

## ***Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform (FLAIR) Act: Improving Real Property Stewardship***

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has repeatedly (108<sup>th</sup>, 109<sup>th</sup>, 110<sup>th</sup>, 111<sup>th</sup> Congresses) designated Federal Real Property Asset Management one of the high-risk areas within the Federal government most prone to waste, fraud and abuse. One of the reasons cited by GAO is the fact that the government does not have a current, accurate inventory of the land it owns. The General Services Administration (GSA) collects data from at least 30 Federal agencies, but its system has been criticized by GAO for being “unreliable and of limited usefulness” and “not current or reliable.” On the other hand, the government inefficiently maintains a plethora of land inventories that are inaccurate, out-of-date, single purpose and non-interoperable. This inefficiency should not be the case when a single, uniform, reliable, regularly-maintained database is currently available through state-of-the-art geographic information systems (GIS) technology.

The inefficient and wasteful nature of the government’s current way of doing business was demonstrated by then-Interior Secretary Gale Norton’s 2005 testimony before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee:

*“The Department currently uses 26 different financial management systems and over 100 different property systems. Employees must enter procurement transactions multiple times in different systems so that the data are captured in real property inventories, financial systems, and acquisition systems. This fractured approach is both costly and burdensome to manage.”*

Representatives Ron Kind (D-WI) and Rob Bishop (R-UT) have introduced the Federal Land Asset Inventory Reform (FLAIR) Act, H.R. 1520. To improve government efficiency and management, MAPPS, the association of private geospatial firms, and NSGIC, the National States Geographic Information Council, strongly support this bill. In the Senate, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) will soon re-introduce a companion version of the FLAIR Act (S. 3043 from the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress). This bill creates a single, Federal multipurpose cadastre (a uniform Federal computer database), in accordance with standards recommended by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). The bill also calls for an “inventory of inventories,” so that duplication can be identified and eliminated. The FLAIR Act will provide all agencies owning Federal real property an improved accounting of their land assets. Such an inventory will assist in improved Federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection and utilization of real property.

MAPPS also advocates a national parcel system to create an early warning system that may prevent future mortgage crises. Since 1980, the NAS has recommended the benefits of a “Multipurpose Cadastre” including parcel data. MAPPS supports amending the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) whereby the Federal Reserve Board would collect address and parcel level data and the current Census Bloc data. These changes will help identify alarming trends in mortgage defaults and other financial data at the local level and allow remedial action early enough to prevent the spread of associated problems before they reach a regional or national level.

**ACTION REQUESTED: MAPPS respectfully urges Representatives to cosponsor the FLAIR Act with Representatives Kind and Bishop. To become a cosponsor, contact Erin Gulick in Representative Kind’s office at 5-5506. Or contact Jason Knox in Representative Bishop’s Subcommittee office at 5-2761. MAPPS respectfully urges Senators to cosponsor the FLAIR Act with Senator Hatch. To become a cosponsor, contact Jared “JJ” Brown in Senator Hatch’s office at 4-5251. For more information, contact John Byrd, MAPPS Government Affairs Manager, at [jbyrd@mapps.org](mailto:jbyrd@mapps.org) or (703) 787-6996.**