

Everglades Online Help Desk

A Virtual Reference Service for an Evolving Digital Library



Gail Clement, Sherry Mosley, Megan Waters

Everglades Information Network,
Florida International University Libraries

<http://everglades.fiu.edu>

glades@fiu.edu



Everglades Information Network

- A collaborative effort of agencies dedicated to providing comprehensive, reliable information in support of research, education and decision-making
- FIU Libraries, Everglades National Park, US Geological Survey, South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Taskforce, Univ. Miami Libraries, Historical Museum of Southern Florida, FCLA
- Key services
 - Everglades Digital Library (collections)
 - Everglades Online database (index/catalog)
 - Ask An Everglades Librarian (email/chat)

Everglades Digital Library

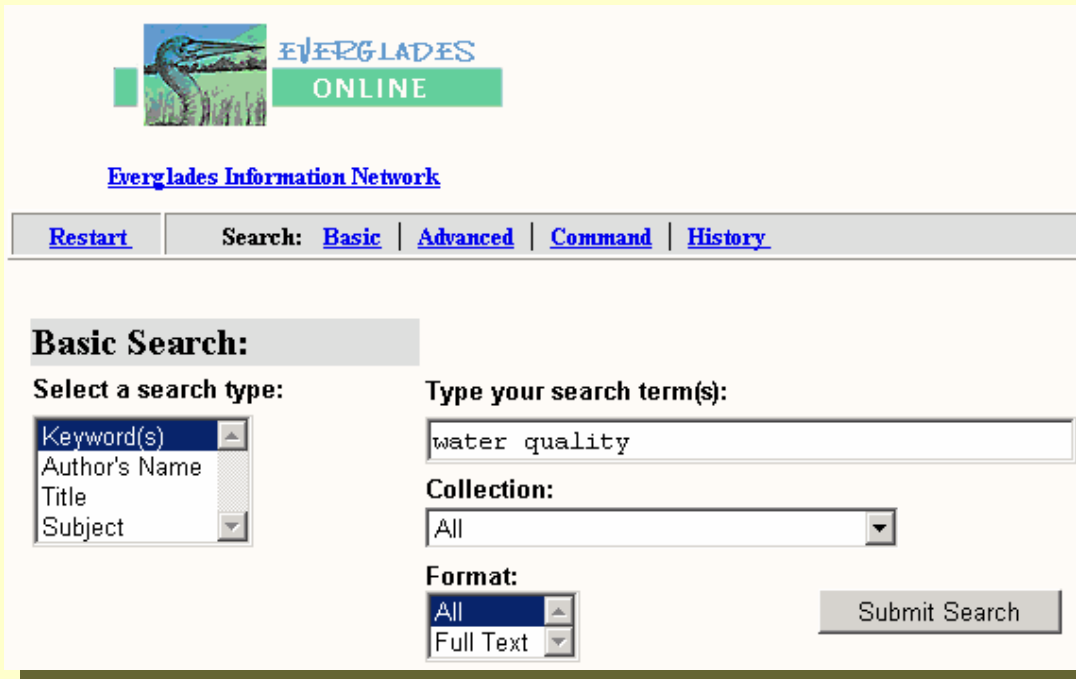
The screenshot shows the homepage of the Everglades Digital Library. At the top, the logo reads "EVERGLADES DIGITAL LIBRARY" with the tagline "Collaboration in support of research, education, restoration, and resource management." Below the logo is a photograph of a bird perched on a wooden post. The page is divided into three main sections: "EDL SERVICES" on the left, "EDL COLLECTIONS" on the right, and a central text block. The "EDL SERVICES" section includes links for "About the EDL", "New! Ask An Everglades Librarian", "Browse the Collections", "Search the Collections", "Help", "Credits and Disclaimers", and "Contact". The "EDL COLLECTIONS" section lists several digital resources: "Reclaiming the Everglades: South Florida's Natural History, 1884-1974", "FIU Libraries Collection", "South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force Collection", "SER Reports", "Everglades Educational & Interpretive materials", "Wah Deenan Collection", "Hole in the Donut Restoration Collection", "South Florida Natural Resources Center Collection", "The Pages of Arthur R. Marshall, II", and "Other Everglades-related Resources on the Internet". The central text block contains a welcome message and a description of the library's scope, which includes scientific and technical reports, historical writings, educational and interpretive materials, images, maps, photos, and a directory of other Internet sites related to the greater Everglades. At the bottom, it states that the library is a project of the Everglades Information Network, a collaborative effort of the Florida International University Libraries, the Southwest Environmental Research Center, the Florida Center for Library Administration, and the Florida Center for Environmental and Estuarine Science.

