

# THE SUMMIT

## News From and For The Washington GIS Community

### WAURISA

The Washington State Chapter of  
The Urban & Regional Information Systems Association



SUMMER 2008

WWW.WAURISA.ORG

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### GIS KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES – THE ECITYGOV ALLIANCE

By John Backman

Online services have the potential to transform municipal services and dramatically improve customer service – particularly if government agencies and departments are willing to look beyond traditional service delivery models. GIS in particular has the promise to open entirely new ways to communicate and share information with citizens and businesses.

The implications of making information available on-line through a GIS service are not insignificant. Issues ranging from technical to legislative policy may come into play and need to be considered in the process of providing an on-line GIS service.

#### *The Potential of GIS On-line*

Government agencies at all levels have been using GIS internally for well over a decade to support their individual missions. Agencies are continually evolving their internal GIS management systems to better coordinate and leverage the value of their GIS data sets. At the local level, we can see every line of business, if not every employee, making some use of GIS data. Whether a permit technician is verifying an address, a maintenance division plotting the location and asset data of shut-off valves, 911 dispatch routing an emergency responder or a transportation planner using GIS to plot and display a complex analysis of traffic flows, GIS data sets and the capacity to analyze and graphically represent the information is an extremely valuable and powerful tool.

Evolving GIS tool sets are providing both end business users and the public with more and better access to not only views of GIS data, but also the ability to use web-based GIS tools interactively. The ability to use a map based search function not only enhances user functionality but also presents an entirely new opportunity to begin to bring together both spatial and tabular data in entirely new ways.

*See: eCityGov Alliance, page 2*

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### NEW URISA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY COMING TO SEATTLE



WAURISA is pleased to announce that the new URISA Leadership Academy (ULA) will be coming to Seattle in December. The ULA is a unique training opportunity that brings together no more than 75 students with some of the most experienced GIS managers, academics, and consultants for an intensive, weeklong program.

The entire five day program, the only leadership training program of its type, is tailored to industry leaders and practitioners faced with unique challenges of GIS leadership and management and who want to make an impact leveraging the power of GIS.

If you are new to GIS management, experienced in directing a GIS program, or aspire to a future GIS leadership position, the URISA Leadership Academy is for you!

**Save the date:**

**December 8-12, 2008**

**at Hotel 1000 in Seattle**

**For More Information Visit:**

**[WWW.URISA.ORG/ULA](http://WWW.URISA.ORG/ULA)**

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

There is no column this month, while WAURISA President Angela Johnson is on maternity leave. Reports are that Angela, her new baby, and husband are well.

In Angela's absence, the WAURISA Board is continuing to work on new programs for later this year and into 2009.

Please join the WAURISA Board and the Summit staff in wishing Angela and her family health and happiness with their new addition.

*-Editor*

## eCITYGOV ALLIANCE

*Continued from page 1*

### *Beyond the Boundaries*

However, to fully tap the potential of GIS, we must find ways to bring these disparate data sets together in meaningful ways. Existing constraints include organizational (city, county, district), operational (internal organization and management of GIS) and organizational priorities (individual work and strategic agency priorities as well as funding). To complicate matters further, the internal and public appetite for access to rich, interactive services powered by GIS interfaces seems to be insatiable. Find a park, check live traffic flows, look up crime statistics, or access property data are just a few of the examples of GIS services available today in our region.

At the same time new GIS services are appearing on-line, we are also seeing limitations to broader uses of GIS services due to the fragmented manner in which GIS data is developed, managed and accessed on a regional basis. For example, when the City of Bellevue set out to create an economic development (ED) browser using a GIS interface for locating available commercial property, the city conducted several focus group discussions with commercial real estate brokers to elicit their input as part of the application development process. The message from the brokers was strong and unequivocal, if every major city in the region deploys its own ED browser; the service(s) will have very limited appeal to the broker community. The brokers wanted an ED browser that transcended geo-political boundaries since their working area covered dozens of cities and counties.

Ultimately these discussions lead Bellevue to proposing a regional ED browser through the eCityGov Alliance. NWProperty.net was launched in 2004 and now serves 36 agencies.

This same sense that our citizens and businesses think, act and live in the greater Puget Sound region presents significant challenges to local governments considering on-line GIS services. Exactly who should be responsible for providing on-line maps of regional trail systems that traverse multiple jurisdictions? A seemingly simple solution of one agency mapping the entire regional trail system may solve the most immediate problem, but has to potential to open an ever expanding set of questions and issues relating to the relationship between the regional mapping service, and local park and recreation departments.

### *Overcoming the Barriers*

To better exploit and utilize GIS data, we will need new models and means to be able effectively share and provide information to our collective constituents. King County alone has 39 cities and 106 special purpose districts. Without some level of inter-agency collaboration for web services, citizens and businesses will be left to sort through a myriad of government web sites to find the information or services they are seeking.

The eCityGov Alliance<sup>1</sup>, an interlocal agency, is one such model. Established in 2002, the purpose of the Alliance is to implement cross-boundary, service specific web service portals. Four of the five eCityGov service portals utilize GIS data, and it is expected that an interactive GIS mapping function will be added to the fifth application in 2009.

The Alliance experience has been that informal collaboration is not sufficient to meet the dual roles of significantly improved on-line services and making these services affordable for all sized government agencies. To be successful, the Alliance has brought

Search by Address among all cities  
Get zoning, demographic or tax reports and maps for property in the cities above.

### *NW Maps.Net*

together the key ingredients of executive sponsorship, a proportional funding model, and a formal business committee structure. The funding model includes project management, application development and a robust computing environment.

While it is clear that the potential for adding and expanding on-line GIS services is growing, until we can meaningfully reach beyond our existing geo-politically based organizations, on-line GIS services will be constrained by our artificial boundaries.

