

**NORTH COUNTRY LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**FIVE-YEAR SYSTEM PLAN OF SERVICE**  
**JANUARY 1, 2012 – DECEMBER 31, 2016**

**SECTION 1 – BASIC INFORMATION**

- A.** Name of System: North Country Library System
- B.** Address: 22072 County Route 190  
Watertown, New York 13601-1066
- C.** Phone Number: (315) 782-5540
- D.** FAX Number: (315) 782-6883
- E.** System Director E-Mail Address: [Bolton@ncls.org](mailto:Bolton@ncls.org)
- F.** System Home Page URL: <http://www.nclsweb.org>
- G.** Date of Establishment: 10/24/1958  
Date of Absolute Charter: 10/25/1963
- H.** Names of Central Library/Co-Central Libraries:  
Central: Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library, Watertown  
Co-Central: Ogdensburg Public Library
- I.** System Service Area: Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego & St. Lawrence Counties  
Square Mileage: 6,187  
Population: 372,990
- J.** Type of System: Cooperative Public Library System
- K.** Minimum staffing requirements:  
Director: Stephen B. Bolton  
Consultant Manager/Outreach Coordinator: Amy Zuch  
Youth Services Consultant: Emily Owen  
General Consultant: Joan Pellikka

## SECTION 2 – SYSTEM GOVERNANCE

### BYLAWS

2.1 URL of Current Governing Bylaws:

<http://ncls.northcountrylibraries.org/sites/default/files/Bylaws.pdf>

2.2 Board Members are elected.

2.3 The NCLS Board of Trustees Nominating Committee seeks nominations from the Member Libraries. The Committee creates a slate of Trustees to be voted on by the Elector designated by each member library. Voting takes place during the Annual Meeting (Bylaws Section III.4.). Eight members of the NCLS Board of Trustees are elected in this manner; one member is appointed by the Boards of the Central Libraries.

### ADVISORY GROUPS

2.4 North Country Public Library Directors Organization.

The Director of NCLS attends all meetings of the North Country Public Library Directors Organization. The President of the Directors Organization may appoint committees to confer with the Director of the NCLS as needed.

Outreach Advisory Council.

Joint Automation Board.

Directors and staff of libraries using the shared circulation system meet three times a year to discuss service and policy options.

Central Library Advisory Committee.

Meets twice a year to discuss service options and the Central Library budget.

Youth Services Organization

## SECTION 3 – PLANNING

### NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

3.1 Member needs are assessed through:

- An Annual Survey of Services
- Discussions between the NCLS Consultants and the Directors and Trustees
- Annual visits to libraries made by the NCLS Trustees
- Participation in the NCPL Directors Organization
- Participating in the Joint Automation Board
- Central Library Advisory Committee

**3.2** The groups involved in the development of the NCLS Plan of Service and their roles:

- NCPL Directors Organization subcommittee: Reviewed and Commented.
- Member Library Boards of Trustees: Vote to recommend approval by the NCLS Board of Trustees.
- NCPL Directors Organization: Reviewed and Commented.
- NCLS Board of Trustees: Reviewed and considered amendments, Adopted.

**3.3** Central Library Planning Process:

The Director of NCLS conferred with the Directors of the Central and Co-Central Libraries on a draft document. This was in turn presented to the Central Library Advisory Committee, the NCPL Directors Organization, and the Boards of the Central, Co-Central Libraries for comment.

**3.4** The groups involved in the development of the Central Library Plan and their roles:

- NCPL Directors Organization: Reviewed and Commented.
- Member Library Boards of Trustees: Vote to recommend approval by the NCLS Board of Trustees.
- Central Library Advisory Committee: Reviewed and Commented.
- NCLS Board of Trustees: Reviewed and considered comments, Adopted.

**3.5** Please see **4.18** Central Library Plan for integration comments.

**APPROVAL OF THE PLAN**

**3.6** The Plan of Service will be adopted as a policy document by the NCLS Board of Trustees. Therefore, final approval will be given by that Board. However, all comments and discussion that result from the process in **Sections 3.1** through **3.4** will be considered prior to approval.

**EVALUATON**

**3.7** An Annual Survey of Services will be conducted to evaluate whether NCLS has achieved the intended results of this plan.

