

**NYS GIS State Agency Advisory Group**  
**Meeting Agenda**  
at NYS Thruway Authority, Building 10  
August 23, 2016

**Welcome/Roundtable Discussion of Software and Applications for Elevation Data.** Eric started the meeting, and the group went around the room, introducing themselves, and discussing how they use elevation data, and what elevation modeling software they use:

- **Eric Herman – NYSTA:** Elevation data is used for a variety of projects from project planning to flood analysis, culvert placement, radio propagation, and line of site; The Authority has been using Quick Terrain Modeler, but is planning to switch to Global Mapper software
- **Maurico Roma – AG:** Interested in seeing Global Mapper next meeting; Use elevation data for various projects at the AG; Use ArcGIS 3D Analyst software; Looking for potential for hill shades to be posted online (like contours are)
- **Susan Knauss – DOT:** Design department traditionally gets info from internal photogrammetry unit's flights for projects; 3D Analyst for sound studies (to see our noise walls would work); Structures group uses data for bridge flood/scour data along streams; Bentley's MicroStation software used
- **Nick Mezzadonna – OTDA:** Not much elevation work done at this time
- **Doug Heim – OTDA:** Same as above
- **Dan O'Brien – OEM:** Use elevation data for coastal flooding, inundation models, HAZUS program terrain data for flooding projections, seismic data and classifying soils (slope can be used as a proxy for soils) for landslide susceptibility analysis, icing issues/prediction; Also noted that it's useful for finding stone walls in forests; ArcGIS 3-D and Spatial Analyst software used – often for cartographic purposes
- **Tim Ruhren – ITS:** Data provider, not a user so much; LAS datasets are nice for point cloud and switching to bare earth models for profiles & 3D views; ArcGIS 10.3.1. software used in office and noted that it now takes in raw LAS (but uses a proprietary compression format); Used Global Mapper since 2006, which opens DEMs super-fast & continuous color ranges on neighboring; Good for line of sight, profiles; LiDAR Module allows you to use LAS point cloud directly; Looking for tools to manipulate LiDAR data
- **Bob Gehrler – ITS GPO:** Programs under his domain don't use elevation
- **Jerry Farrell – OPWDD:** No current use
- **Anyée Willows – NYSTA:** See notes from Eric (Line of sight – mostly the Engineers)
- **Gwen LaSelva – DOH:** Some use for water supply and exposure assessment; Mostly MapInfo
- **Frank Winters – ITS:** <Arrived after this discussion>

**Status of NYS LIDAR and Elevation Data.** Tim Ruhren provided an update on the state's elevation program. He discussed the new federal datasets that are available, and DEMs that are downloadable from the <http://gis.ny.gov/elevation/> website. The latest status maps are also available at the site. All data that is available for download is also available if an agency provides an external drive. He then discussed the federal 3DEP program. Background information on the 3DEP is available at: <http://nationalmap.gov/3DEP/index.html>. There is great potential for partnering with the federal government on funding projects, and Tim showed the online application

where potential partners can see areas of interest (AOIs) that have been entered for the 3DEP program at <http://www.seasketch.org/#projecthomepage/5272840f6ec5f42d210016e4>. He discussed the significant improvements in the quality of data products over the years, and that although 75% of the state will be covered soon, only about half of this is up to current Quality Level 2 specifications (which is good for 1-foot contours). He encouraged agencies to provide feedback ([Tim.Ruhren@its.ny.gov](mailto:Tim.Ruhren@its.ny.gov)) on the GPO's plans, to prioritize data collection in specific areas.

**Details on Use of County Tax Parcel Data.** Bob recently sent out an email regarding the latest parcel data collections from the counties. As of today, the GPO now has permission to share tax parcels from 59 of the state's 62 with state agencies. Rockland, Suffolk and Putnam are not currently allowing the GPO to provide access outside of emergency needs, and would prefer that agencies come to them directly, and sign an agreement. If needed for emergency purposes, agency executives can send Bob an email detailing the need. The ITS Counsel's office is working with these counties to allow redistribution to state agencies. Bob reiterated that it is imperative that this data not be redistributed outside of the agencies, and that agencies should have consultants using the data sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Bob also pointed out that some counties have coincident polygons to represent situations like condominium ownership. This could greatly impact area calculations and some other types of analyses, so users should be aware of this. His group is considering removing coincident polygons and using a related table for ownership, or adding a new column to indicate that the polygon is a duplicate, so those can be removed from calculations. Bob will send something to larger group.

Finally, he discussed the value of a parcel image web service versus a future web feature service. The group discussed the various merits of each.

**Agency Use of Drones for Mapping Purposes.** The group then discussed potential uses for drones by state agencies. At this time, no one present was directly aware of specific projects that were using drones, but some were interested in learning about their potential, and possible uses on projects. Gerry mentioned that he knows of DEC rangers who are being trained in the technology. Mauricio also discussed some of the potential interest his office may have in the capabilities of this technology, as did Eric. Eric then provided an overview of some of the demonstrations that had been done at the Authority, looking at a variety of models and sensor types, and the various projects types this could potentially apply to.

**VDI Technology Investigations for DOT.** Kevin Hunt was unable to attend the meeting, but provided a summary of his office's work on VDI, which Eric and Susan reviewed for the group. DOT's regional offices have had crippling performance issues accessing centralized data over the wide area network. To address this issue, ITS has been testing virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) technology, where a user's desktop actually runs on a centralized server, and is accessed from a thin client. With this method, the software and data reside on same local area network at the data center, and just small data packets are sent to end users in the regions. Testing has shown a

major performance difference for remote office ArcGIS users, and the ITS cluster is pursuing this for the regional users, and potentially other agencies.

**Announcements/Open Forum.** A few quick announcements were made:

- Cheryl Benjamin ([Cheryl.Benjamin@its.ny.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Benjamin@its.ny.gov)) is seeking feedback to ensure that agencies do not have any problem with her office removing Census block information as street attributes. Current Census data is easily available from the [Census Bureau's web service](#).
- Introduction to GIS classes with a focus on the CIRIS application will be held September 13, 8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. at OCFS. Interested parties should contact John Fox ([John.Fox@its.ny.gov](mailto:John.Fox@its.ny.gov)).

**GPO's State Spending App.** Frank concluded the meeting with an overview of the state spending application that his office has been developing. This is being designed to assist with the Governor's request to see where projects are being done in various districts. It maps projects, and will serve as a way to highlight where state resources are being spent. It will be a public site, and users will be able to specify a location and see expenditures by type in that location's districts, with links to projects, as appropriate. Hosting location, and future maintenance responsibilities are still being worked out. This has also led to a larger discussion about the potential for new state data policies and standards, with regard to georeferencing datasets.

**The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.**

**The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 10, 2016 from 9:30am-12:00pm at the NY State Thruway Authority Offices. If you have any ideas for topics or would like to provide a demonstration at this meeting, please let us know. Any questions or concerns about any of these issues can be sent to the Advisory Group Chair, Eric Herman at the NYS Thruway Authority (518) 471-5890, or [eric.herman@thruway.ny.gov](mailto:eric.herman@thruway.ny.gov).**