Nebraska GIS Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes -- January 20, 2000

Present were (authorized to vote *):

Mahendra Bansal	+	Natural Resources Commission
Rose Braun		Nebraska Department of Roads
Dennis Burling	+	Department of Environmental Quality
Lash Chaffin	+	League of Municipalities
Cam Conrad		Lower Platte North NRD
Blaine Dinwiddie	+	Omaha Public Power District
John Erickson	+	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Dick Genrich	+	Nebraska Department of Roads
Erik Hubl		Lancaster County Assessor's Office
Ed Kelley		Nebraska Department of Roads
Kelly Klenke		USDA-NRCS
Mele Koneya	+	Nebraska Game and Parks
Mark Kuzila	+	Conservation and Survey Division - UNL
James Langtry	+	Lancaster County
Rod Larson		Lamp, Rynearson & Associates
Josh Lear		National Resources Commission
Nathan McCaleb	+	USDA-NRCS
Jim Merchant		Conservation and Survey Division - UNL
Jerry Odum		National Geodetic Survey, NOAA
Scott Richert		Lancaster County Assessor
Bryan Skalberg		Nebraska Department of Labor
Duane Stott	+	Scottsbluff County
Larry Wells		Chair Mapping Sub-Committee Cooperative Agreement
Cliff Welsh	+	NACO - Keith County
Dennis Wilson	+	City of Omaha
Paul Yamamoto		Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality
Larry Zink		GIS Steering Committee Coordinator

Complete Meeting Agenda

MAJOR MEETING TOPICS

Multipurpose Land Information Systems
GIS/LIS Association
Geospatial Data Sharing Cooperative
DOQs & DEMs - Priority Databases
Transportation - Priority Database
Land Cover/Land Use - Priority Database
Nebraska Geospatial Forum - Possible Endorsement
Next Meeting Date

NITC Planning Process
GIS Annual Report
Funding Geospatial Data Development
Governmental Units - Priority Databases
Hydrography (Streams) - Priority Database
Height Modernization
Steering Committee Member Updates
Meeting Voting Record

NOTICE OF MEETING: A public notice of the meeting, pursuant to Section 84-1411 R.R. S. 1943, was published in the Lincoln Journal-Star on January 13, 1999.

ROLL CALL: Chairperson Lash Chaffin called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and requested a call of the roll. Twelve duly authorized representatives were present at the time of the roll call. Therefore, a quorum was present to conduct business.

MINUTES: Chairperson Lash Chaffin requested approval for the November minutes. Mahendra moved for the minutes of the

November 4, 1999 Steering Committee meeting to be approved as corrected prior to the meeting. John Erickson seconded. As no discussion was desired, Larry Zink called roll and the motion passed. *(see vote #1 on Voting Record sheet)*.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS FOR MULTI-PURPOSE LAND INFORMATION SYSTEMS: Erik Hubl stated that the Advisory Committee met this morning prior to the Steering Committee meeting. The Committee is in the process of preparing a mailing consisting of a cover letter, a copy of the completed sections and a copy of the draft cadastral section. This package will be sent to the assessors group, that will be meeting next week in Kearney, as well as Nebraska clerks and NRD's. In this manner, the Committee continues to seek further feedback and review on their work.

The Commitee has begun work on a new section called 'Other Data Layers'. The sections to this point have laid a framework for building a basic GIS system up to the cadastral level. It is now possible for a given GIS to expand into other areas of important development such as the sewer network, hydrography, etc.

The Committee is also approaching the task of drafting an introductory section to address the concept of GIS in quick and easy terms, devoid of technical terms.

The next Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for the morning of the next GIS Steering Committee meeting.

NITC PLANNING PROCESS: Larry reminded the Steering Committee that it had discussed two meetings ago topics to be taken to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission for possible inclusion in the statewide technology plan. The Steering Committee approved the basic concepts and authorized Larry to work with the Executive Committee to submit a formal document to the NITC. Near the end of November, the NITC distributed the final format for IT coordinating entities to follow when submitting recommendations. Larry noted that the NITC significantly shifted its requirements from general principles to specific action proposals. Using the Steering Committee's ideas, Larry drafted several action proposals and presented them to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee approved the action proposals and Larry passed them on to the NITC. Larry expressed a desire to review these action plans with the Committee. He has some concern about these proposals having been submitted without the opportunity for full Committee discussion, as these recommendations will require a great deal of effort on the part of the Steering Committee in the coming year.

