

OUTREACH EVENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attendee's Name: Joseph Kerski, Gene Jackson and Pete Modreski

Location: The Denver Natural History Museum

Meeting Dates: November 18, 1999

Summary:

The University of Colorado at Denver (UCD) has formed a new master's program in science education through The Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The USGS was asked to become one of the six sponsors to join the board along with: Denver Museum of Natural History; Ocean Journey; The Butterfly Pavilion; Colorado Division of Wildlife; Hudson Gardens. The reason for developing this partnership is to assist in the professional development of teachers by offering classes specific to each sponsor's expertise. This science network will involve 20 school districts along the front range, representing over 50% of all Colorado science teachers.

For this conference there were 1,000 teachers invited from K-university. Our emphasis was on using GIS and Remote Sensing in the curriculum. We provided information how teachers can access GIS and remote sensing options through the use of ArcView software, development of hands-on lessons for curriculum inclusion, and classroom application. The GIS handouts included articles about GIS implementation, resources for GIS education, and lesson plans for GIS implementation.

The organizers of the event placed our booth in a very prominent spot near the entry and we were completely swamped for the first 3 hours. The teachers were extremely excited about the involvement of USGS in the program. We received lots of appreciative comments and distributed nearly every item we took with us.

Display and Handout Material:

Historic Trail Map of Denver
Colorado's Ancient Trees
Several GIS Information Packets
Colorado Fact Sheet
Teacher Packets
Various GIP's
Power Point GIS demo
Web sites
USGS Bags
Poster – Denver From Space

Reason for Attending:

The benefits to USGS will be the ability to obtain interns to gain hands-on experience. Learning from experience rather than from lecture or written sources will strengthen content knowledge and have a greater impact on the students. This project allows us to establish a long-term working relationship with the scientific organization partners, academia, and numerous school districts at once. Whenever possible, this is exactly what we need to do in the lifelong learning aspect of education outreach. The benefit to all parties of such a program is much greater than the one-time visits to sites and teachers.

This is an interdivisional opportunity for USGS, and as the only federal agency involved with this BOCES, we hope to pave the way for other agencies to follow. We encourage other outreach folks to seek BOCES and other projects of this nature to reach a larger education audience.