

Report on the 2007 UCGIS Summer Assembly
Lake Lodge, Yellowstone Park, Wyoming
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Formed in 1996, the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS: <http://www.ucgis.org>) has successfully shaped the direction of research, teaching, policy, and legislation in the geographic information sciences. The membership includes over 70 academic institutional voting members, three professional societies, 5 corporate, one governmental and two international affiliates. The UCGIS mission is to serve as a unified voice for the geographic information science community, to foster multidisciplinary research and education in GIScience, and to promote informed and responsible use of geographic information and analysis for the benefit of society.

The most recent accomplishments of UCGIS include:

- The publication of the *GIS&T Body of Knowledge*, a reference work that presents the skills and knowledge that necessary for professionals in the GIScience and Technology fields.
- Publication of *A Research Agenda for Geographic Information Science* (2004) by CRC Press that identifies 14 research priorities for GIScience.
- Joining in an amicus brief opposing the claims of MAPPs (Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors) *et al.*, v. *United States of America* that sought to “limit competition for federal mapping contracts of nearly every type, including GIS services, to firms of licensed architects, engineers and surveyors.” The June 19, 2007 U. S. District Court decision against MAPPs, leaves the field open for non-licensed GIS professionals and others to compete for federal contracts.

Besides the broad goals of the UCGIS mission for GIScience, UCGIS membership provides many benefits to academic member institutions including:

- funding for projects of workshops
- exchange of ideas with other UCGIS member institutions and organizations
- exposure to cutting edge research through presentations by researchers and educators from the related field of GIScience
- discussions with funding agencies (NSF, NIH, USGS, NSA, etc.)
- opportunities for student travel, presentations and awards

UCGIS meetings:

UCGIS sponsors two meetings a year: A winter meeting held in February in Washington, DC that focuses on federal funding opportunities, GIScience policy and legislation; and a summer assembly held throughout the United States that highlights GIScience research and education. The 2007 Summer UCGIS Assembly was held at Lake Lodge, Yellowstone Park, Wyoming. What follows is a brief synopsis of this summer’s retreat (Most of these presentations will be available soon on the UCGIS web site <http://www.ucgis.org>).

- A research plenary summarizing major global change concepts and issues, with valuable connections made to GIScience. These presentations are wonderful resources for sharing the "meat" of global change science with colleagues and students. The plenary included presentations from Klaus Wolter (NOAA), Marc Levy (Center for International Earth Science Information Network), and Brent Yarnal (Center for Integrated Regional Assessment).
- A workshop on “What’s next for UCGIS Research” that identified research challenges facing GIScientists today. Potential workshop/symposia topics including Extending Geographic Information: Getting Applied
GIScience Applied, Geographic Contextual Modeling of Human-Environment Relationships, Cyberinfrastructure and GIScience, GIScience and Health, and GIScience, Hazards and Vulnerability.
- Education plenary panels on:
 - Geospatial Literacy Education at community colleges, in University Studies programs (freshman level and math competency), the graduate level, and among social science educators
 - Integrating GIScience teaching and research with real life course examples presented from UCGIS delegates.
- Student paper presentations. All six of the student participants received travel support for attending the meeting and two of the six presenters received a \$200 award and offers of aid with publication of their research in GIScience journals.

The UCGIS also presented its 2007 Research Award to Dr. J. Ronald Eastman of Clark University (for the innovative and well-recognized research contributions embodied within the IDRISI GIS software), and the 2007 Educator of the Year Award to Dr. Duane Marble of Ohio State University (for his outstanding contribution to geographic education, and as one of the founding fathers of geographic information systems education).