

**GIS Steering Committee  
Meeting Minutes - May 20, 1997**

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Present were (\* authorized to vote):

* Rod Armstrong	State Information Technology Coordinator
* Jim Brown	State Surveyor's Office
* Dennis Burling	Department of Environmental Quality
* Lash Chaffin	League of Municipalities
Larry Dix	Nebraska Association of County Officials
Bob Foreman	Nebraska Department of Roads
* Dick Genrich	Department of Roads
* Val Goodman	Legislative Research
* Les Howard	Conservation & Survey Division
Erik Hubl	Lancaster County Assessor's Office
Rich Kern	Natural Resources Commission
Terry Kubicek	Natural Resources Commission
Jim Lacy	CALMIT, Conservation & Survey Division
* Jim Langtry	Lancaster County Engineer's Office
Sue Maxwell	Milestone Solutions
* John Miyoshi	Lower Platte NRD
Steve Rathje	Natural Resources Commission
Scott E. Richert	Lancaster County Assessor's Office
Steve Schafer	DAS-Intergovernmental Data Services
Jennifer Sharpe	USGS
Ethel Skinner	Property Tax Division
* Duane Stott	Scotts Bluff County Surveyor
Roderick S. Sutherland	Professional Surveyor's Association of NE
Connie Watson	SAIC
* Cliff Welsh	Keith County Commissioner
Darryl Williams	US Geological Survey, Nat'l Mapping Division
* Dayle Williamson	Natural Resources Commission
* Dennis Wilson	City of Omaha
* Larry Worrell	Lancaster County Surveyor
Paul Yamamoto	Department of Environmental Quality
Larry K. Zink	Coordinator, GIS Steering Committee

**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 Tuesday, May 13, 1997.

**ROLL CALL.** Chairperson Jim Brown called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 p.m. and requested a call of the roll. Twelve duly authorized representatives were present. Therefore, a quorum was present to conduct business. At this time, Jim Brown asked each of the guests to introduce themselves.

**MINUTES.** Larry Zink noted that the date on the minutes for May 18 was incorrectly stated as May 19. Lash Chaffin moved for the minutes of the May 18, 1997 Steering Committee meeting to be approved as

distributed with a change to the meeting date. Dayle Williamson seconded the motion. The motion passed (see vote #1 on the attached Voting Record sheet).

**EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS.** GIS Steering Committee Home Page. Les Howard handed out a copy of the Nebraska Geographic Information Systems Steering Committee home page (<http://ulysses.unl.edu/gis/>). He asked the committee to visit the Web site and to send any comments or suggestions to Jim Merchant. Les also noted that the site does include a bulletin board for any one who was interested.

Nebraska GIS Listserve. Jim Brown asked for any comments or suggestions regarding the GIS Listserve. None were offered.

Mid-America GIS Symposium - 1998. Les Howard handed out an outline of the level of sponsorship that may be available for the symposium in 1998. They include: the Advocate where no money contribution is required and the Benefactor in which a \$200 contribution is required. Neither level had been formally approved by the planning committee, but final approval was expected to be made at the next planning meeting on May 22. Larry asked the committee if it was okay for him to devote his time working on this project. Lash Chaffin moved that the Steering Committee co-sponsor the Mid-America GIS Symposium at the \$200 Benefactor level as outlined by Les Howard. Les Howard seconded the motion. The motion passed (see vote #2 on the attached Voting Record sheet).

Nebraska Association of Emergency Managers. Duane Stott reported on the booth he had at the EMA meeting in Hastings on April 19 & 20. Duane reported that there were a wide range of people at the conference from fire departments to ambulance personnel. The conference was a different focus than Duane was used to, but he had fairly good response. It also provided opportunities for Duane to visit with many civil defense and emergency response people from all across the state. Larry Zink noted that Duane's travel expenses for this meeting were paid out of the PSAN contribution funds. A summary of the expenses paid out of these funds was included in the GIS agenda packet.

