

FLIGHT LINE

Newsletter of the Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)

June 2006

Senate Panel O.K.'s MAPPS FEMA Proposals

The Senate Banking Committee voted unanimously on May 25 to approve the Flood Insurance Reform and Modernization (FIRM) Act of 2006. The bill, still unnumbered, includes significant enhancements to FEMA's Flood Map Modernization Program and expands the Program's requirements for current, accurate geospatial data and adopts several provisions recommended by MAPPS.

The legislation authorizes \$400 million each year for flood map modernization. It expands the scope of the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Program to capture all areas within a 500 year flood event, rather than the current 100 year. It also includes coastal areas, as well as areas located behind levees, dams, and other man-made structures that are subject to inundation as a result of any failure of such infrastructure. All updated and new maps will be digitally published in a geospatial data-compliant format.

The bill also places an emphasis on new data collection to provide current, accurate data in the FIRMs. In the collection of new mapping, new ground elevation data will be collected on a watershed basis for hydrologic and hydraulic modeling. In particular, discrepancies in base flood elevations (BFE) will be eliminated while forming a reliance on vertical positioning of the lowest floor and lowest adjacent grade (LAG) coordinate elevation data in the national structure of inventories. As stated in the bill, "The most accurate topography and elevation data available" must meet the requirements of Appendix A, Guidance for Aerial Mapping and Surveying of FEMA's Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners and be compliant with NAVD'88.

The Technical Mapping Advisory Council (TMAC) will be re-established so that various stakeholders from the public and private sector will have a seat at the table when flood insurance rate maps' accuracy, standards and specifications are implemented. In particular, a member of a surveying and mapping professional association and a member of the professional engineering association will be two of the twelve TMAC members.

Earlier this year, MAPPS President Kurt Allen appointed a task force to review the FEMA program and develop [MAPPS Recommendations](#) for legislation.



MAPPS Government Affairs Manager John Byrd, who led efforts on Capitol Hill in support of the association's FEMA flood mapping proposals, is pictured with Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX).

Nominations Committee Formed, Candidates Sought (see page 3)

President's Column

by Kurt Allen
MAPPS President



"Turning Ideas Into Action"

As you know, we are in the midst of a "member-get-a-member" campaign. Each current member firm principal of MAPPS is encouraged to recruit a new firm to the association's membership. Boeing has generously sponsored the campaign, and your help is needed to grow and strengthen MAPPS – and our profession – by enlisting a new member firm.

When discussing MAPPS membership with a proactive new member, there is no better evidence of the value of MAPPS than our current – and, thus far, successful – effort to pass meaningful flood mapping reform measures in the legislation before Congress to restructure the National Flood Insurance Program.

As you can read elsewhere in this edition of FLIGHTLINE, the Senate Banking Committee has approved a bill that includes several strong provisions recommended by MAPPS. This legislation not only benefits the American taxpayer by improving the mapping component of the flood insurance program, but, quite frankly, it provides an extraordinary market opportunity for dozens of MAPPS member firms. A \$400 million annual authorization ain't bad!

At the beginning of this year, based on feedback our staff received on Capitol Hill, I appointed a task force to explore the development of legislation to enhance FEMA's Flood Map Modernization Program. The task force worked with the MAPPS staff, and consulted with FEMA, to study this issue and draft desired legislation. The members were: Silas Suazo, Bohannon-Huston, Inc., Chairman; Dave Greenwood,

Michael Baker, Inc.; Michael Bullock, Intermap; Don Wicks, Spectrum; Vince DiCamillo, Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc.; Dave Maune, Dewberry.

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I want to salute the task force. This is one of the finest efforts I have witnessed in my years in MAPPS. It is a model of member involvement and professional responsibility.

The task force worked hard evaluating the current FEMA program. Most importantly, this panel of professionals educated and informed our staff so they could be effective advocates for the MAPPS membership on Capitol Hill. Having sat in on both task force meetings, as well as staff visits in Congress, I saw first hand the outstanding job our task force members and staff did developing and lobbying our recommendations.

Our Government Affairs Manager, John Byrd, deserves particular recognition. Although with MAPPS less than 18 months, "JB" was tireless in identifying key Congressional staff who would be writing the FEMA legislation and setting up meetings to present the MAPPS viewpoint. He has become a well informed and

effective advocate for MAPPS in a very short period of time.

For several years, the MAPPS Board has been working to make the association more member-driven. The work of this task force is an example of turning our members' knowledge and professional expertise into MAPPS policy --- and legislation in Congress.

