

Maine Library of Geographic Information Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday August 19th, 2009

Time: 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Place: Burton M. Cross Building, Conference Room 105.

AGENDA

1. Approval of the July 15th meeting minutes – Chair
2. LIDAR Regional Project – Mike Smith
3. Upgrades to orthoimagery – Mike Smith
4. Strategic Plan Implementation Groups -Chair
5. Membership review - All
6. Subcommittee Reports
 - Financial – Larry Harwood
 - Policy & Marketing – Marilyn Lutz
Governance: OIT & Geolibrary commitments
 - Technical
Status of the GeoPortal – Mike Smith, Christopher Kroot

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: Wednesday September 16th, 2009, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Burton M. Cross Building, Conference Room 105.

Maine GeoLibrary Board

August 19th, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Present

Nancy Armentrout
Michael Smith
Greg Copeland
Gretchen Heldmann
Paul Hoffman
Greg Davis
Stu Rich
Aimee Dubois
Christopher Kroot

Staff

Larry Harwood

Visitors

Dan Walters, US Geological Survey (USGS)
Joseph Young, Floodplain Management Program, State Planning Office (SPO)
Vinton Valentine, University Southern Maine (USM), Maine GIS Users Group (MEGUG)

Both the Chair and Co-Chair being absent, staff called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM.. Gretchen Heldmann was voted acting Chair.

1. Approval of the July 15th meeting minutes

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Greg Copeland moved to approve the minutes as written. Mike Smith seconded. The Board voted 8¹ in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion carried.

2. LiDAR Regional Project

Mike Smith reported that a conference call on the project with representatives of the other New England states is scheduled for tomorrow. One question is whether to have a single proposal or have individual states submit proposals. In a similar vein is the question of whether to use an overall RFP or existing contracting mechanisms in the states, which he thinks is preferable. The USGS will announce the request for proposals probably in mid September. In addition the 'Broadband application'² has \$500,000 allocated for LiDAR collection. New Hampshire is also looking for \$200,000 for LiDAR some of which will of course be on the border.

3. Upgrades to Orthoimagery

Mike Smith announced that the aerial photo collection for the 2009 National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) imagery is currently underway. This year the contractors are collecting in the infra-red range as well. The entire state 4th band can be purchased directly from aerial photography contractors for about \$77,000.³

Dan Walters reported a surprise aerial imagery project by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). Aerial photography will be collected this fall for the Portland area totaling about 1000 square miles. The photography will be collected in color and leaf-off, and will be processed to orthoimagery with 1 foot pixel resolution and 2.12 meter horizontal (positional) accuracy in the X or Y direction.

The Web Mapping Service (WMS) for the 1 foot and 2 foot Geolibrary orthoimagery has been slow. This is due to the size of the image tiles and this will be fixed hopefully by cutting them up into smaller tiles. The venerable Aerial Photography Viewer will be going away in the near future. The replacement will be very similar but based on MapServer an open source, customizable application. It will have the same image tile display-and-download function that the current one has.

Q: Will the new download format be jpeg2000⁴?

A: Yes. The jpeg2000 format is more widely useable than the MrSid format.

4. Strategic Plan Implementation Groups

ILRIS Workgroup.

¹ Due to Board members arriving at or departing from the meeting, the total number of votes may vary

² National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) State Broadband Data and Development Grant

³ So called "four band" imagery has red, green, blue, and near infrared bands. Either natural color or color infrared imagery is displayed by changing the band assignments.

⁴ The jpeg is a method of compression for photographic images. The degree of compression can be adjusted, allowing a selectable tradeoff between storage size and image quality.

Nancy Armentrout provided a handout of "...Follow-up Suggestions to the Maine Geolibrary Board From the ILRIS Project Team" (see attachment A). This 4 page document addresses *Leadership and Support, Opportunities, Parcel Data Inventory, Maintenance of land records data, System Design, Promotion, Portal Opportunities and Funding*. Today however the Board's attention was drawn to the *Immediate Next Steps* at the end of the document:

1. Put together small group of 3 to 4 people to draft an update to the Parcel Standard. This group would include Angie from MEGIS, representation from LURC or MRS, and representation from the ILRIS Working group. This standard update would be recommended to the ILRIS group and to the MEGIS director for approval to go through the State Standards Process. Timeline for this effort is Sept. and possibly into October.

