

Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

May 29, 2024

11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Members Present: Heather Albrecht, *Hennepin County*; Mitch Bergeson, *USGS*; Jeffrey Bloomquist, *USDA Risk Management Agency*; Ryan Bonney, *Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community*; David Brandt, *Washington County and MetroGIS*; Christy Christensen, *McLeod County*; Shana Crosson, *UMN Twin Cities*; Kari Geurts, *MNIT DNR*; Len Kne, *UMN Twin Cities*; Leanne Knott, *City of Red Wing*; Britta Maddox, *Anoka County*; Tanya Mayer, *Metropolitan Council*; Victoria Reinhardt, *Ramsey County*; Cory Richter, *Ramsey County*; Kendis Scharenbroich, *Pro-West & Associates Inc.*; Gerry Sjerven, *Minnesota Power*; Alison Slaats, *MnGeo*; Stacey Stark, *UMN Duluth*; Dennis Tumberg, *City of Chanhassen*; Patrick Veraguth, *Douglas County*

Members Absent: Jill Amundson, *West Central Initiative*; Benjamin Timerson, *MnDOT*; Jessica Fendos, *LOGIS*

Non-Members Present: Norman Anderson, *MnGeo*; Chelsey Bagent, *Swift County*; Andrea Bergman, *MNIT DNR*; Andra Bontrager, *MNIT DNR*; Curtis Carlson, *MnGeo*; Jennifer Corcoran, *MN DNR*; Will Craig, *UMN Twin Cities*; Preston Dowell, *St. Louis County*; Karl Hahn, *Unknown*; David Holm, *Fugro*; Joseph Jones, *Fugro*; Randy Knippel, *Dakota County*; Tim Krohn, *Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa*; Ryan Mattke, *UMN Twin Cities*; Chris Mavis, *Hennepin County*; Rick Moore, *MNIT DNR*; Sean Morrison, *MPCA*; Akiko Nakamura, *MnDOT*; James Olson, *MNIT DNR*; David Ortega, *UMN Twin Cities*; Tom Paulson, *1Spatial, Inc.*; Rachel Pichelmann, *DOT*; Jill Pohjonen, *MN DNR*; Jesse Reinhardt, *Hennepin County*; Chris Ross, *Scott County*; Dan Ross, *Private Citizen*; Catherine Rowley, *City of Minneapolis*; Kiah Sagami, *Houston Engineering*; Sharvari Sangle, *SRF Consulting*; Jamie Schulz, *MNIT DNR*; Molly Shoberg, *MN DNR*; David Sieberg, *Blue Earth County*; Megan Sisko, *MnGeo*; Eric Slegh, *RESPEC*; Alissa Stark, *MNIT DNR*; Ryan Stovern, *St. Louis County*; Brett Thomassie, *Surdex*; Kory Thurnau, *MnGeo*; Kevin Trappe, *Beltrami County*; Sarah Voje, *EOR, Inc.*; Sally Wakefield, *MnGeo*; Clayton Watercott, *Metro Transit*; Ace Wesselmann, *MN DEED*; Dave White, *Fugro*

Meeting Options

- **Virtual:** Online via Microsoft Teams
- **In-person:** Blazing Star Room (*ground floor*), [Centennial Office Building](#), 658 Cedar Street, Saint Paul, MN

Meeting Materials

- [Agenda packet](#)
- [Presentation slides](#)

1. Call to order

Chair Albrecht called the meeting to order and invited members to introduce themselves. In-person guests then introduced themselves, with online guests introducing themselves in the Teams chat.

- **Motion:** Approve the agenda (Mayer / Crosson) – Motion passed
- **Motion:** Approve last meeting minutes (from 3/20/2024) (Brandt / Knott) – Motion passed

2. Review and accept Committee and Workgroup Reports

Chair Albrecht called for approval of the committee and workgroup reports as reflected in the meeting agenda packet. An update to the Emergency Preparedness Committee Report page 7 has been requested to clarify the organization responsible for the Underground Utilities Mapping (UUM) project funding.

- **Motion:** Approve the committee reports, with expected updates from Steve Swazee regarding the underground utilities report (Maddox / Veraguth) – Motion passed

3. Review and approve K-12 Committee Charter

Shana Crosson presented a proposal to create a K-12 Committee to promote the connections between GIS professionals and the K-12 community. Crosson highlighted the proposal's importance to students, schools, and the geospatial profession and reviewed the committee principles, mission, and planned activities and members. Crosson also shared about an October 5 GeoFest event. See the presentation slides and proposed committee charter in the agenda packet for more details.