I hope this experience will motivate more members to get involved. At our Summer Meeting in Whistler next month, JB and Executive Director John Palatiello will be presenting information on legislation in the current Congress, as well as opportunities for the profession in 2007. If you have an

idea for legislation MAPPS should promote, or if you are aware of a problem that effective legislation can remedy, it is your right and professional responsibility to bring it to MAPPS attention and work toward a favorable public policy solution.

Let me close by saying that since I quoted the poet Robert Frost in a recent column, I need to be a little more pedestrian. So this month I turn from Frost to the rock band Coldplay, whose recent hit "Clocks" includes the lyric, "Am I part of the cure, or am I part of the disease?" Provide a cure, get active in MAPPS and bring forward your solutions. Please let me know your ideas.

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Nominations Committee Formed, Candidates Sought

MAPPS President Kurt Allen has appointed the following MAPPS members as the 2006 Nominations Committee: Jeff Lovin, Chairman, Woolpert; Walter Hernandez, LandAir Mapping; Bob Richards, Fugro; Pat Olson, Aerometric; and Lindsey Galyen, G-Squared, LLC. This notice hereby calls for candidates from the membership. If you are interested in serving on the MAPPS Board of Directors, or would like to recommend a member to the nominations committee, contact the Mr. Lovin by email (jeff.lovin@woolpert.com) or by phone at (937)461-5660, or any other committee member, by June 20. There are two seats on the MAPPS Board of Directors where the incumbent's term expires in July. They are currently held by Silas Suazo of Bohannon-Huston, Albuquerque, NM and Scott Perkins, Western Air Maps, Overland Park, KS. On July 1, there will be an announcement of recommendations of the Nominations Committee and elections will be held at the annual MAPPS business meeting on July 16 at the Summer Conference in Whistler, BC, Canada. Additional information is posted on the MAPPS web site (www.mapps.org).

COFPAES, ASCE Join MAPPS Law Suit

The Council on Federal Procurement of Architectural & Engineering Services (COFPAES) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) have agreed to be named plaintiffs, joining MAPPS and the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE), in a suit against the U.S. Government. The legal motion seeks a declaratory judgment that the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) is in conflict with the Brooks Act with regard to its treatment of mapping services, and seeks injunctive relief directing the government to revise the FAR as directed by Congress in several legislative acts. A response from the government is due this week.

Congress Seeks to Halt USGS Reform

The USGS's plan to consolidate its four mapping centers, (Reston, VA, Rolla, MO, Denver, CO and Menlo Park, CA) into a co-located National Geospatial Technical Operations Center (NGTOC) in Denver is in jeopardy due to a provision in the 2007 Interior Appropriations bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives.

Functions in the consolidated NGTOC will be divided into "commercial" and "inherently governmental" categories, with the inherently governmental activities to be carried out by USGS employees in Denver, while the commercial tasks will be subjected to a "competitive sourcing," public-private competition, pursuant to Office of Budget Circular A-76 to determine whether a private contractor, or government employees provide the best value to the government in the performance of those assignments.

USGS announced its plans for consolidation, co-location and competitive sourcing in 2005. An internal team evaluated the agency's options, workforce and operational costs. A decision to locate the NGTOC in Denver was made. Almost immediately, there were objections from the 130 USGS employees in Rolla, and soon thereafter, from its Congressional delegation. Both an internal USGS review, and an Interior Department Inspector General study were conducted, and the decision to locate in Denver was upheld. The internal review team found the selection process was "open, fair, and adequate to support the decision," while the Inspector General found "no evidence of pre-selection, misconduct or unlawful actions."

An appropriations bill rider, attached to H.R. 5386 on May 10 by Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), whose district includes Rolla, earmarks \$13 million for operation of "a full service mapping organization" in Rolla and prohibits the expenditure of any funds to "consolidate the functions, activities, operations, or archives of the Mid-Continent Mapping Center."

For several years, USGS has been undergoing a major transformation. As far back as 1987-1990, a committee of the National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences recommended that USGS evolve from a data production agency to one that emphasizes work sharing, data sharing and coordination, even at the expense of its "traditional data production programs" (Spatial Data Needs: The Future of the National Mapping Program, National Academy Press, Washington, DC, 1990). In the mid-1990's, Congress responded to complaints about USGS duplication of and competition with the private sector and ordered USGS to increase its contracting of mapping and data production to the private sector. In 1998, Congress enacted the Federal Activities Inventory Reform (FAIR) Act, Public Law 105-270, on which MAPPS was a leading force, to require all Federal agencies to create a list of all its internal activities that are "not inherently governmental," review the activities on the list" and "use a competitive process to select a source," be it the incumbent in-house government employees or a potential private contractor.

