

Nebraska GIS Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes -- November 1, 2001

Present were (authorized to vote +):

Mahendra Bansal	+ Department of Natural Resources
Alan Beiermann	+ NPPD
Jim Brown	+ State Surveyor
Stephen Frederick	+ Health and Human Services
Dick Genrich	+ Nebraska Department of Roads
Ed Kelley	Nebraska Department of Roads
Mele Koneya	+ Nebraska Game and Park
Jim Langtry	+ Lancaster County
Scott McIntyre	+ Omaha
Steve Schafer	+ Chief Information Officer
Sonja Sebree	+ USGS - WRD
Duane Stott	+ Scotts Bluff County Surveyor
Paul Yamamoto	+ Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
Rex Wamsley	Nebraska Emergency Management
Cliff Welsh	+ Nebraska Association of County Officials
Larry Worrell	+ Lancaster County
Larry Zink	GIS Steering Committee Coordinator

Complete Meeting Agenda

MAJOR MEETING TOPICS

National Hydrographic Database
Advisory Committee on Interactive Internet
Land Records Modernization
GIS Specialist Classification
NSGIC Annual Meeting
Member Agency Reports

NDOR Geospatial Advisory Committee
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
I-Team
Master Street Address Database
GIS/LIS Association Report
Voting Record

NOTICE OF MEETING: A public notice of the meeting, pursuant to Section 84-1411 R.R. S. 1943, was published in the Lincoln Journal-Star on Thursday, October 25, 2001.

ROLL CALL: Acting Chairperson Duane Stott called the meeting to order at approximately 1:05. There were nine duly authorized members present therefore a quorum was present to conduct business. There were several new members to the committee so Larry asked that introductions be made.

MINUTES: Dick Genrich moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Paul Yamamoto seconded. One typographical error was noted. The next federal GIS meeting will be held March 6 and 7, 2002 rather than 2001. The motion passed.

NATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC DATASET : Mahendra reported that the Logan Creek watershed has been completed and they are now beginning work on the Lower Elkhorn Creek watershed.

A methodology has been set up but has not yet been perfected. The work to create revised stream vectors is time consuming and there are features that are not always clear on the DOQ's. In addition, there are questions regarding what features should be included in the database and in some cases how they should be coded.

Larry indicated that an informal NHD Technical Advisory Group has been formed to solicit interagency input on these questions and to make decisions about which features to include as necessary.

Mahendra explained that the USGS has a standard set of features they use but other agencies may need additional information that could be difficult to integrate.

STEERING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION ON NDOR GEOSPATIAL ADVISORY TEAM: Dick Genrich explained that as a result of Roads GIS strategic plan, a NDOR Geospatial Advisory Team was created. To ensure appropriate representation on this Team, they

have Dan Cady to represent the local element and Larry Zink, as temporarily appointed by Jim Brown, to provide Steering Committee representation. Recently, Roads determined it would be prudent to obtain an official appointment for Larry.

Larry Worrell moved to appoint Larry Zink as permanent representative to the Department of Roads Geospatial Advisory Team. Mahendra seconded. The motion passed. (see vote #2 on Voting Record sheet)

INTERACTIVE INTERNET MAPPING ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Mele reported that the committee has met several times. The last time he gave an update to the Steering Committee, he identified the issues the Advisory Committee had selected as priorities.

Education and Sharing Knowledge. Involves sharing of ideas throughout the group. They have also done some investigation into training.

Security Issues. Much of the documentation they have found has not been Internet mapping specific. The belief is that much of this area will be covered by NITC guidelines. They plan to continue to watch how this area develops.

Software and Database Format Compatibility. Many people doing web mapping are using ESRI products. At this point, not much testing has been done but they are hoping that it will be addressed by the Open GIS Consortium. In Nebraska the main concern seems to be interfacing with NDOR Integraph products. The Advisory Committee is still working to identify these issues.

