



# Geographic Information Systems Technology News

The Newsletter of the New York State  
GIS Coordination Program

A Service of the NYS Office For Technology  
NYS GIS Clearinghouse: [www.nysgis.state.ny.us](http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us)

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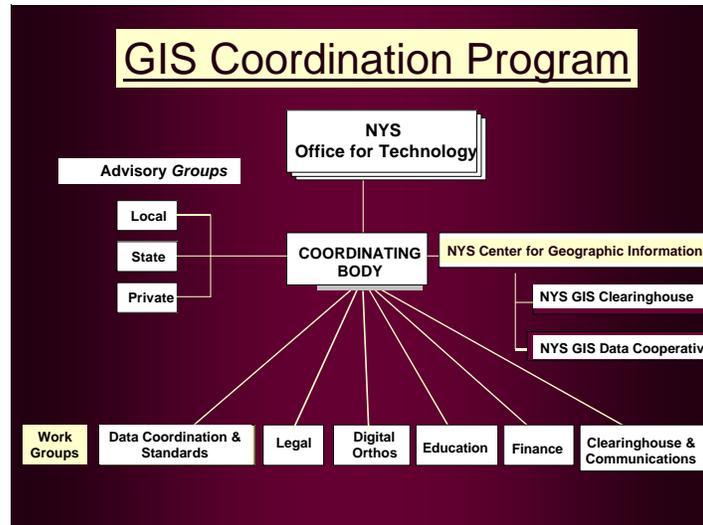
## NYS Center for Geographic Information Established!

**D**irector of State Operations, James Natoli, has announced the creation of the *New York State Center for Geographic Information*. The Center will be housed within the Office for Technology with the NYS GIS Coordinating Body serving as its steering body. The Center is being established to:

- Provide staff support for the NYS GIS Coordination Program;
- Ensure the timely creation, integration, and maintenance of GIS framework data in New York State;
- Promote awareness of GIS benefits and encourage the growth of GIS use and expertise within State agencies and local governments;
- Provide improved GIS training opportunities; and
- Encourage the development and sharing of GIS applications and resources that improve government services.

Staffing for the Center is now being assembled, and by this fall, we anticipate that 10 staff will be in place. The Center's major units include the Clearinghouse, which was recently moved from the State Library, Digital Orthoimagery, Framework Data Development, Data Accuracy, and Education/Government Liaison.

The Center will be embarking on a number of projects relating to the direction provided by the NYS GIS Coordinating Body and the Office for Technology. The major project goals



are captured in five areas:

**Clearinghouse Enhancements** – The Clearinghouse will include an on-line GIS help desk; a redesign of the Clearinghouse website; and the development of a spatial data warehouse.

**Framework Data** – Framework Data will include the digital orthophoto pilot project; the development of a continuous annual digital orthoimagery program; and the development, integration, and maintenance of a number of other basic framework datasets needed by virtually all GIS users.

**Map NY** – Map NY will be part of Governor Pataki's e-commerce initiative. It will include the development of certain on-line GIS applications that will allow citizens to find out information about New York and services that are available to them through the use of internet-enabled GIS.

**Government Liaison** – This function will be designed to improve communication on GIS issues in State and local government in New York. It will feature the development of a GIS Contact list and the development

of a needs analysis for State, county, and local governments.

**Education/training** – Modeled after last year's successful metadata training program, this program will encompass the development of a statewide GIS training program. Included will be the development of a GIS starter kit for local governments, the delivery of topical GIS workshops across the State for a variety of GIS users; and specialized GIS training courses.

The Center and its staff look forward to working with GIS users in New York State to make this initiative a success.

### INTERESTED IN SUBSCRIBING TO GIST?

Contact Ms. Mary Ann Normandin at (518) 474-0865 or subscribe on-line at <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/forms/news.htm>.

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## Development of the Interactive Mapping Gateway Continues



The Interactive Mapping Gateway now features a robust application designed to provide convenient access to an enhanced digital orthophotography data set. The site has been moved, along with the rest of the clearinghouse, from the original host at the State Education Department, to the Office for Technology under a new GIS URL <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gateway/index.html>.

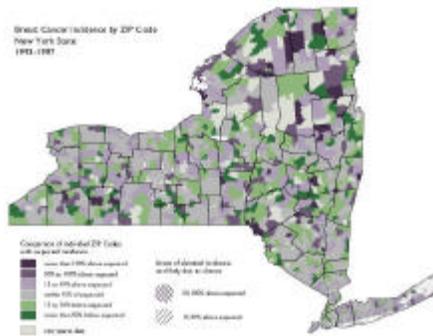
Moving the site allowed for an upgrade in functionality. Building on a strong set of geographic guides, the site now features zip codes as a searchable data set. Latitude and longitude data is now reported to four decimal places, matching the accuracy of the underlying data and providing increased utility for agencies such as the NYS Department of Health and the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. Both groups actively use the site to extract locational data through the site which has proven to be a fast and efficient means of data collection for point features.