- Digital Collections from FIU Libraries and partner agencies
- Directory of 'Other Internet Resources'
- *Reclaiming the Everglades*, an LC/Ameritech Award Winner, is part of the National Digital Library (LC American Memory Program)

<http://everglades.fiu.edu/reclaim>

Everglades Online

Database



The screenshot shows the Everglades Online database search interface. At the top left is a logo featuring a bird in a marsh with the text "EVERGLADES ONLINE". Below the logo is a link to "Everglades Information Network". A navigation bar contains links for "Restart", "Search: Basic", "Advanced", "Command", and "History". The "Basic Search" section is highlighted. It includes a "Select a search type:" dropdown menu with options: "Keyword(s)", "Author's Name", "Title", and "Subject". To the right is a text input field labeled "Type your search term(s):" containing the text "water quality". Below this is a "Collection:" dropdown menu set to "All". At the bottom left is a "Format:" dropdown menu set to "All", with "Full Text" as an option. A "Submit Search" button is located at the bottom right of the search area.

- “Catalog” of the Everglades Digital Library
- WebLuis database with MARC records
- Covers EDL content + journal articles, web sites, technical reports, published books, etc.
- Subjects to be assigned from forthcoming *Everglades Thesaurus*

Email

An Everglades Librarian

- people always asked us questions
- put email/feedback links on every page
- online contact form use
- extra staffing became necessary
- staff develop email reference techniques

Subject: collections at Daniel Beard
Research Center

Date: Thu, 25 Jan 2001 10:23:50 -

To: glades@fiu.edu

I am in the process of writing a manuscript on the introduced herpetofauna of southern Florida . . .

Subject: Information

Date: Tue, 28 Nov 2000 18:54:11 -0500
(EST)

To: glades@solix.fiu.edu

Hello!...I am home-schooling my children and would like to know if you could send me some information on the Everglades.

Date: Mon, 27 Nov 2000 13:24:11

To: <glades@fiu.edu>

To whom it may concern,

I am a Mississippi State University student. I am studying Landscape Architecture. I will be living in Miami this summer. I was wondering if you might know of any internships available in my field of study. I grew up in Miami and would love to help fix the everglades.

Chat with An Everglades Librarian

- patrons asked to “chat” with us often
- 2001: received LSTA funding to improve patron use of technology in searching for south Florida environmental information via “high-tech” communication applications combined with “high-touch” professional reference services.
- ability to browse sites w/patrons essential

Real-Time Software Considerations

- design/implement in-house
- single vendor
- bi-lingual
- collaborative/cooperative
 - pricing
 - ability to network with other professionals, set meetings, forward questions etc.

Special Circumstances

- NOT a reference dept. service yet . . .
- Timeline of grant (1 year)
- Systems support limitations
 - recording transcripts for analysis

Our Choice: 24/7 Reference



[ABOUT US](#)

[PRODUCTS](#)

[SERVICES](#)

[SUPPORT](#)

[CONTACT](#)

[COMMUNITIES](#)

[PRIVACY](#)

About Us

Our Service's goal is to provide libraries with the tools they need to do live reference on the Web.

24/7 Reference was originally developed for use in our large library consortium, [MCLS](#), located in southern California.

After exploring several different products and modalities for offering a 24/7 Reference service, we realized that the commercial tools already available to the general public could be modified and customized to better serve the needs of our librarians and our library patrons. We spent 2 years developing and testing a product that would accomplish our goals.

We created a suite of products, now available to any library with an Internet presence. This enables libraries to offer live online reference to their patrons.

