



# imafi NEWS

what's inside

## 2007 Conference

By Brian Buckley, Sarah AcMoody and Scott Swan

2007  
Conference

Who's  
Doing  
What?

Member  
News

Did You  
Know?



The 2007 IMAGIN Conference "Geography on the Move: Affecting Decisions" from May 6th to 9th in Kalamazoo aimed to provide information and ideas for participants to take back and affect decisions in their organizations. Time will tell how many decisions are being affected, but the wealth of workshops and presentations were extremely informative based on feedback received so far. The keynote speaker, Rick Toliver, said it well "If you're not moving forward, you are moving back." That theme seemed to be repeated numerous times during the conference where people talked about the changing times regarding GIS integration into their organizations and between organizations. While there is much work ahead, many decisions are now being influenced by the awareness that spatial information is a key component in the decision making process.

On Sunday, the conference started off with the fourth annual IMAGIN golf outing at the Prairies Golf Club in Kalamazoo. A windy day made for a challenging round, but the sun, mild temperature, friendly competition,

and smiling faces made for a great round of golf. After golfing, the speakers and vendors were treated to a reception in Webster's at the Radisson Hotel to thank them for their support of IMAGIN. With the fireplace glowing and the piano playing, the speakers and vendors were able to relax and get ready for the conference as well as catch up with old and new friends.

Monday morning began with a talk by Rick Toliver from Teledyne Solutions about the future of Geospatial Systems. He gave his vision of the future and encouraged us all to develop our vision and move forward. Monday continued with a hands-on workshop on GeoConnector for Land Records Management by InfoGeographics, Inc. as well as numerous presentations on topics such as endangered species, election results, natural resources, imagery, open source GIS, and GIS in your community. A technical workshop on the National Hydrography Dataset was also presented.

Monday lunch brought another guest speaker as Stu Davis, President of NSGIC and the State GIS Coordinator of Ohio, talked about the "Imagery for the Nation" program being promoted by NSGIC as well as the statewide GIS efforts in Ohio.

That afternoon brought the first of three offsite hands-on workshops that were held at Western Michigan University (WMU) titled

## Who's Doing What in GIS and Spatial Technology



### **DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC. GREAT LAKES/ATLANTIC REGION**

**Membership:** 219,157 in the Great Lakes and North Atlantic; 585,432 in the United States

**Geographic Coverage:** Great Lakes and North Atlantic (Wisconsin to Maine, south to Virginia)

**Number of Staff:** Three full-time employees and four interns

### **PROGRAM STATUS**

What do habitat conditions, nest locations, migration routes, habitat restoration, conservation planning, and your favorite hunting spot have in common? They all have a spatial component and can be linked together efficiently and synergistically with GIS. Ducks Unlimited's (DU) conservation programs always have had a strong biological foundation, but linking all of these components together (except, of course, for your favorite hunting spot) and translating them into better habitat restoration and management has not always been easy. By utilizing GIS data and tools for solving complex habitat problems and working over large (multi-state and national) landscapes, DU has been able to utilize its grassroots dollars more efficiently to provide the best "bang for the duck" in terms of habitat conservation. As DU has grown over the years, so has its need to utilize GIS to achieve its mission - conserve, restore, and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl.

DU started its GIS program in 1984 with the ambitious goal

of mapping the 300,000 square mile (776 996.433 km<sup>2</sup>) prairie pothole region of the United States and Canada. The prairie pothole region (parts of Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Montana in the U.S. and parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta in Canada) is known as the "duck factory" because it is the primary breeding ground for waterfowl in North America. When the mapping effort was completed in 1989, DU and its partners finally had a complete picture of the habitat quantity and quality it could use for targeting conservation efforts.

In 1998, DU opened the doors of the Great Lakes/Atlantic Regional Office in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The region services 18 states, from Wisconsin to Maine and south to Virginia. The mission of the GIS program for this region is to support, facilitate, and enable science-based conservation through spatial analysis and tools to achieve regional goals. The vision of the GIS program is to be fully integrated with conservation, to assume a proactive and indispensable role through efficient and effective planning and prioritizing of conservation activities, and to acquire a complete data set for the region.

