Southeastern Minnesota GIS Users Group

Steele County Offices – Owatonna, MN
Thursday, January 19th 2012 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Sarah Schrader – Goodhue County
Alan Laumeyer – Goodhue County
Dave Wavrin – Owatonna Public Utilities
Michelle Trager – Rice County
Nick Flatgard – Steele County
Tom Hoffmann – Winona County
Ashley Ignatius – Student at St. Mary's University
Brandon Tourtelotte – Compass Tools, Inc
Eric Miller – Jones, Haugh & Smith (JHS Engineering)
Joel Thoreson – Olmsted County
Dean Schrandt – Dodge County
Lawrence Svien
Todd Zielsdorf – Winona County
Kevin Morrissey – City of Rochester

10:00am Introductions
2 new members attended this meeting!

Steele County Update:
Nicholas Flatgard – Steele County
The full version of this is available for viewing on the users group website.

- Nick was hired at Steele County in August 2011.
- Currently working with ProWest & Associates to create a plat book for Steele County. Nick will be handling the page layout and ProWest staff will handle all of the labeling.
- Steele County currently has an online mapping site through ProWest & Associates using their WebFusion product. A future possibility is to create a Flex-based application to replace the existing WebFusion application.
- The Steele County GIS data is currently stored in personal geodatabases and a future goal is to migrate data into file geodatabases. At this time it does not make sense to move to an enterprise system since Nick is the only staff person who edits GIS data at the county.
- Steele County is currently using ArcGIS Server Workgroup licensing.
- Steele County uses Pictometry and has a license for the Pictometry Online program. Rice County and Rochester Public Utilities also use the Pictometry Online program.

Owatonna Public Utilities Update:
Dave Wavrin – Owatonna Public Utilities
The full version of this is available for viewing on the users group website.

- Dave was hired at Owatonna Public Utilities (OPU) in June 2011. He is the first GIS staff person that OPU has ever had. They have not had GIS at their agency before.
- Current work is focusing on collecting natural gas utilities information and then moving on to both electric and water utilities. Staff currently has a goal of collecting all of the gas utility information within the next 2-4 years.
- The company mPower was recently contracted to evaluate GIS and GPS for OPU.
- OPU staff have used AutoCAD and AutoCAD Map software in the past and now Dave also has a license of ESRI ArcMap.
- Many OPU staff use primarily paper maps for their work and a future goal is to gradually incorporate access to digital information and move away from using the hard copy maps.

**Alan commented that the Goodhue County Cooperative Electric Association (GCCEA) currently has their utility maps as pdf documents which are loaded onto laptops for their staff to use in the field. There is less printing needed and the maps are easier to update since there are just digital copies.

- Currently there are multiple editors working on the same data sets and staff are experiencing some issues. An Enterprise system may be a viable option in the future.
- Dave shared photos taken during and following the major flood event from September 2010. This event greatly affected the Owatonna area and the OPU buildings, which are located right next to the river.

General Discussion:

- Statewide Geospatial Advisory Council update - Michelle Trager
  - Michelle was recently appointed as the At-Large member to this statewide council which "advises the MnGeo office about issues, policies, priorities, and investments needed to improve services statewide through the coordinated, affordable, reliable, and effective use of geospatial technology." (www.mngeo.state.mn.us)
  - This group meets quarterly and Michelle encourages all users group members to communicate with her any questions or ideas that they have so that she can bring them to the council. Michelle will report to the users group at future meetings about the activities and projects of this council.
  - Current or Recent Projects:
    - Parcel Business Plan for Statewide Parcels
    - Statewide LIDAR collection
    - Minnesota Imagery Project
- Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium – Michelle Trager and Sarah Schrader
  - Michelle was recently elected to serve as the Local Government representative. Sarah moves from Board Chair to the Past Chair representative on the board. Sarah and Michelle will continue to update the users group at future meetings regarding the activities of the Consortium.
- GoSoutheastMN web application - Tom Hoffmann
  - People continue to use the web application and mobile application.
  - Still working through some bugs regarding updating the data from specific counties and incorporating the data into the regional datasets. Overall though, the data update process is going well.
- Flex Viewer - Sarah Schrader
  - Sam Klimoski of ESRI posted a couple links on the LinkedIn group page regarding the newest version of the Flex Viewer. Members are encouraged to check out these links for more information on how to easily create a Flex-based web application using a new Graphic User Interface (GUI).
- LinkedIn - Sarah Schrader
  - There are currently 19 members in the users group LinkedIn page. Members are encouraged to go to LinkedIn, create a profile and then join the Southeastern MN GIS Users Group page.
  - Once a member of this Group page, users can post links or interesting information, questions, job postings and much more. Users can also communicate between group members and is a great way to connect in between the users group's quarterly meetings.
  - http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4146797&trk=hb_side_g
- Plat books:
  - Goodhue County is working on their 2012 plat book in-house using tools provided by Red Barn Plat Books, now called Mapping Solutions.

- Rice and Steele counties have used Cloud Cartographics in the past to create plat books.
- Rice County has also provided their parcel information to Cloud Cartographics for their plat books. The plat book projects were led by The Rice County Farmers Union.
- Winona County uses Rockford Maps for their plat books.
- Discussion about the benefits/drawbacks of producing a plat book in-house.
    - The biggest benefit of creating a plat book in-house is having more control over the look of the product and ability to easily change colors, fonts, etc.
    - The biggest benefit of outsourcing the plat book creation is saving staff time.

Next Meeting: Spring 2012 – Hosted by Eric Miller at Jones, Haugh & Smith (JHS)

****Members are encouraged to present at a future meeting and to offer suggestions of vendors or other agencies to present. Please contact a Steering Committee member or the next meeting's host if you are interested in presenting:**

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