

NMGIC

1984-2007

The Map Legend

NMGIC Spring Meeting 2007

The New Mexico Geographic Information Council, Inc. (NMGIC) Spring Meeting for 2007 will be held Friday, May 11th. The theme is "Bringing GIT Home: Community & Regional Geospatial Applications", emphasizing the use of geospatial technologies in and around the local community or region. The meeting will be held at the usual location ... the UNM Science & Technology Park at 801 University Blvd SE in Albuquerque, NM (off Basehart west of University, a few blocks north of Avenida Cesar Chavez, the Pit, etc.: see <http://nmgic.unm.edu/directions.htm>). Registration begins at 8:00am (along with coffee and a chance to view vendor's exhibits); the meeting proper commences at 9:00am.

As is customary, admission is free to NMGIC members who have paid their 2007 dues (\$25/year; \$10/year for students with ID from their educational institution). Non-NMGIC-members may attend for a one-time fee of \$15, or \$7.50 for students. A box lunch and beverage is included with the admission fee. *(Continued on page 3 ...)*

2007 SWUG Conference in NM!

by Douglas W. Strech, SWUG NM Committee Co-Chair

Greetings NMGIC members!

It is that time again for New Mexico to host the Southwest Users Group (SWUG) Conference. The conference rotates between the member states of Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico. This year, after much wrangling and wringing of the hands, the conference will be held in Santa Fe at the Historic La Fonda Hotel on October 30th through November 1st. Yes, we will have the conference on Halloween...scary!!

The conference coordinating committee has been meeting regularly, and we are planning on having a wonderful conference focusing on geospatial information technology and applications here in the Southwest region. Please plan to join us for this special gathering of GIS users, and if you would like to volunteer your time and effort to make this conference happen please contact the Committee Co-Chairs, Doug Strech (doug@mrgcd.us) and Kurt Menke (kmenke@edac.unm.edu).



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The Map Legend

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NMGIC Public Relations

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NMGIC Spring 2007 Meeting *(Continued from page 1)*

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

8:00 - 9:00	Registration / Coffee / Exhibits
9:00 - 9:15	Welcome and Announcements
9:15 - 10:15	Keynote Presentation: “RailRunner As It Relates To The Region’s Development” - by Chris Blewitt
10:15 - 10:30	Break / Visit Exhibits
10:30 - 11:00	Using ESRI's Business Analyst for Market Area Analysis of Remotely Located Towns - Jeff Mitchell (Senior Research Scientist, BBER) and Theresa Watson (Research Scientist, BBER)
11:00 - 11:30	The State Water Plan - Liz Zeiler (ISC)
11:30 - 12:00	Land Use Trend Analysis - David Jordan (Intera)
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch (box lunches provided)
1:00 - 1:45	Tijeras Canyon: Hope for an Endangered Wildlife Linkage - Kurt Menke (Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition), Marcel Browne (Marron and Associates) & City Councilor Martin Heinrich
1:45 - 2:00	Break / Visit Exhibits
2:00 - 2:30	The Use of GIS in Population Estimation - Dely Alacantara (Senior Demographer, BBER)

Mystery Photo Location

Kurt Menke kindly supplied us with this “mystery photo” taken at an undisclosed location right here in New Mexico. Can you identify the location? A fabulously mysterious prize will be awarded to the person who first correctly identifies the location. Note: no fish were harmed in the filming of this bucolic scene ...

Contact Kurt with your answer.



Note From NMGIC President Kurt Menke

Dear NMGIC'ers:

2007 has begun and it's already looking like a busy and interesting year for the GIS community in New Mexico. In January the Board met to hold our annual Board Election. We welcomed two newcomers to the Board, Larry Spear (DGR-UNM) and Christina Noftsker (NM-OSE). The new board consists of myself as President, Kerri Mich (Vice President), Amy Budge (Treasurer), Christina Noftsker (Secretary), Sarah Masek (Elections Coordinator), Bart Matthews (Workshop Coordinator), Larry Spear (Meetings Coordinator), Rick Koehler (Public Relations) and last but not least Rich Friedman (Speaker Coordinator).

