

**NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program
Institution Building and Coordination Project**

**Agreement Number 04HQAG0179
Final Report**

**Wisconsin Department of Administration
Division of Enterprise Technology**

January 18, 2007

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In writing the report keep in mind the goals of your project under this category: the development of new or strengthening of existing multi-organizational collaboration that supports the development and maintenance of shared digital geographic resources, and to foster the establishment of cross-organizational coordinating councils that develop and advance the NSDI within a specific geographic area.

Project Narrative:

Over the past 15 years, development and coordination of geospatial data and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) across Wisconsin state agencies has been an informal activity. Wisconsin's spatial data governance and GIS infrastructure needs to be formalized. Significant long-standing investments in GIS have been made in the Departments of Transportation and Natural Resources. Other agencies are emerging as major users of GIS, and some receive federal funds to build GIS systems.

Many GIS activities require statewide coordination to be effective and efficient: geospatial data infrastructure, geospatial data standards, federal GIS initiatives, federal grants, homeland security, applications development, partnerships among state and local agencies, and data delivery to the public.

On Tuesday May 17, 2005 at the Pyle Center on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, a full-day workshop was conducted to build the case to Wisconsin state agency managers and staff for better GIS coordination. It presented some of the business demands driving the need for improved GIS coordination. The workshop featured several speakers from outside Wisconsin: Zsolt Nagy, North Carolina Center for Geographic Information and Analysis; Chris Kannan, North Carolina National Spatial Data Infrastructure Partnership Office; and Eric Swanson, Michigan Center for Geographic Information. These speakers related experiences in their states where GIS coordination has been implemented successfully and with beneficial results.

The workshop served to educate and network an expanding community; identify next steps; and obtain volunteers to work on next steps. Workshop presentations and results are posted at the public website, <http://enterprise.state.wi.us/home/tlc/GIS/home.htm> or directly at <http://enterprise.state.wi.us/home/tlc/GIS/wk050517.htm>.

NSDI Workshop attendance:

- 8 Counties represented
- 2 Cities
- 2 Regional Planning Commissions
- 8 Private sector
- 15 University
- 1 School District
- 3 Feds
- 17 State Agencies

Approximately 120 people attended in-person. The day was also webcast live via Mediasite Live.

Project Activities:

Include its accomplishments, successes strengths and weaknesses, further challenges, and collaboration activities.

- ***State of regional coordination, how has it changed as a result of this project***

The community has been energized and because of the national stature of the speakers, has placed geospatial information coordination on the radar screen. Other entities in the state will make FGDC proposals to move coordination forward. The community has been activated.

Since this meeting Wisconsin has received 2 subsequent grants to continue coordination efforts using NSGIC and FGDC guidelines. A strategic plan has developed and a Statewide Coordination Council is being formed. Also, the State has hired a Geographic

Information Officer (GIO) for the first time to guide coordination efforts across the State. There has been a renewed emphasis on the use of GIS for emergency management needs.

- ***Regional scope, the types and applications of data covered by this project***

This workshop primarily focused on needs of state agencies. Applications were discussed from the areas of emergency management, public health, transportation, and natural resources.

Issues discussed included business drivers, geospatial content standards and web interoperability standards, custodianship, data delivery, a GIS Service Center, and next steps.

- ***What are the best practices that lead to success, and practices you have found that do not work.***

Statewide GIS coordination practices which have lead to success include funding land information initiatives through levying statewide uniform real estate transaction fee; the existence of a professional organization Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) and multiple user groups (Geographic Information & Technology Association, ESRI Wisconsin User Group, Public Safety GIS users); provision of regular annual and quarterly professional meetings around the state; preparation of annual state agency land information Integration plans; preparation and peer review of five year county land records plans; completion of an annual web based survey by county coordinators; a technical list server; establishment and ongoing maintenance of a registered NSDI clearinghouse node, with attendant CSDGM metadata workshops. Enterprise licensing could make more tools accessible.

Utilizing the 50 States Initiative model for State Coordination has been useful in Wisconsin. It has provided a clearly defined set of goals to be pursued.

Practices that have not fostered building NSDI in Wisconsin include inconsistent and poorly timed funding models and excessively priced proprietary data sets.

- ***Describe how the collaboration is governing.***

Wisconsin Land Information Board and Wisconsin Land Council were abolished September 2005. The Wisconsin GIO is leading the development of a broad-based coordination council for the state. Once established, the council will provide significant, broad-based guidance for GIS activities in the State.

Next Steps

- ***Will this project's activities continue in the future***

The following the meeting the state renewed it effort to establish GIS coordination in the state. Since this meeting Wisconsin has received 2 subsequent grants to continue coordination efforts using NSGIC and FGDC guidelines. A strategic plan has developed and a Statewide Coordination Council is being formed. Also, the State has hired a Geographic Information Officer (GIO) for the first time to guide coordination efforts across the State. There has been a renewed emphasis on the use of GIS for emergency management needs.

- ***Describe the next phase in your project***

Implementation of the State Strategic Plan will be the next phase. This includes the development of the coordination council, development of a statewide data framework, provision of GIS services, establishment of an appropriate funding model and providing GIS education and awareness.

- ***Requirements (more technical assistance, software, other?)***

The State, under the direction of the Chief Information Officer, is consolidating servers. This affords an opportunity to provide technical assistance across the agencies and for the counties and municipalities if some geospatial information technical specialists are brought together and then leveraged for this purpose.

A greater array of licenses i.e. software products could be provided under statewide or site licensing agreements. The software tools available could provide part of the infrastructure for a One Stop for Wisconsin.

Continued support from FGDC in terms of best practices models and grant funding for coordination efforts and tools.

- ***What areas need work?***

Governance, areas of responsibilities at the state and local levels, geospatial standards, web based interoperability, data sharing arrangements. Development of mutual understanding across different levels of government is needed.

Feedback on Cooperative Agreements Program

- ***What are the program strengths and weaknesses?***

Wisconsin has benefited tremendously from the FGDC CAP grants program. The establishment of a registered NSDI Clearinghouse Node (Wisclinc), two cycles of metadata training grants, and a grant to link web mapping services to metadata, in addition to this grant cycle, have all leveraged additional resources to grow the GIS community.

Where does the program make a difference?

It has been a catalyst for coordination activities. In fact, a presentation on CAP grants at this workshop has led to four new groups writing grant proposals for 2005.

Promotion of the 50 States Initiative model for State Coordination has been useful in Wisconsin. It has provided a clearly defined set of goals to be pursued and resources to begin the pursuit of those goals.

- ***Was the assistance you received sufficient or effective?***

Yes. The September kickoff meeting was helpful as an overview to federal initiatives, where other states are, and to network with federal and other state staff.

- ***What would you recommend doing differently?***

Check-in with Federal reps once a month. Have listserv or facilitated discussion group with other grant members to keep in touch.

- ***Are there factors that are missing or need to consider that were missed?***

None at this time.

- ***Are there program management concerns that need to be addressed? Time frame?***

None at this time.

- ***If you were to do this again, what would you do differently?***

Plan sooner, to involve additional constituencies.