

December, 2007

## Winter Meeting Set for Jan. 31 – Feb. 4 in Palm Springs, CA

Sessions on technical trends in GIS, remote sensing, photogrammetry, LIDAR, and new and potentially disruptive technologies will be among agenda topics at the MAPPS annual winter conference, to be held January 31-February 4, 2008 at the Westin Mission Hills Resort and Spa in Rancho Mirage (Palm Springs), California.



Conference attendees will learn about business trends, such as teaming and partnering, raising capital to support a firm's growth, issues in professional services contracting, potential new markets and the challenges facing the geospatial profession.

Additionally, such topics as imaging processing, LIDAR, SAR and automated elevation extraction, data fusion, software for processing LIDAR data, UAVs and GPS navigation will be covered.

"MAPPS meetings are a unique and special experience, bringing together the principals, owners, partners, and senior professionals from the community's leading firms. The Winter Conference sessions feature the experts who can help professionals understand important issues that affect the multi-million dollar decisions made by private firms including the purchasing and implementation of aerial sensors, aircraft, data conversion and processing systems, and other hardware, software and products. These meetings are designed to spur thoughtful, in-depth analysis by fellow professionals," said John M. Palatiello, MAPPS Executive Director.

The preliminary program also includes updates on important decisions made by the government that affect the private geospatial profession. "No organization comes close to MAPPS in monitoring government policies and activities, or is more effective in lobbying for a favorable outcome for the private sector," Palatiello said. "All this information is presented in a one-of-a-kind setting. MAPPS meetings are known for their relaxed atmosphere, beautiful settings, cordial interaction and most notably, fun! MAPPS has created a unique conference structure, which emphasizes networking and business-to-business relationship building. The meeting experience creates an environment which provides principals and decision makers of the nation's top private geospatial firms with information and education that positively affect the business aspects of their professional practice."

**"Early Bird" registration closes this Friday, December 14.** The preliminary conference schedule can be found by visiting the MAPPS website, [click here](#). The conference is open to all private firms in the geospatial profession, including those that are not currently MAPPS members. However, there is a significant savings for MAPPS member firm principals.

**Win a Free Trip to the Conference, see page 5**

## MAPPS President Testifies Before Congress on NOAA Programs

"While much progress has been made, NOAA still duplicates, competes with, and under-utilizes the private sector capacity and capability in the geospatial field," MAPPS President Marvin E. Miller, PLS, PPS, CP, (AERO-METRIC Inc., Maple Grove, MN) told a Congressional committee October 24, 2007.

In testimony on H.R. 3352, the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act Amendments of 2007, before the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife & Oceans of the Committee on Natural Resources in the U.S. House of Representatives, Miller applauded the bipartisan leadership of the Committee over several years, stating that without their effort to mandate increased use of the private sector in hydrographic surveying, shoreline mapping and other geospatial services, the "NOAA program would be beyond life support."

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# President's Column

## *"Maturity"*

by Marvin E. Miller, PLS, PPS, CP  
MAPPS President



Recently, the MAPPS membership received an email from our Executive Director, John Palatiello, regarding membership recruitment generally and recruiting new Associate Members in particular. In that email, John pointed out that MAPPS now has two human resources recruitment

firms, three marketing communications firms and one law firm among our Associate Members. He made the point that the phenomena of such consultants and advisors to geospatial service and data product firms showed a level of maturation in the geospatial market and in MAPPS as the association of private geospatial firms.

I share John's view. The fact that our profession and our association are attracting this kind of attention is a sign of market maturity. That is a healthy and welcomed development.

There are, however, other ways we can and should mature as a community of practice and a profession.

For more than a year, MAPPS has been working on legislation in several areas – oceans and coastal mapping, the aviation bill, flood map reform, and the Farm Bill, to name a few. We have had task forces studying these issues and developing recommendations for Congress. This process has been very well publicized inside of MAPPS, as well as externally. The recommendations being advocated by Congress are not for the benefit of a single firm, or even the geospatial profession, but are intended to serve the public by providing geospatial data to the government and the public at large in a way that will enhance the quality of life and protect public health, safety and welfare.

Nevertheless, it recently has come to my attention that in addition to the MAPPS proposal, there are

three other geospatial proposals for the Farm Bill that have been advocated in Congress by individual member firms of MAPPS, or other organizations in which member firms of MAPPS are also prominent members. This shows we still have a long way to go to mature as a community, a market and a profession. When we advocate our individual interests at the expense of a greater good, we not only hurt ourselves, but we hurt the profession and the public. If we are to be mature, and effective, we must learn to do a better job of working together.

