

## **EDUCATION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Attendee's Name: Joseph Kerski Title: Cartographer, PM  
Location: Snow Mountain Ranch, CO Other Attendees:  
Meeting Date(s): Saturday 19 October 1996  
Purpose of Meeting: Operate Display Booth and Attend Sessions at Colorado Geographic Alliance Fall Conference

### Summary:

The Colorado Geographic Alliance (COGA) was established in 1986 as part of the national network of state-based alliances supported by the National Geographic Society. COGA is an organization of over 6,000 classroom teachers, professors, administrators, professors, and interested citizens dedicated to promoting and improving geographic education in the schools and universities of Colorado. The coordinators of COGA are Professor A. David Hill (CU) and Professor David Cole (UNC). COGA sponsors summer institutes, teacher consultant workshops, offers small grants, provides scholarships for teacher training, and provides a clearinghouse for instructional materials.

Approximately 100 people attended the conference, which included field trips, technical sessions, and a vendor exhibit area. I operated a booth in the vendor exhibit area, distributed information and material, and demonstrated digital data sets using an animation package. This is my third year to be involved with COGA as a USGS representative.

I obtained a great amount of data that I intend to bring into ArcView, including socioeconomic data by county, voting patterns and frequency, and data describing the physical geography of the United States. This will assist the USGS in demonstrating how the data sets we and other agencies produce can be used in a GIS and decision-making environment.

Based on my observations at the COGA conference, I make the following recommendations:

1) These are exciting times for geographic education, with the resurgence of public interest in the subject, and the new national K-12 standards in geography. The state of Colorado has interpreted the national standards in their own state standards, and an emphasis now for schools is how to implement the standards. I believe that the USGS could play a role in this expansion of geographic education, by:

-producing a CD-ROM with base spatial data sets and thematic sets in modules, with one module for each of the national geography

standards, and for different grade levels (primary, middle, and high school). Teachers need easy-to-use data that can be imported into an easy-to-use GIS such as Idrisi or ArcView. CD-ROMs still are preferred by teachers over internet sites.

-producing a publication entitled "Educational Resources Available from the USGS." Using a similar publication produced at the Census Bureau as a guide, this should include a selected list of GIPs, digital data, CD-ROMs, circulars, teachers packets, and other materials especially suitable for geoscience instruction.

2) An amazing number of primary and secondary schools have access to the internet, and need to know where USGS internet resources are. The USGS should increase its efforts in making spatial and metadata available and to educate data users as to their availability.

One idea we should pursue is:

-producing a pamphlet listing and describing our base data types (DLG, DEM, DRG, DOQ) and their applications in an easy-to-understand, non-technical format. Should this be published as a GIP, an open file report, or other?

3) GIS is being increasingly used in secondary and even primary schools. The USGS should continue to investigate the educational potential of GIS packages so that we can make informed answers to customers who seek to use our data in a GIS.

\*\*end of report\*\*