

Library of Congress
National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program
Framing a National Preservation and Access Strategy for Geospatial Data
11/12/2009

Background

The National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program is a congressionally mandated effort that builds on the Library of Congress mission to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

The Library is working with a variety of participants, including federal, state, and local government agencies; archives and libraries; creators, disseminators and users of geospatial data; and other stakeholders to develop a national strategy for preserving and supporting enhanced access to geospatial data. This effort is aligned with existing mandates and programs in connection with geospatial information.

Issues of interest include:

- Identifying geospatial data types or categories that are most important to preserve
- Scoping preservation and access models
- Exploring options for expanding educational and community building activities

A stakeholders convening session in November 2009 will gather input and ideas for next steps.

Definition of Significant Digital Geospatial Information

1. “Significant” implies that the materials are of enduring value for cultural, historical, or scientific use. Designation of significance is typically assigned through appraisal or selection on the part of a stewardship organization.
2. “Digital” means principally born-digital. Although digitized copies made from analog originals may be considered, activities will not cover the process of making such copies.
3. “Geospatial Information” identifies, depicts or describes geographic locations, boundaries or characteristics of Earth's inhabitants or natural or human-constructed features. Geospatial data include geographic coordinates that identify a specific location on the Earth; and data that are linked to geographic locations or have a geospatial component.

Stakeholders Convening Session

The November stakeholders meeting will discuss a national geospatial preservation and access strategy. The goals for the meeting are:

1. Understand the broad sweep of stewardship organizations involved with geospatial information creation, preservation and access
2. Get input about the types of digital geospatial information that are priorities for preservation
3. Learn about current stewardship roles and responsibilities
4. Identify gaps in the geospatial information life cycle in terms of preservation and access
5. Obtain suggestions for next steps in supporting preservation of and access to geospatial data