Once again this spring Chandra Bales coordinated the NM Geographic Bee, held on Friday, March 30th. This year the New Mexico State Winner was Sam Waitt (6th Grade Rio Grande School, Santa Fe); he'll be moving on to the National Geographic Bee, Washington, D.C., held May 22-23, 2007. Every year, using materials prepared by the National Geographic Society, thousands of schools in the United States participate in the National Geographic Bee. The contest, for students in grades four through eight, is designed to "encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography." I've been a judge for several years and I can report that it's a blast. The kids are a lot of fun and have an impressive amount of geographic knowledge. It's a great event to support. For more information contact Chandra Bales (cbales@edac.unm.edu).

In May NMGIC will be holding our annual Spring Meeting/Workshop. The dates have been set for May 10th and 11th at the Rotunda in Albuquerque. The topic looks to be something centered around the concept of Community Based GIS/Regional Development. This may include public health, transportation, utilities, tribal issues etc. The workshop will be the NGS Height Modernization Forum.

The biggest news of the upcoming year has to be the 2007 Southwest Users Group (SWUG). This fall SWUG comes back to New Mexico for the first time in 5 years. Instead of having a Fall NMGIC meeting and a separate SWUG meeting, the NMGIC Board and the SWUG Scoping Committee have decided to co-host SWUG 2007. One detail that we're working on is how the NMGIC membership will benefit from this arrangement. Hopefully NMGIC will be able to get a small return from SWUG, based upon the number of NMGIC members who register for SWUG. NMGIC would like to use such monies to fund a grant or another scholarship and SWUG may allow us to do this. The venue has been narrowed down to Santa Fe. Doug Strech (MRGCD) and I are co-chairing the aforementioned Scoping Committee and are still looking for volunteers to organize the meeting. There are many roles left to fill and we can use your help. If you're so inclined, contact Doug (doug@mrgcd.us) or myself (kmenke@edac.unm.edu) for more information.

I look forward to seeing you all this year ...

Kurt Menke, NMGIC President

GNIS Job Opportunity

The NMGIC Geographic Names Committee is seeking to work with other groups or an individual to develop a system whereby the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) database for New Mexico can be maintained and kept current. At present, it appears limited funds might be available to support this effort. The position could be an ideal opportunity for a student or retired person with a fondness for maps, modest computer literacy, and an interest in New Mexico geography. Work hours and location are flexible, and new technologies have made data compilation and entry far more efficient than in the past. Anyone interested should contact me: Bob Julyan, rjulyan@comcast.net, tel. 505-298-8420.

State GIS Update

by Larry Brotman, NM Geospatial Advisory Committee Chair

The torch has been passed in New Mexico's Geospatial Advisory Committee (GAC). Rick Koehler, who had served as Chair of the Committee twice, ended his second term in December. His commitment, diligence, and passion for guiding the Committee's efforts have been greatly respected and appreciated. Larry Brotman was elected to take the Chair for 2007. Larry has been with the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department since August of 2006 and is working in the Information Systems Bureau.

The sixty-day 2007 New Mexico legislative session got under way January 16. There are two proposals that address the creation of a State GIT Coordinator and establish a budget for geospatial services. They are House Bill 359 the "Geospatial Resources Act," sponsored by Janice Arnold-Jones, and a Multi-Agency "C2" request coming from the Office of the Chief Information Officer. The OCIO "C2" proposal would embed the GIT Coordinator and GIS Services funds into the Governor's Executive Budget. [Editor's Note: Although HB359, as amended and stripped of funds, passed both House and Senate, it was pocket-vetoed. The OCIO C2 proposal likewise was not approved.]

