



February 28, 2007

Congressman Collin Peterson  
Seventh District  
2211 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Attention: Robin Goracke, Legislative Director

**SUBJECT: RED RIVER BASIN MAPPING INITIATIVE**

Dear Representative Peterson:

On February 6, 2007, Mr. Chuck Fritz, Director of the International Water Institute, together with a delegation from Minnesota and North Dakota, visited your office with a proposal to collect high-resolution elevation data for the U.S. portion of the Red River Basin. The Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information respectfully requests your support of the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative.

High-resolution elevation data has enormous value in preparing for and responding to floods, especially within the Red River Basin, which has a relatively flat topography. Some areas within the Red River Basin already have good elevation data, in no small part because of your support. The proposed International Water Institute project will complement existing data. Mr. Fritz has agreed to involve members of the Council's Digital Elevation Committee on his Steering Committee, where they will help evaluate other data that may meet or exceed project specifications and minimize duplication.

The Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information coordinates geographic information system activities among all levels of government in Minnesota. Its 23 members represent state agencies, federal and local governments, higher education and the private sector. The Council's Digital Elevation Committee works to improve the availability of digital elevation data in Minnesota by providing technical information, assistance and coordination. Elevation data is needed for floodplain mapping, but also has value for a variety of other applications, ranging from precision agriculture to resource protection. I have attached a copy of the Council's 2006 Annual Report.

On behalf of the citizens of Minnesota, the Council wants to thank you for supporting the collection of elevation data for Norman and Mahnommen counties. Led by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the project involves several state and local agencies, watershed districts and tribal governments. It is an excellent example of leveraging resources to meet a critical need and demonstrates our strong commitment to collaboration. The Council is equally committed to the goals of the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have about the Council or the importance of the Red River Basin Mapping Initiative.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Gelbmann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rick" and last name "Gelbmann" clearly distinguishable.

Rick Gelbmann  
Chair, Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information

Enclosure

Cc: Senator Norm Coleman  
Senator Amy Klobuchar  
Representative Michele Bachmann  
Representative Keith Ellison  
Representative John Kline  
Representative Betty McCollum  
Representative James Oberstar  
Representative Jim Ramstad  
Representative Timothy Walz

*Minnesota relies on geographic information systems to address such critical issues as protecting the environment and responding to emergencies. The Minnesota Governor's Council on Geographic Information promotes the effective use of GIS by coordinating investments; developing standards, policies, and guidelines; promoting stewardship of geographic data; and minimizing duplication of effort and public expenditure.*

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS, FY 2006

In 2005-2006, the council addressed its mission by

- Helping people get the data they need
- Communicating with Minnesota's Geographic Information System (GIS) stakeholders
- Coordinating federal, state, regional, and local activities
- Developing standards and guidelines that support data sharing

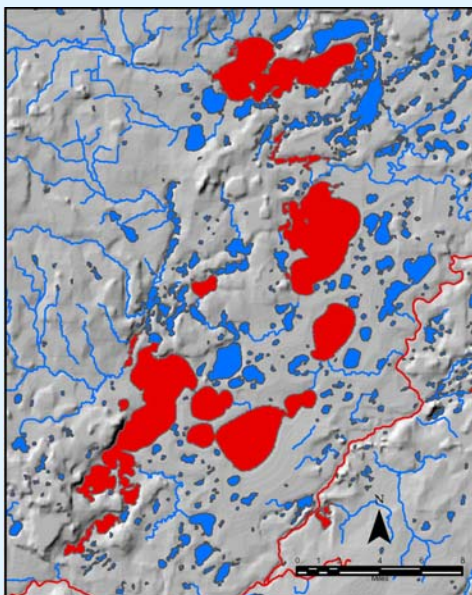
### Helping People Get the Data They Need

- Expressed the state's need for current air photos by joining a national coalition of states to encourage federal agencies to improve their photography programs.
- Continued to work with federal officials to accept Minnesota's watershed delineation process with minor modification. Thirty-five hydrographic units have been processed and delivered for review and another 24 are near completion.
- Successfully demonstrated a system to cross-reference older hydrography data and the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD).