Additional information about the eCityGov Alliance<sup>1</sup> is available at [www.eCityGov.net](http://www.eCityGov.net) or by contacting John Backman, Executive Director, 425.452.782, [jbackman@eCityGov.net](mailto:jbackman@eCityGov.net).

<sup>1</sup> The founding partners of the alliance are the Washington State cities of Kenmore, Bothell, Woodinville, Kirkland, Bellevue, Mercer Island, Issaquah, Sammamish and Snoqualmie.

The eCityGov Alliance has won numerous awards, including the following:

- **eCityGov Alliance** – Government CIO Summit, Winner, 2003 government Solution Award, Government to Citizen
- **MyBuildingPermit.com** – Winner, 2004 Washington Software Association Industry Achievement Award, Outstanding Contribution to Digital Government
- **NWProperty.net** – Finalist, 2005 Washington Software Association Industry Achievement Award, Outstanding Contribution to Digital Government
- **MyBuildingPermit.com** – Winner, Innovations Group 2005 Outstanding Achievements in Local Government Innovation
- **MyBuildingPermit.com** – Honorable Mention, Center for Digital Government 2005 Digital Government Achievement Award
- **eCityGov Alliance** – 2005 Program Excellence Award for Intergovernmental Cooperation, International City/Council Management Association
- **MyBuildingPermit.com** – 2006 Technology Solutions Award, Telecom/IT-Medium; Honorable Mention, Public Technology Institute (PTI)
- **MyParksandRecreation.com** – 2006 Spot Light Award, Best Web Site, Washington Recreation and Parks Association
- **eCityGov Alliance** – Finalist, 2006 Innovation in American Government, Harvard University, JFK School of Government, Ash Institute
- **MyBuildingPermit.com** – 2006 Gold Medal, Special Economic Development Category, Association of Washington Cities —over 40,000 population
- **MyParksandRecreation.com** – Finalist, 2008 Washington Technology Industry Association, Industry Achievement Award, Outstanding Contribution to Digital Government



## INTERGRAPH & GIS: THE EXAMPLE OF 9-1-1 DISPATCH

*Summit Editor Eadie Kaltenbacher attended Intergraph's annual conference in June. The conference included several sessions on GIS-related topics, such as I/CAD, AVL, and routing. This is her report.*

The initials ESRI are often taken to be synonymous with GIS, while Intergraph Corporation is better known for its software products designed for the engineering world, such as modeling, rendering and schematics tools. However, a significant portion of Intergraph's products are "geospatially powered" – meaning the software relies on GIS to perform tasks. One such product is their CAD (Computer-Aided Dispatch) system, called I/CAD, used in 9-1-1 dispatching. I/CAD is a system that encompasses several software products that rely on GIS, namely I/Dispatcher, GeoMedia, I/LEADS, and I/Mobile.

I/Dispatcher is the main screen that the dispatcher uses, and it includes a map which is live-linked with the incoming call. If the caller is using a land line, the map is populated with the caller's address, which comes from an external database storing data provided by phone companies. If the call comes from a cell phone, the X/Y locations come from triangulation performed by the cellular phone company. The map can display many other desired GIS layers, such as roads, jurisdictional boundaries, schools, fire hydrants, etc. The X/Y locations of the calls are stored in a database and can be exported for analysis.

Intergraph's software product for working with GIS data is called GeoMedia, which has a GUI like ESRI's ArcMap. Intergraph produces an extension for GeoMedia called I/Map Editor. This extension is used to translate GIS data into the ".MAP" file used by I/CAD. The workflow for using I/Map Editor is to import a roads shapefile into GeoMedia, check for topological errors, create a street network, add and symbolize other GIS layers, create ESZ files, and ultimately publish a single .MAP file. The .MAP file is installed on all dispatchers' computers, and functions in conjunction with the rest of the I/CAD software.

GeoMedia is also used to create and integrate ESZ (Emergency Service Zones) polygons into I/CAD. Depending on which ESZ a call falls within, the responding agency and deployment plan differs. For instance, a call for police coming from inside city limits should be dispatched to city law enforcement, while an accident on a state highway should involve Washington State Patrol.

Intergraph also markets a product called I/LEADS (Law Enforcement Automated Data Systems), which can use GIS to perform spatial analysis. I/LEADS can be used to make maps of crime hotspots, analyze crime by type and area, and to display visuals such as the route traveled by a stolen car.



GIS will play a major role in the future of dispatching. Some agencies are already using Intergraph's I/Mobile for AVL (Automatic Vehicle Locating) to track and more effectively assign first responders and their units to incidents. With I/Mobile, dispatchers can view the locations of all units on their map, in real-time. Setting up an AVL system requires a large investment. First of all, a stable and secure wireless network is required. Next, each unit must be outfitted with the necessary components, including a MCT (Mobile Computer Terminal), a GPS, wireless network connectivity, and the software, as well as a pre-loaded map on the MCT. (On a side note, the map must be pre-loaded because continuously re-sending the data over the wireless network would be too slow. Wireless bandwidth is currently a major limiting factor in AVL development.) Finally, the software requires a large amount of data input, such as the equipment on board each unit, and data about the first responders' special skills. The data is necessary so the dispatcher can select not just the closest unit, but the closest one with the necessary supplies for aid.

### ***One of the major challenges in the future of GIS in 9-1-1 dispatching is routing.***

One of the major challenges in the future of GIS in 9-1-1 dispatching is routing. I/CAD is capable of routing right now, but several users have had experiences where the software does not choose the most efficient route. Intergraph representatives explain that if this occurs, there is a problem with the data. For example, the software may route a unit the wrong way down a one-way street. This error can be prevented if the road data defines directionality. Other scenarios are more complex: an interstate running through a downtown core may be the most efficient way between two points, except during rush hour. Getting this kind of local knowledge into a database is very challenging. One approach that may be used in the future is collecting wireless signals (from cellular phones and other wireless devices) and mapping them to see where roads are congested, and using that data to route around congestion.

