**The Federal Depository Library Program in Oregon:**

**The Oregon Library Association’s Recommendations**

**December 2013**

Congress established the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) to ensure that the American public has free access to Government information and to the expertise required to successfully navigate it. Oregon’s FDLP program has evolved from one comprehensive regional depository collection to distributed housing arrangements between the designated regional depository library (Oregon State Library) and three selective depository libraries (Portland State University, Oregon State University, University of Oregon) to provide permanent public access to the physical documents in Oregon’s regional federal depository collection. Each of these libraries is responsible for a specified portion of the regional collection. They collect, manage and preserve their portion of the physical collection, provide access to digital items and offer expert reference help to users looking for government information. The shared regional model was adopted in 2007 in order to mitigate the difficulties of housing the entire FDLP collection with a single institution, then Portland State University. The volume of space required to house a comprehensive regional collection, estimated at 30,000 square feet, and the concomitant management responsibility was determined to be restrictive and overwhelming in the face of inadequate funding and infrastructure.

Oregon’s shared regional FDLP model relieves the burden of storage and management on any single institution, potentially mitigates loss of the collection in the event of natural disaster(s), and takes advantage of locally available subject expertise by housing specific portions of the collection with institutions best suited to use them. However, the housing agreements between the OSL and the three designated depository libraries have not been substantially reviewed since 2007.

The State Library Transformation Project provides depository libraries in Oregon with an opportunity to build on this innovative, shared regional model. Below are recommendations from the Oregon Library Association’s Documents Interest Group for the transition of Oregon’s FDLP into the 21st century.

1. Review the Housing Agreement to clarify roles and reduce duplication;
2. Affirm the role of the State in managing the agreement:
   1. Identify expertise in the State Library or State Archives for the technical management of the agreement and the State’s portion of the collection;
   2. Identify expertise in working with the public with access issues;
   3. Fund expertise adequately. (The Regional Depository Coordinator assigned to oversee housing agreements and provide technical consultation/assistance to Oregon’s FDLP libraries is currently a .25 FTE Librarian position).
3. Adequately staff the State’s portion of the FDLP to accommodate vital functions. (The OSL currently assigns .6 FTE library assistants and student assistants for cataloging, shelving and maintenance);
   1. Piece-level cataloging for the collection;
   2. Inter-library loan of materials;
   3. Reference assistance both in-person and online.
4. Catalog as yet un-cataloged parts of the regional collection. This would make it easier for users to discover and locate specific FDLP publications
5. Digitize and provide access to historical federal documents via a centralized online reference system to improve access to that material for users throughout the country.
6. Explore expanding the shared regional model to include institutions in Washington/Idaho. This could function in tandem with already existing cooperative agreements, such as the Orbis Cascade Alliance’s shared ILS. This option would require discussion with GPO, but there is existing precedent for multi-state regional agreements.