GISCorps Newsletter

GIS Professionals Volunteering for a Better World

URISA

GISCorps Partner Agencies

EWB

GSDI

MMEX

UNDP

UNHCR

UNJLC

UNOSAT

iMMAP

Volunteers for Prosperity

Relief Agency Links

Relief Web
global hub for time-critical humanitarian information on Complex Emergencies and Natural Disasters

Data/Information Links

Earthwatch Institute
Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned about the Earth's future.

Service at Sea
Service at Sea is a ship-based technology assistance program

A Message from the Core Committee

Belated Happy New Year everyone! We hope you all had a wonderful Holiday season and are having a great start to 2011. GISCorps has been very busy over the last couple of months engaging in some new partnerships as well as expanding volunteer opportunities. Some highlights include:

- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with disaster response NGO: MapAction that details opportunities for GISCorps volunteers to work on behalf of MapAction projects and provide joint outreach related to humanitarian efforts on behalf of both organizations;
- Assisting a Micro loan Organization in Haiti;
- Mapping Micro-watersheds in Malawi;
- Starting a GIS Needs Assessment for the Niassa National Reserve in Mozambique
- Continued support for the Red Cross in Brisbane, Australia

In addition to these exciting projects, GISCorps is actively recruiting six volunteers for an upcoming GIS Data Mining project (in partnership with MapAction) to collate spatial data concerning administrative districts, transport networks, and population data for the Caribbean Basin countries of Belize, Bermuda, and Saint Lucia. Also, looking for an ArcGIS Server Programmer for a project in New Orleans (2nd volunteer); and a second volunteer specialist for a metadata project in Nigeria.

We appreciate the dedication of our volunteers who are ready at a moments notice to support our efforts to provide GIS support services in times of need to those who may not be able to afford these services otherwise. Thank you for your efforts, they do not go unnoticed!

Please stay tuned on our website of new information on missions and happenings with the GISCorps in 2011!

GISCorps Core Committee,
Allen Ibaugh, Heather Milton, Mark Salling, Shoreh Elhami, Dianne Haley, Ray DeLeon, Cindy Braddock

P.S. Please email info@giscorps.org if you want to be removed from this list.

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Deployment and Partnership News

Missions in Progress:

- **Recruiting Six GIS Data Miners in Partnership with [MapAction](#) - Caribbean:** In January 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) was signed between GISCorps and MapAction. The MOU highlighted the mutual interest of the two organizations in providing GIS Assistance to communities affected by disasters throughout the world. To start the collaboration, both teams agreed on conducting a pilot project on three Caribbean countries. A **Job Description** was developed and it was determined that six volunteers would be needed for the pilot project. The recruitment team has already begun the search process.

- **Recruiting a Second Volunteer for [NHS/UNO-PLUS](#) Mission - New Orleans:** GISCorps provided a volunteer to a project in New Orleans in 2010. The project was commissioned by the University of New Orleans – Department of Planning & Urban Studies (UNO-PLUS) and resulted in the deployment of Rafael Ferraro, a GIS Programmer with Science Application International Corporation (**SAIC**) in Virginia. He developed a website called WhoData.org which was launched in early 2011. UNO-PLUS recently asked for a second volunteer and recruitment in progress. A **Job Description** is developed for the second phase. To learn about the first phase, click **here**.

- **Second Recruitment for [GRDC](#) - Nigeria:** The Geographical Resources for Development Centre (GRDC), a non profit organization in Nigeria, has requested another volunteer to assist them with several new tasks related to the metadata clearinghouse which was developed by Alison Fischer, a GISCorps volunteer from British Columbia. A detailed **Job Description** is developed for the new volunteer. To learn about the first phase, click **here**.

