August 8, 2014

To: NITC Commissioners

From: Nathan Watermeier, State GIS Coordinator
Josh Lear, Chair, GIS Council
Bill Wehling, Vice-Chair, GIS Council

Subject: GIS Council Report

Membership

***Action:* Approve nomination of reappointment of Michael Schonlau of Douglas County to fill Member At Large GIS Council seat.**

***Action:* Approve nomination of reappointment of Jim Langtry, United States Geological Survey (USGS) to fill federal agency GIS Council seat.**

There are three GIS Council seats expiring in September 2014. A request to seek nominations for Member at Large, Federal Agencies, and Omaha Metro were sent out through letter and email in April.

At the June 4 GIS Council meeting, the Council reviewed the nominations and tallied votes for two of the seats. The Council received two nominations for Member At Large seat, Michael Schonlau, GIS Manager from Douglas County (10 votes) and Kelly Mueller, self-employed (3 votes). The Council received two nominations for federal agency seat, Jim Langtry, USGS (11 votes), and Steve Peaslee, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (2 votes). Michael Schonlau, Member-at-Large and Jim Langtry, Federal Agency Representative seat were voted as re-appointments to continue as nominations to the NITC.

The Omaha Metro seat is nominated by representatives of the Omaha Metro area then nominated to the NITC. A selection committee has been formed and nominations have been provided to the committee. The Committee is seeking additional information from nominees prior to making their nomination for the Omaha Metro seat. The current nominations for the Omaha Metro seat include: Eric Herbert, Sarpy County, Josh Corrigan, Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA), and Donald Groesser, Mayor of Ralston. The nomination for the Omaha Metro seat will be provided at the next NITC meeting.

A seat was vacated back in April for the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO). NACO has selected Brittny King, Assessor, Dodge County to replace Kelly Mueller, Deputy Assessor, Antelope County. Because of statute, this seat is nominated by NACO with final approval and appointment by the Governor. No action is required by NITC for this seat.

Standards Update

Standards have been drafted and submitted to the NITC Technical Panel for Elevation Acquisition using LiDAR, Imagery, Street Centerline, Address Points, and updates to the existing Geospatial Metadata standards. The elevation, street centerline address point standards were approved at the April 16 GIS Council meeting and forwarded to the NITC Technical Panel to conduct a 30 day review. As a result of the 30-day review, there were no comments received for the street centerline and address point standards. A few comments were received on the elevation standards by state agencies.

The imagery and metadata standards were approved by the GIS Council on June 4. The GIS Council also sought further input from the Technical Panel on best way to represent information to support maintenance, distribution and ownership of data to all the standards. The NITC Technical Panel has provided recommendations to our standards including elevation, street centerline and address points. These recommendations are posted here: http://nitc.ne.gov/technical_panel/meetings/minutes/2014-07-08.pdf. Since this also affects the imagery and metadata standards they will also be updated and resent to the Technical Panel for review. The Technical Panel will then move all the standards forward in a follow-up 30-day review process after the GIS Council makes suggested changes to maintenance, distribution and ownership. It is expected to have all the standards ready for review and approved by NITC at the final meeting in 2014.

Business Plans Update

The GIS Council is using a national Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) template for use in developing statewide business plans for geospatial data and technologies. The drafting of the standards was integral to completing several components of the Business Plans for Elevation, Imagery, Street Centerline and Addresses, Land Records, and NebraskaMAP. All the Business Plans have been started and are currently completing the implementation plans, timelines, and education/technical assistance components by various volunteers of the working groups. The Elevation and NebraskaMAP business plans are currently prioritized for draft review yet this fall.

Nebraska K-12 Educational GIS Initiative

The Nebraska Department of Education and the Office of the CIO recently partnered to bring free GIS software and online mapping service through a statewide educational enterprise license agreement (ELA) with Esri. This provides software and online instruction for all K-12 schools, districts, staff, students, and formal youth clubs in the state. This software and service is valued at $80,000 per year. This includes GIS software for desktop, server, ArcGIS Online, and mobile use. It provides updates to software, technical support, online instruction, and complimentary registrations to the annual Esri User Conference.

The success of the pulling off the implementation for a statewide curriculum and GIS plan for K-12 is to find the right teachers with the interest and support from their organization. To jump start the use of the software and the program, the curriculum and technology needed to be exposed to interested teachers. Earlier this year, the Nebraska Department of Education was successful in receiving a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to develop curriculum around soil conservation with the stipulation of using GIS to deliver the curriculum. The project is entitled, *"Educating the Next Generation of Nebraskans About Soil Conservation Using the Power of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)."* The Nebraska Environmental Trust awarded the State of Nebraska Department of Education a grant for 3 years totaling $88,881 to develop, deliver and maintain curriculum.

Since then, curriculum was developed and five teacher training workshops were conducted through June and July in Omaha, Scotts Bluff, North Platte, Kearney, and Wakefield. More than 90 teachers were instructed on how to take the information from the field and utilize GIS software to create a computer document called a story map. Story maps combine intelligent Web maps with Web applications and templates that incorporate text, multimedia, and interactive functions. Each story map in the workshops followed the theme of soil conservation practices and consisted of photos showing conservation practices, a narrative written to explain the photos and a computerized GIS map. The GIS map showed where the photos were taken and allowed the user to select information from that location to see pictures that were taken about soil conservation.

These workshops will be conducted again for the next two consecutive summers throughout the state. During the next school year, the process of creating story maps will then be taught by the workshop's teachers in classrooms across the state. The end result will be classrooms visiting sites in their local community and creating story maps that help young people to understand soil conservation practices and the use of GIS technology.

The Nebraska K-12 Educational GIS Initiative online resource web site for teachers is located at http://needgis.maps.arcgis.com.