



Oregon Federal Documents Regional Collection Survey

Introduction

The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is a program coordinated by the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) that distributes federal government publications free of cost to [designated libraries](#) in Oregon, providing free access for all users to this information. The State Library of Oregon serves as the Regional Depository Library and works with [Regional partner libraries](#) to ensure the comprehensiveness and integrity of a tangible (print, microfiche, electronic media) FDLP collection in Oregon.

GPO is now offering more options for Regional Depository Libraries to select online versions of federal government publications in lieu of printed versions. For more details, see policies on [Regional Online Selections](#) and [Regional Discard](#) on the GPO website.

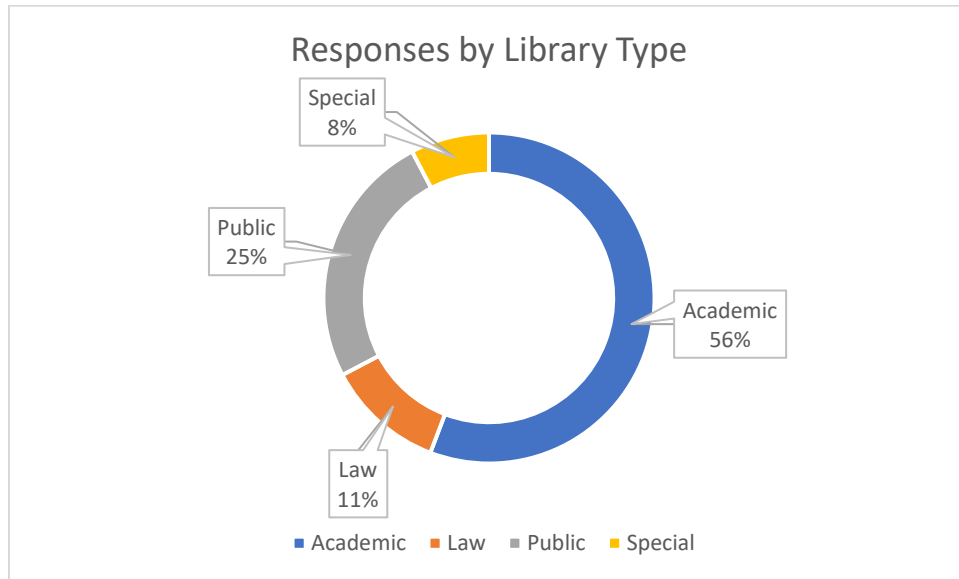
Titles are made eligible for Regional online selection or discard based on the location of FDLP libraries, who enter into partnership with GPO to select and/or preserve tangible publications. For Oregon, these libraries must be located in the [West National Collection Service Area](#) (NCSA).

In order to make decisions about the retention of these and other titles for Oregon's Regional Federal Depository Collection, the State Library conducted a survey to gather data about preferences for the geographic location of tangible collections of federal government publications.