Governor's Information Technology Conference. Larry Zink reported that the GIS Steering Committee was invited to have a booth at the Governor's Information Technology Conference. Larry had talked to the Department of Roads and they were willing to staff the GIS Steering Committee booth at the conference on May 29 & 30 in Kearney, Nebraska.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT.** Larry Zink reported that at the last GIS Steering Committee meeting, the committee voted to develop a PLSS pilot project. Larry was to research two possible funding sources, which were the Bureau of Reclamation and a FGDC grant. Jim Brown, Larry Zink, and Larry Worrell did contact the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau was interested in a pilot project and was specifically looking at the Loup River area. However, this area did not meet the GIS Steering Committee's criteria for the project: 1) the county must have an active county surveyor, and 2) that the county was likely to use this information within the next year or two. Larry Zink also explored the possibility of a FGDC grant. The grant was more of an institutional approach—getting groups together to share and integrate data—as opposed to creating a database. Consequently, Larry followed Jon Ogden's suggestion from the last meeting, that if funding was not easily available, the committee should develop a pilot project proposal as opposed to spending the time to seek funding.

Larry Zink drafted a proposed pilot project and circulated it to the pilot project team (Larry Zink, Jim Brown, Larry Worrell, and Duane Stott). Based on comments from the pilot project team, and those from Steve Schafer of DAS/IDSD and Milbert Krohn of the BLM, Larry revised the PLSS Pilot Project

Proposal and sent copies to all of the Steering Committee asking for their feedback. All of the feedback was, for the most part, positive. Dayle Williamson did bring his concerns to the executive committee meeting by providing a memo outlining NRC's concerns about the proposal and the project itself. Dayle's memo and the Executive Committee minutes had been distributed to Steering Committee members in advance of the Steering Committee meeting.

Larry reported that NRC had conducted an analysis comparing their existing PLSS database with BLM's new one and expressed a need to integrate NRC's and BLM's digitized PLSS corner databases. NRC also noted that the GMM is a DOS-based program and recommended the use of ArcInfo COGO or another program. Dick Genrich agreed that the committee should check other software programs and he would check this further with Integraph. NRC also questioned the need for developing the database and whether or not the State and/or the GIS Steering Committee should be undertaking the project. NRC was also concerned about whether such project management fell within the GIS Steering Committee's authority and whether the committee had the resources to conduct the project.

Larry reported that the Executive Committee did discuss Dayle's list of concerns. Larry also noted that the Executive Committee voted to recommend that the Steering Committee proceed with the proposal. The Executive Committee's recommendation was drafted as follows:

*"The Nebraska GIS Steering Committee, in cooperation with the Nebraska State Surveyor's Office, should undertake the PLSS Pilot Project, as generally outlined in the 4/26/97 Version of the PLSS Pilot Project Proposal. The project should be directed by a subcommittee of the GIS Steering Committee, initially composed of Jim Brown, Duane Stott, Larry Worrell, and Larry Zink, and chaired by Jim Brown. The subcommittee should solicit partnerships and support from other entities and submit a more detailed work plan, including recommendation for initial pilot project area(s), to the Nebraska GIS Steering Committee for approval."*

In Larry's presentation, he noted that the PLSS Pilot Project goal was a "long-term pilot project to lay the foundation for the development and maintenance of an upgradeable, statewide, map quality or better, PLSS database . . ." Larry also explained the project's purpose and benefits. The project would provide the foundation for developing up-to-date cadastral tax maps, provide the necessary PLSS base maps required for a local government multipurpose GIS, and would provide a good estimate of the resources needed for a statewide project.

Larry further outlined the projects objectives, project management, implementation steps, and the database development steps. Dayle expressed his concerns about the management of the project. Larry noted in his presentation, that there would need to be good cooperation between the Steering Committee and the Surveyor's Office. The Steering Committee would need to develop an advisory committee as appointed by the Steering Committee Chair. Finally, the advisory committee would be responsible for preparing an action plan and a budget for the Steering Committee's approval.