Guidelines and Standards for Web Mapping. These would be turned over to the NITC upon completion. Larry has created a preliminary draft for Steering Committee review. The recommendations include

- Use of a common projection, namely the State Plane Coordinate system
- Creation and inclusion of metadata
- Information about map metadata should be made available online
- Inclusion of appropriate cites if outside sources are utilized
- Disclaimers/intent of mapping service, something of a composite of what other cities, counties, and agencies are using

Larry indicated that if this document is to be forwarded to the NITC, action needs to be taken however, some discussion should take place regarding the Advisory Committee's recommendation of a common measurement unit in the State Plane projection recommendation. Currently, some agencies use meters, some agencies use feet and the Advisory Committee determined selecting one standard for data sets would eliminate the need for continual reprojection. The Committee recommended the use of meters. Jim Brown indicated there may be additional technical problems involved, specifically related to raster projections and it may not be possible to select a single standard unit.

There was no objection to recommending the use of State Plane.

Jim added that this recommendation can be made but the end result will be that individuals will do what they want, much as happened when the federal government attempted to move to the metric system.

Larry agreed that there is a difference between recommending that the specific data sets that are in the process of being created by significant coordinated effort such as the hydrographic, roads, DOQ's, soils etc. be made available in this projection.

Mahendra Bansal moved to adopt the standards, guidelines, and recommendations as presented by the Interactive Internet Advisory Committee with the correction of US Survey foot/meter to US Survey foot or meter. Scott McIntyre seconded.

Steve Schafer asked if this resolves the software compatibility issues or if it is not a relevant issue. Larry indicated it is relevant but they are not able to resolve that issue at this time. They would like to wait until that is resolved to forward the recommendations on to the NITC.

Dick Genrich asked for clarification on the source citation recommendation. Mele explained that data sources could be linked to a FAQ page rather than listed on each individual page.

Steve Schafer asked what role handicap accessibility played in these guidelines. In html pages, an alt tag defining the map as a map is required.

The motion passed. (see vote #4 on Voting Record sheet).

Data Access and Support Center: This idea is designed to assist smaller entities either in getting into GIS or getting data published in a central clearinghouse. While this concept is somewhat similar to the Regional Center, the Regional Center will be designed with more of a data development focus than access and support. This issue is of such a scope that the Internet Advisory Committee wanted to suggest that the Steering Committee create a separate committee to investigate the potential for establishing this type of center.

Mahendra commented that the concept as a whole is a good one but that the data to be accessed should be stored and processed by the individual agencies.

Larry explained that the concept is actually a proposal to establish a committee to explore issues of this type.

Duane Stott objected to the formation of a new agency to handle this issue.

Jim Brown pointed out that the clearinghouse issue is one that keeps coming up. Because this is a state issue, Jim proposed a committee

comprised of Dick Genrich, Dan Hoffman, Mele Koneya, Steve Fredrickson, Mahendra Bansal, and Jim Brown. Paul Yamamoto and Sonia Sebree volunteered to serve as well. The purpose of the subcommittee is to discuss the creation of a support center for access to Internet mapping and support.

Scott said the first step in this process is to go to the governor and request funds. Larry Zink said if this committee could address the process involved in creating this entity and determine where it should go, then the area of resources can be explored.

Mele moved to adopt the resolution to create a subcommittee with membership as defined. Paul seconded. The motion passed. (see vote #5 on Voting Record sheet) Additional committee membership is as follows; a representative from NEMA and Steve Schafer.

NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

Larry Zink explained that in the aftermath of the September 11 events, NEMA has become quite interested in GIS. Larry noted that he has meet with Rex Wamsley, NEMA, and had invited Rex to share with the Steering Committee NEMA's current GIS plans.

Rex Wamsley explained that in 1998 the Federal government issued Presidential Directive 63 naming FEMA as the lead federal agency to coordinate basic awareness activities for the Nation's fire and emergency services sector. At that time, they were given a directive to identify critical infrastructure. As of September 11, fulfilling that directive became a crisis and they have been forced to quickly find an integratable system. NEMA needs a system that will take the intelligence information provided by the FBI and distribute it to law enforcement in order to provide protection. That system is an ESRI program called Visualrisk map and it brings in a lot of different layers.