For more information about our products, and services, please see [24/7 Reference - Products](#).

For a list of the libraries using 24/7 Reference products, please see [24/7 Reference - Communities](#).

A project of [Metropolitan Collaborative Library System](#), supported by Federal LSTA funding, administered by the [California State Library](#).



24/7 Chat Pricing

- \$1,000 one-time training fee
- \$4,000 flat fee per seat
- \$3,600 maintenance/annually, each seat

1 seat/1 yr. = \$8,600

\$7,600 each additional seat

After first year: \$3,600 per seat, per year

Why we like it

- modern, hip look & feel
- tested by large library consortium, MCLS, located in southern California
- regular upgrades
- co-browsing, file-sharing capabilities
- bi-lingual Spanish/English software
- collaborative reference helps staffing
- web meetings (up to 20 people)
- session transcript analysis

How it works . . .

Chat Reference service is accessed through the Web, using Java applets. Librarians need high-powered PC w/Windows 98, NT, or 2000, and a direct Internet connection. No client-side downloads necessary. Library databases are accessible via proxy server. Patrons must login in themselves using id number or a librarian may log in.

Librarian Interface

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the address http://ref1.247ref.org/wcsogl_rep/CDML.exe. The main page has a dark blue header with the text "24/7 REFERENCE" and a "Main Page" title. The left sidebar contains navigation links: "Sessions - access to 24/7 Reference services", "Session Inbox" (with a red arrow), "Meetings", "Knowledge Base - edit and manage", "Folders", "Other features", "Documentation", and "Login - Main Page".

An inset window titled "Session Inbox - Microsoft Internet Explorer" is open, showing a "24/7 REFERENCE" header and a "Session Inbox" title. It includes a "Status" section with a green dot and a "Session in-progress; click to view" link. Below this are two tables:

# on hold	wait (min)	Queue
0		Personal

# on hold	wait (min)	Waiting Room
0		EVERGLADES

Navigation buttons on the right of the Session Inbox window include "Logout", "Settings", "Refresh", and "Printable".

On the right side of the main page, there is a "Help - Meetings" section with the text "Create, join and administer meetings".

Co-Browsing: Patron Interface

Everglades ONLINE HELP DESK A reference service of the Everglades Information Network

Welcome to Ask An Everglades Librarian!

We are here to help answer your Everglades-related reference questions or get you started on your own research. During the live session, we may ask you some questions to determine what type of information will best meet your need. We may also take you to various websites to show you an answer or demonstrate a search technique. To make sure the session goes smoothly, please follow the guidelines below.

Please note that **Ask An Everglades Librarian!** is a new, experimental service of the Everglades Information Network. You may also wish to try our companion service, **Email An Everglades Librarian!**

Guidelines for a smooth session with the Everglades librarian

- Start your session by filling out the form on the right side of your browser window and clicking the 'connect' button. Be sure to provide a valid email address so that we can send you a complete transcript of your session with the librarian, including the chat text and all links to web sites visited.
- Once you have clicked the 'connect' button on the right side of your browser window, please do not use your "forward", or "refresh" buttons, or you will be disconnected. If you must open a second browser for any reason while connected, please use the "start" menu or taskbar shortcut, not control "n" or File "new". If you do so, you will crash.
- Make sure your Web browser is set up for live chat. You will have the best results by

ASK AN EVERGLADES LIBRARIAN
Your representative will be with you shortly.
Please wait for a greeting.

[swamp lily - A librarian has joined the session.]

^ NEWEST ^

Please hold, a librarian will be with you shortly.

bob: What rivers flow into the Everglades?

Respond and click the "Send" button

Send End Call

Co-Browsing: Librarian Interface

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Everglades Digital Library website. The browser's address bar shows the URL "http://www.everglades.org". The website header includes "EVERGLADES DIGITAL LIBRARY" with links for "SEARCH", "BROWSE", and "HELP". Below the header are two buttons: "ADD AN EVERGLADES LIBRARIAN" and "CLICK HERE FOR HELP TO REPLY ONLINE REFERENCE HELP".