Priority Databases. The first action plan is to formulate and adopt strategies for the cooperative development, maintenance, and distribution of priority databases. This proposal requires the Steering Committee to establish recommendations and report to the NITC by the end of the year. There are some committees already in place; hydrography, DOQ/DEM, transportation, governmental units, and land cover/land use. One strategy for fulfilling this commitment is for the Steering Committee to ask these existing committees to draft a progress report for the NITC at the end of the year. The Steering Committee may want to also address databases that do not yet have a committee.

Larry asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding this action plan. There were none.

Collaborative Funding Mechanism. The next action plan deals with establishing a collaborative funding mechanism. There were two possible options in order to put this concept into an action plan. One option was to bring the issue to the attention of the NITC and ask them to create the fund. The other option, suggested by Steve Schafer, was to propose allowing the Steering Committee to complete a study building a business case for and to determining the merits of establishing this funding mechanism. The Executive Committee assessed both methods and decided to pursue the study proposal avenue.

Larry expressed some concern as to how to begin this process. One of the first steps will be to ask the committees already in place to estimate the costs involved in developing their respective databases as well as drafting some benefit statements. Another potential angle is to approach the budget office or legislative fiscal office to ask what is needed by them for this study to be meaningful.

Mahendra pointed out that the pilot project being completed by the Hydrographic Database Committee would be useful for this purpose. Larry agreed that is an excellent illustration; this database is something many agencies need, with both specific benefits and a rough cost estimate.

Lash commented that at the Executive Committee meeting, there was recognition that every agency has competing priorities and in the absence of genuine numbers, this concept is going to go no where. Larry observed that while developmental costs can be estimated, it is difficult to assign a specific figure to the benefits of having better data for flood plane control or roads management because it is subjective. Duane said that demonstrable efficiency improvement can be translated into cost savings. Larry indicated that he had no feel for what that monetary rate might be.

Blaine offered that OPPD approaches assigning cost benefits by comparing the growth of future rates without the use of new

technology against growth using the new technology. Costs will still rise but the elevation will be slower. The difference between the two figures is used as a benefit. This approach would demonstrate specific cost savings while bypassing the need to get into every application.

Larry asked for a Committee decision about whether to proceed or retreat from this action plan.

Mark clarified that proceeding with this plan requires the Subcommittee chairs to develop some type of cost benefit analysis of their respective sections. One important benefit to be derived from developing these databases deals with the inadequately addressed area of anticipation of emergency response needs. Emergency data issues are not traditionally confronted until there is a crisis such as the current potential drought. The Climatic Assessment Committee is in need of climate and land information that is not available now but could have been collected in anticipation of this situation. Lash noted that there are numbers assigned to those models. Other technology interests will be using subjective models in dealing with the NITC as well, which may help provide some guidelines as to what numbers are permissible.

Mahendra added that another issue that should be addressed in this study is how to recover developmental costs.

The Committee agreed to pursue this action plan.

Facilitating Land Record Modernization. The third action plan is to develop and adopt a strategy to facilitate the modernization of local government land information systems, addressing the need for compatibility across jurisdictional boundaries and adequate funding. This action plan would build on work already underway on behalf of the Steering Committee. Larry noted that a number of recommendations were originally outlined in a GIS Steering Committee Property Parcel Task Force Working Paper back in July 1996. Since then, various working groups and committee of the Steering Committee have worked to address many of those recommendations. The pilot project for the PLSS has been completed; local government GIS/LIS guidelines are being drafted; a formal definition of the state planes coordinate system has been placed in statutes; additional resources have been acquired for the State Surveyor to work with local governments; and statewide DOQ's have been completed. One major recommendation from that Task Force, that has yet to be seriously addressed, is the need for a new state/local partnership model to help facilitate land record modernization.

Larry indicated that a likely first step in creating this model is to bring together the key policy agencies; the Property Tax Division, the GIS Steering Committee, NACO, the League, and possibly real estate interests. These agencies need to decide if it is a priority to develop local property parcel databases and, if so, how will they be funded. Most local governments will not have the monetary and technical resources available to complete this effort themselves.

Larry noted that this action plan has a two-year timeline. It is not ideal in terms of the legislative cycle but seems to be the most realistic course given all the other commitments and the available resources. The Committee also agreed to pursue this action plan.

