# MnGeo State Government Geospatial Advisory Council
# January 10, 2012
# Meeting Minutes

**Participating**
Members: David Arbeit, MnGeo; Mike Dolbow, Agriculture; Mary Emerson, Human Services; David Fawcett, Pollution Control (for Tad Schindler); Greg Fetter, Commerce; Scott Freburg, Education (for Craig Rhombs); Jennifer Johnson, Corrections; Greg Klinkhammer, Employment and Economic Development; Tim Loesch, Natural Resources; Sean Mangan, Public Safety; Steve Misterek, Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council liaison; John Paulson, Health; Dan Ross, Transportation; Cindy Valentine, Labor and Industry.

Non-members: Chris Buse, OET; Chris Cialek, MnGeo; Dan Falbo, Esri; Brad Henry, University of Minnesota; John Hoshal, MnGeo; Mark Kotz, Met Council; Fred Logman, MnGeo; Liesa Miller, Mn/DOT; Carolyn Parnell, OET; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Ed Valencia, OET; Ron Wencl, USGS.

Arbeit called the meeting to order. Participants introduced themselves. Minutes for the 11/8/11 council meeting were approved.

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**Statewide Council Report** (Misterek)
The Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council, which focuses on GIS issues that affect the statewide community, designates a member to attend meetings of the State Government council in order to improve communication between the two groups. Misterek has volunteered to be the liaison for several meetings, and other members will serve at the remaining meetings. November 29, 2011 was the first meeting of the FY2012-13 council, and many of the members, including Misterek, are new; most of the issues discussed were similar to today's council agenda. See the Nov. 29 minutes for details.

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**MnGeo Activities Update**

a) **Enterprise License Agreement** (Cialek): MnGeo is coordinating negotiations for the next ELA with Esri for their GIS software, to be effective July 2012. The 16 state agencies that currently participate in the ELA have provided advice through the ELA Steering Committee. The existing contract, red-lined to show proposed changes, should be ready for OET and MMB's review by January 13. After the review, the document should be ready to send to Esri; the current goal is to send it by the end of January. Loesch requested that the Steering Committee be kept informed as the process moves along. Arbeit noted that there is also a complementary agreement, part of the State's Master Purchase Agreement, that specifies pricing for agencies that are not participating in the ELA; this existing agreement also is being discussed with OET and MMB.

b) **Orthophotos** (Cialek): Cialek provided an Orthoimagery Program Update handout summarizing progress on Minnesota's Spring Aerial Imagery Program. Page 2 of the handout describes the steady increase in use of MnGeo's Image Service, with more than 25 million calls for orthophoto data during 2011. Thanks to Wencl and USGS, the service now includes NGA photos along Minnesota's border with Canada and along Minnesota and Wisconsin's Lake Superior lakeshore (see the handout for a map of the areas covered).

c) **GLO Field Notes Scanning** (Logman): Due to budget cuts and shifting priorities, BLM has been delayed in posting Minnesota's scanned field notes online. BLM is currently estimating project completion at the end of February.

d) **Geospatial Commons** (Logman): This project was described extensively at the council's November 8 meeting. Little progress has been made since then, but work is resuming to move the project ahead. Kotz added that "sharing ideas, knowledge, and use of social media" is becoming an emphasis at MetroGIS and the Mn GIS/LIS Consortium, so this aspect of the Commons likely will also become increasingly important.

e) **Parcel Data Business Plan** (Logman): See the interim report handout. The joint proposal submitted by Pro-West & Associates, Inc. and Applied Geographics was selected; the deadline for the final report is June 30, 2012. Loesch suggested that the report contain a statement of value of parcel data to state agencies. Arbeit noted that the Quantify Public Value return-on-investment project has found general consensus that there's much public value to sharing data and has documented many anecdotal and qualitative benefits of sharing parcel data; quantitative value has proven more challenging to document. Ross added that the biggest job is coordinating parcel updates over the long term (maintenance); Logman confirmed that this will be recognized in the plan.

f) **LiDAR data** (Loesch): Loesch distributed the 1/4/12 LiDAR status map. The work order for the last phase, the Central Lakes region 2012, was awarded last week, and the contract is being developed. The Arrowhead and the north metro areas flown in 2011 are being delivered to DNR in blocks; some of the Arrowhead data has quality problems with break lines and is being reprocessed by the vendor. Data distribution is more complicated than it is for air photos; a WMS can deliver an image of elevation data for **viewing**, but for **analysis**, users need full resolution data and full attributes. For updates, see the Minnesota Elevation Mapping Project webpage.