### Communicating with Minnesota Stakeholders

- Updated the council's Web site to make information more easily accessible to a wider range of viewers.
- Presented the benefits of using GIS technology in emergency preparedness planning, response, and mitigation at the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers conference and in meetings with state, county, and city officials.
- Held a well-attended meeting in Grand Rapids to learn about local GIS activities and needs.

## NHD Enables Impaired Waters Mapping



*The National Hydrography Dataset (shown in blue) is used to reference and display rivers and lakes designated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as impaired waters (shown in red). For more information about impaired waters, see [www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/index.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/index.html)*

- Continued to provide videoconferencing access to council meetings, when technically feasible.
- Published 14 articles in *Minnesota GIS/LIS News*, plus one each in *Minnesota Surveyor* and *MNCITLA News*.
- Presented strategic planning efforts at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Minnesota Government IT Symposium.
- Recommended a Governor's Commendation for *Minnesota MapServer*, the world's leading open source Web-mapping service.
- Prepared a one-page summary, *Minnesota's Strategic Plan for GIS*, to alert people about the council's plans for organization, technology, and data.
- Developed *The Case for a Minnesota State GIS Enterprise*, a common-sense argument for adopting an enterprise approach to sharing and integrating state GIS resources.

- Participated in the 2005 state GIS/LIS conference with two panel sessions and six papers.
- Sponsored a training session on NHD updates.

### Coordinating GIS across Agencies and Sectors

- Received a \$50,000 grant from the Federal Geographic Data Committee to address organizational and operational issues of state geospatial strategy.
- Initiated discussions about geospatial technology issues with the state's chief information officer and the Office of Enterprise Technology (OET).
- Developed a survey to identify prospects for shared statewide geospatial technology services.
- Maintained relationships with national programs that support the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.
- Gained a seat for one of our members on the board of directors of the National States Geographic Information Council. NSGIC is the national organization of state GIS councils.
- Merged state and MetroGIS Emergency Preparedness Committees to avoid duplication of effort.
- Assisted in planning to create a Minnesota County GIS Association.
- Drafted agreements with the U.S. Geological Survey to establish the state's stewardship role for maintaining and updating Minnesota hydrographic data.

### Developing Standards that Support Data Sharing

- Re-established a formal GIS standards review process in response to the state's new IT governance structure.
- Gained approval from OET for two hydrography standards: *Lake Basin IDs* and *Watercourse IDs*.
- Developed and approved a new standard, *Watershed IDs*, and forwarded it to OET.
- Intervened in federal efforts to create a new *Geographic Names Information System*, providing critical comments that led to a better standard.



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## PLANNED ACTIVITIES, FY 2007

In 2006-2007, the council will continue to support more cost-effective, higher-performing GIS services within Minnesota through the following activities:

### Monitor Data Needs and Make Data Available

- Complete a second generation strategic plan for the Minnesota Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI).
- Complete documenting uses and benefits of digital parcel data in Minnesota county governments.
- Identify local sources of data critical to the emergency preparedness community.
- Develop implementation plans for use and maintenance of the state's hydrographic data.
- Begin new focus on updating wetland data.

### Enhance Communication with Stakeholders

- Participate in the 2006 conference of the Association of Minnesota Counties.
- Continue to connect with the emergency management community via presentations at their conferences and surveys to determine their GIS awareness and needs.
- Organize a forum to discuss emergency preparedness and public safety data access and security issues.
- Expand efforts to educate GIS professionals about the emergency management community's needs.
- Continue to expand communication with the state and local IT communities.
- Develop a new council brochure.
- Continue to improve the council's Web site.

### Coordinate across Agencies and Sectors

- Work with OET to integrate geospatial technology with the state's enterprise technology environment.
- Recommend functions, organization, and funding for a state geospatial authority.
- Implement a shared services survey across agencies and sectors.
- Prepare a proposal to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop a common operating procedure for emergency planning response and mitigation in Minnesota using GIS data maintained by local, regional, state, and federal agencies.

