

NSDI Future Directions Initiative: Towards A National Geospatial Strategy & Implementation Plan

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The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) is the technology, policies, criteria, standards and people necessary to promote geospatial data sharing throughout all levels of government, the private and non-profit sectors, and academia. It provides a base or structure of practices and relationships among data producers and users that facilitates data sharing and use. Much has been accomplished in recent years to further the implementation of the NSDI, but there is still much to be done to achieve the vision of current geographic data being readily available across the country.

The goal of the NSDI Future Directions Initiative is *to craft a national geospatial strategy and implementation plan to further the development of the NSDI*. Drawing on the collective insights of the geospatial community, three overarching action areas have emerged.

(1) Forging Partnerships with Purpose: Adopting a governance structure that includes representatives of all stakeholder groups guides the development of the NSDI.

The NSDI can only be maintained and enhanced through the collaborative efforts of many organizations. A well-coordinated, concerted effort inclusive of the private sector, academia and all levels of government led by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), is needed to leverage resources, minimize redundancies and solve problems. A governance structure that fosters collaboration and shared responsibilities among stakeholders is critical to ensure success of this effort.

Essential elements for achieving the objectives are a bottom-up approach and partnerships.

(2) Making Framework Real: Implementing nationally coordinated programs that include collection, documentation, access, and utilization of data for generating framework data themes.

Standardization of framework themes is critical to the achievement of interoperability among diverse geospatial data suppliers and users. The national acceptance and utilization of American National Standards for framework data themes is the first step toward interoperability. Expansion of the current framework layers to encompass more themes of national, regional, local or topical importance is an FGDC priority.

(3) Communicating the Message: Ensuring that the NSDI is recognized across the nation as the primary mechanism for assuring access to reliable geospatial data.

The geospatial community must be able to communicate the benefits and value of the NSDI beyond the current user and supplier communities. The development of the business case, a strategic communications plan and training programs that support NSDI implementation will contribute to reaching this goal.

For more information, please visit the website at: <http://www.fgdc.gov/FutureDirections/> or contact Milo Robinson at mrobinson@fgdc.gov, 703.648.5162