The main content area features a photograph of a field of tall grasses on the left and a central heading: "Other Everglades Resources on the Internet". Below the heading is a sub-heading: "A directory of high-quality online resources produced by agencies other than the Everglades Information Network".

Below the heading, there are six blue underlined links arranged in two columns:

- Scientific Data & Reference Collections
- Educational & Interpretive Resources
- Conferences & Symposia
- Laws, Legal & Policy Information
- General Information & News about the Everglades
- Sugar & Other Industries

At the bottom of the browser window, there is a chat window titled "Attendees". The chat window shows a list of participants:

Name	Time	Avatar
Sherry	1 min	
Swamp Lily	1 min	

Below the list, there is a "Librarian" button. The chat window also displays a message from "Swamp Lily": "Sherry: [Page sent]". Below this message, there is a status message: "Swamp Lily - A librarian has joined the session." and a note: "Please hold, a librarian will be with you." The chat window includes a "Messages" tab, a "Suggestions" dropdown menu, and a "Send" button.

Librarian reactions

- they hate being in cyberspace alone
- fear of the question you can't answer (and that all of this is being recorded!)
- fear of Internet impatience
- they need time to learn online chat personality cues, slang, abbreviations etc.
- Becoming an "Infobot"



Staffing Issues

- Small Gov. Docs. Dept., Big Questions!
- Cooperation with FIU Libraries Reference Departments becomes essential
- Big Reference Dept., Little Docs. Training
- Inter-departmental fear of science
- Cross-campus, cross-dept. scheduling

Staffing Solutions

- Training: Everglades resources + reference
- Share transcripts, email interaction
- Double staffing @ virtual desk
- Well-developed collections (digital and print) to support service
- Solicit partners from other institutions and agencies with professional reference librarians



Quality Control

- Follow standards for exemplary reference service promoted by VRD
- Generally emphasize information literacy over answers, but adjust service depending on needs and resources of users
 - Juvenile users, international users, users with low-speed connections

ASK AN EVERGLADES
LIBRARIAN



Results to date

Subject: wow!

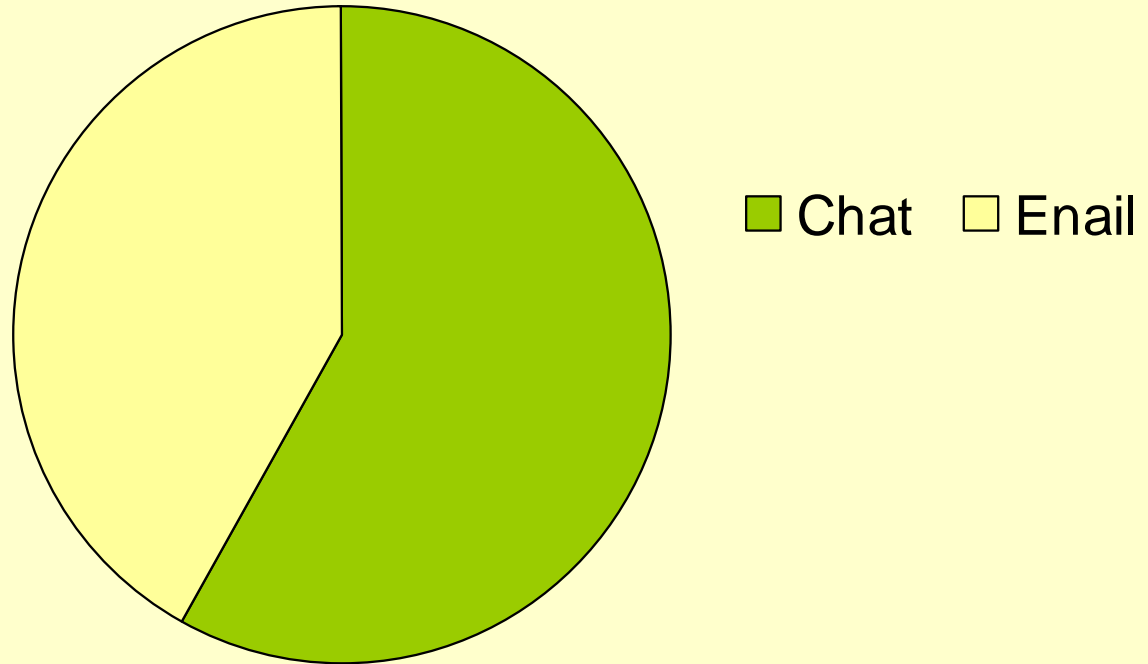
Date: Thu, 28 Feb 2002 10:52:47 -0500

From:

