MnGeo Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council

May 30, 2012 Meeting Minutes

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

Attendees

Members: Brad Anderson, City of Moorhead; Will Craig, University of Minnesota; Craig Erickson, Minnesota National Guard; Rick Gelbmann, Metropolitan Council; Jon Gustafson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Blaine Hackett, Flat Rock Geographics; Doug Hansen, Crow Wing County; Justin Hansen, WSB & Associates (for John Mackiewicz); Stephen Misterek, City of Minneapolis; Mark Olsen, Pollution Control Agency; Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County; Ben Richason, St. Cloud State University; Dan Ross, MnGeo; Kirk Schneidawind, MN School Boards Association; Terry Schneider, MetroGIS; Gerry Sjerven, Natural Resources Research Institute; Steve Swazee, SharedGeo; Kody Thurnau, ARDC; Michelle Trager, Rice County; Sally Wakefield, Envision Minnesota.

Non-Members: David Arbeit; Chris Buse, MN.IT; Chris Cialek, MnGeo; Brad Henry, University of Minnesota; John Hoshal, MnGeo; Matthew Hyde, Macalester College; Mark Kotz, Metropolitan Council; Tim Loesch, Dept. of Natural Resources; Fred Logman, MnGeo; Carolyn Parnell, MN.IT; Nancy Rader, MnGeo; Ron Wencl, U.S. Geological Survey

Welcome and New CGIO

Victoria Reinhardt called the meeting to order. Participants introduced themselves. Reinhardt introduced Dan Ross, Minnesota's new Chief Geospatial Information Officer (CGIO); Ross has taken over from David Arbeit who retired April 10.

Minutes of February 29, 2012 Meeting

Motion to approve the February 29, 2012 council meeting minutes (Gelbmann/Craig) with one typo corrected. Motion carried.

Report – Liaison to State Government Council

Craig reported that the State Government Council's May 22 meeting agenda was very similar to today's meeting.

MnGeo 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.

Discussion highlights:

- Q: Who are MnGeo's typical clients?
  A: Primarily other state agencies, along with some federal agencies. The client list changes each year – see slides for examples. Grants often involve a match of staff time. Most projects provide broad benefits beyond the immediate client, and often involve partners, such as USGS, FGDC, FSA, counties, PCA, and MnSCU.
- Coordination with local government and other partners is of very high priority. We need to emphasize describing what problems we are solving. How do we do business/collaborate with people? We need to conduct a very basic examination of the current process of collaboration.
- Need more web services, for example in the area of LiDAR, to make information accessible to more people.
- Need more specific deliverables with a solid commitment to deadlines so that partners can set workplans, for example the Geospatial Commons project and a revised metadata editor.
- Do we still need two councils (Statewide and State Government)?
- What does the legislature need from MnGeo and the geospatial community?

State IT Governance Framework

Buse reported that the new IT Governance Framework has undergone internal review and review by the agency CIOs. It is scheduled to be in a final form by June or early July. A proposed new Geospatial Technology Committee will be empowered to make decisions. It will seek advice and input from external stakeholders, including this Statewide Council.

2012 Legislative Session

Logman reported that the proposed changes to the State's Data Practices legislation discussed at the council's previous meeting (see handout) were not passed during this legislative session. The House committee legislators felt that they didn't have a firm enough understanding of the issues and implications to vote on it before session's end; there was particular confusion on what the term "geospatial" meant in this context. Legislators were, however, open to further discussion and education on the issue of data sharing, so the proposed changes will be revisited.

Governor's Commendation

The deadline for nominations for a Governor's Geospatial Commendation award is June 29, 2012. Craig volunteered to chair a group to review the nomination(s), and Wencl, Arbeit and Wakefield agreed to be on the group.

Geospatial Data Resource Sites (GDRS) Presentation (slides)
Loesch gave an overview of the MN DNR's GDRS, a system of components that enables sharing of geospatial data across an enterprise. The GDRS approach provides consistent and predictable storage and access for file, database and web service data. An important characteristic of GDRS is that it accepts GIS users and organizations as they are, not asking them to change how they store or provide data.

Version 1 of the GDRS was managed centrally and data was replicated out to remote sites. With the new version 2, the approach is peer-to-peer sharing. Remote sites can choose to "pull" data in rather than have it "pushed" out to them and can create scheduled tasks to automatically look for updates. Remote sites now include not just DNR locations but also other agencies, including MN Depts of Agriculture, Human Services, and Transportation. A public GDRS is also becoming available.

Loesch then gave a demo of how GDRS underlies the use of DNR's "Quick Layers" (which provides quick access to presymbolized data layers and services in ArcGIS) and of their LandView application. GDRS also promises to contribute important functionality to the Geospatial Commons project, an effort to create one main location where people can find and share geospatial resources in Minnesota.

DNR staff will give a GDRS workshop at the October MN GIS/LIS conference.

Hot Topics

- **Unmanned drones**: Swazee provided a short presentation which described the greatly increasing use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and the need to establish guidelines for their use.
- See the Emergency Preparedness Committee's EPC Blog for other hot topics.

Information Items and Announcements

- Spring aerial imagery program update: see handout.
- LiDAR project update: see handout.
- **Remaining 2012 Statewide Council Meetings:** August 29 *[later rescheduled to September 5],* November 28
- Next State Government Council meeting will be September 11, 2012 *[later rescheduled to September 26].* The July 10 meeting has been cancelled; instead, Dan Ross will be meeting individually with council members.

Meeting Adjourned. Notes by Nancy Rader.