There was substantial discussion of this. First some members suggested enlarging the group to include other stakeholders of parcel data. There was no objection as long as one of the ILRIS workgroup was included and the "standards group" did not become too large. Second it was suggested that there might be some duplication of effort with the inventory and acquisition work by the Geospatial workgroup and MEGIS. It was decided to try and combine all efforts in such a way that the Geolibrary 'spoke with one voice' on digital parcel data. Lastly there were a number of reminders as to the great variety of formats, data structures, coverage areas and levels of spatial accuracy to be found with municipal parcel data.

2. Put together a small group of 3 to 4 people to focus on bringing some specificity to our vision. This is needed to be able to promote the ILRIS and also to design it. We need to be able to tell people about how it will work and what they will get. The ILRIS document lays out some of this but does not go far enough for these purposes. This may take 3-4 months to pull together. The small group should include likely users, suppliers, and people with a technical background. Would like to start in September.

There was little discussion of this step. It will be revisited at the next meeting.

3. Mike Smith to set up a meeting of State agency people who collect parcel data. They will work out ways to coordinate their efforts so that towns are not being asked multiples times by the State for the same data. Their coordination will also help with parcel data inventory and update.

As indicated above, this step was combined with number 1.

There was a general discussion of how other states have managed their parcel data and land records systems, including having private sector vendors manage the system. Most of these are centered on county government; unlike Maine, where assessing is done at the township level, many states have strong county governments that handle the assessing and property taxation. In some western states certain Federal agencies are central to the process because of their large land ownerships. The ILRIS for Maine will depend on three 'pillars' as summarized by Nancy Armentrout:

- 1 Getting the digital parcel data
- 2 Updating the digital parcel data
- 3 Linking the parcel data to the registry records

Geospatial Workgroup

Joe Young reported that the group had their initial meeting on the 13th. The focus was on 1) what is the Board's charge to the group, 2) getting more members and 3) prioritizing the geospatial action items listed in the Strategic Plan⁵.

The charge to the group was well stated in the Strategic Plan as follows. "This Geo-Spatial Work Group, working with the Policy Committee, will be charged with developing standards for open space, land use and land cover as well as defining the geospatial data needs and flows between local, county, State and federal governments. It shall also take into consideration special requirements that not-for-profits, academia and the private sector may have."

The Group agreed to search out additional members with expertise in specific issues identified in the Strategic Plan. This will be done by enlisting recommendations from organizations such as the Maine GIS User group and Maine Municipal Association as well as referrals from the Board and other sources. Greg Davis has already asked for volunteers in the utility community.

The top three geospatial data action items identified were 1) "Updated Ortho Imagery", 2) "Develop open space, land use and land cover data set and determine an appropriate update cycle", and 3) "Develop a new statewide high resolution elevation data set and determine appropriate cycles for updating". Number 2 was originally 3 separate action items which the group decided to merge. Number 3 will be primarily support of the various ongoing LiDAR initiatives.

The action item "Develop one uniform roads and addressing data set" can be delegated to MEGIS which has been working on this and may get a grant to enlarge the scope of work. The action item "Develop a statewide parcel data layer" can be left with the ILRIS workgroup. The Geospatial group will be meeting again today at the conclusion of the Board meeting.

Q: Should the digital parcel standards be part of the Geospatial group's agenda?

A: Not directly but the group should monitor them.

Coordination and Communications Workgroup

Mike Smith reported that the group had not met yet but a meeting will be set in the near future and they will report at the next Board meeting. The Chairs (Mike Smith & Dan Walters) were asked if the group could help find members for the Geospatial workgroup. A short discussion ensued on methods for doing that. One suggestion was a one page handout, folding pamphlet or brochure with all the workgroups listed and short descriptions in plain language of what their missions are. It was also suggested that the work plans be better defined for potential volunteers. The C & C group will look at these ideas and bring suggestions to the next Board meeting.

5. Membership review

Larry Harwood reported that the Chair had asked him to contact the appropriate legislative leadership and governor's staffers about reappointment of members whose terms were ending soon. Board members Robert Marvinney, Greg Davis and Christopher Kroot are appointed by the Governor. They have already received the paperwork for reappointment. Members Gretchen Heldmann and Ken Murchison are appointed by the Speaker of the House. The Speaker's staff have been notified that reappointments are needed but the paperwork has not yet been forwarded. Larry will check on this and stay in contact with the staff until this is taken care of.

⁵ Appendix D – Overall Listing of Maine GeoSpatial Issues and Action Items

6. Subcommittee Reports

Financial

Larry Harwood reported two changes in the financial report. First, Two items, \$15,000 each encumbered to the CAT 3 FGDC project are combined under the description “Project management – Match CAT 3 FGDC CAP”. Second, Mike Smith had discovered an over-billing error to the CAT 3 FGDC project of \$6,740. This reduces the amount for this item to \$23,260 and increases the “Funds under consideration” to \$34,110.