- **Assisting a Micro loan Organization - Haiti: [Fonkoze](#)**, a US based non profit organization, requested the assistance of a GISCorps volunteer in implementing a complete GPS data collection and web mapping of all of their "credit centers"; the 2000 locations that their clients meet at to repay loans, receive health and education services. Fonkoze is the largest micro-finance institution in Haiti offering a full range of financial services to the rural-based poor in Haiti. Following a search, Joe Dickinson, a GISCorps volunteer from Seattle, WA was recruited for this project and is currently working with Fonkoze representatives. Read more **here**.

- **Conducting GIS Needs Assessment and Training - Mozambique:** The Niassa National Reserve, a non profit organization located in northern Mozambique requested a GISCorps volunteer to assist them in two capacities: 1) conducting a GIS Needs Assessment of their existing GIS (remotely), and 2) training their local staff on the use of ArcGIS software for 3 weeks. Established in 1954, Niassa is one of the oldest Reserves in

Mozambique and holds the greatest abundance and variety of wildlife in the country. The recruitment resulted in selecting Marci Meixler, a visiting professor at Rutgers University and two of her students: Carly Aulicky and Mike Tanis. The team is already in contact with Madyo Couto, the Reserve's representative. The remote work will begin on the second week of January and a tentative date for the on-site training (conducted by Marci Meixler) is set for early March.

- **GISCorps Watershed Specialist recruited for a project - Malawi:** Christiana Pollack, a GIS specialist with Princeton Hydro in New Jersey was recruited for a project in Malawi. The project is commissioned by **WALA**, a five year livelihoods program beginning in 2009 to improve food security for chronically food insecure households in Malawi, Africa. The WALA program was looking for a volunteer to assist them in using GIS applications to map seven (7) micro-watersheds in sufficient detail to allow for creation of a GIS database. The first phase of the project, running a pilot project on one of the watersheds, has already begun.

- **Three GISCorps volunteer are deployed to the Red Cross project - Brisbane, Australia:** The Australian Red Cross – Emergency Services (QLD), based in Brisbane has requested the assistance of GIS volunteers with experience in disaster response. The aim of the project is to have mapping tools that would improve the ability of the Red Cross team to document resource capacity and market this capacity to partner agencies. The recruitment resulted in selection of two volunteers in Brisbane (and vicinity) and one volunteer in the US. The volunteers are: Ori Gudes and Daniel Coogan from Australia and Scott Madry from North Carolina. Read more **here**.

- **GISCorps volunteer assists in geolocating child-mother clinics - Chiapas, Mexico:** Juan Del Toro, a GIS professional with Instituto de Información Territorial del Estado de Jalisco, has been selected for a project in Chiapas, Mexico. The project was brought to us by **Maternova**, a US based organization who is implementing a web-based portal focused on empowering frontline health workers and saving lives around the time of childbirth. Juan is assisting Maternova in geo locating 43 hospitals and clinics in the region. Read more **here**.

- **Mission with Ministry of Tourism – Mozambique:** The Ministry of Tourism requested the assistance of a remote sensing specialist. They had access to several Quick Bird imageries of Chimanimani National Reserve from 2005 and 2008 and were interested in having the volunteer conduct a change detection to identify changes in land use pattern. This is expected to help the reserve management team to locate the areas where more attention is required to control illegal activities currently occurring in the Reserve (e.g. gold panning). Kerry Brooks, a professor at Washington State University has been recruited for this mission. He has received the imagery, loaded it into ArcGIS, and completed a preliminary processing and assessment. The project contact in Mozambique also sent the boundary of the Reserve to further define the geographic boundary. Kerry has also added some other contextual data such as the 90m SRTM terrain data and some regional imagery (EarthSat NaturalVue Global Landsat 150-meter resolution natural color image -

distributed by ESRI). Since the 2008 imagery has not registered correctly with the 2005 imagery, recently, Kerry applied for Digital Globe's "8 Band Challenge" grant in hopes of receiving their 8 Band WorldView 2 imagery for this area. He has applied for and received approval for the data and is now waiting for data to be collected. Since the imagery hasn't been received yet, Kerry decided to download the Thamatic Mapper (TM) imagery for the area and is now conducting analysis on the new dataset. Stay tuned for further update on the results.

