

## **MnGeo Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council**

June 30, 2010 Meeting Notes

Blazing Star Room, 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55155

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### **Attendees**

**Members:** Brad Anderson, City of Moorhead; David Arbeit, MnGeo; Rebecca Foster, City of Edina; Patricia Henderson, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission; Brian Huberty, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; John Mackiewicz, WSB & Associates; Robert McMaster, University of Minnesota; Robert Meeks, Minnesota School Board Association; Tim Ogg, Board of Water and Soil Resources; Mark Olsen, Pollution Control Agency; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Terry Schneider, MetroGIS; Rick Schute, Minnesota National Guard; Dawn Sherk, White Earth Nation; Stephen Swazee, SharedGeo; Gary Swenson, Hennepin County; Mark Thomas, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; Sally Wakefield, 1,000 Friends of Minnesota; and Ron Wencl, U.S. Geological Survey.

**Non-Members:** Jeff Bloomquist, FSA; Chris Cialek, MnGeo; John Hoshal, MnGeo; Fletcher Klassen, FSA; Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council; Kevin Kuhlman, Sanborn; Fred Logman, MnGeo; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; and Sarah Steinhilber, FSA.

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### **Welcome**

Chair Victoria Reinhardt called the meeting to order. Participants introduced themselves.

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### **Notes of March 31, 2010 Meeting**

Motion by Sally Wakefield with second by Steve Swazee to approve the [notes](#) for the March 31, 2010, Council meeting. There was no discussion and the motion carried.

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### **State Government Geospatial Advisory Council**

Rebecca Foster, the Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council's representative to the State Government Geospatial Advisory Council, reviewed highlights from the State Government council's May 11 meeting – see [meeting notes](#) and Tim Loesch's [presentation](#) on MN DNR GIS Service Delivery and Governance.

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### **Governor's Commendation Awards**

This award program for exemplary GIS activities in Minnesota, initiated and recommended by the MN Governor's Council on Geographic Information from 1996 through 2009, will continue under the auspices of MnGeo, with the advice of the Statewide Council. Rebecca Foster has agreed to chair the awards committee this year, and Will Craig has volunteered to assist.

**Motion:** That the council form a committee to review nominations for 2010 Governor's Commendation Awards and to recommend to MnGeo whether or not to forward any of the nomination(s) to the Governor's Office for approval (Reinhardt/Meeks). The motion carried.

Additional members volunteered to serve on the committee: Bob McMaster, Bob Meeks, Terry Schneider, Sally Wakefield and Ron Wencl.

For more information on the awards, including past winners, see this [webpage](#).

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### **Update on USGS Budget**

Arbeit continues to work with the Governor's Office to have a letter sent to Minnesota's congressional delegation in support the USGS budget which the President's proposed budget significantly cuts; of particular concern are the proposed significant reduced funding for USGS liaisons to the states and the

elimination of some FGDC CAP grant funding. Wencl reported that there is no budget proposal yet from either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

**Action item:** Arbeit will continue to advocate that the Governor's Office send a letter to the Minnesota delegation in support of restoring USGS's budget.

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## 2010 Legislative Session

Arbeit reported on bills from the 2010 Legislative Session that affect geospatial activities (see [handout](#)). The main changes were to update language referring to old LMIC and MLMIS programs, to add language about geospatial standards, and to refer to a state geocoding model. The Office of Enterprise Technology's Enterprise Board (Arbeit is a member) is developing a new process to approve state technology related standards, and a new [Geocoding Workgroup](#) has formed.

**Action item:** Logman or Rader will send more information to council members about the new Geocoding Workgroup.

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## Project Updates (for more details on the five projects below, see the [projects update handout](#))

### 1. Broadband (Arbeit)

Connect Minnesota, the nonprofit organization that has been mapping broadband availability, is scheduled to deliver its most recent data to the Department of Commerce on July 2. Minnesota is supposed to receive a copy of the data delivered to the NTIA.

### 2. Critical Infrastructures Data (Hoshal)

The initial phase of the critical infrastructure data project, funded by a 2008 FGDC CAP grant, has been completed. The project anticipates receiving an additional \$25,000 grant from the U.S. Geological Survey to add new data to the prototype web application, to enhance the security and accessibility of the data, and to update the 10K maps that show the infrastructure data on a U.S. National Grid base. The State Fire Marshall's Office has agreed to review the data on fire stations.

