

MAINE COORDINATES

Update of the Maine
Geographical Information Systems
User Group
Vol. 1, No. 1
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Welcome to the Maine GIS User Group! The use of GIS is expanding daily in Maine and throughout the world. By linking data with spatial references the way people manage and interpret information is changing. By facilitating the discovery of common ground and shared interests, we are seeing changes in the way organizations interact. Many people at all levels of government, business, and other organizations, have repeated the sentiment, 'It is a shame I didn't get your advice **before** I started this new project' or 'Hey, I am developing data in these areas too. Are there ways we could exchange information?'

The Maine GIS User Group is one way for people to meet, share ideas and experiences, and then walk back to specific jobs with more efficiency, cooperation, and ultimately significant cost savings. As a group we are system analysts, application developers, division managers, data developers, and desktop users. We work in most of the major organizations in Maine on several different platforms with dozens of software packages and hundreds of data sets. With all this diversity it is hard sometimes to 'break the ice' and find common interests.

Without proposing a formal mission statement (yet) we are:

People of Maine who use spatial information for specific projects and share an interest in knowing more about what others are doing.

WHO ARE WE? A Breakdown of Users:

of group members by organization type

Federal	10
State	29
Municipal	15
Regional	7
Education	21
Non-Profit	10
Business	13
Vendors	9
Utilities	11
Consultants	24
Other	6
TOTAL	155

Most anyone who has implemented a GIS in their organization will confess that initially it can be labor intensive and require significant capital investment. However, it usually pays off with high profile products, increased data management, and simplified updates. So how does it work? How can we as a participant in our respective programs begin (or continue) to integrate spatial structures into

our day-to-day operations? These are the kinds of questions we will pose as a group in coming years.

Brief Group History:

The Maine GIS User Group first met in December 1993, and three times since then with discussion periods, member presentations, vendor displays, and a poster session. Attendance has been strong, averaging 45 people. The sense of the group was more structured sessions and written materials would help make meetings more productive.

In September, a volunteer sub-group began to formulate a more organized agenda for meetings. Initial plans from this group include quarterly, three hour meetings for the first year with a series of programs led by panel discussions. Between these group meetings, specific topic meetings may be put together in response to interest in areas like:

- municipal GIS
- conservation
- coastal applications
- northern forests
- ArcView scripts
- remote sensing
- digital orthoquads

An update 'newsletter' would be wrapped into the meeting announcements to provide more background information and forum space.

Current planning subgroup members:

- Nancy Allen,
Bureau of Info. Services
- Linda Alverson,
Seven Islands Land Co.
- Tim Case,
Natural Areas Program
- Judy Colby-George,
Geo-Systems
- Stacey Fontaine,
Central Maine Power
- Jon Giles,
City of Portland.
- Tim White,
James W. Sewell Co.

Additional planning group members are welcome. Regular meeting attendance would be necessary.

 This is an informal group, so knowing approximately how many people will attend a meeting is important to our hard working, volunteer organizers. Please cut out and return the attached card, making an changes necessary to the label. We need these by November 10th, 1994!!!

Columns for MAINE COORDINATES

SO YOU WANT A JOB?

Open job listing for Maine employers seeking GIS skills

SHAPES of MAINE:

Specific project announcements and updates including new program outlines or mission statements, personnel changes, and previews of articles or conferences.

QUESTION AND ANSWER:

How do I...? Where is that data...? Who is doing....?

NEW TRENDS:

Technology is changing so quicky few are able to keep abreast. Discussion of new hardware, software, networks, applications, that could impact the way many of us do GIS in Maine.

Note: These are brainstorming ideas for articles that would be of interest to the membership. The success of this forum will depend on how much YOU contribute to the dialogue. Please take the time to mail in copies of RFPs, media coverage, annual reports, etc. The editors will review materials and solicit members to write focus articles. Take the initiative and offer to write!.

STATE of the STATE:

With so much of GIS being driven by state agencies, this will focus on neat programs from Augusta (and beyond).

COOPERATION IS THE KEY:

Highlights of cooperative programs that are making a difference for Maine.

This update is distributed with the generosity of the Bureau of Information Services. Mention of specific products does not indicate endorsement by the Maine GIS User Group or its members.

Article contributions are encouraged. Send materials in WP5.1 or ASCII format to :
Tim Case, Maine Natural Areas Program, DECD, SHS #130, Augusta, ME 04333
Internet: sdtcase@gatekeeper.ddp.state.me
Newsletter coordinators Tim Case and Nancy Allen reserve the right to edit for length.

Questions relating to group activities should be directed to:
Nancy Allen, BIS, SHS #145, Augusta, ME 04333, (207) 624-7843,
Internet: isnalle@gatekeeper.ddp.state.me

**MEETING of the Maine GIS User Group
Thursday November 17, 1994
9:30am - 12:30pm**

**Augusta State Office Building , Room 113
Lunch at Pat's Pizza will follow for those
interested.**

Directions: Heading south, take Interstate 95 South to Exit 30A. Heading north, take Interstate 95 North to Exit 30. From the exit take Western Avenue (Route 202) east. Travel straight through 5 lights then right at sixth light onto Sewall Street. Take Sewall Street one light. The state parking garage will be on your left, with the State Office Building directly across the street and behind the capitol building. Room 113 is on the ground floor.

Preliminary Agenda for November 17th Meeting

- I. Welcome - New Introductions
- II. Membership and other business
- III. Panel discussion session. First in a series of workshops.
What can GIS really do for your organization?
How do you plan for GIS implementation?

PLEASE CUT HERE AND RETURN by NOVEMBER 10th

YES _____ people from our organization
plan to attend the November 17th
meeting. Please keep us on the
mailing list!
_____ people will come to lunch
afterwards.

We are unable to attend the November
17th meeting, but we are still interested in
the GIS User Group. Please keep us on
the mailing list!

NO We are no longer interested in the
GIS User Group. Please remove
our name from your mailing list.

NANCY ALLEN
BIS
SHS 145
Augusta, ME 04333

Geographical Information Systems are Growing!

BUT...

- Do you know who uses GIS in Maine?
- Are there other organizations duplicating your work?
- Where can you find good advice about new hardware or software systems?
- You need highly qualified employees to do GIS.
- How do you know which data is appropriate?
- What are all these *#@! data standards?

The Maine GIS User Group can help!

Can you receive this newsletter and group notices via Internet Email?
We can send the newsletter to you in wp5.1 format or ASCII. Please
drop a message to Nancy Allen. This will save us mailing costs and time!

Please make any address changes below. Pass this update to a friend!

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