

**Event Report:** Third International Conference on Geospatial Information in Agriculture and Forestry

**From:** Mark Barber, EDC  
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**Location:** Marriott City Center,  
Denver, Colorado

**Date:** November 5-7, 2001

### **Background:**

We attended the Third International Conference on Geospatial Information in Agriculture and Forestry (GIAF), November 5-7, 2001 in Denver, Colorado. The conference focused on the latest developments in advanced geospatial data and information technologies. This event provided 400 representatives from producer and trade associations, agribusiness and timber companies, insurance and financial institutions, government and multilateral agencies, universities, and technology companies the opportunity to explore technologies to improve today's decision making and define future research requirements and implementation strategies.



**Wide shot of two USGS booths staffed by EDC and RMMC at GIAF.**

Veridian organized the GIAF conference in partnership with leaders in agriculture, forestry, and geospatial information technology communities. Associate sponsors for the conference included: the USDA – Agricultural Research Service, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the USGS EROS Data Center.

Remote sensing was the chief science represented at this conference. Imagery has been applied to forest management and precision agriculture for years, and this was one of the emphases of vendors and attendees alike. The conference was truly international—we met people at our exhibit from Nepal, Brazil, Scotland, the Netherlands, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Colombia, and other countries. Attendees were chiefly researchers, such as soil scientists and natural resource planners, followed by educators, particularly university professors. Also in attendance were developers of high-resolution digital cameras and agricultural sensors.

## **Exhibit:**

The 3-day technical program offered more than 230 presentations in plenary, interactive poster, and special sessions, plus special presentations, workshops, and exhibits of products and services. In addition to Joseph Kerski, NMD, RMMC, and Mark Barber, EDC, Pat Schassburger and Mike Mulligan, BRD, RMMC volunteered their time and expertise.

Our exhibit emphasized USGS data and research related to geospatial applications in biodiversity, wildfires, drought, amphibians, and land use. Posters on the backdrop display Included: “GIS and Wildland Fire Support,” “Geographic Analysis in Support of a Multi-Tiered, National Amphibian Status and Monitoring Program,” “Monitoring Drought in the USA by Satellite,” “Landscape Level Post-Fire Analysis Using Satellite Data,” and “The Geographic Face of the Nation—Land Cover.”

The booth featured a Colorado From Space State Mosaic and a NAPP image of downtown Denver, CO on easels. These images and their placement attracted a great deal of attention. Joseph and Mark brought several image products from EDC and the RMMC to place on blank GIAF display boards around the convention center to help promote the two USGS booths.

Other exhibitors included satellite image companies (Space Imaging, Digital Globe), research organizations (Kansas Applied

Remote Sensing), federal agencies (NRCS), camera, photogrammetry, and GPS companies (DuncanTech, Leica).



**Mark Barber, EDC, and Pat Schassburger, RMMC.**



**Joseph Kerski, RMMC, visits with a customer at GIAF.**

Attendees seemed quite appreciative of our presence at the conference, often staying 20 minutes or more at our exhibit. Most USA attendees, of course, being from geographic information sciences, were familiar with the USGS, but had specific questions about accessing our digital data. Many attendees were surprised to find out how much the USGS does with biological resources.

## **Acknowledgements:**

At a conference such as this, showing results of USGS research is critical. We thank all those who provided posters displaying their research. We also thank Jan Nelson for helping to coordinate and reformat data products provided by Steve Howard, Jess Brown, Alyssa Gallant, and Zhu Zhiliang of EDC. We also are indebted to Annie Simpson for the biology-related publications and to Butch Urquhart in Denver for laminating posters.

## **Handouts:**

Handouts provided at our two USGS co-located booths included:

- National Land Cover Dataset (100)
- High Resolution Land Use Land Cover (100)
- Nutrient Concentrations in STR (50)
- Pesticides in Urban & Agriculture (50)
- National Elevation Dataset (50)
- Are Agricultural Pesticides in (100)
- Agricultural Pesticides Found (50)
- Effects of Forest Harvesting (75)
- USGS Geodata (200)
- Aerial Photo and Satellite Images (200)
- Ground Water and Surface Water: A Single Resource (20)
- Sustainability of Ground-water Resources (20)
- The Quality of Our Nation's Waters (20)
- Design of the National Water-Quality Assessment Program: Occurrence and Distribution of Water-Quality Conditions (20)
- USGS EDC Brochure (20)
- USGS EDC Archive Brochure (20)
- USGS EDC Landsat Trading Cards (5 types, 100 each)

- USGS EDC Bookmarks (2 types, 100 each)
- USGS EDC highlighter markers (30)
- Geospatial Task Group Brochure (30)
- USGS EDC Landsat Historical Comparison Booklets (50)
- Biodiversity
- Invasive Species Stakeholders
- GeoMac Fire Management Flyer
- Geospatial Task Group
- Issues in Ecology
- NBII – National Biological Information Infrastructure brochure and overview flyer
- Water Quality in South Central Texas
- Are Agricultural Pesticides in Surface Waters of the Central Columbian Plateau?
- GAP – Gap Analysis Program brochure

EDC staff who participated in the Presentations and workshops included Nick Van Driel and Cheng Huang. J.A. Griffith, a visiting scientist in EDC's SAB also participated in the conference. J.D Guthrie participated in the conference from RMMC. The USGS was fairly well represented at the conference, with six posters and workshops.

## **Recommendations:**

It was a pleasure working with Joseph Kerski, Mike Mulligan, and Pat Schassburger from the Denver area. I recommend the USGS continue to exhibit, present workshops and presentations at the GIAF because of the excellent opportunity it offers to communicate with international geospatial users in agriculture and forestry. This conference demonstrated once again the value in:

- (1) interdisciplinary approaches to our USGS exhibits;
- (2) holding poster sessions and workshops as well as a USGS exhibit.

A possible future outreach opportunity to consider will be the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Remote Sensing for Marine and Coastal Environments, Miami, Florida, May 20-22, 2002. USGS scientists from our National Wetlands Center might be particularly appropriate to attend this conference.