

April 2004

Welcome to the seventh edition of the **MassGIS GISette**, a bi-monthly newsletter emailed to our users and partner agencies to keep them informed of data updates, GIS events, and on-going technology developments. With this issue of the MassGIS GISette, we have been in publication for a year now and have almost 800 subscribers.

I have heard several pronunciations of the GISette's name; as the creator, I prefer to use a hard G like the word gazette, but with an "is" sound as opposed to an "az" sound.

This newsletter is sent out by email and will not replace more focused emails that many users currently receive. A page on our website has been created for the [GISette](#). There you will find back issues of the GISette and an [online subscription form](#).

Because we see the GISette as a useful medium for disseminating information related to MassGIS and data development, I would encourage readers to forward to me updates or announcements that they would like included in the GISette. We particularly want to encourage submission of announcements concerning data development projects. As the GISette only comes out every-other-month, we will soon start posting these announcements on the MassGIS web site from where they will be "archived" in the GISette.

Database News

Data Updates

- **State House and Senate District Layers Updated** - 4/29/2004
With the recent boundary changes approved by the state legislature, the [Massachusetts House Legislative Districts](#) layer has been updated and is available for distribution. Also, attribute edits were made for the Ninth Norfolk district. The [Massachusetts Senate Legislative Districts](#) layer was updated with attribute edits to the Norfolk, Bristol, and Middlesex district. See the datalayer descriptions for more details and links to free data download.
- **MBTA and Trains Layers Updated** - 4/7/2004
Central Transportation Planning Staff and MassGIS have edited the [MBTA Rapid Transit](#) and [Trains](#) layers. Much of the linework in both layers has been adjusted to the 1:5,000 ortho images, greatly improving the spatial accuracy of both. Some linework in the Trains layer is based on the 1:5,000 Road and Rail Centerlines layer. In addition, The Silver Line has been added to the MBTA layer and Commuter Rail station changes have been incorporated into the Trains layer. See the datalayer descriptions for more details.
- **DEP Wetlands (1:12,000) Data Updated** - 4/7/2004
Formerly the 1:5,000 Orthophoto Wetlands and Streams layers, the DEP Wetlands layers now

comprise seamless (no longer tiled by ortho quad) polygon and arc feature classes. Distribution is now by Watershed. Additionally, new items have been added to the 2 attribute tables, including PALIS and PWSID information, and codes for more generalized symbolization. The scale description in the layer name - 1:12,000 - represents that of the original stereo color-infrared photography used in the interpretation. For more information, please see the [Datalayer Description](#) and, for areas with completed data development, the [Status Map](#).

- **[Title 5 Layer Updated](#)** - 4/7/04
Many tiles were modified to reflect updates to the DEP Wetlands (1:12,000) layer. Distribution of the layer is now by the Watershed Index (previously the layer was tiled by USGS Quad panels).
- **Zoning data for Boston Available** - 3/15/2004
Municipal zoning district data for Boston is now available from MassGIS. [Download](#) and see [Status Map](#).
- **C21e Layer Updated** - 3/12/2004
DEP GIS Group has updated the [Tier Classified Chapter 21E Sites](#) datalayer. 119 sites were removed.
- **New Town Boundary Data Layer Update** – Release of the first version of this data set is planned for May. This new version of the city/town boundaries is based on survey coordinates recorded in state legislation. These coordinates are the official record of each city or town's boundary. The boundary for most communities will be complete in this initial release. Questions remain about portions of boundaries in some communities. As more information becomes available from secondary sources, the data will be updated. In addition, the configuration of the offshore boundary for coastal communities will remain incomplete pending some state legislation to reflect recent changes in federal law.

What's New on the Web Site:

- **[Municipal GIS and Parcel Status Maps](#) - 3/18/2004**
Status maps displaying GIS and digital parcel development at the municipal level across the Commonwealth have been updated. PDF versions of the maps are now available.