Working under the GAC umbrella, the Parcel Data Support Effort got under way again with the first meeting of the Parcel Data Workgroup. The new workgroup convened January 25th at Taxation and Revenue in Santa Fe. The workgroup is being facilitated by Deniz Berdine from Taxation and Revenue's Property Tax Division and Larry Brotman from the Information Systems Bureau. Initial participants include a diverse mix of folks representing county assessor's offices from throughout the State, a representative from the GIS Affiliate of the New Mexico Association of Counties, a few state agencies, and academics from New Mexico State University. The intent was to launch the workgroup with an efficient number of contributors and then expand as appropriate for the intended goals and tasks. The stated mission for the workgroup is: "To develop a business plan that describes spatial and attribute data standards, workflow, processes, and funding strategies that support building, publishing, and maintaining a seamless, statewide parcel layer."

The agenda for the first meeting included conference calls with Shelby Johnson, Arkansas Geographic Information Coordinator and Kevin Hyde, from the USFS RMRS Forestry Sciences Lab in Missoula, Montana. Mr. Johnson discussed the Parcel Data Management Plan implemented in his state and shared some of their challenges and successes. The workgroup is using several documents drafted and published through a collaboration between Arkansas and the FGDC Cadastral Data Subcommittee. Kevin Hyde joined the group to explain an application he has developed for the US Forest Service and the National Interagency Fire Center that utilizes FGDC cadastral core data to analyze values at risk within the projected path of wildland/interurban fire outbreaks. The workgroup also met again February 22 with goals that included establishing priorities, determining potential quick and realistic successes, and beginning the process of drafting a New Mexico Parcel Data Management Plan.

Finally, the GAC website (<http://www.gac.state.nm.us/>) has been recently relocated by the General Services Department to a new server. This will allow for future enhancement of the site in both look and function. In addition, a discussion forum for geospatial topics has been established at <http://nmgac.informe.com/>. Forum registration instructions: From the link above click on "Register." It's only necessary to complete the username, email address, password, and confirmation code. For more info contact Larry Brotman at 505-827-2318, or email larry.brotman@state.nm.us.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar containing <http://nmgac.informe.com/index.php>. The main content area features a logo for the Geospatial Advisory Committee (GAC) consisting of a yellow square with a magnifying glass over a globe and the letters "GAC" to its right. Below the logo is a navigation bar with buttons for "Login", "Register", "FAQ", "Memberlist", "Search", and "Forum Index". At the bottom of the page, there is a timestamp: "The time now is Fri May 11, 2007 1:15 am" and "All times are GMT - 8 Hours". To the right of the timestamp are links for "View unanswered posts" and "Mark all forums read". The main heading is "Geospatial Advisory Committee Forum Index". Below this heading is a table with four columns: "Forum", "Topics", "Posts", and "Last Post".

GNIS Report for Spring 2007

by Robert Julyan, NMGIC Geographic Names Committee Chair

Confession time. Only last month did I move from using Windows 98, and about the same time I finally downloaded and began playing with Google Earth. Admitting that to NMGIC members is like telling your college friends you finally can recite the whole alphabet.

I mention this because a major theme at the 2006 conference of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (GOGNA) was the evolving integration of the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) into the increasing number of online mapping techniques and applications—and those have multiplied faster than my ability to keep up. Originally designed as the official database of the nation's several million geographic names—federal maps and publications can use only those names listed in GNIS—the adoption of GNIS as an essential layer in GIS applications has required the system to change to meet new demands. As one presenter stated, “GNIS is becoming more geospatially enabled.”

For example, GNIS now has a new interface that allows named features to be displayed in Topozone, Google Map, Terrafly, Terraserver DRG, Terraserver DOQ, the Tiger Map Server, the watershed map of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and perhaps most importantly, the many map views of the National Map. Also, a new GNIS interface will link to the National Hydrological Dataset. And you thought GNIS was just to see how many places had your surname.

