

DRAFT Minutes of a Meeting of the
Topographic Mapping External Advisory Committee
Held December 7th, 2004 in Calgary

Attendees:

Mike Benz, Weldwood
Bob Parkinson, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Dianne Haley, Alberta Energy and Utilities Board
Eric Solomonson, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation
George Idema, ATCO Electric
Lawrence Fabbro, EnCana Corporation
Lori, Husak, Alberta Energy
Nola Lewis, Talisman Energy
Randy Williamson, County of Strathcona (via phone)
Stephen Barnett, Challenger Geomatics
Mike Michaud, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Phil Mackenzie, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Bill Martin, AltaLIS
Jim Chorel, AltaLIS
Marco deHoogh, AltaLIS
Wayne Newby, AltaLIS
Wolfgang Janke, SDW

1. Introductions

Eleven individuals have agreed to be members of the topo external advisory group (EAG). Craig McBride of McElhanney Land Surveys and Bob Held of Weldwood were the only EAG members that were unable to attend this initial meeting. Mike Benz capably filled in for Bob Held.

Two representatives from SRD, four from AltaLIS and one from Spatial Data Warehouse (SDW) also participated in the meeting to gather input from the EAG.

2. Provincial Mapping Roles and Responsibilities

The roles of the Government of Alberta (GOA), SDW, AltaLIS and the EAG were discussed. The main role of the EAG is to be a stakeholder forum to provide feedback and advice relative to the provincial topographic datasets. The EAG recommendations will be valuable input for the formulation of topo update plans.

3. Topo Stakeholder Forums

Topo stakeholder forums were held in Edmonton and Calgary in the fall. A summary of the proceeding is not yet available.

SDW/AltaLIS plan to put on a workshop in conjunction with next year's GeoAlberta conference. The workshop would invite stakeholders to discuss issues and concerns regarding any of SDW's licensed mapping products.

4. Base Features Dataset

Phil Mackenzie outlined some of the data within the GIS ready Base Features dataset, which has been available through AltaLIS since May 2004. Some of the data themes contained in Base Features are: hydrography, access, DEM, contour data, ATS data, geo-admin boundaries and a spatial index data set.

The GOA is currently updating some of its access data in specific geographic areas in northern Alberta through the use of imagery. SDW/AltaLIS are required to give the GOA their recommendations for the 2005 topo update program by Feb. 15, 2005.

5. ATS

The GOA has decided to adopt a May 31, 2004 version of the ATS as the standard for industry filings to government. The release of this May 31, 2004 version is imminent and is expected to be the standard for several years. Base Features will be updated to incorporate the May 31, 2004 version of ATS. There are still some unresolved issues related to how to maintain updates to the new ATS version due to new plan integrations.

The ATS data will be available in the following formats: MATS (3 points per section) coordinate file, MATSCOR (9 points per section) coordinate file or in a SHP file format for both the MATS and MATSCOR. Decisions still need to be made in regards to the number of polygons that will be created to represent road allowance for each section.

AltaLIS has been designing a movement tracker that will give information regarding any movement in the ATS cadastral stations.

6. Geo-Admin Boundaries

Base Features contains approximately 100 different types of geo-administrative areas. The GOA regularly updates seventy of these geo-admin boundaries. Only 26 of the geo-admin boundaries are currently available in the version of Base Features data available through AltaLIS.

Phil Mackenzie will distribute a list of the 100 types of geo-admin areas to members of the topo EAG. The EAG members will then let Phil know which areas they would be interested in.

7. Topo Data Used By EAG Members

The EAG members each gave a brief overview of the topo data they currently use. Limitations in the provincial topo data cause many of the users to create and update some of their own data. Some of the limitations identified were:

- Lack of classification of water data

- DEM contains numerous errors and resolution is too low
- Freehold mineral titles not mapped

An overriding theme was the lack of currency of the data.

8. Dissatisfactions With Provincial Topo Data

EAG members discussed their current dissatisfactions with the provincial topo data and identified the following areas where they would like to see improvements to the data:

- Hydrography – Data needs to be updated in order to be of value to users.
- Public Land Dispositions – As built disposition mapping would be useful.
- Access – Currency of data is an issue
- DEM – Needs to be updated. Higher resolution and accuracy needed.
- Metadata – More metadata required
- Geo-Admin Boundaries – Additional geo-admin boundaries are required.
- Watershed – Watershed delineation is becoming increasingly important to users.
- Data Formats – Some users would like to see vendor independent data formats
- Federal Lands – Users would like to have good data for the entire province. The lack of good data for national parks and Indian reserves hampers corporations who operate in these jurisdictions
- Land Cover Data– Would be beneficial for some users.

Once again currency of data was a predominant issue that applied to most areas.

9. Priorities

There was no clear consensus among the EAG members in regards to which type of data should be given the highest priority for future updates. When asked to select just one of the areas listed above, each of the first three areas received two votes and the next three received one vote each.

A lack of time precluded any detailed discussion on which geographic areas should be given the highest priority for future updates.

With such a diversity of opinion on what areas should be given the highest priority, the challenge will be to come up with an appropriate provincial topo update plan that produces the most value for both the GOA and users. The GOA and SDW/AltaLIS are considering preparing some potential update scenarios that can be reviewed with the EAG.

10. Topo External Advisory Group

The topo EAG currently has representation from the following stakeholder communities:

- Forestry
- Federal Agencies
- Geomatics industry
- Municipalities

- Oil & gas
- Surveyors
- Utilities
- GOA departments
 - AEUB
 - Alberta Energy
 - Alberta Transportation

A suggestion was made to consider adding someone from the educational community, such as SAIT, NAIT or one of the universities.

Having 3 to 4 EAG meetings a year was considered reasonable at this stage.

11. Next Meeting

The next topo EAG meeting will probably be scheduled for February or March of next year. The GOA and SDW/AltaLIS will attempt to have some update possibilities prepared and available for discussion at the meeting.

Thanks to all committee members who participated in the meeting!