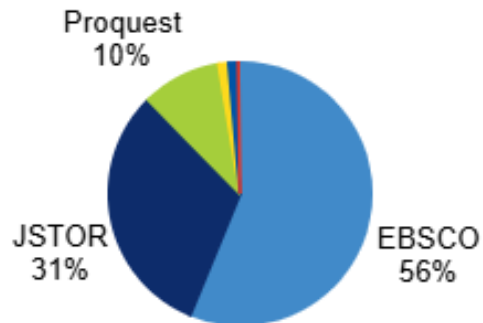
## State Employees

Databases available to all State of Montana Employees to conduct research and carry out projects.

Total State Database Searches FY25:

**4,700+**

State Database Searches FY25:



## Public Libraries

Montanans use databases to research family history, explore local news, and dig into their favorite hobbies.



# E-Resources: Schools

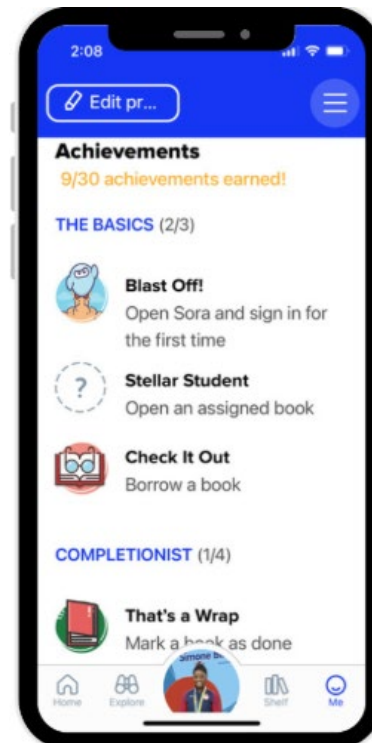
## Educational E-Resources

These options provide age-appropriate, authoritative content that allow teachers to support curriculum in the classroom and give students the opportunity to research a wide variety of topics from anywhere.



## SORA

The "Libby App" for schools.



*"With Sora, we serve a variety of MS student interests that are beyond our library funds for print materials. Access to audiobooks allows our students of all ability levels to have access to engaging books. Our Battle of the Books participants can be on par with the rest of our state by using Sora to prepare."*

**- Lockwood Teacher**

# Resource Sharing: School Libraries

## Resource Sharing Study Survey Responses- Count By Community

<b>Class AA (5/8) 63%</b>
<b>Class A (10/22) 45%</b>
<b>Class B (7/44) 16%</b>
<b>Class C (6/96) 6%</b>
<b>K-8: No High School (2)</b>

## Current Resource Sharing Participation- Count By Individual Schools

<b>Montana Shared Catalog: 90 (16%)</b>
<b>OCLC Group Services: 108 (19%)</b>
<b>Courier 0: (0%)</b>
<b>SORA (School Libby): 132 (24%)</b>
<b>E-Resources- Unknown- Not Centralized</b>

## State Staffing for Public School Librarian Specialist Positions:

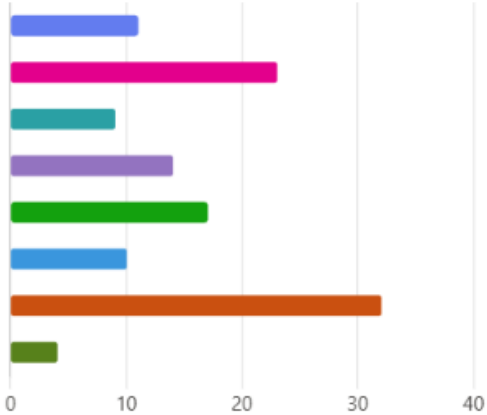
- OPI: School Library Specialist Position lost in 1993.
- OPI: School Library Specialist Position reinstated in 2007.
- OPI: School Library Specialist Position eliminated in 2016.
- MSL: Has never had a School Library Specialist Position.
- 2016 Coal Severance Budget cuts ended statewide E-Resource Database contracts.