- **Mission with iMMAP/WFP - North Korea:** After evaluation of the first round of this project, the management team is gearing up for a third round of recruitment. The request for volunteers came from the **World Food Program** (WFP) and Information Management and Mining Action Program (**iMMAP**). Volunteers are charged with the task of digitizing 400 map sheets and will create several data layers such as: settlement points, transportation (roads, foot path, and railroads), rivers and lakes. To read a recent update of this project, click **here.**

- **Mission with South Luangwa Conservation Society - Zambia:** GISCorps volunteer, Lisa Matthies, a GIS and Geography Instructor at Erie Community College in Williamsville, NY has been supporting SLCS' GIS needs since spring of 2009. Her ongoing support includes analysis of SLCS' historic and current data as well as providing custom maps on a regular basis. Read more and see the latest maps generated by Lisa from **here**.

- **Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) Small Grants Program's 2010-2011 Projects:** The 2010/2011 application deadline was October 31, 2010. As a result, approximately 40 applications are under review and it is expected that between 14 and 18 awards will be given to organizations in emerging nations to help with developing SDI's and to encourage collaboration and additional funding. Several applicants will be invited to apply for GISCorps volunteers. As in the past couple of years, the 2010/2011 efforts are spearheaded by Mark Salling, a GISCorps Core Committee member. Read about previous projects **here**.

Read more about completed projects **here**.
Read more about projects in progress in **here**.

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URISA Announcements
Upcoming Conferences

15th Annual GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference
February 28–March 3, 2011 – Memphis, TN
Register today!

URISA Leadership Academy
June 13–17, 2011 – St Louis, MO
New Dates!

3rd GIS in Public Health Conference

June 27–30, 2011 – Atlanta, GA

Abstract submissions due January 24, 2011

URISA/NENA Addressing Conference

August 15–18, 2011 – New Orleans, LA

Abstract Submissions due April 4, 2011

GIS in Public Transportation Conference

September 12–14, 2011 – St Petersburg, FL

Abstract Submissions due February 11, 2011

GIS-Pro 2011: URISA's 49th Annual Conference for GIS Professionals

November 1–4, 2011 – Indianapolis, IN

Abstract submissions due March 14, 2011

URISA Caribbean GIS Conference Highlights

What's New

GISCI Invites Comment on Proposed Examination Requirement

Comment Period Now Open

Featured Member Benefit – *URISA Journal*

URISA Journal Special Issue: Call for Papers

Letter of Intention and One Page Abstracts Due February 15, 2011

2011 Student Competition Opens

Due June 6

URISA Journal Names New Editor-in-Chief

Apply for a 2011 Exemplary Systems in Government (ESIG) Award

Due June 6

Final Draft Submission of the United States Thoroughfare, Landmark, and Postal Address Data Standard

Now Available – Managing GIS Column in ArcNews by Greg Babinski:

URISA Proposes a Local Government GIS Capability Maturity Model

URISA Unveils New Sponsorship Packages for the Private Sector

Call for New URISA Workshop Proposals

URISA Journal – Volume 22, Number 2 (Education Issue) Posted

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Shop for GISCorps Stuff!!

Do you find yourself in need of a new T-shirt, coffee mug, ball cap or tote bag? Do you want to advertise GISCorps and your association with the organization? Well, you are in luck! You can now find various GISCorps items at our online shop at: http://www.cafepress.com/giscorps

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Featured Project:
Mission with the Geographic Resources for Development Center (GRDC) - Nigeria

Geographical Resources for Development Centre (GRDC) metadata clearing house node is now open to the public. The clearing house can be accessed **directly** or by navigating through the **GRDC website**. The clearing house is open to public use by individuals and organisations who want to publish their metadata on Nigerian datasets. It is also a service that is advantageous to individuals, researchers and organisations of any size in publicising themselves as well as their datasets. It will also make the public aware of available datasets, contact information, services and capabilities of the clearing house users and avoid duplication of projects.