**3.8** The results of the Survey will be compiled, distributed to the libraries, and discussed at meetings of the NCPL Directors Organization.

**3.9** NCLS will conduct regular needs assessments and evaluations. The planning process will include a review of the previous year's plans and these will be discussed with the NCPL Directors Organization, along with plans for the next year.

**REVISION PROCESS**

**3.10** The NCLS Board of Trustees may revise the plan by discussing a change at a Board meeting and sending notice to the libraries that a change will be voted on at the next meeting. In this way there will always be time for the libraries to comment and also to attend the meeting at the time of a vote. The NCPL Directors Organization may submit an amendment to the NCLS Board of Trustees at any time during the year for the Board's consideration.

## **SECTION 4 – GOALS/RESULTS**

### **4.1 MISSION STATEMENT:**

The North Country Library System is a cooperative of public libraries in Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties in New York State. NCLS exists to provide and strengthen services that the individual libraries cannot reasonably provide with their own resources. Coordinating and pooling efforts will benefit all library users in our service area.

NCLS will continue to provide free services to its members as long as funding allows. The NCLS Director and Board of Trustees will seek advice from the NCPL Directors Organization and Member Library Boards concerning cost-sharing fees for services if NYS funding is not adequate to support such services.

### **ELEMENT 1 – RESOURCE SHARING**

#### **4.2 COOPERATIVE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

The NCLS Professional Staff will continue to provide guidance for Member Libraries in the selection of library materials for use in meeting the needs of their library patrons and sharing their resources with other libraries.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- If funding allows, NCLS will pay for a subscription to Booklist for each of the libraries.
- NCLS will periodically provide specific collection development lists of recommended materials.
- NCLS Professional staff will make library visits to assist in weeding and collection development.
- NCLS will continue to maintain a database of NCLS and all member library holdings to enhance cooperative system sharing.

##### **3. Intended Result(s):**

Have member library collections meet the needs of their patrons and the patrons of all libraries in the system.

##### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Number of Consultant library visits, database maintenance statistics, interlibrary loan statistics, Annual Survey of Services.

#### **4.3 DELIVERY**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

The timely sharing of NCLS and Member Library resources will be expedited through a series of delivery methods to help meet the needs of patrons throughout the System Area and from outside the area.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- If funding allows, the Central Library in Watertown will continue to receive a daily (Monday through Friday) NCLS delivery.
- If funding allows, the top lending libraries will continue to receive two deliveries per week for the exchange of materials.
- All libraries will receive at least one delivery per week for the exchange of materials.
- The System will evaluate new methods to increase the number of deliveries to the libraries.

##### **3. Intended Result(s):**

To provide all NCLS Member Libraries with regular NCLS deliveries for the exchange of materials.

##### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Annual Survey of Services, North Country Public Library Directors Organization meetings.

#### **4.4 INTERLIBRARY LOAN**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

Support and facilitate lending among Member Libraries. If funding allows, NCLS will continue to pay the Northern New York Library Network a fee for the use of the ICICILL interlibrary loan software. The NCLS Central Library program will continue to be a key component of our ILL services.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- Central Libraries will provide a core adult nonfiction collection for interlibrary loan.
- Evaluation reports reflecting ILL use of the collection and describing the subject areas of ILL traffic will be established.
- The use of library collections through resource sharing will be marketed.
- Patron generated ILL will be promoted.

##### **3. Intended Result(s):**

To provide efficient, easy to use ILL and to supplement the adult nonfiction collections of the Member Libraries with needed items not normally found in the general collections of small libraries.

##### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Annual Survey of Services, ILL usage reports.

## **ELEMENT 2 – TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

### **4.5 INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM**

#### **1. Goal Statement:**

Promote efficiency, expansion of services and standardized procedures through the use of a centralized circulation system.

#### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- The NCLS Board of Trustees will strongly urge all non-automated libraries to join the ILS by 2016 to make the regional library resources more readily and equally available to their patrons.
- Have regularly scheduled user meetings of the Joint Automation Board.
- Add additional libraries to the circulation system.
- Attend library board meetings to discuss automation issues.
- Research and evaluate alternate network configurations.

