

NSDI Future Directions Second Quarter 2005 Report Executive Summary

Background: The FGDC Future Directions Initiative continues to draw on the collective insights and contributions of the geospatial community at-large as it crafts a national geospatial strategy and implementation plan to further the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The twelve Action Teams established in the fall of 2004 are targeting the strategic objectives identified in three focus areas: Partnerships with Purpose, Communicating the Message, and Making Framework Real. The work of the Future Directions Initiative is contributing to the activities guiding the establishment and priorities of the USGS National Geospatial Programs Office (NGPO). The individual team Quarterly Reports -- outlining areas of responsibility, major accomplishments, issues and concerns, and required support -- are attached. Action plans, team charters, and monthly reports are available at <http://www.fgdc.gov/FutureDirections/>. A brief summary of accomplishments by focus area follows.

Partnerships with Purpose: The **Governance Action Team** recently completed an extensive research and outreach effort to investigate and recommend governance options for the development of the NSDI. The team has reached consensus on a number of recommendations which focus on two distinct areas: 1) immediate and mid-term improvements to the policies and operations of the FGDC and 2) a long-term strategy to establish an inclusive body to provide national leadership for the development of the NSDI. The report is scheduled for public review in May 2005. The **Tribal Action Team** is institutionalizing its Tribal Framework, Operations and Mitigation courses while continuing to strengthen its partnership with DHS/FEMA. In partnership with the USFWS, the Tribal team has institutionalized courses on GIS for Conservation Professionals and GIS/GPS for Field Managers. The team is also coordinating with USDA/USFS to establish courses at its training center in Utah. The **Fifty States Initiative Action Plan** was reviewed and accepted by the FGDC Coordination Group and approved by the NSGIC Board of Directors. It was presented and promoted at a number of professional conferences and meetings. A newsletter describing the initiative was widely circulated within the geospatial community in February and March. The initiative, included as part of the Governance Team's recommendations, is ready for implementation and a proposal for initial funding has been submitted. The **Non-Geospatial Organizations Action Team** has proposed an outreach strategy to engage non-geospatial organizations to the FGDC Coordination Group at its April meeting. The "best practice" strategy is included in the report and action plan that has been distributed for comment and is pending final acceptance by the members of the FGDC Coordination Group.

Communicating the Message: The **Business Case Action Team** reviewed the literature and case studies that illustrate the value of collaborative development and access to geospatial information and services. Selection of the three best candidates illustrating the facets of the NSDI and consideration of the Geospatial Information & Technology Association (GITA) survey instrument are identified next steps. Some aspects of the **Strategic Communications Action Plan**, accepted by the FGDC Coordination Group at its January meeting, will also be incorporated into the NGPO communications efforts. The FGDC Federal partners will continue to promote the significance and value of geospatial information and the NSDI. Primary targeted audiences for the first phase of the plan focus on FGDC member agencies and FGDC partners. Efforts to reach Tribal, local and state governments and non-geospatial organizations will be implemented by coordinating and supporting efforts with the Tribal, Fifty States and Non-Geospatial Action Teams. The **Training and Education Team** is striving to aid the implementation of FGDC programs (Metadata, Framework and Clearinghouse/Portal) through training and education initiatives and outreach. Its continuing efforts include presentations and

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discussions at industry conferences, engagement of the academic community to develop implementation strategies for framework base and hydrographic standards, and delivery of the Train the Trainer Workshop in April 2005. Metadata training materials and resources, including a guide recommending core curriculum, are currently available on the FGDC metadata website.

Making Framework Real: The Future Directions Initiative emphasized a renewed focus on implementation of framework standards and the identification of the next generation of standards. The **Standards Working Group** is accelerating the work on current framework data themes. All editing committees will have adjudicated the nearly 5000 comments by the end of April 2005 and at that time theme leads will meet to refine drafts and identify remaining issues. Concurrently, the **Future Data Themes Team** is researching and identifying potential data themes for future standards development. It has conducted and will continue to facilitate outreach efforts to identify potential data themes. A Shoreline Data Content Standard is already in development and a proposal for the Address Data Standard has been submitted by URISA. The **Publishing Metadata Team** distributed the Member Agency Profile to FGDC member agencies to determine the status of Agency metadata implementation and to identify key agency metadata contacts. There was a 70% return rate on the profile. Additional follow-up is being conducted with those agencies that have not responded in order to complete the profile and integrate its results into the next FGDC Annual Report. The members of the **Implementing Standards and Web Protocols Team** are developing guidance materials for implementing open interfaces for accessing NSDI Framework data. Their work has included explorations of the link between the Geospatial Interoperability Reference Model (GIRM) and Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA) elements and a services-based view of NSDI and Framework. The **Urban Areas Team** has developed its team charter and work plan as it continues its task. Plans have been finalized to host the Urban Regional Geospatial Data Framework Workshop on May 3, 2005 in Washington, D.C.

Support Needed: As identified in the last Quarterly Report, the NSDI Future Directions Initiative will continue to require:

- Financial support for travel for action team members
- Financial support for implementation
- Dedicated staff for communications and implementation activities
- Support from the project manager and facilitator
- Realignment of FGDC staff priorities for successful implementation
- Ongoing communication and briefings between and among FGDC Actions Teams, FGDC staff and NGPO leadership
- Endorsement from members of the Steering Committee to continue efforts

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Partnerships with Purpose: Alan Voss and Dennis Goreham (Governance), Bonnie Gallahan (Tribal), Bill Burgess (Fifty States) and John Cark (Non-Geospatial Engagement).

Communicating the Message: David DiSera and Doug Nebert (Business Case), Leslie Wollack (Communications) and Sharon Shin (Training and Education).

Making Framework Real: Julie Maitra (Framework Standards and New Themes), Lynda Wayne (Publishing Metadata) John Evans (Standards and web Protocols) and Kathy Covert and Twyla McDermott (Urban Areas).