This survey will remain open, and we will continue to try to increase survey responses to help us identify potential future cooperative resource sharing options for school libraries, including E-Resources/ Databases.

# School Resource Sharing Survey Responses

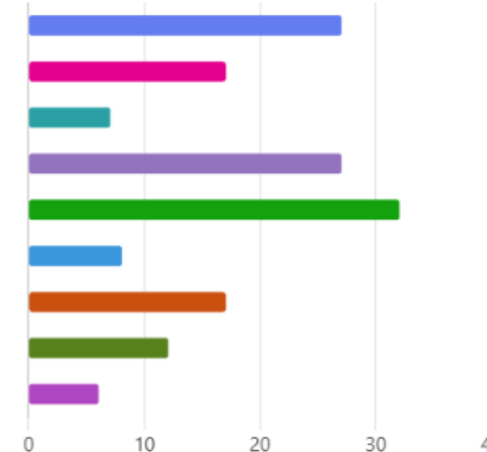
Are there any resource sharing services you would like to use, but do not currently use, if barriers like cost, training or technology were reduced or eliminated? Select all that apply.

- Montana Shared Catalog 11
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL) using OCLC 23
- Cataloging and Metadata using OCLC 9
- Sora (Overdrive for schools) 14
- Montana History Portal 17
- No, I do not want to add any additional services 10
- Maybe, I would need to learn more about these services. 32
- Other 4



What barriers or challenges have you encountered regarding resource sharing services? Select all that apply.

- Limited training or support 27
- Technology or system issues 17
- Collection gaps (not finding needed materials) 7
- Cost or affordability of services 27
- Lack of awareness of available services 32
- Not enough staff or vacant positions 8
- Other teaching responsibilities 17
- I have not experienced any barriers or challenges 12
- Other 6



Note- Class B has 16% response rate and Class C has 6% response rate. We would prefer to continue to push this survey to get more adequate information from Montana School Libraries.

# Resource Sharing Services

Montana Shared  
Catalog

OCLC Group  
Services

Montana Courier  
Program

Montana History  
Portal

Montana Library2Go  
(Libby app)

Montana K-12  
Overdrive (Sora  
app)

Treasure State  
Academic  
Information &  
Library Services  
(TRAILS)

E-Resources

Resource Sharing  
Support Staff

# Current Cost of Resource Sharing

Resource Sharing Program	MSL State Funds	Local Funds*	MSL Federal Funds	Total FY 25 Investment
Montana Shared Catalog	\$101,310	\$457,699	\$248,763	<b>\$807,772</b>
OCLC Group Services	\$101,161	\$311,409	\$75,679	<b>\$488,249</b>
Montana Courier Program	\$0	\$114,042	\$12,537	<b>\$126,579</b>
Montana History Portal	\$0	\$17,000	\$153,189	<b>\$170,189</b>
Montana Library2Go (Libby app)	\$0	\$450,969	\$20,000	<b>\$470,969</b>

\*Local includes all funds contributed by participating libraries, which may come from a variety of sources. Local funds could not be calculated for E-Resources.

# Current Cost of Resource Sharing (Continued)

Resource Sharing Program	MSL State Funds	Local Funds*	MSL Federal Funds	Total FY 25 Investment
Montana K-12 Overdrive (Sora app)	\$0	\$64,240	\$0	\$64,240
Treasure State Academic Information & Library Services (TRAILS)	\$0	\$2,836,121	\$34,034	\$2,870,155
E-Resources	\$0	Unknown	\$0	Unknown
Resource Sharing Support Staff	\$17,973	\$0	\$152,881	\$170,854

# Current Cost of Resource Sharing Summary

Resource Sharing Program	MSL State Funds	Local Funds*	MSL Federal Funds	Total FY 25 Investment
All Programs	\$220,444	\$4,251,480	\$697,083	\$5,169,007

- **LSTA Grants to States covers 13%** of library resource sharing program costs, yet these funds make up nearly half of MSL's total LSTA award (\$1.4M in FY 2025).
- **Local funds contribute over 82%** of total program investment. The actual percentage is likely higher because local spending on e-resources (such as databases and other digital materials) is not centrally tracked and cannot be reported. Sadly, some libraries cannot afford to participate in these services
- **MSL State funds contribute 4%** of the total resource sharing investment, the smallest source of support.

