

October 27, 2008

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**Re: Membership Meeting and News**

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your support of the West Virginia Geospatial community. Our next membership meeting is scheduled for November 13, 1:00-3:30 p.m. in Building 2 at the Gus R. Douglas Agricultural Center, Guthrie, WV. The agenda for the meeting includes reports on the GIS Coordinator vacancy, strategic plan, CORS development, and future GIS training opportunities. In addition, the membership will also be reviewing and adopting the 2008-09 goals of the association. In case you cannot make the meeting, I have provided an overview of geospatial activities in the Mountain State which will be discussed in more detail at the meeting.

- 1) *WV GIS Coordinator Vacancy:* Since the WV GIS Coordinator, Katherine Kapo, resigned October 1<sup>st</sup>, the WV Department of Commerce is leading the effort to hire a new coordinator who has the experience, energy, and qualifications to meet the needs of the West Virginia GIS Community. The job position should be posted in the near future. For more information about the GIS Coordinator, refer to the letter dated 21 October 2008 from Dr. Michael Hohn, Director of the WV Geological and Economic Survey. <http://www.wvagp.org/upload/news/GIS%20Coordinator%20-%20Mike%20Hohn%20-%20Oct%2008.pdf>
- 2) *WV GIS Strategic Plan:* In the absence of a State GIS Coordinator, the WV GIS Steering Committee will move forward on a new strategic plan. Larry Evans will chair the Steering Committee on an interim basis. The Committee will build upon the accomplishments of the previous GIS Coordinator. <http://www.gis.wv.gov/steering/Pages/statestrategicplan.aspx>
- 3) *Formal Recognition of WVAGP:* On July 28<sup>th</sup>, the WV GIS Policy Council met and formally recognized the non-profit WV Association of Geospatial Professionals as fulfilling the formal user and advisory group role in state coordination. [http://www.wvagp.org/upload/news/WVAGP\\_announcement\\_Aug2008.pdf](http://www.wvagp.org/upload/news/WVAGP_announcement_Aug2008.pdf)
- 4) *2008 WV GIS Conference:* The 8<sup>th</sup> biennial conference was held June 9-12 in Charleston, WV. The largest conference program to date, the 2008 WV GIS Conference included a plenary session, 28 concurrent paper presentations, a poster viewing and competition, and 17 seminars/workshops. The keynote was Cy Smith, Oregon State GIS Coordinator and President of National States Geographic Information Council. We would like to thank again our sponsors who made the event possible: Baker Engineering, BAE Systems, ESRI, Photo Science, NiSource Gas Transmission and Storage, Rahall Transportation Institute, and WV Office of GIS Coordinator. The presentations and photos have been posted on the conference website.
  - 2008 GIS Conference Photo Gallery: <http://wvagp.org/conference/2008/gallery.asp>
  - Papers and Presentations: <http://wvagp.org/conference/2008/papers.asp>
- 5) *2008-2009 WVAGP Goals:* This year's WVAGP goals have been approved by the board of directors and will be presented to the members at the next regular meeting (November 13<sup>th</sup>) for presentation and adoption. Below are the eight goals for your review and comments:

- Double GIS professionals in WV
  - Assist GIS Coordinator with development of GIS Strategic Plan
  - Offer at least two GIS training courses
  - Work with the Election Committee on making sure that Board elections are handled smoothly using the mail-in ballot system
  - Start using Podcasts to spread the word about the association
  - Newsletters
  - Work with Surveying community on developing a standardized GIS Accuracy Disclaimer
  - Get the Governor to sign a GIS Day Proclamation
- 6) *Committee Chairs:* New committee chairs will be elected at the next membership meeting. A great deal of work for the association is done by committees, so participation in committees is a valuable way to contributing to the organization. There are presently five standing committees for members and non-members to contribute. <http://www.wvagp.org/committees.asp>
- 7) *GISP Certification:* More and more job advertisements for GIS professionals are listing GIS certification as a desired qualification. Remember that on December 31, 2008, the Grandfathering Provision of the GIS Certification Institute's (GISCI) certification program expires. Right now WV has seven individuals who have attained this certification and one of the goals is to double the number certified by the end of next year. <http://www.gisci.org/>
- 8) *NSGIC Advocacy Agenda:* The National States Geographic Information Council works to strengthen statewide geospatial coordination efforts and spatial data infrastructures in every State. Information about national initiatives such as *Imagery for the Nation* and *National Land Parcel Dataset* are listed in their 2008-09 advocacy agenda. [http://www.nsgic.org/committees1/documents/2008\\_NSGIC\\_Advocacy\\_Agenda.pdf](http://www.nsgic.org/committees1/documents/2008_NSGIC_Advocacy_Agenda.pdf)
- 9) *WVAGP Training Catalog:* A catalog of geospatial training resources is being compiled for the membership. In conjunction with this effort, a survey is being created to identify the training workshops that are in most demand. Results of this survey will be used to schedule future training courses in West Virginia.

A lot has taken place over the past year and with your continued help and participation we can build on the foundation that has already been laid. I strongly encourage all of you to participate in the association by serving on a committee or running for a seat on the WVAGP Board of Directors, where five seats will be up for grabs in next year's elections. If you want to learn more about the association please head over to the website where you can find key information and also contact a board member about any questions you may have about the association. <http://www.wvagp.org/>

Sincerely,



Jennings Starcher  
President, WVAGP