Larry concluded his presentation by asking the committee to look at the Executive Committee's recommendation and the draft resolution for an Advisory Committee. John Miyoshi asked what the Executive Committee proposed for funding. Larry noted that approximately \$10,000 would be needed for temporary data entry help. The rest of the funding would fall to the various agencies that take part in the project and would probably be in the form of in-kind contributions. John also asked about hardware and software costs. Larry explained that these costs would also fall to what the various agencies could offer. Larry noted that much of the budget was very general, because one of the purposes of the pilot project was

to get baseline figures for these costs and they could vary significantly depending on which county might be selected for a pilot project area. Dayle noted that the NRC could offer to translate the project information into GIS coverage and compare it to the DOQs. Larry Zink reported that he had visited with other states to see what they have done. Larry explained that other states generally fell into one of three categories:

- 1) the BLM is active in their state and the state has taken and used the data developed by the BLM;
- 2) other state's PLSS database consists basically of digitized coordinates for USGS quad map; or
- 3) enhancement to these digitized PLSS coordinates had been accomplished in spots by the local level using GPS and maintained in a central state database.

Several states expressed an interest in learning how Nebraska decides to proceed. General discussion about the project followed. John Miyoshi asked who would own the data. Jim Brown explained that this issue had not yet been addressed. He assumed it would be passed on to the county for ownership and maintenance. Jim also added that there was a continual need for training the county surveyors to upgrade and maintain the data.

There was a fair amount of discussion about the time required for a pilot project. It was noted that the draft resolution refers to six months. Lash Chaffin suggested that if speed was a concern, then the Steering Committee should just endorse the concept and get out of the project committee's way. Larry noted that there were two different wordings that summed up what the committee had been discussing. One was the draft resolution for creating an Advisory Committee on the Statewide Public Land Survey System (*see attachment*) which Larry thought was a little more conservative as far as communication and project management. The other wording was the Executive Committee's recommendation which essentially endorsed the general concept and recommended that the project go forward.

Cliff Welsh asked what the involvement of the Department of Revenue would have. Larry Zink saw them as a major agency who would have input into the selection of the counties. Ethel Skinner noted that cadastral mapping is being looked at by the Property Tax Division. However, it was not a top priority. She would be willing to talk to her Division Administrator, Cathy Lang-Morrissey, about the project. Ethel also noted that it was important to show the Property Tax Division that this will help the quality of assessment for the State of Nebraska. If the committee could show this, then the Property Tax Division would most likely be a major player in the effort. Ethel felt that the committee should do a pilot project and noted that the committee was going in the right direction. She also added that the pilot project should be one county, it should be selected very carefully, and finally it should be done on a regional basis, not county by county.

Rod Armstrong moved to adopt the PLSS Advisory Committee resolution with the word "draft" stricken. Lash Chaffin seconded the motion. During the discussion, Dayle asked all of the agencies that have already been asked to serve on the PLSS Advisory Committee to make sure they are still willing to participate. He also asked the other state agencies present what, in general, they would contribute to this effort. General discussion about data entry and the capabilities of the GMM software followed. Dayle called the question. The motion passed (*see vote #3 on the attached Voting Record sheet*). John Miyoshi asked that the minutes of the PLSS Advisory Committee meetings be posted on the Listserve.

#### **NEBRASKA PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM—UPDATE ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION.**

Larry Zink reported that he had met with Tom Ryan, Jim Brown, and Brian Dunnigan from NRC to address NRC's questions about LB 483. Larry felt that NRC's questions had been answered and there was to be an exchange of letters confirming this. Dayle noted that Brian had not yet received a response. Jim Brown explained that a draft was being worked on and it would be finished fairly quickly.

**UPDATE - DRAFT LAND RECORD MODERNIZATION GUIDELINES.** Larry reported that at the last meeting, he had presented a partial draft for land record modernization guidelines. At that time, Dayle had indicated that his staff felt there were errors in the draft document that should be corrected before it was sent to a subcommittee for review and revision. Larry noted that he hadn't been able to spend too much time with the guidelines project, because of the demands of the PLSS Pilot Project. Since the last Steering Committee meeting, Larry met with Brian Dunnigan to address NRC's concerns. In general, Larry felt that most of Brian's concerns were editorial in nature. Brian and Larry have discussed these and Larry has made some wording changes. At this point, Larry is hoping to not need to spend too much time with editorial changes until a larger subcommittee has reviewed the draft. Larry indicated that he anticipates further editorial suggestions from that group.

