

# **Federal Geographic Data Committee Initial 2013 Guidance to the National Geospatial Advisory Committee**

**March 2013**

This paper provides initial guidance to the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) from the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and identifies specific issues on which the FGDC requests advice and recommendations from the NGAC during 2013. This guidance is the charge to the NGAC from the FGDC and the Department of the Interior.

The NGAC is an important component for ensuring the success of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and achieving the goals of the FGDC and the Administration. This set of issues for review and consideration by the NGAC has been identified through coordination with the FGDC Steering Committee, Department of the Interior leadership, and the NGAC membership. The goal in providing this guidance is to establish a general framework that will allow the NGAC to focus its efforts on high priority issues related to the leadership and management of Federal and national geospatial programs, and provide the NGAC with the flexibility to organize, prioritize, and refine the tasks it is being called upon to address.

Given the restrictions on travel and large meetings under the current Federal budget sequester, we have prioritized a set of initial issues for the NGAC to address during this year. Because the Committee will not be able to meet in person as planned in April, we have identified an initial set of issues that the committee can discuss and begin to address during the NGAC web-based meeting now planned for April 3, 2013. We are hopeful that the Committee will be able to meet in person as planned for later this year and discuss and address additional issues.

Key issues for initial NGAC review during 2013 are as follows:

## **NSDI Strategic Plan**

The FGDC has initiated a process to update the strategic plan for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The FGDC agencies will work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders in the geospatial community to develop an updated strategy that includes a set of goals and objectives for the Federal government's role in the continued and sustainable development of the NSDI. An updated NSDI plan is important and timely for several reasons. First, while the FGDC has engaged in a series of strategic initiatives over the past several years, including the Geospatial Line of Business and Geospatial Platform initiatives, the current NSDI strategic plan has not been revised for a number of years. Second, geospatial technologies, industries, and applications have seen tremendous growth and change over the past several years, and our strategies need to be modernized to align with and leverage these changes. In addition, the recent report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), "OMB and Agencies Need to Make Coordination a Priority to Reduce Duplication" (GAO-13-94), reaffirmed the importance of improving coordination and reducing potential duplication and recommended the development of an updated NSDI strategy.

The NGAC, and the organizations represented by the members of the NGAC, will play a key role in providing input and feedback on the plan as it is developed. We anticipate that participation in the

development of the NSDI plan will be the primary activity for the NGAC this year. Initial topics for NGAC input on the plan include the following:

- Provide input to review, validate, and provide perspectives to help develop a shared vision of the NSDI.
- Provide input to help define the current and future role of the Federal government in advancing the development of the NSDI, and provide input to help collaboratively define the roles and relationships among Federal agencies and non-Federal partners and stakeholders.
- Provide input to help define key external factors and trends in the geospatial community which will have an impact on the continued development of the NSDI.

FGDC will also ask for feedback and comment on the goals and objectives of the NSDI plan as they are developed through the planning process.

### **Geospatial Platform Implementation / Data Partnership Models**

The NGAC has provided thoughtful input and feedback that has had significant impact on shaping the development of the Geospatial Platform initiative, including comments on the *Modernization Roadmap for the Geospatial Platform*, the *Geospatial Platform Value Proposition*, and the *Geospatial Platform Business Plan*. As the Platform moves into the implementation phase, the FGDC requests continuing input and feedback from the NGAC on opportunities to facilitate interagency and intergovernmental collaboration and partnerships, including the following topics:

- Data as a Service (DAAS) Public-Private Partnerships.
  - How can public-private partnerships to provide Data as a Service work most effectively? What models or best practices would the NGAC recommend?
  - Provide advice and feedback on optimal approaches and best practices for public-private partnerships to make commercial data available for execution of government missions.
- Geospatial Platform Implementation.
  - Provide feedback on technical, administrative, and governance-related topics relevant to the Geospatial Platform as implementation progresses.

### **OMB Circular A-16 Supplemental Guidance/Portfolio Management Implementation Plan**

The NGAC has provided ongoing advice and recommendations related to the development and implementation of the OMB Circular A-16 Supplemental Guidance. The recent GAO report, “OMB and Agencies Need to Make Coordination a Priority to Reduce Duplication” (GAO-13-94), recommended that the FGDC “establish a time frame for completing a plan to facilitate the implementation of OMB’s portfolio management guidance, and develop and implement the plan within the established time frame.” The FGDC requests continuing input from the NGAC on this process, including the following:

- Provide feedback and comment on the A-16/portfolio management plan as it is developed.

### **Landsat**

The NGAC Landsat Advisory Group (LAG) will provide advice to the Federal Government, through the NGAC, on the requirements, objectives and actions of the Landsat Program as they apply to ongoing delivery of societal benefits for the Nation and the global Earth observation community. The LAG is requested to provide advice and recommendations on Landsat-related issues for consideration by the NGAC, including the following:

- Through collaboration with the Landsat Science Team, potential new applications of Landsat imagery and data to benefit land and water managers, governmental planners and land use officials, and any others.
- Current and future Landsat data and information product characteristics, including potential means of modifying the current products to make them more useful to commercial value-added information providers.
- Potential new approaches to data management and distribution (e.g., possible means to “bring algorithms to the data”, rather than to “bring the data to algorithms”; and use of “the cloud” and other new technology developments).
- A dialogue with industry on future development of new terrestrial Climate Data Records (CDRs)
- Review and comment on the National Research Council report on implementing a sustained Land Imaging Program.
- Recommendations on partnership opportunities with existing foreign or commercial missions to maintain and augment DOI/USGS land imaging capability.

### **Future Issues**

The issues identified above reflect the initial priorities for the NGAC for 2013. However, as indicated above, these issues may be augmented over time. Other potential issues for the NGAC to address include the following:

- Geolocation Privacy
- National Address Database
- National 3D Elevation Program
- National Parcel Data
- Transportation for the Nation

The FGDC looks forward to an ongoing dialogue with the NGAC membership to refine these issues and develop a Plan of Action to address these topics, including the establishment of subcommittees or work groups. The FGDC will continue to coordinate with the NGAC Chair, Vice Chair, and membership on the planning and implementation of the NGAC’s activities.