g) **State Agency GIS Contact List** (Hoshal): Last week's brief activation of the State's Emergency Operations Center for a chemical spill at the Prairie Island nuclear power plant underscored the need to ensure that the contact list and protocols for requests for assistance from state agency GIS staff are kept up-to-date. Hoshal will be contacting council members soon about their agency information. Individual agencies have their own COOP (continuity of operations) and DR (disaster recovery) plans, but there is not yet an enterprise plan. MnGeo's protocol should be re-examined as it moves to OET.

**Action Item:** Hoshal will contact council members to ensure that their agency's contact list and protocols governing requests for GIS staff assistance for emergency response are up-to-date.

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**DNR's GDRS** (Loesch) See slides.

Loesch demonstrated DNR's Geospatial Data Resource Sites (GDRS), providing more detail to complement the overview he'd given at the council's Nov. 8 meeting. The GDRS provides geographic data, metadata (for data and for the GDRS system), and tools (to manage the GDRS and to share GIS applications). It provides consistent and predictable storage and access and is designed to be software and data agnostic. DNR is willing to share the code with others who could contribute to further developing the system.

The GDRS offers different capabilities, depending upon one's role:

- Data Custodian – Publish, document and disseminate
- Data User – Ready access to data and tools
- Developer – Grist for applications
- System Admin – Upkeep, maintenance and monitoring

- System Managers – Enterprise sharing and monitoring

Loesch then demonstrated an application called LandView that is an ArcMap plug-in and is included with the GDRS. LandView is a tool that allows users to find a particular location using a variety of methods including Latitude/Longitude (DD, DM, and DMS), UTM, USNG, PLS, street address and place name. Once a location is found, the geocode is then translated into geocodes for all other formats and displayed on the screen.

DNR maintains approximately 80 GDRS sites internal to the department and has collaborated with several other organizations listed in the slides. DNR is experimenting with a public GDRS outside its firewall that would allow the public to download current data and access Quick Layers and LandView, and allow application developers outside DNR to create additional applications and uses more easily. Users can map a drive on their computer to a web service or can use the application as a standalone.

Scaleability Issues: As the GDRS implementation expands, and before public access moves beyond the experimental stage, many questions need to be answered about the impact of greatly increased use on network traffic, security and funding. What is the role of OET?

Discussion:

- Fetter: Is there a common lexicon for describing the data categories? Several choices are provided, including standard categories used by ISO, and ones used by the DNR Data Deli. Users also may select a subset of categories or create their own. Data categories are quite intuitive, and there is a "Quick Find" search capability to look for data across category folders.
- Kotz: The GDRS fits well into the Geospatial Commons effort, potentially providing much of the missing automated broker functionality. It promises to elegantly solve the problem of making sure users can easily access the most recent data; currently, users often make decisions based on out-dated copies of data on their computer, or they spend lots of time checking for updates.
- Loesch: This effort has great potential in the area of emergency response. If responders use this system and data in their day-to-day work, and it is what's used during an emergency, then they will already be familiar with how to use the system, they won't have to search for data and become familiar with it, and they can concentrate on the response work.
- Hoshal: Does the GDRS integrate easily into Google Earth? LandView has a button that can bring a user to their selected spot in Google Earth, but no data is currently provided in KML format (but it could be); this is an important capability to explore.

**State Government IT Consolidation and MnGeo Transition**

**State CGIO position**: Arbeit said that the position announcement for Chief Geospatial Information Officer to replace him when he retires has been released on the State Jobs website (position # 11OET000040), and a number of applications have already been received. The application deadline is January 30, 2012, but the emphasis is on finding the right person even if it takes longer.

Human Resources staff will initially screen the applications to determine which ones meet the minimum requirements for the position. The remaining steps in the selection process are still being determined but will include input from the GIS community. Commissioner Parnell invited council members to contact her directly about advice concerning the position, MnGeo's direction or other IT issues. To make an appointment, contact Marcia Hansen, 651-556-8010). Email input is also welcome.

**Action Items:** Arbeit, Parnell and others on the OET executive team will keep members informed as the process for selecting the CGIO is determined. Members will provide input to Parnell on the CGIO hiring, the future direction of MnGeo, and other GIS/IT consolidation issues.

