

Interim Report

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Project title: Iowa Metadata Outreach Project - Interim report

Organization: Iowa Geographic Information Council, <http://www.iowagic.org/>

Principal Investigator: James D. Giglierano, Iowa DNR,
james.giglierano@dnr.iowa.gov<<mailto:james.giglierano@dnr.iowa.gov>>

Collaborating Organizations: Iowa Counties Information Technology Association, the State of Iowa CIO Council, the Iowa-Cedar Watershed Technical Team, the Iowa State University GIS Support and Research Facility, and the USGS Geospatial Liaison Office for Iowa

Summary: The Iowa Metadata Outreach Project (IMOP) will provide organizations within the state of Iowa with metadata training, assistance, and management support. The expected outcome of IMOP is to establish within other state and local agencies a sustained culture of metadata knowledge and usage, the ability to inventory and document data at an institutional level, and to encourage and facilitate data sharing and full participation in the Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure (IGI), which is Iowa's contribution to the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. IMOP will provide metadata workshops and ongoing support to organizations within Iowa that directly supply framework data layers to the IGI, especially state agencies and county GIS departments. Additional metadata workshops will provide training to the general GIS community. A key component of IMOP is to provide ongoing support after the workshops for agencies to maintain their metadata on the Iowa Geospatial Data Clearinghouse as well as on various geospatial data repositories within the state.

Narrative:

PI report - Due to severe budget cuts last spring in the PI's agency, we had to postpone hiring the project's Metadata Outreach Coordinator until the fall. In October, Amy Logan (amylogan@mail.iastate.edu) of Ames, Iowa was hired to fill this position, which is administrated by the Iowa State University GIS Facility, Kevin Kane director. Funding for the position comes from two sources, this FGDC grant and state funds for a GIS service bureau. The Iowa GIS Service Bureau was inaugurated in July with the hiring of a GIS analyst, Evan Koester, to work with state agencies on a GIS needs inventory. Together these two positions will work on creating and collecting GIS data and metadata from state agencies. Amy will also work with county, federal, watershed groups and the general GIS community in her metadata workshops over the next 6-8 months. All metadata collected will become available on the Iowa Geospatial Data Clearinghouse. Joshua Obrecht, Patrick Wilke-Brown and Casey Kohrt are in the process of updating the Clearinghouse software to use ESRI Geoportal Server 1.1.1., and importing all of Iowa DNR's existing metadata records into the new server, as a test.

Because of our late start, a 6 month extension until November 30, 2012 will be needed. Even with the budget cuts last spring, we have managed to apply for continued state funding for the two service bureau positions, and are reasonably confident that this work will continue an additional two years, including additional metadata training for state and local agencies in 2013 and 2014. The service bureau, clearinghouse and metadata efforts are all part of our larger effort to develop the Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure, conceived with a 2007 FGDC 50 States CAP grant, which was absolutely critical to our progress to this date.

Metadata Coordinator Report - This interim report will provide information from the project's mid-October start date to the present. While our project is behind the timeline proposed in the initial grant application we have been making steady progress. In the first two months of this project we have focused our efforts in three areas: a state inventory of GIS resources and associated metadata; outreach; and metadata service.

A primary goal of the state inventory of GIS resources is to understand the status of current metadata practices as well as general GIS use across the state. The inventory is two-fold. One aspect of the inventory looks broadly at GIS human resources, such as professionals and agencies using GIS around the state. This inventory provides basic contact information for a number of groups in the state including: GIS contacts at federal, state, county, and city levels, post-secondary education facilities, RC&D offices, council of government offices, and some private sector GIS users. The other aspect of the inventory focuses on the public GIS files and associated metadata that are available for download from major GIS providers within the state. We plan to use these inventories to help market the metadata training sessions to groups with existing data holdings (and no metadata currently).

Another area that has been emphasized in the initial months of the project has been outreach. Thus far there have been two specific outreach activities. First, an initial press release was posted on the Iowa Geographic Information Council website, which provided a public announcement to highlight the purposes and goals of this project. This generated positive feedback from parties interested in learning more about metadata creation and implementation. We were able to provide these parties with metadata reading materials and information about upcoming metadata trainings.

Iowa GIS Contact Inventory Link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ccc?key=0AvltxSagt5SfdGJVQWxmSEpYVUN4RGNCa1FpN2tjSIE>

A second form of outreach has been visiting GIS user groups around the state to promote the project and inform users of upcoming training events. These visits have also provided additional insight as to the progress of metadata creation across Iowa and the types of projects that users are involved in. Another outcome of this outreach is that we are finding ways to collaborate and support these users.

The final focus of our efforts thus far has been on developing and preparing a data discovery tool (geoportal) to serve out the metadata records and point users to the locations of Iowa's various GIS resources. The geoportal is still in a development and testing phase. This tool provides additional incentive for the metadata trainers and users to create quality metadata because the tool will only be as strong as the metadata that is created.

Next Steps:

As we look to 2012, we anticipate having four metadata training workshops targeting the following groups: 1) state agencies; 2) county agencies; 3) watershed groups; and 4) general users. We are planning to hold two meetings in March and two meetings in the early summer. We are currently working to revise our metadata training materials in preparation for these trainings.

This metadata outreach project is interwoven within a larger state organization, the Iowa GIS Service Bureau (IGSB). As such it is our hope that an emphasis on metadata creation and updating will continue to be a part of this organization and that the IGSB will provide these trainings and information long after this grant performance period has ended.