### 3. General Land Office Field Notes (Hoshal)

The Minnesota Historical Society has awarded a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant to MnGeo to scan, index and make more accessible Minnesota's General Land Office (GLO) Field Notes. These notes were the basis of the GLO maps which have already been scanned and are online. The federal Bureau of Land Management will provide indexing software and some advice to MnGeo and its project partners. The project's anticipated completion date is June 30, 2011.

### 4. LiDAR (Cialek)

The handout contains a map showing which areas in southwest Minnesota were collected in Spring 2010 and which areas are scheduled to be done Fall 2010. Currently, the Arrowhead region is scheduled to be collected in 2011 and central Minnesota in 2012. Possible additional federal funding to collect additional areas is being pursued.

### 5. Orthoimagery (Cialek)

**East-Central MN:** Eleven of thirteen East-Central Minnesota counties were flown this spring for high-resolution 4-band digital imagery from which stereo and ortho-rectified data products will be produced. The vendor is creating an online site for the main project partners to QA/QC some of the imagery.

**Southern MN:** Three regional meetings are being held to inform potential partners in Southern Minnesota about buy-up options for higher imagery resolution and about partnership opportunities for

setting ground control points. (Note: Since the meeting, a new [spring air photo website](#) has been created; see the site for ongoing updates.)

Cialek said that local organizations that have bought up for higher resolution products are generally making 1-foot products publicly available with no fee, but are charging for access to 6-inch products.

In response to a question from Sherk, Cialek confirmed that tribal organizations would be welcome partners in the orthoimagery projects; he will work with her to add tribal representatives to the growing list of contacts of interested groups.

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### **Committees and Workgroups**

Arbeit indicated that [updates for the committees and workgroups](#) were included in the meeting material and asked if there were any questions. He also indicated that we would likely have a presentation on one of the committees or workgroups at each of the Council meetings. The presentation this time will be on the Geospatial Commons Workgroup.

### **Geospatial Commons** (see [slides](#))

Mark Kotz presented an overview of the work of the Geospatial Commons workgroup, a joint venture of the MetroGIS Technical Leadership Workgroup and the MnGeo Standards Committee. The Minnesota Geospatial Commons is intended to be the single place to go on the web to find and share geospatial resources about Minnesota. Key functions include the means to find, evaluate and share resources, and to administer the site. The workgroup is aiming to have a prototype available by the MN GIS/LIS Conference in mid-October.

See the [workgroup's website](#) for more information and updates.

### **Discussion**

- Olsen asked whether the group has considered criteria for what data is posted; Kotz responded that there are many governance issues such as this that will need to be discussed in a later phase.
- Swazee noted that the federal emergency preparedness community is developing topical categories for organizing data and that the Commons workgroup should be aware of them.
- Arbeit commented that this effort builds on earlier work done to define a “broker” by the Geospatial Architecture Committee of the former Governor’s Council on Geographic Information. He also emphasized that the project sponsors have committed only to proof-of-concept work for the Commons; he has submitted a grant proposal to the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources intended to underwrite a next phase of implementation focused on environmental data.
- Huberty asked whether the group was communicating with Minnesota’s neighboring states and provinces as well as the Great Lakes Information Network about this effort. Kotz responded that the group is doing so, and specifically mentioned Natural Resources Canada.
- Mackiewicz strongly encouraged that as much data as possible be provided as web services, and noted the increased efficiency for data consumers if all data from a site is provided in the same way. Kotz noted that a survey of users of Minnesota’s main existing data sites is indicating support for providing web services and KML.

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### **Member and Community Issues and Needs & How is MnGeo Doing?**

Reinhardt led a general discussion about upcoming issues and MnGeo and the council’s roles. The following main points were raised:

- **Budget:** Members agreed that for the foreseeable future, budgets will be very tight. Agencies will increasingly be asked to track where funding goes and what results it produces (Schneider). In many areas, especially education, funding will likely be cut substantially (Meeks). The

emphasis everywhere will be on using existing resources more efficiently, continuing to improve communication, and shifting resources to the highest priority areas (Reinhardt and Olsen).

