Issues in Forestry and Science Librarianship: Taxonomy and Authority Control

EXPERIENCES OF A FEDERAL SCIENCE LIBRARY

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National Forest Service Library

HTTPS://WWW.FS.FED.US/LIBRARY/

USDA FOREST SERVICE

CRYSTAL FALCONER

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Who I am:

Crystal Falconer

ILS Management

CMS Management

Digitization and Preservation

Outreach

Website Management

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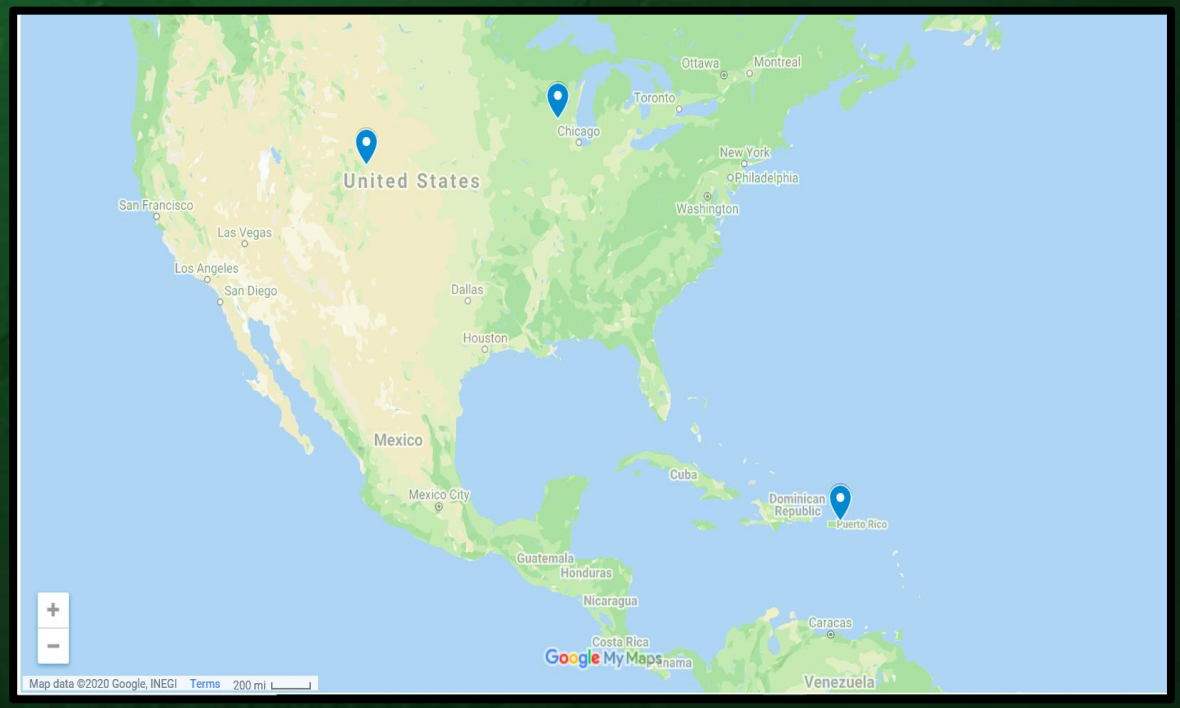
Makeup of the National Forest Service Library:

- **National Forest Service Library**
  (Fort Collins, CO)
- **Forest Products Laboratory Library**
  (Madison, WI)
- **International Institute of Tropical Forestry Library**
  (Rio Piedras, PR)



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Taxonomy in Science Libraries

EFFORTS BY THE NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE LIBRARY
TO LINK DATA AND STREAMLINE SUBJECT METADATA.

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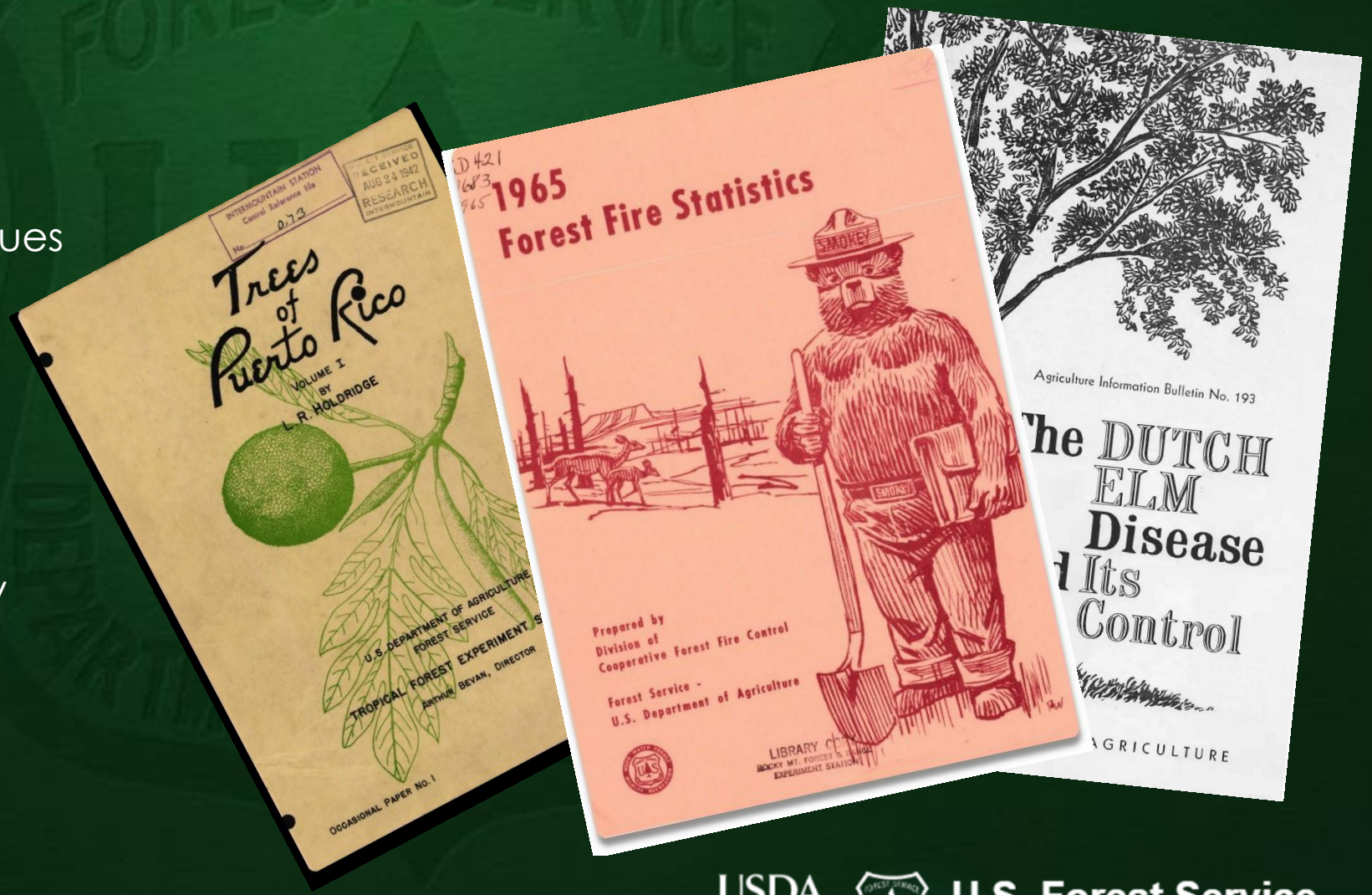
Why Science is Complicated