Dennis Tumberg shared local schools' desire for support that he has encountered.

Chair Albrecht called for a vote to add this new committee to the GAC and invited discussion. Andra Bontrager asked if there could be potential for this committee to solicit or acquire funding to help schools implement geospatial curriculum standards – Alison Slaats said that MnGeo can apply for and accept grants on behalf of the GAC. The GIS/LIS Consortium was mentioned as an additional resource for this type of work. There were no other questions and no objections.

- **Motion:** Establish a K-12 Committee with the proposed charter (Mayer / Brandt) – Motion passed

4. Non-profit sector outreach event

Sally Wakefield presented on behalf of Jessica Fendos about a free event being hosted on August 21 for non-profits to help them leverage GIS to achieve their goals. Wakefield highlighted the timeline of event activities, participating partners, and plans for promotion. Len Kne shared additional details. See the presentation slides and [RSVP Survey](#) for more details.

- **Motion:** Endorse the Community Mapping Expo for Non-Profits (Reinhardt / Knott) – Motion passed

Chair Albrecht invited discussion, comments, or objections. Members shared ideas to help promote the event, such as reaching out to the Association of Minnesota Counties and League of Minnesota Cities. Members were encouraged to share the event with their sectors.

5. NAIP 2023 status update

Jeffrey Bloomquist shared about ongoing collaboration with Alison Slaats, Christy Christenson, and others to ensure the community is informed about activity and plans for National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP).

Bloomquist provided an update regarding the status of NAIP data for Minnesota, highlighting that Minnesota was flown June 15 through September 1, 2023 in 30-cm resolution and that the next update is tentatively scheduled for 2025. The 2023 imagery is expected to be available August 2024. A digital surface model (derived from stereo imagery) is expected 2 months after the full NAIP release. See presentation slides for more details.

Bloomquist will continue to give updates as they are available and shared his interest in getting the geospatial community better connected with this program, for example via the GAC and GIS/LIS Consortium. Upon Bloomquist inviting discussion from the group, Tanya Mayer requested to be involved. Jennifer Corcoran reminded attendees that statewide imagery is a GAC priority and recommended coordination and collaboration on a statewide level, noting her desire to participate in the conversation via a committee or workgroup.

6. Statewide lidar status update and Q & A

Gerry Sjerven, current 3D Geomatics (3DGeo) Committee Steering Team member, shared some background about the 3DGeo Committee structure and members, noting that lidar became a GAC priority around 2017 or 2018. Sjerven pointed to the committee report in the agenda packet for recent activity and successes and shared major updates with attendees, highlighting that updated lidar acquisition has been completed for the entire state. Sjerven shared that it typically takes 16 to 20 months to process the lidar data; 3DGeo will continue to share updates about data availability. More information about derivatives is expected in September. Lidar data is currently available on the [USGS National Map](#) – see the [lidar status page](#) and presentation slides for more details regarding lidar data collection and funding.

Sjerven then provided information about the Lidar-derived Hydrography Subgroup of the 3DGeo Committee, which is working to bring updated statewide lidar-derived hydrography to Minnesota. The subgroup just started meeting monthly in February and is looking for new members to join, especially from underrepresented groups such as local government. They are also looking for one more leader of the group that is preferably not a MNIT employee, as MNIT is already well represented among subgroup leaders. Contact the [co-chairs](#) (Sean Vaughn, Jamie Schulz, Rick Moore) to join the subgroup. Sjerven closed the discussion by reviewing the group's current

and upcoming activities and timeline of work, noting an estimated 10-year effort to create statewide products. The subgroup hopes this may become a GAC priority in 2025. Sjerven invited questions from attendees.

During attendee discussion, it was noted that Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa lidar data has been redacted from the publicly available data but that this data may be made available to individuals via request to Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (with proper agreements in place). MnTOPO 2 is in development by MnGeo to share the new generation of lidar data and derivatives (similar to the previous generation's availability on [MnTOPO](#)). Some Minnesota-derived DEMs are ready but awaiting proper sharing infrastructure to be in place. Anyone with lidar questions should reach out to lidar@state.mn.us.

7. Break and networking

8. MnGeo updates

Alison Slaats shared updates from the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office. Modernization of the Minnesota Geospatial Commons is underway, including analysis of responses to the Commons Modernization Survey – the scope of work is expected to be finalized in June. Information about MnTOPO 2 and data availability was reiterated as above during Sjerven's lidar update. PLSS Monument Grants will be provided to 34 counties, totaling \$9.1 million (see the [PLSS Dashboard](#)). See the presentation slides for more details about these updates.