At the moment, NEMA is being overwhelmed with GIS information that is being uploaded into that system. Much of the base information has already been loaded such as roads and highways, bridges, tunnels, powerlines, feedlots, hog producers, poultry etc. DNR has assisted in converting sections of townships into GIS coordinates. Jack Daniels is assisting with water information, DEQ with hazardous materials facilities, NRD with dams, etc. Currently they have three data loaders working to put all the information in as soon as possible.

Many organizations have come to NEMA and requested that NEMA take responsibility for some of the information traditionally housed in different agencies. Due to the freedom of information act, they do not feel comfortable being responsible for keeping it safe. That provides a single point of contact for obtaining information as well as a control point for determining if that information should be shared with the requesting party. NEMA is willing to be the clearinghouse.

NEMA does not maintain a large staff and depends on other agencies to provide information that is then entered into the database and becomes a layer. They would like to update all their information annually and through funds acquired for anti terrorism efforts, can potentially contribute to the development of a data access and support center.

Locally, NEMA has over six hundred directors in the state encompassing every city, county, village, and region in the state. They were asked to coordinate with their law enforcement and other responder organizations to come up with their list of critical infrastructure. Information has been coming in from all over the state. This database is available to all Steering Committee member agencies, though that access will be granted after their system has been placed behind the protection of the National Guard's firewall.

Larry asked if NEMA has any way of getting maps to local governments so that they can then be annotated and returned to NEMA. An ESF layer can be printed off with an attached spreadsheet and any problems with the data can be noted and returned in that fashion. Until the firewall is in place, they do not want anyone accessing the data and then only if they have a need to know. Other uses for this data exist as well for emergency management in situations like tornado tracking.

Larry asked if any thought had been given to data maintenance yet. Rex said there is no way they can update all the databases and will be counting on other agencies to help them.

Alan Beiermeir indicated appreciation for the real world example of the benefits of GIS. Currently, NPPD is lagging behind in GIS development and they need more examples of actual usage to educate the people in upper management.

ANNUAL REPORT:

Larry said the Annual Report is not done yet but he plans to update the Strategic Plan for that purpose.

LAND RECORDS MODERNIZATION:

Larry reported that the agreement with the USGS for the \$50,000 grant money has come upon a series of snags. Initially, the understanding was that distribution of funds was not connected with the end of the fiscal year. That subsequently proved to be erroneous and there have been some issues to arise out of that misunderstanding.

It is still our belief that eventually, the money will likely be sorted out and distributed, there is simply no telling when that may happen or how it will be given. Larry indicated that he would try to get the ball rolling on this among the various players.

Jim Brown added that there were additional difficulties in that the USGS also wants justification for requesting the funds.

I-TEAM:

Larry reported that he met with Sonya who is the new federal representative about the federal meeting that was held. They recommended having a two-day meeting, potentially March 6 and 7, 2002. The intent would be to hold a one to one and a half day meeting that would culminate in the Steering Committee meeting. That would provide the opportunity for federal as well as local government to collaborate in identifying any holes in the data and how to move forward.

Steve Schafer stated it would be helpful to have the database of federal activities proposed by Ron Matzner completed before the next federal agency meeting.

CLASSIFICATION FOR GIS SPECIALIST:

Dick reported that as a result of Roads' strategic plan, some restructuring of his department took place. In the wake of that, one of his cartographers switched jobs, leaving the task of rewriting the job specs from a cartographer's position to that of a GIS specialist.

The three people currently employed by Dick's department downtown are all classified under IT. Although they do some programming, they should not technically fall into that category.

State Personnel is under a directive to eliminate job titles but GIS is a unique field that is beginning to come into its own and these jobs needed to be classified and compensated accordingly. A statement of need from the Steering Committee would be welcome as well as any comments on how these specifications should be written. Another possibility would be to form a committee similar to the one responsible for developing guidelines and standards.

Jim asked if the Association was involved at all in this endeavor. Ed Kelley said there have been some discussions about how to classify different types of jobs as well as university classification of their courses and programs. This would allow employers to better understand what type of skill sets and knowledge are coming out of the schools and help the students understand what jobs are available and what skills they need to develop.

Larry asked if the Committee needs to draft a letter of support. Dick said it would not hurt.

