

## NSDI Future Directions First Quarter 2005 Report Executive Summary

**Background:** The Future Directions Initiative is crafting a national geospatial strategy and implementation plan to further the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. Drawing on the collective insights and contributions of the geospatial community at-large, these Future Directions efforts are targeting three focus areas each with supporting strategic objectives. To address the strategic objectives, Action Teams were established using a phased-in approach.

In August 2004, Chip Groat, Director USGS established the National Geospatial Program Office (NGPO). This new office consolidates the operations of the Federal Geographic Data Committee Secretariat, The National Map, and the Geospatial One Stop Project. The work of the Future Directions Initiative is being used to inform the activities that are guiding the establishment and priorities of the NGPO.

**Progress to date:** Twelve of the thirteen strategic objectives are currently being addressed by action teams or working groups. Each of the operating teams developed a team charter and an action plan. Two teams have completed their reports and will seek Steering Committee approval. Other teams are implementing specific actions identified in their action plans or work plans. The attached Future Directions Quarterly Report outlines areas of responsibility, major accomplishments, performance measures, issues and concerns and support needed for each team. Action plans, team charters, and monthly reports are found at the FGDC web site ([www.fgdc.gov/futuredirections](http://www.fgdc.gov/futuredirections)). A summary of accomplishments by focus area follows.

**Partnerships with Purpose:** The **Governance Action Team**, composed of members from the private sector, state and local government, academia and federal partners, is investigating and analyzing options for a more inclusive NSDI governance model. An extensive research and outreach effort is underway. Recommendations and options will be completed by June. The **Tribal Action Team** and the **Non-Geospatial Organizations Action Team** have developed action plans and are targeting their outreach and implementation efforts. They are also coordinating activities with other action teams in order to avoid duplication of effort. The **Fifty States Initiative Action Team** has completed its report and action plan. The plan was approved by the NSGIC Board, presented to the FGDC Coordination Group and is scheduled for FGDC Steering Committee approval. The strategic objective regarding agreements with the private sector and utility industry to facilitate participation in building the NSDI has not been formally addressed at this time. The involvement of the private sector has been approached indirectly through the extensive effort of the Governance Outreach Subcommittee. This objective will become a focus area for the FGDC secretariat staff director and staff during the next quarter.

**Communicating the Message:** The **Business Case Action Team** is reviewing literature to document and publish business cases that illustrate the value of collaborative development and access to geospatial information and services for selected audiences. Coordination and collaboration with the Strategic Communications Team as well as briefing the NGPO staff and the FGDC Coordination Group, Subcommittees and Working Groups are identified next steps toward implementation.

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The **Communications Action Team** presented the Strategic Communications Plan to the FGDC Coordination Group at the January meeting. FGDC, in concert with GOS and *The National Map*, will embrace a leadership role on behalf of the geospatial community to promote the significance and value of geospatial information and the NSDI. Primary targeted audiences for the first phase of the plan include FGDC member agencies, FGDC partners, tribal, local and state governments and non-geospatial organizations. An additional goal of the Communications Team is to provide communications support for the other FGDC Future Directions teams. The **Training and Education Team** strives to aid the implementation of FGDC programs (Metadata, Framework and Clearinghouse/Portal) through training and education initiatives and outreach. Efforts include presentations and discussions at industry conferences, train-the-trainer workshops, engagement of the academic community to develop implementation strategies for framework integration, and research of alternative training methods including on-line and distributed network delivery.

**Making Framework Real:** The Future Directions activity emphasizes the adoption and implementation of framework standards. The **Standards Working Group** is accelerating the submission of framework data standards to ANSI. The project manager and contract support are adjudicating nearly 5000 comments before submitting these standards for approval by ANSI. Concurrently, a small diverse **Team to Identify New Themes for Standards Development** is researching and identifying potential data themes for future standards development. Outreach efforts to identify potential data themes are underway. The **Publishing Metadata Team** designed, developed, and recently distributed a Member Agency Profile to FGDC member agencies to determine the status of Federal agency metadata implementation and identify key agency metadata contacts. The profile will be integrated into the FGDC annual reporting format. The members of the **Standards and Web Protocols Team** are working collaboratively to develop their work plan while coordinating with the Standards Working Group and Training and Education Team. Lastly, the newly formed **Urban Areas Team** developed a team charter and work plan.

**Support Needed:** The NSDI Future Directions will require:

- continued financial support for travel for action team members
- continued financial support for implementation
- dedicated staff for communications and implementation
- continued support from the project manager and facilitator
- realignment of FGDC staff priorities for successful implementation
- on-going communication and briefings between and among FGDC Actions Teams and NGPO Study Teams
- endorsement from members of the Steering Committee to continue efforts

**Acknowledgements:** The success of the NSDI is dependent upon FGDC leadership and the continued commitment from partners to work together to achieve our common goals. FGDC would like to thank the 80 or more members of the geospatial community from Federal, state, local government, private sector, and academia who are serving on action teams and dedicating time to the Future Directions Initiative.