Proposed Change to the Structure of
LCSH Subdivisions Used for Cartographic Materials

Discussion Paper
June 10, 2009

In February, 2009, the Policy and Standards Division (PSD) of the Library of Congress announced the beginning the genre/form project for cartographic materials. As with the previous projects, PSD is reexamining current subject headings and subdivisions to determine whether any changes should be made to their structure and/or to the ways that they are assigned.

PSD is requesting input from the library community regarding a possible change to the structure of most of the form subdivisions in the area of cartography. Provided below is a discussion of the current subdivision structure; the impact that the genre/form project will have on cataloging and resource discovery; and a solution to ameliorate the negative impacts. Comments on PSD's proposed solution will be accepted through August 10, 2009.

Current subdivision practice
Currently, the genre or form of cartographic materials may be brought out in two ways:

1. Through the use of a form subdivision after the name of a place or, in some cases, the name of a corporate body, educational institutional institution, or topic (e.g. **Arlington (Va.) $v Maps, Manuscript**).
2. Through the assignment of a subject heading denoting the type of map (e.g. **Maps, Manuscript**).

In some cases, both types of headings have been used on a single bibliographic record. However, headings with a *form subdivision* are generally used when the maps are about one particular locality, corporate body, topic, or educational institution; *form headings* are generally used when the scope is not limited in such a way.

Typically, the cartographic form subdivisions are identical in structure and wording to a subject heading. However, an examination of the form subdivisions and their correlated subject headings, shown below in the first two columns of Chart 1, shows that there are some inconsistencies.

- The syntax of the subdivision **Maps, Topographic**, does not match the syntax of the correlated heading, **Topographic maps**
- While most of the subdivisions and headings are inverted, some are not (e.g. **Bathymetric maps**)
- Some subdivisions, such as **Maps, Physical**, do not have a correlated subject heading

Chart 1

Current form subdivision	Current topical heading	Revised topical heading
Aerial views	n/a	n/a
Bathymetric maps	Bathymetric maps	Bathymetric maps
Index maps	Index maps	Index maps
Maps	Maps	Maps
Maps, Comparative	Maps, Comparative	Comparative maps
Maps, Manuscript	Maps, Manuscript	Manuscript maps
Maps, Mental	n/a	n/a
Maps, Outline and base	n/a	n/a
Maps, Physical	n/a	n/a
Maps, Pictorial	Maps, Pictorial	Pictorial maps
Maps, Topographic	Topographic maps	Topographic maps
Maps, Tourist	Maps, Tourist	Tourist maps
Maps for children	Maps for children	Maps for children
Maps for people with visual disabilities	Maps for people with visual disabilities	Maps for people with visual disabilities
Maps for the blind	Maps for the blind	Maps for the blind
Relief models	Relief models	Relief models
Remote-sensing images	Remote-sensing images	Remote-sensing images
Remote-sensing maps	n/a	n/a

Impact of the genre/form project on heading assignment
As part of the cartography genre/form project, all of the inverted subject headings will be modified to bring them into natural language order, as shown in the third column of Chart 1. At the same time, matching genre/form headings will be authorized, as will genre/form headings for which there is no correlated topical heading (e.g. **Remote-sensing maps**).

The new genre/form headings will be valid for use on collections of cartographic materials as well as on individual maps, and subject headings will still be applied to bring out the topic of a map (a locality, etc.). If the current form subdivisions are retained, the results might appear something like the following.

Coralville Reservoir, Johnson County, Iowa : marked fishing map
650   Fishing $z Iowa $z Coralville Lake $v Maps.
651   Coralville Lake (Iowa) $v Bathymetric maps.
655   Bathymetric maps.

Index to photography, Arlington County, Virginia.
651   Arlington County (Va.) $v Index maps.
655   Index maps.

Mapeasy's guidemap to Boston.
651   Boston (Mass.) $v Maps, Pictorial.
651   Boston (Mass.) $v Maps, Tourist.
655   Pictorial maps.
655   Tourist maps.

A plan of Patomack River, from the mouth of Sherrendo, down to Chapawamsick. 1737.
651   Potomac River $v Maps, Manuscript.
655   Manuscript maps.

As these four examples demonstrate, maintaining the status quo with regard to the form subdivisions would lead to further inconsistencies in the database. There would be a great many more cases in which the syntax of the form subdivision would not match the syntax of the genre/form heading; this could lead to confusion for catalogers, reference librarians, and users alike. The confusion might be increased by the fact that some of the subdivisions (those that are currently in direct order) *would* match the syntax of the genre/form heading.