Education and Outreach. The next action item raises the need for resources for education and outreach specifically targeted toward local governments. Larry reported that Steve Schafer said that it is probably unrealistic to expect to attain the type of resources requested specifically for this project. However, Schafer noted there are a number of initiatives coming into the NITC regarding the need for IT assistance to local governments. Schafer reportedly suggested in might be possible to marry this action plan proposal with the other proposals raising local government IT needs and come up with a combined approach..

NIDCAC Local Government Technology Study. The final item relates to an effort by NIDCAC in response to Senator Wehrbein's information technology bill designed to develop guidelines for local government. NIDCAC formed a Local Government Technology Study Group to look at local government's need for information technology. Larry attended those meetings and raised the issue of the importance of developing geospatial databases.

That group has drafted a number of recommendations, including the concept of regional cooperation for local government information technology support and recognition of the importance of cooperation on collecting commonly needed data. Those recommendations have been forwarded to the NITC.

If these recommendations are approved, the NITC will likely ask the Steering Committee to draft model interlocal agreements for cooperative development of geospatial data.

Larry expressed his belief that the NITC will likely include at least all the action items proposals that do not require additional funding.

Recommendations to the NITC Technical Panel - Metadata. Among the items initially proposed for the NITC's attention

were some ideas that did not fit into an action plan format. Larry noted that at the suggestion of Steve Schafer, he had reworded these concepts and submitted them to the NITC's Technical Panel for possible inclusion in their technical specifications. One area of concern deals with framework data and the need to coordinate and follow standards. Another is the importance of recording locational data in a standard, format so that it may be used for analysis later on. Also addressed in this section is the importance of metadata.

At the last meeting, the Committee discussed referring the FGDC metadata standards to the NITC Technical Panel for possible adoption. One issue that surfaced in that discussion was the question of what, if any, Steering Committee recommendations for use that should accompany the FGDC metadata standards themselves. This questions was not resolved at the last meeting. The original draft GIS-NITC recommendations language read as follows: *"To preserve the public's investment in geospatial databases, and to facilitate data sharing, all geospatial databases developed by public agencies should be documented with standard metadata."*. That original draft language was what Larry ultimately forwarded to the NITC Technical Panel for their consideration for possible inclusion in the technical standards section of the State Technology Plan.

Because of the ambiguity regarding how strongly the Steering Committee wanted to encourage the development and use of metadata, Larry requested further discussion of this issue. Larry indicated that he felt that it was appropriate to include with the FGDC metadata standard some Steering Committee recommendation on the use of the metadata standard.

Mahendra noted that metadata is an essential part of a database. Larry agreed and pointed out that the vast majority of Nebraska's gesopatial databases are not currently documented with metadata. Larry indicated that he didn't feel this was not an issue of enforcement, but more a statement of principal or guidance from the Steering Committee. However, Larry acknowledged that if this draft language was included in the NITC statewide technology plan, then database projects submitted for NITC review will likely be required to include provisions for developing metadata. A potential benefit of adding stronger language is to assist agencies in obtaining funds for metadata development.

Jim Langtry commented that the Steering Committee has been consistent in maintaining the position that it is necessary for data across the state to be spatially referenced so that it fits together. If the information of how it was developed and who to contact is missing, then only part of the puzzle is in place.

Blaine expressed discomfort with the word 'all'. In the information technology projects he has been involved with, documentation is something no one ever wants to do or pay for. This is a good philosophical position, but unrealistic in practice, particularly without addressing issues of maintenance.

Larry explained that he looked for less encompassing language but could not find another way to state this. Blaine indicated that the only word he objected to was 'all' and pointed out that there are a lot of projects and internal databases that are organization specific that would not need to be documented as assiduously. Obviously, data to be shared needs to be documented. Cliff added that metadata is generally addressed individually on a case by case basis.

Larry reasoned that the people who are developing the database do not need the metadata and their evaluation of the need to draft such documentation will be biased. Because government cannot afford to retain GIS technicians, five years down the road, the person who designed the database will not be around to discuss its creation.

Dick maintained that databases are fairly dynamic constructions that change frequently. Larry agreed but pointed out that the core information remains regardless of what other values change. There is a definitive cost to drafting metadata but there is also a deferred cost in terms of knowledge loss to not developing it.

Lash asked what the time frame was in getting this to the NITC. Larry did not know what the timeline was for inclusion in the first Statewide Technology Plan. Action can be deferred.

Blaine asked what standards would be used. Larry explained that there is a nationally recognized FGDC metadata content standard. Software vendors are beginning to build in tools related to the FGDC standard, so that the process is more automated. The main question is not what standard is used, but how assertive the Steering Committee wants to be in recommending that public entities invest resources to develop and maintain metadata.