9. Review and approve GAC 2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Work Plan

Chair Albrecht referred to the GAC 2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Work Plan within the agenda packet. Albrecht summarized highlights from 2023, noting the appointment of members, election of new leadership, and reprioritization of projects and initiatives. Albrecht recognized the retiring of valued GAC contributor Randy Knippel then highlighted the work and purpose of each committee and workgroup.

Albrecht then reviewed the GAC work plan for 2024, highlighting the alignment of geospatial priorities with 2-year member terms (rather than determining these annually). Attendees discussed the work plan's proposal for an Executive Team, differentiated from the Leadership Team which meets monthly to set meeting agendas – the Executive Team would meet more frequently to implement Leadership Team decisions and optimize the process of the GAC. Members proposed formalizing this team now rather than waiting for a future meeting.

- **Motion:** Establish the Executive Team (as detailed in the 2024 work plan, with specific members identified at later date) (Reinhardt / Brandt) – Motion passed

Upon Chair Albrecht inviting discussion and proposals for changes to the 2024 Work Plan, attendees expressed support for the proposed changes in GAC's operations, noting that tying priorities and reporting into 2-year member fiscal terms allows time to work on set goals and aligns well with the legislative process and state fiscal year. Members considered the possibility of adding a legislator to the board, as the Clean Water Council does – Alison Slaats confirmed that this is a possibility and could help with educating legislators about GIS. Albrecht noted the existing Greater Minnesota City vacancy on the GAC and an upcoming vacancy for Twin Cities Metro County Government once member Reinhardt retires.

- **Motion:** Approve the 2024 GAC Work Plan (and 2023 Accomplishments) (Mayer / Tumberg) – Motion passed

See the presentation slides for more details about the discussion, and the [March 2024 meeting agenda packet](#) for more details about each committee and workgroup's 2023 successes and 2024 goals.

10. Priority projects and initiatives updates

Vice Chair Maddox began review of priority project and initiative updates, inviting contributors to speak briefly to their slide. Each priority project owner or representative spoke accordingly. See the presentation slides for details about these updates. Pertinent information not included in the slides is noted below.

During discussion, the Open Data Subcommittee expressed the need for more volunteers to reach out to counties about opting in to their foundational datasets (parcels, address points, road centerlines) being included in the statewide dataset that is shared with the public. Albrecht also invited counties to email her directly if they are ready to opt-in now, explaining that is a simple consent and not a formal signing process. Albrecht explained the data collection process and reasons for opting in, and Norman Anderson explained the need to reach out rather than just share data where it is already publicly available.

Chair Albrecht highlighted that a group is still in the process of forming for the Planned Land Use Data Standard.

A desire was expressed to include priority project owner names on each slide.

During discussion of the Statewide Imagery Program, Alison Slaats explained that other states know when collections occur because they have ongoing funding for statewide imagery, whereas this does not exist in Minnesota – therefore, historically, someone would reach out to counties and ask if they are interested in one-off funding that becomes available. Slaats asked if there is desire from members to ask for ongoing statewide imagery program funding from the legislature (no answer). Tanya Mayer offered Metropolitan Council as an example for how this could work, as they have regional funding for imagery collection every 5 years.

Regarding the Remonumentation effort, Pat Veraguth shared that they are working on getting more legislative funding and they are also working with tribal governments to potentially get them funds for remonumentation.

Vice Chair Maddox closed the discussion.

11. St. Cloud State University Letter of Support

Chair Albrecht shared that St. Cloud State University (SCSU) is potentially cutting their geography and GIS programs due to budget shortcomings. Chair Albrecht was approached by Tom Owen from SCSU, requesting a letter of support for the program. Albrecht invited discussion about providing a letter of support from the GAC. Victoria Reinhardt highlighted the potential that GAC may not be able to do this since it is a state entity – Alison Slaats will look into this with the MNIT legislative liaison and report back to the GAC.

- **Motion:** Recommend a letter of support to bring to the MNIT legislative liaison (for consideration) (Reinhardt / Slaats) – Motion passed

In the meantime, attendees were encouraged to reach out as individuals with their support to save the programs (not on behalf of the GAC), as desired. Tanya Mayer offered that MetroGIS will consider providing a letter. It was suggested that the GIS/LIS Consortium consider providing a letter as well.

12. Announcements or other business

Chair Albrecht recognized Randy Knippel days before his retirement for his contributions to the GAC.

13. Adjourn

Chair Albrecht adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.

- **Motion:** To adjourn (Mayer / Veraguth) – Motion passed

Next Quarterly GAC Meeting: September 18, 2024, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Minutes prepared by: Megan Sisko