Jim asked if there was any time frame associated with this effort. Larry said they hope to have something together within the next two months.

MASTER STREET ADDRESS DATABASE:

Larry introduced Marcus Tooze as the principle contact for GIS Workshop, a private firm in Lincoln. That company has been engaged in a dialogue with Alltel to create something called the master street address guide to be used in E911 integration.

Marcus said that a push has begun at the county level to develop accurate E911 or GIS databases. The motivation behind this push is that all the phone companies are being forced by the FCC to install selective routers and to do so, they are in need of accurate street information.

Marcus also noted that there has been a demand across the state for a truly accurate street address database. Because of this new effort, Marcus was interested in exploring how to leverage this E911 effort to put the data together to create a statewide database.

This effort will be addressed on a county by county basis and there will be good compatibility between counties because all counties use the same E911 system. It appears to be a good opportunity to piece together all the information for a comprehensive statewide database. Marcus indicated willingness to assist in the effort.

Larry explained that the FCC regulations begin in October and November and will require progressively more and more information to be automatically available from cell phone calls, up to the point the origin of a call to within 100 feet. Part of that process includes requiring new cell phone users to register their address so it can be verified against the master street address database.

Last year, LB585 was passed to set up the Enhanced E911 Advisory Committee, directed by the Public Service Commission. There is the potential for the Steering Committee to get involved in this effort or allow it to proceed without any attempt to create a comprehensive statewide master street address database. The counties in Nebraska that wish to participate in E911 will need to have a street address database completed individually.

Larry pointed out that maintenance will be an issue, regardless of what happens. Marcus said that the counties will be expected to maintain their own information and that could then feed into a main database.

Steve Schafer said it is worth a call to the Public Service Commission to determine what the status of this endeavor is.

NATIONAL STATES GEOGRAPHIC COUNCIL MEETING:

Larry attended the annual NSGIC meeting in September. At that meeting, he discovered that the USGS is moving ahead with the concept of an all digital national map. The main challenge with this is to get updated information fairly rapidly and then to get that information integrated in a timely fashion. This is the biggest conceptual leap to have taken place recently in terms of how agencies will work together to collaborate. The USGS has virtually said they will take that role on but it is still at the concept stage.

Another issue that rose at the meeting relates to GIS efforts made by the Bureau of Land Management. There has been considerable cadastral

work done in the Western states, largely because of the BLM and U.S. Forest Service holdings in that region but little has been accomplished in the East. Partly in response to that, a new movement has formed known as the Eastern States Cadastral Initiative to work with BLM and Congress to get funding to develop land records in the Eastern United States. 'East' has been defined to all states not part of the Western Governor's Association.

Within the Western Governor's Association, there has been a great deal of work with federal agencies. However, there is a tier of states from North Dakota to Texas, including Nebraska, that has not been a part of that initiative because there is minimal federal ownership of land. However because these states belong to the Western Governors Association, they are not a part of the new Eastern States Cadastral Initiative. In order to facilitate cadastral work in Nebraska, representatives need to either become more vocal within the Western Governors Association or get involved with the Eastern States Cadastral Initiative.

In terms of transportation, there appears to be new dialog between the Census Bureau, USGS and the Bureau of Statistics to find some common transportation database format. If that happens, they would be looking to states to develop and maintain that data.

There is also interest in initiating more dialog between the NSGIC, the national coordinating body of GIS coordinating groups and the national body of state CIOs.

NSGIC has changed their dues structure. In the past, Larry has been an individual member but the Council is now encouraging state membership. State memberships cost \$250. Membership in this organization is of value to the Steering Committee and Larry recommended paying the state fee.

Dick moved to pay the state membership fee to NSGIC. Cliff seconded. The motion passed. *(see vote #5 on Voting Record sheet)*

GIS/LIS ASSOCIATION : Ed Kelley reported that the last Association meeting was held in Scottsbluff. It was an effort to demonstrate more interest in the issues facing Western Nebraska.

There was some discussion on Education and classification. Carl Kinkade agreed to head an educational subcommittee to look into what universities are offering in terms of GIS training and assessing how that relates to the target group or work areas are used in the field.