Lash suggested that this issue be deferred until the next meeting for further discussion.

Dennis expressed concern that this document was forwarded to the NITC without approval from either the Executive Committee or the Steering Committee. Larry reminded him that during the discussion at the last meeting about this situation, the Committee was informed that the NITC's timeline was such that there would be no opportunity to address these issues

with the Committee. Subsequently, that timeline relaxed. Lash added that Larry was given fairly broad authority to respond to the NITC. Dennis clarified that the stipulation with that authority was that the Executive Committee approve any actions. These items went forward to the NITC without the approval of either group. Larry pointed out that a disclaimer accompanies the draft recommendations for the Technical Committee which clearly states that the Steering Committee has not approved that document. In addition, Larry also verbally passed that message on to Steve Schafer and other members of the NITC.

Dennis requested that the Draft Recommendations be withdrawn from the NITC's consideration until the Steering Committee is comfortable with the items included in it.

Larry said that the first Technology Plan is to be released early in February. If this document is withdrawn until the next meeting, then there will be no chance to get it into the first plan. However, as this will be a dynamic document, the NITC will likely be drafting a new Statewide Technology Plan annually, and there will be other opportunities to get these ideas inserted.

Larry asked how this issue is to be resolved, as this is the second time it has been unsuccessfully addressed. Lash suggested each member discuss it with his respective agency to determine the agency's stance. Larry suggested that agencies consider how useful metadata is when attempting to use someone else's database.

GIS/LIS ASSOCIATION: Scott Richert recounted that the Association met last week at the Lancaster County Assessors office. May 11 was selected as the next Association meeting date, which is also the next scheduled Steering Committee meeting. The Association meeting will be held in Kearney and the GIS Steering Committee is invited to attend.

Scott McIntyre is taking nominations for Association officers to be elected in May.

The Association now has 70 members as of last week, with ten new members who did not attend the GIS symposium. Reminders will be sent out for membership renewal. Individual membership is $35, students are $15.

The Association has approved cosponsorship for the Mid-American GIS Symposium in Lake of the Ozarks, May 14-18.

John Beran and Larry Zink are working on creating the travelling GIS education show that the GIS Steering Committee had expressed an interest in developing.

Editors for the Nebraska Update Newsletter are needed.

One February 1, the Central Nebraska GIS group will be sponsoring another workshop at the Central Platte NRD. The topics will include spatial analysis, ArcView tips and tricks, working with ESRI and a round table discussion.

Larry, who had to leave the meeting briefly, asked if there had been discussion regarding moving the Steering Committee meeting to Kearney. Scott said he mentioned it but there had been no discussion. Lash expressed concern about discussing it without having it published on the agenda and asked to address it at the next meeting. In order to reserve appropriate space, Larry asked if there was a general desire among the Committee members to move the meeting. There was interest in changing the location of the meeting.

Lash announced that this topic will be published on the agenda for the next meeting with a notation on the webpage, indicating a likely change of location for the May meeting.

UPDATE ON PLSS EFFORTS: Lash asked Cliff if it would be acceptable to defer this update until the next meeting when Jim Brown is present. Cliff said he had looked at Jim's efforts and would be willing to wait until the next meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT: Lash explained that Larry drafted the Annual Report and the Executive Committee reviewed it. Dayle, Dick, Cathy Lang, Jim Brown, and Lash were present. The Executive Committee is comfortable bringing the report to the Steering Committee.

Dennis Wilson moved to send the Annual Report to the Legislature. Mark seconded. The motion passed. *(see vote #2 on Voting Record sheet).*

Larry asked if there was any interest in distributing copies of the Annual Report to the Legislature. By statute, the Steering Committee is required to send a copy to the Clerk of the Legislature, the Governor, and NIDCAC. Lash maintained it should only be given to those who statutorily require it. Mark commented on possible positive exposure but the Committee determined to send it only to the required persons.

GEOSPATIAL DATA SHARING COOPERATIVE: Lash recounted that Jim Cook from the NRC, Lauren Hill, Larry Zink and Lash met to discuss how to create the geospatial data sharing cooperative. Lauren volunteered to rework the New York document for Nebraska. She will eventually be making a presentation regarding this topic. Larry added that interlocal agreements were currently being explored rather than a cooperative.