- **Emergency Preparedness:** Swazee advocated for greater political attention to emergency preparedness, including dedicating MnGeo staff (at least 1 full-time staff, but preferably 3) to this sector. These staff could make sure the state perspective is considered at the federal level. Arbeit responded that additional funding is very unlikely through the executive budget, so advocacy for this type of proposal would need to focus on finding a legislative champion. There were comments that the lead for additional resources and focus on geospatial efforts should come from HSEM and the emergency management business community. Huberty noted that more work should be done to define the skills and training necessary for GIS staff who respond to emergencies, to identify staff who have the appropriate skills, and to determine sources for funding to cover the response. Currently, GIS and other activities at Homeland Security and Emergency Management are very compartmentalized, e.g., Carla Coates, new HSEM GIS staff person, will focus exclusively on the radiological response program (Foster and Arbeit).
- **Other resources:** Wakefield noted that there may be untapped resources available from non-profits; often data, maps, analysis and other products that they create do not become part of the public domain. McMaster suggested the possibility of tapping students for internships at MnGeo.
- **MnGeo:** Comments on MnGeo's activities so far were generally favorable, although a longer period of time will be needed to more fully assess progress. Members agreed that, for now, it was best for MnGeo to remain in the Department of Administration rather than move to the Office of Enterprise Technology, especially with the upcoming November election that will bring in a new governor and administration. MnGeo does have a "virtual connection" with OET through MnGeo's participation on OET policy groups. Currently, some state agencies have combined their GIS staff with their IT staff, but others remain as separate activities.

Arbeit encouraged members to continue to provide comments and feedback at any point.

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## Information Items

**Customized USNG scale:** Swazee distributed a new version (V7) of the Romer scale, a plastic scale used to measure distances on maps to find U.S. National Grid coordinates. This version includes one for 1:6,000-scale which Rebecca Foster (City of Edina) and Randy Knippel (Dakota County) had found to work very well for printing city maps for emergency personnel since it is sized perfectly for printing a 1,000-meter grid on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper. (Currently, the [online version](#) is V6, without the 1:6,000-scale.)

**Draft National Address Standard:** The U.S. Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard was open for public review and comment this spring. Kotz reported that the MetroGIS Address Workgroup and the MnGeo Standards Committee coordinated submission of a combined set of comments on behalf of the Minnesota geospatial community. See details on this [webpage](#).

**Draft Storm Water Infrastructure Exchange Standard:** A workgroup led by Mike Trojan from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has drafted a standard for the transfer of GIS data about storm water infrastructure. The Standards Committee has worked with them to clarify the document and ready it for wider review and testing. Mackiewicz served on the workgroup and emphasized that an extensive educational effort will be needed since the proposal doesn't exactly match how the data is stored by any of the organizations that create and maintain it.

**MetroGIS Quantify Public Value Project:** This CAP-funded project to quantify the value of sharing data publicly is summarized in the [handout](#). Swenson has been coordinating the effort to have producers and users of parcel data complete pre-interview questionnaires for the project consultant. The consultant

will follow up with in-person interviews in mid to late July. Randy Johnson, Francis Harvey, and the consultants have attended training on the existing return-on-investment methodology developed by GITA.

**NSGIC Annual Meeting:** Cialek announced that the annual meeting for the National States Geographic Information Council will be held September 12-16 in Minneapolis. There are still openings for short “ignite” sessions, so members should contact him ASAP if they have a topic to suggest.

**GEOFEST:** Swazee announced that GEOFEST, a GIS conference for K-12 social science educators sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education, will be held October 16 at Macalester College. The Emergency Preparedness Committee will exhibit there, and other exhibitors are sought. See the [GEOFEST website](#) for more information.

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### **Future Meetings**

**2010:** Meetings will be held in the Blazing Star Room, 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, on September 29 and December 29, 2010 (Wednesdays) from 1:00 – 4:00 pm.

**2011:** Meetings are scheduled for March 31, June 30, September 29, and December 29, 2011 (fifth Thursdays of those months). The March and September meetings will be in the Blazing Star Room; locations for the June and December meetings are TBD.

The meeting was adjourned.

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### **Summary of Action Items**

- Arbeit will continue to advocate that the Governor’s Office send a letter to the Minnesota delegation in support of restoring USGS’s budget.
- Logman or Rader will send more information to council members about the new Geocoding Workgroup.

Notes by Nancy Rader and Fred Logman.