EPA NATIONAL LIBRARY NETWORK

Strategic Plan
FY 2015-2017

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MESSAGE FROM THE CIO

On behalf of the Office of Environmental Information (OEI), I am pleased to present U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Library Network Strategic Plan for fiscal years (FY) 2015-2017. This plan outlines the Library Network's vision for delivering information services in support of EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment. The Library Network includes libraries and document repositories across the Agency, including many valuable electronic resources. The Network has a successful history of providing outstanding library services and has evolved over the years into a robust and collaborative organization serving the environmental information needs of EPA staff and the public.

As EPA's Chief Information Officer, I am committed to ensuring access to the highest quality environmental information to all of our stakeholders. The Library Network is one of the pillars of this service. The Network has worked diligently to capitalize on the opportunities provided by advances in information technology and offers many innovative services, including the "Ask a Librarian" live chat reference service, a successful webinar training program and electronic access to EPA publications through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) digital repository.

The Library Network's new Strategic Plan is ambitious in scope and scale, and it builds upon the progress made under the previous plan for FY 2012-2014. Like the preceding plan, this new Strategic Plan lays out goals and actions in four key areas: Library Services; Library Network Governance; Electronic and Physical Collections; and Communications, Outreach and Training.

EPA is committed to ensuring that EPA staff and library users have access to the environmental information and resources they need to conduct their work and make informed decisions. As we move forward, EPA will leverage the skills and professional expertise of the Library Network to harness the power of information for our customers and stakeholders. I am confident that through the implementation of this plan, the Library Network will continue to enhance its well-deserved reputation for high quality library services.

Regards,
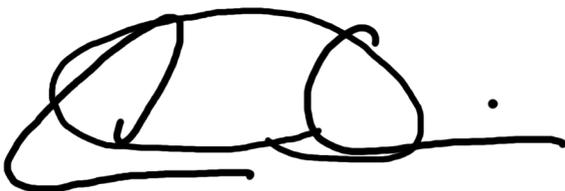
Ann Dunkin, P.E.
Chief Information Officer

1.1 Overview

The EPA National Library Network (Library Network or Network) is composed of libraries and document repositories located in EPA's Headquarters, regions, field offices, research centers and specialized laboratories. In addition to its professional library staff and print collections, the Library Network supports and makes available many virtual library resources. Together, these provide Agency staff and the public with a wide range of access to EPA information and essential library services.

In 2011, EPA published the *EPA National Library Network Strategic Plan: FY 2012-2014*, which forms the basis for this follow-on plan for FY 2015-2017. The Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014 focused on building a more fully-distributed and coordinated Network community able to leverage expertise and resources to deliver critical information services. Appendix A details the numerous accomplishments the Network has achieved in accordance with this first plan. Today's collaborative Library Network provides more streamlined library operations with fewer redundancies, which exemplifies the One EPA principles of cooperation and collaboration.

Like the Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014, a cross-Agency workgroup developed the new plan to provide a roadmap for maintaining a robust network of libraries. This document, *EPA National Library Network Strategic Plan: FY 2015-2017* (Plan), outlines a three-year strategy for building on the Library Network's past successes and accomplishments to offer employees and the public convenient and timely access to environmental information. The Plan supports the realization of the Library Network's vision and mission and will help ensure the future sustainability of EPA's library services.

The Library Network's significant progress toward the ambitious goals outlined within this document will demonstrate to the Agency and the public its commitment to providing the best possible library services to its patrons. These goals are enumerated throughout this report, and also listed in Appendix B.

The EPA National Library Network is already a highly collaborative and coordinated community that provides outstanding library services to its customers. Network librarians are actively engaged in daily operations and strive to help the Network realize efficiencies in the delivery of the Agency's library services. The librarians support many Network projects, including the EPA National Library Catalog, the webinar-based National Training Program, the "Ask A Librarian" live chat reference service and the *Core List for an Environmental Reference Collection*. Network librarians collaborate extensively to share expertise, evaluate and recommend resources, manage Agency-wide electronic subscriptions and address cataloging and digitization backlogs. Appendix C delineates the structure of the Library Network, including the new National Library Council, and tools available to library users.

Library Network Mission:
*The EPA National Library Network serves the needs of
EPA staff and the public by using the latest information
technologies and developing innovative services to acquire,
organize and deliver timely access to accurate information.*

1.2   Guiding Principles

This Plan is built upon the following guiding principles. The Library Network will work to:

- Develop library services that align with Agency and local missions and priorities.
- Provide EPA with access to library services and collections.
- Provide the public with access to Agency information and publications.
- Collaborate with users to meet evolving information needs.
- Pursue appropriate use of technology to support library services.
- Respond to all library requests in a timely manner and in the most appropriate format.

1.3   Network Priorities

The guiding principles drive the day-to-day work of the Library Network. Based on the guiding principles and the future direction of the Library Network, EPA developed the following priorities for FY 2015-2017:

- Provide fully accessible collections and resources in the most appropriate format to support the Agency's mission.
- Increase visibility of the Library Network and its services.
- Utilize a responsive and collaborative organizational structure to provide effective library services to customers.
- Continue coordination and collaboration among Network libraries to ensure services make efficient use of expenditures.
- Strengthen the Library Network governance structure to increase stakeholder input and support.
- Meet changing demands from users for accurate and timely information.
- Leverage technology to deliver point-of-need access to library services for EPA staff and the public.
- Encourage information literacy among EPA staff to increase research efficiency.