“... the two themes that remain most problematic—borders and geographic names—have plagued cartographers since the first hand-drawn maps.”

Also new to GNIS, the Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) 55 database now has been functionally merged with the Geographic Names Information System and has ceased to exist as a separate entity. The GNIS Feature ID supersedes the FIPS55 Place Code as the Federal unique, permanent, feature identifier. FIPS55 data is preserved in the GNIS and is available for query and for download. The new Search FIPS55 Data form allows users of the old data to query that data. All this has led to a push for GNIS to be accepted by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

But probably of greater significance than these public developments is GNIS's adoption by the private sector, especially via the Internet. As Rebecca Moore of Google Earth/Google Maps stated, “At least half of all the information on the Web is related to a location in some way.” Integral to the concept of Web 2.0 are such user-generated resources as Wikipedia, Wikimapia, and Placeopedia. “Remote areas in the Third World that don't have water or electrical systems nonetheless have Internet cafes that are very popu-

(Continued on page 7)

GNIS Report for Spring 2007

(Continued from page 6)

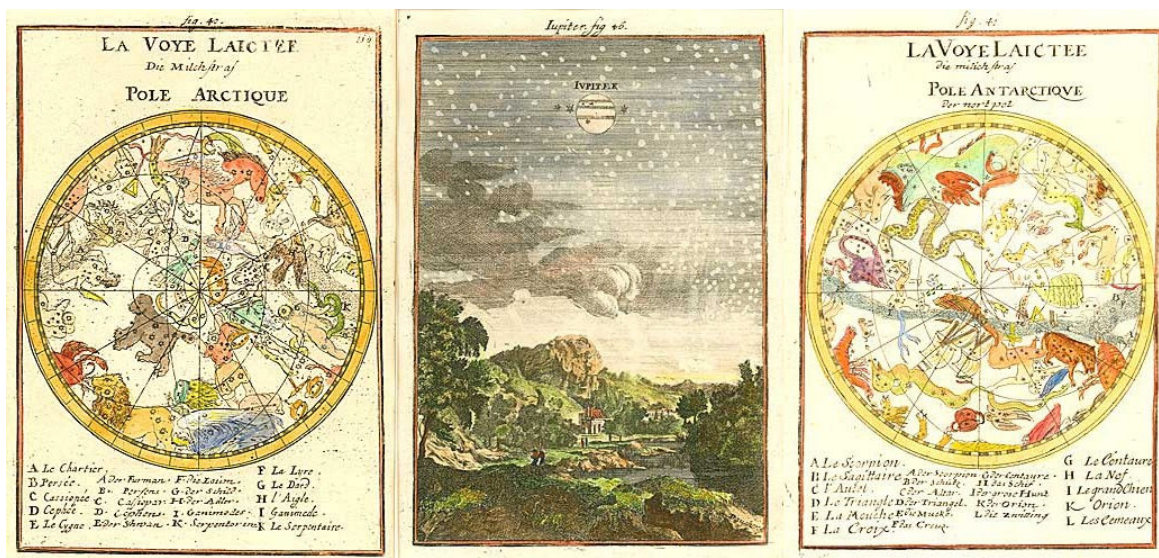
lar.” Yet throughout this, she said, the two themes that remain most problematic—borders and geographic names—have plagued cartographers since the first hand-drawn maps.

That's a heavy burden for GNIS. Unfortunately, GNIS desperately needs editing and maintenance. In some states, the data is more than 20 years old (approaching that in New Mexico). Recognizing this, USGS has begun to award funding to a few states for GNIS maintenance—and New Mexico could be one of these. This could be an ideal opportunity for a student or retired person with a fondness for maps, modest computer literacy, and an interest in New Mexico geography. Work hours and location are flexible, and new technologies have made data compilation and entry far more efficient than in the past. Anyone interested should contact me. By the way, the proper pronunciation of GNIS is simply to say the letters. It is not GEE-nis, as some presenters misspoke.

