

**HIGHLIGHTS: INFORMATION RESOURCES EXCHANGE GROUP (IREG)  
MEETING OF JANUARY 5, 2010**

**1. Presentation: “*Overview of GIS at American Water*”**

Christopher R. Kahn, Senior Engineering Technician presented a detailed overview of GIS at New Jersey American Water. Beginning with a little background information, he cited New Jersey American Water as being the largest investor owned water and wastewater utility provider in the state. New Jersey being the largest of the American Water States, having approximately 875 employees and 9500 miles of water pipes. Hence, we arrive at why utilization of GIS became an imperative at New Jersey American Water. In addition to having a good deal of pipes for which they are responsible for maintaining, and assuring quality water and wastewater management, there appeared to be a lack of a cohesive organization or methodology for how the data was captured and or structured across the state. By translating everything over to GIS, they would have a centrally accessible system with a spatial component and an easily editable database. Where everything was originally in CAD, now it would be in a GIS connected to a database with about 40 data fields related to this spatial data. During the 2 years that it took to complete this process of transition, an additional 2 years worth of CAD based data had been mounting. However, with this new statewide organized data infrastructure in place, this would be the last of the CAD drawings that they would need to migrate over. Along w/ the standard functionality that comes w/ a typical GIS package, they had acquired a good deal of extensions such as Network Analyst, Spatial Analyst and 3D Analyst to name a few. This allowed for them to go beyond simple data acquisition to a wide array of analyses, particularly raster based analysis. They've recently produced a huge atlas (valued at \$200), and developed a comprehensive web application that has increasingly greater detailed as you zoom in closer and closer to a scale ordinarily impossible to clearly view data.

**2. Presentation: “*Social Web - Technology for Social Change*”**

Seth Horwitz, Principal, CommuniShare Consulting, gave a presentation examining social change through the use of a variety of social media such as blogging and tweeting. Originally he became interested in social structures while at Penn State in the early '80s. By the mid '80s while working as a reference librarian he had developed learning groups, utilizing social resources as a means to satisfy a specific pursuit of knowledge desired by those who participated. His indication was that all communities are an abundant source of resources, which can be translated into productive social networks. The central interest surrounds a broadly conceived idea of social change, primarily focused on "making the world a better place." He cited a Clean Air Council mapping project within Philadelphia, in which anyone can participate in citing illegal truck idling which (location) would then be added to the map. Additionally, he mentioned how a news publication made detailed expense receipts available to the public, in an attempt to expose potential misuse of expense allowances by Parliament. Philly NetSquared hosts a regular monthly meeting the first Tuesday of every month, called Net Tuesday Gatherings.

### **3. Discussion and Information Items**

- Kiersten Gauntt (Burlington County) was elected Chair and Thomas Denton (Archdiocese of Philadelphia) was elected Vice-Chair for CY 2010.
- Joe Fazekas reported about recently released reports, including the Long-Range Plan and the Annual Report/Weekly Planner. Mr. Fazekas also announced that DVRPC was testing the Emma email campaign management solution for electronic distribution of the DVRPC Newsletter. DVRPC is also exploring collaborative project management solutions, such as Microsoft Sharepoint. He also discussed current efforts with Mercer County on a online mapping solution for submitting comments on bikability. DVRPC is also experimenting with adding all scheduled meetings for a single committee with a single click.
- DVRPC staff were recognized by Mr. Fazekas for their efforts on the DVRPC Website relaunch, which resulted in winning the 2009 National Association of Government Webmasters (NAGW) Pinnacle Award.
- Glenn McNichol provided an update on Year 2010 Aerials. We've contracted with the USGS , who will be handling the vendor selection, which will be much more expedient than a typical RFP process as the USGS already has 5 pre-approved vendors to choose from. Mr. McNichol is serving as President of PaMAGIC, a GIS users group for PA, and announced their meeting in Harrisburg next week.
- Will Stevens provided the Region-wide Transportation GIS Update. A meeting was held on November 30<sup>th</sup> to give update to the full group. Draft maintenance procedures were laid out that sparked discussion regarding the handling of multiple road names and amount of work that still remains. GeoDecisions is evaluating and estimating several issues taken from meeting. The Traffic Count Request web application is nearly complete, and will be presented to DVRPC and select county staff in the near future. Also, DVRPC plans to sponsor more GIS training for project participants before the end of FY10, for which specific course(s) are yet to be determined.
- Burlington County gave an update on their Pictometry Online product, which will first be launched on the county's intranet for county employees.
- NJ OIT is putting together an RFP for their state centerline project, which DVRPC hopes to play a minor role in, using our counties in the pilot.
- The Webmasters Subcommittee is being temporarily suspended, due to the duplicative efforts of the Southeastern PA Government Webmasters Group (which meets quarterly) and the Government Web Professionals of NJ (which meets every other month). Mr. Fazekas announced that he was elected President of the NJ webmasters group. The next SEPA-Gov Webmasters meeting will be on Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> in Chester County and the next GoWProNJ meeting will be on February 5<sup>th</sup> in Morris County.
- February 10<sup>th</sup> is the DE State GIS Conference in Dover. May 11-12<sup>th</sup> is the PA GIS Conference in Johnstown.
- The next IREG meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2010. Presentations are currently planned from SEPTA and NJ DEP. Other presentation topics being planned are social media and email campaigns.