- Cultural Values
- Discoveries
- Methods
- Technology
- Language
- Terminology



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Why does Controlled Vocabulary Matter?

Ex. London Plane Tree

(Photo credit goes to the Arbor Day Foundation)

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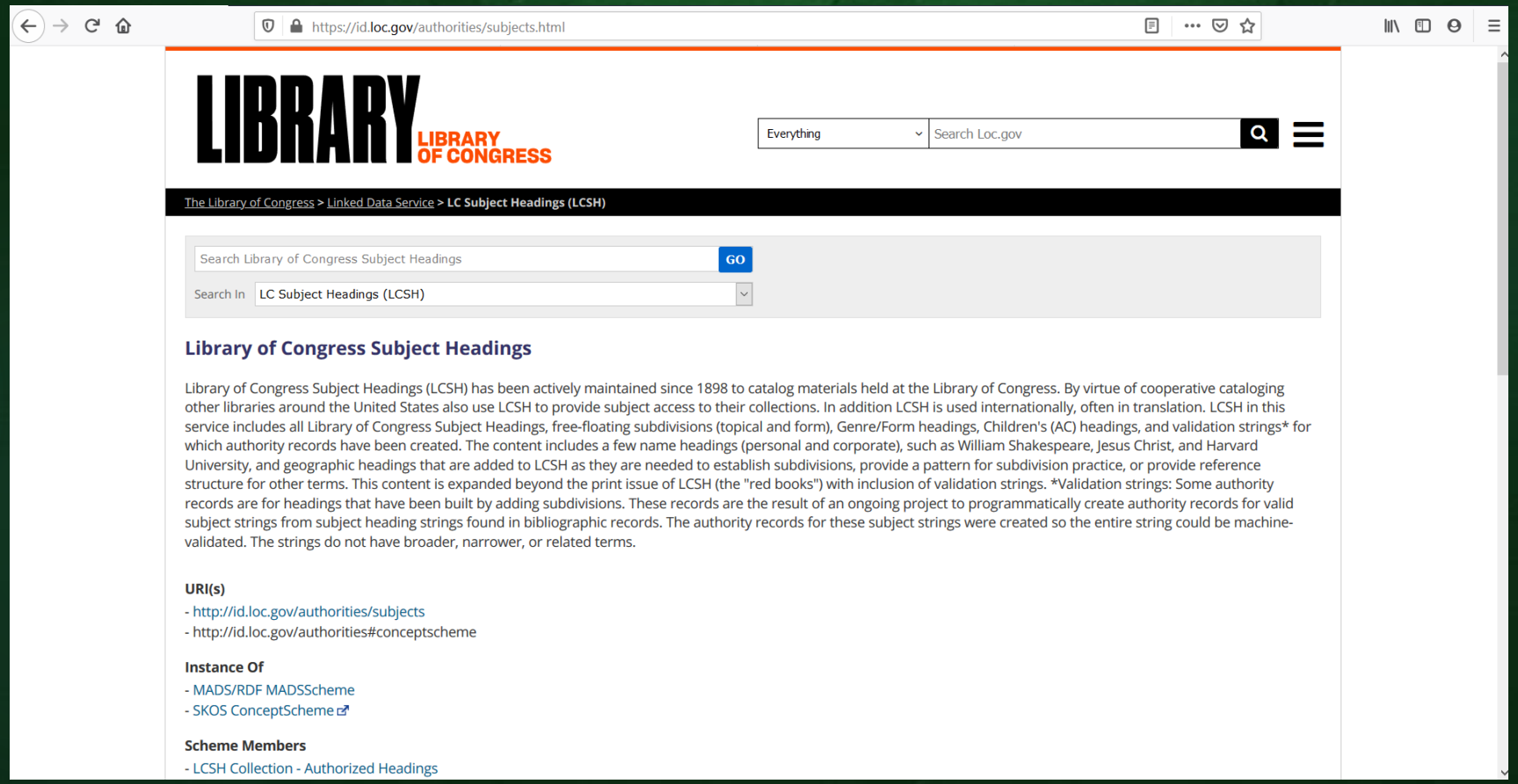
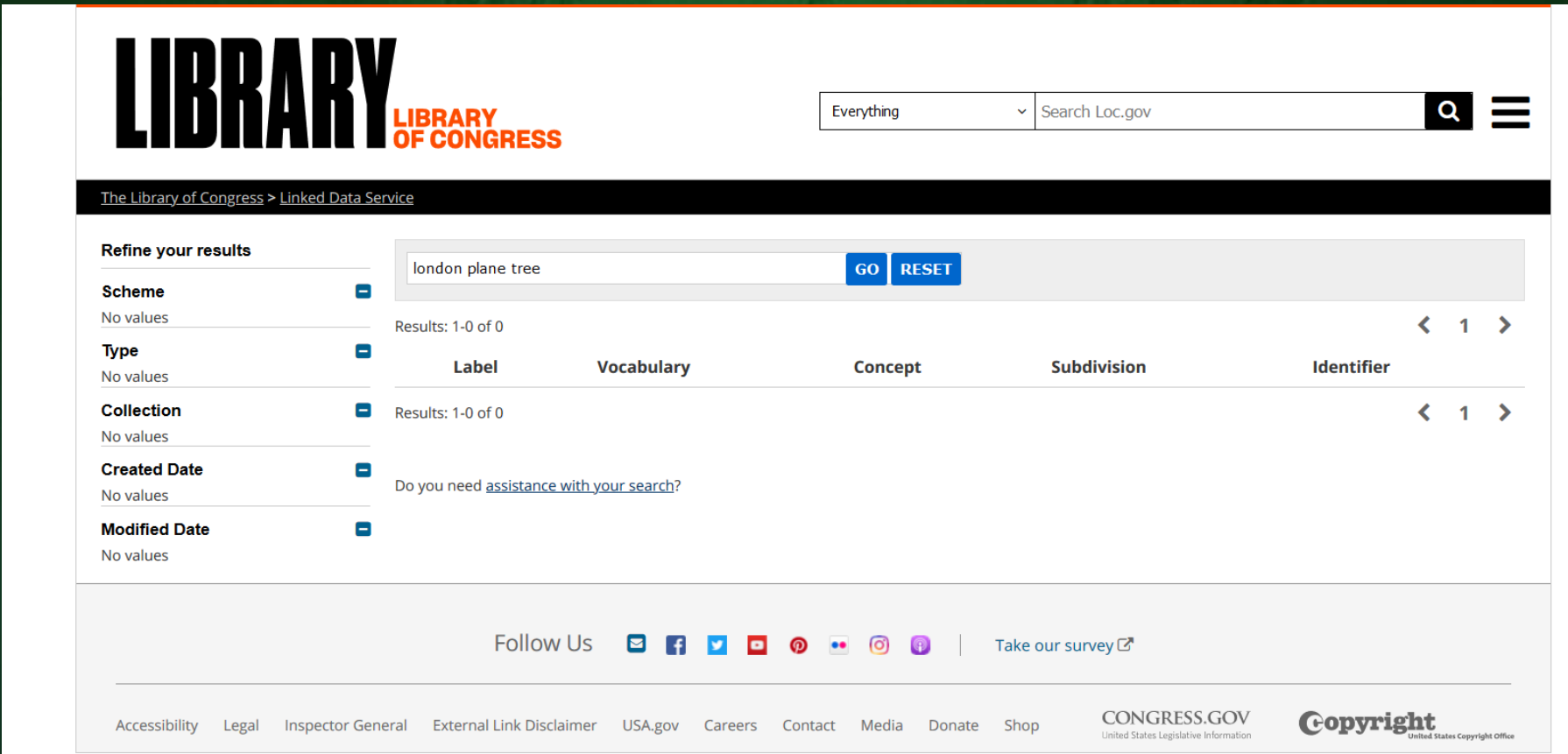
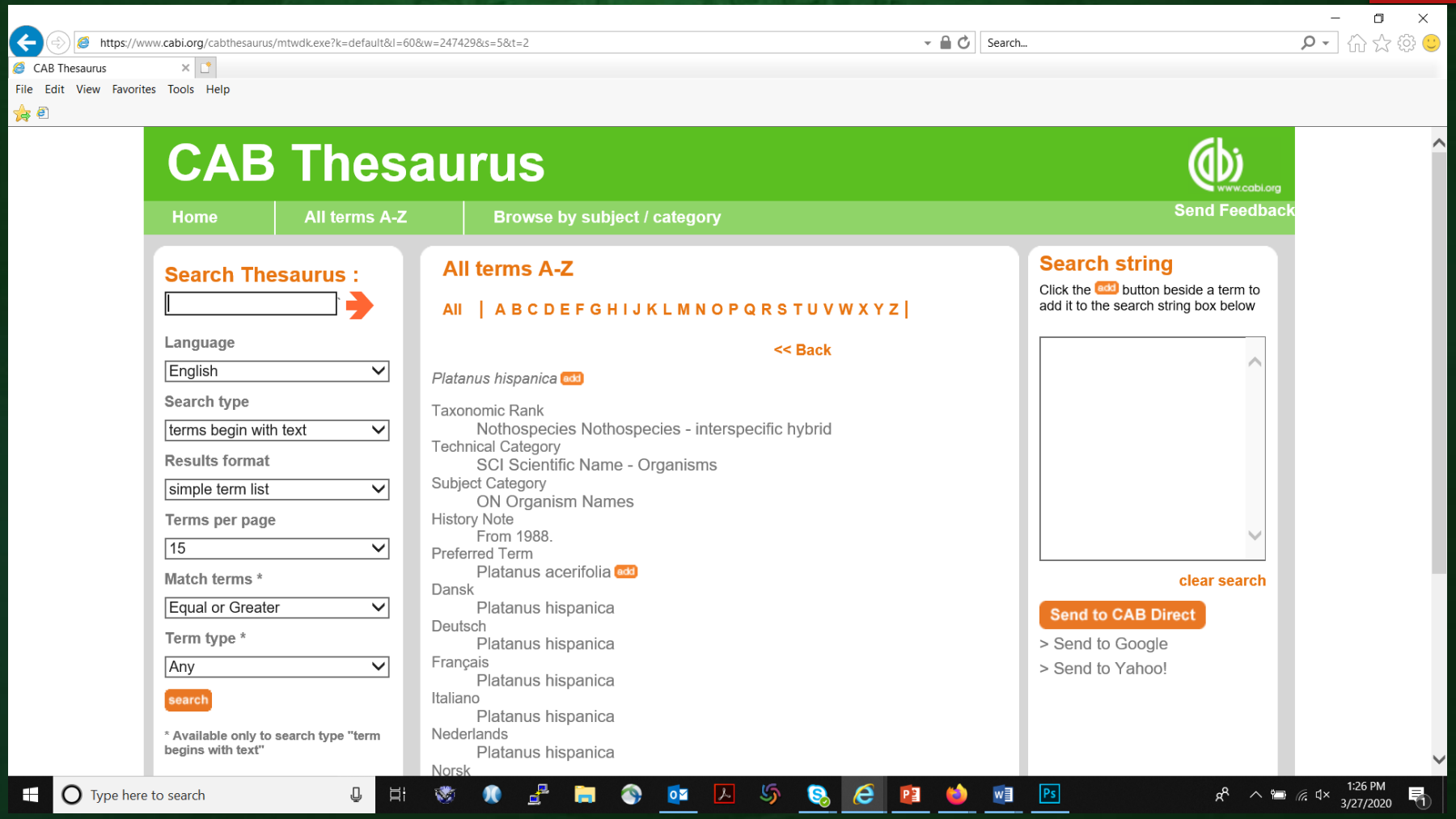
Common Library Subject Sources