FUNDING GEOSPATIAL DATA DEVELOPMENT: During the last meeting, Larry noted that Erik raised the issue of using the Wisconsin model as a means of funding property parcel development. To this point, the Steering Committee has never taken action on this issue. There seems to be general positive support for the concept of a cost sharing collaboration between state and local government or, as in the Wisconsin model, of increased land transaction fees to be dedicated to land modernization.

Duane asked if this relates to the NITC project proposals. Larry confirmed that it does relate but that the Steering Committee has not taken a formal position. Lash pointed out that local government strongly supports such an initiative but that state agency directors encounter a conflict of interest because they are under a no new tax mandate.

Jim Langtry suggested that if a conflict of interest is evident then perhaps the Legislature needs to create an independent committee to address this issue. It definitely needs to be addressed and some action must be taken. Larry said that there may be a middle ground where the language used can be generalized to avoid recommending a tax increase. This would allow the Steering Committee to adopt a written statement supporting this concept. The most probable course of action will be for state agencies to take a draft document to the Governor's policy people to determine if it is something that can be supported by the state.

Cliff asked what the document stamp tax was originally intended to fund. Larry did not know for sure but presumed that its function was to support the local offices. Cliff commented that there have been many interesting proposals as to what to do with it lately.

Duane stated that until there is some sort of funding available, the activities of the Steering Committee are extremely limited. Results cannot be obtained without resources. Larry added that one of the issues that will face the proposed study committee is what position the Steering Committee has taken regarding this matter. Duane asked how many code agencies there are on the Steering Committee. Larry said there are 8.

Blaine asked if there is an existing fund not requiring the addition of new taxes or fees that could be used. Lash explained that it is a good idea but unless it is a new revenue source, local government support can be lost. Part of the money goes to local governments for various housing projects and part of it goes to the county registrar of deeds. Jim Langtry added that the Wisconsin model changes the fee schedule and redistributes some of that money for land records modernization.

Larry pointed out that this issue can be handed over to the committee that will be created out of the NITC recommendations, but ultimately, the Steering Committee needs to take a stand. Until a formal position is taken, everyone who tries to work with this will be stymied by ambiguity. Lash suggested that the topic remain on the agenda as it continues to develop. It has the potential to progress rapidly if the right political forces come together. Larry asked if he should begin drafting a document and review it with people like Lauren Hill.

The Committee determined the next course of action was to draft a document for consideration.

Available Grant Funds. Larry advised that grants are available through the NITC's Community and Government Councils for information technology projects. The proposals are due in May. The Government Council's priorities are to assist small state agencies in information technology projects or collaborative information technology projects. The Community Council grants are aimed toward community related projects. Any Steering Committee member agency is eligible for these grants.

Duane asked if the Steering Committee can look for good applications of that money and recommend grants. Larry said it is unclear whether the Steering Committee itself could apply for a grant or not. However, if an agency wanted to apply, the Steering Committee can recommend specific projects.

UPDATES FROM PRIORITY DATABASE ADVISORY COMMITTEES:

DOQ/DEM DATABASE ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Mahendra reported that the second round of DEMs and DOQs are underway. NAPP photography for Nebraska was completed in 1999 but has not been approved so the NRC has not received it yet.

The Advisory Committee recommended undertaking a pilot project in Lancaster County to evaluate procedures,

methodologies, standards, and resources for eventual completion of statewide coverage. To accomplish this, a two-phase work share agreement with USGS has been arranged. The first phase, completion of 10 meter DEMs, is done. The 10 meter DEMs of Lancaster County have been delivered to the USGS for their review. The second phase, completion of 1 meter DOQs, requires NAPP images that are not yet available.

A question arose regarding the methodology. Since DEMs are based on contours and that data does not change, some argument has been made that 10 meter DEMs are not going to affect the DOQs very much. Further, it makes little sense to revise the DOQs for the entire state if it is not going to dramatically affect the image quality. The Committee is investigating this issue. In some comparative studies, it was discovered that if the terrain is variable then there is a marked difference between the 30-meter DEMs and the 10-meter DEMs. Otherwise, there is no visible difference. The Committee will review this point at a later date to determine if the entire state should be revised or not.

GOVERNMENTAL UNITS: Larry advised that there is a bill in the legislative process that addresses changes in the voting and election district boundaries. This legislation provides for these areas to be determined by visible boundaries.

The Legislature has started purchasing GIS equipment and software for the redistricting effort coming up.

The process for verification of voting precincts for the census starts in February.

Mahendra asked if it would be possible for the Steering Committee to recommend including NRDs as governmental boundaries for census purposes. In the 1990 census, the NRDs were requested as the recognized official boundary but it was too late. Lash suggested calling Val to discuss adding this as an amendment to the existing legislation.