1.4   Drivers for Change

In developing the EPA National Library Network Strategic Plan for FY 2015-2017, EPA conducted an updated Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis with Network librarians in July 2014 to highlight drivers for change. Among the Network strengths were the coordinated and collaborative librarian community and robust tools for sharing information. Acknowledged weaknesses focused on the lack of a common funding strategy for libraries and information services. Opportunities for development included expanding the reach of librarians' expertise to knowledge management and data curation. Perceived threats centered on ongoing budget constraints accompanied by the rising costs of subscriptions and other information resources. Appendix D details the complete SWOT analysis.

The implementation of this follow-on Strategic Plan will enable the EPA National Library Network to continue its tradition of providing innovative, essential library services in support of the Agency's mission. The following sections detail the strategic goals and actions the Library Network will undertake in FY 2015-2017 to achieve the priorities set forth in the preceding Overview section. This Plan organizes the goals and actions around four strategic improvement areas: Library Services; Library Network Governance; Electronic and Physical Collections; and Communications, Outreach and Training.

2.1   Library Services

Moving forward, EPA will continue to focus on library services as a key objective in maintaining a robust, responsive Library Network. The following sections describe the actions the Library Network will undertake in FY 2015-2017 to maintain robust services for library users.

2.1.1   Increase Service Coordination

The Library Network will continue coordination and collaboration among Network libraries to best serve users, ensuring access to information for all EPA patrons while making efficient use of Agency expenditures. Existing across time zones and consisting of independently managed libraries, the Network faces the challenge of operating as a cohesive unit in which employees and the public receive the same level of service regardless of the library they use. To ensure that library services are available when and where needed, the Network will continue to expand services and enhance tools to meet users' needs. To this end, the Library Network will:

- Expand the "Ask A Librarian" service to ensure that users nationwide are able to reach a librarian during business hours.

- Explore and implement collaborative agreements with EPA program offices and regions to facilitate information sharing.

- Explore and establish Agency-wide license agreements for additional resources to meet the wide variety of growing research needs.

- Provide clear guidance via Library Network policies and procedures and encourage sharing of best practices among libraries and other organizations.

2.1.2   Enable User Access with Tools and Resources

With today's technology-driven information services, it is incumbent upon libraries to enable internal and external users to access information independently. To keep pace with users' changing expectations and new technologies, the Network will draw upon librarians' expertise to expand and enhance Network tools and resources. A robust set of carefully selected and managed resources will ensure critical information is available to support EPA and public decision-making. To facilitate users' access to information, the Network will:

- Create Desktop Library guidance that defines roles and responsibilities for maintenance and management of the Desktop Library.

- Explore and implement enhancements to the EPA Desktop Library's Electronic Resources Management (ERM) system, such as a federated search capability to enable searching all content at once rather than each resource individually.

- Continue to support the Online Library System (OLS) workgroup and the ongoing enhancement of the Library Catalog by collecting feedback from users and librarians and recommending enhancements, as appropriate.

- Support the NSCEP digital repository by evaluating collections, providing materials for digitization and making recommendations for enhancements to NSCEP when appropriate or when requested by NSCEP representatives.

- Expand the Public Access Knowledgebase and perform regular maintenance to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate content is published and available to all patrons.

2.1.3   Ensure Timely Delivery of Quality Services across All Libraries

The Library Network strives to provide timely, high quality services to all patrons. Going forward, the Network must explore new and innovative service models and consider how the use of Agency-approved mobile devices and other technological advancements affect service delivery. The Library Network will:

- Match library services to the most advanced technology available within the Agency.

- Explore evolving options of meeting patrons' needs regardless of location in response to the increased use of telework and unexpected closures of EPA facilities due to inclement weather or other events.

- Benchmark other libraries to explore new and innovative service models.

- Consider how Agency-sanctioned mobile devices and other technological advancements affect methods of service delivery.

2.2   Library Network Governance

The Library Network's governance process provides oversight for the global operation of libraries and ensures coordination across the Network. With increasing demands for information and continuing resource constraints, a robust Library Network governance structure is necessary to streamline operations, eliminate redundancies and contain costs while leveraging the strengths of all libraries to meet user needs.

2.2.1   Develop and Cultivate Formal Mechanisms for Management and Stakeholder Input

With the establishment of the National Library Council, the Library Network has a formal mechanism for obtaining senior-level and stakeholder points-of-view and expertise. The interaction between the National Library Council and Library Network will benefit the Library Network by providing a channel for communications

with internal stakeholders. The National Program Manager (NPM) represents the Network to external stakeholders and strives to increase awareness of EPA's libraries through outreach activities that strengthen relationships with these groups. To this end, the Library Network will:

- Support and participate in National Library Council meetings and coordinate information requests for decision-making.

- Provide guidance to Network libraries and library users when changes to EPA systems affect the use of library resources and equipment.

- Strengthen relationships with external stakeholder groups, including library professional associations, the federal library community and other interested stakeholders.

2.2.2   Evaluate Funding Processes to Ensure Sustainability of Library Services

The Library Network provides access to a wide variety of information resources that continue to see rising customer use and increasing costs. In an era of shrinking resources, the Library Network must work with stakeholders to seek solutions to funding challenges, which will help ensure the long-term sustainability of library services within the Agency. The Library Network will:

- Work with the National Library Council to evaluate the funding process to identify redundancies and areas for increased efficiency in resource procurement and service provision.

- Compile and assess Agency-wide information resource needs and share with decision makers.

2.2.3   Increase Coordination and Participation in Library Network Operations

The EPA National Library Network is a highly collaborative and coordinated organization. Such collaboration is encouraged by EPA senior management through its One EPA initiative and presents an excellent opportunity for the most efficient use of funding and effective use of library services within the Agency. With the emergence of new technologies, the role of the librarian is expanding to more active and integrated members of research teams and partners in data creation and management instead of simply providers of information. Increasing Library Network coordination and collaboration remains critical, and the Library Network will:

- Explore opportunities to expand the role of librarians within the Agency.