Examples of Science Term Deficit in LC



Cab Thesaurus



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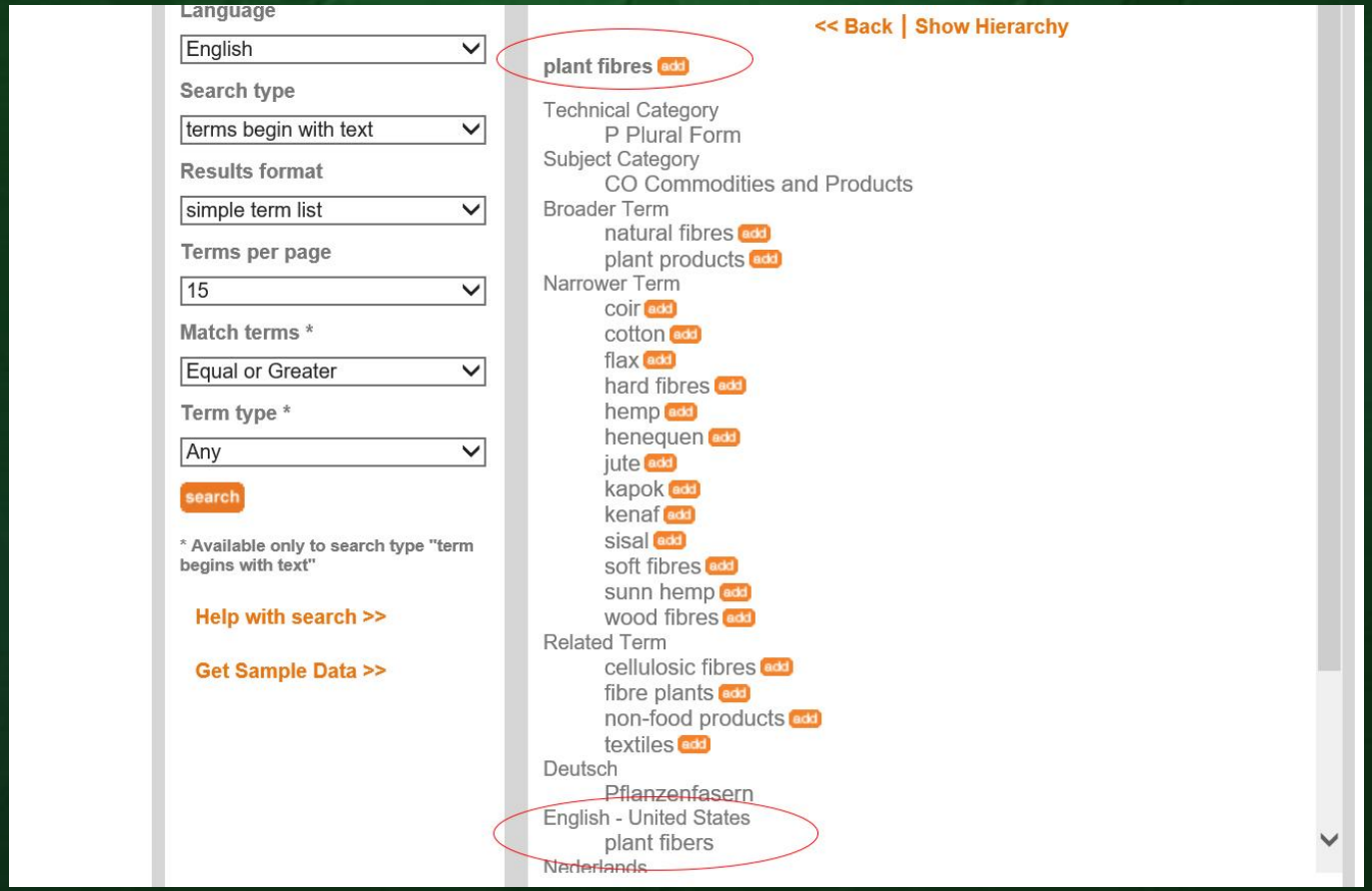
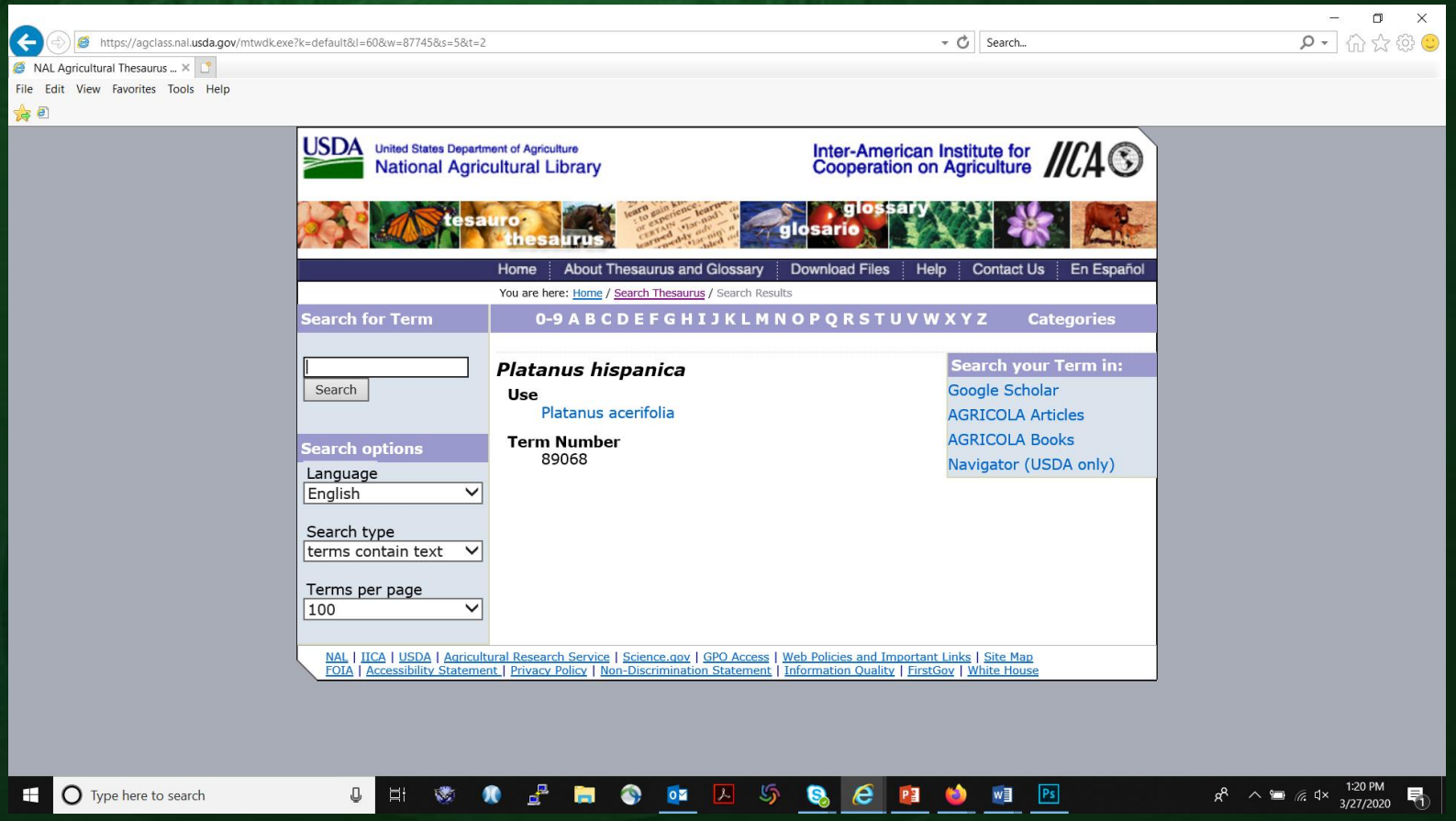
Cab Thesaurus: British vs. American English



