

SW MN GIS Users Group
10am January 10, 2007
Southwest RDC Office in Slayton

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Charlie Kost – SMSU	Jeff Sehr – Rock Co
Arlyn Gehrke – Rock Co	Justin Decker – Rock Co
Jean Christoffels – Murray Co	Kathy Henderschiedt – Nobles Co
Lincoln Ferguson – Jackson Co	Ardis Hotzler – Jackson Co
Beth Collins – NRCS	John Shepard – SRDC
Kari Howey – Lincoln Co	Brian Green – Redwood Co
Todd Zielsdorf – Redwood Co	Kyle Krier – Pipestone Co
Ryan Wendt – Lyon Co	Mark Volz – Lyon Co

Introductions – Since the last meeting Shawn Strong has taken a position to start a GIS department in the city of Brainerd. Ryan Wendt and Mark Volz are the new GIS people for Lyon County. Also Todd Zielsdorf has joined Redwood County in a new GIS position.

Items for discussion- Charlie Kost updated the group on the progress of the LRM subcommittee in establishing a state-wide county GIS association (MCGISA). Beth Collins talked about updates to soils data that are available on line. New tools are available for viewing soil information at websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov.

The presentation was given by John Shepard, Kari Howey and Charlie Kost looking at examples of serving information to the public via GIS and the web. GIS professionals spend a lot of time using the internet to access sources of data, but we don't always think about using the web to ease public access to our data. The group visited and critiqued web sites in terms of clarity of presentation, reproducibility and target audience.

John Shepard, Southwest Regional Development Commission, reviewed two websites at counties for which he had worked previously.

- Gallatin County (Bozeman, Montana) took part in an early FGDC NSDI demonstration project to use GIS to provide public access to data in the land use planning process. Gallatin County has expanded on that project to provide a variety of low-bandwidth data to the public.
http://www.gallatin.mt.gov/Public_Documents/gallatincomt_gis/gis%20home%20page
- Larimer County (Ft. Collins, Colorado) is a fast-growing community, with an urban core, developing suburbs and isolated rural areas. Larimer County is using web-based mapping to improve customer service and

reduce the need for citizens and businesses to pick up the phone or drive to the courthouse. http://www.co.larimer.co.us/ims/gis/gis_services.htm .

Kari Howey presented the Lincoln County adaptation of (FIST) (The Flexible Internet Spatial Template) which is an Open Source, Pre-Hypertext Processor (PHP) object based application that is used to rapidly deploy internet mapping web sites. It provides a code base with built-in functionality for common internet mapping tasks as well as the ability to extend the mapping site with custom functions. The application is not specific to any one dataset and also features a map server abstraction layer that separates the mapping requests from any specific map server. It's free and offers an alternative to the commercial Esri product, ArcIMS.

Charlie Kost visited the City of St Paul site (www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/maps) as another example of a site using mapserver. The site has some useful tools for selecting data and creating files that can be used to print mailing labels. Charlie also visited the site to preview the mapserver application (Geomoose) and tools in development through the FGDC grant to a group in Minnesota and North Dakota (<http://openmnnd.mapmorph.net/openmnnd.html>)

Next Meeting

April 11, 2007 -10am, Lyon County Public Works Building, Marshall
Topic: MCGISA in SW Minnesota presentation by Charlie Kost and the LRM MCGISA subcommittee