

# MnGeo State Government Geospatial Advisory Council

## May 22, 2012

### Meeting Minutes

#### **Participating**

**Members:** Mike Dolbow, Agriculture; Scott Freburg, Education (for Craig Rhombs); Kath Hoglund, Human Services (for Mary Emerson); Jennifer Johnson, Corrections; Tim Loesch, Natural Resources; Sean Mangan, Public Safety; Dan Ross (Chair), MnGeo; Tad Schindler, Pollution Control; Paul Weinberger, Transportation; Diane Wells, Commerce (for Greg Fetter).

**Non-members:** Chris Buse, MN.IT; Chris Cialek, MnGeo; Dan Falbo, Esri; Brad Henry, University of Minnesota; John Hoshal, MnGeo; Fred Logman, MnGeo; Carolyn Parnell, MN.IT; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Ron Wencil, USGS.

Ross called the meeting to order. He is the State's new Chief Geospatial Information Officer and director of MnGeo and now chairs this advisory council. Participants introduced themselves. There were no changes to the [agenda](#). Updated minutes for the [March 13, 2012 meeting](#) were accepted as distributed at the meeting.

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#### **MnGeo Activity Portfolio:** [slides](#)

Ross, Cialek, Logman and Hoshal presented an overview of MnGeo's 2011 and 2012 activity portfolio and funding model. This information will help set the stage for developing a new service model that better meets the community's needs.

The overview was organized by eight main activity areas within the following three general areas: Geospatial Coordination, Technical Infrastructure, and Technical Support. Activities have reflected the priorities established for MnGeo when it was created in 2009 (see slide 55).

In 2011, a quarter of MnGeo's FTE time was spent on coordination, outreach and communication; nearly a quarter on data coordination; and almost half on project support. In 2012, project support resources declined, so more emphasis was placed on data coordination. Year-to-year changes reflect a funding model that has a relatively constant appropriation from the state's General Fund but widely fluctuating funding from grants and contracts. Most of MnGeo's projects are supported by a mixture of funding sources and involve other partnering organizations.

See the [slides](#) for details about a number of MnGeo's recent projects.

Over the coming months, MnGeo will be developing a new services and resources model, improving outreach and communication, and will focus on three or four priority activities.

Ross also emphasized that the role of the two geospatial advisory councils will shift from information exchange to providing advice.

Main questions asked and points made during the discussion:

## Strategic Planning

- What is the vision for MnGeo and the state geospatial enterprise and how do we achieve it?
  - Need to formulate a strategic plan.
  - Do we have a set of criteria for decision-making and priority-setting? Not yet, we need input first.
  - Are the eight main activity areas still the correct ones to pursue? Categories still seem right, and they were determined fairly recently (2009) so do not need to revisit, although may need to rethink some of the data and technical coordination areas now that State IT is consolidating.
  - Our initial priorities come from the Legislature. For example, the Legislature's priority on water quality has supported LiDAR acquisition and directs that we need to coordinate tabular data about water.
  - Develop a service model for state as a whole, not just MnGeo. This could be a challenge since agencies have different needs.
  - Define services in layperson's terms. The "core security services taxonomy" does that for the IT security area.
  - MnGeo will create a new project portfolio which will provide a list of clients, deliverables, and who benefitted from each project.
  - MnGeo plans to produce an annual report as one way to communicate priorities and main achievements.

## Data and Technical Coordination

- What are the arguments to keep many things as they are in agency silos versus to better coordinate?
  - A three-part "federated service model" could be appropriate:
    1. A single Commons
    2. A shared backend using the GDRS (DNR's Geospatial Data Resource Site) to provide peer-to-peer sharing
    3. Agency-specific activities
  - Different stakeholders have different technical requirements and constraints and domain expertise.
  - Although everybody has their own needs, what do we really need as a community? We probably can agree on "what" but not necessarily on the priorities.
- Do any of the data layers follow a "Master Data Model" specifying entities, relationships, etc. as is used in other areas of IT? Not specifically, however, we follow many applicable federal standards.
- Data coordination could be helped by using the DNR's GDRS (geospatial data resource sites). Should we have one GDRS for the state?
- The technical coordination role is very important for figuring out how data gets from a steward to the end user through services, cloud hosting, and other approaches.
- [NEIEN](#) (National Environmental Information Exchange Network) is becoming an important mechanism for exchanging data of all types, not just water information, for example, criminal justice data. NEIEN is endorsed by NASCIO, the National Association of State CIOs.
- GIS issues have had a forum for a long time, whereas other non-GIS data needs have had no forum, e.g., maintaining lists of companies.

## **Funding**

- The current funding model, with its reliance on fluctuating soft money, makes it difficult to plan ahead and focus on priorities. We need a strategic plan to set the state's highest priorities and have a funding model that allows us to best match our efforts to these priorities. For example, it would be very beneficial to have a consistent on-going program for acquiring air photos.
- MnGeo has pursued grants for projects that needed doing, for example, making the Minnesota's original land survey plat maps and field notes available in digital form. No agency had a mandate to do this, so MnGeo and partners sought and obtained funding to complete this large and complex project.

In the next three months, Ross plans to meet with each council member at their agency to discuss priorities for MnGeo and the larger state geospatial enterprise. These visits will replace the July meeting of this council.

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## **Governor's Commendation**

The deadline for nominations for a [Governor's Geospatial Commendation award](#) is June 29, 2012.

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

Written updates were provided on the [spring orthoimagery](#) and [LiDAR projects](#).

There was no additional discussion or business.

## **Future Meetings:**

- The July Council meeting was cancelled to allow time for Dan Ross to meet with each council member at their agency.
- The next scheduled Council meeting is Tuesday, September 11, 2012 [*later rescheduled to Wednesday, September 26*].

Meeting adjourned. Meeting minutes by Nancy Rader.