One of the first tasks GIS performed for the region was to collect data on waterfowl densities, habitat types, and potential restoration areas. This data was used to identify priority areas within the region. These priority areas currently are being used to set programmatic goals for the region. For example, one performance goal DU's biologists have each year is to make sure 80% of their conservation efforts are within a focus area. The next step in the evolution of GIS for the DU office was to guide conservation efforts on a local scale.

In order to "step down" the priority areas to a local scale that biologists could use in a day-to-day setting, DU needed to complete four tasks: research, data development, data analysis, and implementation. The research component identified the habitat parameters needed to reach breeding populations goals in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The data development component gathered spatial data from existing sources (e.g., National Land Cover Data (NLCD) and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)) or created data when existing data was not available (e.g., potential restoration sites and existing conservation lands) to apply the habitat models to the Great Lakes. Lastly, and probably most importantly, DU needed to provide a means to implement the models for use on a daily basis. This was accomplished through the use of a custom Internet Map Server application. For more information on this project, see the Nov/Dec 2003 issue of *IMAGINews*.

*2007 CONFERENCE continued from page 1*

"Introduction to Object Oriented Image Classification using 'Definiens Professional' (eCognition)". There was also a technical workshop on consortium building as well as presentations on topics such as geocoding accuracy, land records integration and access, crime, homeland security, and ArcIMS programming.

The networking reception on Monday evening provided a chance for participants to discover how the vendors that support IMAGIN can help them do their jobs more effectively. The reception was a great chance to network and find out better ways to affect decisions in our own organizations.

Tuesday morning had Bill Johnson from the State of New York describing the GIS work being done in his state as well as their part of the response to 9/11 in New York City. The morning continued with a hands-on workshop at WMU about what's new in ArcGIS 9.2 and a technical workshop that gave an introduction to ArcGIS Server 9.2. Numerous presentations covered such topics as mobile technology support for land records management, 3D visualization, transportation planning, land cover, wetlands, and several presentations on GIS in specific communities.

Tuesday afternoon covered topics such as "Dune Management", "Creation and Use of Impervious and Canopy Datasets", "Integrating Documents in Your GIS", "The UrbanSim Project in Southeast Michigan" and "3D GIS using Sketchup." A technical workshop on "Getting the Most out of ArcIMS" and a hands-on workshop at Western Michigan University on Integrating GIS Data with Google Earth were also presented.

The afternoon wrapped up with the Annual IMAGIN Membership meeting that was very well attended and provided a great opportunity for the membership to hear what the IMAGIN Board has envisioned for the next year and gave the Board the opportunity to get feedback from the membership on the memberships' vision for IMAGIN.

The participants enjoyed dinner Tuesday evening while the guest speaker Eric Swanson, Director of the Michigan Center for Geographic Information (CGI), presented the current CGI initiatives and Center's plans for the future.

The breakfast speaker on Wednesday morning was Jill Saligoe-Simmel, Executive Director of the Indiana Geographic Information Council. Jill spoke about the partnerships formed and management of the 2005 statewide aerial project. She also discussed Indiana's part in the Imagery for the Nation program.

Following breakfast, the 'GIS in Michigan' session presented by Scott Oppmann and Jeroen Wagendorp, co-chairs of the newly formed "Michigan Statewide GIS Steering Group", talked about GIS needs, concerns and coordination statewide and

how these issues can be addressed. Feedback was solicited from the IMAGIN Conference attendees regarding statewide issues and will be taken into account as they begin the process of better statewide coordination.

The conference concluded with a session on specific examples of CGI initiatives that are now online or are nearly online. CGI is actively creating new and better ways to deliver data and applications to the entire state and there are many more initiatives to come. They are currently developing several web services to deliver data that can be used by web sites across the state.

### **Awards & Scholarships**

The Tuesday lunch brought with it the annual IMAGIN awards ceremony. This began with a tribute to Bill Enslin and the announcement of IMAGIN's new "Founder's Fund". This Founder's Fund, financed by charitable contributions, will be used to help support IMAGIN members who want to attend training out of state, on the condition that when they return, the recipients will offer that knowledge back to the community by teaching a workshop or other training session. In this way, IMAGIN can improve the access of members to outside training opportunities, support the spirit of members educating members, and honor the vision that Bill, the other founders, and the vast majority of IMAGIN members share.