#### **3. Intended Result(s):**

To operate and maintain an integrated library system for circulation and an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC). The expectation is for 100% participation by 2016.

#### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Number of libraries participating in the centralized system, minutes and feedback from the Joint Automation Board meetings, library board visits.

### **4.6 VIRTUAL REFERENCE**

#### **1. Goal Statement:**

Virtual reference is an emerging priority that will promote a positive, progressive perception of the area's public libraries. NCLS Consultants and Central Library reference staff will make an effort to continue virtual reference through the Ask Us 24/7 service.

#### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

Investigate alternative methods of delivering virtual reference. Promote and seek participation among the NCLS Member Libraries that employ an MLS Librarian.

#### **3. Intended Result(s):**

To maintain an awareness of virtual reference services and their feasibility for the NCLS area.

#### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Annual discussion among the NCLS Service Center, Central Library Co-Central Library, and at a meeting of the North Country Public Library Directors Organization.

## **ELEMENT 3 – SPECIAL CLIENT GROUPS**

### **4.7 ADULT LITERACY**

#### **1. Goal Statement:**

To provide improved adult services and literacy to Member Libraries.

#### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- Maintain regular communication with regional adult literacy providers.
- Assist Member Libraries and Adult Literacy providers in the development of applications for literacy related grants.
- Provide advice for collection development of adult literacy materials to the Member Libraries.
- Visit Member Libraries to discuss programs and grant opportunities.
- Encourage partnering with literacy focused organizations.

#### **3. Intended Result(s):**

Improved literacy in our region.

#### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Number of libraries partnered with literacy focused organizations (Annual Survey of Services question), number of grant received.

### **4.8 COORDINATED OUTREACH**

#### **1. Goal Statement:**

Residents of the North Country Library System who are blind/visually impaired, deaf/hearing impaired, physically handicapped, elderly, learning disabled, or residents of institutions will receive services from the Outreach Department.

#### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- If funding allows, the Outreach Coordinator will attend all pertinent local and statewide meetings, workshops, conferences as deemed appropriate.
- The Outreach Coordinator, or a designee, will speak at meetings and participate in local events to promote Outreach Services.
- The Outreach Coordinator will facilitate two meetings a year of the Outreach Advisory Council.
- The Outreach department will respond to requests for materials made by Outreach patrons and will attempt to purchase as many of the requested items as possible.
- The Outreach department will promote the service to the Member Libraries.
- The Outreach department will fill patron requests and have the items mailed directly to the patron's residences, or sent to a member library for delivery by the librarian or for pickup by a friend, volunteer or family.
- Communication will be maintained with Outreach patrons through a periodic newsletter and updated lists of materials.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

To serve individuals in the NCLS Service area who have special needs.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Circulation statistics of large print, audio books, etc. The number of communications with service organizations and visits to senior housing sites. The number of Outreach patrons registered with NCLS Outreach Services.

**4.9 CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES (STATE AND LOCAL)**

**1. Goal Statement:**

Inmates of State Correctional Facilities (CF) and county jails in the NCLS Service Area will have access to enhanced library services through the services of the North Country Library System.

**2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- Outreach Coordinator will visit the State Correctional Facility Libraries as needed to confer with librarians.
- NCLS staff will maintain open oral and written communication with the CF librarians as needs arise during the year.
- NCLS staff will host CF Planning Meetings at the NCLS Service Center to plan and prepare the budget application, share common concerns and meet with NCLS staff.
- NCLS Professional Staff will continue to provide assistance in planning and scheduling special cultural and informational programs funded through the grant program.
- NCLS will continue to keep CF holdings current in the System's database.
- NCLS will continue to strive to fill inmates' special requests for titles.
- NCLS will continue to annually purchase popular paperback books for use by County Jail inmates.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

To provide NCLS services to the inmates of the State Correctional Facilities and County Jails.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Meetings with Correctional Facility librarians and communications with representatives from the County Jails.