TRANSPORTATION: Ed reported that the Advisory Committee drafted a scope of proposed accomplishments that was subsequently approved by the director. The next step is to develop a plan of action and select committee members. Ed has obtained some ideas from the Land Cover/Land Use Committee.

HYDROGRAPHY: Larry reported that Dayle Williams from the USGS submitted a draft pilot project interagency agreement that has been circulated among DWR and NRC to obtain some initial feedback. As soon as that is complete, the Advisory Committee will meet again. The first draft contains the agreed roles of different agencies.

LAND COVER: Jim Merchant reported that the Advisory Committee met twice in the fall. The Committee made a good start in identifying the need for data and some of the current data sources. More meetings are needed to reach some conclusions and recommendations.

HEIGHT MODERNIZATION: Jerry Odum explained that there has been a height modernization effort nationwide. The plan is to establish elevations via GPS through money from the NGS. There have already been considerable efforts in Nebraska in this arena. A meeting with Jim Brown, the NRC, Roads and Jerry resulted in the planning of a demonstration project for Lancaster County. Jerry plans to meet with Brian Dunnigan from the NRC to solicit his input. Following the pilot project, it is hope that this will be a progressive effort throughout the state, densifying down to about the four-mile level. He hopes to have a report around March with a Lancaster County proposal.

Jim Langtry explained that the Lancaster County project is designed to develop procedures and standards for potential use on the rest of the state. One possibility that was discussed was cooperative effort among agencies across the state. Jerry invited assistance with this effort. Jim Langtry added that one of the concerns is that the density needed for vertical control is not present in outstate Nebraska.

GEOSPATIAL FORUM IN KEARNEY - POSSIBLE ENDORSEMENT: Larry said that Bill Waltman contacted him via email regarding the Steering Committee's endorsement of a Geospatial Forum similar to one that was held a year ago in Omaha. This group, primarily attached to the university, is planning another Forum for March 14 at UNK. They are requesting the use of the Steering Committee's name and mailing list. Jim Merchant added that this group is an outgrowth from the Nebraska Research Initiative. The particular focus of this forum will be around agricultural and natural resources and providing farmers with the tools to make decisions about what to plant and when to plant, etc. Dick moved to give Steering Committee endorsement to the Geospatial Forum. Mark seconded. The motion passed. *(see vote #3 on Voting Record sheet).*

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS UPDATES AND AGENCY GIS ACTIVITIES:
Nathan reported soil surveys have been completed in 42 counties, with twelve more scheduled to be completed in fiscal year 2000.

The NRCS has hired a GIS specialist, Steve Peasley from Kansas. Steve has been spending his time mainly working with the

SURRGO effort down in Kansas. Due largely to his efforts, the NRCS will have hard copies of the digitally soils databases as well as digital copies.

The NRCS has purchased 23 high-end GIS machines and placed one in each NRD office throughout the state. These are the newest generation of Dell computers with great GIS capability but no software purchasing authority has been granted. By mid March, the NRCS hopes to have the authority to purchase software, which will likely be ESRI products.

Duane announced that he received the ESRI grant computer and software. PADD, Panhandle Area Development District, also received their ESRI grant equipment. GIS Day was successful with persons from NRD's and Scottsbluff attending to share respective GIS work.

Lash asked what PADD's ultimate goal is. Duane said that when he was thinking about submitting a grant application, he spoke with them and they determined it was something they could use. PADD is likely looking at economic issues. The Scottsbluff County Surveyor's office plans to use the system for public access.

Jim Merchant said that the January issue of the newsletter is currently being copied at Roads and should be mailed next week. He also is interested in stepping down as editor and is looking for volunteers to replace him.

Mark Kuzila added that the University recently completed a round of action plans. There has been discussion about getting all Conservation and Survey Division information accessible to the public. That issue will be addressed more fully in the next four years or so. The core activities, geology, ground water, and land cover/land use are areas that CSD has well covered, but the data needs to be put in a format that can be accessed. The initial plan is to focus work on constructing a few databases and then to collaborate with the Steering Committee to determine how to best merge this data with existing databases.