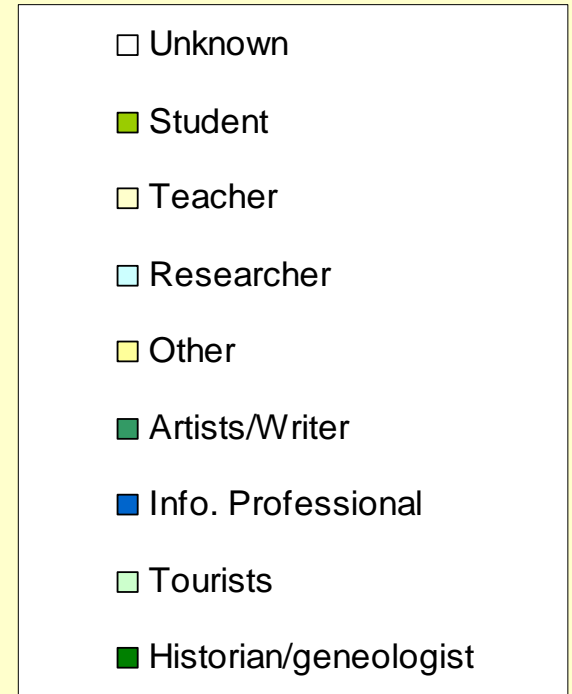
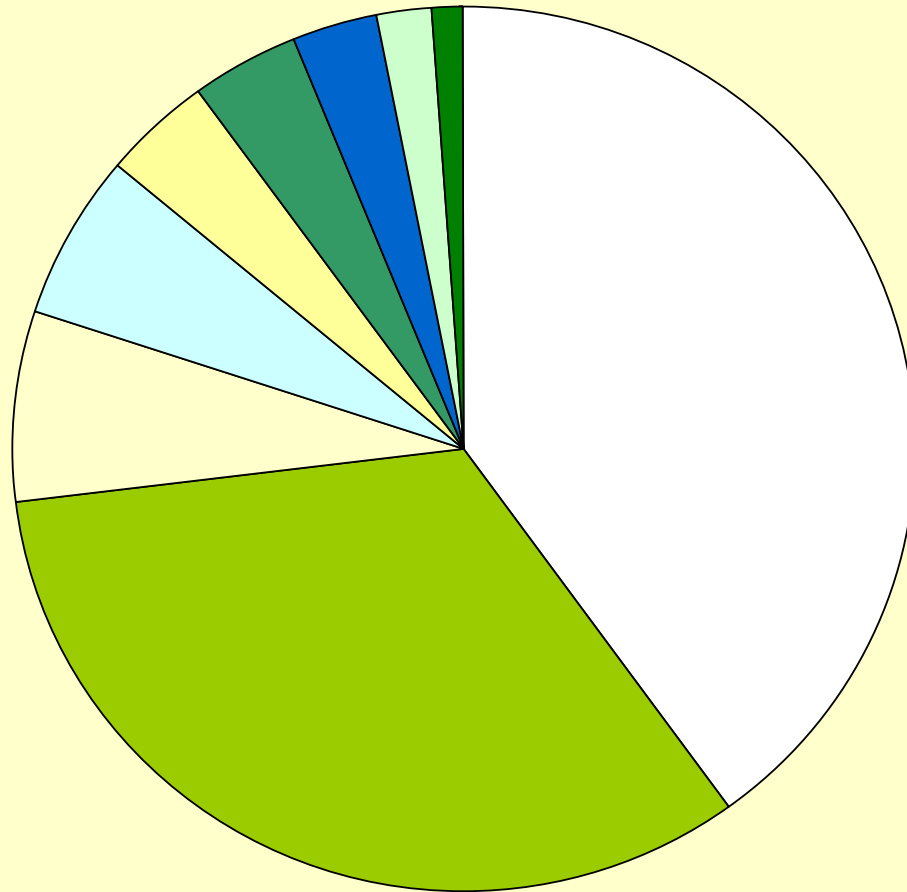
To: glades@fju.edu

