

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

October 7, 2008

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
Tom McAllister (for Mike Womack), Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
Jack Moody (for Gray Swoope), Mississippi Development Authority
Gerald McWhorter (for Delbert Hosemann), Secretary of State
Charlie W. Morgan, Mississippi Institute for Forest Inventory
Jim Steil, Institutions of Higher Learning/MARIS
Gene McGee, Mayor, City of Ridgeland
Joel Yelverton, Mississippi Association of Supervisors
Chuck Carr, Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
Dannie Reed, Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives
Warren McKinnon (for Joe Blount), Mississippi State Tax Commission
David Shaw, Mississippi State University, Policy Advisory Committee Chair
Talbot Brooks, Delta State University, Technical Users Group Chair

ABSENT

Rick Ericksen, Mississippi State Board of Registered Professional Geologists
Jeff Lewis (for Colin Baird), Mississippi Association of Professional Surveyors
Tommy Moffatt, Senator, Mississippi State Senate
Tony Fleming, Clarke County Board of Supervisors
Jeff Mullins, Tax Assessors/Collectors Association
Matthew Dodd (for George Lewis), Mississippi Municipal League
George Phillips, Mississippi Department of Public Safety

Chairwoman Trudy Fisher called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed those present, mentioning that this was the first Council meeting at our new building. She asked for a motion to approve the Council meeting minutes for November 8, 2007. The motion to approve these minutes was made by Talbot Brooks and seconded by Joel Yelverton. The minutes were approved.

Chairwoman Fisher proposed that the Council members consider setting the future meeting dates for the Council on the first Tuesday of the first month of each quarter. If this is approved, the meeting dates for the year 2009 would be January 6, April 7, July 7, and October 6. The motion to approve these dates was made by Talbot Brooks and was seconded by Joel Yelverton. The motion was approved.

Steve Champlin, Project Manager for the Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative (MFMMI), gave a briefing on the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) mapping project. Following a brief history of MFMMI, funding and spending were discussed. The total of the FEMA funding to date is slightly under 19.5 million dollars. The total spending thus far is a little over 7.7 million dollars. A PowerPoint presentation showed the mapping status of all the Mississippi counties. This year numerous meetings have been held with many of the counties. The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) awarded MDEQ and MEMA its national 2008 Tom Lee State Award for Excellence for MFMMI and for post-Katrina coastal mapping and outreach.

A report on the status of the statewide MDEM activities was given by Bill McDonald of Mississippi Geographic Information (MGI). True color, digital orthoimagery with a 2-foot pixel resolution covering the entire state was delivered prior to the last Council meeting. This data set has become the base map for the DFIRM program. Thirteen counties now have digital elevation data, specifically LIDAR. USGS, FEMA, NOAA, and USACE have helped with funding. Next priority is state-wide development of terrain data. Jim Steil brought up that no technical or policy prioritization of statewide data layers had taken place and no elevation standard was in place to guide new work. Additionally, a new statewide 10 meter Digital Elevation Dataset (DEM) was now available as part of the National Elevation Dataset (NED). The new DEM is based on 7.5 minute quadrangle map contours and has been updated using recent imagery.

The Gulf Region Base Mapping Report was given by Bill McDonald. This five-county region is comprised of Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, and Stone Counties. The color digital orthoimagery with six-inch and one-foot resolutions was delivered just before the last meeting and is in use. The second part of this program is underway and is just about complete. This part consists of the development of three additional layers which are transportation, ground elevation and contours, and hydrographic features. Mr. McDonald introduced Robin Hoban of Fugro EarthData. Final delivery is scheduled for October 31. The third part of this program, which is about to get underway, is property ownership.

Craig Orgeron of ITS gave an overview of the GIS Portal/Clearinghouse. Items discussed included status, functionality, data loading, site statistics, project management, and costs. The website address is <http://www.gis.ms.gov>. As of March, 2008, this website is in full production. Heath Prejean gave a PowerPoint presentation showing the home page of the Mississippi Geospatial Clearinghouse and the other sites which could be accessed from it. He also demonstrated the interactive maps, search tools, and data loading. Since March, 2008, there have been over 129,000 visits to the site, and 849 users have registered. Clearinghouse development cost was \$954,000, and infrastructure cost was almost \$768,000. ITS is expecting operational costs to be between \$500,000 and \$750,000 a year.

Dr. Scott Samson of the Geosystems Research Institute (GRI) at Mississippi State University delivered the report on education and outreach efforts. The Geosystems Research Institute received the Founders' Award from the South Central ARC User Group during their 18th Annual Conference in April. GRI was given this award for the extensive GIS education and outreach program delivered to rural Mississippi, primarily to local governments. They now have new funding to continue the project, and new courses are being offered.

Dr. David Shaw of MSU gave the report from the Policy Advisory Committee. He handed out the GIS Plan for Disaster and Emergency Management in Mississippi which MEMA had requested. He asked the Council members to review this plan and to get back with him within the next month. The Committee has met twice and subcommittees have met several times. Tom McAllister of MEMA thanked the Council for their work. This plan is not just for MEMA but involves other agencies as well. MEMA is no longer referred to as EOC (Emergency Operations

Center) but is now called MACC (Multi-Agency Coordination Center). The change came from Homeland Security. The development of the business plan for the Council was then discussed. Some new funding was received from NOAA last week, and a portion of this has been targeted to help with this. Dr. Shaw said we are missing funding because we do not have a business plan in place and Rep. Reed agreed. Rep. Reed said he would look into this from the government's side. Jim Steil said he had been encouraged by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) to submit a proposal for the development of a strategic geospatial plan for Mississippi. The plan would provide individual strategic goals which the business plan could then address with implementation plans. The strategic plan is complementary to the business plan to be developed by the PAC.

Chairwoman Fisher told the Council that Cragin Knox is now on contract with MDEQ to provide assistance in advancing the Council's goals and objectives. Our annual report is due, and Mr. Knox will be working on preparing a draft of this report. This draft will be circulated by email to the Council members in the first week of December to give everybody an opportunity to review it. It will be finalized and adopted at our next meeting on January 6, 2009.

At this point, Chairwoman Fisher apologized for having to leave the meeting and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairman David Litchliter.

Talbot Brooks of Delta State University, the Technical Users Group (TUG) Chairman, gave the TUG-related activities. The TUG has met four times since the last Council meeting. They are trying to develop standard operating procedures for how TUG itself should function. Chairwoman Fisher had asked them to make an assessment of the standards currently in place. TUG has three subcommittees. Heath Prejean leads a Clearinghouse Subcommittee. Renee Murray is heading a Best Management Practices Subcommittee. Mike Miller is in charge of the Standards Subcommittee. Copies of the minutes of the TUG meeting held on April 18 were distributed. Also, a sheet detailing the Adoption of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) US National Grid (USNG) Standard was handed out. TUG has reviewed this standard and proposes it be adopted by the Council. Tom McAllister of MEMA said this would make us compatible with federal agencies. This will be taken up again at the next meeting on January 6, 2009.

Chuck Carr representing the Planning & Development Districts distributed copies of a letter and draft proposal from the Mississippi Association of Planning and Development Districts (MAPDD). This draft proposal is to assist local governments with Geographic Information System (GIS) technical support and implementation. They want to take a more active role. Vice Chairman Litchliter said we need to see how we can draw the MPDDs in more to whatever function we are doing and make a more coordinated effort to seek their assistance.

Vice Chairman Litchliter adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.