

NATIONAL SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

I. PURPOSE

To establish a framework for coordination and cooperation between the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Geospatial Programs Office (NGPO) and the North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council (NC GICC). This Agreement will facilitate the implementation of collaborative activities in areas of mutual interest that support the development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). It also provides the framework for implementing a focused strategy that will enable the NGPO and local, state, regional, tribal, and federal NSDI partners to work together through a statewide geographic information coordinating body or consortium, in order to share data, leverage investments and expenditures, enhance intergovernmental cooperation, support the recommendations in the NSDI Future Directions Fifty States Initiative Action Plan, and promote USGS assistance to states in implementing strategic and business plans that support the development of the NSDI.

II. BACKGROUND

For the last several years, geospatial partnerships between USGS and state and local governments have focused on developing and obtaining primary data layers for inclusion in *The National Map*. With the establishment of the NGPO to unify and simplify USGS-led national geospatial initiatives such as *The National Map*, Geospatial One-Stop and the Federal Geographic Data Committee, the focus of these partnerships is being transformed to address all aspects of building the NSDI. Because the NSDI is developed by the entire geospatial community and not just the Federal government, building it through collaboration among NSDI partners and through statewide coordinating councils, such as the NC GICC, is an effective strategy. The NC GICC involves membership from all levels of government in North Carolina, including significant local government membership and active participation on statewide initiatives by its Local Government Committee. The development of long-term statewide plans is a key foundation for transforming NGPO business practices towards incentives-based partnerships and supporting state and local agencies as the engine of the NSDI. These long-term plans will frame collaborative efforts between the NGPO and NSDI partners and guide NGPO investments.

III. SCOPE

The NGPO and the NC Geographic Information Coordinating Council, through its staff agency, the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis, agree to coordinate and cooperate in geospatial activities to advance the development of the NSDI that may include, but are not limited to, the following general areas:

- Coordination of geospatial activities to support each party in meeting its business needs

- Joint coordination to engage state and local government participation in statewide efforts to advance the geospatial infrastructure in the state
- Joint coordination to encourage participation of the broader geospatial community, including federal and tribal entities
- Data discovery and inventory
- Data access and integration
- Framework data production, stewardship, and maintenance
- Data sharing, dissemination, and distribution
- Technology transfer and sharing of technical information and expertise
- Metadata, data model, and other standards development and support
- Web mapping and feature services
- Research and applications
- Education, training, and outreach

VI. AUTHORITIES

This Agreement is entered into by the USGS under Public Law 99-591 that bestows permanent authority to the USGS to “prosecute projects in cooperation with other agencies, Federal, State, and private” (43 U.S.C. 36c). The NC GICC is responsible for “coordination, direction, and oversight of state, local and private GIS efforts” (G.S. 76, §143-725 through 143-727). When applicable, any further agreements entered into between USGS and the State of North Carolina that implements specific activities under this Agreement will be pursuant to the authorities and policies governing such agreements.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Geospatial Strategic Plan.

The NGPO and the State of North Carolina, through the Geographic Information Coordinating Council, agree to work jointly toward the development of long-term geographic information strategic and business plans (hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”) that detail the development of a spatial data infrastructure to meet local, state, tribal, and/or federal needs and mirrors the definition of the NSDI. The NC GICC will involve and seek input from all sectors represented in its membership and will especially involve local government perspectives through its established committees, communication outlets, and ongoing forums (e.g., the NC GIS Conference). The Plan will provide a strategy including, but not limited to, the following:

- Linking and aligning the geospatial infrastructure to statewide efforts including NC OneMap, and across the nation through Geospatial One-stop and *The National Map*
- Engaging the broader statewide community in planning and implementation of partnership best practices
- Methods of inventorying existing data
- Acquiring/cost-sharing on new data
- Planning data maintenance

- Integrating data across the geographic area
- Ensuring data documentation (metadata)
- Assigning data stewardship roles and responsibilities
- Coordinating activities

The Plan will be used by the NGPO as a key component in planning and budgeting annual programs of work with partners. The Plan will be used by the NC GICC to guide its investments and implementation. The North Carolina NSDI Partnership Office staff will work with the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis staff to build the Plan using all available information, including existing plans, to project the annual priorities and needs over a 3-5 year period to accomplish their top NSDI goals. The Plan will be customized to the specific needs and opportunities within the geographic area, will be aligned as closely as possible with state and local business needs, and is intended to bring sustainability and stewardship to NSDI development. The NGPO and the NC GICC will work jointly to develop guidance and priorities in support of the Plan on a regular basis. The NGPO will work with the NC GICC in the review and update of the Plan annually.

2. Specific Activities.

The NGPO, through the NSDI Partnership Office liaison, and the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis, at the direction of the NC GICC, will work jointly on an annual basis to identify the specific requirements and priorities that are desired to support the development and/or implementation of the Plan. This information will be used to inform NGPO investment planning on an annual basis.

Once NGPO program decisions have been made, those activities that will be pursued in the coming year will be described in a separate Statement of Work that will be developed jointly by the parties. When required, additional supporting agreements shall be executed to implement the agreed upon activities. Such agreements may include, but are not limited to, cooperative agreements, grants, joint funding agreements, work share, data sharing, or data stewardship agreements. These agreements will be coordinated through mutual agreement between the parties and independently authorized by appropriate statutory or other authority. To ensure the success of all cooperative efforts, measurement and accountability criteria shall be identified against which activities pursued under this agreement will be reviewed annually to determine accomplishments.

VI. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

This agreement defines the general terms upon which the USGS and the North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council will cooperate. Performance under the terms of this agreement is subject to the availability of appropriated funds and personnel resources through each party's respective funding procedures. This agreement is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document and, as such, does not constitute a financial commitment on the part of either party. Any endeavor or transfer of anything of value involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures and shall be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. The NC GICC's fiscal obligations are

administered by its staff, the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis.

VII. RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AGREEMENTS

It is the intent of the NGPO and the NC GICC to recognize and uphold existing agreements between USGS and state, local, regional, and tribal partners that contribute to the advancement of the NSDI. These agreements may include, for example, Memoranda of Understanding for coordination and cooperation pertaining to NC OneMap, *The National Map* and/or cooperative agreements for the development, maintenance, or stewardship of specific geospatial datasets. To the extent appropriate, and upon mutual agreement of the parties, these existing agreements shall be considered auxiliary agreements under this NSDI Partnership Agreement. It is anticipated that these agreements and the specific activities they define will become essential components of the long-term Plan.

VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE, REVIEW, MODIFICATION, AND TERMINATION

This Agreement shall take effect upon the date of the last signature and shall remain in effect for a period of five (5) years. This Agreement may be reviewed annually or at the request of either party. This Agreement may be modified or amended at any time upon joint approval. Any such amendment shall be in writing and shall be made an addendum to this agreement. This Agreement may be terminated at any time by mutual written agreement of the parties, or by either party upon 90 days written notice to the other party.

IX. APPROVALS

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

**N. C. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**Stephen King, Eastern Region
Geographic Information Officer**

**Dempsey Benton, Chair
and
Chief Deputy Secretary, North Carolina
Department of Environment and Natural
Resources**

Date

Date