- Develop a Web-based guide to key information resources to help local governments create and maintain parcel data.

### Standards Initiatives

- Finalize standard for *Hydrographic Features/Attributes*.
- Begin detailed logical design work on major geospatial architectural components.
- Recommend revisions to the Minnesota Geographic Metadata Guidelines in response to emerging international metadata standards.
- Inventory and review existing and proposed federal or state standards/best practices for GIS-based emergency preparedness data.
- Continue monitoring federal data standards.

**FY 2007 Council members represent a broad cross-section of organizations that benefit from coordination of geospatial technology and data.**

#### Appointed Members

**David Berrisford**, MN Dept. of Public Safety

**Jeff Bloomquist**, Farm Service Agency, USDA

**Gordon Chinander**, Metropolitan Emergency Services Board

**Will Craig**, University of Minnesota

**Mike Dolbow**, MN Dept. of Agriculture

**Rick Gelbmann**, Chair, Metropolitan Council

**Jeff Grussing**, United Services Group

**Charlie Kost**, Southwest Minnesota State University

**Jonette Kreideweis**, MN Dept. of Transportation

**Stuart Lien**, Clearwater County

**Robert Maki**, MN Dept. of Natural Resources

**Tim Ogg**, MN Board of Water and Soil Resources

**Mark Olsen**, MN Pollution Control Agency

**Victoria Reinhardt**, Ramsey County

**Ken Saffert**, City of Mankato

**Mark Sloan**, Clay County

**Bill Swing**, Wright County

**Sally Wakefield**, 1000 Friends of Minnesota

#### Ex-Officio Members

**David Arbeit**, Land Management Information Center

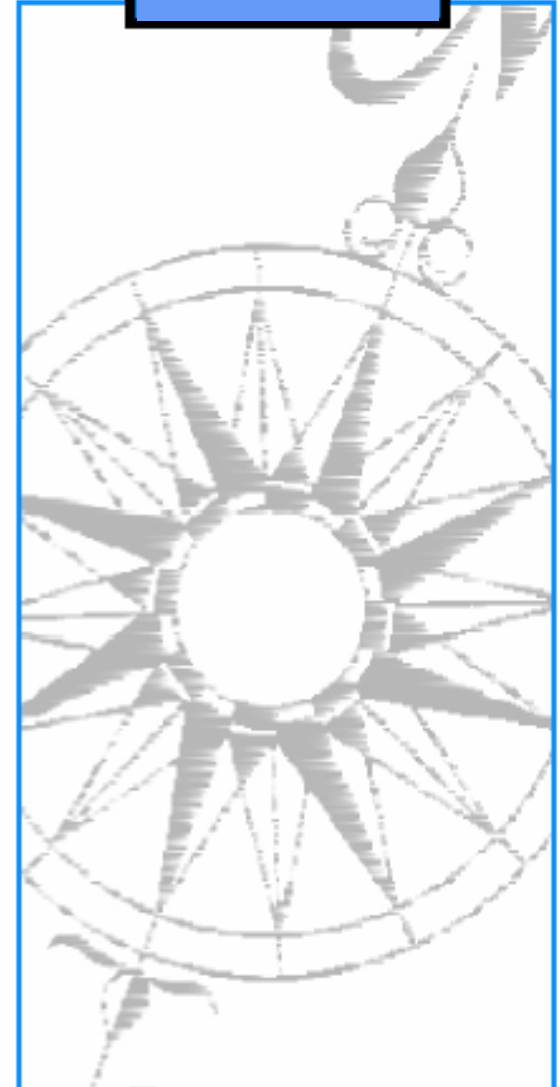
**Chad Martini**, MN GIS/LIS Consortium

**Lee Meilleur**, Legislative Coordinating Commission

**Mike Ryan**, MN Office of Enterprise Technology

**Ron Wencil**, U.S. Geological Survey

FY 2006  
ANNUAL REPORT



**Minnesota  
Governor's Council  
on Geographic  
Information**