As professionals, we are expected to exhibit the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Our services have a direct and vital impact on the quality of life for all people who utilize our services and data, as well as the projects and programs that rely on our services and data. Accordingly, the services provided by geospatial professionals require honesty, impartiality, fairness, and equity, and must be dedicated to the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare. We must perform under a standard of professional behavior that requires adherence to the highest principles of ethical conduct.

What distinguishes professionals from others in business and industry is a societal expectation that we shall at all times strive to serve the public interest. We are held to a higher calling to participate in civic affairs and work for the advancement of the safety, health, and well-being of our community.

As I announced in my speech to the members at the Summer Meeting in New Hampshire upon being installed as President and in my column in the last issue in *FLIGHTLINE*, I am committed to implementing a community service program in MAPPS. I would like to develop a formal program by which we give back to the communities we serve. Your suggestions and input on such an activity is requested.

In my view, it is another way we can mature as a profession.

## **House Passes FEMA Bill, Includes MAPPS Provisions**

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a FEMA flood insurance reform bill that includes several flood map modernization provisions advocated by MAPPS. H.R. 3121 the “Flood Insurance Reform and Modernization (FIRM) Act of 2007” passed the House on September 27.

The FIRM Act will reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for five years, through 2013. The bill doubles funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program, from \$200 million to \$400 million per year. It extends mapping to a 500-year flood plain, as well as areas protected by levees and dams, and reestablishes the Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC).

During House consideration of H.R. 3121, an amendment by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA), Chairman of the Financial Services Committee, was adopted by voice vote. The amendment included three key areas that the MAPPs Task Force on FEMA flood map modernization and reform recommended to Congress. The provisions included using current, state-of-the-art geospatial technologies for collection of new elevation data, mapping on a watershed basis rather than by political jurisdictions, and the inclusion of a member of a professional mapping association on the Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC) that will advise FEMA on further improvements to the NFIP mapping program.

“Passage of this bill is a testament to the hard work of the MAPPs staff and our FEMA Task Force members,” said Marvin Miller, CP, PLS, PPS, MAPPs President (AERO-METRIC, Inc., Maple Grove, MN). “The members of the MAPPs Task Force have worked to educate members of Congress and their staff of the capabilities available to enhance data acquisition for NFIP.”

MAPPs created a FEMA Task Force in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and developed recommendations to improve FEMA’s Flood Map Modernization program. MAPPs established this Task Force, comprised of leading geospatial professionals with expertise in flood mapping, to review Federal policies and to make recommendations, to assist in the protection of property, and to instill financial integrity to the government’s flood insurance program. The members of the task force are: Silas Suazo, CET, Bohannon Huston, Inc. (chairman); Michael Bullock, Intermap Technologies, Inc.; Vince DiCamillo, CFM, Greenhome & O’Mara, Inc.; David Greenwood, Michael Baker Jr., Inc. and David Maune, Ph.D., CP, CFM, Dewberry, Inc.

On June 12, Dr. Maune testified before a House Financial Services Subcommittee on behalf of MAPPs on flood mapping improvements. In his testimony, he urged Congress to adopt the MAPPs reforms, which were included in the bill passed by the House. The House passed H.R. 3121 by a vote of 263 to 146. On November 1, the Senate Banking Committee approved a similar bill, S.2284, and full Senate action is expected in the coming weeks.

“This is a great victory for MAPPs, but more importantly, this bill will benefit the entire Nation,” said Suazo, Chairman of the MAPPs Task Force and President-Elect of MAPPs.

## **SBA Seeks Problem Regulations**

The Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration is seeking nominations of federal rules in need of review and reform. The “Top 10” rules nominated by small business owners, trade associations, and others will be transmitted to appropriate federal agencies for review and reform. The regulatory review and reform or “R3” initiative was briefed to MAPPs members at the Fall Policy Conference on November 12. For information, go to [R3 Initiative](#). MAPPs members who wish to nominate a regulation should contact MAPPs Executive Director at [john@mapps.org](mailto:john@mapps.org). The deadline for submitting nominations to the SBA is December 31.

## **MAPPS Praises Bill to Create Commercial Geospatial Advocate**

The private geospatial community will have a government agency as an advocate for increased use of commercial firms if legislation being sent to Congress by the Bush Administration is passed. A bill to restructure the Office of Space Commercialization (OSC), part of NOAA in the Department of Commerce, would rename the agency as the Office of Space Commerce and establish as one of its statutory missions to “promote the advancement of United States' geospatial technologies related to space commerce.”