Intergraph's GIS products are very popular in 9-1-1 dispatch centers, and they are likely to stay that way. As technology moves forward at a rapid pace, Intergraph is on track to ensure I/CAD will accommodate the increasing volume, variety and detail of incoming data.



## RECAP OF THE SECOND ANNUAL DICK THOMAS MEMORIAL AWARD - STUDENT PRESENTATION COMPETITION AT THE 2008 WASHINGTON GIS CONFERENCE

By Amanda Taub, GISP

**WAURISA**, the Washington State Chapter of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association, held the second annual Dick Thomas Memorial Award on May 7, 2008 at this year's Washington GIS Conference (May 5 – 7, 2008) at the Seattle Center's Northwest Rooms. WAURISA established this award to honor Washington State GIS pioneer and mentor, Richard 'Dick' Thomas. This award honors Dick by continuing his work of encouraging students to excel in their studies and transition successfully into GIS careers.

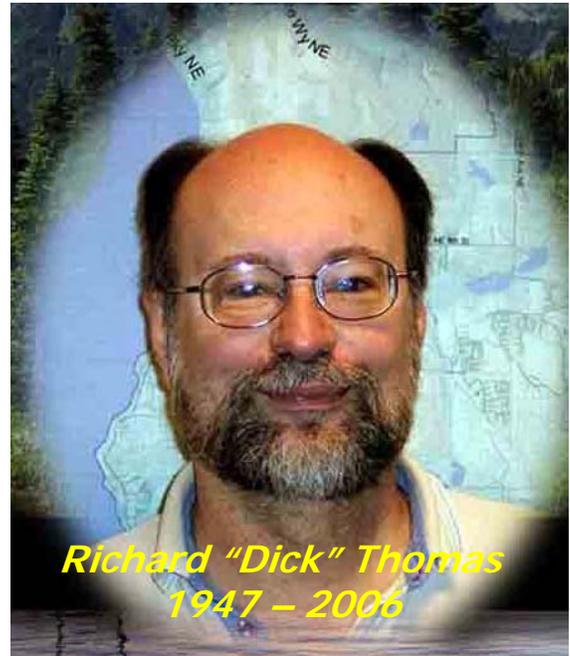
WAURISA's goal is to inspire students to present their original work related to GIS, geography, or geographic research in Washington State at the annual Washington GIS Conference. The competition comprised of two parts: the first was the selection of four (4) abstracts by the WAURISA Student Presentation Competition Committee. The second part was the judging of the 4 selected presentations during the Student Presentation Session at the 2008 Washington GIS Conference. Abstracts used a maximum of 250 words to describe the proposed presentations. The presentations were limited to 20 minutes, with an additional 5 minutes for questions.

The competition was limited to current students enrolled at least 6 hours in a relevant curriculum at a secondary school, community college, technical school, or university program. Submitters did not need to join WAURISA, but all students are encouraged to become WAURISA student members at a special student rate.

Entries were the original work by the students, they conducted as school projects or under the supervision of a professor while enrolled in a GIS, geography, technology, or related academic program. Subjects for papers were related to geography, GIS, or allied technology, as applied to social, natural resource, business, government, or other similar issues in Washington State.



Ruth Thomas shares her memories and thoughts on Dick and his work.  
(Greg Babinski photo)



Abstracts and presentations were judged on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of expertise and understanding of geographic concepts
- Demonstration of expertise and understanding of GIS, related technology, and its application
- Explanation of how the work presented relates to the topic and contributes to greater understanding or knowledge
- Demonstration of an innovative approach and/or critical thinking
- Quality of the written abstracts
- Quality of the public presentations

### A Special Guest:

At this year's Student Competition and Award Presentation, we were honored with a special guest. Ruth Thomas, Dick's wife, joined us to hear the students' presentations and to present the awards to the winners. At the Awards' Ceremony, Ruth shared some of her memories and thoughts about Dick's contributions to the GIS profession:

*"It's a privilege and an honor to be here with this very special GIS community. I have always been impressed by the sharing of information and ideas within this group. I knew Richard's GIS friends were special, but I really learned how true that was when he was diagnosed with leukemia, spent time in the hospital undergoing treatment, and finally succumbed to complications of the disease in July, 2006. He received cards and phone calls from many people in this community, wishing him well. This is truly a community—it is so much more than a group of people with a common interest.*

See: **Dick Thomas Award**, page 5

## DICK THOMAS AWARD

*Continued from page 4*

*"Many of you came to his memorial service and introduced yourselves to me. I was amazed at all the people he knew and helped professionally, because he was never one to toot his own horn.*

*"I was very pleased when I was approached about the idea of a scholarship fund in Richard's name. He was very giving of his time to others in the profession, and I can't think of a better way to honor him.*

*"Richard graduated from the UW with a Bachelor's degree in Aeronautical & Astronautical Engineering--at a time when the local market for such jobs absolutely tanked. He moved to California to be near some extended family, and started his career with a drafting job at one of the cities. He took on increasing responsibilities, working in municipal development departments, reviewing plans and such.*

*"He completed most of the work for a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering, attending classes at night.*

*"After he met me and we were married, we moved back to Washington. He worked for the City of Bellevue for several years, then King County, and most recently for the Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District.*

*"Richard always stayed on the forefront of new developments in his field. He was good with computers, and saw them as a valuable tool. I don't even remember when and how he made the transition into GIS, but he was there in the early years, working on a needs assessment, and the selection and implementation of GIS software at the City of Bellevue and King County Surface Water Management.*

*"He was involved with the NW Computer Aided Mapping Association, which later became the Washington State Chapter of URISA."*

### This year's entries:

This year's four entries covered a diverse array of topics. Joowon Park discussed his new method of mapping small streams that can be missed by the 1:24,000 USGS topographic maps. Chris DeSisto presented his work on assessing wildfire hazards in eastern Clallam County for preventative planning purposes.