653 Usage

651	3	\a New Mexico.
651	0	\a Pecos River (N.M. and Tex.).
651	0	\a Rio Grande.
653		\a Hesperioidea.
653		\a Assemblages.
653		\a Biological indicators.
653		\a Metrics.
653		\a Stresses.
653		\a Assessment.
653		\a Quality.
653		\a Riparian vegetation.
653		\a Indexes.

National Agriculture Library Thesaurus



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Background on NALT

Originally created for:

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

Used by:

- AGRICOLA
- Food Safety Research Information Office (FSRIC)
- Agricultural Network Information Center (AgNIC)
- Economic Research Service

What Sources Were Used to Create NALT?

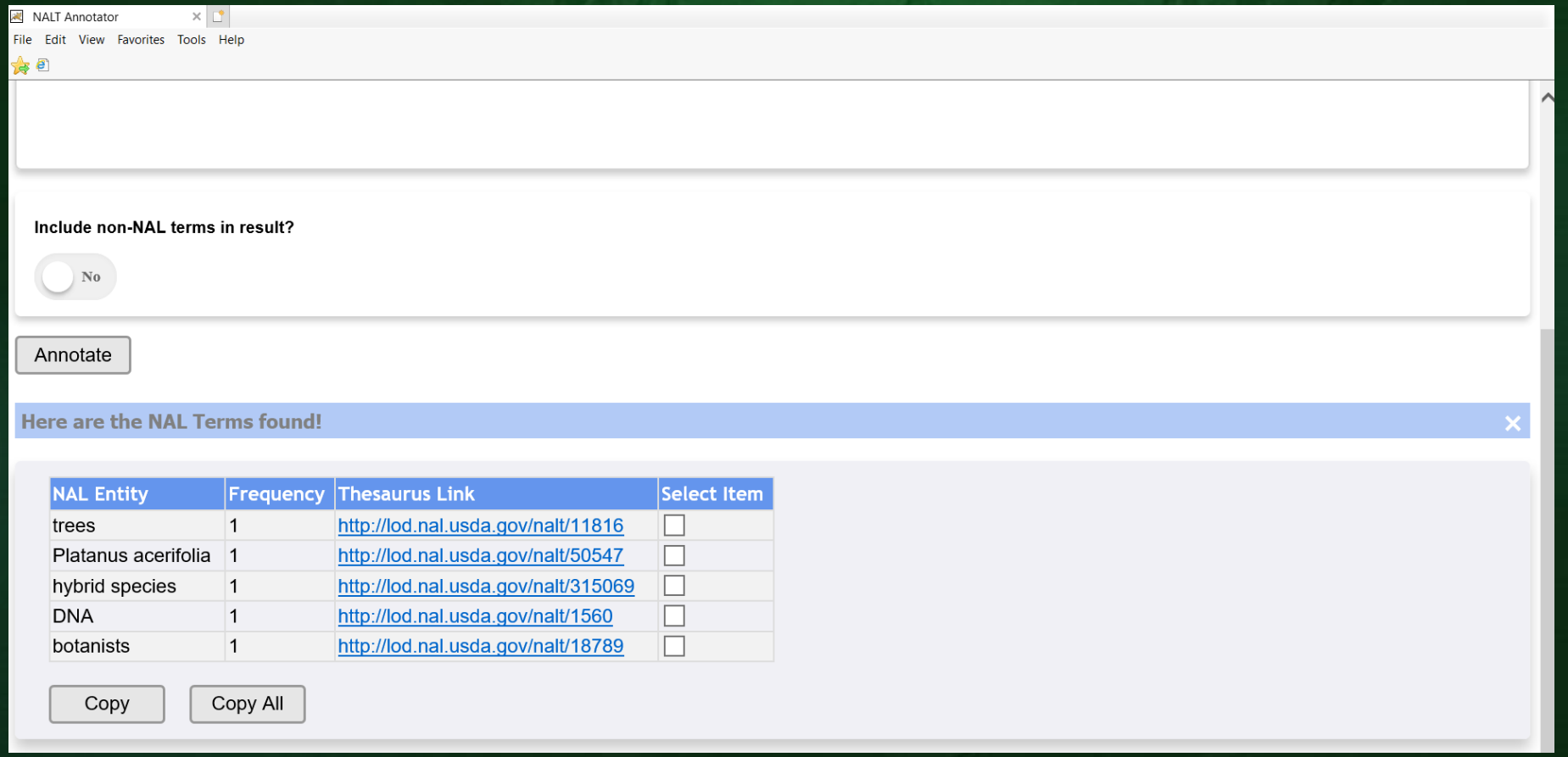
- Numerous glossaries, dictionaries, and classification sources from varying subject areas:
- Neurology, Pesticides, Cellular biology, Ecology, Business and Economics, Botany, Nutrition, Bacteriology, Biomass, Medicine, Chemistry, Disease, Environmental Protection, Fish and Fishing, Veterinary science, Genetics, Horticulture, Pulp and Paper Production, and more
- Sources can be found at: https://agclass.nal.usda.gov/bib.shtml

