OFFICIAL
MINUTES OF THE
MISSISSIPPI COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR
REMOTE SENSING AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

APRIL 3, 2007

PRESENT

Trudy Fisher, Chair, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
David Litchliter, Vice Chair, Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services
John Michael Simpson (for Larry L. "Butch" Brown), Mississippi Department of Transportation
Alex Finch (for Mike Womack), Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
Jack Moody (for Gray Swoope), Mississippi Development Authority
Charlie W. Morgan, Mississippi Institute for Forestry Inventory
Scott Samson (for David Shaw), Mississippi State University
Andy Taggart, Madison County Board of Supervisors
Joel Yelverton, Mississippi Association of Supervisors
Barbara Collier, Tax Assessors/Collectors Association
Chuck Carr, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
Dannie Reed, Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives
Jim Steil, MARIS, Technical Users Group Chair

ABSENT

Gerald McWhorter (for Eric Clark), Secretary of State
Rick Ericksen, Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists
Gene McGee, Mayor, City of Ridgeland
Jonathan Smith (for George Lewis), Mississippi Municipal League
Colin Baird, Mississippi Association of Professional Surveyors
Tommy Moffatt, Senator, Mississippi State Senate
Joe Blount, Mississippi State Tax Commission
George Phillips, Mississippi Department of Public Safety

   Vice Chairman David Litchliter called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed those present. Since a quorum was present, Vice Chairman Litchliter asked for a motion to approve the Council meeting minutes for November 7, 2006. Andy Taggart made the motion to approve these minutes, and Chuck Carr seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.
   Vice Chairman Litchliter introduced Trudy D. Fisher, the new Executive Director for the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).
   Since Charles Chisolm retired as Executive Director of MDEQ and as Chairman of this Council, a new chairperson must be elected. Nominations were requested. Joel Yelverton nominated Trudy Fisher. There were no other nominations, and Trudy Fisher was elected as the new Council chairperson.
   Mississippi Digital Earth Model (MDEM) activities were discussed by Cragin Knox. The state-wide orthoimagery report was given first. We have just received the two-foot imagery which was flown in January and February, 2006. Earth Data was responsible for the flights and

photography. Dewberry and Davis instructed by Mississippi State University was responsible for quality control. The MDEQ Office of Geology will check for completeness. Then the data will be distributed to the counties and the Clearinghouse. The Gulf Coast orthoimagery report was given next. Since there was so much debris left from Katrina, the area had to be flown again after the debris had been removed. This was done through a grant from HUD to MDEQ. The orthophotography was done at resolutions of one foot in rural areas and six inches in urban areas. The Gulf Region Base Mapping Program report was a PowerPoint presentation of the Aircraft & Sensor Showcase held on February 13, 2007, at the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. It was well attended. All of Mississippi should be covered with orthoimagery by the end of summer.

The report on GIS Portal/Clearinghouse development was presented by Cheryl Crawford of ITS, GIS Project Manager. The portal has been developed and will be tested at ESRI. The types of users are anonymous users, self-registered users, and registered users who must sign an agreement with ITS. The three parts of the Mississippi Geospatial Clearinghouse are geodatabase, portal, and users. The portal website, entitled "Mississippi Geospatial Clearinghouse," was demonstrated. Featured were the search engine, metadata portal, map viewer, and data download.

Heath Prejean of ITS, GIS Technical Lead, gave the delivery system report focusing on portal data loading. There was a brief description of the data loading process with a list of goals. The database can hold over five terabytes of data, and over one terabyte of data has already been loaded. Geodetic control data from NGS has been loaded. MDEM-quality elevation data supplemented with USGS elevation data has been loaded. Some orthoimagery has been loaded. Cadastral data from five counties has been loaded for testing. Other loaded datasets are PLSS from best available, census from 2005, and base map generalized transportation data. Mr. Prejean then gave a live demonstration of the GIS Council website.