Survey Results

Survey Time Period: January 9-30, 2023

Number of Responses: 52

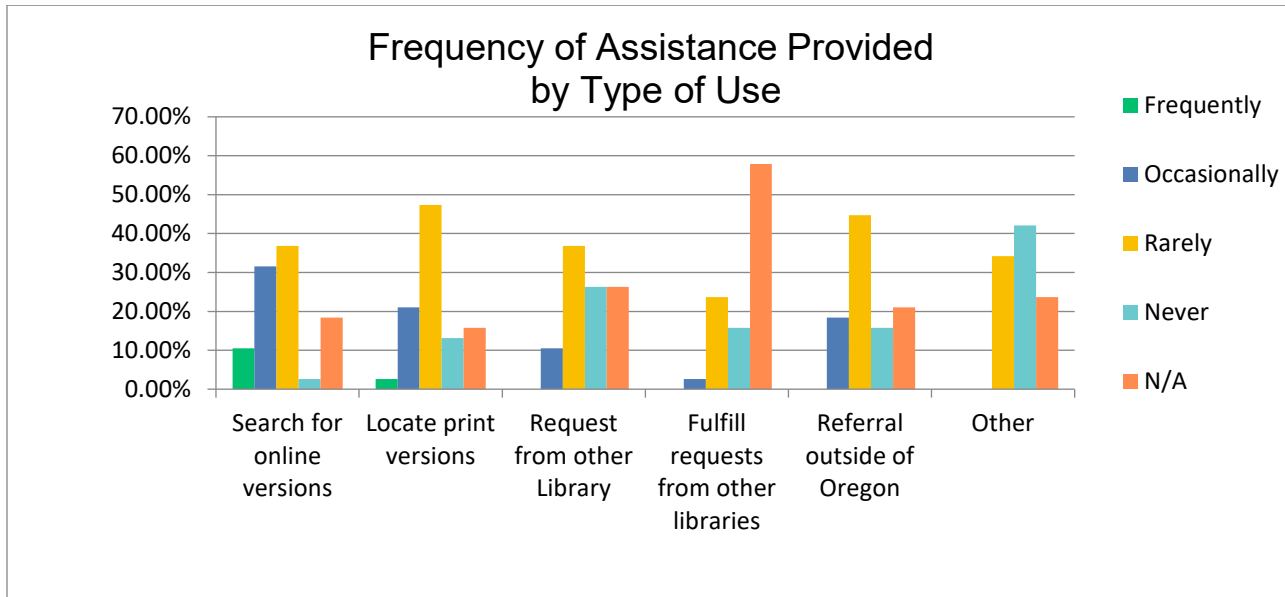


Respondents' Primary Role at the Library

Primary Role	Responses
Administration/Management	33%
Cataloging/Acquisitions/Technical Services	26%
Reference/Public Services	20%
Access Services/Circulation/Interlibrary Loan	9%
Collection Development/Management	7%
Other	4%

Survey Questions

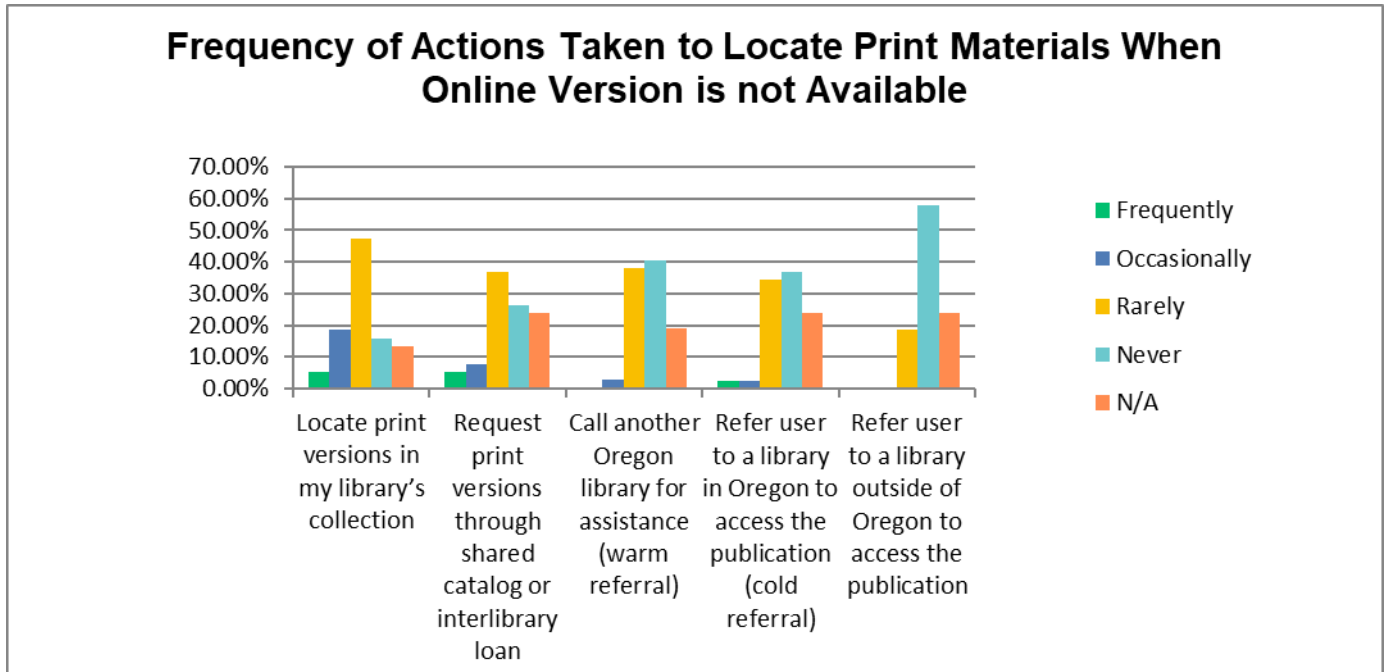
Survey respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they provide library users with assistance in locating federal government publications.