The Jim Living Scholarship, sponsored by Woolpert, LLP, was awarded to Heather Aschoff. Heather recently received her B.A. in Geography and a specialization in GIS at Michigan State University. She is currently pursuing a career in the Utility Industry and plans to return for a graduate degree in the future.

The "GIS for Everyone Award" recipient was McKenna and Associates for their interactive mapping tool developed for the City of River Rouge. The City of River Rouge has been experiencing economic decline and to address this problem has completed a Redevelopment Ready Certification process. This process contains criteria identifying vacant lots that are appropriate for residential construction. Their partnership with McKenna has helped them to create an interactive mapping tool that is designed to map these potential sites. It helps them analyze the sites to see if they meet the redevelopment criteria.

This tool is shared between the City departments so that City staff has easy access to parcel maps, assessors information, aerial photos, site photos, etc. This also allows staff to easily create custom maps for residents of the community and developers – increasing the awareness of the program and GIS even further. Currently, the City is exploring options to put this interactive map online.

The Jim Living Geospatial Award recipient was Jim Bennett,

## WHO'S DOING WHAT *continued from page 2*

For those in the GIS field, what DU has learned through this process is nothing too enlightening, but worth mentioning nevertheless: 1) it's almost never easy assimilating data across multiple jurisdictions, so plan on extra time when trying to merge these data sets; 2) using data that is 30 years old (NWI) does not always represent what currently exists, so be careful how you use and represent old data; and 3) effective implementation takes a lot of effort, but it is well worth it in the long run.

### NEW PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

In past efforts, DU has focused on breeding waterfowl, but another important limiting factor for stable waterfowl populations is spring migration. Every spring, waterfowl migrate through the Great Lakes region from their wintering grounds in the south to their summer breeding grounds in the north. Along the way they utilize stopover sites to replenish their fat reserves, which provide the energy necessary to reach breeding areas. If they have no place to stop and eat, they will not arrive at the breeding grounds fat enough to reproduce successfully. Think of it this way: if you took a trip to California and were not allowed to stop for any reason until you got there, what would be the first thing you would do? Lie on the beach and soak up the sun, or find a restaurant with a clean bathroom?

DU currently is working on a research project with the Ohio State University and Southern Illinois University to develop models that describe the limiting factors for spring migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. In order to apply these models, DU needs to have an updated and complete wetlands layer for the Great Lakes. Working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as many other federal, state and local organizations, DU has embarked on an ambitious project to update the NWI for the Great Lakes region. DU has developed a system to update and track the NWI wetlands from the original inventory (circa 1978-1983) using current aerial photos (2005-2007). Once the update is accomplished, a sample of the wetlands will be selected for verification in the field. DU is seeking partners and volunteers to assist with the field verification. Partners and volunteers can find out more about the field verification process at <http://glaro.ducks.org/NWI>. Once the NWI update is complete and verified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it will be posted on the NWI web site ([www.fws.gov/nwi](http://www.fws.gov/nwi)) or available through DU. How do you set habitat goals and measure success, without knowing what has been accomplished already? This is the basic premise for the Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) layer. CARL is a seamless and consistent GIS database of public and private conservation and recreation lands in the Great

Lakes area. CARL was developed with funding from the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) and patterned after the Florida Greenways CARL layer. DU expanded CARL to the Great Lakes area with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Great Lakes Coastal Program. Additional partnerships have been developed with The Nature Conservancy in Michigan, the Central Indiana Land Trust, and Land Trust Alliance to include local conservancy and land trust lands. CARL is a living database, as new lands are being conserved every day. DU would like your assistance in keeping CARL alive and well for future generations. In return for sending DU an organization's CARL data, DU will produce hard copy maps of the organizations property and service area. Any sensitive information (i.e.: private easements) is not available to the public, however a public version of the CARL layer is available to download in shapefile format from <http://glaro.ducks.org/CARL>.