Another issue that was addressed at the meeting was potentially getting a voice in policy issues. Larry agreed to draft a statement for the creation of a policy research or policy initiative subcommittee.

The next issue of the GIS update newsletter will be available by the end of the year. The Association is working to pare down its address list and to facilitate that, requested recipients return cards indicating whether they wished to continue receiving the newsletter. That has assisted in streamlining the process.

The Association will hold its Annual meeting in May of this year. An independent Annual Meeting is held each year there is no Symposium. This year it will be hosted at UNO.

There was a Western Nebraska users group meeting in the afternoon following the Association meeting. It was well attended. Senator Adrian Smith spoke to the group and assured them that GIS was not one of the things in danger of suffering budget cuts. Duane commented on how pleased he was at the diversity of people in attendance at that meeting.

Following that meeting, there was ArcView Training session. Several people expressed interest in attending a full ArcView training session.

November 14 is National GIS Day. This would be a good time to get outside people involved in GIS. There is a letter waiting for the Governor's endorsement about a GIS Proclamation. Nothing has been heard thus far. There is a gentleman in Chadron who will be sponsoring GIS Day activities on November 10.

Jim Brown said that he would appreciate some additional support from the Association's Education Committee as he is on the SECC Board and requires assistance in getting more GIS coursework in place there.

REPORTS ON MEMBER AGENCIES:

Mahendra reported that DNR is redesigning their website. That process should be complete in two months.

Dick said that he committed to taking the city and county maps and remove all the patterning on the local roads to form a graphic representation of local roads. That project is coming along. Some of the graphical work will already be done for the street address database.

Roads is moving forward in implementing their strategic plan. They have hired a company called Geodecisions to put together a prototype web map.

Jim Brown said that the Farm Service Agency provided the field boundaries from Fillmore County. Their data is extremely good.

Steve Fredrickson said that while his agency is a large agency, they are minor GIS users and do not have a lot of resources. Some of the Internet maps are being taken offline and there will likely be more dialog coming on what really needs to be publicly accessible.

Larry Zink reported that four more counties requested the Department of Property Assessment and Taxation do property tax assessment for

their counties.

Rex formally requested that NEMA be considered for membership on the GIS Steering Committee. Larry explained that is a statutory decision and should begin with the Governor's office. Additional members have been added over the past few years and Dan Hoffman would be a good contact for getting something going.

There was no further business. The meeting was adjourned.

Vote Tallies for 11/01/01 GIS Str. Cmte. Meeting									
	Roll Call #1	Min. #2	NDOR Geospatial Adv Team #3	Internet Map. Com. Recmd. #4	DASC #5	NSGIC Dues #6	#7	#8	#9
DAS - Steve Schafer (Lori McClurg)	A/P	+	+	+	+	.	.	.	.
DEQ - Tom Lamberson Paul Yamamoto (Mike Linder)	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
CSD - Mark Kuzila, Jim Merchant, Jim Lacy	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
NGPC - Mele Koneya Bruce Sackett (Rex Amack)	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
NRC - Mike Thompson Mahendra Bansal (Roger Patterson)	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
PRO - Dan Hoffman (Lauren Hill)	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
PTD - Cathy Lang Bob Martin, Rob Christian	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
DOR - Dick Genrich (John Craig) Ed Kelley	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
St.Surv - Jim Brown	A/P	.	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
Clk of Leg. - (Patrick O'Donnell) Judy Backhaus	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Sonja Sebree	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
John Miyoshi	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Alan J. Beierman	P	NV	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
Cliff Welsh	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
Larry Worrell Jim Langtry	P	NV	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
Lash Chaffin	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Duane Stott	P	+	+	+	-	+	.	.	.
Scott McIntyre	A/P	.	.	+	+	.	.	.	.
HHS - Dick Nelson Steve Frederick	P	+	+	+	+	+	.	.	.
TOTALS	10-P 13-P	9+ 2-NV	12+	13+	11+ 1-	10+	.	..	.

"P"=present, "A"=absent, "+"=voting for, "-"=voting against, "NV"=not voting