Ruth Thomas presents Joowon Park with his Dick Thomas Award Plaque. Greg Babinski photos

Cathy Walker spoke about her work on mapping crime at Deception Pass – Washington State's Most Visited State Park. Our last presenters were Robyn Carmichael, Liz Green, Collin O'Meara and Matt Yarrow. They discussed their work documenting and mapping all of the storm water outfalls on Puget Sound (SWOOPS).

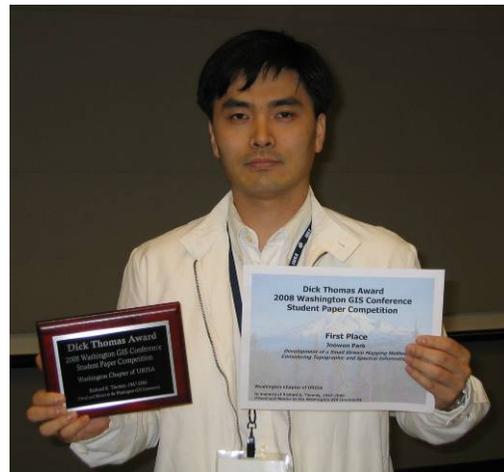
### First Place: Joowon Park

Joowon Park is with the College of Forest Resources at University of Washington in Seattle. His advisors are Finn Krogstad of the College of Forest Resources at the University of Washington and Jim Fridley with the Institute for Risk Analysis & Risk Communication at the University of Washington. Joowon's presentation was a "Comparison of the Positional Accuracy of Stream Mapping Methods; Considering the Effects of Minimum Contributing Area and Spectral Data". Here is his abstract:

*Recent studies on stream functions emphasize the need to protect small streams because they play a crucial role in the distribution of sediments, water and nutrition to downstream aquatic and terrestrial habitats. However, in order to extend stream protection to small streams with conflicting stream protection and timber production objective, the stream locations should be delineated very accurately on maps.*

*Current 1:24,000 US Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps fail to accurately delineate small streams. Alternatively, Digital Elevation Model (DEM)-based stream mapping techniques including D8 are superior to USGS maps, but a weakness of DEM-based methods is that they only rely on morphology, not water-related information.*

*The new Local Differencing Algorithm (LDA) is suggested to utilize both DEM-topographic information and water-related spectral information. This technique assumes that water related spectral information varies relative to distance from a stream. LDA "potential streams" are generated with DEM data and then regression of reflectance values on neighboring pixels surrounding individual potential stream pixels are analyzed to infer whether the DEM potential streams are real streams or not. The inferred stream's existence can be tested by estimating the spectral relationship between reflectance and distance from a stream.*



Joowon Park with his First Place Award Plaque and Certificate.

## DICK THOMAS AWARD

*Continued from page 5*

*For comparison of DEM and LDA, they produced simulated maps that covered one square mile area in the Capitol State Forest and were made to have the same number of stream pixels. The result indicates that LDA may improve the accuracy of small stream maps by 10%.*

*This research was supported by Precision Forestry Cooperative at the University of Washington and the Pacific Northwest Research Collaborators.*

Joowon's awards included:

- Dick Thomas Award Plaque
- \$1000 cash
- Luggage tag from Dick Thomas' collection given by Ruth Thomas
- 2008 Washington GIS Conference t-shirt
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Free registration to the 2009 Washington GIS Conference
- Publication of his paper in *The Summit* (Washington GIS Newsletter)

### Second Place: Chris DeSisto

Chris DeSisto, with Western Washington University's Huxley College on the Peninsula in Port Angeles, WA, presented "Preventing an Accident Waiting to Happen: GIS Wildfire Hazard Assessment of Eastern Clallam County for Preventative Planning". His advisor is Dr. Dwight Barry, WWU-Huxley College on the Peninsula. Here is Chris's abstract:

*Located on the Olympic Peninsula, Clallam County is ranked 5th amongst all 413 counties of the western United States for risk of catastrophic loss from wildfire. Rapid population growth throughout Clallam County's wildland-urban interface (WUI) combined with the driest climate in western Washington and some of the highest vegetative fuel loads on the planet has created a situation that has emergency managers and county government extremely worried. To make matters worse, regional fire service agencies are extremely limited in both funding and operational resources, meaning that—in spite of its importance to both the lives and livelihoods of thousands of people—both pre-planning and adequate response in the event of a major wildfire are precluded without assistance from non-governmental sources. To begin to address these related challenges, a partnership was formed between Fire District 3 and Western Washington University-Port Angeles for a class to conduct an interdisciplinary wildfire hazard assessment of the county's most fire prone region, an area covering 135 square miles. Most wildfire hazard assessments focus strictly on fuels and slope factors, but because of the weather anomalies created by the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains, this innovative assessment accounted for probable weather conditions during the height of the fire season by using a spatially explicit climate model in the GIS analysis. The course helped prepare students for the emergency and resource management fields as well as provided a vital service to address one of Washington's greatest preventable hazards.*

Chris's awards included:

- Dick Thomas Second Place Award Certificate
- \$300 cash
- Luggage tag from Dick Thomas' collection given by Ruth Thomas
- 2008 Washington GIS Conference t-shirt
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Free registration to 2009 Washington GIS Conference

### Third Place: Cathy Walker

Cathy Walker is a student at the University of Washington, Tacoma campus in the GIS Certificate Program. Her instructor is Steven Garrett and program advisor is Kim Davenport. Cathy's presentation was on "Crime Mapping Washington State's Most Visited State Park – Deception Pass". Here is her abstract:

