



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

<http://fwp.mt.gov/>



MONTANA
**Natural Heritage
Program**

<http://mntnhp.org/>

From: Information Management Bureau Chief, Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Senior Zoologist, Montana Natural Heritage Program

RE: Coordinated Handling of Animal Observation Data in Montana

Date: February 20th, 2008

To: Agency Partners and Data Contributors

The purpose of this memo is to share with our partners how Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP) and the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) are cooperating in the collection and management of observation data for Montana's animals and to inform potential data contributors of appropriate data contacts within the participating agencies. Our goal is to work effectively with all collectors of this data to ensure that it is gathered and disseminated efficiently so that it is available for resource management.

MNHP was established by the Montana State Legislature in 1983 and charged with statutory responsibility for the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information documenting Montana's flora, fauna, and biological communities. The program is part of the Montana State Library's Natural Resource Information System and is operated through a contract with the University of Montana.

MFWP has long collected and managed data on harvested fish and game species to provide the information needed for wildlife management. As a result of the completion of Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS) in 2005, MFWP has taken a more active role in the development of databases for managed nongame species. In the states best interest, MNHP and MFWP have formed a collaborative working relationship on data centralization.

Continued integration of data acquisition and management by MNHP and MFWP recently culminated in the development of an MOU outlining the relationship and respective roles of the two agencies in the acquisition, management, and dissemination of animal information. MFWP is solely responsible for acquiring and managing information on *harvested game species, all fish species, and data associated with scientific collector's permits*. MFWP also leads the acquisition and management of data for *managed nongame species* with support from MNHP. MNHP leads the acquisition and management of data for *unmanaged nongame species* with support from MFWP.

In recent years MNHP and MFWP have partnered on products such as the Montana Animal Species of Concern report and the online Animal Field Guide. In addition, both agencies have recently developed a variety of web-based map products for Montana's wildlife managers and the general public.

The back of this letter further clarifies the partnership and roles of MFWP and MNHP with regard to gathering and disseminating information on animal species in Montana. We look forward to your continued support of our efforts to centralize and deliver data on Montana's animal species. Please contact us with questions regarding data submissions, data management, or dissemination of information.

Sincerely,

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DATA ACQUISITION ROLES

Data Category	Data Subcategory	MFWP Role	MNHP Role
Scientific Collectors Permit Data	All data associated with permits issued by MFWP	Primary	-
Fisheries Monitoring Data	Managed Game Species	Primary	-
	Unmanaged Nongame Species	Primary	Partner
Terrestrial Species Monitoring Data	Managed Game Species	Primary	-
	Managed Nongame Species	Primary	Partner
	Unmanaged Nongame Species	Partner	Primary
Miscellaneous Observations	MFWP Agency Data	Primary	-
	Other State Agencies	Partner	Partner
	Federal Agency Data	Partner	Primary
	Public Data	Partner	Primary

PRODUCTS

Product	Product Access	Description
Montana Field Guide	http://fieldguide.mt.gov/	Range maps, images, species and habitat descriptions and references
MNHP Tracker	http://mtnhp.org/tracker	View and enter species occurrence data. Agencies and general public have access to different levels of information
FWP GIS Data	http://fwp.mt.gov/	Over 70 GIS layers available including administrative boundaries and species distributions
Montana Animal Species of Concern Report	http://mtnhp.org/Reports/2006_MASOC.pdf	Current report on Montana's Animal Species of Concern (SOC)
MFWP Mediated Requests	Contact Janet Hess-Herbert	Data not available on public website
MNHP Mediated Request	http://nris.mt.gov/reqapp/userMain.asp	Species Occurrence data for Environmental Reviews and other customized requests

CONTACTS FOR DATA REQUESTS & SCIENTIFIC COLLECTORS PERMITS

Data Requests For:	
Unmanaged Nongame Animals	Bryce Maxell - MNHP Zoologist (406) 444-3655, bmaxell@mt.gov
Managed Terrestrial Game	Adam Messer – MFWP Data Analyst (406) 444-0095, amesser@mt.gov
Managed Terrestrial Nongame Animals	Scott Story – MFWP Data Analyst (406) 444-3759, sstory@mt.gov
Fisheries	Bill Daigle – MFWP Fish Data Manager (406) 444-3737, bdaiGLE@mt.gov
Scientific Collector's Permits & Reports:	
Wildlife Scientific Collector's Permits	Laura Juvan-George, MFWP Wildlife (406) 444-7321, ljuvan-george@mt.gov
Fisheries Scientific Collector's Permits	Nancy Podolinsky, MFWP Fisheries (406) 444-7319, npodolinsky@mt.gov