Ed Morris, Director of OSC, provided an explanation of his office’s current and future activities to MAPPS members at the MAPPS Fall Policy Conference in Arlington, VA on November 12. The "Space Commerce Act" would strengthen and provide more focus for the new Office of Space Commerce (OSC). An office within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the OSC, would lead the Federal government's effort on space commerce policy. While it has recently been involved in satellite, airborne and value-added geospatial activities, in addition to GPS issues, the OSC would be more engaged in all aspects of commercial geospatial promotion and advocacy under the proposed legislation.

“MAPPS has long called for an office within the U.S. Government to act as an advocate for the private geospatial community and an inside voice for eliminating government competition and maximizing government use of the private sector. We strongly supported the 'IMAGE Act', S. 4006, that was introduced in the last session of Congress by then-Senator George Allen (R-VA) and we are pleased the Bush Administration has endorsed the MAPPS idea of an in-house proponent for commercial geospatial firms,” said MAPPS Executive Director John Palatiello.

“While we may still seek amendments and improvements to the bill, we are delighted the Administration is sending this proposal to Congress and we look forward to working with the Administration and Congress to pass as strong a bill as possible,” Palatiello said. “Although the proposed bill does not go into all the detail of the IMAGE Act, it does endorse the basic tenet - that there is tremendous potential for growth in the geospatial field if only the government would get out of the way.”

MAPPS has long believed an office, modeled after the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy and the Office of Private Sector Initiatives in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transit Administration (now Federal Transit Administration) established by President Reagan in the 1980s, should be empowered to be an inside-the-government advocate and watchdog to promote utilization of commercial geospatial firms to the maximum extent possible. "For its entire 25 year history, MAPPS has fought unfair government competition. To now have an ally - a place to go to inside the government - will be a great benefit to MAPPS and our member firms," Palatiello said.

## **DHS Geospatial Grants Total \$300 Million**

Some \$300 million in grants related to geospatial activities have been awarded to state government by the Department of Homeland Security since the new Cabinet agency was established by Congress in 2002. The analysis of grants was conducted by the Geospatial Management Office, at the request of MAPPS, and was presented to MAPPS members at the MAPPS-DHS Liaison Committee meeting on November 13.

A delegation of MAPPS leaders, including President Marvin Miller, President Elect Silas Suazo, Executive Director John Palatiello and Government Affairs Manager John Byrd met with DHS officials in late October. At that meeting, MAPPS expressed concerns raised by several MAPPS members that while the Nation has significant geospatial requirements for homeland security, there appear to be few business opportunities for private geospatial firms at DHS. The DHS staff, led by Daniel Cotter, Geospatial Management Officer for the Department, conducted an analysis in response to the MAPPS request. At the November 13 liaison meeting, Cotter reiterated that the GMO’s office was a coordination and policy entity, not operational. He noted that a considerable amount of geospatial related work has been conducted by state government, utilizing DHS funds. DHS has developed guidelines for geospatial grants to state and local government grants. [Access the guidelines.](#)

## **MD Legislature Rejects Sales Tax on Surveying, Mapping Services**

The Maryland state legislature concluded its special session very early the morning of Monday, November 19, and as a result of the letters and other grass roots communications by MAPPS members in Maryland and with offices in Maryland, combined with the efforts of the MAPPS staff, the legislature did NOT broadly expand the Maryland sales tax to services.

Governor Martin O'Malley (D) had proposed a sales tax expansion to a variety services. Instead, the legislature only extended the sales tax to a select few services, notably certain computer services. However, the legislature specified what types of computer services would be subject to the sales tax, and by reading the definition and exclusions, it is clear that digital mapping and GIS services, and other computer-related services performed by mapping, surveying, engineering and architectural firms, are EXEMPT.

MAPPS sent a letter to legislators urging that surveying and mapping services not be subject to the sales tax.

“This is another example of what we can accomplish when we work together,” said MAPPS Executive Director John Palatiello.

## **Oregon’s Photogrammetrist Licensing by Grandfather Closes Jan. 1**

MAPPS members are reminded that Oregon’s new licensing law for photogrammetry that permits individuals to apply based on a grandfather or “prior practice” application requires all such applications to be submitted in full by January 1, 2008. For information and application, go to: [Oregon's Licensing Law Information](#).