Dr. Scott Samson of the GeoResources Institute at Mississippi State University delivered the report on education and outreach efforts. Since June 1, 2006, standard ESRI training has been taught in 28 workshops with 352 participants. Gunnar Olson, focusing on tax assessors, has created a new two-day course entitled "Creating and Maintaining a Parcel Geodatabase Using ArcGIS." This course has been taught on the coast. ArcGIS I is a prerequisite. A CD version is coming out this summer. "GIS Notes" is a two-page fact sheet which will go in packets to the counties. Nelle Ruffin, who is an instructor in the Geosciences Department at Mississippi State University and a former editor at the *National Geographic* magazine, has written articles that will appear in "GIS Notes." These articles are written in a non-technical format for those who are not familiar with GIS.   The products for the MDEM Image Viewer are third generation Mr. Sid. Many people have software that cannot read this, so a Mr. Sid plug-in was prepared for the Council website. A GIS certificate (MSU-ES) will be given to participants who complete a series of GIS courses. A GIS tutorial with a software package will be coming out later this summer.

The discussion of Project Homeland was begun by Cheryl Crawford who stated that this is a federal initiative in which Mississippi could become a pilot state. She then introduced Peter Bottenberg, Thomas Wesp, and Bruce Robinson who work for the Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). Mr. Bottenberg began the discussion by saying the goal of this project is to make connections between federal, state and local agencies on geospatial intelligence focusing on GIS. Federal participants include the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the United States Geological Survey (USGS). ESRI contracted with NGA to develop and maintain the Palentara technology. DHS has rebranded this as iCAV. The pilot states would be used as the framework for a common, end-to-end Homeland Security GIS system using the iCAV data set with data sharing in both directions. The state pilot concept would involve strategic mapping, public safety,

and critical infrastructure protection. A slide show was used to describe the Texas pilot system architecture. Mr. Bottenberg thinks Mississippi is suitable for a pilot state due to three projects we already have which puts us well on our way towards doing what other states are just thinking of doing. These projects are the Council's portal project, the Mississippi Digital Earth Model (MDEM), and Jackson State University's project which provides common data to all emergency responders. With the DHS iCAV system, the Mississippi viewer should connect with the federal viewer. Also, iCAV will have geocoding services. ESRI does not want money from the state, just data availability and collaboration. It should be a three- to five-month project. ESRI, which is funded by NGA, needs to make a recommendation to NGA. States chosen as pilot states will get help from USGS with implementation, such as staff to help load data and training staff in ETL. ESRI will help us get our data into the EOC viewers. Meetings will need to be held to discuss this further. They would like to start requirements by the beginning of May. Mr. Bottenberg asked the Council for a single point of contact and suggested Cheryl Crawford for that person. A scope of work with deliverables needs to be developed and approved. Andy Taggart suggested that we adopt some sort of resolution of support in principle. Then when the scope document is prepared, circulate it by email for a tally by email. Vice Chairman Litchliter asked for a motion for this resolution. Mr. Taggart made the motion that this Council does extend its support in principle to the prospect of entering into a pilot as was described to us, subject to review of the proposed scope agreement and final approval by the Council. Jim Steil should be a part of the discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) report was given by Jim Steil. The NSGIC Mid-Year Conference was held March 25-28, 2007, in Annapolis, Maryland, and was attended by 37 states. There was a concurrent USGS meeting. The main topic at this meeting was "Imagery for the Nation" (IFTN). NISGIC is trying to get the federal government to pay for getting annual imagery done. Other topics discussed at the conference included iCAV and census. As chairman of the TUG committee, Mr. Steil reported that TUG did their work assignment by answering questions from the Clearinghouse. TUG is working with MEMA on redoing the emergency management plan.

The next Council meetings are tentatively scheduled to be held during the second week of July and some date in November. Cragin Knox asked the members to send him email regarding any conflicts they may have during those dates.

Joel Yelverton said the Mississippi Planning and Development Districts (MPDDs) and the Mississippi Association of Supervisors are formalizing how counties with no GIS department can be helped. Scott Samson has been training the PDDs so they can provide the assistance. Dr. Samson's work in the counties has been outstanding and well received. The county buy-up plan needs to be restructured. He suggested a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) to get competitive bidding for hard pricing with a list of vendors. We need the State Tax Commission and the county tax assessors to provide standards that would cross county lines and that would meet MDEM standards. This would be shared data. Hard pricing allows budget planning, and the counties could still go out on their own. Partnering of the counties did not happen.   Vice Chairman Litchliter asked Mr. Yelverton to facilitate a discussion on this matter and asked those who want to join in this discussion to meet with Mr. Yelverton after this meeting.

Since there was no other business, Vice Chairman Litchliter adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.