EPA Update
Current Activities of EPA Librarians

Richard L. Huffine
Information Access Division, Office of Information Analysis and Access

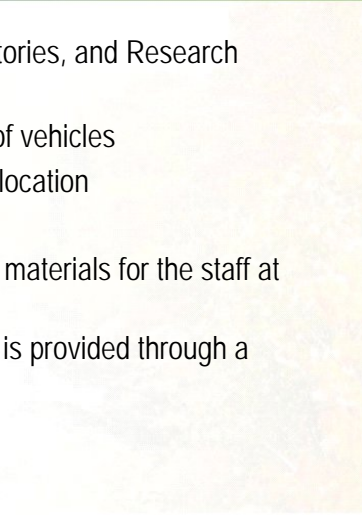October 20, 2003

OEI OFFICE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
INFORMATION

EPA United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

EPA United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Libraries and Librarians at EPA

> 28 Libraries – in EPA Regions, Laboratories, and Research Centers
> Primarily contracted through a variety of vehicles
>> – A federal manager oversees each location
>> – A long history of staff consistency
>> – Each library collects and manages materials for the staff at their location
>> – Resources are shared and access is provided through a central catalog

EPA Online Library System

> A central catalog of the holdings of all EPA libraries
> Online at http://www.epa.gov/natlibra/ols.htm

Address http://www.epa.gov/natlibra/ols.htm   Go

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Libraries
Contact Us | Print Version
EPA Home > Information Sources > Libraries > Online Library System (OLS)

About EPA Libraries
Link to EPA Libraries
Online Library System
Library Publications
Services for the Public
Services for EPA Staff

OLS : Search EPA National Catalog

Advanced Search   **About OLS**   **How to Obtain Publications**   **Help**

Submit Search   Reset

Limit Search to a Specific Library: Search all libraries

Title

Libraries at EPA

> Several libraries have moved into new spaces within the last couple of years
> – Research Triangle Park, NC
> – Headquarters Libraries, Washington, DC
> – National Enforcement Investigations Center, Denver, CO
> EPA library space needs are changing as we move more services to the employee desktop
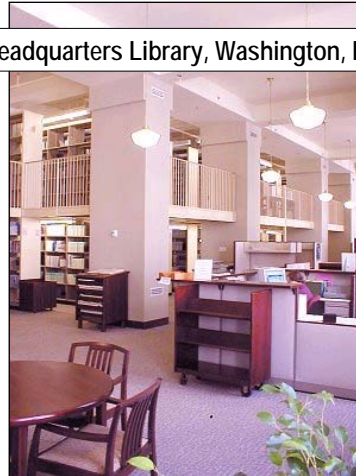
Libraries at EPA (continued)

Research Triangle Park, NC

Headquarters Library, Washington, DC

EPA's Desktop Library

> The EPA has purchased access to a suite of tools for staff to use in their daily work

> Resources include journals, news outlets, and citation databases

The EPA Desktop Library
...brought to you by the
EPA National Library Network

Resources by Topic:
Business & Finance
Computers & Information Technology
Government
International
Law
News
Policy
Reference
Science

Resources by Type:
Books & Reports
Dissertations & Theses
Journals & Magazines
Newspapers & Newsletters
Online Communities
Reference
Transcripts, Speeches & Briefings

Quick Search for a Resource:
go

News and Announcements

New Resources!
- **Econlit** - Search over 600 economic journals
- **Dissertations Abstracts Online**
- Track environmental issues in Congress with **Greenwire**!

News from the Daily Environment Report:
- Drinking Water: CDC to Examine Byproducts in Blood Levels After Showering

News from Inside EPA:
- Industry Data Quality Warning to Universities Draws Sharp Response
- **More Inside EPA Headlines**...

Planning for the Future

> EPA Libraries are currently studying their options for the future

> A cost/benefit analysis is being conducted as well as a review of approaches for funding and providing services to EPA staff and the public

> Approaches are being considered to maximize the value of libraries while improving the efficiency of their operation

> Approaches for virtual reference, improved access to electronic publications and enhanced functions of libraries are all being considered

Moving Forward

> An ongoing dialogue has begun between EPA Libraries and the Government Printing Office to:
  – Identify opportunities to partner to improve services to the Depository community
  – Review the EPA materials on-line and in the GPO Catalog to identify a potential "Web gap"
  – Find partners for the future that could work with EPA to improve access to environmental information on-line

> We are looking for Depositories that would like to work with us to improve access to EPA documents and resources.

> Projects for digitization, preservation, and enhanced indexing would enhance the capabilities of all environmental libraries

Managing the Internet

> A staff of EPA Librarians has been developed to manage several aspects of the EPA Web site:

> Arranging and selecting resources for the EPA Home page and associated subordinate pages (e.g. About EPA, Educational Resources)

> Coordinating responses to comments and questions submitted by the public via the EPA Web site.
  – They currently respond to almost 3,000 questions per month
  – Each EPA Web site has its own method for responding to comments. The Internet Librarians handle comments posted from the home page and associated subordinate pages

---

Managing the Internet (continued)

> Librarians have been improving search results using a metadata catalog that intercedes in search requests

Managing the Internet (continued)

> A controlled vocabulary has been established to improve access by subject in Browse By Topics

Address 🔘 http://www.epa.gov/epahome/topics.html ▾ ⭢ Go

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Browse EPA Topics

Recent Additions | Contact Us | Print Version   Search: [   ] **GO** Advanced Search

EPA Home > Browse EPA Topics

EPA Newsroom
Browse EPA Topics
Laws, Regulations & Dockets
Where You Live
Information Sources
Educational Resources

The following list organizes EPA topics into broad categories. A much longer list presents EPA topics alphabetically.