Other items

Roger Payne, longtime executive secretary of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) retired last year. He has been replaced by Lou Yost III, Roger's deputy. Also, Robin Worcester, longtime GNIS guru, also has retired. Queries regarding GNIS should be addressed to gnis_manager@usgs.gov. Dwight Hughes is most knowledgeable about technical matters.

Currently, the NMGIC Geographic Names Committee (GNC) has no proposals under consideration, though committee member Denise Bleakly has been involved in collecting names in association with *acequias* in the Embudo area. This is a reminder that the GNC welcomes involvement in all projects involving geographic names. And finally, I'm sorry to report that the USBGN rejected what I thought was a wonderful proposed named for a drainage—Stream of Consciousness.



Cool Websites - Mexican GIS Data

by Denise Bleakly

Cool Websites: Mexican GIS Data, January 2007

For this edition of Cool Web sites, I've chosen to focus on information resources concerning Mexico and the US Southern Border. The border is a complex place - immigration issues, water issues, ecological issues.

There are many geospatial activities along the southern border, and these are just a few of the many links I found. These are from a very simple Google search, and are updates from previous searches for Mexican data I have done. There is no particular order or ranking. This is not an exhaustive list and as always, if you have any additions, please feel free to contact me, Denise Bleakly, at drbleak@sandia.gov

* * *

Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), Georeferenced Population Data Sets of Mexico:

[**http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/home-page/mexico.html**](http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/home-page/mexico.html)

US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Mexican GIS Coverages:

[**http://www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/data_gis.asp**](http://www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/data_gis.asp)

GIS Lounge Mexico GIS Resources

[**http://www.gislounge.com/atlas/blmexico.shtml**](http://www.gislounge.com/atlas/blmexico.shtml)

GeoCommunity, GISDataDepot.com - Mexico Nation wide data:

[**http://data.geocomm.com/catalog/MX/datalist.html**](http://data.geocomm.com/catalog/MX/datalist.html)

US Mexico Joint Working Committee Border Geographic Information System (BGIS):

[**http://mapper.nmsu.edu/**](http://mapper.nmsu.edu/)

Us Department of the Interior, US Mexico Border Field Coordinating Committee

[**http://www.cerc.usgs.gov/fcc/resources.htm**](http://www.cerc.usgs.gov/fcc/resources.htm)

Mexico GIS Resources - more of a linking site than an originator of data

[**http://www.geografxworld.com/free.htm**](http://www.geografxworld.com/free.htm)

New Mexico State University Library - Border and Latin American information: lots of links like

[**http://lib.nmsu.edu/subject/bord/**](http://lib.nmsu.edu/subject/bord/) and

[**http://lib.nmsu.edu/staff/mmollo/border_environment_resources.htm**](http://lib.nmsu.edu/staff/mmollo/border_environment_resources.htm)

Transboundary Resource Inventory Program (TRIP) / Texas-Mexico Borderlands Information Center (BIC)/ Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS)

[**http://www.tnris.org/bic.htm**](http://www.tnris.org/bic.htm)

Compiled by Denise Bleakly, January 2007

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2007 GIS Calendar of Events

NMGIC

Spring Workshop 2007, Thursday May 10th, 2007, Albuquerque
Spring Meeting 2007, Friday May 11th, 2007, Albuquerque
Fall Meeting 2007—see SWUG entry below

ASPRS

2007 Annual Conference May 7th-11th, 2007 "Identifying Geospatial Solutions", in Tampa, Florida

ESRI

27th Annual International User Conference, June 18th-22nd, 2007, in San Diego, California

NSGIC

2007 Annual Conference September 23rd-27th, 2007, in Madison, Wisconsin

URISA

2007 Annual Conference August 20th-23rd, 2007, in Washington, D.C.

SWUG

October 30th-November 1st, 2007, Santa Fe, held in conjunction with NMGIC Fall Meeting



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