*Washington's state parks are a place where you can discover the natural beauty of sandy beaches, islands, and old-growth forests. While generally regarded as safe places, crimes happen in state parks. This study provided an in-depth analysis of crimes that occurred in Deception Pass State Park from 1998 to 2007. With an average annual visitor total of over 2 million people, Deception Pass State Park is Washington's most visited state park. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), this study focused on the location and type of crime committed, personnel staffing patterns compared to visitor population, and the location of infrastructure present to prevent or deter crime. This study used ESRI's ArcGIS software to perform the GIS analysis. Law enforcement incident reports for this park exist in digital form for the four most recent years; for the earlier years, hard copy incident reports were analyzed and transferred into a digital format.*

*Utilizing GIS to analyze crime data will allow one to determine patterns in the data including: the types of crime being committed, areas of the park most frequented by crime and the time of year that specific types of crime are being committed. Armed with this knowledge, park law enforcement staff will be able to better prevent crime by increasing law enforcement presence and/or installing infrastructure in problem areas that will help to deter crime. This analysis will also allow a system to be established with which to gauge crime in other Washington State parks.*

Cathy's awards included:

- Dick Thomas Third Place Award Certificate
- \$200 cash
- Luggage tag from Dick Thomas' collection given by Ruth Thomas
- 2008 Washington GIS Conference t-shirt
- One year membership in WAURISA

### Honorable Mention: Robyn Carmichael, Liz Green, Collin O'Meara and Matt Yarrow

Robyn Carmichael, Liz Green, Collin O'Meara and Matt Yarrow, a group from the GIS Certificate Program at the UW Extension of University of Washington in Seattle, presented their work on the "Storm Water Outfalls of Puget Sound (SWOOPS)". Jaime Crawford was their instructor and advisor for their work.

## DICK THOMAS AWARD

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Here is their abstract:

*In May of 2007, Governor Christine Gregoire signed a legislative Act designed to restore Puget Sound to health by the year 2020, to be overseen and implemented by the newly created Puget Sound Partnership. In order to move forward in our attempt to reduce pollution in Puget Sound, it is essential to locate all entry points where stormwater is draining into the Sound. At the present time, there is no comprehensive spatial record of storm water outfall locations that discharge into Puget Sound. This project has produced a comprehensive map and accompanying database of all stormdrain outfalls, combined sewer overflow (CSO) outfalls and "natural" outfalls such as streams and rivers that discharge into Puget Sound. Our goal is that this map and accompanying fact sheet and report will be used by the non-profit sector and government entities alike and aid in guiding future management of toxic loads to the Puget Sound.*

*We will also present initial analysis that seeks to identify toxic loads deriving from watersheds and stormdrain networks. For the CSOs, a critical component of this analysis is to determine the frequency of discharge based on permit data. Such analysis will ultimately be useful in identifying pollutants and mapping areas that are at risk for potentially damaging inputs of contaminated stormwater.*

The group's awards included:

- Dick Thomas Honorable Mention Certificate
- Luggage tag from Dick Thomas' collection given by Ruth Thomas
- 2008 Washington GIS Conference t-shirts

### Conclusion

I would like to send my heartfelt gratitude to everyone that made possible this year's Dick Thomas Student Presentations and Award. I would like to thank this year's entrants, Joowon Park, Chris DeSisto, Cathy Walker, Robyn Carmichael, Liz Green, Collin O'Meara and Matt Yarrow, for their great work as demonstrated in their submitted abstracts and quality presentations.

The judges for this year's Dick Thomas Student Presentations and Award were Marty Balikov with ESRI, Mellissa Faga with the City of Redmond, Walker Willingham with Earth Walker GIS and Rick Lortz with Lakehaven Utility District. Thank you for your work judging the submitted abstracts and the presentations. It was an honor for WAURISA when Ruth Thomas joined us to hear the students present their work and gave the students their awards, too. Thank you, Ruth, for joining us. The day was so very special because you were there. Thank you Greg Babinski for taking the pictures included in this recap.

Finally, I would like to the professors that encouraged their students to enter the competition. These presentations would not have happened without your support.

In the next few months, look for the announcement for the third annual Dick Thomas Student Presentations and Award at next year's Washington GIS Conference in Spring 2009!

*Amanda Taub, GISP  
WAURISA Outreach Committee Chair  
Dick Thomas Award Coordinator*



*Amanda Taub, Dick Thomas Award Coordinator, looks on while Ruth Thomas presents Chris DeSisto with his Dick Thomas Second Place Award Certificate.*



*Ruth Thomas presents Cathy Walker with her Dick Thomas Third Place Award Certificate.*



*Amanda Taub looks on while Ruth Thomas presents the Dick Thomas Award Honorable Mention Certificates.  
(All photos this page by Greg Babinski)*

## 2008 WASHINGTON GIS CONFERENCE RECAP

The **2008 Washington GIS Conference** held May 5-7 at Seattle Center was a big success! Many thanks are due to the WAURISA Conference Planning Committee, ably headed by Neil Berry. Neil was assisted by more than 20 volunteers who helped with Conference planning, advance preparations, and on-site operations.

Special thanks are due to our vendor sponsors who helped to underwrite the conference costs and who also provided additional value to the attendees via the information they shared in special vendor technical sessions and in their exhibit hall booths. This year's sponsors were:

### 2008 Washington GIS Conference Sponsors

#### Mount Rainier Sponsor:

- ESRI

#### Mount Adams Sponsors:

- Geoline Positioning Systems
- GeoNorth LLC
- LizardTech
- King County GIS Center
- Pacific Alliance Technologies
- Spatial Wave, Inc.
- Terra GIS Ltd
- The PPI Group
- The Sidwell Company

#### Mount Baker Sponsors:

- 3Di West
- Aerials Express
- David C. Smith & Associates
- Electronic Data Solutions
- Latitude Geographics Group
- Metro Geospatial
- Terra GIS Ltd.
- Woolpert, Inc.



