COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Governor's Office of Administration
207 Finance Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Rachel Carson State Office Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

November 1, 2007

Mr. Cy Smith, President
National States Geographic Information Council
2105 Laurel Bush Road, Suite 200
Bel Air, MD 21015

Dear Mr. Smith:

The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) has identified Imagery for the Nation (IFTN) as its #1 priority program. This is attributable to several reasons:

- There are numerous federal agencies with uncoordinated imagery collection programs, resulting in duplicative spending of taxpayer dollars;
- States and local governments collect aerial imagery on different cycles and with differing standards;
- By coordinating and combining funding across multiple agencies and multiple levels of government, we can complete the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) aerial imagery objective at a significantly lower cost;
- Many states today do not have the resources or knowledge to mount a successful statewide imagery collection or enterprise geospatial architecture/base mapping program;
- Imagery drives federal, state, local government, and private industry geospatial data creation programs, and is critical to the accuracy of the resulting data; and
- Without standardized data programs, it is impossible to create statewide data layers for boundaries, parcels, transportation, utilities, and other NSDI framework data layers made up of the highest quality county and municipal data aggregated to a statewide view.

Geospatial programs in every government agency will benefit from a coordinated and standardized nationwide imagery program that provides for a collaborative funding model. Pennsylvania has already implemented a successful statewide imagery and LiDAR data collection initiative, carried out by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), called The Pennsylvania Map (PAMAP). The goals of PAMAP closely align with the standards and goals of IFTN – collect statewide true color imagery on a 3 year cycle with 1' pixels, 1:2400 scale accuracy, etc. We completed our first statewide imagery collection in Spring 2006 and started our first imagery maintenance cycle with the Spring 2007 collection. We have also collaborated with USDA in the Farm Services Agency National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) to collect 1m statewide coverage.

Sustainable funding for DCNR's PAMAP initiative has been difficult to achieve. Pennsylvania would greatly benefit from a joint funding strategy where federal agencies pay an equitable amount of funding to share the costs and products of the PAMAP imagery initiative. IFTN holds that promise, which is why Pennsylvania, other states, regional governments, counties, local governments and geospatial stakeholder organizations support the concepts of the IFTN program. If federal agencies invest half of the cost of a 3-year, statewide

imagery collection, processing, and distribution program, this will make it easier for all states to convince their administration and legislative bodies to provide sustainable funding for this important national program.

Through IFTN, the states and federal agencies that collect imagery now have a collaborative program concept that can successfully move us forward on realization of the NSDI.

If all stakeholders support the IFTN initiative and we create a successful program, we will finally have a proven national model that we can use to create the complete set of NSDI framework data layers that everyone needs and that will guarantee the ability of all parties to participate and add value, with all resulting products available to the entire stakeholder community.

The cost savings we can achieve by working together in a national imagery program like IFTN that leverages federal, state, and local funding will allow the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to concentrate on creating and improving the accuracy and currency of other statewide NSDI goals, including boundaries, LiDAR elevation data, parcels, roads, and other framework data layers.

Additional benefits will accrue to all parties by starting to generate and archive historical records that can be used to scientifically measure change over time, and that will enhance public safety, public health, conservation and environmental lines of business, and economic development, and will lead to significant cost savings and new opportunities across many business and industry sectors.
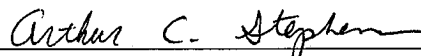
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recommends an equitable 50% cost sharing program between the federal government and state governments to fund IFTN on a 3-year cycle to generate a statewide, high resolution, true color aerial imagery product with a 1' pixel and 1:2400 scale for 49 states, territories, and possessions with a 1m pixel or better true color imagery product for the state of Alaska. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania also encourages the Federal government to work with the states to establish a collaborative LiDAR for the Nation program that ensures sharing of elevation data across levels of government.

The Governor's Office of Administration, the Office for Information Technology, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and the Geospatial Technologies Office enthusiastically endorse and support the Imagery for the Nation program on behalf of the Commonwealth on this 1st day of November, 2007.
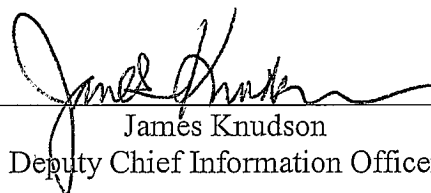
<div align="center">Sincerely,</div>

Naomi Wyatt
Secretary of Administration

Arthur C. Stephens
Deputy Chief of Staff

Michael DiBerardinis
Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources

James Knudson
Deputy Chief Information Officer