



President Clinton Issues NSDI Executive Order

Executive Order 12906

Critical Dates:

- October, 1994 – FGDC to take steps to establish an electronic National Geospatial Data Clearinghouse.
- January, 1995 – All new federal geospatial data documented using the Metadata standard and documentation made electronically accessible to the Clearinghouse network.
- January, 1995 – Plan submitted to OMB for completing initial development of digital geospatial data framework.
- January, 1995 – Strategies developed for maximizing participatory effort with State, local, tribal, and other non-federal organizations to share costs and improve efficiencies for acquiring geospatial data.
- April, 1995 – Schedules developed for documenting previously collected geospatial data and making documentation accessible to the Clearinghouse network.
- April, 1995 – Plans adopted for making geospatial data available to the public.
- April, 1995 – Internal procedures adopted to ensure use of the Clearinghouse prior to new data collection using Federal funds.

On April 11, 1994 President Clinton signed Executive Order 12906, *Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure*. The order directs all Federal agencies to contribute to the development the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI), and lays out key activities that Federal agencies must conduct in conjunction with State and local governments, academia and the private sector to ensure the evolution and growth of the NSDI.

The order directs the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to coordinate the Federal Government's development of the NSDI. It calls for agencies to:

- contribute to a national geospatial data clearinghouse and use the clearinghouse to determine data availability prior to starting a new data collection project;
- document data sets according to metadata standards, and to support public access to data;
- cooperatively develop data content standards and other geospatial data standards as deemed necessary;
- develop a plan for initial implementation of, and on-going maintenance for, a national digital geospatial data framework; and
- develop strategies to maximize cooperative efforts with State and local governments, the private sector, and other non-Federal organizations to share costs and improve efficient acquisition of geospatial data consistent with the order.

The order calls for timely action, generally requiring concrete steps to implement these initiatives within a year.

To receive a copy of the NSDI Executive Order, contact the FGDC as indicated on the back page.

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FGDC Appearances and Workshops

URISA - August 7-10
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
NSDI Partnerships Forum
Aug. 7, 1:30-5 pm
Metadata Workshop
Aug. 9, 5-8 pm
Framework Discussion
Aug. 10, 9:30-11 am
Clearinghouse Workshop
Aug. 10, 3:30-7 pm
Exhibit Booth

FGT Conference - September 26-28
Washington, D.C.
Exhibit Booth

NSGIC - October 14-19
Jackson Hole, Wyoming
Partnerships Forum

GIS/LIS '94 - October 23-28
Phoenix, Arizona
Clearinghouse workshop
Oct. 23, 8:30-12 pm
Partnerships workshop
Oct. 23, 1-4 pm

NSGIC Report Available

In May the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) issued the *Survey of State GIS Coordination Bodies*. The report summarizes information about the States' coordination activities (such as authorities, operational characteristics, accomplishments, and charters), backed up by appendices containing detailed, State-by-State responses about coordination activities.

The report was funded by the FGDC. Use the form on the back page to request a copy.

FGDC Approves Metadata Standard

On June 8 the FGDC, under the chairmanship of Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, approved the *Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata*. The standard provides a common set of terms and definitions for documenting geospatial data.

The FGDC encourages all organizations, and not just the Federal community, to use the standard to document their geospatial data. Metadata, or data about data, help organizations to organize and maintain their internal investment in spatial data. Metadata also provide information needed for data catalogs, clearinghouses, or brokerages so that potential users of the data can determine data availability and fitness for use, and means to access and transfer the data.

The standard provides data elements for documenting important aspects of geospatial data, including identification, data quality, spatial reference, spatial data organization, feature and attribute definitions, and distribution.

The standard was developed over the last two years. This effort involved participation from numerous groups throughout the geospatial data community.

Several individuals who contributed significantly to the development of the standard were recognized by Secretary Babbitt at the June 8 meeting. They are: Stephen Guptill,

U.S. Geological Survey and Chair of the FGDC Standards Working Group; Doug Nebert, U.S. Geological Survey; Elizabeth Mangan, Library of Congress; David Danko, Defense Mapping Agency; Charles Grymes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; John Butler, U.S. Forest Service; and Michael Domaratz, FGDC Executive Secretary.

Seed Money Offered for National Spatial Data Infrastructure Projects

In April 1994, the FGDC launched the "NSDI Competitive Cooperative Agreements Program." The program supports collaborative projects among State and local government agencies, institutions of higher learning, private organizations, and the Federal Government that support the development of the NSDI.

Proposals were invited on two major components of the NSDI: creation of a distributed clearinghouse for finding and accessing geospatial data, and development and use of standards in data collection, documentation, transfer, and search and query.

Proposals are being evaluated, and awards should be made by September 30, 1994. Individual awards are expected in amounts up to \$25,000. The FGDC anticipates offering a similar program next year.

'94 NSDI Plan Calls for Action

The 1994 Plan for the NSDI, outlining actions, responsible entities, and dates for accomplishment, was adopted by the FGDC at its March meeting.

