

OUTREACH EVENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attendee's Name: Joseph Kerski Title: Cartographer, PM
Location: Austin TX
Meeting Date(s): 10-12 February 2000
Purpose of Meeting: **Conduct Presentation and Operate USGS Exhibit at World 2000 Conference on Teaching World History and Geography**

Summary:

The World 2000 conference was sponsored by the World History Association and the National Council for Geographic Education. The focus area was 100% lifelong learning, and the audience was comprised of nearly 1,000 educators. About half of these educators were from K-12, and the other half were university professors. About 50% of the educators were from history and 50% were from geography. Approximately 60% of the K-12 teachers and 30% of the professors were from Texas.

It should be noted that we were invited to this conference by faculty at the Geography Department at the University of Texas, who paid for airline and lodging. Obtaining outside funding continues to be a viable means for us to extend our outreach efforts.



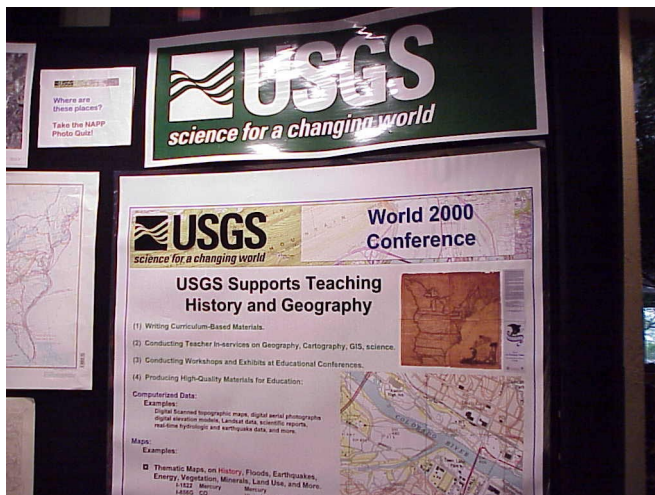
I conducted a presentation on how to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to teach World Geography. GIS is a powerful tool to explore patterns of demography, commerce, and physical features. I tried something a bit different this time – the first three minutes of my presentation were designed to foster a quick impression of GIS in the curriculum. In this section, I showed computer images of teachers and students using the technology, maps, imagery, tables, and charts, all of which was set to music. The bulk of the presentation discussed the approaches to using GIS in the World Geography curriculum, including tools, software, data, challenges, benefits, and pedagogical approaches. Approximately 150 teachers and faculty were packed into the

room to hear this and three other excellent presentations of the session, which emphasized Internet-based and GIS-based instruction. I showed this at our USGS exhibit as well, as well as some research articles I have written about GIS in education.

I also showed demos of USGS products and services that would be of interest to historians and geographers. I used our Earthlink Internet account to communicate with the USGS while in Texas, but did not have an Internet connection at the exhibit.

Although all exhibits, including ours (photo above) were in cramped quarters in the Hyatt Hotel (and the set up hours were less than ideal – 10:30pm to 1:30 am!), this situation resulted in heavy traffic, since the exhibits were directly outside the meeting rooms.

I handed out 20 boxes of materials between 730am and noon on the first day of the conference. I also met with former NCGE president and with the NCGE Director. While we often work with geography educators, this conference provided one of the few opportunities recently to work with both history and geography educators. The USGS has a great deal to offer the history discipline: historical editions of topographic maps, historical aerial photographs, and historical thematic maps. Besides the standard educational handouts (USGS Maps, Aerial Photographs and Satellite Images, teachers packets, and so on), I handed out the last of the “Electing the President” historical election maps that I have been saving for this conference. I also distributed a stack of historical Texas topographic maps dating back to 1900, and sample aerial photographs. The 10-photo “NAPP Photo Quiz” that I created some time ago and described in previous reports was another big attention gatherer. I displayed the new Denver historical trails map and a historical map from the National Atlas on the backdrop. I created a poster for this event illustrating how we support geography and history instruction [below]:

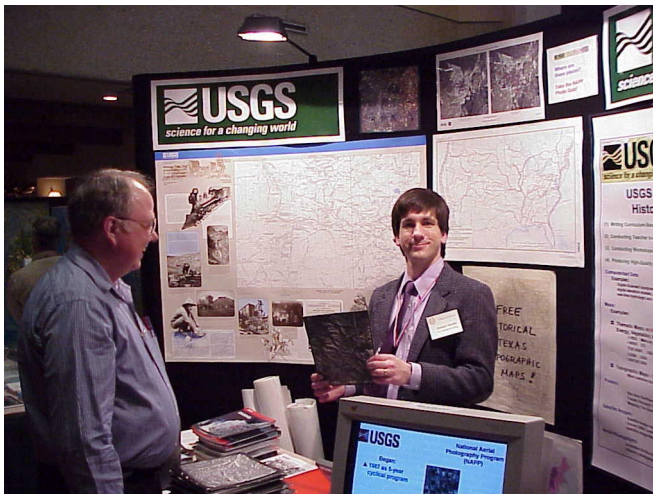


Acknowledgements:

I greatly appreciated the assistance of Jean Parcher, USGS Texas state mapping liaison, who worked in the exhibit and helped me with transportation, computer monitor, and booth tear-down. I also thank Gary Kress for help with the materials, and Gene Jackson for suggestions of historical maps.

Recommendations:

- 1) We should continue to pursue outside funding for outreach events. Universities, private companies, and professional societies may fund us to conduct an off-site event, as this event so clearly demonstrated.
- 2) These are exciting times for geography education, with the resurgence of public interest in the subject, and the new national K-12 standards in geography. Education receives a great deal of publicity. The USGS should continue to pursue educational venues with *both* an exhibit and a presentation.
- 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.
- 4) Judging from the reception of the Electing the President maps, I recommend the USGS pursue creating this year's 2000 election maps as part of the national atlas, and also to scan the 1796-1992 Electing the Presidents poster and post it alongside the other teachers packets currently available on the web. This poster should be considered for a cost item along with the other educational packet posters.
- 5) The NAPP photo quiz is a great way of drawing and keeping attendees near the USGS exhibit. I would hold up the photos for the quiz several times [below] and people would stop and congregate around our exhibit. I have a listing of the photos I used in my quiz (such as Grand Canyon, Crater Lake, New York harbor, Pittsburgh, etc) that I am happy to share, if anyone would like to create the same one, or a similar concept with your own photographs.



end of report