

GEM NEWS

For the Idaho
GeoSpatial
Community

Spring/Summer 2013



2013 Intermountain GIS Conference Wrap-Up

Danielle Favreau (danielle.favreau@idwr.idaho.gov)

The Intermountain GIS Users' Conference at the Riverside in Boise was a huge success! Registrants had a great opportunity to mix and mingle not only with fellow GIS Professionals but also with members of the Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors. Thank you to all the presenters at the Conference because without your willingness to share your ideas, projects and innovations, there would be fewer stimulating conversations.

The Conference was kicked off by a great trio of Keynote speakers who touched on topics of professional and personal relevance. Greg Babinski spoke on URISA and the organization's past and present. Many changes are coming to the NRURISA parent organization and GIS as a whole. Dr. Kituku gave a very high energy presentation on overcoming obstacles both professionally and personally. I also believe he is the first conference attendee to bring a spear. Monday evening was closed out by Dr. R Justin Houghman touching on K-12 education and GIS.

A highlight of the week was Family Night. Pam Bond and Jerry Korol did a great job getting the word out, including landing on the front page of the Idaho Statesman! Another highlight was the recognition of Keith Weber as our Excellence in GIS Award winner. Keith gave a very heartfelt acceptance speech and reminded us that we couldn't do what we do without the support of those around us. All the more reason to keep Bridging Gaps!

Wednesday's joint sessions with the Idaho Professional Land Surveyors provided a unique opportunity to discuss topics of interest to both professions. The day's presentations focused on the GCDB (Geographic Coordinate Database), a key dataset of great interest to both communities. Although the GCDB may not be of interest to every GIS Professional or even every Surveyor, it is a place to start a dialog between both professions. Hopefully that dialog will continue and perhaps be expanded to include other groups in the future.

The 2013 Intermountain GIS Users' Conference highlighted the importance of working together and sharing ideas. Thanks to all who participated and we hope to see you again in Northern Idaho in 2015!



Special Thanks to Our Exhibitors:



Specializing in Field Data Collection

IDAHO FALLS • BOISE • TWIN FALLS • UTAH



Bonneville Blueprint Supply

ARCHITECTURAL • ENGINEERING • CONSTRUCTION • SURVEYING • COPIERS & PRINTERS • REPROGRAPHICS



GEM NEWS

Family Night 2013

Pam Bond (pam.bond@idfg.idaho.gov)

The Intermountain GIS Conference Family Night event was a huge success! Our station volunteers were busy all night showing our guests just how cool GIS and geography can be.

The giant floor map of Idaho was a show stopper. It was awesome to see so many of our younger guests working together to get all the pieces in just the right place while the adults looked on with great amusement. We had a number of stations, each with its own learning experience, including: ArcGIS Online, geocaching, geography related computer games and mobile applications, and my personal favorite "Look! You're Wearing Geography". At this station, people would look at their clothing tags and then put a dot on the map where their clothes were made.

Our guest speaker, Geoffrey Klein of Ada County, gave a very entertaining and crowd-pleasing presentation. He kept the all-ages crowd engaged and even got a few giggles.

The Idaho Geographic Alliance had a great station with lots of informative handouts and posters and had a number of great hands-on projects. The mission of this organization is to "fosters geographic and ecological awareness by empowering teachers, students and communities with the knowledge, skills and resources necessary to be geographically and ecologically literate in the 21st century." I think their presence at this event was quite relevant and hope to see them at future GIS events.

Thank you to all the volunteered and participated!



Special Thanks to Our Exhibitors:



Dept. of Geography



GEM NEWS



2013 NRURISA and ISPLS Joint Conference

Excerpt from *Gem State Surveyor*, Spring 2013

Aaron Rush, PLS (rushaaaron1@gmail.com)

The theme of this year's event was "Expanding our Horizons". In concert with that theme, a joint session on Wednesday was held with Northern Rockies URISA, a GIS organization. The topic of the day's presentations centered on the GCDB (Geographic Coordinate Database) and its importance to the GIS community for creating a reliable parcel database layer.

This is also important to surveyors for multiple reasons. There is a reliance upon the surveying community to provide information on the locations of government lot corners with a known degree of confidence. As GIS expands and becomes more accepted and relied upon, its ability and use as a tool for creating and maintaining a Land Information System (LIS) is expanding as well. Eventually, all county assessors will rely on a GIS platform of some sort for developing and maintaining the spatial nature of the parcels – how they relate to each other and with the PLSS – within their boundaries. The land surveying community needs to be involved from the ground level to: (1) supply good raw data, (2) help define what the limitations on the use of the data should be, (3) categorize data into different levels of determinable precision, and (4) maintain a data base that is dynamic and fluid as information on locations is revised and more precisely reported.