The plan identifies six actions:

- conducting and participating in national forums that provide a means to debate issues, policies and technical procedures related to the NSDI;
- improving access to geospatial data by establishing a clearinghouse, completing a data documentation (metadata) standard;
- producing a framework of national digital geospatial data on which other data sets can be built;
- developing thematic data sets to meet critical national needs;
- developing educational and training programs to ensure the availability of trained personnel for future geospatial data activities; and
- developing productive partnerships among all sectors to coordinate geospatial data collection, management, and use.

The recent NSDI Executive Order (see p. 1) directs Federal agencies to carry out their parts of these actions. Use the back page to request a copy of the plan.

Help Appreciated

In 1993 several working groups were formed to address key concerns and issues related to the NSDI. The FGDC would like to belatedly acknowledge the efforts of these groups. Special

thanks goes to the chairs of these groups, who spent many hours leading discussions and juggling different viewpoints to provide recommendations. They are **Will Craig**, University of Minnesota, chair of the "Current Components of the NSDI"; **Ron Abler** of the Association of American Geographers, chair of

NSDI and Related Discussions Now On-line

Two new Internet discussion groups, NSDI-L and Geoweb, provide e-mail users with a way of staying up-to-date on activities related to NSDI.

The NSDI-L carries discussions about the issues, policies and technical questions related to the emerging NSDI. To subscribe to NSDI-L, send an e-mail message to:

listproc@grouse.umesve.maine.edu

Leave the subject field blank and type the following message:

`subscribe NSDI-L <your name>`

After you receive confirmation of your subscription, all messages posted to the list will be forwarded automatically to your e-mail address. To post a message to the news group, send e-mail to:

NSDI-L@grouse.umesve.maine.edu

For more information, contact Steven Frank, NCGIA-

the "Impediments to Developing the NSDI"; **Bruce Westcott** of the Vermont Center for Geographic Information, chair of the "Geospatial Data Coordination with States"; and **Ken Topping**, a private consultant in Southern California and **Connie Blackman** with the Atlanta Regional Commission, co-chairs of the "Alliance Issues". Their time and effort are much appreciated.

Department of Surveying Engineering, 348 Boardman Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5711, telephone 207-581-2112, or fax 207-581-2206.

Geoweb focuses on archiving, cataloging, and retrieval of geographic information on the Internet and the World Wide Web. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to:

majordomo@census.gov

Leave the subject field blank and type the following message:

`subscribe geoweb
<userid@hostname>`

After receiving confirmation of your subscription, all messages posted to the list will be forwarded automatically to your e-mail address. To post a message to the news group, send e-mail to:

geoweb@census.gov

FGDC Publication Requests

To subscribe to the newsletter or request a publication, please complete the information below and return it to the FGDC secretariat by facsimile or mail (see contact information on this page). You also may request publications through the Internet (gdc@usgs.gov), but be sure to provide the information requested below in your message.

Name/Position

Organization

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Technical and Meeting Reports

- Ordering information for the Manual of Federal Geographic Data Products, January 1993
- Application of Satellite Data for Mapping and Monitoring Wetlands, September 1992
- Ordering information for Multipurpose Land Information Systems: The Guidebook
- National Geo-Data Policy Forum Summary Report, May 10-12, 1993
- Technical Forum (March 1993) on Spatial Features, Summary Report (in press)
- Technical Meeting (February 1993) on the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (in press)

Standards

- Final "Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata," June 8, 1994
- Information about the Spatial Data Transfer Standard, FIPS 173

Other documents

- The 1994 Plan for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure: Building the Foundation of an Information Based Society
- Executive Order 12906, "Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure" (April 1994)
- The National Geospatial Data Clearinghouse Guidelines (v. 1.0) (June 1994)
- NSGIC Report "Survey of State GIS Coordination Activities (May 1994)
- Strategic Interagency Approach to Developing a National Digital Wetlands Data Base (July 1994)

* Note: The FGDC provides electronic versions of many publications and information by anonymous FTP at fgdc.er.usgs.gov

FGDC Contact Information

The *FGDC Newsletter* describes activities of the spatial data community and the ongoing development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. Subscriptions are free of charge. Subscription requests, correspondence or contributed articles may be directed to the FGDC Secretariat as indicated below:

FGDC Secretariat
590 National Center
Reston, VA 22092
phone: 703-648-5514
fax: 703-648-5755
Internet: gdc@usgs.gov

By anonymous FTP* (to receive FGDC information and documents):

Address: fgdc.er.usgs.gov
(130.11.52.153)
User name: anonymous
After connecting: cd gdc
(File README has information on the files in each subdirectory.)

Users with a World Wide Web browser (such as Mosaic) can also access the server with the URL:

[ftp://fgdc.er.usgs.gov/gdc/html/fgdc.html](http://fgdc.er.usgs.gov/gdc/html/fgdc.html)

*Note: FGDC frequently adds new information to this site; please check periodically for updates.