*For more information on CARL, the NWI update, map viewers, or DU's GIS program, please visit <http://glaro.ducks.org> or contact Robb Macleod at [rmacleod@ducks.org](mailto:rmacleod@ducks.org) or (734) 623-2000.*

## Member News

**Grand Traverse County** has hired John Harrell as GIS Technician to work on their address point database and to assist with the digital tax mapping project. John graduated from Northwestern Michigan College with an Associates in Science and Arts degree with a major in Computer Information Systems. John is IT-Hardware Specialist Certified.

## Did you Know?

In Michigan the most common road name is "Main St" with 348 instances. Next come Maple St, 2nd St, 1st St, then Elm St. Most road names in Michigan are unique; fewer than 1% of road names are shared by 10 or more communities. For more fun with Michigan road names, see the Michigan Geographic Framework 'All Roads' file at [www.mcgi.state.mi.us/mgdl/](http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/mgdl/).



## 2007 CONFERENCE *continued from page 3*

President of InfoGeographics, Inc. Jim has served many roles in IMAGIN, including sitting on the Board of Directors and serving as President for two terms. He has also provided years of support to the *IMAGINews*, the Student Poster and Paper Competition, and the Conference. Jim has experience managing a wide variety of GIS projects, from large and complex to small, task-driven efforts. He has played a major role in these projects, helping clients develop practical programs, systems, and data products that maximize the benefits of their GIS investment. He has also served as the State of Michigan's representative to the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and been involved in the ESRI Northern Michigan Users Group. Laurie Spencer of Grand Traverse County, one of many that Jim has helped throughout the years, states "Jim Bennett has been instrumental in the success of the Grand Traverse County GIS system. I can't say enough about Jim and his staff and the help they have provided..." IMAGIN thanks Jim for his years of hard work and dedication to IMAGIN and to GIS in Michigan.

Sarah J. AcMoody of Remote Sensing and GIS Research and Outreach Services at Michigan State University was the second recipient of the IMAGIN Volunteer of the Year Award. This award is given to an IMAGIN member in recognition of their continuing commitment to the organization and their work that goes above and beyond what is expected. Sarah was recognized for her efforts on IMAGIN's Professional Recognition Committee. She has been chair/co-chair of this committee for the past five years and involved in the committee since 2000. Along with her committee members, Sarah dedicates numerous hours planning and orchestrating the Student Poster and Paper Competition, the Map Gallery, and the Awards Luncheon. IMAGIN thanks Sarah for her hard work and dedication over the years.

IMAGIN would like to thank the sponsors and exhibitors, the IMAGIN management staff, presenters, conference co-chair Kim Wraight, the other members of the Conference Committee, volunteers, and all of the attendees for making the 2007 IMAGIN Conference a tremendous success. See you at the 2008 IMAGIN Conference at the Dearborn Inn in Dearborn on May 4th-7th, 2008!

*Conference Co-chair Brian Buckley of Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc. can be reached at (248) 454-6836 or [bbuckley@hrc-engr.com](mailto:bbuckley@hrc-engr.com)*

*Professional Recognition Committee Co-chair Sarah J. AcMoody of MSU RS&GIS can be reached at (517) 432-7447 or at [acmoody@msu.edu](mailto:acmoody@msu.edu)*

*Professional Recognition Committee Member Scott Swan of InfoGeographics can be reached at (231) 995-8266 or at [sswan@infogeographics.com](mailto:sswan@infogeographics.com)*

## Map Gallery Awards

The 2007 IMAGIN Map Gallery Competition was a great success. Thanks to all who participated, especially our sponsor, North Arrow Technologies, Inc. Former IMAGIN Lifetime Achievement Award winner, John Middlestead, graciously volunteered as this year's guest judge. Thanks, John! The 2007 Map Gallery award winners are listed below. Congratulations everyone!

