



RAMSEY COUNTY GIS USER GROUP

An alliance of communities sharing Geographical Information Systems

Meeting Minutes
August 4, 2010
Shoreview City Hall, 4600 Victoria St N

1. Introductions

Carrie Mack, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District
Steve Lorbach, Saint Paul Water
Matt Koukol, Ramsey County
Curt Peterson, Ramsey County
Jim Bownik, City of Lauderdale
Jolinda Stapleton, City of Roseville
Matt Baker, City of Shoreview
Melissa Baker, Capitol Region Watershed District
Chad Bergo, City of Maplewood

The meeting was called to order by Carrie Mack, Chair of the User Group at 2:06 PM.

2. July 2010 minutes

The July 2010 meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

3. ESRI User Conference Review

Matt Koukol shared his experiences at the annual ESRI User Conference in San Diego. He recommended spending more time at the technical sessions instead of the sessions where people give papers, because you get to interact with ESRI developers. He went to a few sessions on ArcGIS Server and installation of ArcGIS 10, getting some tips and tricks for administration and deployment.

One of the big emphases of the conference was the new ArcExplorer online service, which allows users to give web-based map presentations. ESRI is also encouraging use of their Community Basemaps template, which gives a standardized look and feel. It allows users to load their own data into ESRI's cloud-based system for hosting and sharing.

He spoke to ESRI developers about their plans to develop their own linear referencing system (similar to dynamic segmentation, but more detailed) that could be the basis for an asset management system.

Carrie Mack demonstrated a few of the new features of ArcGIS 10. Both ArcCatalog and ArcToolbox can be made dockable and set to auto-hide when not in use. Searching is universal, and will go through system help, attribute tables, tools, and metadata once system-wide indexing is set up.

Working with symbology has been improved by the addition of a search capability, and basemap layers can be created to allow for faster drawing speed and seamless panning (but layers chosen for use in a basemap cannot be edited). Online basemaps from providers like Bing and OpenStreetMap are now integrated seamlessly.

Chair

Carrie Mack
carrie.mack@rwmwd.org

Vice Chair

Matt Baker
mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov

Secretary

Joel Koeppe
joel.koeppe@ci.roseville.mn.us



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Creation of map books is no longer handled by a separately installed add-on, but is built into the program as the Data Driven Pages feature. Feature editing is simplified through the use of templates, so new features can be dragged and dropped onto the map. There are several improvements for working with imagery, such as the ability to change the brightness and contrast of image catalogs.

Carrie reported that she attended a training session on Python scripting, where they had workstations set up with the lesson books so attendees could learn at their own pace if desired.

4. Ramsey County Updates: Curt Peterson and Matt Koukol

Curt Peterson updated the group on the recent work going on in the Surveyor's office. They have built an updated topology of the county's public land survey system and are in the process of identifying errors and making needed corrections. Due to the nature of the high-precision database, they have 94 section corners that don't fall precisely on section lines.

Matt Koukol and Curt had a brief discussion about the use of abbreviation and jargon in the attributes of items in the database going forward, and how keeping them to a minimum would be useful.

Matt informed the group that the self-hosted Pictometry purchase did go through, and they are now identifying hardware needs, taking care of a few more details with the vendor, and will soon be putting together a project plan with the IS Department for rollout. The timeline for availability to User Group members is still unknown.

Work on getting ArcGIS Server up and running is ongoing, and is currently limited to internal map services. They are working on an inventory of GIS assets and activities, and putting together training plans. Matt is working on developing a geodatabase strategy and set of standards. In the future there will be 4 versions of geodatabases in a matrix of: Production, Development, Presentation, and Transactional.

Joel Koepp mentioned the December 31st expiration of the County's data license agreement with the User Group and that he will send a copy of the existing document to Matt for review and updating.

6. Community Announcements

Carrie Mack shared that the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District is in the midst of a \$10,000 pilot project to gather stormwater data and convert it to the proposed new standard format and talk to cities about its feasibility. Jolinda Stapleton added that Roseville was recently audited by the state for their MS4 permit and had asked if the city's data was using the standard.

A user group membership request was received from District Energy of Saint Paul, a non-profit group.

The ESRI ArcGIS 10 seminar will be an all day event at the Minneapolis Hilton on Wednesday, September 22nd.

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Carrie Mack

carrie.mack@rwmwd.org

Vice Chair

Matt Baker

mbaker@shoreviewmn.gov

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joel.koepp@ci.roseville.mn.us



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Joel Koepp briefly mentioned that he had done some investigation of ESRI's ArcGIS.com site and tested out the ability to upload data such as layer packages. There might be some usefulness in the future for User Group members to share data with each other this way.

Curt Peterson announced that new PDF section maps for the whole county are on the FTP site with new smaller file sizes after performing Adobe optimization on them.

Steve Lorbach asked if anyone in the group was working with mobile applications and air cards. He is testing a new protocol that caches map data from an ArcGIS Server so an application will still be usable if connectivity is lost. He agreed to demonstrate his application at the September meeting.

Joel Koepp told the group about a MetroGIS/MnGEO meeting he attended about the development of a GIS data portal for the entire state, modeled on the DNR's Data Deli concept. The project is still in the brainstorming phase.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Minutes submitted by Joel Koepp, Secretary

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