The creation and maintenance of the GCDB in its current form has been a massive undertaking by the BLM and its consultants in their effort to achieve the tasks numbered above. They have developed a complex algorithm for integrating survey measurements of corner locations that relies on statistical analysis and least squares adjustment to provide positions for government lot corners throughout the state. It's a program that could be greatly expanded to include more input and development, but like anything, takes money.

Surveyors and GISers by nature have different perspectives about what constitutes a corner position or a boundary line, but as GIS and its end users (which include the lay-public) become more dependent upon reliable property information and how it relates spatially to other data sources, we as a surveying community in our role as "stewards of the land" have a great responsibility to educate the public and the GIS community on the usage of data of this nature, and to provide data that can be used with a measureable degree of confidence.

Fortunately, there exist minds such as that of Ray Hintz, this year's featured presenter, who can take on the daunting task of trying to please both the GIS and surveying communities. In his quirky and confident way, Mr. Hintz took us all into his world of understanding, causing many of us brain cramps that still persist. In the joint session with the GIS people, we were treated to presentations by Mr. Hintz, Sheldon Bluestein, and Stanley French. Additional presentations in a panel format were given by Ray, Keith Weber, Dave Williamson, Byron McCombs, and Kurt Luebke. Three of whom are professional surveyors with an intimate knowledge of the use and development of the GCDB.



GISCI Exam Development Press Release, February 14, 2013



As the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) celebrates its first decade of success, it continues to move forward with the production of an Exam component and an investigation of how that can augment its well-received voluntary portfolio process.

At its annual strategic planning meeting in Denver, August 4, 2012, the GISCI Board selected and contracted with a Project Manager to guide the efforts to develop and deploy an exam component for the GIS Professional Certification by 2015.

Rebecca Somers, GISP, is a principal with Somers-St. Claire GIS Management Consultants. She has taken the lead in guiding the GISCI and the Exam Development Workgroup, formed in August 2012, of industry representatives from GISCI Member Organizations, in the completion of this phase of the exam project, including engaging a leading exam development consultant.

The Exam Development Workgroup has made great progress in exam planning and the development planning process is now approaching completion.

The Board expects to make its decisions regarding exam development by the First Quarter of 2013, and the target date for the Exam launch is the First Quarter of 2015. Throughout the exam development process, GISCI will seek the participation of many GIS professionals.

GISCI President, Mike Vanhook remarks: "This is a very exciting and challenging time for GISCI. Our organization has taken on significant efforts to improve the certification process and add value to the GISP. Rebecca Somers has done an exceptional job. She continues to meet our expectations with timely and quality results that will provide GISCI with the best possible outcome. We are ready to review the Exam Development Plan and to begin developing the exam. With ongoing efforts GISCI is leading the way in GIS professional certification and we are proud to do this for our GIS professional community."

GISCI began its GIS Professional (GISP) certification program in 2003 with foundational support from URISA and continued management services. Since that time, GISCI has grown to become an independent, not-for-profit organization with more than 5000 GISPs. GISCI is comprised of five geospatial organizations: Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA), the Association of American Geographers (AAG), Geospatial Information & Technology Association (GITA), National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), and the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS).

The Board has embarked on a methodical, multi-stage process to carefully explore, develop, and implement a competency based examination by 2015, reflecting a conviction that portfolio-based certification augmented by such an examination has the potential to further advance the profession.

GISCI Approves an Exam Development Plan That Will Complement the Portfolio-Based Certification Process

At a special meeting on March 14, the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) Board of Directors approved the GISCI Exam Development Plan. The exam will complement GISCI's portfolio-based certification process. Initial work on exam development has begun and the exam is scheduled to be launched in the first quarter of 2015.

President Michael Vanhook commented, "I am very appreciative of the GISCI Board and the Exam Working Group as they work together to move the exam forward." He added, "As a component of the application process the exam will further enhance the GISP certification. It will provide GISCI and the community with opportunities that we didn't have before now to advance the Institute and utilize the best professional standards to evaluate competencies, including the work of many GIS professionals and the US Department of Labor competency model. GISCI has strengthened its efforts to provide value to the GISP."

GISCI expects to provide more updates as the exam is developed.

For more information on GISCI and on how you can become a certified GIS professional, visit www.gisci.org.

GEM NEWS

Updating Idaho's Land Survey Code

The Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors (ISPLS) has asked the GIS community to give their input on updating Idaho's land survey code.

The Idaho Geospatial Council Executive Council (IGC-EC) has formed a special task force to review the proposed changes and to work with ISPLS in creating document that is accurate and agreeable for all involved parties.

