

**Washington Geographic Information Council**

June 12-13, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Ellensburg Quality Inn

1700 Canyon Road

Ellensburg, Washington

**Attendees Present:**

Steve Rush, Outgoing Chair, Hanford

Michelle Blake, DOT

Kerry Brooks, WSU

Michelle Dailey, Columbia Gorge Commission

Matthieu Denuelle, ESRI

David Gadsden, ESRI

Tami Griffin, DOT

Tracy Guerin, DIS

Ron Holeman, DNR

Allyson Jason, USGS

David Jennings, DOH

Allen Jakobitz, EMD

Jeremy Kulm, Border Patrol/WANG

Mike McGuire, Accent GIS

Joy Paulus, DIS

Luke Rogers, UW

Dan Saul, ECY

Cy Smith, Oregon DAS IRMD

Megan Smith, Grant County

George Spencer, DOT

Scott Van Hoff, USGS

Ian Von Essen, Incoming Chair, Spokane County

Ann Zald, UW

**Department of Information Services, Information Services Board, and Geographic Information Technology Committee Overview**

Tracy Guerin, Department of Information Services (DIS), shared with the Council that Washington was one of three states to receive an A- for creating and sharing information from *Grading the States 2008: Pew's 50-State Report Card Evaluates How States Manage Public Resources*. The Pew Report stated, "No state in the nation is better at developing and sharing information than Washington." One reason is the Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) Program, but the cornerstone is the way Washington utilizes and shares data.

Ms. Guerin explained the reporting structure of DIS, the Information Services Board (ISB), and the Geographic Information Technology (GIT) Committee. DIS is responsible for Information Technology (IT) oversight, services, and product procurement. The ISB consists of fifteen diverse members. They are responsible for IT project

oversight, policy and planning. The ISB has three Committees that report to the Board, one is GIT which was created in 2002 and currently has nine active members. The GIT was created to broaden the knowledge, opportunity, and visibility of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Ms. Guerin shared that there is an opportunity for the Washington Geographic Information Council (WAGIC) to influence policy by partnering with GIT, ISB, and DIS. While funding is the main obstacle, efforts can be coordinated to create a political realm, reach out to the local and tribal governments, and bring forward standards, ideas, policies and issues. GIT is currently looking to expand their membership to bring in more agencies (state, local, and tribal) and increase visibility.

WAGIC should look at moving from a user group to a coordination role. Ms. Guerin explained how the Enterprise Architecture Committee uses a stewardship model to increase statewide involvement with issues, policy, and standards. This strategy creates an agreement among the majority of the stakeholders due to their continuous involvement.

Another method for increasing WAGIC's visibility is to utilize articles in newsletters and other publications. DIS can Plain Talk the articles and assist with distributing it to agencies, organizations, and business people.

Ms. Guerin advised the Council to identify some of the current state level issues that GIS can address. Then gain visibility for WAGIC by influencing policy and decisions around those issues at the state and local levels.

**Oregon's Geographic Information Council and Geospatial Enterprise Office**

Cy Smith, Oregon GIS Coordinator, provided an overview of Oregon's GIS Program. Oregon has a Geospatial Enterprise Office along with a Geographic Information Council. For the 2007-09 Biennium Budget, they spent \$500,000 on data development. Ten percent of the combined state, city, and county budgets are for GIS.

Mr. Smith confirmed that decisions are made on the best available data, but often times the data is inadequate or outdated. Three main issues that GIS can or has supported in Oregon are

assisting emergency services with accurate response, coordinating foster children guardianship changes to maintain school attendance, and eliminating salmon migration barriers.

Oregon has fourteen Framework Data Initiative Committees that are responsible for the implementation plan and standards for each theme. Oregon faces the same challenges as Washington in determining how to manage a shared resource across federal, state, and local jurisdictions. There are no mechanisms for showing integrated packages and no financing for ongoing maintenance of integrated projects.

