



## Discussion Paper – Managing Partner Options for the Geospatial Platform

### ISSUE SUMMARY

The Geospatial Platform, a service oriented geospatial initiative described in the President’s FY 2011 budget, must determine the most effective Managing Partner organization to oversee the Platform’s activities. The Managing Partner is envisioned as the broker and manager of the Partner Network that provides data, services, applications and infrastructure for customers and will provide the primary interface to customers. This paper provides background considerations for a permanent Managing Partner organization.

### DISCUSSION TOPICS

- What are the core operational functions required for a successful Managing Partner function?
- Are there innovative organizational options that should be considered when developing the model for the Managing Partner organization?
- Are there essential criteria that must be factored into the decision on the Managing Partner organization?

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### BACKGROUND

#### Current Status – Interim Managing Partner Structure

Through the end of Time Box 2 (December 31, 2010), as described in Section 6 Roadmap Implementation, the Managing Partner role will be met in the following way:

- The Department of the Interior (DOI) will serve as the interim Managing Partner organization.
- The Chair of the FGDC (or designee) will serve as interim Executive Sponsor of the Geospatial Platform.
- An interim Project Manager will be donated by one of the Federal agencies.
- The FGDC Secretariat and Federal member agencies will provide interim staff support to the Geospatial Platform.

#### Roles and Responsibilities for Consideration

A Geospatial Platform Managing Partner will coordinate the Platform’s activities and provide core operational capabilities and competencies needed to oversee the Platform offering. The attached paper ‘Evaluation of Key Governance Structure Strategies in Developing Managing Partner, Interagency and Intergovernmental Initiatives’ provides a much more detailed discussion of Managing Partner Roles and Responsibilities in Table 3. A summarized list of core functions required for managing the Geospatial Platform will include:

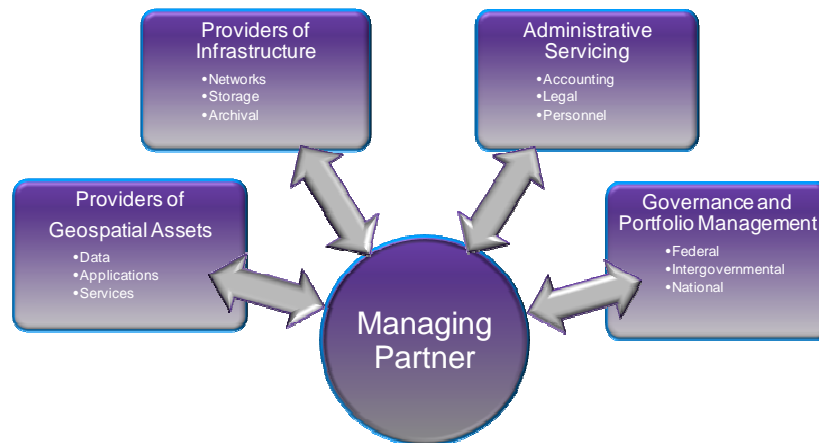
- Project Sponsor / Executive Champion
- Project Stakeholders / Board of Directors



- Project Manager
- Budget / Contract / Grants / Interagency Agreements Manager

Additional capabilities to be included as part of the Managing Partner organization, or leveraged through other mechanisms include:

- Information Technology Support (hardware, software, network, communications, security)
- Subject Matter Expertise (geospatial, database, application development, standards, etc.)
- Communications / Outreach / Marketing Support
- Performance Management / Evaluation Support
- Interagency Coordination / Partnership Building
- General Counsel Support
- Human Resources Support



### Criteria for Managing Partner Selection

A process for selection and oversight of the longer-term Managing Partner will be developed in consultation with OMB and the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) member agencies and affiliated partners. Initial criteria for a successful Managing Partner organization and individual(s) should include:

- Strong leadership skills and comprehensive understanding of the issues and partners
- Ability to negotiate and manage formal partner relationships (e.g. contractual agreements, service level agreements, etc.)
- Capability to conduct geospatial requirements analyses
- Credibility with the geospatial stakeholder community
- Portfolio management capabilities, including operational management experience
- Customer relationship management capabilities



## **Potential Organizational Approaches to Consider**

There are a range of organizational options to be considered for the Managing Partner. A Federal government agency will be required to assume a leadership role in the Managing Partner organization given the inherently governmental nature of certain functions of the Platform. A tiered approach, utilizing the skills and contributions of multiple members of the national geospatial community may prove to be the most viable long-term solution. The analysis of strengths and weaknesses of a tiered model is required, as is the development of a clearly defined operational governance model for the Managing Partner.

- **Tier A – Federal Government Lead [Inherently Governmental Functions]**
  - Single federal agency lead (existing agency or new)
  - Multiple federal agencies in collaboration
  
- **Tier B – Non-Federal Organizations [Leverage Supporting Capabilities]**
  - Private companies
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Other government organizations (state, regional, local, and Tribal)
  - Academia