

Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2020

Online via Webex

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Timothy Baker, University of Minnesota, Crookston; Ryan Bonney, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community; David Brandt, Washington County; Kari Geurts, MNIT Natural Resources; Renee Huset, City of St. Paul; Leanne Knott, City of Red Wing; Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council; Chris Mavis, Hennepin County; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Cory Richter, City of Blaine; Dan Ross, MnGeo; Soren Rundquist, Environmental Working Group; Gerry Sjerven, Minnesota Power; Alex Steele, Minnehaha Watershed District; Ryan Stovern, St. Louis County; Harvey Thorleifson, University of Minnesota; Kory Thurnau, USDA Forest Service; Benjamin Timerson, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Brandon Tourtelotte, Pro-West and Associates; Patrick Veraguth, Douglas County.

Members Absent: Jeff Bloomquist, USDA Risk Management Agency; Len Kne, University of Minnesota

Non-Members Present: Brad Anderson, City of Moorhead; Curt Carlson, MnGeo; Will Craig, retired; Mike Cremin, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Mike Dolbow, MNIT Education; Mike Eull, MNIT DOT; Andy King-Scribbins, Esri; Randy Knippel, Dakota County; Mike Koutnik, retired; Karen Majewicz, University of Minnesota; Andra Mathews, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Ryan Mattke, University of Minnesota; Matt McGuire, Metropolitan Council; Anne Morris, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; Akiko Nakamura, Minnesota Department of Public Safety; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Jesse Reinhardt, Hennepin County; Justin Roberts, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Matt Robinson, Esri; Kiah Sagami, Houston Engineering; Megan Sisko, MnGeo; Galen Sjostrom, Minnesota Department of Transportation; Alison Slaats, MnGeo; Steve Swazee, SharedGeo; Sean Vaughn, MNIT Natural Resources; Sally Wakefield, Minnesota Department of Revenue

References

This meeting included references to the following resources:

- [Slides](#)
- [Agenda Packet](#)

Call to Order

Kotz welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members introduced themselves. The agenda was approved. The [May 27, 2020 meeting minutes](#) were approved.

Review and Accept Committee Summaries

Committee summaries included in the meeting packet were accepted. The Awards Committee summary was delayed and was added to the packet after the meeting.

Approve Damage Assessment Data Standard; Standards Update

Approve Damage Assessment Data Standard

Kotz introduced the standard and summarized its importance in gathering information to support response to disaster situations where damage has occurred. He then provided an overview of the process and timeline of the Standards Committee work on this standard.

- After a 90-day public review of the proposed standard, the committee met, responded to the comments received and then approved the standard. The committee is now requesting GAC approval.

Motion: Approve the proposed [Damage Assessment Data standard](#) (Brandt/Mavis). Passed unanimously.

- Kotz acknowledged the standards team's great work. Swazee thanked everyone on the committee and emphasized that this work and the resulting standard will be of value not only to Minnesota, but also to other states. As an example, he referenced the recent straight-line wind event in Iowa. He attended several meetings where there was discussion about how to collect information about damage; he shared the Minnesota draft standard which was then used in the Iowa response.

Standards Update

- *Address Point Data Standard and Road Centerline Data Standard*
 - Modifications were made to these standards to be compatible with NG 9-1-1 data
 - Changes to the standards were put out for public review because the schema was updated, and this type of change triggers a public review
 - The public review period ends on 10/12/20
- *Trails and Bikeways Data Standard*
 - MnDOT is spearheading the effort and conducted an earlier informal review of a draft standard
 - The proposed draft standard was reviewed by the Standards Committee which approved it for public review
 - Watch for information coming out soon about the public review period for this standard

Remonumentation Update

Veraguth shared slides that showed a pilot project being conducted by the Minnesota Association of County Surveyors (MACS) to do remonumentation work. This work is needed because many of the original monuments are gone. The slides included maps of the current state of monuments by county in Minnesota as well as counties that have a full-time, a part-time or no surveyor. A Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) project to support remonumentation was funded and those funds are being used for pilot work being done in a Grant County township. The township was selected because it had a high number of corners that needed to be recertified. Key findings of this work include:

- Remonumentation is a lot of work and costs a lot of money
- The LCCMR application process took a lot of time
- RFP process to hire a vendor to do the work took a lot of time
- The project may finish under budget

- For remonumentation, a full-time County Surveyor is the best option because they can spend the time needed to certify the correct corner locations

Veraguth noted that the RFP developed can be used as a model for others to use. He estimated that for 100 corners, the cost of remonumentation is about \$100,000. Veraguth thanked the GAC for letters sent to LCCMR in support of the grant application.