- Establish a federal and contractor workgroup within the Network to foster communication, clarify the contracting process and identify additional opportunities for collaboration.

- Work with Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) to communicate best practices of contracts management to further the efficient and effective use of library services.

2.3   Electronic and Physical Collections

The Library Network's collections provide valuable information to EPA staff and the public through physical and electronic resources. Network Libraries hold more than 343,000 cataloged titles in their collections, including books, EPA publications and other government publications, journals, audio-visual materials and microfiche. Overall, local libraries manage the collections with limited informal coordination. Duplication within the Library Network's collections represents a potential area for reducing redundancy and saving resources.

2.3.1   Increase Discovery of and Access to Materials in Library Collections

The usability of library collections, and thus their value to users, is dependent upon the discoverability and accessibility of the materials. Following the successful completion of Network-wide collection inventories in the previous planning period, EPA materials are more accessible than ever. To further enhance usability of collections, the Network will:

- Develop a plan to ensure the eventual complete cataloging of all holdings by Network libraries.

- Establish local procedures for ensuring the full, accurate and adequate cataloging of materials on an ongoing basis.

- Encourage the ongoing refinement of cataloging and collection management activities to enhance the accuracy of the National Library Catalog.

- Investigate best practices for the management of the Headquarters Dark Archive collection of non-circulating EPA publications to ensure the retention of valuable resources.

2.3.2   Expand Electronic Access to EPA's Environmental Information

The Library Network's digitization project is a critical component of information access at EPA and provides broader access to information for EPA staff and the public. In the next planning period, the Network will continue to support the digitization project and will explore and implement strategies that enhance access to EPA's environmental information. The Library Network will:

- Continue digitization efforts and include additional EPA publications in the digitization process as they become available.

- Adopt a strategy for updating OCLC bibliographic records to include access through NSCEP URLs.

- Develop a plan to ensure digitization of all dispersed EPA publications.

- Form a multi-office workgroup to develop and implement an Agency procedure to ensure electronic EPA documents are cataloged and added to the NSCEP digital repository.

2.3.3   Enable Agency-wide Access to Electronic Resources and Research Tools

The EPA Desktop Library resources and research tools are a valuable supplement to the libraries' physical collections and provide access to information for EPA staff and contractors working offsite. The Library Network will facilitate Agency-wide access to critical information resources through maintenance of a robust Desktop Library and acquisition of additional electronic resources. The Library Network will:

- Investigate alternate means of acquiring resources for the EPA Desktop Library.

- Improve the process for handling patron recommendations of new resources for the EPA Desktop Library to ensure timely consideration and consistent communication.

- Establish a process for regular Library Network-wide review of current EPA Desktop Library resources to ensure continued relevance to Agency research.

2.3.4   Coordinate Collection Management at the Network Level to Ensure Adequate Subject Coverage throughout the Agency

A coordinated approach to collection management in a network of libraries as large as EPA's helps to maximize available funding for library materials. Considering the management of Network collections in this way also increases the likelihood that information needed for research and decision making will be available within the Network. To this end, the Library Network will:

- Perform a comprehensive review and revision of the *Core List* and publish an updated document.

- Modernize and ensure the continued relevancy of the *Core List* by researching alternative publication methods and a system for ongoing review and revision by librarians.

- Explore options with program offices and regions to ensure efficient and effective funding and management of subject-specific collections such as legal or business reference to support the needs of staff throughout the Agency.

- Develop a strategy to guarantee consistent management of local collections and promote coordination of collection development at the Library Network level while respecting the local needs of individual libraries.

2.4   Communications, Outreach and Training

Expanding awareness of library services and resources is an ongoing challenge for all libraries. An essential task, this can be accomplished through outreach and training efforts to EPA staff, the professional library community and the public. As the information landscape changes, the role of the librarian is expanding from information-provider to information-enabler. As information-enablers, librarians empower users with the tools and knowledge to perform research on their own or to better partner with professional library staff in identifying and locating the information they need. The Network's attention to centralized communications, outreach and training serves stakeholders and external user communities by providing more opportunities to learn about resources and services of which they might not otherwise be aware.

2.4.1   Expand Awareness of Network Libraries' Offerings

The Library Network currently provides outreach and communications support for EPA library services including, but not limited to, national conference exhibits and presentations; publications such as the EPA National Library Network Annual Report; outreach material templates; and localized customer service reports for library managers. The Network also maintains the Internet/Intranet presence for EPA libraries and the Network and develops consistent branding and communications for Agency-wide library services. To build on these efforts to increase awareness of EPA libraries and their services, the Network will examine additional methods of outreach, including the following:

- Cultivate relationships with other federal and environmental libraries to promote the sharing of materials and development of ideas that benefit users and librarians.

- Conduct an updated information needs assessment of internal EPA users, both on local and national levels, to facilitate library interactions with end users and develop targeted services.

- Educate the professional library community about the Library Network and EPA resources to promote the sharing of materials and development of ideas that provide benefits to users and librarians.

- Investigate outreach opportunities in social media and implement as appropriate.

- Explore means and audiences for publicizing the availability of materials from and the processes behind the digitization project, as well as the Library Network's role in ensuring that EPA documents are electronically available into the future.