Maps for the Masses

MassGIS has created a new standard map product geared more toward the general public as opposed to the professional community. We are now producing color orthophoto maps with an extent of a town or an area surrounding a specified geographic point. In addition to the orthophoto base, other layers on the map include: streets with annotation, town boundaries with annotation, and geographic place names from the USGS. At a cost of \$25 (\$5 for additional copies of the same map), these would make a great gift for map enthusiasts or new residents. To order, please visit: <http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/ordercolororthomap.htm>

MassGIS Online Mapping Updates

Regarding the problem with online mapping in the first 2 weeks of March:
During the first 2 weeks of March most people could not get maps from our online mapping

applications. In fact, the requests for maps were received and maps were created but the maps could only leave our server extremely slowly due to a hardware problem with our Internet Service Provider. The connection between our building and another was not normal. Once the hardware was replaced the images were able to leave our building at the normal speed. This was very frustrating for MassGIS and everyone who wanted maps during this period and we are evaluating options to ensure that this doesn't happen again.

Open Space Corner

Hello again Open Space Users!

Upgrading of OpenSpace is in progress - I am fixing many typos and miscodings in the data as it gets moved into its new SDE format here at MassGIS. Our new edit tools and manual are in testing and are nearing release. With the completion of the QAQC tools, we will be bringing the data online. This will be a major milestone in the many years of MassGIS OpenSpace Mapping.

In another vein, I will be teaching MACC unit #7 (Open Space Plans) with Jennifer Soper (Division of Conservation Services) April 30th in Framingham. I will also be giving a brief talk at the Spring NEARC meeting in Amherst on using CASE tools for geodatabase modeling (used this on OpenSpace).

Open Space Attribute Focus: *Other Interests*

A legal interests in a parcel is currently modeled in OpenSpace using the three fields: OTHER_1, INT_1 and STATUS_1. Further interests are modeled using OTHER_2 and OTHER_3, as needed. The present schema is limited to 3 interests beyond owner and manager.

The OTHER and STATUS fields are in direct parallel with Owner and Manager (see previous issues of the GISette). The INT field indicates what interest OTHER holds on the parcel. These interests include Conservation Restrictions (CR), Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR) and many others (see OpenSpace metadata on MassGIS website).

Did you see something in our Open Space data that isn't quite right? Let me know so I can fix it! If you need help in submitting a revision and/or addition, I'll aid you any way I can. I have been striving to clean up the data one parcel at a time and the improvements are showing.

The pending Quinebaug Forest Legacy Area application contained a map made by Kristin Foord (EOEA) and myself that the US Forest Service liked so much, they are using it as a type example for those maps! Hopefully, the Quinebaug FLA application will be approved soon...

Keep those updates coming and enjoy the springtime!

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MassGIS Staff Presentations at NEGIS

Aleda Freeman will be presenting an overview of MassGIS online mapping, focusing on OLIVER and web services at the New England GIS Conference (NEGIS 2004 May 12 & 13, 2004 Holiday Inn, Boxborough, Massachusetts <http://www.negis.org>), on Thursday May 13th. The

session will be "Web Mapping: State Experience" (E2) with NH Granit and Maine Office of GIS presenting as well, from 2:30 to 4 pm. Get your laminated MassGIS Online Mapping bookmark!

Dan Marrier will discuss the fundamentals and principles of conducting Quality Assurance and Quality Checking procedures upon data. Frequently, MassGIS contracts with third parties to create or update data, Dan will use the examples of Land Use and Zoning to explain QA/QC procedures across a variety of platforms.

Paul Nutting will staff an information table replete with materials related to MassGIS.

MassGIS Staff Presentations at Spring NEARC

Philip John - Taking Elevation Data to New Heights: The Massachusetts 5-meter DEM (A Fair and Balanced Look at 3D Surface Modeling)

Scott Costello - Data Modeling – Using Visio and other tools to design a data layer in SDE.

Meetings, Conferences, and Training

May 4 [Spring NEARC](#), UMASS Amherst

May 12 & 13 [New England Geospatial Information Summit](#) (NEGIS)
Because of NEGIS, there will be NO MGIC Meeting in May

April-June MassGIS Staff will teach a series of training sessions for the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions; see <http://www.maccweb.org/documents/SpringReg.Form.pdf>

Any comments or suggestions about the GISette are welcomed paul.nutting@state.ma.us

MassGIS-The Commonwealth's Office of Geographic and Environmental Information is located within the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and is charged with the collection, enhancement, storage and dissemination of the Commonwealth's geographic data.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH OUR PHYSICAL LOCATION IS THE SAME, WE HAVE A NEW *MAILING* ADDRESS

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