#### **4.10 YOUTH SERVICES**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

NCLS will support our Member Libraries as lifelong learning centers for children and families.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

The Youth Services Consultant will:

- Assist Member Libraries in forming community-based partnerships for youth services and activities.
- Pursue system-wide grants to promote and enrich children's and young adult activities.
- Encourage Member Library Staff to join and participate in the Youth Services Section (YSS) of the New York Library Association (NYLA).
- Offer a variety of continuing education workshops.
- Offer collection development lists to assist Member Libraries in the selection of materials.
- Keep the Member Libraries and the NCLS IT staff informed of opportunities to integrate technology into library services for children.
- Promote and encourage participation in the NCLS Youth Services Organization.
- Coordinate the NYS Summer Reading Program, provide supporting materials and hold a workshop to assist Member Libraries with this important activity.

##### **3. Intended Result(s):**

To assist Member Libraries in improving services for children and young adults by providing advice, continuing education opportunities, and helping to acquire age-appropriate materials and technology.

##### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Workshop evaluations, Annual Survey of Services, and the minutes of the Youth Services Advisory Committee.

### **ELEMENT 4 – CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **4.11 CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

To provide educational opportunities on library practices, services, trends, and important issues to Member Library staff and trustees.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- If funding allows, NCLS staff will attend conferences and training sessions to remain current.
- NCLS will provide regularly scheduled training classes for Member Libraries, including management-related classes.
- NCLS will survey the libraries to determine training needs.
- NCLS will continue to pursue alternate methods of providing training classes for the libraries (i.e. web conferencing, video conferencing).

**3. Intended Result(s):**

Library staff and trustees will have opportunities to build the skills and knowledge they need to enhance the services of their libraries.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Number of workshops offered and number of attendees. Annual Survey of Services. Class evaluations.

**ELEMENT 5 – CONSULTING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

**4.12 CONSULTING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

**1. Goal Statement:**

NCLS will provide Consulting Services to its members through a Professional library staff with expertise in all areas of library and information science.

**2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

If the number of Consultant hours remains constant, or if the Consultants are not assigned new duties due to budget constraints, NCLS will:

- Develop a schedule of site visits so that each member library receives at least two visits annually.
- Consultants will attend at least one board meeting of assigned libraries annually.
- Consultants will prepare toolkits on frequently requested topics and will make these toolkits available on the NCLS web site.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

Member Libraries will meet and/or exceed minimum standards mandated by the NY State Library.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Updated chart of library visits and board meetings. Consultant visit reports. Annual Survey of Services.

**ELEMENT 6 – COORDINATED SERVICES**

**4.13 COORDINATED SERVICES**

**1. Goal Statement:**

NCLS will continue to provide coordinated services in the areas of Technology, Youth Services and Collection Development.

**2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- Maintain or expand services as allowed by State funding.
- Periodically issue subject-oriented collection development lists.

- Coordinate and/or participate in the cooperative purchase of online databases as a result of discussions with the Central Library Advisory Committee and the NCPL Directors Organization.
- Investigate, with the NCPL Directors Organization, the possibility of having libraries volunteer to adopt subject areas for regional collection development.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

To assist our Member Libraries in pooling resources to improve and expand services.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Annual Survey of Services. The maintenance or expansion of existing services. Implementation of new services.

**ELEMENT 7 – AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY**

**4.14 AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY**

**1. Goal Statement:**

Member Library trustees, librarians, Friends, and volunteers will receive information and assistance in promoting their library to legislators and the community.

**2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- NCLS will encourage Member Library staff and Boards to join NYLA as a means of participating in, and supporting, statewide advocacy and legislative efforts.
- NCLS Professional staff will keep library directors and trustees informed of opportunities for their library supporters to contact legislators and public officials for action on issues of importance to libraries.
- Consultants will present workshops and meetings about conducting programs for library awareness and advocacy.
- NCLS Director and Professional staff will speak to civic organizations and other groups and release publicity about the importance of library services in communities.
- NCLS Professional staff will hold organizational meetings for Member Libraries' representatives to develop strategies for their annual requests for County Aid.
- NCLS Director and staff will invite libraries to contact state officials and organize groups to visit legislators on "Library Legislative Day" in Albany.
- NCLS staff will provide statistics to assist Member Libraries' advocacy efforts.
- NCLS will provide graphics and printing services to assist libraries with ballot-referendum advocacy campaigns.
- NCLS will assist libraries with bulk mailings.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

- Member Libraries will have the necessary information to lobby public officials for funding and support for laws favorable to libraries.
- Provide the organizational structure Member Libraries need to conduct campaigns to lobby legislators for funding.
- Improved local support for the Member Libraries as reported on the Annual Report.

#### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Level of State and local support for libraries as reported on the Annual Report.

### **ELEMENT 8 – COMMUNICATION AMONG MEMBER LIBRARIES**

#### **4.15 COMMUNICATION AMONG MEMBER LIBRARIES**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

Member Libraries will be encouraged to develop relationships among themselves in order to support each other in their efforts to provide the best possible services for their patrons.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- To encourage person to person contact between Member Libraries, and to foster and promote friendly, informal relationships among them. NCLS will provide time periods before and after all in-service training sessions for such exchanges.
- NCLS will promote the NCPL Directors Organization and the Youth Services Organization and send a representative to each of their meetings.
- NCLS will encourage members of the NCPL Directors Organization to attend each NCLS board meeting to promote communication between NCLS and the Member Libraries.
- Member Libraries will continue to be encouraged to communicate with each other via electronic means.

##### **3. Intended Result(s):**

Opportunities for communication and cooperation among Member Libraries will be facilitated.

##### **4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Annual Survey of Services. Input from the NCPL Directors Organization.

### **ELEMENT 9 – COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER LIBRARY SYSTEMS**

#### **4.16 COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER LIBRARY SYSTEMS**

##### **1. Goal Statement:**

NCLS will collaborate with all other library systems in the area and throughout the State for the purpose of coordinating library services.

##### **2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- NCLS staff will serve on committees of the Northern New York Library Network for program development and information technology enhancement.
- NCLS will assist NNYLN and area School Library Systems in disseminating promotional materials for their programs and activities to our Member Libraries.
- NCLS Consultants will serve on School Library System Advisory Councils and consider cooperative projects, i.e. grant opportunities, etc., that would benefit all library patrons in the North Country region.

- NCLS will participate in State-wide collaborative efforts and programs.
- NCLS will assist Member Libraries in creating cooperative programming opportunities with other public library systems.
- If funding allows, NCLS will provide delivery links with the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System and Onondaga County Public Library.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

To improve overall interlibrary cooperation and coordination through the development of interpersonal ties and networking among staff members of area public, academic, school, and special librarians.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Participation and membership in the NNYLN Board and committees.  
 Participation and membership in area school library groups.  
 Participation in State-wide collaborative efforts.  
 Participation in PLS, NYLA, and other regional organizations impacting public libraries.

**ELEMENT 10 – CONSTRUCTION**

**4.17 CONSTRUCTION**

**1. Goal Statement:**

The Professional library Consultant staff of the North Country Library System will administer and complete all the requirements by DLD within the program of NY State Aid for Public Library Construction.

**2. Years 1 – 5 (2012 – 2016):**

- NCLS staff will counsel Directors and Trustees concerning the process of updating their planning documents.
- NCLS staff will meet with Member Library Boards and will present workshops and meetings to advise them concerning various aspects of Construction Grant application and funding process.
- NCLS staff will assist Member Libraries in completing the application process and assist in providing any additional information needed by State agencies responsible for the review of Construction Grant applications.
- Eligibility to apply for funds will be based upon: having the required matching funds available, participating in ILL, and demonstrating a pattern of striving to increase in local public support over the past three years.
- NCLS staff will review, evaluate, and rank the applications in accordance with priorities set by the NCLS Board of Trustees.

**3. Intended Result(s):**

To provide assistance for individual libraries in obtaining New York State Construction funding for their building projects.

**4. Evaluation Method(s):**

Number of successful building projects, surveys.

**ELEMENT 11 – CENTRAL LIBRARY SERVICES**

**4.18 URL OF THE 2012 – 2016 CENTRAL LIBRARY PLAN:**

<http://ncls.northcountrylibraries.org/sites/default/files/centrallibplan.pdf>

**ELEMENT 12 – DIRECT ACCESS**

**4.19 URL OF DIRECT ACCESS PLAN:**

<http://ncls.northcountrylibraries.org/sites/default/files/directaccplan.pdf>