Southeastern Minnesota Counties GIS Users Group Meeting Summary
Fairibault, MN: 9:30am – 2:00pm, Monday, June 28th, 2004

Attendees:
Andrea Peck, Dodge County FSA
Tom Hoffmann, Winona County
Joe Buchmann, Graduate Student - St. Mary's University
John Gabbert, GIS Analyst
Jeremy Maul, Fillmore County SWCD
Danea Larson, Fillmore County SWCD
Sarah Midler, Goodhue County GIS
Mike Mohrhauser, ProMap Corporation
Sarah Ellingson, ProMap Corporation
Dave Wavrin, Steele County GIS
Eric Miller, Freeborn & Mower County Surveyor's Office
Shawn Gertken, Wabasha County GIS
Richard Bauer, Olmsted County FSA
Tex Hawkins, US Fish & Wildlife
Michelle Trager, Rice County Planning/GIS
Jamie Schulz, MN DNR

Meeting started 10:00am
Task assignments are highlighted

1) Introductions

There were 8 new people who attended this meeting.

2) ProMap Corp. Presentation – Mark Mohrhauser

The full version of this power point presentation is available on the users group website.

This presentation went through the differences between a Personal Geodatabase (PGDB) and an Enterprise Geodatabase, and also the main components of a geodatabase.

*Rice County utilizes multiple personal geodatabases for use by many different departments.
*Currently, Rice County keeps their raster data in separate files and it works well for their staff.
*Winona County is looking into using Enterprise GDB's because they have staff that will need to edit the same files at the same time.

3) ProMap Corp. Presentation – Sarah Ellingson

The full version of this power point presentation is available on the users group website.

*ProMap's WebGIS option is currently being used by Rice County.
*Set up fee is roughly $6500 for the program with a $600/month hosting fee for non-subscription sites and $700/month hosting fee for subscription sites.
*Nightly updates of tax information and other data
*Customizable display and set-up with possibility of having password protected site or certain site areas.
*This will work as an intranet site and internet use.
Question: What kind of security is in place for this program?

- When the data is transferred nightly, it is encrypted code and there is little to no chance of something getting past the fire wall during this process.

*Winona County has received some grant money for SDE training and now need to send people through the the ESRI classes.

http://www.maps.promap.com →link to ProMap's website and list of websites that currently use this application.

4) Host Presentation – Michelle Trager

The full version of this power point presentation is available on the users group website.

Brief history of GIS in Rice County:
1997: ArcView used very little in the Planning & Zoning department
1999: ESRI grant for ArcView & ArcInfo
1999: Community-based planning grant, hired a long-term planner, hired an intern, hired private group to fly orthophotography, hired private group to compile parcel dataset
2000: Drafter started to maintain the parcel data
2001: Hired fulltime GIS planner, Internet site was created
2002: E911 roads project was completed
2003: Faribault and Northfield data was added to the datasets
2004: Updated data with more section coordinates

*There are 25,592 parcels within Rice County. The county charges the cities of Northfield and Faribault $1/parcel per year for maintenance of the linework and data.
- There are no names listed on the parcels online as per public feedback during the planning process.

*Rice County currently has all of their vector data stored in Personal geodatabases. The raster data is stored in SID format. Currently, this works very well for Rice County.

*Tom Hoffman mentioned that Winona County is looking into migrating to Enterprise geodatabases since they have multiple users who need to edit data layers at the same time.

5) Round Table Discussion

*Interest shown for a shared project within the users group to purchase high resolution color aerial photography (6" resolution)
- Would participating in a shared photography project actually save money?
- A lot of money is spent on photos that, due to new housing developments etc., can become outdated within a couple of years. Is it really that important to spend the extra money to get high-resolution photography? Can't we just use the USDA Farm Service Agency photos each year?
- Rice County paid roughly $200,000 for their 6" resolution photos in 1999.

*Sarah Midler mentioned that Goodhue County is currently using ArcGIS version 9.0 and has run into some quirks with the software:
1) When editing shapefiles in 9.0, the project has crashed a few times.
-Michelle Trager mentioned that since Rice County has converted to using geodatabases, she has had much less trouble with using ArcMap and her projects have not crashed very much.
2) When an ArcGIS project crashes, the system sometimes will not release the license and so resulting in one-less floating license available for users.
-Sarah Midler and Joe Buchmann suggested restarting the local computer. Next step would be to restart the ArcMap license manager. If that doesn't solve the problem then you might need to just reboot your server. (or restart whichever machine has the license manager installed)

3) FEMA's HAZUS-MH software, which works with flood, wind, and earthquake modeling, will not work properly with ArcGIS version 9.0.

-FEMA is aware of this issue and is working to correct it. However, a fix to the issue will not be available until next year.

-Sarah Midler and Joe Buchmann solved this issue for Goodhue County by loading both ArcGIS 8.x AND ArcGIS 9.0 license managers on the same server. Then, Arc 8.x was loaded on the computer that would be using HAZUS-MH and the rest of the computers in the office would still have Arc 9.0 installed and in use. Just to be on the safe side, make sure that the computer using Arc 8.x and HAZUS-MH does not have any other version of ArcGIS software installed.

*Questions were raised regarding acquiring contour data

-Goodhue County has 2ft. contour information for the entire county that was compiled using LIDAR mapping. Roughly 90% of all data requests in the GIS Department are for digital or hard-copy contour data. The county has a fee schedule for these requests that was approved by the County Board.

-Currently Rice County uses 100ft contour information and its 10ft estimated contour information.

*Suggestion was made by Tom Hoffmann to start holding the meetings on a quarterly basis.

- Group is in agreement for quarterly meetings

*Suggestion was made to discuss parcel mapping at the next meeting.

- Group is in agreement to talk more about parcel mapping at next meeting.

*Jeremy Maul suggested possibly more discussion/training on geodatabases at the next meeting.

-Joe Buchmann suggested more information on SDE as well.

-John Gabbert mentioned that the online courses provided by ESRI have been very helpful regarding geodatabases.

*Tex Hawkins is looking for main County GIS contacts throughout the State of Minnesota.

- Jeremy Maul referred Tex to the LMIC website where they host a list for County GIS staff contacts. www.lmic.state.mn.us/cty_contacts.html

*Tom Hoffmann volunteered to host the next meeting some time in September and tentatively plans on inviting GeoSpatial Services to give a presentation.

*Tom Hoffmann will notify users group by email of date, time, and place of next meeting.

Next Meeting Location: Winona County, *Date to be determined*

1:45pm Meeting adjourned