

NRIS Advisory Committee
1:00 p.m., December 8, 2009
Montana State Library,
Grizzly Conference Room
1515 E. Sixth Ave., Helena

ATTENDEES:

Members: Amy Bamber, Nat Carter (for Chris Yde), Janet Hess-Herbert, Damon Murdo, Stan Sternberg and Robin Trenbeath.

Staff: Allan Cox, Gerry Daumiller, Jeff Dobb, Evan Hammer, Bryce Maxell, Scott Mincemoyer, Diane Papineau, Darlene Staffeldt, Jennie Stapp and Marlys Stark.

Visitors: Dave Nagel, Ralph Franklin,

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

ONGOING PROJECT UPDATES:

1. Montana GIS Portal

The application is one year old. Updates were done on October 1 which included primarily interface changes with an emphasis on publishing data as well as finding it. There has been a slight increase in usage. Future development ideas to be implemented based on funding and priority include ways to search better and improvements to metadata records and documentation as well as developing Mt Digital Atlas to replace the current map viewer with a map viewer based in the digital atlas.

2. MSDI Stewardship Update

Editing and updating the high resolution National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) is the main responsibility of NRIS along with keeping records clean and increasing usage of the data set. A lot of groups have developed and maintain their own hydrography data sets so there is a lot of maintenance work on duplicates. There has been limited interest in adopting the NHD but the drawback is the cost and the time to transfer data. For example, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, which uses the Lat/Long ID, has information needs that aren't addressed by NHD. It would be good for NHD to be available for people to download as a service. The hydrography workgroup has not been very active but are hoping to begin to meet every other month or more in some form.

The Imagery Framework Layer, NAIP 2009 is being processed in the Mr. Sid format to be accessible like the 2005 NAIP. It will be available as tiles for download. The 2005 NAIP data in TIFF format has been transferred from the Base Map Service Center (BMSC) and will be available through NRIS. The BMSC will no longer make the 2005 NAIP available and will, instead, offer an imagery service for the 2009 NAIP. This service will be available in early 2010.

3. Geographic Names Adviser

Gerry Daumiller has taken over the duties of the State Geographic Names Advisor through a memo of understanding (MOU) with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). This position is responsible for making recommendations regarding what names the federal government recognizes for natural features. The federal Board of Geographic Names meets and decides on the official name based on recommendations from Gerry as the state representative. Gerry interacts with county commissions and representatives from 6 agencies to determine what name to propose. He may wish to set up a state names board such as 20 states already have.

NEW PROJECTS:

1. Digital Atlas

Now that the Portal is complete, this project can move up again. It will be updated to the new ArcGIS Server technology. This new application will replace that GIS Portal map viewer and will consolidate older applications including the Topofinders.

2. Montana Place Names

In conjunction with the Montana Historical Society, NRIS staff are developing an online Montana Place Names Companion application that will make all of the content of the recently published Montana Place Names book searchable online. The end of the year is the goal to have the site up and going.

3. Data and Map Inventory

It is a goal for NRIS to complete a data and map inventory. This has been attempted before and follows a recommendation from the last meeting. It blends well with other projects such as consolidating the web applications on the IT side. This should help keep the NRIS web interface up to date including cleaning it up and helping with the data archiving.

4. Data.mt.gov

MSL staff have been exploring the possibility of creating a data.mt.gov web site. This would be based on a federal site which makes available raw data as well as web services. One should be fairly easy to implement for Montana. ITSD has encouraged the idea and about 5 states currently have something similar up. The NRIS role would be making sure the geospatial data is accurate. This would just be one more avenue for having access to the Montana Natural Resource data.

5. Geospatial Multistate Archive and Preservation Partnership (GeoMAPP)

Library of Congress is funding a grant to examine archival needs for geospatial data. The current grant funds work in North Carolina, Kentucky and Utah. They are seeking informational partners to continue their work to develop best practices for preservation of geospatial and other digital data. NRIS has been included along with about a dozen other states. Both the State Records Management Division and the State Archives have agreed that NRIS is the best organization to represent Montana in this capacity. There is some chance that this opportunity might eventually include some grant funding for geospatial data archiving.

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM:

MTNHP was established in 1983 as part of NRIS. It is currently under the University of Montana and is part of the Natural Heritage Network which includes all states and provinces as well as many foreign countries. It has to be compatible with other heritage programs and make information available to all state agencies, federal agencies and the public. Their main focus is on providing information to be used for planning. Their funding comes from three areas, MSL core funding, U of M, and Annual Service Agreements with federal agencies and other organizations. Recent products include an online species of concern report that can be more easily kept current, predicted distribution models, Montana Field Guide updates and speed improvements for Tracker.

NRIS STRATEGIC PLANNING:

1. Core functions/Prioritizing work

NRIS needs to manage and deliver information and contract services. Some agencies would like to change core functions or services; there is an opportunity to do this through agency MOUs. These changes would need to be included in the agency strategic plan.

2. NRIS and the state Enterprise GIS environment

ITSD is developing this for MT. NRIS's role needs determined but will include framework assistance.

3. NHD Pilot and the Water Information System (WIS):

The water information system is a very important issue with a lot of support. One future action may be to survey agencies for their ideas.

4. Elevation and GNIS

Thought needs to be put in to what would make Elevation more active. There is a proposal to make GNIS a framework layer.

NEXT MEETING AND OTHER STRATEGIES FOR MOVING FORWARD:

Input and ideas would be very helpful as well as keeping in better touch. Please send suggestion to Evan. A conference call meeting for January is a possibility.

The next scheduled meeting is June 2, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT:

The chair closed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.