

**December, 2004**

Welcome to the eleventh 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. This newsletter will not replace more focused E-mails 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](#) to receive the GISette via E-mail.

While our primary intent in publishing the GISette is to disseminate information related to MassGIS initiatives and data development in particular, we also see the GISette as a means of communicating public agency GIS news. So we encourage readers to send in updates or announcements concerning public agencies that they would like included in the GISette. We particularly want to encourage submission of announcements concerning data development projects. Announcements should be sent to Paul Nutting at [paul.nutting@state.ma.us](mailto:paul.nutting@state.ma.us).

### **[GIS Day at the State House](#)**

On November 17<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 2PM, MassGIS hosted its 6<sup>th</sup> annual GIS Day event in Great Hall of the [Massachusetts State House](#). The event drew hundreds of visitors, including many Legislators and State House staff. Over twenty GIS professionals, mainly from State government, and several high schools demonstrated their current GIS projects. During a noontime speaking program, MassGIS Director Christian Jacqz announced several upcoming initiatives, including the enhancement of a commercial geocoding dataset for use by all Massachusetts public agencies. To view photos and a complete list of the demonstrations visit the [GIS Day page](#) on our website.

### **[MassGIS Has Released a Minor Update to the Digital Parcel Standard](#)**

Version 1.5.1 is a minor release that should not disrupt existing work flows significantly. Adapting existing digital parcel data to the changes in this new version should take very little time. Changes made from Version 1.5 include moving the RES\_AREA field from being an optional attribute of parcel polygons to being one of the items extracted from the assessing database (if its available there). The optional parcel file attribute CI\_AREA has been dropped, as it was redundant with the assessing data field BDL\_AREA. Also, the discussion of the town boundary requirement has been updated to reflect the release of the new town boundary data layer. Finally, some typos and page reference errors were corrected. Version 1.5.1 can be viewed on-line or downloaded from <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/muniparc.htm>.

### **Support for ArcGIS 8.x Layer Files**

MassGIS is upgrading to ArcSDE version 9. With this change, the work required to maintain and produce layer files compatible with ArcGIS 8.3 will be prohibitive. Therefore, effective January 14th, MassGIS will end its support for and production of ArcGIS layer files

compatible with ArcGIS version 8.3 or earlier versions. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

### **A Picture's Worth...?**

Several popular geospatial websites are using the MassGIS 2001 color orthophotos to enhance information provided to their users.

USGS' The National Map <http://nationalmap.usgs.gov/>

NASA's Worldwind <http://learn.arc.nasa.gov/worldwind/>

Google's Keyhole <http://www.keyhole.com/>

If you come across any others, please let us know.

### **State Geographic Advisory Committee Update** - 12/20/2004

The list of members has been updated. Also, agendas for the 2004 meetings have been posted.

## **Database News**

### **Updates**

- **DEP Public Water Supply Layers** - 12/10/04  
The DEP GIS Group has updated the following layers:
  - [Public Water Supplies](#)
  - [Zone IIs, IWPA](#)
  - [Surface Water Protection Areas \(Zone A, B, C\)](#)
- **C21e Layer** - 12/10/2004  
DEP GIS Group has updated the [Tier Classified Chapter 21E Sites](#) datalayer. 81 sites were added, 117 sites were removed, and five sites underwent changes in Tier Classification STATUS.
- **Soils Updates coming soon**
  - Middlesex, Worcester South, Worcester Northeast, Worcester Northwest may go out for SSURGO certification as early as late December and not later than January. MassGIS we could receive the completed data for distribution as early as late January of February.
  - For Hampden and Hampshire Counties only QA remains; they are following closely behind the above counties and so MassGIS should have them for distribution by March or April.
  - Field mapping in Franklin and Plymouth is about 80% done.

Stay tuned to the MassGIS Web site for more details.

## **Online Mapping**

### **Back in View**

For various reasons, a couple of the single purpose online viewers were removed from the

MassGIS website, now two are back. Two viewers developed as part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project are back up:

- The [GAP Forest](#) viewer shows various forest communities.
- The Multi-Resolution Land Characterization- [MRLC Viewer](#) depicts several classes of land cover.

### **A Fix for Bookmarking MassGIS Viewers**

On the page <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/mapping.htm> generally the first half of the viewers listed are ESRI HTMLviewer. When you open these viewers and bookmark them in your browser, the bookmarks work fine in the Netscape and Firefox browsers. But in the Internet Explorer browser the bookmark needs to be edited in order to work. Essentially, take the "viewer.htm" off of the end of the bookmark.

Normally a bookmark is created by opening a Web site and then simply choosing the Add to Favorites option on your Web browser. Because the ArcIMS HTML Viewer involves opening a series of files, you cannot use the bookmark created from the HTML Viewer main page. Instead you need to make a minor edit to the saved bookmark before it can be used again.

#### *Procedure*

Follow the steps below to open an ArcIMS Web site, create a favorite, and then make a minor edit to the path of the favorite.

The instructions below describe Adding Favorites in Internet Explorer Web browsers. Follow similar instructions for your Web browser of choice.

- Open an ArcIMS HTML Viewer. When the viewer is completely loaded, the URL will end in viewer.htm.
- Use the Add to Favorites option of your Web browser to save the favorite.
- From your Favorites list, right-click on the newly created favorite and click Properties.
- Click the Web Document tab. In the URL field, remove the "viewer.htm" from the URL. Click OK.
- You can now use the favorite to open the ArcIMS HTML Viewer.