Tested Against the Best

- Ritchie S., Banyas K., & Sevin C. (2019). **A Comparison of Selected Bibliographic Database Search Retrieval for Agricultural Information**. *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship*, (93). https://doi.org/10.29173/istl48

"A generalized linear model statistical analysis determined that AGRICOLA ranked highest for precision and was statistically more likely to produce a relevant result than four other databases." (Quote from abstract)

NALT Annotator



How we got there:

Image: Logan River Foot bridge, Cache (Wasatch) National Forest, 1935 (United States Forest Service)

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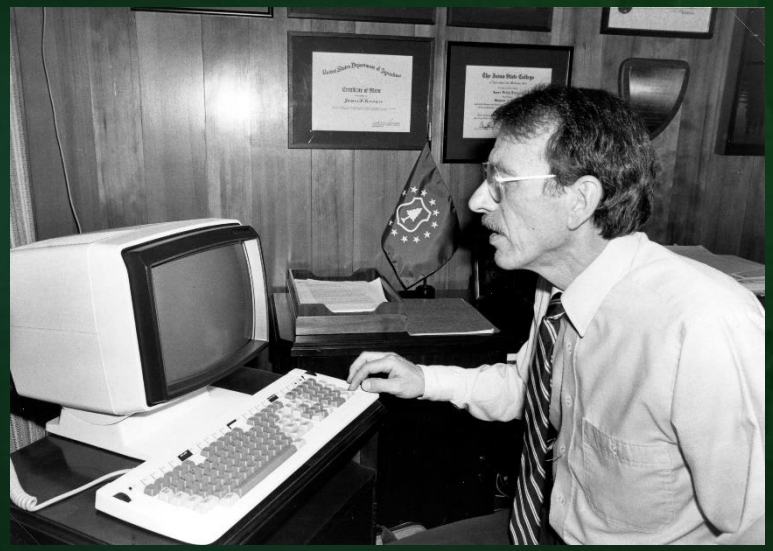
What we gained:

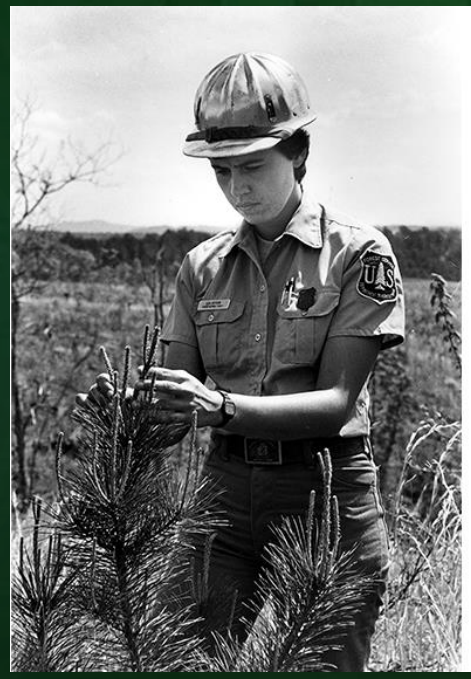


- The catalog records are cleaner than ever before.
- We made tons of improvement to our subject indexing.
- Our relationship with NAL is stronger than ever before.
- Staff has been impressed by the ease of use with NALT and the Annotator.
- Our researchers have noticed a vast improvement in our information retrieval and access.

Why Taxonomy is Important:

Improves the Forest and Forestry Research experience for our USDA Forest Service Researchers

