Background: The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) collaborated with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Department of Commerce (DOC) to create a web-based mapping site displaying how these agencies are using funds received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Because each partner received funding under the ARRA, it was important to demonstrate fund usage in an accessible and transparent manner. The USDA Geospatial Interface presents detailed ARRA project data using an interactive, customizable, dynamic map http://www.usda.gov/recovery/map/.

Value Statement: The Recovery Act Projects Map allows citizens to see where and how their tax dollars create jobs, build infrastructure and help to bolster the economy. The site also provides links to ARRA funding reports and stories. In addition, citizens have access to web pages where they can report suspected cases of waste or fraud related to ARRA funds.

Challenges: USDA, DOC and HUD were faced with time constraints to create the Recovery Act Projects Map. The map application needed the display capabilities to track thousands of projects and millions of dollars. Additionally, developers needed to identify the authoritative data sources for the web page.

How Has USDA Addressed These Challenges?
- Beginning in February 2009, the USDA Forest Service's Geospatial Service and Technology Center developed a web based map application using Google Maps application programming interface, or API, and ARRA project funding information. Google's API provides an interface familiar to users who may not be accustomed to using complex geospatial tools.
- Developers chose to reuse data from USAspending.gov to capture ARRA project information quickly and accurately.

What Functions Does the USDA'S Recovery Act Projects Map Provide?
- Filters provide easy map customization based on department, agency and funding amounts.
- Users can find project information on a statewide level and drill down to see individual project data.
- The map provides easy access to the USDA Secretary's blog, relevant podcasts and newsfeeds. It also links to social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, allowing users to share what they discover.
- The map website also enables public input on ARRA funds through a "Tell Your Story" feature.

How Can You Leverage USDA's Recovery Act Project Map?
- Use drill down features to track Recovery spending in your area and blog about success stories.
- Employ familiar web based applications to make your GIS tool easy to use and accessible.
- Include social media and Web 2.0 technology in your GIS tools to make them more relevant and facilitate information sharing.

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