Conference Attendees are greeted by Jaime Crawford (former WAURISA President), Angela Johnson, WAURISA President, Susan Johnson, URISA President, & Neil Berry, 2008 Conference Chair



Last Minute Keynote Speaker Tom Nolan provided an insightful and entertaining address on Tuesday morning



2008 Summit Award Winner Mike Onzay receives his award from 2007 Summit Award winner Donna Wendt



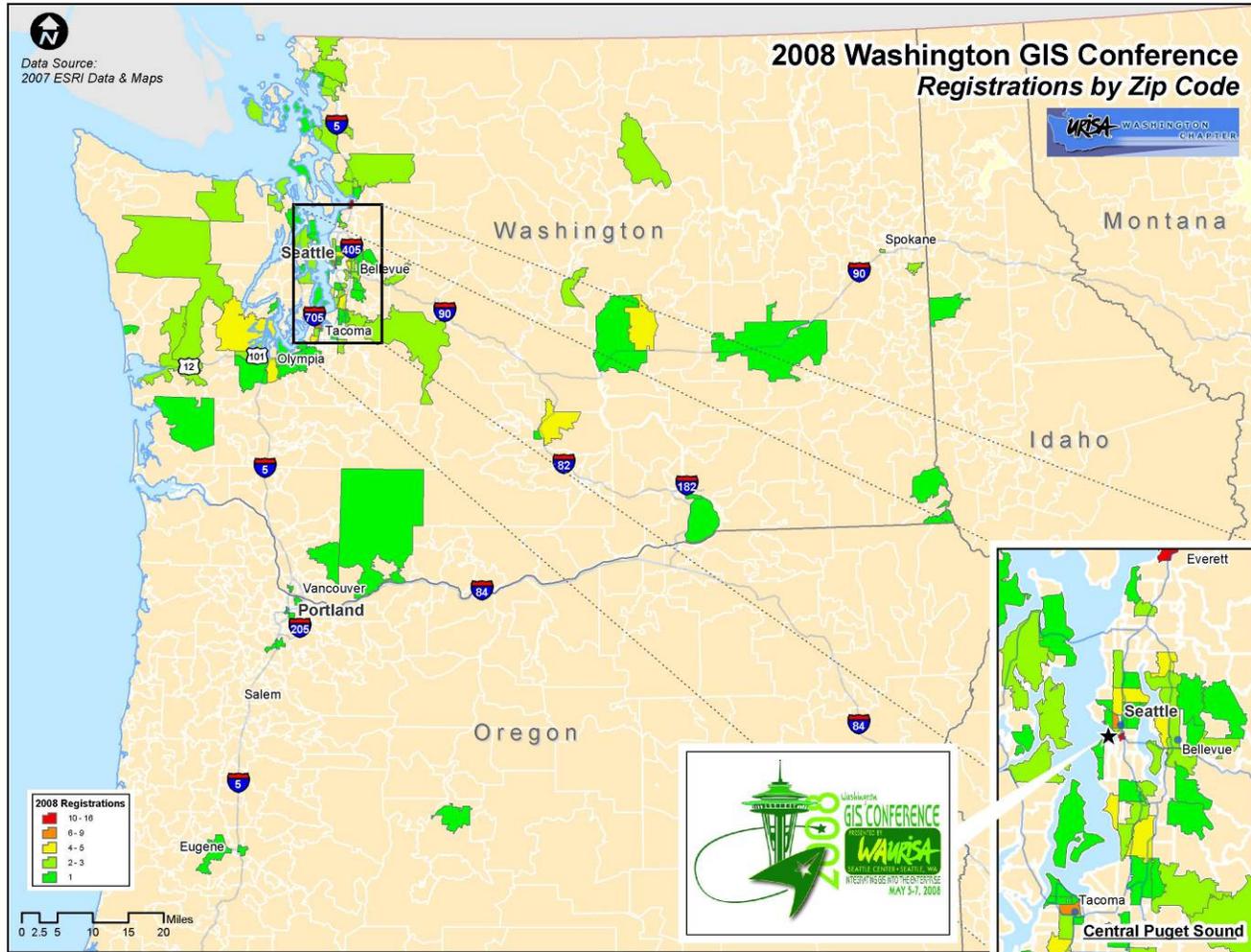
Despite the disappointing score, the Conference social event at the Seattle Mariners was an enjoyable evening

## 2008 WASHINGTON GIS CONFERENCE A REGIONAL SUCCESS!

By Steve Schunzel

**Thanks to all of you who attended** the 2008 GIS Conference in Seattle, May 5-7. Because of you, we had a record number of registrations (266) and record attendees making this the most successful conference for WAURISA ever!

It has been a goal of the WAURISA board for a number of years to branch out to other areas of the state besides the Central Puget Sound Region. As illustrated on the map shown below (how could we be a GIS organization without a map?), we are seeing larger pockets of attendees from around the region and beyond. This tells us that we are meeting our objective of providing quality GIS education opportunities. While our core audience will likely remain in the central region, the perspective and experiences from others throughout the state will certainly richen the content of conferences in the future.



Not shown on the map are additional attendees from Canada, California, and Nigeria! Thanks again for your support...

### WAURISA BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

Three WAURISA Board of Director positions were up for election in 2008. The results of the voting were announced on the last day of the conference. Elected to two year terms were:

- **Don Burdick**
- **Heather Diaz**
- **Amanda Taub**

### WAURISA SURVEY PRIZE WINNERS

WAURISA appreciates all who participated in our post-Conference on-line survey. The results will help us plan an even better event for 2009. Two winners chosen randomly from all survey participants each won \$100 Amazon gift certificates:

- **Jason Matihiesen**
- **Zinta Smidchens**

## COALITION OF GEOSPATIAL ORGANIZATIONS BECOMES OFFICIAL

**August 11, 2008** - The Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) came into official being on August 4, 2008. Representatives of the eleven founding member organizations met at the ESRI Users' Conference in San Diego and voted unanimously to approve a set of Rules of Operation and Procedure that brought COGO into existence. Several attended via conference call and WebEx.