Definitions	
Frequently	Once a week
Occasionally	Once a month
Rarely	1-2 times per year
Never	
N/A	Not part of job duties

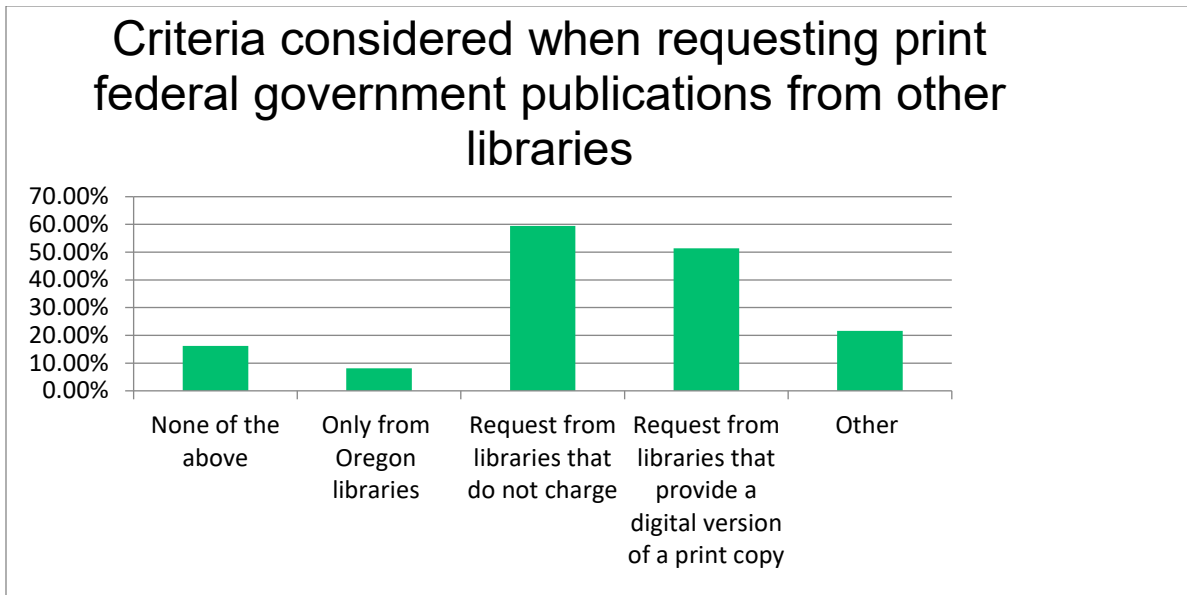
Respondent Comments
Frequency varies, January through April online access is several times per week.
Due to our lack of federal publications, we rarely are able to use them to help our patrons. We usually need to refer people to the originating agency if we can figure out which one it is. We do refer people to NARA in Seattle.
Help them understand what types of sources are available online and how to access them.

Survey respondents were also asked how frequently they helped to locate print federal publications when online versions are not available.