Additionally, since the syntax of the genre/form headings and form subdivisions would not be identical, the provision of the same information in two places could not be accomplished through a copy-and-paste function. This would lead to extra keystrokes for cataloging personnel.

The solution
In order to ameliorate the negative impacts of the genre/form projects as outlined above, PSD proposes that the syntax of subdivisions be altered. Its proposal is to simplify the form subdivisions, removing the qualifier (e.g. Topographic, Bathymetric) and allowing the more specific genre/form heading to characterize the type of map being described. As shown below in Chart 2, the subdivisions that include the word "maps" would be affected. Fourteen of the 17 form subdivisions used for cartographic materials would be affected.

The subject and genre/form headings would then have a symbiotic relationship in which each relies on the other to present a full view of the resource being described, instead of duplicating each other. The following examples are the same as those given above, but are modified to follow the proposed policy.

Coralville Reservoir, Johnson County, Iowa : marked fishing map
650   Fishing $z Iowa $z Coralville Lake $v Maps.
651   Coralville Lake (Iowa) $v Maps.
655   Bathymetric maps.

Index to photography, Arlington County, Virginia.
651   Arlington County (Va.) $v Maps.
655   Index maps.

Mapeasy's guidemap to Boston.
651   Boston (Mass.) $v Maps.
655   Pictorial maps.
655   Tourist maps.

A plan of Patomack River, from the mouth of Sherrendo, down to Chapawamsick. 1737.
651   Potomac River $v Maps.
655   Manuscript maps.

Chart 2

Current form subdivision	Proposed new form subdivision	Genre/form heading
Aerial views	Aerial views	Aerial views
Bathymetric maps	Maps	Bathymetric maps
Index maps	Maps	Index maps
Maps	Maps	Maps
Maps, Comparative	Maps	Comparative maps
Maps, Manuscript	Maps	Manuscript maps
Maps, Mental	Maps	Mental maps
Maps, Outline and base	Maps	Outline and base maps
Maps, Physical	Maps	Physical maps
Maps, Pictorial	Maps	Pictorial maps
Maps, Topographic	Maps	Topographic maps
Maps, Tourist	Maps	Tourist maps
Maps for children	Maps	Children's maps
Maps for people with visual disabilities	Maps	Maps for people with visual disabilities
Maps for the blind	Maps	Maps for the blind
Relief models	Relief models	Relief models
Remote-sensing images	Remote-sensing images	Remote-sensing images
Remote-sensing maps	Maps	Remote-sensing maps

There are several benefits to this approach.

1. All types of maps about one locality, etc. would be collocated under one heading in a browse search, and would not be separated alphabetically, as is the case today.
2. In some library systems the presence of a generalized form subdivision combined with a specific genre/form heading may enhance searching capabilities. The subdivision **–Maps** would collocate all maps about a place, topic, etc., for users who would like to see any or all such maps in a library's collection. The genre/form heading could be used as either a search limit or as a post-search filter to narrow results for users interested in only one type of map.
3. The genre or form of a map would be entered only once, saving time for the cataloger.

4. It would bring the assignment of cartographic subject headings into closer alignment with the assignment of headings in some other disciplines. In each of the following examples from LC's database, a general form subdivision is assigned, along with a specific genre/form heading.

    Pride and prejudice / Jane Austen.
    650   Young women $v Fiction.
    650   Social classes $v Fiction.
    650   Courtship $v Fiction.
    655   Love stories.
    655   Domestic fiction.

    The raven / Edgar Allan Poe.
    650   Ravens $v Poetry.
    655   Fantasy poetry.

    Nanny McPhee.
    650   Nannies $v Drama.
    650   Widowers $v Drama.
    655   Comedy films.
    655   Feature films.
    655   Fantasy films.

There are also a few drawbacks to this solution, two of which are chiefly caused by current system limitations.

1. File maintenance would have to be performed on existing bibliographic records.
2. Libraries with large cartographic collections may find that the lack of qualification in the form subdivisions causes large numbers of hits on individual searches. Using the genre/form heading as a post-coordinate search term or filter should resolve the problem, in systems that have such capabilities.
3. Online catalogs that do not currently support genre/form headings, search filters, or search limits would be negatively impacted, since information would not be duplicated between the subject and genre/form headings.

Those with an interest in the cataloging of cartographic materials are encouraged to send their comments on this proposal to the Policy and Standards Division by August 10, 2009. Comments may be sent to Janis L. Young, genre/form coordinator, at jayo@loc.gov or to PSD's general address, policy@loc.gov.