Figure 1 shows the homepage of the GRDC GeoNetwork powered clearinghouse.

This service is offered without a charge to the public. Individuals and organisations can apply for an account by filling out the form available from the GRDC clearing house site. Training and support on metadata issues is also available for individuals or organisations. If interested please indicate this when applying for an account. The metadata clearing house project is the product of collaboration between GRDC and Geography Department of University of Lagos, Nigeria. It is proudly supported by the GISCorps through the GSDI small grant award for 2010 and Geocat. If have any comments, suggestions or you will like more information about the project or how to get involved please send an email to Anthonia Ijeoma Onyeahialam-Okoro, the founder of GRDC at: **info@grdccentre.org**.
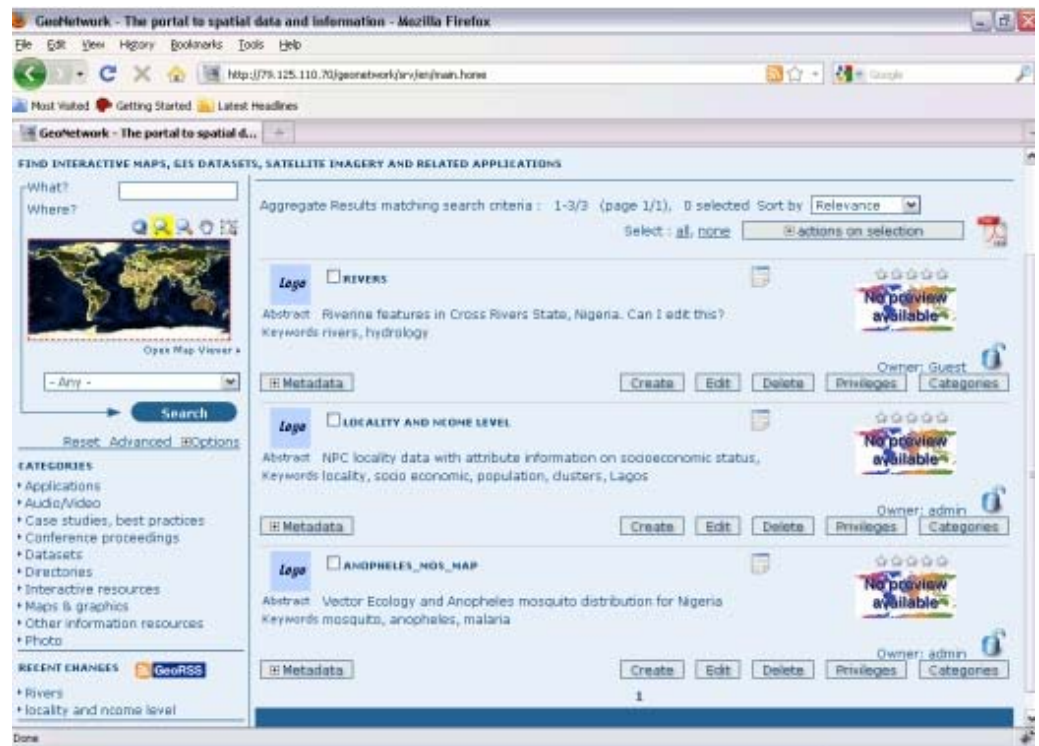

Figure 2 shows the results of a search for all metadata, owned by the administrator, in the clearinghouse.

Project Background

The Geographical Resources for Development Centre (GRDC), a non profit organization in Nigeria, requested a volunteer to assist in setting up a metadata clearinghouse. This clearinghouse will house metadata related to projects and research occurring within Nigeria and, ultimately, other regions in Africa.