Larry noted one significant difference that needed further discussion. Larry noted that he had surveyed various guidelines for map scale recommendations and found a fair degree of consensus. In addition to making a draft recommendation on those map scales, Larry noted he also made a draft recommendation for related map accuracy standards. Brian questioned this map accuracy recommendation primarily because of the cost involved. Larry indicated that, in the context of the direction he felt he was given by the Steering Committee, he was not clear how to best handle this differing point of view relative to map accuracy. Larry further noted that while he felt Brian's point was a very legitimate point of discussion, he was reluctant to change his draft recommendation on map accuracy without the benefit of further discussion by a broader subcommittee. However, at the last Steering Committee meeting, Dayle requested that "errors" identified by NRC's staff should be corrected prior to the draft being sent to a subcommittee for review. Larry noted that while he hadn't had much time to work with the guidelines, he would appreciate some assistance in working through this process "box". Larry said he felt that Brian was comfortable in raising his perspective at a subcommittee discussion. Dayle noted that Brian was waiting on Larry's response. Jim Brown suggested that both opinions be brought to a subcommittee for discussion and resolution.

**ELECTION OF STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS.** Rod Armstrong moved that the current officers be reelected for a one-year term being July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998. Larry Worrell seconded the motion. Jim Brown asked for discussion, but there was none. Dayle called for the question. The motion passed (*see vote #4 on the attached Voting Record sheet*).

**REPORT ON FGDC MEETING.** Larry used overheads to report on the FGDC meeting he attended in April. He showed a map listing the eighteen states which have entered into a partnership agreement with the FGDC. Larry explained that the conference included a two hour meeting with the FGDC and Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt. During this meeting, there were three basic recommendations presented. The first recommendation was to increase resources for the development of foundational data sets. Secretary Babbitt noted that he was aware of this need, but it was unlikely that there will be any new money to address this issue. Discussion focused on ways to provide increased flexibility for existing funding sources. The second recommendation was to get federal field offices more aware and involved in local spatial data coordination. The third recommendation was for state and local groups to get involved early on with the development of standards. Larry felt that all three recommendations were fairly well received by Secretary Babbitt.

Cliff Welsh asked if there were any recommendations for cadastral mapping to come out of the conference. Larry noted that there had been some discussion about standards for cadastral mapping. Larry also reported that geospatial cadastral databases were generally felt to be one of the most difficult and complex challenges for framework data development. The complexity of the FGDC cadastral standards were discussed as well as the need for educational materials and actual physical database models. Larry noted

that he had also discussed the PLSS Pilot Project with several people at the meeting and received encouragement for pursuing the project.

**STEERING COMMITTEE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT NEEDS.** Following up on a suggestion made at the last Steering Committee meeting, Larry Zink had drafted a letter to Steve Schafer, Intergovernmental Data Services Division, outlining anticipated financial management needs of the GIS Steering Committee and inquiring if DAS-IDSD might be able to help. Since Steve was at the meeting, he personally responded to inquires from the Steering Committee. Steve explained that he would have to look at the needs of the committee on a case-by-case basis. He suggested that if there was a logical home for an activity, then that agency should assist with the financial management needs. However, in the absence of a home, Steve may be willing to help with the process. He also noted that state law makes disbursement of funds for symposiums or conferences difficult. Therefore, he thought it was best to work with a private entity such as the PSAN who sponsored the 1996 GIS Symposium. Some general discussion followed. Dennis Burling and Jim Brown recapped what they understood Steve had said. Steve would be able to help with grants, but it was difficult for the state to sign long-term contracts. Jim Brown noted that the committee should move forward to get a users group going to help with the upcoming symposium.