Improves cohesiveness between organizations and their resources



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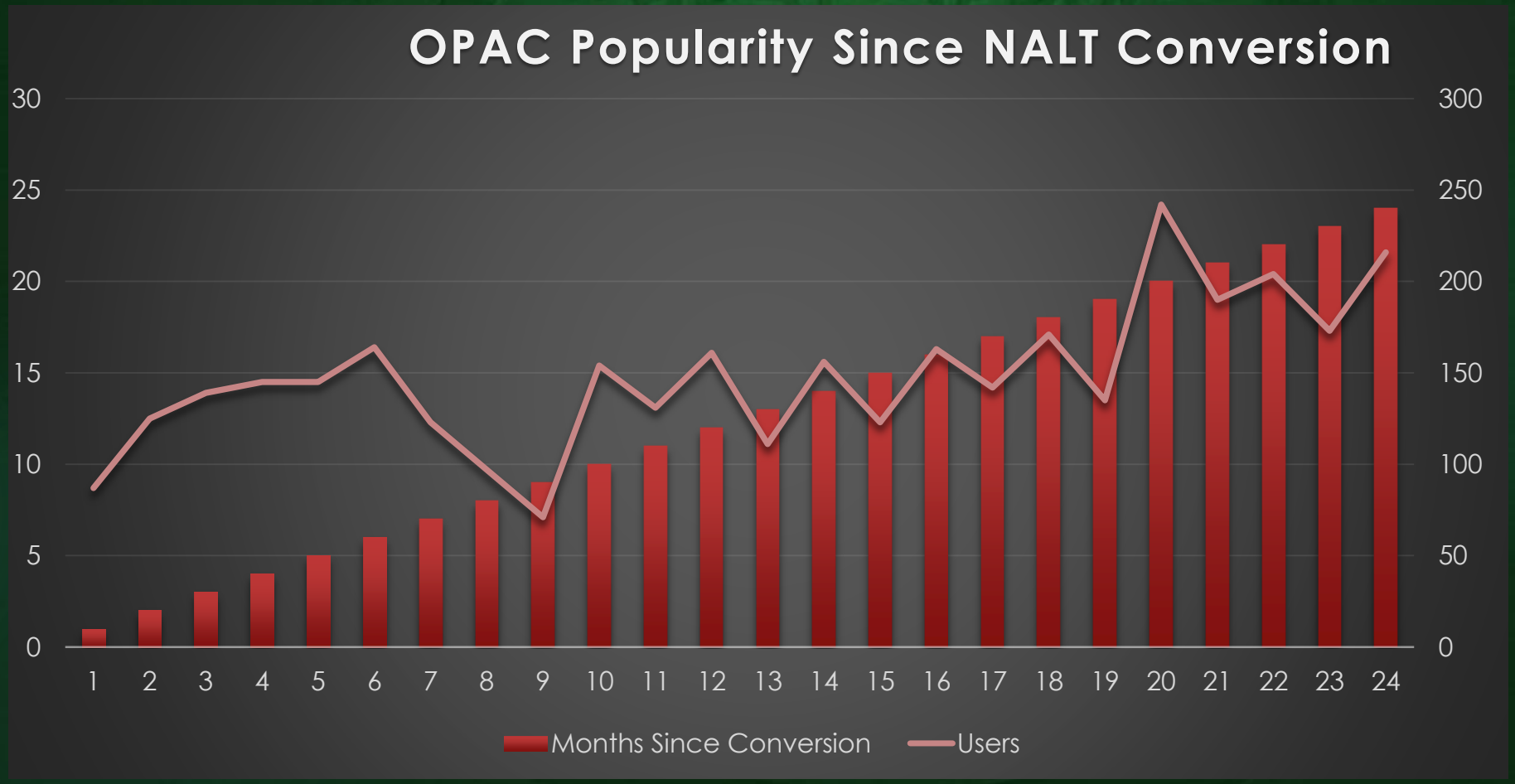

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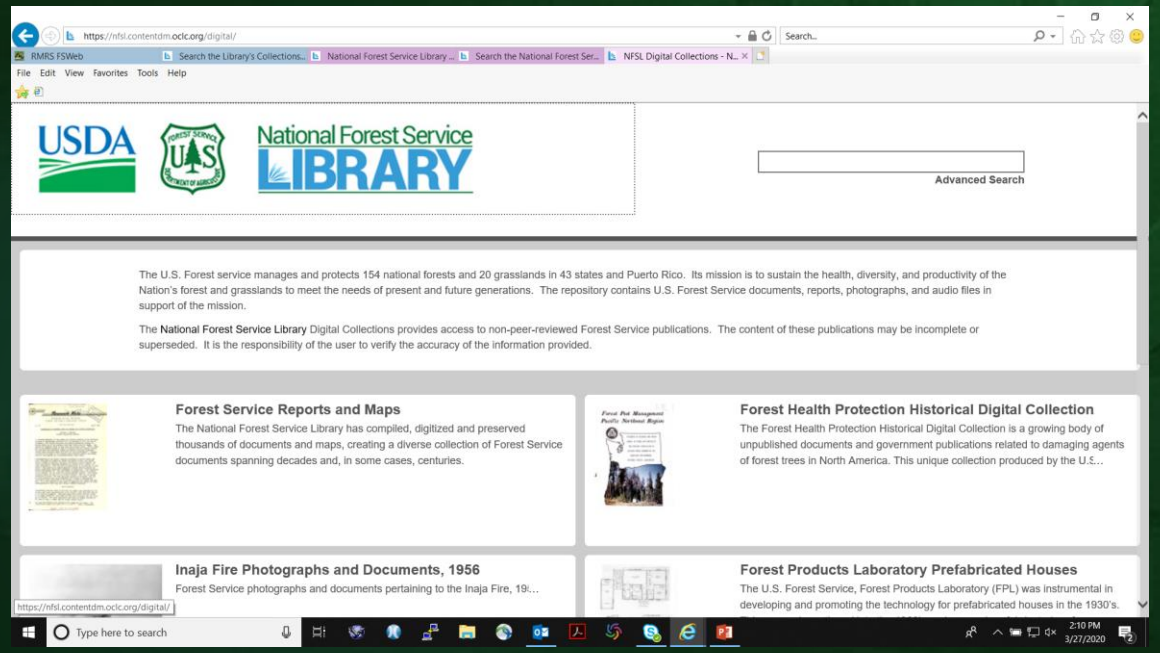
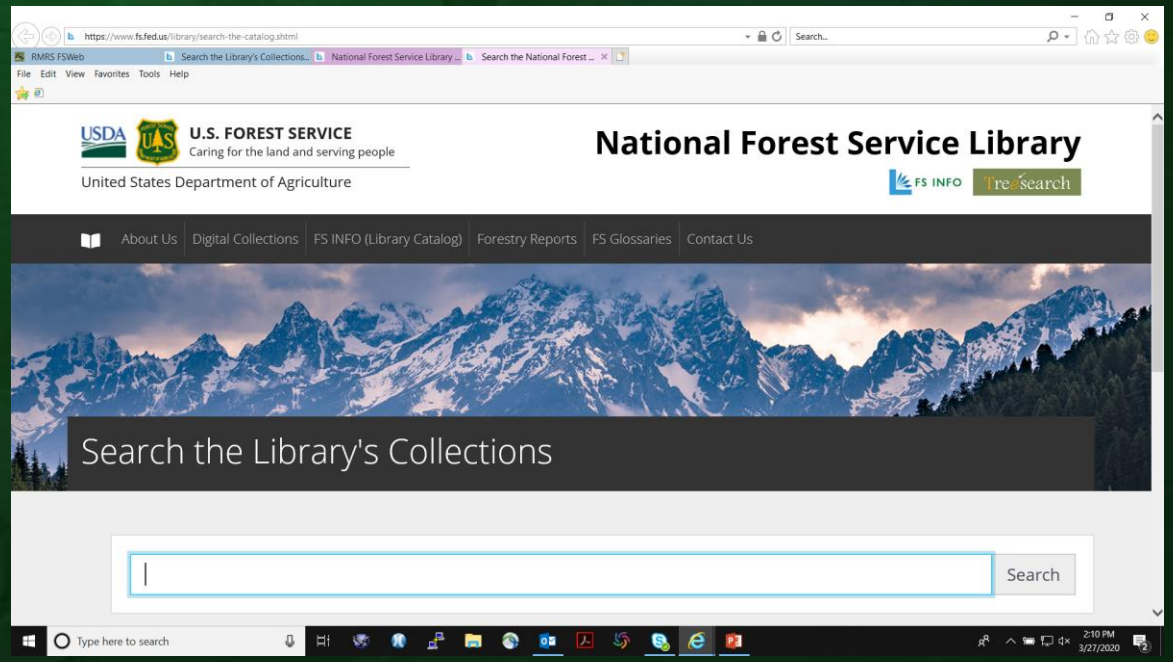
ILS and CMS Cataloging