COGO grew out of a series of stakeholder meetings among the leaders of national organizations involved in geospatial data and policy issues over the last several years. The groups realized that they had common interests and concerns and that they could increase their effectiveness by speaking with one voice wherever possible.

After voting to formalize COGO by adopting rules of operation, the group selected an inaugural slate of officers. The Chair is Cy Smith from the National States Geographic Information Council, the Chair-elect is Curt Sumner from the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping, and the Secretary is George Donatello from the International Association of Assessing Officers.

"I know I speak for all organizations that have joined this coalition when I say that we are excited and optimistic about the potential to accelerate the advancement of a variety of national geospatial issues" said Oregon GIS Coordinator and NSGIC President Cy Smith. "We intend to begin immediately developing a collaborative advocacy agenda and aggressively pursuing those issues on which we can all agree. We invite other geospatial organizations and organizations with an interest in geospatial issues to join us as Member or Advisory Organizations."

The founding Member Organizations are:

- [American Congress on Surveying and Mapping \(ACSM\)](#)
- [American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing \(ASPRS\)](#)
- [Association of American Geographers \(AAG\)](#)
- [Cartography and Geographic Information Society \(CAGIS\)](#)
- [Geospatial Information Technology Association \(GITA\)](#)
- [GIS Certification Institute \(GISCI\)](#)
- [International Association of Assessing Officers \(IAAO\)](#)
- [Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors \(MAPPS\)](#)
- [National States Geographic Information Council \(NSGIC\)](#)
- [University Consortium for Geographic Information Science \(UCGIS\)](#)
- [Urban and Regional Information Systems Association \(URISA\)](#)

The founding Advisory Organizations are:

- [National Association of Counties \(NACo\)](#)
- [National Emergency Number Association \(NENA\)](#)
- [Western Governors Association \(WGA\)](#)
- [American Planning Association \(APA\)](#)

The next meeting of COGO is expected to be held in Washington, DC in October in conjunction with the next meetings of the Federal Geographic Data Committee and the National Geospatial Advisory Committee.

For more information about COGO, visit <http://www.urisa.org/cogo>.



## REPORT ON THE JUNE 2008 WAGIC RETREAT

*By Joy Paulus*

The Washington Geographic Information Council (WAGIC) conducted its fifth retreat in Ellensburg, Washington on June 5, 2008. Some twenty-five GIS practitioners from throughout the state participated in this year's retreat. The primary objective was to renew its connections with the GIS user community and to get a better understanding on how WAGIC can better support the states GIS users now and into the future.

The retreat started with presentations by Tracy Guerin, Deputy Director, WA Department of Information Services and Cy Smith, Oregon's GIS Coordinator on how the state council's governance structures and decision making process affects GIS initiatives in their states. The remainder of the meeting was spent exploring GIS successes, gaps and opportunities for moving GIS forward in Washington.

The retreat participants also explored and developed a WAGIC vision and a list of action items that would help it achieve that vision. The list focused on tasks that the two interconnected, coordinating committees should address. These committees include:

- Information Services Boards (ISB) sub-committee on Geographic Information Technology (GIT); and
  - Washington Geographic Information Council (WAGIC).
- Some of the priority recommendations include:
- GIT's commitment of resources to WAGIC and a commitment to fill its vacancies on its membership board;
  - WAGIC will undertake the update of its charter and strategic plan and the creation of a Business Plan.

For copies of the presentations, meeting notes and actions items please check the WAGIC website at [www.wagic.wa.gov](http://www.wagic.wa.gov) in the next month for further details.

*Joy Paulus, GIS Coordinator*  
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## UPCOMING URISA EVENTS AND CONFERENCES



### URISA's 46th Annual Conference

October 7-10, 2008

Sheraton New Orleans

<http://www.urisa.org/conferences/aboutannual>

Go beyond basic technology and applications and contemplate issues related to designing, managing and applying information technology - at its highest and best use - to improve our urban and regional environments. Join your colleagues, peers, thinkers and doers from around the world at URISA's Annual Conference. The URISA Annual Conference offers a unique multidisciplinary approach, with sessions led by industry leaders, powerful keynote presentations, panels, roundtable discussions and networking meetings you won't find anywhere else. This conference is vital to professionals concerned with the effective application of information technology in all state and local government agencies.

### URISA Leadership Academy in Seattle

December 8-12, 2008

Hotel 1000, Seattle

<http://urisa.org/ula>

A Leadership Academy for the GIS Practitioner

- Do you see GIS as much more than "just a map"?
- Do you see GIS potential in every industry/application?
- Do you recognize GIS as a major enabling technology to help achieve most goals?
- Do you want to make a positive difference in the world around you using GIS?
- Do you understand the power of visualizing and spatially analyzing information?
- Are you frustrated by others in your organization that just don't "get" GIS?
- Are you overwhelmed by your management responsibilities?

If you can answer "yes" to two or more of these questions, then the URISA Leadership Academy (ULA) is for you.