# What does a resilient funding model that services all Montanans look like?

- **Present state:** resource sharing services support some, but not all, Montanans and are funded 82% local, 13% federal, and 4% state.
- **Desired state:** resource sharing serves all Montanans through a more stable funding model that can weather changes without disruption in service to Montanans.



# Patrons demand digital age services, but libraries' funding is based on an analog resource sharing model

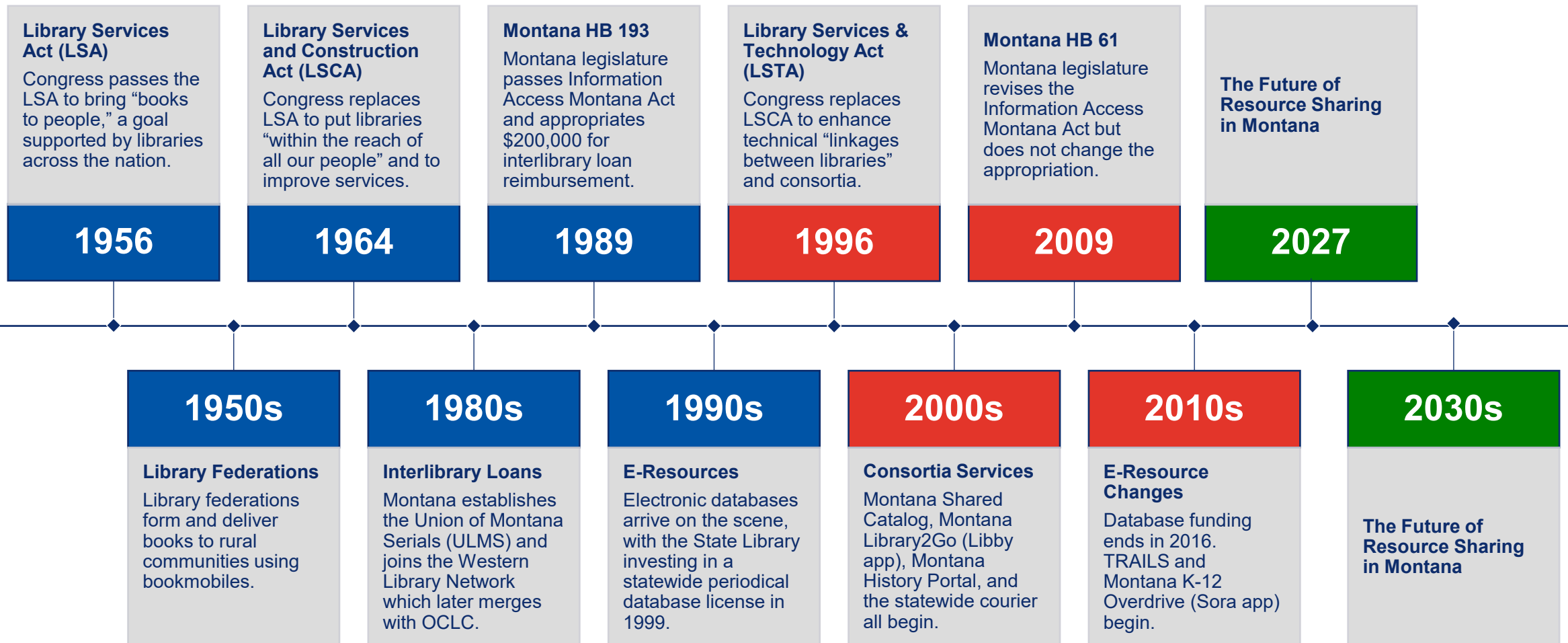
- At 1989 rates of \$5.50 a transaction, 2024 reimbursements for public libraries alone would equal **\$2.4 million**
- But 36 years later, annual funding is still \$200,000 (equates to **\$0.46/transaction**)
- This amount doesn't account for the thousands of ebooks shared each year nor does it fund online periodical databases, key components of resource sharing not present in 1989.