https://nfsl.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/

https://www.fs.fed.us/library/search-the-catalog.shtml





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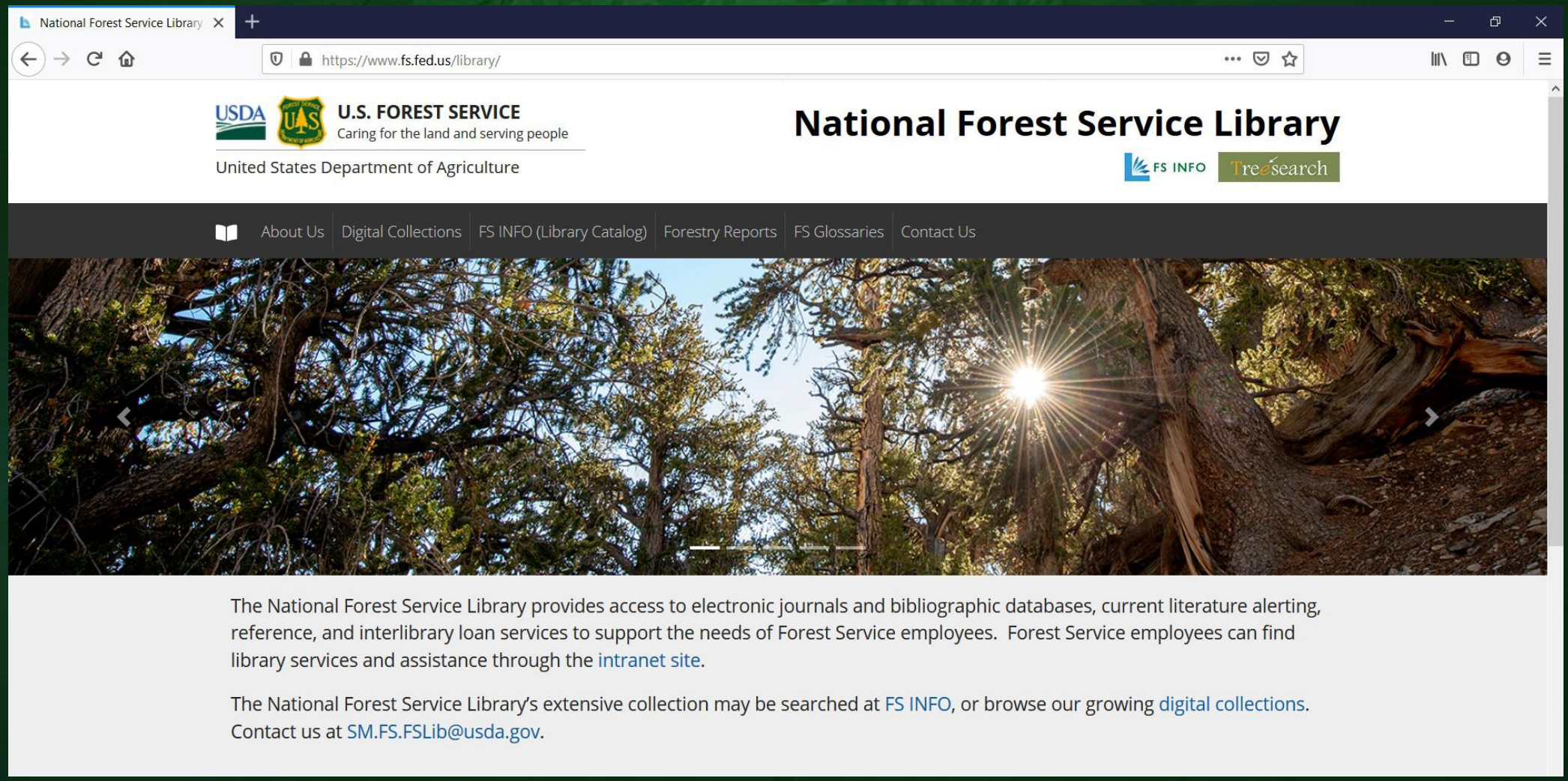
Our Website:


National Forest Service Library
https://www.fs.fed.us/library/
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The National Forest Service Library provides access to electronic journals and bibliographic databases, current literature alerting, reference, and interlibrary loan services to support the needs of Forest Service employees. Forest Service employees can find library services and assistance through the intranet site.
The National Forest Service Library's extensive collection may be searched at FS INFO, or browse our growing digital collections. Contact us at SM.FS.FSLib@usda.gov.

Questions:

- For obvious reasons, my library is most concerned with Forestry and Forest Science terms. What other specialized vocabularies exist in the other sciences?
- I discussed the solutions we tried at NFSL to remedy these issues. What have other libraries done to address these issues?
- My experiences are very specialized. In the broader audience, what networking opportunities exist for science librarians and catalogers? What groups do you all participate in, and what do you subscribe to that is helpful?
- Any other comments or questions?

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Contacts:

Digital Collection Manager:

- Crystal Falconer (Technical Information Specialist)
- Crystal.l.falconer@usda.gov

Library Director

- Tom Moothart (Library Director)
- Thomas.Moothart@usda.gov

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