**ANNUAL REPORT TO LEGISLATURE.** Larry drafted an outline of what he felt was to be included in the 1997 Annual Report. Larry was going to include a brief overview of the various projects for the year and write a more in depth report on database development efforts. He proposed having the Executive Committee review the draft report by July 15 and be ready for final approval by the Steering Committee at the next meeting on July 24. Dennis Burling suggested that the Executive Committee review a draft of the annual report in June. The Executive Committee would then circulate the draft report to the entire Steering Committee for changes, comments, or suggestions. Larry would gather and review all of the committee's comments and have a final draft ready for the Steering Committee's approval at the July 24 meeting. John Miyoshi suggested an alternative approach for the draft to be first circulated to the entire Steering Committee, and then, the Executive Committee would have that feedback when it reviewed the draft. John's suggestion was accepted by the Steering Committee. Larry confirmed with the Steering Committee members their support of his proposed outline for the annual report. General support was expressed with Lash Chaffin suggesting that an abbreviated summary report might be acceptable.

The committee took a short break at 3:10 p.m.

**FRAMEWORK DATA PLANNING - TRANSPORTATION.** Dick Genrich reported on recent conversations between Jon Ogden, Larry Zink, and himself regarding the possible initiation of a planning process for the development of a statewide transportation database. Dick reported that he and Jon Ogden will be exploring this matter with the Department of Road's administration. Dick noted that one of the seven state priorities for GIS database development was transportation. Therefore, Dick provided an overview of the current situation. Dick noted that the 10,000 mile state highway system and 10,000 of the county arterial system has been digitized. In addition, 15,800 bridges; 3,700 railroad crossings, and nearly 4,100 miles of the railroad lines have been digitized. Airports, barges, and trails also need to be added, which leaves about 70,000 of county roads left to be digitized. Originally, the Department of Roads was working with prison industries to explore the possibility of getting most of this work done. However, Etak, a private contractor, contacted Dick asking for digitized county maps. During Dick's conversation with Etak, Dick discovered that Etak was planning to send a GPS crew out to Nebraska to travel the county roads. Dick is exploring a possible agreement to give Etak county road maps in return for the raw GPS data. Dick is planning a conference call sometime next week to discuss this agreement.

**UPDATE ON GPS BASE STATION NETWORK.** Jim Brown reported that the Lincoln station is running. Duane Stott is now set up on the Internet at the Scotts Bluff location. Duane also has the server he needs and information should be flowing back into the Lincoln Web site sometime next week. Computer software is being taken out to Grand Island and it should be up and running sometime next week as well. Jim has ordered two mobile single-frequency stations (one hand-held and one backpacker) to be used for training. They will also be available for loan to other people working on small projects. Roderick Sutherland added that Iowa Western is looking for a grant to purchase GPS equipment and asked the PSAN for a letter of support. Dick Genrich noted that the Department of Roads has been using the GPS Base Station data with the GPS equipment mounted in their van and everything has been going well.

**UPDATE ON DOQs.** Dayle handed out a map of the DOQs. All approved DOQs are online and the project is ahead of schedule. NRC just received certification from the USGS on blocks J2 and K1. Darryl Williams from the U.S. Geological Survey National Mapping Division was present to thank Dayle and the NRC for their work on the DOQs project. The project is expected to be completed before the December 1998 deadline. Mr. Williams did not know of any other states who had pursued such a work share type of arrangement. However, it has worked well for NRC and the USGS.

**FUTURE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING DATES.** Larry Zink had tentatively reserved meeting rooms at the East Campus Union for the following days:

1997

Thursday, July 24

Thursday, September 25 (possible GIS Forum)

Thursday, November 13 (possible GIS Forum)

1998

Thursday, January 15

Thursday, March 12 (possible GIS Forum)

Thursday, May 21

Jim Brown did not hear any objections to these meeting dates and adopted them as the next meeting dates. Larry had received a suggestion to move the meetings times from 1:30pm to 1:00 pm. Since there was no discussion about this change in time, Jim Brown noted that the committee will meet at 1:00 pm and will remain flexible to work around any scheduled GIS Forums.

**DOQQs & DIGITAL SOILS MAPS FOR USE IN CADASTRAL MAPPING.** Jim Brown was concerned how well the DOQQs and the cadastral mapping were going to mesh together. Jim appointed a quick committee of himself, Larry Zink, Erik Hubl, and one representative from Dayle's office to meet with Erik to see what work he has done and how it is working.

