

## TRIP REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attendee's Name: Joseph Kerski Title: Cartographer, PM

Location: Dallas TX

Other USGS Attendees: Pete Modreski, GD

Trip Date(s): 5-7 March 1998

Purpose of Travel: **Geo-Tech 10 Conference**

Conduct 3 workshops, 1 field trip, run USGS exhibit at conference;  
plan national GIS institute.

Summary:

Geo-Tech is an annual national conference, emphasizing K-university geography education in the southwest, but also bringing together national leaders in geographic educational technology. By participating in this conference, we demonstrated the leadership that the USGS-NMD has in digital data and services that teachers can use at all grade levels. We also once again demonstrated the effectiveness of cross-divisional outreach work, since I worked closely with Pete Modreski, GD Central Region outreach coordinator, on preparing the program and the exhibit. This conference is seeking to expand its traditional geography base into earth science. By participating in this event, the publicity generated from teachers and students across the country for the USGS could be enormous, particularly with high media attention on both the need for geographic skills as well as the need for educational technology by students in America. I conducted three workshops at the conference:

- 1) Exploring cultural and physical geography with USGS topographic and thematic maps.
- 2) The use of GIS and USGS digital data in geography and science education.
- 3) The use of GPS in education, emphasizing the combination of GPS with USGS digital data.

I co-conducted 1 workshop at the conference with Pete Modreski:

- 1) Using Geography and Geology in the Field. We combined mapping, GPS, geology, water resources, and geography in the classroom and on a field trip to a local stream, Fivemile Creek.

I also assisted the ESRI instructors with a GIS training workshop. I stayed at the conference site an extra day to plan the first national summer GIS institute with the ESRI team, to be held at Southwest Texas State University in July.

Pete Modreski and I set up and ran a USGS exhibit at the conference. Approximately 500 teachers attended the conference. We displayed and handed out miscellaneous topographic maps for Texas, teachers packets, information sheets, hazards posters, water education posters, GIPs, and other items. Other exhibitors included Microsoft, the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, the US Census Bureau, and book publishers.

My emphasis for attending this conference was two-fold: First, capitalize on USGS strength in technology. The explosion in educational technology presents the best opportunity that the USGS

has ever had to get our data and products into the hands of students and educators across the country. Educators who are trained in the types and applications of our data are a powerful lobby for the USGS. Students familiar with our data will form an expanded future USGS customer base. The second objective was to "train the trainers"--teachers--to magnify our effectiveness and maximize our limited resources. These trainers will themselves network with and train other teachers, administrators, and students.

#### Publicity:

The Geo-Tech conference is unique for two main reasons: First, it brings in well-known educators and associated potential publicity. This year, Dayton Duncan, the biographer of a book on Lewis and Clark and the director of the PBS special on the explorers, was one of the keynote speakers. I spoke with Mr. Duncan and will send him some USGS historical and explorer maps which can bring recognition to our agency. Teacher Ann E. Bancroft, the first woman to ski to both the north and the south poles, was the other keynote speaker. I talked with her about the USGS, and will send her some of our excellent Antarctica maps that she can use in her outreach work. Second, GeoTech is held in the high school where the principal herself, Kate Collins Dailey, is on the board of the National Council for Geographic Education. The USGS should continue to work with the NCGE on a variety of projects, particularly the joint publication of educational information, as I recommended last year. This would bring in funding for educational outreach.

#### Recommendation:

The Geo-Tech conference should remain on our list of participating in each year as one of the few educational conferences we are involved in. This is especially pertinent as we seek to concentrate efforts on targeted audiences and de-emphasize "general public" events where the benefit is questionable for the resources expended. This is a strong candidate for a conference we participate in each year, but some handouts should rotate, in case some of the attendees are the same. In 1997, I was the only USGS staffperson at the conference, which necessitated leaving the exhibit vacant while I conducted workshops. This year, having 2 USGS staffpersons greatly increased our effectiveness.

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