



The Federal Geographic Data Committee

The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) is an interagency committee that promotes the coordinated development, use, sharing, and dissemination of geospatial data on a national basis. The FGDC was established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in its 1990 revision of Circular A-16, "Coordination of Surveying, Mapping, and Related Spatial Data Activities." The FGDC is composed of representatives from 14 Cabinet level and independent Federal agencies (see table). Currently, Secretary Bruce Babbitt of the Department of the Interior chairs the FGDC.

To coordinate various themes of geospatial data that will contribute to the development of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure, OMB assigned lead coordination responsibilities to specific Federal agencies. This thematic organization is reflected in the FGDC subcommittee structure (see chart). FGDC working groups play a crosscutting role, dealing with issues that span many subcommittees. Working groups have been formed to discuss data archives, the establishment of a National Geospatial Data Clearinghouse, the creation of framework data, and the development and implementation of data standards.

The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)

Chair — Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior

Department of Agriculture — Tom Hebert, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment

Department of Commerce — Diana H. Josephson, Deputy Under Secretary for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Department of Defense — corepresentatives: Paul Barber, Chief, Engineering Division, Directorate of Civil Works, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Walter Senus, Chief Scientist, Defense Mapping Agency

Department of Energy — Jay Hakes, Administrator, Energy Information Administration

Department of Housing and Urban Development — John Cook, Community and Planning Development

Department of State — William B. Wood, The Geographer

Department of Transportation — T. R. Lakshmanan, Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Environmental Protection Agency — John Z. Cannon, Assistant Administrator for Administration and Resource Management

Federal Emergency Management Agency — John Matticks, Deputy Associate Director, Operations Support Directorate

Library of Congress — Ralph Ehrenberg, Chief, Geography and Map Division

National Aeronautics and Space Administration — Dixon Butler, Director, Operations, Data and Information Division

National Archives and Records Administration — Kenneth Thibodeau, Director, Center for Electronic Records

Tennessee Valley Authority — Alan Voss, Project Engineer, Geographic and Engineering Department

FGDC COORDINATION

Circular A-16 defined specific coordination responsibilities for the FGDC including:

Promoting the development, maintenance, and management of distributed data bases of geospatial data that are national in scope.

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Encouraging the development and implementation of standards and exchange formats.

Promoting technology development, transfer and exchange.

Interacting with other Federal coordinating bodies that deal with geospatial data.

Publishing technical and management reports.

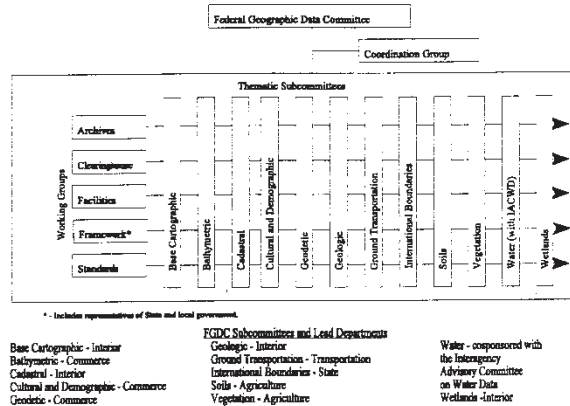
THE FGDC AND THE NATIONAL SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

To extend the scope of Circular A-16 in support of the National Information Infrastructure, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12906 "Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI)." NSDI encompasses the technology, policies, standards and human resources necessary to acquire, process, store, distribute, and improve the use of geospatial data. In the Executive Order, the FGDC was given an expanded role in coordinating the NSDI with a mandate to involve State, local, and tribal governments, academia, and the private sector.

Through its committees and working groups the FGDC supports activities in four areas crucial to the NSDI: development of a National Clearinghouse for spatial data, development of standards for the sharing of geospatial data, creation of a national digital geospatial data framework of basic data themes, and promotion of cooperative ventures and cost sharing agreements for geospatial data among partners outside the Federal sector.

FGDC ACTIVITIES

The FGDC committees and working groups provide the basic structure for institutions and individuals to come together to discuss and work on various aspects of the implementation



of the NSDI. The FGDC also sponsors other activities. In recent years the FGDC has:

- sponsored two national forums on geospatial data;
- instituted a grant program to support cooperative agreements for Clearinghouse and metadata development with participants from State and local governments and academia;
- developed and adopted a content standard for digital geospatial metadata;
- developed user training materials for metadata and Clearinghouse;
- conducted workshops throughout the country to support the metadata standard and Clearinghouse efforts;
- supported research into the evolution of the National Geospatial Data Clearinghouse;
- supported the development of a plan and on-going research to create basic framework data sets.

For more information on the FGDC or to receive the committee's newsletter, please contact us at the above address.