HB193. Fifty-two libraries submitted a total of 7,610 transactions for reimbursement, at \$5.50 per transaction, for a grand total of \$41,855 to be paid to Montana libraries for sharing their resources with other Montana libraries. The total amount available in FY '90 for ILL reimbursement is \$200,000.

“1989-11 Montana State Library News – Volume 18, Number 6.” Available on the [Montana History Portal](#).

What does “books to the people” mean in the future?

# What does library resource sharing look like **today** and **tomorrow**?



# Meeting tomorrow's demands



The demand for information is accelerating faster than ever.



Understanding and using information grows more complex every day.



Libraries help people keep pace with this shifting information landscape.



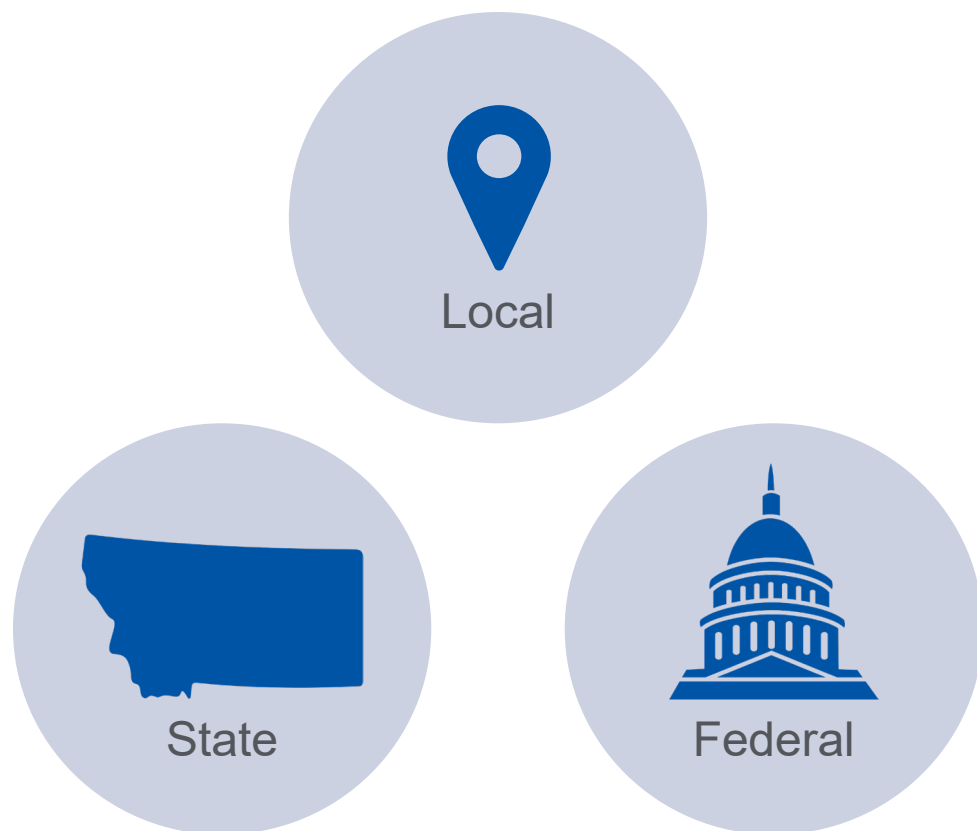
Resource sharing multiplies each library's capacity to respond.

# Preparing for the Future

“I think the options listed are fairly comprehensive at this time, but **demand for library services and needs of Montanans change over time** with new technology, costs of services...”

- Library Resource Sharing Priorities, survey respondent

# Resilient Mix of Funding Sources



# Expand the Proprietary Account

Gives flexibility so as new services emerge, there is a model in place for funding them



Allows libraries to select and pay for only those services that fit their communities' needs



Ensures local libraries continue to have skin in the game



Reduces administrative burden by standardizing the way libraries pay for these services

Jennie Stapp  
State Librarian  
jstapp2@mt.gov



Thank you!