In addition to viewing, printing, and downloading user-produced maps, the site features file download capability, both through the mapping interface and via access to file directories. Cooperative members seeking to use the data locally in their own GIS applications are able to access the

downloadable directories at the Cooperative Test Site section of the gateway opening page <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gateway/index.html>. Opening the direct download guides the users through a series of map images to access the data files. Bulk downloads can be achieved via HTML using NetVampire <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/tools.htm>.

For more information on the Interactive Mapping Gateway, please contact Tom Hart at [tfh01@health.state.ny.us](mailto:tfh01@health.state.ny.us).

## New York State's Breast Cancer Incidence by Zip Code



## Gathering Input from State and Local Government

The input of State and local government is very important to the successful establishment of the NYS Center for Geographic Information. Accordingly, the Center will be meeting with State agencies and local government around the State. These meetings will highlight how GIS can better serve an Agency's primary business needs and how the Center can assist with this process. The meetings will also serve to identify opportunities for coordination within and between NYS government, while improving access to GIS technology across New York. Participants will be introduced to GIS technology, OFT's GIS program, and the variety of current GIS uses across the State. Finally, the sessions will focus on an organization's particular GIS needs and potential uses.

These meetings will provide an excellent forum for executive management and department heads to learn more about GIS and its implications for use in their organization. Additionally, the meetings will provide a conduit for cross communication between State agencies and local governments. Furthermore, by working in concert with the NYS GIS Coordination Program's Local Government Advisory Workgroup, these meetings will assist Workgroup activities by promoting GIS awareness between local governments across New York.

An executive report will be developed to summarize the general conclusions from these meetings and identify GIS needs for New York State. This information will be used to direct future efforts of the NYS Center for Geographic Information and identify opportunities for coordinating GIS development activities. Once completed, the report will be available online at the NYS GIS Clearinghouse.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Novak at [elizabeth.novak@oft.state.ny.us](mailto:elizabeth.novak@oft.state.ny.us) or 518-474-0865.

## GIS at Work in Western New York

Three years ago, the Division of Environmental Studies at Alfred University hired a geographer for the first time. The Division now maintains a dedicated GIS Lab, and up to 25 people each year study Introductory and Advanced GIS. Although Alfred University has no "geography" or "GIS" majors per se, their students use GIS: 1) as a tool to complement their independent research; 2) to improve their spatial skills and gain a spatial perspective as they analyze and interpret environmental data; and 3) to acquire practical computer-based skills that make them more efficient and competitive environmental scientists.



Student-based research is a significant component of the program. Using GIS, students' projects have covered a spatial scale from the campus itself up to a regional level. The hiking trails across Pine Hill (approximately 100 forested acres behind the University) have been identified with GPS, and improved trail maps are being produced. Hydrologic mapping of the Canacadea Creek watershed has complemented the groundwater sampling and water chemistry analyses they have been doing for years. In northeastern Allegany County, they are helping the Canasarega Creek Watershed Project (CCWP) create maps of infrastructure, slope stability, and flood plains, as part of their economic development plan.

Alfred University's big project this summer has involved trying to find new oil from old wells. Funded in part by the New York State Energy Research Development Authority (NYSERDA), the New York State Oil Producers Association (NYSOPA), and the Otis Eastern Drilling Company, two students have been mapping geological characteristics of oil-

bearing sandstone units from throughout the Southern Tier. At this point, they are specifically analyzing the patterns of permeability and porosity found in southern Allegany County. NYSERDA and NYSOPA know these maps will assist them in any future plans for regional tertiary oil production.

For further information, please contact Diana Sinton at (607) 871-2604 or by e-mail at [dsinton@alfred.edu](mailto:dsinton@alfred.edu).

## What's been Happening with the Standards and Data Coordination Work Group?

The Standards and Data Coordination Work Group has worked on several activities this year. The work group completed an assessment of principle GIS data sets in New York State. The assessment includes data set scale, completeness, needs, issues, primary attributes, and known links to on-line metadata. The final report is located online at <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/reports/needstoc.htm>.

Secondary custodians in the Data Sharing Cooperative now have an easy way to notify and return data set improvements to primary custodian of the data sets. The online form can be found at the state GIS Clearinghouse at <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/forms/discform.htm>. Data Sharing Cooperative members are reminded that such notification is a requirement of the Data Sharing Cooperative.

A procedure has been developed for submitting suggested GIS standards. More details, including the standards approval procedure, can be found at <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/datcoord/standards.htm>.

As agencies and municipalities continue to deal with shrinking resources, GIS partnerships are becoming more common. A "Partnership Summaries" section has been added to the state GIS Clearinghouse <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/datcoord/partners.htm> to educate others about existing GIS partnerships and to invoke interest in forming new, similar partnerships. In addition to a brief summary of the partnership, basic information provided includes participants, resource contributions, time frame, deliverables, and contact information.

### Don't Be Left Out...

Sign up for GISNY-L at

<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/listserv.htm#newyork>.