2.4.2   Improve Training Opportunities

The Library Network currently offers a range of training opportunities to end-users, as well as orientation support to library staff and Federal Library Managers. The National Training Program, a monthly webinar series taught by EPA librarians and designed to educate internal users on electronic resources, continues to be popular among EPA staff. The Desktop Library also regularly invites vendors of subscription resources to educate both librarians and end-users on their products. The Library Network will:

- Develop a mentoring program for new Network librarians to build a foundation of excellence.

- Investigate options for alternate training formats and opportunities.

- Develop targeted training opportunities for specific EPA audiences.

- Promote the work of Network librarians and improvements at EPA libraries by preparing proposals for the Library Network to submit to professional conferences and publications.

2.4.3   Develop and Refine Communication Channels for Network Librarians

With a program as geographically dispersed as the Library Network, effective communication channels are essential for both planning for the future and for day-to-day operations. The Network actively seeks out and uses internal communication methods, such as monthly Network-wide teleconferences and an email listserv, to sustain a collaborative community. To build upon existing, successful practices, the Library Network will explore emerging communications technologies and best practices to strengthen Network communications. The Library Network will:

- Complete the transition to a collaborative workspace using available Agency technology to further facilitate librarian participation in Network-wide projects and promote the sharing of best practices.

- Investigate internal communications strategies at other geographically dispersed networks of libraries or consortia and consider applying successful communication practices.

- Foster interest groups to support the activities of specific Network populations, such as solo librarians and federal managers.

- Continue to maintain a strong Intranet presence by reviewing and ensuring the application of content standards for local library Intranet sites.

- Establish a means of collaborating on training and marketing resources for use by librarians at the local level, along with specialized marketing workgroups to develop and share projects on an ad hoc basis.

- Continue to make improvements and additions to the Resources for Librarians portal.

The FY2015-2017 Strategic Plan sets the framework for the future of the Library Network. To ensure the continued sustainability of the Network and its resources, all stakeholders must commit to following through on the actions of the Plan, as well as supporting and promoting the value, necessity and relevance of the libraries and professional librarians that support the research mission of EPA.

The NPM, as the primary advocate for the Network, will continue to guide the process, along with others charged with leading various action teams. EPA expects all Network Libraries and stakeholders will follow through in good faith on the actions, providing feedback, input and expertise to the best of their ability. The Library Network will continue to monitor factors that may affect the implementation of the activities in this Plan, such as resource constraints, ongoing day-to-day operations of the Network libraries, changing Agency priorities and new requirements from external sources.

Over the next three years, the Library Network will aim to meet the inherent challenges ahead and seek to surpass the expectations set out in this Plan, as well as to unleash the continuing potential of the Library Network through dedicated focus on Services, Governance, Collections and Communications.

This appendix summarizes EPA's progress in meeting the goals and action items from the *EPA Library Network Strategic Plan: FY 2012-2014*. The goals are grouped by subject area: Library Services, Library Network Governance, Electronic and Physical Collections, and Communications, Outreach and Training.

Library Services

The Library Network's Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014 included goals and action items focused on enhancing library services by increasing coordination among libraries, improving access to information and ensuring the timely delivery of quality services. The milestones EPA achieved in support of these goals include:

- Created a directory of library and librarian specializations on the Library Network's Intranet.

- Increased "Ask A Librarian" chat service agents to 13 and held training seminars for new participants.

- Investigated the use of commercial document delivery services.

- Enhanced and expanded the online Public Access Knowledgebase.

- Developed a system for consistent and ongoing review and assessment of content in the Knowledgebase.

- Added new Agency-wide resources to the Desktop Library, including databases, technical standards, journals and new e-book subscriptions.

- Established a workgroup and modernized the EPA National Library Catalog within the Online Library System (OLS).

- Created an additional module within OLS to facilitate the organized and traceable dispersal of library materials.

- Completed multiple phases of the EPA document digitization project.

- Created measures for quality and timeliness and developed the EPA National Library Network standards document.

- Transitioned entire cataloging process to a new Resource Description & Access (RDA) standard.

Library Network Governance

The Library Network's Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014 included goals and action items focused on implementing and formalizing governance processes to ensure the most effective management of the Network and its resources. The milestones EPA achieved in support of these goals include:

- Established the National Library Council.

- Established formal standards for core library services at all locations.

- Designated a library contract Program Technical Advisor.

- Established a formal framework for fluid library operations to ensure continuity of services.

- Prepared disaster contingency plan at the Network level.

- Revised disaster planning procedure.

- Began work on federal/contractor workgroup and guidance on effective and appropriate use of library contracts.

Electronic and Physical Collections

The Library Network's Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014 included goals and action items focused on inventory completion, increased electronic access and improved coordination of collection management. The milestones EPA achieved in support of these goals include:

- Determined the amount and location of uncataloged materials.

- Completed inventory of EPA publications and general collection materials.

- Established a timeline for inventory of special collections.

- Finalized digitization of non-unique EPA publications in repository library collections.

- Explored and reported on a strategy for updating OCLC records to include NSCEP URLs.

- Updated process by which Internet links are included in the National Library Catalog.

- Developed a process to ensure that all digital repository materials are represented in the National Library Catalog

- Ensured that titles in the *Core List for an Environmental Reference Collection* are represented or electronically available in every library.

- Conducted a portfolio gap analysis to determine the need for additional resources and collections.

- Coordinated the local purchase and management of journals throughout the Agency.

- Developed a strategy for microfiche consolidation, acquisition and retention.

Communications, Outreach and Training

The Library Network's Strategic Plan for FY 2012-2014 included goals and action items focused on enhancing internal and public websites, increasing training opportunities for users and expanding orientation support for librarians and managers. The milestones EPA achieved in support of these goals include:

- Redesigned the Network's public website to expand awareness of library offerings and enhance the user experience.