The Interior Appropriations bill must still be considered by the Senate and a House-Senate Conference Committee. The final outcome will be decided later this year when the bill reaches President Bush's desk.

A Visit with Professor Frank Moffitt, Past MAPPS President

On Saturday, May 6, immediately following the ASPRS convention in Reno, NV, MAPPS Executive Director John Palatiello, MAPPS past president Kass Green (The Alta Vista Company, Berkeley, CA) and her husband Gene Forsburg met with former MAPPS president Frank Moffitt and his wife Kathy at their retirement home in Berkeley.

Moffitt was a professor of photogrammetry and surveying at the University of California Berkeley, in the school's civil engineering department. Moffitt was also a private consultant – he was the co-author of the profession's most widely used college textbooks on surveying and photogrammetry, and a noted forensic photogrammetrist who provided expert testimony in numerous court cases involving measurement science. He was President of MAPPS in 1987.

“I was President of ASP” (American Society for Photogrammetry, the old name of what is now ASPRS), Moffitt told Ms. Green (a former Moffitt student at UC Berkeley). “and the old LCP (Legislative Council of Photogrammetry, the predecessor to MAPPS) invited me to speak at their summer meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. We went, and I said to Kath, ‘this is a fun group’ and I joined.”

Moffitt retired from teaching in 1986. He and Kathy enjoy visits from their 8 children, 17 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. Frank, a vocal political conservative, was always a fish out of water on the liberal Berkeley campus. He spends his time reading – his current read is “The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America,” by David Horowitz, listens to Rush Limbaugh, and watches The O'Reily Factor, as well as Hannity and Colmes on Fox. Frank expressed disappointment with President Bush and the Republicans in Congress, lamenting, “I think I'll become an Independent.”

When Palatiello, Green and Forsburg gave Frank and Kathy updates on people, companies and other changes in the private mapping community, including acquisition of MAPPS member firms by Microsoft, General Electric, and John Deere, Kathy turned to Frank and said, “We're dinosaurs.”

Frank and Kathy were presented MAPPS apparel and the multi-media DVD produced for the MAPPS 20th Anniversary in Monterey in 2002. Viewing the anniversary presentation, they enjoyed seeing photos of many old friends and reminisced about the many MAPPS meetings they attended. “That was fun, Kath. That's why we joined that group,” Frank said.



Frank and Kathy asked that their regards be sent to their many friends in MAPPS. While Kathy physically has been slowed by a stroke, she has a sharp mind and a quick wit. While now more than 85 years of age, Frank is...well, still Frank. It was a delight to hear him tell stories from more than 20 years ago and recall every detail.

Member-Get-A-Member Campaign Closes June 15

The "Member Get A Member" Contest is a worldwide effort for MAPPS members to bring in new firms into the membership. The MAPPS Board challenges each MAPPS member to refer at least one new member firm from the mapping and geospatial profession to the membership. As a reward, the person who recruits the most new member firms will win an all-expense-paid trip (Airfare, Hotel & Registration) to the MAPPS Annual Summer Meeting. Second prize is an iPod and third prize is a digital camera, donated by Kodak.

Refer a new member firm to MAPPS and have them list you on the membership form. Information and an application are on the MAPPS web site, www.mapps.org. The deadline is June 15. Thus far, 3 new firms have been added to MAPPS membership during the campaign.

The campaign is sponsored by Boeing, which has a long tradition of leadership in Geospatial Intelligence. Through its Network & Space Systems business unit, it provides the Department of Defense and Intelligence Community with solutions that allow them to acquire, manage, visualize, communicate and act upon intelligence. Additionally, Jeppesen, a wholly owned subsidiary of Boeing, offers an extensive array of charting, navigation and information services for commercial air and marine usage. Boeing continues to be a leader and innovator through its use of sources, data and technology, by an adherence to mission, and through the promotion of standards-based, interoperable solutions and network-centric operations.