The mission of GRDC is to promote the effective use of mapping technologies in development related programs. They seek to support all organizations, in the effective use of mapping technologies in development related programs. Established officially in 2006, it works with local and international partners in capacity building efforts, coordination of data gathering, provides a spatial database of development required information

(demographic & vulnerability indicators) in the mapping formats used to identify where poor people are and advocate for their needs. GRDC's capacities support a range of development innovators in helping them plan and target assistance in communities where it is needed most. Their idea is that knowing where people are and what they need is the first step towards achieving the common search for solutions to the problems of vulnerable people.
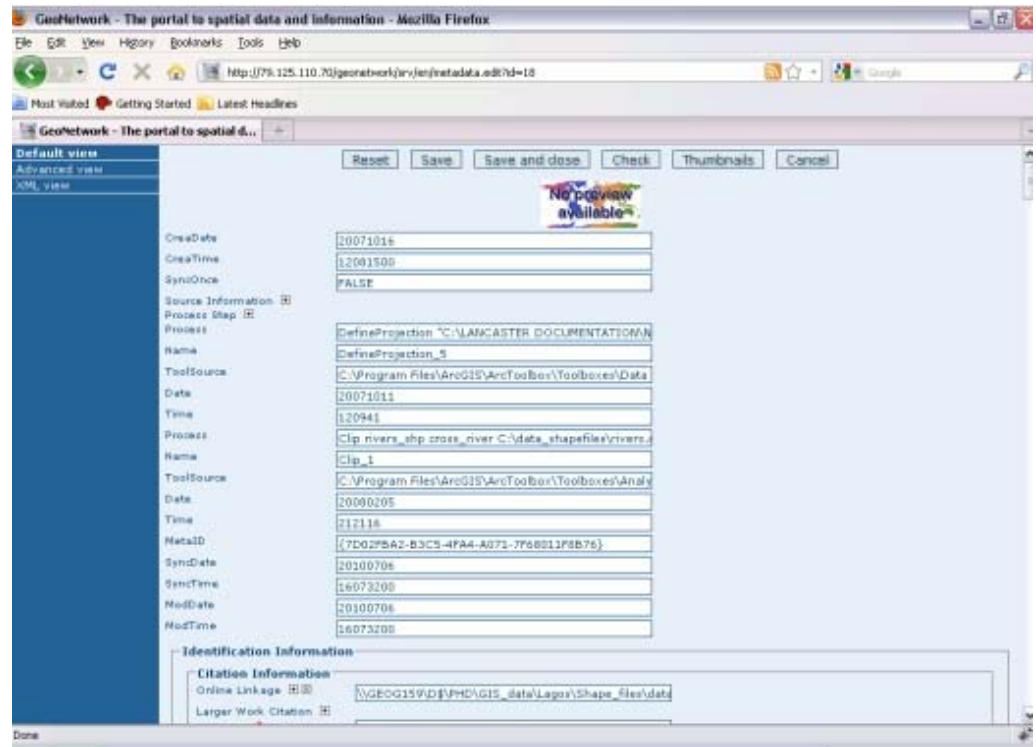

Figure 3 shows a metadata record displayed as the owner a particular data set would see it when editing a record.

It should be noted that this project was a result of a partnership between GISCorps and the **Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association** (GSDI). The GRDC project supports the goal of GSDI "...to promote international cooperation and collaboration in support of local, national and international spatial data infrastructure developments that will allow nations to better address social, economic, and environmental issues of pressing importance."

Alison Fischer, a GISCorps volunteer from British Columbia was recruited for this mission in January 2010. She recently completed and launched the clearing house website to the public. She enlisted the aid of a service provider, GeoCat, to host and maintain the clearinghouse and developed training materials to support the GRDC staff in the operation of the clearing house.

The GRDC clearing house allows the publication or search of metadata. It also reveals metadata quality rating that advises the public on what to expect from each dataset if requested. By publishing metadata, users can contact the data owners via contact information provided to make a data request. The next phase of the project is aimed at sensitising and creating awareness to the public on the existence and use of the GRDC metadata clearinghouse. Other tasks are additional customisations to validate

Nigerian datasets and accommodate research data. As it is an ongoing project, updates will be made periodically. To see a detailed description about the new volunteer's qualifications, click **here**.

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