- Refined and incorporated Library Network standards for local Intranet sites.

- Explored and implemented options for alternate training formats and opportunities.

- Extended outreach efforts and tracked participation of audiences in the National Training Program.

- Developed an online Network orientation portal and welcome materials for new librarians.

Table B-1 lays out the actions described within this Plan.

Table B-1: Comprehensive List of Strategic Plan Goals and Actions

Number	Action
2.1 LIBRARY SERVICES	
2.1.1	**Increase Service Coordination**
1	Expand the "Ask A Librarian" service to ensure that users nationwide are able to reach a librarian during business hours
2	Explore and implement collaborative agreements with EPA program offices and regions to facilitate information sharing
3	Explore and establish Agency-wide license agreements for additional resources to meet the wide variety of growing research needs
4	Provide clear guidance via Library Network policies and procedures and encourage sharing of best practices among libraries and other organizations
2.1.2	**Enable User Access with Tools and Resources**
1	Create Desktop Library guidance that defines roles and responsibilities for maintenance and management of the Desktop Library
2	Explore and implement enhancements to the EPA Desktop Library's Electronic Resources Management (ERM) system, such as a federated search capability to enable searching all content at once rather than each resource individually
3	Continue to support the Online Library System (OLS) workgroup and the ongoing enhancement of the Library Catalog by collecting feedback from users and librarians and recommending enhancements, as appropriate
4	Support the NSCEP digital repository by evaluating collections, providing materials for digitization and making recommendations for enhancements to NSCEP when appropriate or when requested by NSCEP representatives
5	Expand the Public Access Knowledgebase and perform regular maintenance to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate content is published and available to all patrons
2.1.3	**Ensure Timely Delivery of Quality Services across All Libraries**
1	Match library services to the most advanced technology available within the Agency
2	Explore evolving options of meeting patrons' needs regardless of location in response to the increased use of telework and unexpected closures of EPA facilities due to inclement weather or other events
3	Benchmark other libraries to explore new and innovative service models
4	Consider how Agency-sanctioned mobile devices and other technological advancements affect methods of service delivery

Number	Action
2.2 LIBRARY NETWORK GOVERNANCE	
2.2.1	**Develop and Cultivate Formal Mechanisms for Management and Stakeholder Input**
1	Support and participate in National Library Council meetings and coordinate information requests for decision-making
2	Provide guidance to Network libraries and library users when changes to EPA systems affect the use of library resources and equipment
3	Strengthen relationships with external stakeholder groups, including library professional associations, the federal library community and other interested stakeholders
2.2.2	**Evaluate Funding Processes to Ensure Sustainability of Library Services**
1	Work with the National Library Council to evaluate the funding process to identify redundancies and areas for increased efficiency in resource procurement and service provision
2	Compile and assess Agency-wide information resource needs and share with decision makers
2.2.3	**Increase Coordination and Participation in Library Network Operations**
1	Explore opportunities to expand the role of librarians within the Agency
2	Establish a federal and contractor workgroup within the Network to foster communication, clarify the contracting process and identify additional opportunities for collaboration
3	Work with Office of Acquisition Management (OAM) to communicate best practices of contracts management to further the efficient and effective use of library services
2.3 ELECTRONIC AND PHYSICAL COLLECTIONS	
2.3.1	**Increase Discovery of and Access to Materials in Library Collections**
1	Develop a plan to ensure the eventual complete cataloging of all holdings by Network libraries
2	Establish local procedures for ensuring the full, accurate and adequate cataloging of materials on an ongoing basis
3	Encourage the ongoing refinement of cataloging and collection management activities to enhance the accuracy of the National Library Catalog
4	Investigate best practices for the management of the Headquarters Dark Archive collection of noncirculating EPA publications to ensure the retention of valuable resources
2.3.2	**Expand Electronic Access to EPA's Environmental Information**
1	Continue digitization efforts and include additional EPA publications in the digitization process as they become available
2	Adopt a strategy for updating OCLC bibliographic records to include access through NSCEP URLs
3	Develop a plan to ensure digitization of all dispersed EPA publications
4	Form a multi-office workgroup to develop and implement an Agency procedure to ensure electronic EPA documents are cataloged and added to the NSCEP digital repository

Number	Action
2.3.3	**Enable Agency-Wide Access to Electronic Resources and Research Tools**
1	Investigate alternate means of acquiring resources for the EPA Desktop Library
2	Improve the process for handling patron recommendations of new resources for the EPA Desktop Library to ensure timely consideration and consistent communication
3	Establish a process for regular Library Network-wide review of current EPA Desktop Library resources to ensure continued relevance to Agency research
2.3.4	**Coordinate Collection Management at the Network Level to Ensure Adequate Subject Coverage throughout the Agency**
1	Perform a comprehensive review and revision of the *Core List* and publish an updated document
2	Modernize and ensure the continued relevancy of the *Core List* by researching alternative publication methods and a system for ongoing review and revision by librarians
3	Explore options with program offices and regions to ensure efficient and effective funding and management of subject-specific collections such as legal or business reference to support the needs of staff throughout the Agency
4	Develop a strategy to guarantee consistent management of local collections and promote coordination of collection development at the Library Network level while respecting the local needs of individual libraries
	2.4 COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH AND TRAINING
2.4.1	**Expand Awareness of Network Libraries' Offerings**
1	Cultivate relationships with other federal and environmental libraries to promote the sharing of materials and development of ideas that benefit users and librarians
2	Conduct an updated information needs assessment of internal EPA users, both on local and national levels, to facilitate library interactions with end users and develop targeted services
3	Educate the professional library community about the Library Network and EPA resources to promote the sharing of materials and development of ideas that provide benefits to users and librarians
4	Investigate outreach opportunities in social media and implement as appropriate
5	Explore means and audiences for publicizing the availability of materials from and the processes behind the digitization project, as well as the Library Network's role in ensuring that EPA documents are electronically available into the future
2.4.2	**Improve Training Opportunities**
1	Develop a mentoring program for new Network librarians to build a foundation of excellence
2	Investigate options for alternate training formats and opportunities
3	Develop targeted training opportunities for specific EPA audiences
4	Promote the work of Network librarians and improvements at EPA libraries by preparing proposals for the Library Network to submit to professional conferences and publications