Oklahoma Expands QBS

Senate Bill 558, a bill to expand Oklahoma's Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) Law, has passed both houses of the State Legislature and it is on its way to the Governor for signature. SB 558 will require the use of QBS by all state entities for services that are not specifically provided by licensed architects, registered engineers, or registered land surveyors. The intent of the bill was to bring "other professionals," such as Photogrammetrists, lawyers, right-of-way specialists, appraisers, and others under the QBS law. It should clear up the question of whether or not QBS applies to photogrammetry. Oklahoma does not define surveying to include aerial photogrammetry. The bill goes into effect on July 1, if signed into law by the Governor. It provides that a design consultant, whose services which shall be selected via QBS, means "an individual or legal entity possessing the qualifications to provide licensed architectural, registered engineering, or registered land surveying services for or other individuals or legal entities possessing specialized credentials and qualifications as may be needed to plan or design for any construction or a public work improvement project."

MAPPS Summer Conference, July 15-19, Whistler, British Columbia, Canada

Reserve your hotel room by June 24 to assure the discounted MAPPS rate and register with MAPPS by July 6 to avoid late fees. For information, go to www.mapps.org/Whistler.asp.



USGS to Support FEMA on Emergency Response

At a workshop at USGS headquarters in Reston, VA on May 17, it was announced that USGS will be the Executive Agent for contracting for image acquisition and related geospatial deliverables for emergency response. A formal memorandum of agreement has been signed by Interior/USGS and DHS/FEMA. A copy is being provided to MAPPS and will be posted on the web site (www.mapps.org).

Due to confusion and a lack of clarity at the May 17 meeting on how the Memorandum of Understanding will be implemented, MAPPS Executive Director John Palatiello was invited to USGS for a subsequent discussion and briefing.

The confusion sprang from incomplete answers to the private sector's question at the May 17 workshop, and the near-simultaneous issuance of a request for information (RFI) for emergency response capabilities issued by the USGS, Sioux Falls, SD and the Geospatial Products and Services Contracts (GPSC), which includes emergency response activities, by the USGS, Denver, CO, in early April.



After the May 17 meeting, USGS, DHS/FEMA, USACE, NGA and NOAA all met. All understand that USGS is the Executive Agent for contracting for image acquisition and related geospatial deliverables for emergency response.

USGS and DHS recognize there is a need for an annex to the National Response Plan to outline roles and responsibilities in the cross-cutting application of geospatial technology, data and services. Such an annex or supplement was under consideration about a year ago at DHS but not acted upon. Now, it is under consideration again.

The USGS CSC-2 contracts will be used for response to any early summer hurricanes. Contracts that expire will be extended until the GPSC's are selected, negotiated and awarded, at which time GPSC will be utilized. Thus, the Federal government will have an ID/IQ - QBS geospatial procurement infrastructure in place as a pre-positioned asset – something MAPPS has long advocated. The bureaucratic red tape that also prevented use of CSC-2 contracts in the 2004 Florida hurricanes, regarding actual receipt of FEMA funds by USGS, has been solved. USGS can now obligate money with a signed agreement with FEMA, even if USGS does not physically have the money in hand.

The USGS EROS Data Center, in Sioux Falls, will use the responses to the RFI to identify capacities and capabilities in the private sector ONLY in the event the CSC-2 contracts in the short term, and GPSC thereafter, does not have the capacity and capability needed.

USGS now also has a support role to FEMA on Map Modernization. GPSC contractors will be given Map Modernization work from FEMA when needed. This will enable GPSC contractors to do ongoing work for FEMA, thus preparing them for emergency response work when needed in that mode.

Sites Sought for 2008 Summer Meeting

MAPPS is seeking nominations of sites for its 2008 Summer Meeting. This year, nominations will be accepted for destinations in the Western U.S. by completing the [Site Selection Form](#) online. All nominations will be reviewed and the MAPPS Membership will vote for the final site, during the Summer Conference in Whistler, BC, Canada, from a short-list of destinations.

Upcoming MAPPS Events

MAPPS Summer Meeting

July 15-19, 2006

Four Seasons Resort

Whistler, BC, Canada

MAPPS/ASPRS Specialty Conference

November 6-10, 2006

*Measuring the Earth; Digital Surface Modeling
and Automated Feature Extraction*

Includes MAPPS Fall Policy Conference

Crown Plaza Riverwalk

San Antonio, Texas

MAPPS Winter Meeting

January 21-25, 2007

Naples Grande Resort & Club

Naples, Florida

Federal Programs Conference

March 19-21, 2007

Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill

Washington, DC

MAPPS Summer Meeting

July 16-20, 2007

The Mount Washington Resort at Bretton Woods

Bretton Woods, New Hampshire