Policy and Marketing

Marilyn Lutz was not present. No one else on the Policy Committee was prepared to discuss the item *Governance: OIT & Geolibrary commitments* so it was tabled to the next meeting.

Technical

Status of the GeoPortal

Christopher Kroot reported that the portal has been is very close to public release. The cooperative agreement with the University of Southern Maine (USM) has been subject to administrative delays. It has been difficult to get an explicit set of deliverables. The technical aspects have been fairly easy but the administrative side is much harder. He will e-mail the Board later and report on progress. The portal will be “live and stable” soon. Mike Smith noted that there is a glitch in the shape file uploading function. The problem is related to projections of data and the file type that carries that information. The projection can be manually specified by the data holder and the portal can always simply point to the data without loading it.

Q: Is the metadata creation tool functional.

A: Yes, it works fine as far as we know.

Q: Could the portal run without the shapefile up-loader.

A: Yes. It can run without that and without other options as well if it comes to it.

Q: Have you looked at the latest version of MapServer?

A: We are using it actually.

Q: Will the shape file up-loader accept Maine state plane?

A: No we would need to add that. It will now accept latitude-longitude and UTM.⁶

There was a discussion of the desirability of putting the state plane projections on the shape file up-loader. Some felt that this would be done later and could be set to one side. Others felt the matter was too vital to the municipalities and needed to be addressed straight away or this would be virtually a state agency portal. It was decided that the Technical Committee would investigate and report back on the additional cost if any of adding all the Maine state plane projections. There would be six projections:

East zone - US feet, datum NAD83,

US feet, datum NAD27

Meters, datum NAD83

West zone - US feet, datum NAD83,

US feet, datum NAD27

Meters, datum NAD83

⁶ Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 19, datum of NAD 83 units in meters.

There was also discussion of getting the “basic GeoPortal” up and running sooner rather than later. The proposal was to get something running as long as it had basic functionality. Calling attention to the public benefit provided by the GeoPortal would help promote the Geolibrary and aid in soliciting help and funding.

Mike Smith moved to approve the adoption of the GeoPortal with only the metadata up-loader functional if the shapefile up-loader is not functional by September 1st. Greg Copeland seconded. The Board voted 9 in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion carried.

There was a concluding discussion of GeoPortal issues. It was suggested that the Board will have to move incrementally on additional data formats and projections. Funding for maintaining the portal is probably not to be had. USM however has a good bit invested in the portal and would probably keep it running without upgrades for some time.

Dan Walters handed out maps of the US elections from 1789 to 2008, courtesy of the US Geological Survey.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45

Attachment A

ILRIS Follow-up Suggestions to the Maine GeoLibrary Board From the ILRIS Project Team August 2009

The Cat3 Project Team would like to wrap up its commitment to the Fifty States Initiative Project. The Team, which provided guidance and leadership to the Sewall contractors throughout the project, was made up of Marilyn Lutz, Steve Weed, Diane Godin, Dan Walters, Bill Hansen, Judy Mathiau, Laurie Thomas, and Nancy Armentrout.

Now that the project has finished, the deliverables approved, and the Board has embraced the Strategic Plan recommendations, the project team wanted to provide some suggestions specific to the Integrated Land Records System (ILRIS). The ILRIS report provided information on what the system should consist of, how it might work, and how to promote it. The Board unfortunately has no funds available at this time to take additional steps to develop the system. The Project Team would like to see this effort kept alive and has produced a list of ideas to offer the Board.

The following list identifies some short term steps the Board could take to keep ILRIS in the forefront of Board activities and moving forward. The Project Team offers this list for Board consideration.

Leadership and Support

- Create the Integrated Land Records Work Group. Appoint a chair. It appears that the members of the project team wish to participate in the Work Group. Others that we've heard wish to join are Knud Hermansen for as much as he can be available and Paul Hoffman who represents counties on the Board.
- Task the group to read the ILRIS documents and make progress on an approved version of this list of steps by assigning roles and owners of the tasks.
- The Work Group should explore a regional support model for parcels to see if that would work better and where that support might come from – counties, regionals, RPCs, larger towns, etc.