### **WAGIC Opportunities and Gaps**

WAGIC conducted a brainstorming session on current GIS issues; which included:

- lack of accurate boundary layers and the impact on transportation and parcels
- consistent imagery across boundaries on an annual basis
  - security issues (Homeland Security)
  - response issues (Emergency Management)
  - wildfire management issues (Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, and Washington State Patrol)
- elevation and parcels
  - stream control
  - land cover, biodiversity assessments
  - flood control
  - water resource management
  - emergency service response
- climate change – carbon trading
- integrating hydrography and road data with British Columbia for Olympics security, evacuation, and traffic impact
- establishing data stewards or regional centers
  - collection and distribution of funds across multiple state, local, and tribal agencies
  - educating decision makers

- social needs
  - sex offender mapping with relation to schools and parks
  - foster care resource management
  - animal and human disease outbreak control

The Council agreed that the strain of current members' cross participation and overlap of resources between WAGIC and GIT has caused a lack of strong leadership in the workgroups.

### **WAGIC Vision and Next Steps**

The Council agreed that WAGIC is in a transition phase. WAGIC should identify the needs of the GIS community, organize efforts around GIS, and recommend solutions to GIT and ISB.

The Council recommended that a representative from WAGIC attend the GMAP sessions to hear what the topics are across the state. The representative would report back to the Council to discuss if and where GIS can assist. At that time, the Council would coordinate a solution or recommendation to present to the GIT Committee.

In preparation for the coming year, WAGIC will begin planning for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) grant proposals. The Fifty States Initiative will require GIT and ISB support and participation and needs to be presented to GIT before moving forward.

To increase awareness of WAGIC's activities in the business community and private sector more communication is needed, such as the articles and newsletters mentioned earlier by Ms. Guerin. Those communications should be distributed on a regular basis.

### **Charter Review**

The Council reviewed the Charter to see what areas have been successful, and what areas need improvement.

Goal 1: Take an active leadership role to advise decision makers about the use and availability of geospatial information.

WAGIC members advise their respective agency decision makers, but there is a disconnect outside of the core agencies on the Council.

Goal 2: Initiate activities to identify geospatial

information needs.

WAGIC is successful in this area.

Goal 3: Actively sponsor the exchange of educational information about the geospatial information infrastructure.

WAGIC is successful in this area.

Goal 4: Ensure the development of consistent policies, standards, and guidelines for geospatial information.

WAGIC has no direct authority, however they can assist with the development of standards through GIT and ISB.

Goal 5: Assist the establishment of geospatial information partnerships.

The Framework projects are a great example of WAGIC's success in this area.

Goal 6: Maintain a leadership role to promote geospatial information sharing.

WAGIC is successful in this area.

Joy Paulus, DIS, advised the Council that her position is dedicated to strictly GIS activities through GIT, WAGIC, and regional and/or association attendance. The Council asked Ms. Paulus to provide copies of the presentations, articles, newsletters, etc., that are created and distributed around GIS issues. If the Council is aware of GIS needs across the state, their ability to assist with outreach efforts would increase. When ISB and GIT minutes, presentations, and briefing papers are posted to the website, Ms. Paulus will forward the link to the WAGIC members and staff.

The Council will look at creating task orientated work groups with stewards that would report to the Council. Gathering information and analyzing new developments in GIS needs to be revitalized. The different layers can have work groups to formulate standards, assemble information, maintain and archive data, etc. The work groups would assist with fostering connections between state, regional, district, county, and city agencies and organizations.

**Fifty States Initiative**

Allison Jason and Scott Van Hoff, USGS, presented information on the Fifty States

Initiative. The Fifty States Initiative is a partnership between the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) and the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to essentially develop Strategic Plans and Business Plans for each state, bring public and private sectors together, coordinate efforts across all levels of government, and establish a direct point of authority in each state. It will establish a plan for moving forward to ensure federal funds are used to support statewide projects. It will coordinate local and state governments to communicate needs to a central point, help match needs to resources, establish a project priority matrix in obtaining funding through grants, and provide technical assistance and grant writing assistance for projects.

\$50,000 in grant funding is available through FGDC for the Initiative to assist states in completing the planning process and create the framework for a statewide GIS program.

The Strategic Plan and Business Plan created by the states should be aimed at presenting a business case that identifies the what, when, why. Plans can be for a comprehensive goal or initiative or to clarify a component of an initiative. The Plans should assist in implementing long term goals, detail programmatic goals, identify risks, develop strategies for overcoming the risks, and provide a process for feedback.

There are multiple requirements that need to be met within the plans. The requirements along with templates and instructions are available on the NSGIC website.

### **Closing and Adjourn**

Action item and issue lists will be compiled, prioritized, and distributed to members. The meeting was adjourned.