Alphabetical List of all Topics

Air
Acid Rain, Global Warming, Vehicle Emissions...

Industry
Small Business, Permits, Reporting...

International Cooperation
Border Issues, Treaties and Agreements...

Cleanup

Panning for the Future

> We are currently exploring options to expand the controlled vocabulary into a taxonomy or ontology of environmental concepts

> We are participating in conversations on the "semantic Web" and how it could change the way we use vocabularies and keywords

> The EPA is an E-Gov leader on electronic records management and we are exploring the avenues for getting electronic records into public access

> We are beginning to plan for managing Web records after recent draft guidance from NARA

Contacts

> Richard Huffine
  - Federal Manager, EPA National Library Network
  - U.S. EPA Office of Environmental Information
  - 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW (2843T)
  - Washington, DC 20460
  - (202) 566-0703
  - Huffine.richard@epa.gov
  - http://www.epa.gov/natlibra/

EPA's Web Ambassador Program: Enhancing Public Access Through Web-Based Partnerships

Presented by: Chuck Herrick

Stratus Consulting Inc.

October 20, 2003

12th Annual Federal Depository Library Conference

The Role of Environmental Information

- Right-to-know

- "Third Wave" of environmental policy

- Technological drivers, especially the internet

- Formation of EPA's Office of Environmental Information (OEI)

Characterizing the Environmental Information Market

- OEI focus groups, public meetings, media content analyses, & telephone surveys
- Characterizing environmental information needs and access preferences
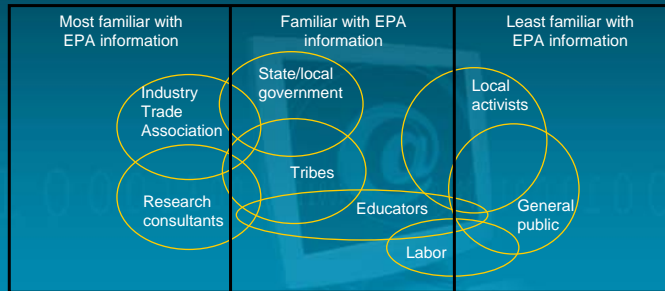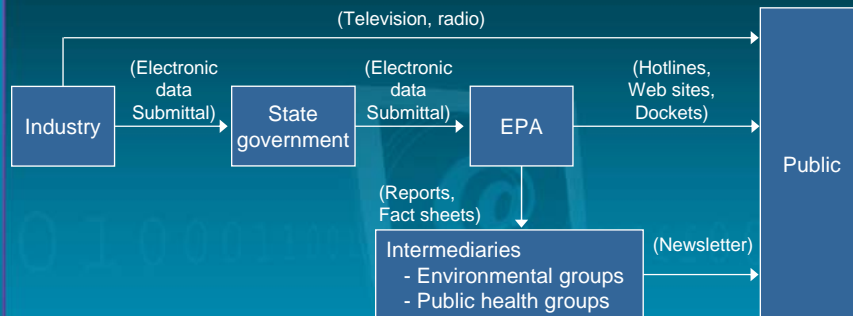
Based on input captured through a series of 27 focus groups conducted by CEIS (OEI's predecessor organization), this graphic portrays how different stakeholder groups tend to have differing levels of familiarity with EPA data and information. Input such as this can be used to help PPMB better understand the information needs of diverse customer segments, assess the Agency's information product portfolio, and plan outreach efforts.

Stratus Consulting

A Key Finding: Information Flows & Intermediaries

- Stakeholders agree that EPA is usually a single strand in an environmental information web, for example...

Based on input captured through a combination of focus groups, in-depth interviews, and survey research, this diagram depicts an environmental information dissemination regime involving multiple technologies/mechanisms, multiple parties (potentially partner), and alternative transmission pathways. Although conceptual in nature, such regimes could be quantified to assess alternative information dissemination efficiencies and effectiveness.

Stratus Consulting

Making it Explicit: Converting Intermediaries Into Partners

- www.epa.gov is the "Rome" of Web sites: large, extended, deep, diverse, complicated... and rich in information value

- Stakeholders demand "high tech, high touch" relationships

- Partnerships can expand information dissemination beyond the Web, and increase the relevance and applicability of information

- The result...Web Ambassadors

Web Ambassadors: Librarians as Pilots

- Focused education for specific needs

- "Training the trainers" and spreading the word...

- Other groups will follow (public health professionals, agricultural stakeholders, science teachers, financial community)

Web Ambassadors Tool Kit

- Booklet
- Poster
- Interactive Sessions
- Web site

Booklet/Poster/Interactive Session

- Teaching the EPA Web site

www.epa.gov: A General Orientation and Eight Key Elements

- Search
- Browse Topics
- Information Sources
- Where You Live
- Laws, Regulations, & Dockets
- Organizational Structure
- EPA Newsroom

Stratus Consulting

Presented by:

Chuck Herrick

Stratus Consulting Inc.