## **Member-Get-A-Member Contest Closes December 31**

MAPPS is currently conducting a "Member-Get-A-Member" competition. The current MAPPS member who recruits the most new members by December 31 wins an all expense paid trip (airfare, registration and hotel) to the MAPPS Winter Meeting, January 31-February 4 in Rancho Mirage, California.

Help recruit new members to MAPPS. Our focus group data shows that peer-to-peer recruitment is the most effective way to attract new members to MAPPS. You, our current members, are our best membership development advocates. You are the most effective recruiter MAPPS has.

Please peruse the current MAPPS membership on the website. Identify those firms you do business with, and recruit them into MAPPS. When assembling your recruitment list, consider not only those firms with which you partner (other geospatial services firms), but those that provide your hardware, software and supplies. Also reach out to marketing consultants, attorneys, accountants, merger and acquisition consultants, public relations firms and others who specialize in services to the geospatial community.

A larger MAPPS membership benefits the current members in many ways. First, membership growth means less need for dues increases. Second, the larger and more diverse the membership, the greater the networking and information exchanging that occurs at MAPPS meetings. And third, the larger the membership, the stronger our voice is in affecting positive change in the market, in Congress and at all levels of government.

In addition to information on the "Member-Get-A-Member" competition, the MAPPS website has information you can use to discuss MAPPS membership with potential new members and recruit them into the association. This information can be found in the "Members Only" section under "Membership Recruitment References." There is also a referral form you can fill out to help with the recruiting effort.

Please help MAPPS grow today. The “Member-Get-A-Member” applies to any new firm that joins before December 31. If you need assistance with your recruitment activities, send an e-mail to [nick@mapps.org](mailto:nick@mapps.org) or call Nick Palatiello, MAPPS Marketing Communications Manager, at (703) 787-6996.

## Dues Invoices to be E-Mailed

2008 MAPPS dues invoices will be emailed to each firm's principal contact later this week. The email contains a link to a secure, on-line renewal form for members' 2008 dues payment with a credit card, or for printing and mailing with a check.

## MAPPS President Marvin Miller Testifies Before Congress ...

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Since the passage of the original Hydrographic Services Improvement Act (HSIA) in 1998, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has "transitioned from a source of competition for the private geospatial community to a source of business," Miller said. "For the geospatial services that NOAA does contract, we believe the agency is highly satisfied. Private firms have been innovative in staffing, scheduling, applying technology and deployment to ensure that the government receives value for its money."

The MAPP's President told the Congressional panel that a number of independent reports conducted on NOAA's programs, including the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Commerce Department Inspector General, National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Public Administration, former Vice President Gore's "Reinventing Government" study and studies conducted for NOAA itself, have all concluded that NOAA should do less surveying and mapping work in-house and increase contracting to the private sector.

Miller recommended to the committee enhancements for opportunities available to the private sector and to utilize NOAA's strengths. These recommendations, based on the work of a MAPP's hydrographic services legislative task force included –

Require NOAA to utilize the private sector for all commercially available geospatial activities;

- Authorize NOAA to maintain an "intellectual" core, in-house geospatial capability, rather than capital equipment, with funds directed toward data collection requirements;
- Require NOAA to embrace the marketplace by disseminating electronic and hydrographic products produced by the private sector in its chart certification program;
- Integrate the various ocean, coastal and shoreline mapping activities into a comprehensive "Digital Coast" program, managed by the Coastal Services Center;
- Establish a line item authorization for the Shoreline Mapping Program; and
- Require NOAA to develop a strategy for an enhanced acquisition workforce, with particular expertise in qualifications based selection.

Miller commended the geospatial services contract program out by NOAA's Coastal Services Center in Charleston, South Carolina. "In this program, (private sector and government) roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined," said Miller.

Miller also applauded NOAA's application of the "Brooks Act" providing qualifications based selection for its geospatial contracts. "This time-tested and proven process assures that contractors are selected based on demonstrated competence and qualifications, not the lowest bid. This is a highly competitive process that permits

NOAA to evaluate firms based on their track record, past performance, capabilities, and qualifications first, and then negotiate a price that is fair and reasonable to the government with the most qualified firm," said Miller.

## **MAPPS Board Approves 08 Budget; No Dues Increase**

The MAPPS Board of Directors has approved a 2008 budget that calls for income of \$860,500 and \$856,450 in expenditures. The budget is the largest in the 25 year history of MAPPS and continues the sustained growth of the association. The 2008 Board-approved budget does *not* call for a dues increase.

