Geospatial Data Policy: Federal Agencies and Non-Federal Advisors

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Chair, National Geospatial Advisory Committee
and
Milo Robinson
U.S. Geological Survey (Retired)
Beginnings

Efforts to standardize data, share resources and avoid duplication began more than a century ago.
Executive Order 28 in 1890

“it is desirable that uniform usage in regard to geographic nomenclature and orthography obtain throughout the Executive Departments of the Government, and particularly upon the maps and charts issued by the various departments and bureaus”
U.S. Geographic Board

Created by Executive Order 493 in 1906

- Renamed U.S. Board on Geographic Names
- Expanded mandate: avoid duplication of work and improve the standardization of maps

President Theodore Roosevelt
Board of Surveys and Maps

Created by Executive Order 3206 in 1919
Assumed responsibilities of U.S. Geographic Board
Goal: A central information office to furnish all map and survey data information within government as well as from other sources
Invite the “map using public” to meetings for “conference and advice”

President Woodrow Wilson
How did the Board of Survey and Maps get advice?

- Created an Advisory Committee
- Major focus was the need for a “Topographic Map of the U.S.”
- Held first public conference in March 1920

“..great possibilities, if we can do our work in harmony within the organizations and in full cooperation with agencies from the outside.”
Who was on the Advisory Committee?

- American Automobile Association
- American Forestry Association
- American Institute of Electrical Engineers
- Amer. Inst. of Mining & Metallurgical Engr.
- American Railway Engr. Association
- Association of State Geologists

- Engineering Council
- Geologic Society of America
- Map Publishers
- National Research Council
- Society of Automotive Engineering

Later additions:
- American Society of Photogrammetry
- Rand McNally
Advisory Committee aligned with Board’s Standing Committees

- Coordination
- Cooperation
- Technical Standards
- Topographic Maps
- Highway Maps
- General Maps
- Control
- Photographic Surveying
- Information
Board of Surveys and Maps

During the period 1920-1936, six Executive Orders were issued amending Executive Order 3206

1942 (Executive Order 9094)
- Board and Advisory Committee abolished
- Bureau of Budget assigned responsibilities

President Franklin Roosevelt
Bureau of the Budget Circular A-16

Issued originally in 1953

Describes responsibilities of Federal agencies with regard to the coordination of surveying and mapping activities

Revised and issued in 1967

President
Dwight Eisenhower

President
Lyndon Johnson
OMB Circular A-16 Updates

1970: Bureau of the Budget reorganized into Office of Management and Budget
Revised and issued in 1990 and 2002
Supplemental Guidance reissued in 2010

President
George H. W. Bush

President
George Bush

President
Barack Obama
OMB Circular A-16 Status

- A-16 remains the leading policy document for geospatial coordination in United States
- A-16 explicitly incorporates Executive Order 12906 (since the 2002 version)
- A-16 is the foundation for the Federal Geographic Data Committee, created in 1990

www.fgdc.gov
Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)

- Promotes the coordinated development, use, sharing and dissemination of geospatial data
- Nationwide data sharing through the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)
- Chair: Secretary of Interior (or designee)
- Vice Chair: Deputy Director for Management, OMB (or designee)
- Secretariat hosted by U.S. Geological Survey
National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC)

- Created in 2008 (88 years after first Advisory Committee) under Federal Advisory Committee Act
- 28-30 diverse members of the geospatial community
- Meetings 3-4 times/year
- Meetings open to the public: public comments are welcome
NGAC Purpose

- Provide advice and recommendations on federal geospatial policy and management issues to Federal Geographic Data Committee
- Provide a forum to convey views representative of the geospatial community
- Provide advice on the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure

www.fgdc.gov/ngac
NGAC’s First Meeting, April 2008
NGAC, The First Eight Years

Secretaries of the Department of the Interior

2008
Dirk Kempthorne

2009 2010 2011 2012 2013
Ken Salazar

2013 2014 2015
Sally Jewell
NGAC, The First Eight Years

FGDC Chairpersons

2008
James Cason

2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014

Anne Castle

2014 | 2015
Jennifer Gimbel
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Affiliation</th>
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<td>John Mahoney (FGDC)</td>
<td>NGAC Alternate DFO</td>
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Past and Current Contributions

- The Changing Geospatial Landscape
- FGDC Strategic Vision for the Nation
- Presidential Transition Recommendations
- Geospatial Platform guidance

Subcommittee activities:
- 3D Elevation Program (3DEP)
- Workforce Development
- Geospatial Privacy
- Landsat
- National Address Database (NAD)
Geospatial Platform

Portfolio Management approach to GIS

- Project Management ➔
- Program Management ➔
- Portfolio Management

Goals:

- Open government, transparency and accountability
- National geographic information system

www.geoplatform.gov
Shared Infrastructure ("Certified" Federal Data Centers and Commercial Clouds)

Transparent, Open Government
- Data.gov
- Geo One Stop

Administration Priorities
- Place Based
- Let's Move!
- Climate Change

Agency Mission Needs
- Homeland Security
- Environmental Protection
- Resource Management

Non-Federal Uses
- Local Planning

Federal Services
- State, Local and Tribal Services

Licensed Services

NGO Services

Crowd Sourced Services

Let's Move!

Agency Mission

Climate Change

Homeland Security

Environment Protection

Resource Management

Local Planning

Federal Services

State, Local and Tribal Services

Licensed Services

NGO Services

Crowd Sourced Services
Lessons Learned from a Century+

- Coordination policies have well-established roots

- Policy goals have remained consistent
  - standards
  - authoritative information source
  - broad participation in the coordination process.

- Coordination of geographic data acquisition and dissemination is important
Lessons Learned from a Century+

Ways to improve the effectiveness of often stove-piped organizational structures within the Federal Government are needed.

Need to stimulate cross agency coordination and collaboration.

Improving coordination and fostering organizational change that will benefit the development of the NSDI is difficult:

- If it was easy, it would have been done 100 years ago.