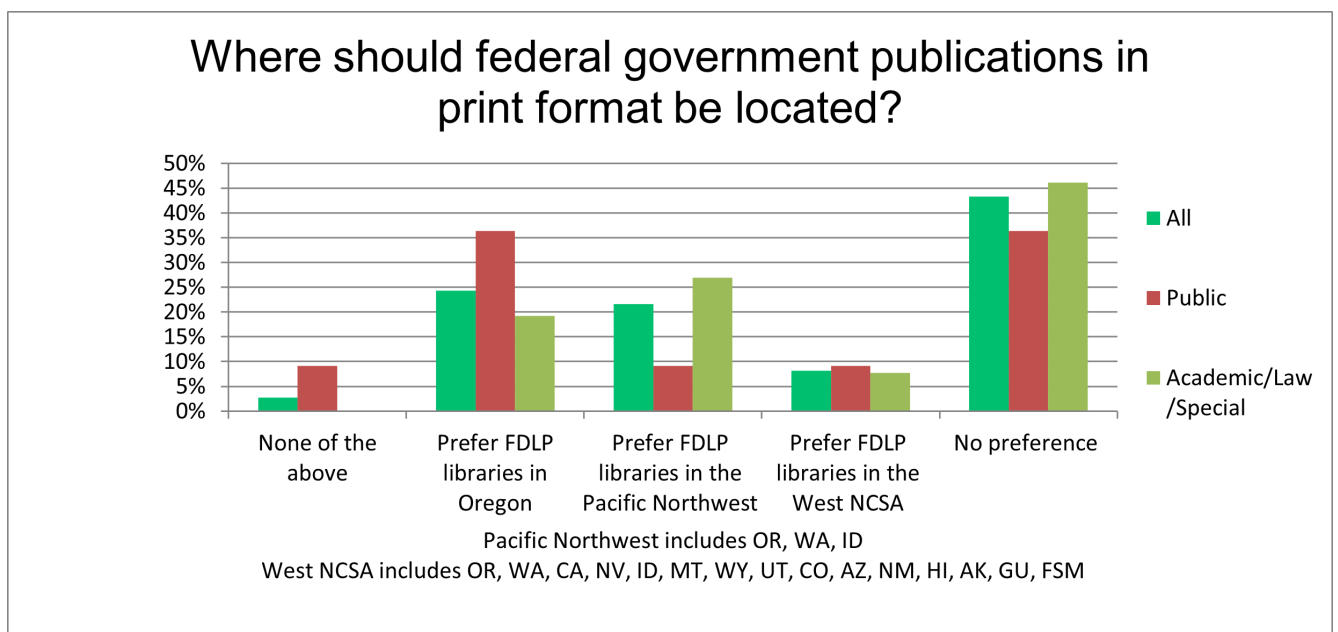


Respondent Comments
We do not have ILL through our catalog.
the things I've never done (in this particular position) = 'never' because the opportunity has never presented itself
I work to find requested documents, rather than referring customers to other libraries
While our collection has been in storage during our move, we have directed patrons to other FDLP libraries

Survey respondents were then asked about the criteria used to request federal publications from other libraries. The majority of responses answering *Other* indicated a lack of familiarity with the criteria used by their library.



The survey then asked where federal government publications in print format should be located, based on library users' preferences. To understand potential differences between types of libraries, the chart below represents all responses as well as responses from public libraries and academic/law/special libraries.



The survey then asked about preferences for categories of federal government publications to be held in print format in FDLP Regional Partner Libraries in Oregon. Respondents could choose more than one category.

Category of Federal Print Publications	Preference for Print Held in Oregon		
	All	Public	Academic/Law/Special
Congressional reports and documents (aka Serial Set)	42%	40%	42%
Federal Register/Code of Federal Regulations	39%	50%	35%
U.S. Statutes at Large	36%	40%	35%
None of the above	31%	40%	27%
U.S. Presidential Papers	31%	10%	38%
Congressional hearings	28%	10%	35%
Other	17%	20%	15%

Other Categories of Interest

Medicare/Medicaid and Tax documents/tax code

FHWA/DOT publications (transportation)

Respondent Comments
I don't have an opinion on this because I can't think of a reason that a digital copy would be insufficient and print would be necessary
It's been rare that I haven't been able to find documents digitally - I don't have a preference to share

Finally, respondents were given an opportunity to provide general comments. Nine of 14 responses are listed below. Responses that indicated “not applicable” or “thanks” are not included.

