

Data and GIS Users Discussion Forum
Summary of Discussion
November 2, 2006

The meeting began at noon in 150 Hodges Library with 14 attendees:

UT Libraries: Eleanor Read, Moderator (Hodges), Jane Row (Hodges), Gregory March (Map), Diana Holden (AgVet)

Faculty: Shih-Lung Shaw (Geography), Daniel Foley (JEM), Mark Harmon (JEM), Rita Hagevik (TPTE)

OIT: Bob Muenchen (Statistical Consulting Center), Ann Reed (Statistical Consulting Center), Chris Hodge (Sunsite)

Research Centers: Wolf Naegeli (Institute for a Secure and Sustainable Environment), Nicholas Herrmann (Archaeological Research Laboratory), Stephen Yerka (Archaeological Research Laboratory)

Ellie Read welcomed the attendees and explained the purpose of the meeting. This is a time for data and GIS users, support staff, and other interested parties to have an informal discussion about current activities, services, resources, and support needs with regard to secondary data and/or GIS research at UT.

Greg March, the Libraries' new Map Librarian, provided a handout and gave an overview of activities at the Map Library. Items discussed included a new high-end GIS workstation with a variety of software and data that will be available in the next few months, a review of the Map Library web pages (www.lib.utk.edu/cic/), a demo of the Tennessee Online Historic Topographic Maps site, and a solicitation for feedback on what kinds of map and GIS services are needed/desired at UT. Contact Greg March at 974-3878 or gmarch@utk.edu for more information or to discuss Map/GIS services.

There was a discussion about the best way to provide the ArcGIS software to the UT community. There is a site license now for UT-owned machines. It could also be made available on a central server such as the Analysis.utk.edu server, which would allow remote access. Bob Muenchen and Greg March are going to follow up on this.

Reminder: With our ESRI site license for ArcGIS software, UT faculty, staff, and students can take the online courses offered by ESRI at no charge.

Bob Muenchen, Manager of the Statistical Consulting Center, made several announcements:

- The SAS ESRI Bridge is now available, but it is not available from the OIT software download site. If you want to use it, contact Bob Muenchen at 974-5230 or muenchen@utk.edu. Nicholas Herrmann said he found it difficult to install.
- Stata is now loaded on the computers in the HSS 201 computer lab. It is also available on the Analysis.utk.edu server with two simultaneous users. Stata is not currently supported by the Statistical Consulting Center. The SCC is, however, monitoring its growth on campus, and if it gets as popular as SPSS or SAS, they would strongly consider supporting it.

Mark Harmon gave a brief demo of the SDA system (Survey Documentation and Analysis; <http://sda.berkeley.edu/>). SDA provides the ability to conduct selected data analyses online (e.g., regression, cross-tabulations), as well as to extract custom subsets of data for analysis in statistical packages. Several major survey projects are enabled for use with SDA, including the General Social Surveys (1972-2004) and the American National Election Studies (1948-2004). The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) data archive has more than 300 studies available for online analysis now.

Wolf Naegeli told us about a new resource being developed for the EPA that will be released soon. GeoBook is designed to help local planners utilize information from the Southeastern Ecological Framework with local efforts for greenspace protection and to help prevent ecosystem fragmentation. It will contain text, images, presentations, and video, as well as a map viewer. The site is at <http://chapman.sunsite.utk.edu> (not yet publicly released). The NBII-SAIN site will have a link to it when it's ready (<http://sain.nbii.gov>).

Wolf also told us about another NBII-SAIN site: the Map Viewer for Tennessee Special Habitats (<http://seris.info/ArcIMS/TN/>).

The group decided that it would be nice to meet more than once a year, so we will have a spring and fall meeting in 2007. The spring meeting will likely be in late February.

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