Stovern commented that this work done by surveyors makes his GIS work so much easier because it provides a foundational dataset. Kotz thanked Veraguth for his good work.

One Minnesota Update

Huset provided an update on the GAC initiative to support Governor Tim Walz's One Minnesota plan.

- She first provided a refresher on the One Minnesota plan which is an effort to ensure everyone in Minnesota has an opportunity to thrive. The plan includes five areas of focus:
 - Equity & Inclusion
 - Minnesota's Environment
 - Children & Families
 - Thriving Communities
 - Fiscal Accountability & Measurable Result
- She explained that GAC priorities already aligned with these areas of focus, and the core message of this GAC team is that **GIS is fundamental to support these efforts.**
- The GAC team's focus has shifted since the last meeting. The response was originally going to be a written report, but this has been changed to be a series of interviews in video format. The team is working with MnGeo and MNIT with the goal of using MNIT's YouTube channel to post the videos.
- The list of questions to be used in interviews is shared on page 18 of the GAC Agenda packet.
- The first interview, Len Kne interviewing Mike Koutnik, has been completed and edited. Huset highlighted a quote from Koutnik: *"GIS enables us to know what is where, understand the relationships amongst different kinds of things, and analyze those data to solve problems, improve processes, and make better decisions. Period."*
- Next steps include lining up more interviews and working with MNIT on requirements to post videos.
- Reinhardt and Richter thanked the team for their work, especially for choosing to use video format.
- Koutnik said he enjoyed being interviewed and was humbled by the experience. He encourages other to participate by being interviewees.

Underground Utilities Tiger Team update

Swazee shared slides that provided an update of work of the Underground Utilities Tiger Team.

- He provided an overview of the Emergency Preparedness Committee's (EPC) structure and then explained how the Underground Utilities Tiger Team fits into this structure.
- The Tiger Team is focused on helping integrate the use of GIS and best practices into the field of underground utilities.

- The team has been working with GSOC (Gopher State One Call); over 30 people are involved in this effort. Swazee acts as the administrative liaison for the work and Barbara Cederberg (COO of GSOC) leads the operation control.
- He presented the 2010 San Bruno pipeline explosion as a real-world example of why we should be concerned with underground utilities. This disaster still has \$4 billion in lawsuits working through the court system. The examination of this explosion found that the GIS data may have been inaccurate.
- Minnesota law mandates that the GSOC must respond within 48 hours to a Gopher one call.
- He shared the team's mission, charter and workplan including 2020 and 2021 goals (see the slides). The workplan has been created to be achievable.
- The **Utility Sector needs help from GIS community!** The United States is behind Europe in this type of work.
- He indicated that this effort is what the GAC is all about and that the representation of the Minnesota GIS community by the GAC has allowed this Tiger Team to move ahead and be successful in this area.
- He ended with an appeal to members of the GAC to carry this effort forward into this future – it is a long-term vision and effort that will take many years.
- Kotz thanked Swazee and the team for their work in this important area.

GIS/LIS Consortium new ad-hoc committees and Education Committee update

The Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium added two ad-hoc committees in 2020:

- **Professional Development Committee** (King-Scribbins, Sisko)
 - King-Scribbins said that the committee will help with resume reviews, mentorships and job opportunities. See the [committee website](#) to learn more.
 - Information on networking events will be shared through GIS/LIS email announcements
 - The committee is collaborating with Wisconsin, North Dakota and others in the Midwest region
 - He noted an upcoming [Wisconsin Land Information Association meeting](#)
 - Sisko recommended that anyone interested in having a "booth" at the upcoming virtual career fair (planned for November) can contact the committee at: profdev@mngislis.org
- **Equity Advocates Committee** (Richter)
 - This ad-hoc committee grew out of the Gender and GIS panel held at the 2019 GIS/LIS conference
 - Richter noted that additional questions about gender and diversity were asked in the recent Minnesota GIS salary survey
 - A new effort this group is leading is to evaluate if COVID has impacted people differently
 - Communication for this committee is done using Slack channels (see slides for details)
 - This group is reflecting the strong interest in the topic of diversity (not just binary male/female)
- Richter provided an update about the **GIS/LIS Education Committee** at Stacey Stark's request. This committee was recently split into two (permanent) GIS/LIS committees: The Higher Education Committee and the K12 Committee. Stark is the chair of the K12 Committee.

Outreach Committee Chair

Geurts said that due to changes in her work position, she is unable to continue chairing the [Outreach Committee](#). She called for a volunteer to serve as chair. She summarized the goals of the committee and noted there is a vice-chair to help.