Opportunities

- Inventory and collect what data are out there – parcels and additional data. Make arrangements for updates. USGS will soon be bringing on an intern to assist with an inventory of local data. We can make sure that the inventory captures information about data that might be useful with parcel information. This activity can promote ILRIS at the same time. This fits well with the first part of Mike Smith’s project. Assuming we have finalized the standard we should be able to collect most of the existing digital parcels over the course of a year.
- There may also be a potential to modify the MRS Annual Survey to towns by adding a question such as “are you willing to provide the GeoLibrary with access to your data”.
- Look into the new legislation around foreclosure tracking to see if there are opportunities associated with it. It looks like MRS is tracking the transfer tax in foreclosure events. The Dept. of Professional and Financial Regulations has a role in this new legislation.

Parcel Data Inventory

- Review the parcel standard and update it for ILRIS.
- Develop a parcel data management policy to improve consistency, currency, and completeness. Our initial goal for parcel updates is annually.
- Bring people who are already doing some coordination of parcel data inventory into the fold, such as Patrick Johnson at DOT, Lisa Whynot at MRS, and Ellen Jackson at LURC. Consider creating a joint custodianship arrangement with these folks for ongoing parcel standards, policy management, and maybe edge matching policy development (similar to the METWP24 custodian team). Consider adding someone from the private sector that is managing parcel data for town.
- If not already done, combine the LURC parcel data and the 75 towns’ parcel data into a single composite to work out the bugs of putting data from disparate sources together or to test updating from these entities in an automated fashion.

Maintenance of land records data (parcels are the primary focus right now)

- Get updates from the 75 or so towns that were grant recipients. We should check their status and try to get updates. Mike’s proposal addresses this as well. Need to add an annual maintenance agreement.
- We should also try to get parcel data from other towns that have digitized parcels on their own. Do this as part of the inventory.
- We should get “last sale book and page” added to the attributes. Revise standard first and use this to collect updates and new data.
- If another grant program is implemented try to solicit lessons learned from previous grant towns to improve data development and maintenance capability. See if they are willing to assist towns in the promotion of the program or in getting the most from the program. A couple who were suggested are Jeff Hewett of Skowhegan and Dave Sawyer of ??.

System Design

- Using the ILRIS documents as a starting point, we should develop more specificity so that we can provide more concrete descriptions in our promotion activities. What has been written so far is still too abstract for many to fully understand what the system will do for them (or require of them). If we had money, we could use a rough prototype. Without money to build one, we should work on creating specificity where we can

as sound bites to help people understand what this thing will look like. Obviously the prototype would be preferable.

- We expect in the short and intermediate term parcel updates will be done by replacing an older file with an updated file from the town. Should this be an annual push or pull? Determine which will work best and work on developing a mechanism to automate what is feasible.
- Experiment with delivering parcel data via Google Earth. Also explore the possibility of cloning the MRS/LURC parcel viewer system. This exploration could be part of a rough prototype effort.

Promotion

- Create and maintain open lines of communication with stakeholders and practitioners. This will facilitate the small steps we need to make (in lieu of funding) to keep this initiative moving forward.
- Use every opportunity to reach out to groups who care about parcel information. Present to MMA, MEGUG, MAAO, County Commissioners, etc.
- Pull together information about who and how much time is currently spent finding, creating, and managing digital parcel data at the state level (to start with). This information could be used to help get financial support for ILRIS.

Portal Opportunities

- The Portal may be an important facility for the ILRIS initiative. The ILRIS Work Group should develop a better understanding of its capabilities and limitations.
- Pilot the portal in terms of its potential use for ILRIS with one or two towns – possibly Bar Harbor and Hampden (if Gretchen is willing). There may be quite a few towns in Cumberland county that already have book and page of last sale and an IMS app is running, so the next question would be “what is the portal interaction with those application like?”.
- The Strategic Plan suggests that a coordinated local Portal presence may be helpful. This might include policies for collecting, storing, and updating local government data. Perhaps the Maine Assessors Association would be interested in considering this.

Funding

- Solicit funding from the private sector and government to build a prototype system and perhaps to implement a new grant program for towns.
- Goal of \$75,000 to match \$75,000 FGDC CAP
- Mike’s effort to continue focus on data development and maintenance.

Immediate Next Steps

The ILRIS Work Group proposes the following:

- 1 Put together small group of 3 to 4 people to draft an update to the Parcel Standard. This group would include Angie from MEGIS, representation from LURC or MRS, and representation from the ILRIS Working group. This standard update would be recommended to the ILRIS group and to the MEGIS director for approval to go through the State Standards Process. Timeline for this effort is Sept. and possibly into October.
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- 3 Mike Smith to set up a meeting of State agency people who collect parcel data. They will work out ways to coordinate their efforts so that towns are not being asked multiples times buy the State for the same data. Their coordination will also help with parcel data inventory and update.