If you would like to read the proposed changes or would like to give your input, contact Bill Farnsworth (Bill.Farnsworth@cio.idaho.gov), Anne Kawalec (akawalec@adaweb.net) or Keith Weber (webekeit@isu.edu).

Montana Association of Geographic Information Professionals (MAGIP)

Here is what's new with MAGIP:

- 2013 Spring Meeting will be held May 21-23 at Miles City Community College in Miles City, Montana. Registration is now open and is refundable until May 10. Visit <http://magip.org/SpringMeeting2013> for more information.
- 2014 Intermountain GIS Conference will be held in Billings, Montana from April 7-11.

Keep up with MAGIP at <http://magip.org>

Free Educational Opportunity

The education team at Esri and Penn State are working together on an upcoming "Maps and the Geospatial Revolution". It will include hands-on activities based entirely on ArcGIS Online. This will be a Massively Open Online Course (MOOC) and is geared towards those that are looking for an entry point into geospatial technology and web mapping.

This free course via Coursera begins July 17 and will run for 5 weeks.

For more info, read this article: <http://blogs.esri.com/esri/gisedcom/2013/04/25/mooc-maps-and-the-geospatial-revolution/>

Elections for New NRURISA Board Members

Northern Rockies URISA will be holding elections for new board members. Elections will open starting June 2 and will run until June 8.

Here are the nominees:

- **President:** Ed DeYoung, Idaho Department of Lands, Post Falls, Idaho
- **Vice President:** Jennifer Grew, TerraGraphics Environmental Engineering, Moscow, Idaho
- **Secretary:** Dan Narsavage, Ada County, Boise, Idaho
- **Treasurer:** Shawn Stubbers, City of Lewiston, Lewiston, Idaho
- **Board Member At Large-** Donna Phillips, City of Hayden, Hayden Idaho
- **Board Member At Large-** Sue Parsons, Bannock County, Pocatello, Idaho
- **Board Member At Large-** Kirk Becker, Bonneville County, Idaho Falls, Idaho

Northern Rockies URISA members can cast their vote using the link below starting June 2:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2013-2015NRURISAElectionSurvey>

Board members will start their terms on July 1, 2013 and will serve for 2 years.

Need more GISP points? Thinking about helping out with the 2015 Conference? Planning for the 2015 conference is already underway. To get involved, contact confchair@intermountaingis.org.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dennis Hill (president@intermountaingis.org)

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" or so saith Charles Dickens. This will be my last Presidents Corner article for GEM News, as NRURISA elections are upon us. I want to let you know that I feel we have moved our organization of GIS Professionals into new territory, while holding true to your direction to provide an excellent conference every other year.

Our parent organization URISA has been looking inward to develop a "best practices and standards for the management of GIS Operations" as well as numerous other changes that I'm not going to elaborate on here in my limited space. I feel we will all benefit from them all, check them out on the national web page.

I want you all to know that I leave the Presidents post and NRURISA in GREAT shape, we had a successful conference (were not going to be listed on the fortune 500 but we have maintained, and have funds to move forward with a 2015 conference and a little to spare). We have great candidates to fill the empty posts of our organization, and they will continue the great history that we have come to expect from our group of compadres.

I am excited about our future endeavors as well. We are exploring new and exciting ventures with the Regional Resource Centers to host vital services that will fulfill not only our desire to support GIS professionals but empower the RRC's to grow. So stay tuned for great things. In closing it has been truly an honor to serve as President of NRURISA. Also a huge "THANK YOU" to our Officer's and Board, without them none of this is possible. And of course you, our members who have stuck with us thru thick and thin, so for now "au revoir" and "second star to the right, and fly straight on till morning"

Dennis Hill, GISP
NRURISA President



Northern Rockies URISA Contacts:

President:

Dennis Hill

president@intermountaingis.org

Vice President:

Kindra Serr

vicepresident@intermountaingis.org

Secretary:

Dan Narsavage

secretary@intermountaingis.org

Treasurer:

Shawn Stubbers

treasurer@intermountaingis.org

Board Members At Large:

Ed DeYoung

board@intermountaingis.org

Laurie Ames

board@intermountaingis.org

Kathy VonKienast

board@intermountaingis.org

WEBSITES FROM THIS EDITION

NORTHERN ROCKIES URISA:

www.intermountaingis.org

GIS Certification Institute (GISCI):

www.gisci.org

Free Education Opportunity with ESRI and Penn State:

<http://blogs.esri.com/esri/gisedcom/2013/04/25/mooc-maps-and-the-geospatial-revolution/>

MAGIP:

<http://magip.org>

NRURISA Election Survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2013-2015NRURISAElectionSurvey>



PO Box 13
Lewiston, ID 83501