Number	Action
2.4.3	**Develop and Refine Communication Channels for Network Librarians**
1	Complete the transition to a collaborative workspace using available Agency technology to further facilitate librarian participation in Network-wide projects and promote the sharing of best practices
2	Investigate internal communications strategies at other geographically dispersed networks of libraries or consortia and consider applying successful communication practices
3	Foster interest groups to support the activities of specific Network populations, such as solo librarians and federal managers
4	Continue to maintain a strong Intranet presence by reviewing and ensuring the application of content standards for local library Intranet sites
5	Establish a means of collaborating on training and marketing resources for use by librarians at the local level, along with specialized marketing workgroups to develop and share projects on an ad hoc basis
6	Continue to make improvements and additions to the Resources for Librarians portal

The EPA National Library Network is composed of libraries and document repositories located in EPA's Headquarters, regions, field offices, research centers and specialized laboratories. The combined Library Network collections contain a range of general information on environmental protection and management, basic and applied sciences and extensive coverage of the statutory mandates that EPA is required to meet. Several Network libraries maintain specialized collections to support specific regional or program office needs. While the libraries differ in function, scope of collections, extent of services and level of public access, the Library Network provides a common framework and enables the libraries to collaborate on the delivery of services to EPA staff and the public.

EPA has a highly skilled library workforce dedicated to delivering quality library services to meet the Agency's information needs. Professional librarians manage collections and resources and assist EPA staff and the public. A National Program Manager (NPM) in EPA's Office of Environmental Information (OEI) is responsible for providing assistance and guidance in the operation of libraries and bringing focus and cohesion to the Library Network community. The NPM also serves as the EPA-appointed representative to work with external library professionals and stakeholders.

A stable governance process is the foundation for maintaining the strength of the Library Network. The Network's recently-formed National Library Council (NLC) is comprised of senior managers from EPA's regions, Headquarters and program offices. The NLC provides a formal mechanism for obtaining senior-level and stakeholder input on Library Network goals, direction, management and funding and will help ensure the future sustainability of library services at EPA.

Figure C-1 shows the EPA libraries in each region across the country. The contact information for each library can be found at http://www2.epa.gov/libraries/libraries.
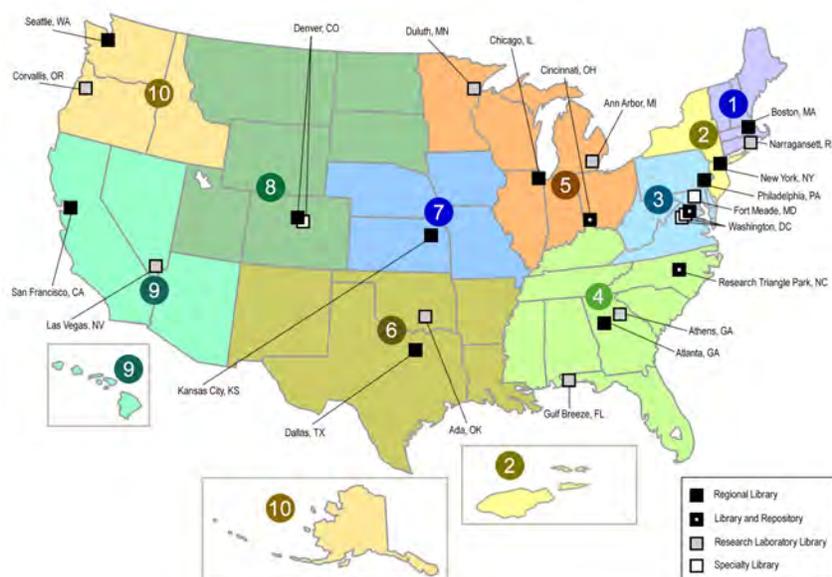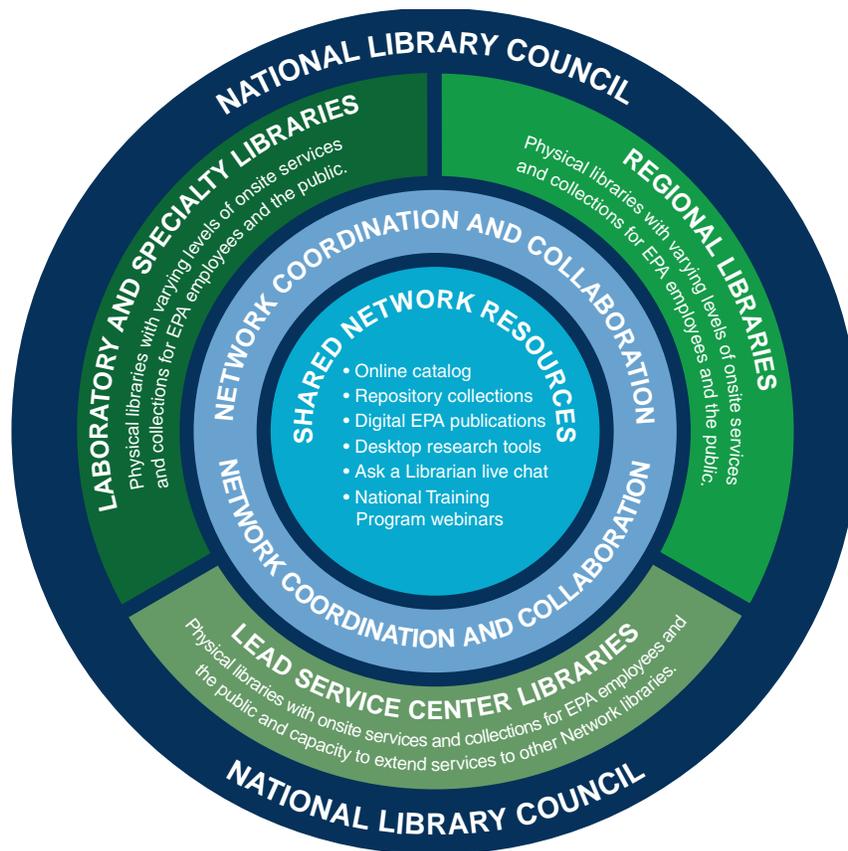
Figure C-1: National Library Network Locations

