

Update on the California GIS Council February 13, 2003

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The Regional GIS Council (RGC) Subcommittee of the State GIS Council met via teleconference on February 13 to facilitate the creation of RGC's throughout the state and to get feedback from State GIS Council representatives. This document summarizes the status of the State GIS Council, as described at this teleconference.

The State GIS Council was represented by Luree Stetson (Deputy Secretary of Environmental Programs, CA Resources Agency). Others present at the call-in location in Sacramento with Ms. Stetson were Ray McDowell (Environmental Specialist, CERES, CA Resources Agency), John Ellison (Information Officer for the California Resources Agency) and Brad Kane (IT Officer for the State Business, Transportation & Highway Agency).

State GIS Council members have had several meetings recently to decide how to move the Council forward - a difficult task given the current budget situation. Because of the budget situation, Council representatives decided to narrow the focus of the Council and to attempt to develop better partnerships with federal and local government. With this in mind, a new State Government GIS Strategic Plan has been developed that has fewer objectives than previous plans.

State government has recommitted itself with a new MOU between State agencies and has now included some State agencies that were not previously involved, such as the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and Clark Kelso, the new Chief Information Officer for California.

The Council Steering Committee recommended that a different statewide GIS framework be developed that would allow the Council to better work with federal and local government partners. To help accomplish this, a Visioning Workshop has been planned for March 12 in Sacramento to develop and refine the new direction and focus for the Council. Attendees at this workshop will be high-level, policy-oriented individuals. This will include Council members themselves (not their alternates), state government agency representatives and other invited policy guests. To make this workshop effective, the Council is trying to keep the number of attendees to a manageable size. Regional GIS Councils (RGCs) will be represented at this workshop by Ron Brummett (a Council member and Chair of the Council's RGC Subcommittee). The Council does not intend to invite representatives of every RGC that has already been formed or is in the process of forming to this workshop.

Council representatives expressed a strong interest in relying on RGCs as a key element of the ongoing statewide GIS coordination efforts and complemented RGCs on their accomplishments and energy to date.

Re: the application process for RGCs to be recognized by the Council, current applications that have been received by the Council will be acted upon at the next formal Council meeting. This meeting has not yet been scheduled because Council members wanted to hold the Visioning Workshop before scheduling the next formal Council meeting.

At the moment, the Council does not plan to include a representative from each RGC on the Council, primarily because this would be too large of a group (i.e. the Council currently has 35 members and there are already 15 RGCs that are formed or being formed). Instead, the Council would like to identify an official liaison for each RGC that would be the point of contact for that RGC. The Council wants these liaisons to be public sector employees – they do not want RGC liaisons to be private sector employees. This was discussed amongst the Council

representatives and RGC representatives, but there was not a general consensus. Some RGC representatives thought that RGCs should be allowed to choose private sector individuals as their RGC liaison, if this made sense for the RGC.

The BAR-GC approach was offered as a model for consideration: The BAR-GC liaison to the Council is a public sector employee - private sector individuals do not sit on the BAR-GC but they attend meetings and provide support to the BAR-GC directly and through a BAR-GC private sector advisory group, which is currently being formed.

Several RGC representatives expressed their opinion that each RGC should have a seat on the Council, rather than simply having a designated liaison to the Council. The role of a potential Technical Committee of the Council was also briefly described within this context, but no general consensus was reached.

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