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS UPDATES ON OTHER AGENCY GIS ACTIVITIES.** John Miyoshi reported that his Natural Resources District just got accepted for a project called City Green which is an urban forestry project. The project includes the use of a specialized software package and one copy has been released to each state. The NRD will be mapping Wahoo for this project. Two people are going out to Fort Collins, Colorado for training next week. The software inventories trees as far as variety, size, and condition. It also expands the canopy in years ahead to help determine where trees should be planted or what types of trees are needed.

Duane Stott reported that they have received two GPS terminal 4600s. Training on these terminals should begin the first week of June.

Jim Langtry. The city is about 3/4s of the way through GPSing section and corner sections. Corner points will be converted over to NRC for aerial photography. Work also continues to build a base map.

Dennis Wilson. Orthophotos are to be re-updated in 1998. The Douglas County Surveyor has showed some interest in getting on the city's system. Therefore, Dennis would like to talk to NRC about GPS control systems. The City of Omaha has also spent a great deal of time working on licensing agreements. The City has been receiving lots of calls from private sector individuals wanting maps and orthophotos, etc. In order to fund the maintenance of the maps and personnel time, the City is looking at some sort of a system to cover costs.

In a general discussion of data access and fees, Jim Langtry explained that Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln is pursuing a policy of making data available for browsing and read-only access on the Web site. Data requested for personal and commercial use will be for sale. Dayle noted that NRC's philosophy was that if the taxpayer paid to get it, then it should be available for free. Larry Zink added that this was an issue brought up at the FGDC meeting. It was suggested that federal moneys are needed to assist local governments to recoup some of their costs to develop the data. Jim Miyoshi noted his concern about LB 590. It centralizes all State information through a gateway provider and lets the State do this themselves or hire a private firm. As a user of state information, John's NRD was very concerned about centralizing power with a gatekeeper. John added that Senator Brohm is proposing four amendments that will grandfather all information that is currently free to remain free. Cliff Welsh has a similar concern for county governments. Counties are responsible for collecting or processing data and they should be able to receive a fee for this.

**OTHER BUSINESS.** At the last meeting, Erik Hubl reported that the NACO Technology Committee had made a recommendation supporting the idea of a documentary land stamp money for land record modernization. Larry Zink asked if the Steering Committee wanted to include their support of this resolution in the annual report. Larry Dix explained that the Technology Committee had made the recommendation, but the NACO Board had not yet approved it. Cliff Welsh added that this resolution followed the State of Wisconsin's model. Lash Chaffin recommended that the Steering Committee wait until after the NACO Board had meet and voted on the committee's recommendation.

Larry Zink reported that the Rainwater Basin was applying for a FGDC grant and they had called asking Larry to help with the process. If they receive approval for the grant, the Rainwater Basin would be looking at the GIS Steering Committee for help with metadata training.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 24, 1997.

GIS Steering Committee  
VOTING RECORD

Date 5/20/97

	Roll Call	Minutes		PLSS		Officers				
		#1	#2	#3	#4					
DAS - Rod Armstrong	A/p			+	+					
DEQ - Dennis Burling Tom Lamberson	P	+	+	+	+					
CSD - Perry Wigley Les Howard, Jim Merchant	P	+	+	+	+					
NRC - Dayle Williamson Terry Kubicek	P	+	+	+	+					
PRO - Tom Ryan	A									
DOR - Jon Ogden <u>Dick Genrich</u>	P	+	+	+	+					
Surveyor - Jim Brown	P	+	+	+	NV					
LRD - Laura Valenziano <u>Val Goodman</u>	P	NV	+	+	+					
John Miyoshi	P	+	+	+	+					
Blaine Dinwiddie	A									
Cliff Welsh	P	+	+	+	+					
<u>Larry Worrell</u> Jim Langtry	P	+	+	+	+					
Lash Chaffin	P	+	+	+	+					
Duane Stott	P	+	+	+	+					
Dennis Wilson	P	+	+	+	+					
TOTALS	12/13	11(+) 1(NV)	11(+)	12(+)	11(+) 1(NV)					

P = present  
A = absent

"+" = voting for  
"-" = voting against  
"NV" = not voting