A NSGIC Retrospective

Reflections on NSGIC’s 33 year history from Bill Johnson, Retired Guy
A teensy bit about *Retired Guy*

- Not totally retired — still keeping my big toe in the water
- 40 year career in GIS
- 31+ years with the State of NY, first GIO
- 2 years in Washington DC at the Universal Service Administrative Company
- 6+ years at AppGeo (now a Division of Sanborn)
- Joined NSGIC in 1996 – attended all but 1 NSGIC conference since then
- 3 terms as Director, Presidential sequence
- Now on NGC Board
- 🖤 NSGIC!
A blatant ripoff of my 2016 Keynote...

NSGIC at 25

William F. Johnson
NSGIC Past-President #13 (2004)
Circa 1991

- State of the art phone was a “touch tone”, wired to your wall and connected to your answering machine that had a cassette tape inside
- Microsoft released Window 3.0
- A business-class 386 PC with 4MB of RAM, a 200MB hard disk and 14" display cost $4300.
- Tim Berners-Lee launched the World Wide Web (nobody noticed except a handful of nerds)
- ESRI released ArcView v1.0
GIS Data

• Generally speaking, we were data starved
• Organizations still did a lot of digitizing or scanning of existing maps; lots of data conversion vendors
• Open Data was far off in the future – many organizations (including some states) viewed data as a salable asset and applied copyrights and attached price schedules to their data
• There was no “common base map” and we often used map layers that by today’s standards were laughably deficient in many ways
Forces that shaped NSGIC in 1991

- Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) was established in 1990 by Circular A-16
- Concept of NSDI was emerging, still in idea stage
- TIGER was new; created and used for the 1990 Census (first Census done with nationwide GIS)
- USGS was beginning its steady decline in mapping
- Most GIS data was produced by government agencies and mapping was widely considered an “inherently governmental” function
  - No Google maps (no Google, period), no Bing maps...
In short, there was a void, and nature abhors a vacuum

Into that void stepped...
Lisa Warnecke

- GeoManagement Associates, Syracuse, NY
- PhD Researcher
- Contracted by Council of State Governments to compile a compendium
- Assembled the group that met in Atlanta in 1991 and became NSGIC
- Omelette
NATIONAL STATES MEETING ON GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

States are emerging as a key level of government to help lead the development and coordination of geographic information in the United States. Such efforts have been identified in each of the 50 states. However, top representatives of state governments currently leading such efforts have not had the opportunity to get together and learn from common experiences at a meeting dedicated to state-level needs and issues.

The annual GIS/LIS Conference will be held in Atlanta, October of this year. The Council of State Governments will be releasing their “State Geographic Information Activities Compendium” prior to that conference. Accordingly, an opportunity exists to convene a meeting of key geographic information representatives of the 50 state governments. The State of Georgia is sponsoring such an event in recognition of the growing needs of states, both individually and collectively, with the purpose of:

- Learning from similar experiences, specifically regarding policy, institutional, management, and states applications issues; statewide digital database efforts; and federal and local government relations.
- Identifying common issues, problems and needs.
- Determining the mechanism for states to share experiences in a continuing manner, including focus and content of future state geographic information publications, meetings, etc.
- Developing a focus, agenda and method for states to work collaboratively to help develop the states’ perspective, needs and contributions to the national geographic information agenda.

The State of Georgia is contributing efforts to make this meeting a success. Lisa Warnecke, Principal Investigator of the Compendium, and The Office of Government Information in the Department of Community Affairs will organize and serve as the meeting coordinators. DCA will also coordinate meeting space and additional support to assure minimal expenses.

The meeting is proposed to be held two days prior to the GIS/LIS Conference, thus providing the opportunity for state representatives to also attend the conference. It will include a review of the compendium results, a roll call of the states, and presentations of exemplary conditions and programs as identified by the compendium effort according to specific themes. Attendees are encouraged to bring copies of written materials to share with others.

Educational sessions will be held by sponsoring companies. Opportunities will also provide for dialogue. Plans and priorities will also be developed for states to continue working together to share information and learn from each other. In addition, states will address national needs from a state perspective and determine issues and mechanisms to help meet national geographic needs.