Kotz thanked Geurts for her service. He noted a committee chair does not have to be a member of the GAC.

Action Item: Please contact Geurts or Kotz about the Outreach Committee chair role if you'd like any more information.

Geospatial Commons Advisory Group

Kotz presented slides explaining the efforts to create a new GAC committee: The Geospatial Commons Advisory Committee.

- Kotz, Koutnik and Mathews created a draft mission for this proposed advisory committee.
- Kotz shared the proposed mission and objectives and deliverables. The mission would be “To provide advice, guidance and strategic direction for the Minnesota Geospatial Commons and Minnesota’s collaborative geospatial data sharing program, from the broad perspective of the Minnesota geospatial data stakeholder community.”
- Kotz clarified that this group would **not** advise on the technical aspects of the Commons, but rather on the policy and usage.
- Ross: The Commons currently has 45 participating organizations and 894 resources. It’s six years old, so it is time to see what our next steps should be.
- Mathews: The committee would benefit from the input of a wide variety of users, publishers and contributors who have interacted with the Commons; it should also hear from those who have not. Keep the question in mind: “Who we would benefit from hearing from?”
- Dolbow expressed general support for this committee, hoping that committee leadership can be identified soon.
- Vaughn asked if this committee could implement a peer review of data being added to the Commons to ensure good data is there. Kotz said this would be a good topic to review for this group.

Motion: Approve the Geospatial Commons Advisory Committee as a GAC committee and approve its charter (Brandt/Richter). Motion passed without dissent.

Action Item: Contact Kotz if interested in being part of the Geospatial Commons Advisory Committee.

NSGIC conference and GAC participation

Ross announced that the NSGIC annual conference is the week of September 21-25. Members of the GAC can attend free of charge, and he encouraged members to attend. See the [registration](#) and [agenda](#).

A Council of Councils forum on September 16, 2-4 pm ET, will be a meeting of councils like the GAC from other states. Richter will serve on a panel for this event.

Sector reports: Thurnau and Veraguth

Federal Representative: Kory Thurnau

Thurnau provided an overview of why the GAC is important to Federal agencies.

- Federal land agencies have a great need for GIS. They often assemble data from many state and local sources, and datasets vary widely in content and quality between different states and counties.
- The GAC is key to helping federal agencies by working on standards and focusing on discrepancies between datasets. This also helps with reducing duplication of effort and is why Thurnau is involved in the GAC.
- His strategy for communicating with others in the federal sector is to stay connected as a surveyor in lands groups and to share information with regional land managers. Additionally, he stays connected with other agencies and shares what the GAC does and how they can use the resulting data. One example of this is his involvement with the Arrowhead PLSS work being done with other GAC members, the Bureau of Land Management and Dan Ross. The work on section corners in the Superior National Forest will be included in Eastern BLM's CAD NSDI. This is positive work!
- Thurnau also works with the 3D Geomatics Committee, especially in the Arrowhead region, which will help foresters and forest management.
- He asked for input on what he could be doing differently or better.

Greater Minnesota County Representative: Pat Veraguth

- Veraguth referenced his presentation earlier about the work he has been doing.
- He is helping set up an executive forum between the Minnesota Association of County Surveyors (MACS), the Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors (MSPS) and the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium which will likely be held in October.
- He continues to work on corners and shared a slide about the township corners statute from 1875 as well as information about work going on in the Arrowhead and Lake County.
- He is also supporting the proposed MnGeo surveyor position and asked others to help him and Ross support this effort. He explained why a state surveyor position at MnGeo is important (from slides):
 - Statewide parcel map
 - Each County is different
 - Each County's data is different
 - 1/3 have a full time County Surveyor
 - 1/3 have a part time County Surveyor
 - 1/3 have no County Surveyor
 - Some counties are fully remonumented with a maintenance program
 - Some have little to no remonumentation

Updates on MN GAC Priority Projects and Initiatives

Richter asked for updates on the GAC's 2020 priorities (names in parentheses are the person who gave the update, not the priority owner).