### [OLIVER: Open\(Source\) for Business](#)

Many enhancements for the MassGIS data distribution tool we call "OLIVER" have been developed recently. OLIVER is a program that provides on-line access to MassGIS's entire public data catalog. It allows you to search, view and download whatever you want. No more fumbling to load a 300 Megabyte statewide dataset when you're only interested in a 3-block area. Once you've defined your area of interest and identified your desired data layers, a zip file containing shapefiles, metadata, layer files and extras will be custom-produced for you.

OLIVER communicates with the MassGIS servers using "OpenGIS" standards. These standards specify how to make a map, get XML information about features, or geocode an address. As a part of our support of these web services, the source-code to OLIVER will

now be freely available. You can now download the nuts and bolts of OLIVER, in its entirety, and integrate some of its functionality into your application.

To top it off, OLIVER has been released under an LGPL license. This means that there are very few restrictions about where and how you use any components of OLIVER. For example, if you want to add a map in your proprietary application, you can have your contractor integrate a piece of OLIVER \*right into your application\*. There's no need to license any code, or make your own proprietary application open-source as well. This means that if you want to integrate MassGIS web services into your non-JAVA applications, you now have the information and code samples you need to do so. And if your applications *are* written in JAVA, you have the libraries you need to get it done fast.

### ***Policy on Usage of Web Services***

MassGIS Web Services were developed as a means to provide access to GIS data through public agency web sites and applications. Until the resources required have been identified and committed, we are unable to support access to these services from non-government entities. However, for vendors of geographic information systems and services who are currently or may in the future be working to develop web applications for Massachusetts government entities, including cities and towns, we will be happy to provide documentation and support. In general, we anticipate the evolution of access control based on server, application-embedded or user authentication - so unsupported access, while it might currently function based on the OGC Web Mapping or other service specifications, may not function in the future.

### **Color Orthophoto Viewer Now has Addressing Feature**

The single purpose [color orthophoto viewer](#) now has an address search feature that uses GDT roads. Click on the find address tool, type in an address, choose the best match and then the screen will re-center and add a point with an address label at your address.

### **Open Space Corner**

Greetings Open Space Users!

The new OpenSpace Data Model data is currently being updated internally now that the methodology has been streamlined. EOEA agencies and I are doing edits. I am now integrating updates from various Regional Planning Agencies, Conservation Restrictions filed through DCS, various EOEA project data, direct municipal updates and many other diverse sources. These data are now on our EOEA internal servers. We are very close to having the data available online, via OLIVER or a direct download. I need to revise how the dataviewer works with the data, how the data gets distributed and how our mapping routines address the data (as the new *GeoDatabase* format is quite different from the old *Coverage* format).

Of news to municipal users is the posting of a new OpenSpace online data viewer targeted at towns drafting Commonwealth Capital applications. It may be found at <http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/MassGISOpenspace>. Of note is the depiction of OpenSpace by protection as it is only permanently protected Open Space that is counted in the application. Any towns that find a discrepancy with our data are asked to contact me with revisions. This may include town land listed under the wrong department, missing land, bad geometries or anything else that may be amiss with our data. Please note that this is currently using the old Open Space dataset – once the new dataset is available on our

external servers, the change will be transparent. When a revision is received, I will forward the revised Open Space scoring to the Commonwealth Capital Application review committee.

### Open Space Attribute Focus: **Deed Information**

The fields in Open Space that directly refer to recorded deed information are rather straightforward: OS\_DEED\_BOOK, OS\_DEED\_PAGE, DATA\_RECORDED and DEED\_ACRES. The deed, page and date information is for the most recent recording of the parcel in question. For example, the recent conservation restriction that was filed on a parcel is recorded, not information from when the fee interest was bought 60 years ago. Any recent recording will refer back previous recordings concerning that parcel (I ask real estate professionals to forgive my ignorance of the proper terminology). The acreage field is for the acres protected. Usually, this refers to a single parcel or sub-lot that is protected, but sometimes there is only one acreage recorded that spans several parcels +/- sub-lots. This is why the DEED\_ACRES is separate from ASSESS\_ACRES.

If you have seen parcels in OpenSpace that have no or incorrect site names, please notify me of the correct information (please include the unique OS\_ID or TOWN\_ID, POLY\_ID).

Keep those updates coming and enjoy the New Year!

Scott Costello, MassGIS Open Space Coordinator, [scott.costello@state.ma.us](mailto:scott.costello@state.ma.us), 617-626-1076.

## **Kudos, Staff, and Meetings**

### **Kudos**

MassGIS would like to congratulate [Baystate's Health Geographics Program](#) on its recent receipt of ESRI's "Vision" Award. The award cited Baystate Medical's "... innovative and important use of Geographic Information System technology in hospital and other health care settings."

### **GIS Technician Position Filled**

MassGIS is pleased to announce that it has hired Hugh Mattison to fill the recently vacated GIS Technician position. Hugh has previously served as an intern at MassGIS as well as having been a volunteer here. At MassGIS, Hugh will fill map and data orders and work on data development and QA projects.

### **Meeting**

[Massachusetts Geographic Information Council MGIC](#) January 13, 2005, 10:00-Noon  
[Worcester State College](#), 486 Chandler Street, Worcester MA

Master Address Files: Purpose, Practice, and Pitfalls with speakers Jeff Amero, City of Cambridge and Shane White, City of Worcester

If you would like to join our MGIC announcement email list, please complete the form at [http://www.mass.gov/mgis/mgic\\_list.htm](http://www.mass.gov/mgis/mgic_list.htm)

Any comments or suggestions about the GISette are welcomed [paul.nutting@state.ma.us](mailto: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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