Meeting attendees will include invited representatives from the 50 states. Those invitees will serve as key state decision makers regarding geographic information. Other invitees are limited to presenters and representatives of companies sponsoring the meeting.
66 Attendees

• Host state of GA and 39 state reps
• Fed reps from USGS, EPA
• Industry sponsors: T.A.S.C., Trimble, ERDAS, Hughes Spatial Data System
• Some interesting titles among state reps:
  • State Surveyor
  • Physical Geologist
  • EDP Manager
  • Senior Cartographer
  • Computer Systems Chief Engineer
NATIONAL STATES MEETING
ON GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
October 27-29, 1991
Agenda

Sunday

12:00-1:30 Registration
1:30-2:00 Introductions & Brief Welcome
Lisa Wronski and Phil Thiel
* Share Experiences, Lessons Learned
* Address Common Issues and Needs
* Help Define and Create National Approach
* Develop Action Plan for Continuing Efforts

2:00-3:00 Roll Call of States/Participants - First Half
(If possible, have representatives of each state on their role in geographic information)

3:00-3:15 Break

3:15-4:15 Roll Call of States/Participants - Second Half
(Short (2 minute) presentations by representatives of each state on their role in geographic information)

4:15-4:20 Multi-State Initiatives and Interstate Coordination

4:20-5:00 Summary Results of Geographic Information Activities
Compendium and Related Efforts to Understand Conditions in States
Lisa Wronski, Phil Thiel (Georgia) and Al Robinette (Minnesota)

5:00-5:30 Federal Coordination Efforts
(If possible, have representatives of the Federal Geospatial Data Committee)
Jeff Booth, FGDC Non Federal Liaison Group

5:30-5:45 Discussion of Monday and Tuesday Meeting Themes, Agenda and Plans

6:00-8:00 Informal Gathering at the Overture (on your own)
(Optional informal gathering at the Overture)
MONDAY

8:30-9:00 Registration

9:00-9:15 Welcome
Georgia Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Jim Higdon,
DCA Office of Government Information Director Lynn Thornton

9:15-10:00 Internal State Management Issues - Part A
State Organizational Structures - Gary Irish (Arizona), Chair Lisa
Warnecke to describe alternatives and example states commenting to
include: California, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina,
Oregon, Utah and others

10:00-10:15 Break

10:15-11:15 Internal State Management Issues - Part B
State Administration and Coordination, including Finance, Personnel,
Systems Administration, Relations with other Central Offices and
Interagency Relationships Karen Siderelis (North Carolina), Chair
* Finance - Lisa Warnecke, Bill Holland (Wisconsin), Al Robinette
(Minnesota)
* Personnel - Anne Hale (South Carolina), others
* Systems Administration - Bob Kitchen (New York), Tim Johnson
(Illinois), others
* Central Offices Relationships - Bob Wiseman (Kansas), Ron Vidmar
(Ohio), Eric Gillett (Oregon)
* Interagency Relations - Karen Siderelis, Ron Woodburn (South
Dakota), Ralph Basile (Pennsylvania), Al Robinette (Minnesota)

11:15-12:00 Nature of State Directives and Making Legislation Happen
Dennis Goreham (Utah), Chair, Overview - Lisa Warnecke, James
Monslow (Kentucky), Wes McInvale (Mississippi), Bob Marvinney
(Maine), Sharon Balfour (Louisiana), Jim Brown (Nebraska), Lorraine
Strycker (Texas)

12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)

1:00-2:00 Data & Metadata Development, Clearinghouses and Data
Administration

1:00-2:00 Data & Metadata Development, Clearinghouses and Data
Administration

* Development, data maintenance, data definitions, data documentation,
data standards, classification systems, indices and directories, etc.
  Allan Cox (Montana), Ted Talman (New Mexico), David Stahl (Florida),
  Phil Thiel (Georgia), Bill Shinar (South Carolina), Bruce Westcott (Vermont)
Data Access & Dissemination
Presentations by states on open records laws, cost recovery and pricing, liabilities, distribution: methods and infrastructure, etc.
* Open Records - Anne Hale (South Carolina)
* Financing - Bruce Westcott (Vermont)
* Technology Infrastructure - Ron Vidmar (Ohio)

3:00-3:15 Break

3:15-5:15 Educational Presentations by Supporting Vendors
Erdas, TASC, Hughes Spatial Data Systems and Trimble Navigation will each give a 30 minute educational presentation related to their specific expertise

6:00-8:00 Informal Gathering at the Overture (on your own)
Optional informal gathering at the hotel bar

TUESDAY

8:00-8:15 Welcome Back, Discuss Plans for the Day

8:15-8:45 Interorganizational State Groups, and Models and Methods for External Coordination
Lisa Warnecke, Chair, Ted Talman and Tom Henderson (New Mexico), Bill Holland (Wisconsin), Allan Cox (Montana), David Stage (Florida), Eric Gillett (Oregon)

8:45-9:30 Coordination with Regional Entities and Local Governments
Phil Thiel (Georgia), Chair, Tim Johnson (Illinois), Hank Gars (New Jersey), Bob Kitchen (New York), Bruce Westcott (Vermont), Bill Holland (Wisconsin)