Figure C-2 illustrates the interrelationships among EPA's libraries and resources that form the fully integrated EPA National Library Network.

Figure C-2: National Library Network Model

The Regional Libraries, the Laboratory and Specialty Libraries and the Lead Service Center Libraries are physical libraries with customized collections and varying levels of onsite services for EPA staff and the public, coordinated by the Library Network.

- **Regional Libraries** meet local and regional needs related to scientific research, environmental regulation and outreach. They are often the first point of contact for public inquiries.

- **Laboratory Libraries** primarily serve EPA's scientific research community, and **Specialty Libraries** are distinguished by special focus areas and subject-specific collections.

- **Lead Service Center Libraries** have the capacity to offer reference/research services and/or administrative/technical functions to other Network libraries. Current Lead Service Center Libraries include Research Triangle Park, North Carolina (Interlibrary loan (ILL), reference support and journals management); Andrew W. Breidenbach Environmental Research Center (AWBERC) in Cincinnati, Ohio (cataloging, ILL and reference support); Region 3, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (business reference and research support); and Headquarters (Dark Archive).

APPENDIX C
LIBRARY NETWORK STRUCTURE

A robust collection of shared resources supports the Network libraries, including Virtual Library Tools and Resources and Repository Library Collections.

- **Virtual Library Tools and Resources** include digital EPA publications and an online catalog available to all users. The Network supports desktop access to electronic subscriptions, a live chat reference service and a webinar-based training program for EPA employees.

  - **EPA Desktop Library:** The Desktop Library is EPA's gateway to both fee-based subscription and free online information resources for Agency staff. The Network continues to add new access to journals, electronic books and databases to support Agency needs.

  - **EPA National Library Catalog:** The EPA National Library Catalog, a module of the Online Library System (OLS), is the joint online catalog of holdings in all EPA libraries. It is the most comprehensive listing of EPA publications.

  - **Digital Repository of EPA Publications:** EPA provides online access to Agency publications through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP), an online gateway to free electronic copies of EPA publications. Over the last decade, the Library Network has worked with NSCEP to digitize EPA's print publications.

  - **Public Access and "Ask A Librarian" Communication Tools:** The Public Access and "Ask A Librarian" ticket- and chat-based communication tools and their FAQ Knowledgebase counterparts provide EPA patrons and the public with information about EPA Library resources and EPA topics and content.

- **Repository Library Collections** provide access to EPA documents for Network libraries, EPA employees and the public. Repository Libraries retain and manage the collections, which enables other Network libraries to address space and funding challenges by transferring library materials that are still of value, but not often used by local patrons. The Repository Libraries are located in Washington, DC; Research Triangle Park, NC; and Cincinnati, OH.

In developing the *EPA National Library Network Strategic Plan: FY 2015-2017*, EPA conducted an updated Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with Network librarians to highlight drivers for change. Following are the results of this SWOT analysis, performed in July 2014.

Figure D-1: The Library Network SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Experienced, customer-focused professional librarians with collective institutional knowledge.
- Collaborative tools, such as the National Library Catalog, "Ask A Librarian," National Training Program and Desktop Library.
- Coordination, collaboration and cooperation across the Network fosters sharing of best practices.
- Centralized repository of online EPA publications.
- Innovative community that consistently searches for ways to improve services.
- The depth of information represented by the individual library collections in the Network – both print and electronic.
- Sharing of information and support across the Library Network to fulfill information requests.
- Consistent, positive and accessible avenue for engagement with the Agency.

Weaknesses

- No common funding strategy for libraries among EPA program offices and regions.
- Underutilization of Network services such as centralized cataloging and library support services from Lead Service Centers.
- Lack of equal participation in the Network by libraries.
- Inadequate level of staffing at some libraries.
- Not all library materials are included in the National Library Catalog.
- Inconsistent and/or inefficient management of library contracts.
- Lack of a discovery system tool and/or service.
- Lack of a prominent presence on the epa.gov website.
- Uneven outreach about services to EPA staff.
- Inconsistent access to updated technology and software.

Opportunities

- Leverage Network skills in knowledge management and data curation efforts.
- Conduct assessment of internal user needs.
- Increase management support and engagement through the National Library Council.
- Explore options for using libraries as innovation centers to provide access to emerging technologies.
- Develop "embedded librarians" to meet the needs of specific user communities.
- Improve search capabilities through enhanced metadata in the catalog and implementation of a discovery system tool.
- Use customer feedback to demonstrate the value of library services.
- Increase visibility of library websites.