Dick said that Roads is in the final stages of hiring a consultant to complete a GIS strategic plan for the agency. An Advisory Committee has been formed comprised in part of division heads from Roads, a person from Aeronautics, and a person from State patrol. Copies of the twelve tasks that were identified in the scope of work are available. The $240,000 cost is still under negotiation, but they plan to be underway in the next few weeks. By the end of the nine-month project, Roads should have hardware and software projects documented for the next five years. One issue to be addressed is a local roads inventory. Some other states that have completed a strategic plan have determined that purchasing a local road network makes more sense than to map it themselves.

Roads has also been working with traffic modelers to take some of their information and bring it into GIS. In that process, they got involved with the census bureau. Ed added that the federal highway administration sanctioned a vendor to develop software that would work with ArcView to allow people to use Tiger '98 files to assist with traffic analysis. Most of this has been done in the metropolitan level by planning organizations and smaller local governments. There are a few states, including Nebraska that have a statewide traffic model. Nebraska volunteered to get involved. The book Nebraska had was completed in the 1960's. Some of those boundaries were not feasible to use. At this time, they are trying to compare the old data with the Tiger '98 data. Ed and others from transportation spent two months putting together traffic zone analysis boundaries. It is now complete and has been passed on to the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau will take that information and incorporate that into the Census 2000 data and send it back to Roads for final verification. When the process is complete, traffic analysis zone boundaries will be included in the 2000 census.

John Erikson reported that HHS is working on an in-house GIS strategic plan to determine the most effective means of initiating collaborative efforts within the agency. The plan will hopefully be completed by spring and included in the statewide technology plan. There also appears to be an increase in GIS visibility within HHS, with more program areas realizing its benefits and uses.

OTHER BUSINESS:
WGA CADASTRAL WORKSHOP: In his report from the Western Governor's Association, Josh Lear described the USGS development of a hazard support system as based on the Department of Defense's early warning missile detection system and LANDSAT data. This will allow continuous, real time monitoring of range land for wild fires. The system is capable of detecting fires that are less than one acre in size and will notify the appropriate officials of a fire outbreak within five minutes of detection. While this venture is still in early testing, they have a lot of confidence in their endeavor, and want to move the trial phase nationwide. The USGS will monitor wildfire outbreaks and notify the appropriate state agencies, while the state agencies will provide validation information to the USGS. Mark suggested the Forest Service might want to be involved.

NASA has developed an outreach program for state and local governments that involves having regional workshops. From these meetings, they plan to cultivate pilot projects where NASA data can be used to solve some of the more pragmatic policy problems that states face. NASA will also fund a nationwide personnel exchange, which will place state agency interns in

NASA and NASA interns in state agencies to allow states to develop the expertise to use the data. The Western Governor's Association GIS Council has drafted a memorandum of understanding that is now in the hands of the Governors for their consideration.

Larry added that the interest from NASA is coming from a number of places. They are genuinely interested in working with states. At the Mid-America Symposium, NASA is planning a workshop on this issue. It would be helpful if Steering Committee members could come up with projects that could be done utilizing NASA data. There will be a number of opportunities to have input into the process of shaping this new collaborative direction NASA.

The third item is a GPS enhancement. One GPS modernization effort is the addition of one or two more civil frequencies on the GPS satellite. Nationwide differential GPS is being enhanced by the conversion of military ground wave emergency network sites to GPS reference stations. Both GPS ventures will enhance the ability to attain precise measurements and need to be financed by the Department of Transportation. However, Congress failed to allocate the necessary funds. The WGA has drafted a resolution in support of these efforts that has been passed to the Governors for their consideration. This topic will likely be addressed in February at the National Governor's Association meeting. The Department of Defense is working to find a legal avenue for them to fund GPS modernization through enhancements.

The WGA is sponsoring a Western Cadastral Data and Policy Forum in Salt Lake City, March 20-22. This meeting developed as the result of efforts to get the Western states together to discuss common cadastral automation issues. In addition, they have some interest in regional coordination; specifically, aggregating data for use in regional analysis. There will be 10-14 persons from each state representing federal, state, and local government invited to attend this meeting. Larry added that one item on the agenda is the cooperative agreement among ESRI, the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service to develop enhancements to ESRI's products for facilitating cadastral data management.

Jerry noted that a couple more base stations have been added to the National Weather Service in Nebraska. One is in McCook, one in Fairbury and one in Neligh. Data from these stations is available through the NGS website.

Jim Merchant encouraged Steering Committee members to attend the Mid-America GIS Symposium and requested that the Steering Committee cosponsor this meeting. It will be held May 4-18 in the Lake of the Ozarks. Speakers are still welcome.

Larry Zink reported that he has received a mailing from NEMA, inviting the Steering Committee to attend their April 14 meeting.