### Best Cartographic Design

1. Tony Foisy, City of Midland: Parking Available Near Dow Diamond
2. Aaron Bodbyl-Mast, Ottawa County: North Ottawa Dunes – Hillshade with Elevation
3. Ryan Dividock, Karla Richey, Julie Skene, and Kristen Wilfgang, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services: Oakland County Native Americans

### Best Analytical Presentation

1. Robert Peven, Monroe County Department of Environmental Health and the Department of Planning: The Vulnerability of Groundwater to Contamination in Monroe County, Michigan
2. Brian Cooper, InfoGeographics, Inc.: Analysis of Fruitland Township Parcel Activities 1966 – 2006
3. Ryan Dividock, Karla Richey, Julie Skene, and Kristen Wilfgang, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services: Oakland County Native Americans

### Best Data Integration

1. Ryan Dividock, Karla Richey, Julie Skene, and Kristen Wilfgang, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services: Oakland County Native Americans
2. Brian Cooper, InfoGeographics, Inc.: Analysis of Fruitland Township Parcel Activities 1966 – 2006
3. Roxanne Gustafson, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Huron-Manistee National Forest Service, Cadillac Area Land Conservancy: Wildlife Corridors in Wexford County

### Best Cooperative Presentation

1. Roxanne Gustafson, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Huron-Manistee National Forest Service, Cadillac Area Land Conservancy: Wildlife Corridors in Wexford County
2. Robert Peven, Monroe County Department of Environmental Health and the Department of Planning: The Vulnerability of Groundwater to Contamination in Monroe County, Michigan

# 2007 Conference Memories



Award winner Jim Bennett gets the Standing O



Eric Swanson, Brian Buckley, and Kim Wraight



Everett Root preaches to the masses



Hmm... Not good



Pete Apgar, Bill Hejka, and Tom Van Bruggen enjoying some food and drink (and the Map Gallery)



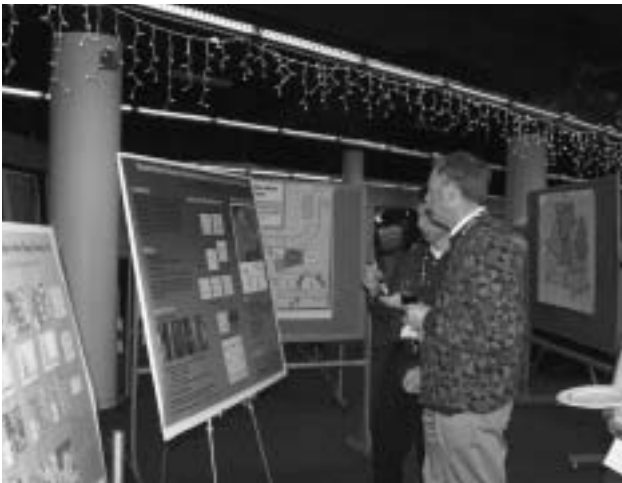
Sudha Maheshwari says "booth traffic is good"



An IMAGIN Gang



Bill Johnson's Plenary



Checking out the maps



Does 3 ribbons constitute a hat trick?



Hey, that guy's from Ohio...



Lori Schultz, Bill Rowe, and Scott Swan



2843 East Grand River Ave #230  
East Lansing MI 48823  
www.imagin.org

NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FARMINGTON HILLS MI  
PERMIT NO. 592

IMAGIN is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization comprised of individuals and organizations interested in the use and application of geographic information system (GIS) technology in Michigan.

Our members are committed to improving the quality and availability of digital data necessary to make good use of GIS.

We believe that cooperation and open communication are necessary to achieve these objectives.

Steve Aichele, IMAGIN President

Tara Holmes and Matt Malone,  
Co-chairs/Services and Benefits Committee

## imaginNEWS

ISSN 1545-4819

is published bi-monthly

You may contact the editor at:

IMAGIN

2843 East Grand River Ave #230

East Lansing MI 48823

(888) 298-1002

(888) 298-1003 fax

www.imagin.org

### IMAGIN MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Discounts to the annual IMAGIN Conference, workshops, training sessions and IMAGIN products
- Subscription to *imaginNEWS*
- Advertising discount rates
- For data sharing organizations, access to authoritative digital information

*imaginNEWS* publishes original, timely, and innovative articles and news items that advance knowledge regarding GIS, related technologies, and their use within Michigan. *imaginNEWS* welcomes submissions from IMAGIN members and others. Please send article submissions in Microsoft Word format to info@imagin.org

Contents©2007 IMAGIN. All rights reserved.

Opinions and positions expressed by columnists and contributors are not necessarily those of IMAGIN, its officers, employees or the editor and publisher of *imaginNEWS*.