### GIS IN PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE

A specialty conference that debuted in New Orleans in the May 2007. Because of the very positive reviews, the conference will be presented every two years. June 5-8, 2009: Providence, RI

<http://urisa.org/conferences/health>

### INTEGRATING GIS & CAMA CONFERENCE

This annual specialty conference and exhibition is jointly presented by URISA and the International Association of Assessing Officers. This conference is designed to foster collaboration and integration of data, technology, and functionality. February 8-11, 2009: Charleston, SC

[http://urisa.org/gis\\_cama](http://urisa.org/gis_cama)

### OTHER UPCOMING GIS EVENTS:

#### PNW GITA 9TH ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 6-7, 2008

BOISE, IDAHO

This year's conference theme is "Infrastructure Management in the Pacific Northwest". This is a great setting for the type of conference that we favor - a comfortable size of about 80 attendees and 12 vendors in an area conducive to relaxing, networking, and socializing with your fellow GIS professionals and friends. The combination of chapter business with interesting presentations from experts in our field is one way to keep you in touch with your counterparts in the region and extend the role of GITA as a local forum for tracking infrastructure solutions.

<http://www.gita.org/chapters/pacific/pacific.asp>



#### 2008 NW User Group

OCTOBER 24-28, 2008

Sun Valley, Idaho

The theme of this year's Northwest GIS User Conference is "Serving The World". The theme focuses on using server and Internet technology to delivery GIS solutions to the world.

<http://www.nwesriusers.org/>

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## THE SUMMIT - EDITORIAL

### COLLABORATION AND COALITIONS

**Most Americans have an independent streak.** We tend to be proud and protective of what we can accomplish on our own. The 'Lone GIS Practitioner' track at the 2008 Washington GIS Conference generated quite a bit of buzz and interest by those who work in one-man or one-woman GIS shops. But there was also a need identified for long-term networking among this specialized group of GIS professionals.

There are some interesting current developments, both within Washington State and beyond, that suggest that collaboration and coalition building may soon lead to significant new developments within the GIS field.

At the ESRI Conference in San Diego earlier this summer, eleven organizations with an interest in geospatial policy came together to form COGO - the Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (see article on page 10). Each of the organizations has its own well defined focus and constituency that it supports – but each recognizes that there are limits to what it can accomplish on its own. URISA was the leading proponent for the formation of COGO, and Cy Smith, URISA Board Member, was selected as the first Chair.

COGO is now working on developing a small number of key policy issues that the group can advocate at the Federal level much more effectively than as individual organizations. For example, the Imagery for the Nation initiative is an example of an issue that is struggling for funding in a challenged Federal budget environment. COGO can and should speak with a unified voice to advocate for Federal leadership and funding for this important program.

Within Washington URISA, we continue to pursue opportunities to collaborate with other URISA chapters to provide more effective services. One idea being discussed with the Oregon Chapter is to collaborate on arranging URISA workshops in both states, to save on travel costs and to share work on the related planning effort.

Another unique collaboration opportunity here in Washington State is the URISA Leadership Academy, which will be held in Seattle this coming December. The ULA is a collaborative effort on two levels. First, development of the curriculum of this week long program is based on the collaboration of some of the most experienced and respected managers and consultants in the GIS field. Second, the ULA program itself depends on the collaboration of the participants to share experiences and work out problem solving strategies to develop their GIS management abilities.

Take advantage of the collaborations and coalitions that are available and you will be able to accomplish more on your own.

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For subscriptions, content, comments, or suggestions, email:  
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### PUBLIC MAPS IN WASHINGTON

**Summer in Washington** means farmers markets. The Vashon Island Growers Association holds its Farmers Market each Saturday on the Vashon Village Green. Greeting visitors to the Green is this brushed stainless map-sculpture depicting the outline of Vashon Island. The Farmers Market runs into October ([www.vigavashon.org](http://www.vigavashon.org)).



*Vashon Island Map-sculpture on Vashon Village Green*

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Do you know of a public map display in Washington? Send it to *The Summit* and we'll include it in a future issue.

-Editor

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### THE SUMMIT – LITERARY CORNER

#### Peering in Maps....

*"Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
 The better part of my affections would  
 Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
 Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,  
 Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;  
 And every object that might make me fear  
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
 Would make me sad."*

**-Salanio, from *Merchant of Venice*, by  
 William Shakespeare**




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*The Summit* would like to hear from you. To encourage the discussion of issues and ideas of importance to the Washington GIS community we welcome letters to the editor and opinion essays. Letters to the editor should be a maximum of 100 words and essays should be limited to 500 words.

## GIS USER GROUPS IN WASHINGTON

ACSM – Washington State Section  
<http://www.wss-acsm.org/>

ASPRS Puget Sound Region  
<http://www.photogrammetry.com/ASPRS-PSR/>

Central Puget Sound GIS User Group  
<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/viewforum.php?f=24>  
 Meetings the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00pm at  
 Mercer Island City Hall. Contact Nora Gierloff at:  
[ngierloff@ci.tukwila.wa.us](mailto:ngierloff@ci.tukwila.wa.us)

Central Washington GIS User Group  
 Meets the 1st Thursday of each month at the Super China Buffet in East  
 Wenatchee, WA at 12:00 noon.  
 For information contact Amanda Taub at: [ataub@co.douglas.wa.us](mailto:ataub@co.douglas.wa.us)

King County GIS User Group  
[http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/KC\\_Users\\_Group.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/KC_Users_Group.htm)  
 Meets 1st Wednesday every other month at 11:00am at the KCGIS  
 Center, 201 S. Jackson Street, Seattle WA, Conf Room 7044/7045.

Northwest Washington GIS User Group  
[http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/gis/nwgis\\_mtgs.htm](http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/gis/nwgis_mtgs.htm)

Spokane Regional GIS User Group  
<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/viewforum.php?f=19>  
 Contact: Dave Rideout, Spokane County 509-477-7251  
[drideout@spokanecounty.org](mailto:drideout@spokanecounty.org) .

Washington Geographic Information Council (WAGIC)  
<http://wagic.wa.gov/>  
 Join Listserve at: <http://listserv.wa.gov/archives/wagic.html>

To have your GIS related group or event listed in future issues of *The Summit*, notify the editor at: [SummitGISNews@URISA.org](mailto:SummitGISNews@URISA.org).

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