Platte River Cooperative Agreement. Mark Kuzila introduced Larry Wells, Chair of the Mapping Subcmte. of the Lands Cmte. of the Platte River Cooperative Agreement. Larry Wells explained that as of yesterday, the consensus was that it will be one year to one-and-a-half years before a basic process is ready to be presented to the three states and the Department of Interior for the Platte River Cooperative Agreement. In that time, GIS will be an integral part of this cooperative agreement. The COHYST hydrology study is already underway, which is not directly connected with the cooperative agreement but is a result of efforts underway within the state. As chair of the Mapping Sub-Committee of the Cooperative Agreement, he recently was given the job of producing a GIS protocol manual for database building efforts, in particular as it integrates with the integrated monitoring and research component that the Technical Committee is drafting. They are currently on their ninth draft of IMRC. Federal agencies are numerously involved in this program so FGDC standards are required. A GIS protocol would require some type of monitoring entity to oversee data acquisition for research and monitoring in Central Nebraska for Nebraska's part of this program. Larry Wells requested a recommendation from the Steering Committee as to what agency, within the state, would be good in that oversight process.

Lash asked if Nebraska had the idea of creating a central agency to oversee data acquisition. Larry Wells said that there are some representative GIS protocol manuals from across the country. Anytime that many agencies are involved, there needs to be a central process for ensuring GPS accuracy standards and eliminating duplication.

Larry Zink asked what the base of authority this agency would have and if there are resources available. Larry Wells said that there should be funding available through the cooperative agreements under the auspices of the governance committee. The authority issue is open to debate. There are so many different agencies involved in this that they do not know what the others are doing. There has been a need for a GIS Protocol Manual for a long time. Larry Zink asked if this agency would be involved in developing this manual or just implementing it. Larry Wells said that there are not many people on the Mapping Committee with capable GIS experience so drafting assistance would be welcome.

Mark Kuzila clarified that Larry Wells was requesting assistance in drafting the manual. Mahendra asked if the FGDC was not already developing a manual of this type. Larry Wells said that they are too busy right now to do this and have passed it down to the Land Committee. Larry Zink asked what the timeline is. Larry Wells estimated a year.

Larry Zink offered to work with Larry Wells, Mark, Dayle and whomever else is interested to try to define what is needed, so that the Steering Committee is more aware of the issues involved. Mark said that he has an email from Larry Wells detailing some of the needs of their Committee and said he would forward it to Larry Zink. Larry Zink said that he would try to formulate something for the Steering Committee to consider.

Mahendra asked if the Mapping Subcommittee was interested in developing standards for data acquisition and database building. Larry Wells explained that they have to adhere to FGDC standards because it is a joint federal and state project. They need the framework set up for this entity or group that will have oversight and reporting capability to the Governor's committee.

Larry Zink asked who else was already involved in this process. The NRC and Game and Parks have representatives on the Committee. Larry Wells commented that the Committee needs more involvement from this end of the state.

The next meeting will be March 9, 2000 at the University of Nebraska's East Campus Union. The meeting was adjourned.

Vote Tallies for 1/20/2000 GIS Str. Cmte. Meeting									
.	Roll call	Min. #1	Annual Report #2	Geospatial Forum Endorse. #3					
DAS - Rick Becker	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
DEQ - Tom Lamberson **Dennis Burling**	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
CSD - **Mark Kuzila,** Jim Merchant, Jim Lacy	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
NGPC - **Mele Koneya** Bruce Sackett	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
NRC - Dayle Williamson **Mahendra Bansal**	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
PTD - Cathy Lang Bob Martin, Scott Gaines	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
PRO - Lauren Hill Dan Hoffman	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
DOR - **Dick Genrich** Jon Ogden, Ed Kelley	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
St.Surv - Jim Brown	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
LRD - Val Goodman	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Fed. - **Nathan Mc Caleb,** Kelly Klenke	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
John Miyoshi	A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Blaine Dinwiddie Steve Larson	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Cliff Welsh	A/P	.	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Larry Worrell **Jim Langtry**	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Lash Chaffin	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Duane Stott	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Dennis Wilson	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
Dick Nelson **John Erickson**	P	+	+	+	.	.	.	.	.
TOTALS	12 - P/ 13 - P	12 - +	13 - +	13 - +	.	.	.	.	.

2/25/2000 1:38 PM

"P"=present, "A"=absent, "+"=voting for, "-"=voting against, "NV"=not voting