9:30-10:00 Coordination with Academia
Ted Talman (New Mexico), Chair, Pat Bigelow (Alabama), John Beezer and Ron Vidmar (Ohio), Bill Shinar (South Carolina), Lisa Warnecke (about Rhode Island and New Hampshire)

10:00-10:15 Break

10:15-11:45 Coordination with Federal Agencies
Eric Gillett (Oregon), Chair, David Stage (Florida), Phil Thiel (Georgia), Rick Tausier (Massachusetts), Dennis Goreham (Utah)
11:15-12:00 Coordination With Private and Non Profit Sectors
   Bruce Westcott (Vermont), Chair, Mary Koleis (Colorado), Tim Johnson
   (Illinois), Robert Surber (Michigan)

12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)

1:00-1:30 General Discussion Regarding External Coordination, Including
   Interorganizational Groups, Role and Authority, Lessons Learned, Agreements,
   and Other Methods for External Coordination

1:30-2:30 Promoting Functional GIS Activities and Data Development and
   Use, Including Reports by Groups of States Concerning Successful
   Statewide Applications of Geographic Information
   - Natural Resources/Environmental Protection
   - Infrastructure/Transportation/Utilities
   - Human Services
   - Public Safety/Emergency Management/911
   - Administration/Public Lands Management
   - Planning/Growth Management/Economic Development

2:30-2:45 Break

2:45-4:15 Where Do We Go From Here?
   Identify and prioritize principal concerns among states, and in relation
   to others, especially federal government
   - Establishing and maintaining knowledgebase about states -
     clearinghouse, synopsis of this meeting, future meetings, publications,
     charts, graphs, matrices, etc.
   - Prioritize items and determine methods to achieve relations with
     government associations (e.g., CSGS, NCGS, NGA), and professional
     associations (e.g., NASIRE, URISA, ACSM)
   - Articulating and encouraging a national approach to geographic
     information, i.e. partnership among states, regional entities, local
     governments, federal government, private sector, non-profit sector
   - Preparing specific recommendations to federal government (FGDC,
     individual agencies, National Academy of Sciences Mapping
     Subcommittees, Congressional committees and researchers) regarding
     federal, states, and other sectors
   - Identify and prioritize areas for research on state geographic
     information activities

4:15-4:30 Wrap Up & Meeting Adjournment
What were the outcomes in 1991?

- Birds of a Feather – learn from each other
- Strong desire to change the way the Fed agencies were operating with GIS
  - Feds cannot and should not do it alone
  - Blanket vs. quilt analogy
  - States play a key role as data producers and aggregators within their footprint
- Determined that a permanent council was in order, agreed to meet again in 1992 and form NSGIC
- Lots of passion, energy, enthusiasm
Bylaws

- Unique – only state delegates can vote
- Everyone else is in a supporting role

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Name:
The name of this body shall be the National States Geographic Information Council (hereinafter "Council").

Section 2. Location:
The principal office of the Council shall be in a location that is determined by the Board. The Council may have such offices as may from time to time be designated by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

Section 1. Purpose:
The purpose of the National States Geographic Information Council is to encourage effective and efficient government through the coordinated development of geographic information and technologies to ensure that information may be integrated at all levels of government. The Council's purposes may embrace other types of information and technologies as may be appropriate from time to time. The Council's activities may include, but are not limited to, the advocacy of state interests and the support of the membership in their individual initiatives, increase public and private awareness, education, research, professional development, and the development of policies, standards and guidelines. The Council shall serve as a facilitator for coordination activities. Participation in the Council shall not preclude members from other coordination activities or taking positions that may be inconsistent with those taken by the Council. The Council shall also foster increased understanding and interest in the development, operation and maintenance of geographic information and geographic and land information systems. The Council's efforts and focus include the following four areas:

A. Policy:
1. To provide a unified state voice on geographic information and technology issues.
2. To actively promote geographic information integration and systems development.
3. To review legislative and agency actions and where appropriate provide advice on geographic information and technology issues to public and private decision makers.
NSGIC President’s Mug
What NSGIC means to a State GIO

- GIO is best job in state government
- Alone in your state
- NSGIC is your peers – can’t do the job without them – your tribe
- Brain trust on national GIS issues (NSDI+)
- 9/11
Annual cycle for a State GIO

- Period leading up to a NSGIC conference
- NSGIC Conference
- Period following a NSGIC conference
NSGIC Secret Sauce

• Passion
• How you choose to spend your time, especially your volunteer time, says a lot about you
  • Time – the great equalizer – we all have exactly the same amount
  • What differs is our commitments & priorities
• Belief – Simon Sinek TED talk
• Tribe of people who believe GIS can make our world a better place, can move the needle
Legacy of GeoWomen
Led Zeppelin's Robert Plant on Life and Music | The Big Interview
Thank You!