**Governance Structure for Consolidated State IT:** Valencia explained that the legislation creating OET mandates a clear role for OET on several specific topics including standards, architecture, portfolio management, security, procurement, and GIS, while leaving OET's role in other areas (e.g., email, phone services) less clearly prescribed. OET must ensure consistency and alignment in IT functions so that they best meet the State's business needs.

As part of the IT consolidation initiative, OET is at the beginning stages of determining a governance structure for the new consolidated State IT; this will define how State IT will be managed and will evolve over time. Chris Buse is heading this effort, working with a team of OET and agency staff. As the State Chief Information Security Officer, Buse has built consensus on what are considered core security services and tools and made significant progress implementing them. For the consolidation, the intent is to try to define an "end state" and then determine how best to transition to it; much of the detail will await the hiring of the CGIO and executive leaders of the architecture and portfolio groups.

Buse and Valencia distributed a draft chart that showed a preliminary idea of what OET's future "functional structure" might look like. Member comments and questions indicated that, at this point, the chart raised more questions than it answered and did not yet present a clear message:

- The chart implies a hierarchy or priority order that is not intended.
- The chart does not make it clear that GIS contributes to the whole enterprise (service delivery, portfolio, architecture…).
- There needs to be an explicit recognition that GIS IT is not limited just to State agencies and that it supports and interacts with a much larger GIS community (federal, local, academic, non-profit, private…).
- The 2009 report, *A Program for Transformed GIS in the State of Minnesota: program design and implementation plan,* concluded that the CGIO should be a member of the executive team, and that is not shown.
- The chart boxes appear to mix programs and functional areas.
- The MnGeo vision and mission will be more important in determining State GIS IT success than exactly where it is on an organization chart.

Buse noted that he had heard similar concerns and questions from the IT security community. The chart will continue to evolve in response to this feedback.

**IT Consolidation Schedule**: Valencia said that the full transfer of MnGeo from the Department of Administration to OET would happen July 1, 2012 or sooner if all the pieces fall into place. Legislation requires MnGeo to move by June 30, 2013. GIS transformation will occur at the same time as the rest of State IT consolidation and will be part of that effort. OET sees agencies' GIS functions being under the agency CIO. There are four significant State IT consolidation deadlines in statute:

1. Agency CIOs report to State CIO Parnell *(completed)*
2. All State IT report to OET *(completed)*

3. Service Level Agreements executed for IT services between OET and every agency *(in-progress)*
4. MnGeo transfer from Administration to OET *(planned)*

Arbeit added that agency CIOs (including council members Paulson and Fetter) are being kept informed of planning and other consolidation activities, including the governance discussions, during weekly CIO meetings and may be able to answer member questions. It is also his hope that the new CGIO would be hired soon enough to actively participate in the next phase (Phase 3) of State IT Consolidation planning. Valencia stated that OET's goal is to have the new CGIO on-board by the end of the quarter and sooner if possible.

**Communication**: Buse asked about venues that could be used to communicate with the broad Minnesota GIS community and partners. Members mentioned:

- The Mn GIS/LIS Consortium, which reaches a significant portion of the Minnesota GIS community and communicates with its members using e-announcements, newsletter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Dolbow mentioned that he and Loesch had posted messages on the Consortium's Facebook and LinkedIn pages (respectively) asking for feedback on the State CGIO position.
- The Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council
- The Minnesota Counties GIS Association

This question is a microcosm of communication challenges for many organizations: how does OET communicate beyond state agency IT to make sure that state agency GIS staff who may not be classed as IT are included, and then on to the wider community outside state agencies?

Dolbow emphasized the important role of social media. It's also important to communicate even when "nothing yet" is happening, so that people know what's going on and feel they are being kept informed.

Kotz noted that communications are getting increasingly fragmented, and that there can be too many channels, none of which reach enough of the community. The Geospatial Commons has the potential of widening and coordinating communication among the community of people interested in Minnesota GIS. The Consortium's communications to all members (not just the subset on Facebook and LinkedIn) follow a somewhat limited model, and could use more feedback (web 2.0) mechanisms.

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**Agency Projects, Needs, Issues and Other Business**

Arbeit asked if members had any other business and reminded the Council that the next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, March 13. There was no additional discussion or business.

Meeting adjourned. Meeting minutes by Nancy Rader and Fred Logman.