Threats

- Ongoing budget constraints.
- Rising prices of subscriptions and information resources.
- Decreasing library hours and staff in some locations.
- Perception that all materials are freely available on the Internet.
- Customers not aware of library offerings.
- Structure of library contracts inhibits ability to respond to changing needs.
- Rapidly changing technology can be difficult to address.
- Lack of library-specific knowledge among some federal library managers.

The following are definitions of terms within the Library Network Strategic Plan.

Ask a Librarian
The Library Network's online reference service that enables customers to request and receive assistance from Network librarians via "live chat" in the online environment. "Ask A Librarian" chat reference service also includes options for customers to search the knowledgebase of frequently asked questions or to submit their own questions for librarian assistance.

Catalog
A comprehensive inventory of the books, periodicals, maps and other materials in a given library collection, arranged in systematic order to facilitate retrieval (usually alphabetically by author, title and/or subject). The EPA National Library Network Catalog is a module within the Online Library System (OLS).

Cataloging
The process of creating entries for a catalog. In libraries, this usually includes bibliographic description, subject analysis, assignment of classification notation and activities involved in physically preparing the item for the shelf—tasks usually performed under the supervision of a librarian trained as a cataloger.

Dark Archive
For the EPA National Library Network, a collection of second-copies of EPA publications that are not circulated or used by patrons, but are retained to ensure perpetual access to the materials in case of loss or damage.

Digitization
The conversion of hard copy documents, printed text or images into digital form through the use of scanning technologies.

Discovery System Tools/Services
Includes the federated search capability, content management and other systems, services and tools.

Dispersal
The transfer of library materials to other libraries. Materials may be dispersed to other EPA libraries or to external libraries, such as those of other federal agencies, state governments or universities. Dispersal may occur as part of a library's normal weeding schedule or as part of a larger effort to reduce the physical size of the library collection.

EPA Desktop Library
A collection of electronic resources, including freely available and subscription-based services, available to all EPA staff via the Intranet. The EPA Desktop Library is funded by the Working Capital Fund and managed by OEI with contributions from other Program Offices.

EPA National Library Catalog

The online public catalog of holdings of the EPA National Library Network libraries. The catalog allows searches by author, title, subject heading, any standard numbers assigned to the work, classification number and keywords of the bibliographic record. It provides links to the full text of EPA reports and other materials as available. The National Library Catalog is the most comprehensive listing of EPA publications.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

The process by which a library requests materials from, or supplies materials to, another library. This service is provided upon request of a library user for materials not available in the local library.

Library FAQs Knowledgebase

A dynamic Internet knowledgebase with answers to commonly asked questions.

Microfiche

A small card-shaped sheet of photographic film designed for storing miniaturized text and/or microimages arranged sequentially in a two-dimensional grid.

National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP)

Based in Cincinnati and managed by the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM), NSCEP maintains and distributes EPA publications in hardcopy, CD-ROM, and other multi-media formats. The NSCEP website also serves as a digital repository, providing an online gateway to free, electronic copies of EPA publications.

National Training Program

A service offering of the EPA National Library Network that provides EPA staff with live webinar-based classes on relevant information resources and services.

Online Library System (OLS)

A data management system made up of working modules to support collection management activities of EPA National Library Network libraries. OLS includes the National Library Catalog as well as operations modules for the management of Serials, Dispersals, Circulation and Catalog Maintenance.

OCLC

OCLC is a nonprofit, membership-based, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing information costs. OCLC maintains the largest catalog and interlibrary loan network in the world, which assists librarians and the general public with locating, acquiring, cataloging, lending, borrowing and preserving library materials. OCLC was formerly known as the Online Computer Library Center.

APPENDIX E
GLOSSARY

Periodical
A serial publication with its own distinctive title, containing works written by more than one contributor, issued more than once, generally at regularly-stated intervals of less than a year, without prior decision as to when the final issue will appear. Although each issue is complete in itself, its relationship to preceding issues is usually indicated by an issue and/or volume number. Content is usually controlled by an editor or editorial board. The category includes subscription-based materials including magazines, journals and newsletters, but not proceedings or the other regular publications of corporate bodies as they relate primarily to meetings. Newspapers are not formally classified as periodicals.

Physical Collection
The materials, whether books, maps, microforms, scrolls, CD-ROMs, DVDs or any other items that physically reside in a library or its storage space and are managed by one or more mechanisms of bibliographic control.

Reference
Services provided by library staff to meet the information needs of patrons (in person, by telephone or electronically), including but not limited to answering questions, instructing users in the selection and use of appropriate tools and techniques for finding information, conducting searches on behalf of the patron, directing users to the location of library resources, assisting in the evaluation of information and referring patrons to resources outside the library when appropriate.

Repository Library
A central place where library collections are stored and made accessible. EPA repository libraries collect and preserve EPA documents and other materials deemed of value to the EPA National Library Network.

Subject-Specific Collections
Collections of specialized materials housed within Network libraries, examples include law collections and business reference collections.

AWBERC	Andrew W. Breidenbach Environmental Research Center
CIO	Chief Information Officer
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERM	Electronic Resource Management System
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FLM	Federal Library Managers
FY	Fiscal Year
ILL	Interlibrary Loan
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
NLC	National Library Council
NSCEP	National Service Center for Environmental Publications
NPM	National Program Manager
OAM	Office of Acquisition Management
OARM	Office of Administration and Resources Management
OCLC	Formerly known as Online Computer Library Center
OEI	Office of Environmental Information
OLS	Online Library System
RDA	Resource Description & Access
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

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