At its November 12 meeting, the Board adopted a budget that continues to support the establishment of state chapters and provides funding for a redesign and upgrade of the MAPPS website. The Board also approved the establishment of a menu of non-dues income programs to enhance the benefits of membership in MAPPS.

## **Membership Survey**

An on-line membership survey will be conducted in the coming days to gather information on the views of the membership. The data will be used by the Board to plan roundtable sessions at the Winter Meeting, to guide the Board and Legislative Affairs Committee on a 2008 legislative agenda, to assist the Program Committee with future conference sessions, and to aid the Board in implementation of the MAPPS Strategic Plan. An email containing the survey will be sent to a principal in each firm later this week.

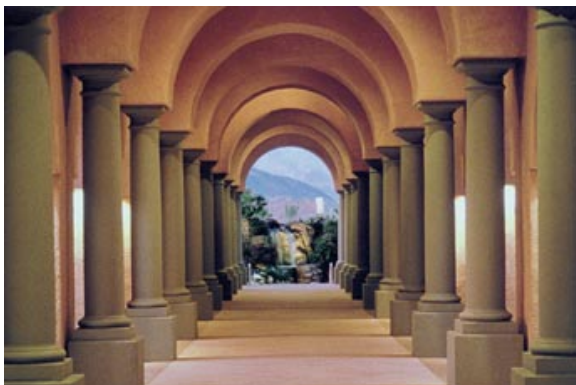
## **MAPPS, ACSM, ASPRS Establish Frank Moffitt Scholarship**

The MAPPS Board of Directors has agreed to participate in the establishment of a scholarship fund to assist deserving students in a geospatial sciences course of study, in honor of Frank Moffitt, a past president of MAPPS, author of textbooks on surveying and photogrammetry and former professor of engineering at the University of California at Berkeley. MAPPS has joined ASPRS and ACSM as sponsors of the fund, which is being managed by the ASPRS Foundation. Moffitt, who was also a past president of ASPRS and a national director of ACSM, died April 21 at the age of 84. For information, go to: [Frank Moffitt Scholarship Fund](#). To make a tax deductible donation, go to: [Scholarship Fund Donation](#).

## **FHwA Reviewing State DoT Competition with Private Firms**

MAPPS is working with the Federal Highway Administration to improve implementation of a provision in law that requires state transportation agencies to use the private sector for surveying, photogrammetric mapping and other geospatial services of the private sector to the maximum extent possible. Section 321 of the 1995 National Highway System (NHS) Designation Act (23 United States Code 306) strengthens a provision included in the original 1956 Highway Act that calls for utilization of the private sector for surveying and mapping services.

A membership survey of all 50 state DoTs is on the "Members Only" page of the MAPPS website. Members are asked to review the survey and provide MAPPS staff any updates or corrections to the state-by-state summary. Based on the MAPPS survey, FHwA will be conducting its own investigation and determining how to better implement the intent of Congress. MAPPS is also questioning several proposed state DOT acquisitions of aircraft and digital aerial sensors. Contact John Byrd, MAPPS Government Affairs Manager at: [Jbyrd@mapps.org](mailto:Jbyrd@mapps.org).



**Register Today**  
**For the MAPPS Winter Conference**  
**January 31 – February 4**  
**Westin Mission Hills Resort**  
**Rancho Mirage, CA**  
*Early Bird Registration Ends December 14*

[Click Here](#)

**Sponsor An Event**

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## Calendar of MAPPS Events

### MAPPS Winter Conference

January 31-February 4, 2008

[The Westin Mission Hills Resort & Spa](#)

Rancho Mirage, California

[Register here](#)

### Federal Programs Conference

March 10-12, 2008

[Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill](#)

Washington, DC

### MAPPS Summer Conference

July 19-July 23, 2008

[Sun Valley Resort](#)

Sun Valley, Idaho

### MAPPS Winter Conference

January 20-24, 2009

[Marriott Frenchman's Reef](#)

St. Thomas, Virgin Island

### MAPPS Summer Conference

June 25-29, 2009

[Ocean Edge Resort & Club on Cape Cod](#)

Brewster, Massachusetts

### MAPPS/ASPRS Joint Conference

November 14-19, 2009

[Crowne Plaza Riverwalk](#)

San Antonio, Texas



**Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors**  
An Association of Photogrammetry, Mapping, and Geospatial Firms

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