- **Free and Open Data** (Geurts): As discussed earlier, the Outreach Committee needs a new chair.
- **Updated and Aligned Boundary Data**: Updates already given in Veraguth's reports above.
- **Geodata Archiving Implementation** (Tourtelotte): The Archiving Implementation Workgroup and its subgroups have been actively meeting.
- **Parcel Data** (Slaats): MnGeo plans to work on parcel data internally in October and will provide an update to GAC in December.
- **Image Service Improvements** (Slaats): MnGeo ordered the 2019 NAIP uncompressed GeoTIFFs from FSA last April. Order fulfillment has still not been completed by FSA. FSA has been very apologetic (delays due to COVID), but the order is in process. When MnGeo receives the data, it will be loaded into the [Geospatial Image Service](#) as soon as possible. The Image Service Sustainability Committee will then evaluate whether to add the imagery into the composite image service. MnGeo will send an announcement when the services are updated.
- **Hydro-DEMs** (Vaughn): The 3D Geo Subgroup that works on [digital breachlines](#), led by Rick Moore, is currently focusing on digital dams. We continue to bring in private, public and academic partners; St. Mary's is a new partner. This is truly a committee-led effort.
- **Road Centerline Data** (Ross): Work on this dataset is in process as part of the NG911 project. MnGeo is automating routines so the data can be shared.
- **Lidar Data** (Sjerven): Sjerven said there actually are many owners of this initiative and they are on the 3D Geo data acquisition team. There is a lot of work going on. The Rainy Lake Block and part of Lake Superior Block will be collected in Spring 2021.
The group is currently looking at where we work towards collecting lidar next. He referenced the message from Dan Ross that there is power in partnerships – the more partnerships the better. Please keep in touch and let us know if your organization would like to help support collection of lidar and a USGS grant application in the northeast or southern Minnesota. Ross asked if the GAC outreach committee can help with the 3D Geo work. Vaughn stressed that we need partners for cost sharing and please get in touch if you can be a partner.
- **Emergency Management Damage Assessment Data Standard** (Richter): Richter reported that this priority will be considered complete with the GAC approval of the [standard](#) today.
- **Address Point Data** (Ross): MnGeo works on automation of the data as it comes in. MnGeo works at the pace of our partners and this dataset will be shared with the National Address Database (NAD) and on the Commons. Ross thanked the county partners for all their work contributing to this dataset.
- **US National Grid Materials** (Active): Nothing beyond the report in the agenda packet.
- **Parks and Trails Data Standard** (Richter): The trails and bikeways standard was discussed earlier in this meeting, but there is nothing to report on a parks standard.
- **NG911 Geospatial Forum** (Not Active): No report.
- **Underground Utilities Mapping** (Richter): There was an extensive report provided earlier in the meeting.
Action Item: If you're interested in this topic, please contact Richter or Swazee.
- **Basemap Services** (Not Active): No report.
- **Unmanned Systems Metadata Guide** (Not Active): No report.
- **Inventory of Minnesota Geodata Assets** (Not Active): No report.
- **Critical Infrastructure Data Custodian** (Richter): Stacey Stark will be the project owner.

- **Culvert Data Standard** (Vaughn): This priority is associated with the hydroDEMs priority. Vaughn will work to identify a new champion since Lorenzen has retired.

Further discussion:

- Kotz: The annual priority survey will be started soon. Members should reach out to their sectors.
- Vaughn: The Culvert Data Standard was not listed on the survey last year; it was an added item as a result of the survey. By having it listed this year as an existing GAC priority during the survey, we may see some increased interest and support for the standard.

Action Item: If members have priorities they'd like to see on the survey, suggestions of additional mailing lists, or other ideas, please send them to Kotz and Richter.

Legislative Updates

Ross shared a slide with legislative updates:

- The LCCMR lidar request was submitted, but the proposal was not successful
 - Ross is still planning on asking for legislative funding for lidar (\$18 million), although chances are small given the current state budget.
- Legislative funding requests – Two budget change items for MnGeo
 - Survey coordinator position
 - \$18 million for lidar cost share

Announcements or Other Business

Updates from GAC members

- Ross: Register for the NSGIC conference!
- Richter: The Institute of Asset Management Minnesota Chapter meeting is on September 17.
- Mavis: Upcoming executive summit meeting to be held in October between MSPS, MACS, GIS/LIS
- Brandt: Next Wednesday: NSGIC Council of councils meeting; MetroGIS meeting
- Thorleifson: County geologic atlas program (in partnership with DNR) is in full swing; Betty McCollum's work is key to supporting a national seamless database of geologic data; there is a significant amount of magnetic survey going on in northern Minnesota.
- Timerson: GIS for transportation conference (AASHTO) is being planned for April 2021. They are currently planning for two options (in-person and virtual) and the decision on which option will probably be made in early 2021.
- Veraguth: MACS cancelled their fall conference (October); MSPS meeting in December will be virtual. MSPS conference in 2021 may be virtual, but that is undecided.
- Reinhardt: Ramsey County is proud of their open data portal that started with GIS data but now includes much more additional types of data such as their budget and how the county runs.