Just want to express my pleasure at how zippy, polite, and absolutely useful your on-line librarian was with an inquiry I initiated this morning. Solved my problem in 10 minutes. What a service to folks interested in S. Florida Enviro. issues. -- , Dept. Chair for Environmental Horticulture,

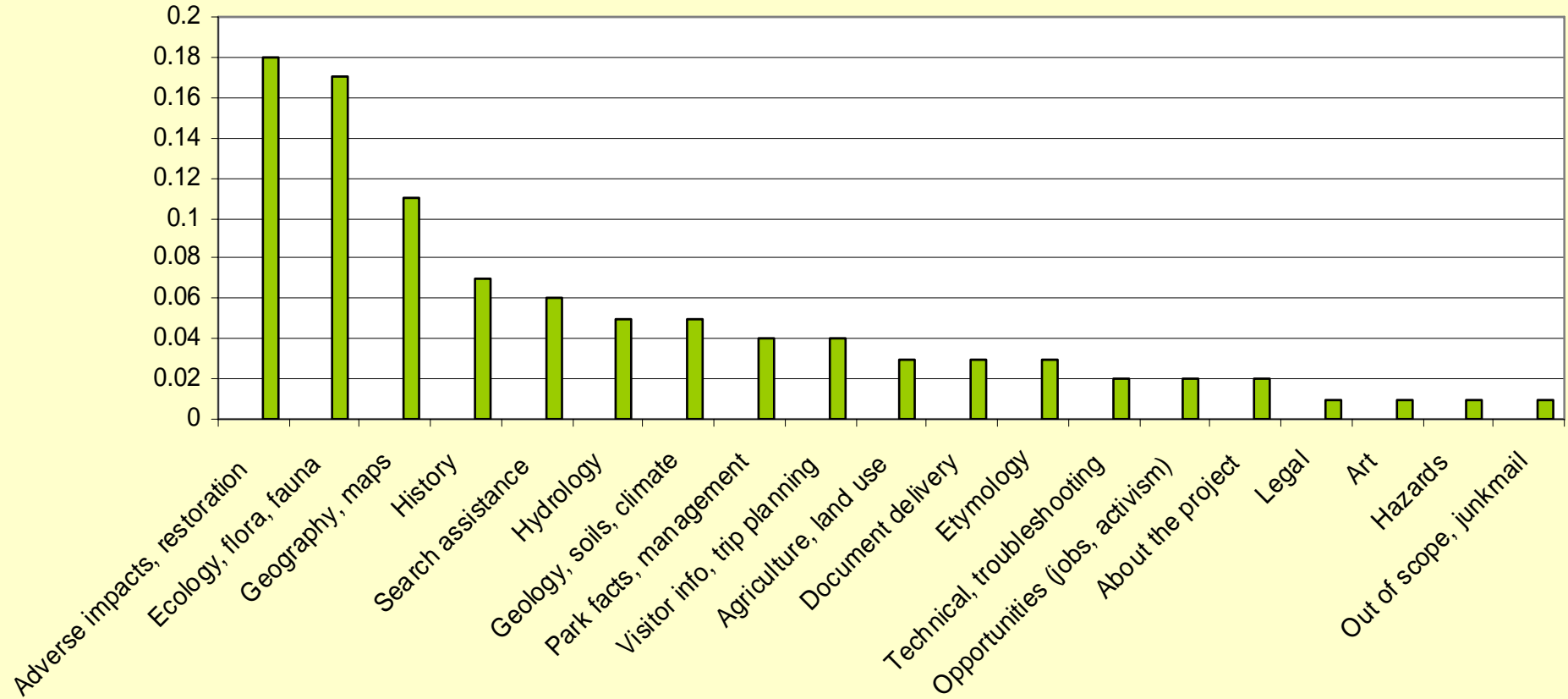
Transactions by service



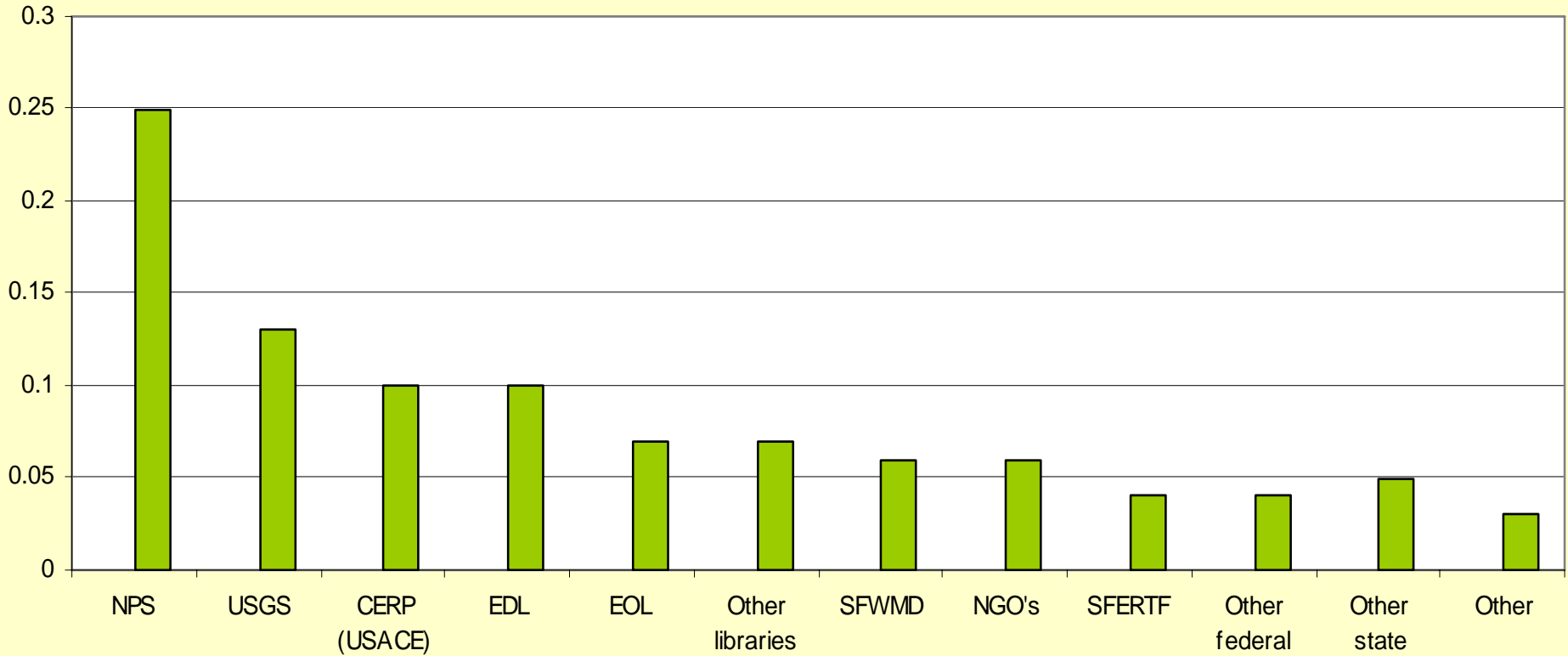
Users by category



Types of Questions



Referrals



Changes in Library Services



- User-driven collection development for EDL
 - In-depth resources
 - Youth-oriented resources
- Spurs establishment of digital reference for the “rest” of the FIU Libraries
- Connection to community intensifies, more project partners evolve

Thanks

Download this ppt!

<http://everglades.fiu.edu/dlc>

Everglades Information Network

Florida International University Libraries

Miami, FL

Email us: glades@fiu.edu

Ask An Everglades Librarian

<http://everglades.fiu.edu/help>