<p>Our library does not offer interlibrary loan as a service, so most of these questions did not seem relevant. I have suggested adding interlibrary loan, but the Board deemed it too expensive so we have not done so. We are conducting a survey of our patrons to see if there is enough interest to justify the expense of interlibrary loan.</p>
<p>We have added some government documents to our collection recently such as an environmental assessment report and the January 6th Committee's report. The former was a donation and the latter we purchased through Ingram. We would add more if we had the money and the shelf space.</p>
<p>Due to library staff reductions and staff hybrid work status, we would like to reduce our FDLP tangible selections to just the Code of Federal Regulations. If Portland State University's library retains copies of the Congressional Record and the Federal Register, then we could refer our patrons to that library.</p>
<p>We are a small municipal library without a consortial relationship. Knowing I can contact the State Library is a lifesaver. Many of our patrons are not computer savvy and DO NOT WANT/REFUSE to read government publications online. We are grateful for any assistance from the State Library and knowing that we can contact them to find if documents, procedures, and laws are available in print at Salem.</p>
<p>Thanks for asking my opinion! Access, especially relating to libraries and education, is super important to me and relevant to the student population I work with most. The best way to improve access is to solicit feedback from those who use or care about the item in question.</p>
<p>I am a newcomer to my career as a librarian and have only been in my current role for a few months - I have had very little experience with federal govt publications thus far and my responses to the above reflect this.</p>
<p>I've worked in my library for 15 years, pretty much all in Youth Services (at the Children's Ref. Desk and Teen Ref. Desk). As such I have not served patrons at a desk where they would be asking for the kinds of publications addressed in this survey.</p>
<p>On the rare occasion when I have been asked for such publications, patrons have generally preferred to receive the information electronically, not in print. Honestly, I did not even know (or if I did know at some point, I had forgotten) that library staff could request print versions of such publications for our patrons.</p>
<p>As a stacks manager, less physical items and more electronic availability is definitely preferred.</p>
<p>With our remodel due to space, we have gotten rid of much of our physical collection of FDLP materials (most of the larger series) and have moved largely to digital. We have retained some of the more individual titles or smaller sets which may not yet be online.</p>
<p>many of our patrons would prefer an online edition, but if we have the edition in print, than that works also</p>

Analysis

State Library staff were pleased to receive 52 responses to the survey and believe the library community appreciated the opportunity to give feedback about the FDLP Regional Collection. Many respondents did not work frequently with federal publications or had different levels of experience working with them. Respondents did indicate that library users and well as staff prefer to work with online versions of publications, and they do not receive or make frequent requests for print publications.

When asked about geographic preferences for print publication library holdings, it is notable that many respondents expressed no preference. Even when asked about specific categories of federal publications, respondents did not indicate definitive preferences. Public library respondents expressed slightly higher preference for library holdings to be located in Oregon, which is likely due to their potential lesser access to consortial or interlibrary loan services.

The categories of federal publications described in the survey are those that [GPO has either authorized](#) or may soon authorize regional libraries to choose to stop receiving in print or weed from historical collections. The survey responses show that while there may be some preference for categories of materials to remain in print collections in Oregon libraries, there is not an overwhelming call to keep print materials in state.

Next Steps and Recommendations

The State Library will continue to receive the **Federal Register** and **Code of Federal Regulations** in print format, but will only retain those materials for 1-2 years according to [FDLP superseding guidelines](#). Most of the State Library's historical holdings of these titles are in microfiche format and will be retained unless future storage space of microfiche materials becomes a concern. Any historical holdings in print format will be discarded.

The State Library will continue to receive and retain all issues of the **U.S. Statutes at Large**. This is a core legal title that is published in only 1-3 volumes per year and will not have a significant impact on stacks space.

The State Library will retain all issues of the **U.S. Presidential Papers** in print format. This series ended in 2022 and will not have significant impact on stacks space.

The State Library will convene a meeting with Regional Collection partner libraries to discuss retention of Congressional reports, documents and hearings. After determining a path forward, the State Library will work with partner libraries to update selective housing agreements to the [format now recommended by GPO](#). The goal is to have agreements updated by December 2023.