



# GISCorps Newsletter

*GIS Professionals Volunteering for a Better World*

November 2010

## In This Issue

- o A Message from the Core Committee
- o Deployment and Partnership News
- o URISA Announcements
- o 48<sup>th</sup> URISA Annual Conference
- o Introductory Membership
- o Shop for GISCorps Stuff!
- o Featured Project

## URISA

## GISCorps Partner Agencies

[EWB](#)

[GSDI](#)

[MMEX](#)

[UNDP](#)

[UNHCR](#)

[UNJLC](#)

[UNOSAT](#)

[iMMAP](#)

[World Food Program](#)

## 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.*

## A Message from the Core Committee

A great time was had by all at the URISA International Conference, held the week of September 27th this year! There were plenty of Workshop and Session opportunities to learn about the latest and greatest happenings in GIS Technology; as well as some after hour events such as IGNITE that limits presenters to 20 slides in 5 minute presentations, truly igniting ideas and crowd interest. GISCorps provided an update of current on-going projects and highlighted that over 60 missions have now been undertaken by GISCorps with nearly 200 volunteers deployed!

We also welcomed new members to the Core Committee at the conference! We would like to extend a giant hug and welcome to Cindy Braddock, who has recently joined the Committee. Cindy is a recent member of the Board of Directors of URISA and has helped tremendously on other URISA Committees such as the Finance Committee. We would also like to note that Allen Ibaugh will Chair the Committee, with Heather Milton serving as the Vice-Chair. Continuing members include Co-Founder – Shoreh Elhami (the inspiration that keeps us all going), Dianne Haley (the organization we all need!), Mark Salling (the vision and perspective we might otherwise miss), and Ray DeLeon (the outreach we must have)!

We would also like to report that since August we have deployed twelve additional volunteers to three projects in Mexico, Australia, and North Korea and are currently in conversation with three other organizations for projects in Panama, Kenya, and Malawi. Check out our website for updates on these projects.

Thank you for your continued support of GISCorps and please stay tuned on our website of new information on missions and happenings with the GISCorps!

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

P.S. Please email [info@giscorps.org](mailto:info@giscorps.org) if you want to be removed from this list.

[\(back to top\)](#)

### Service at Sea

*Service at Sea is a ship-based technology assistance program that will begin a circumnavigation of the earth in August, 2007, with a goal to assist conservation organizations who are using GIS technology to meet goals of their communities.*

### Society for Conservation GIS

*A non-profit organization supporting individuals using GIS and science for the conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage*

### GISCorps Core Committee

Allen Ibaugh, Chair  
Heather Milton, Vice chair  
Dianne Haley  
Mark Salling  
Ray DeLeon  
Cindy Braddock  
Shoreh Elhami, Co-founder

### Contact Us

<http://www.giscorps.org>

Email: [info@giscorps.org](mailto:info@giscorps.org)

---

## Deployment and Partnership News

### Missions in Progress:

- **Mission with Australian Red Cross (QLD) – 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. They are now in direct contact with the Red Cross team and last week had the opportunity to meet and discuss opportunities for enhancing the operations of the Australian Red Cross Emergency Services in QLD. This initial planning meeting identified priorities for the capacity mapping team over the next 4-8 weeks leading into a storm season that is forecasted to be more intense than usual. The objectives of the project are currently focused around gathering relevant situational information for incident management teams, capturing data in the field and transferring it into thematic maps and mapping the locations of affected persons registered during emergencies.
- **Mission with Maternova – 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 University of New Orleans & Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) – New Orleans:** In October 2009, Dr. Michelle Thompson, an Assistant Professor at the University of New Orleans – Department of Planning & Urban Studies (UNO-PLUS) contacted GISCorps and sought the assistance of an ArcGIS Server Programmer to develop a community-university pilot project to develop a community data information system using internet mapping services. Following a thorough search Rafael Ferraro, a GIS Programmer with Science Application International Corporation ([SAIC](#)) in Virginia was selected for this project. The team recently submitted an update for their project. To read the update, click [here](#).
- **Mission with Geographical Resources for Development Centre (GRDC) – Nigeria:** The Geographical Resources for Development Centre (GRDC), a non profit organization in Nigeria, requested one volunteer to assist in setting up a metadata clearinghouse. The project is a result of a partnership between GISCorps and the [Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association](#) (GSDI). Alison Fischer of British Columbia was

recruited for this mission in January 2010 and has since selected appropriate clearinghouse software and has enlisted the aid of a service provider, GeoCat, to host and maintain the clearinghouse. To read a recent update of this project, click [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.
- **Mission with iMMAP/WFP - North Korea:** Eight (8) additional volunteers have been recruited for the North Korea project and that has brought the total number of volunteers to 30 (including two project managers – Carol Kraemer and Chris Zumwalt). 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. The selection of projects will begin shortly after the deadline. 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](#).

[\(back to top\)](#)

---

## URISA Announcements

### Upcoming Conferences

#### [URISA Addressing Workshop](#)

November 5, 2010 – Chicago (URISA HQ)

---

#### [URISA's 5th Caribbean GIS Conference](#)

December 6–10, 2010 – Trinidad

Registration discounts through November 5

---

#### [15th Annual GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference](#)

February 28–March 3, 2011 – Memphis, TN

---

#### [URISA Leadership Academy](#)

May 16–20, 2011 – St Louis, MO

### What's New

---

#### [2011 URISA Dues Renewal](#)

---

#### [October 2010 Issue of THE GIS PROFESSIONAL](#)

---

#### [Barry Wellar: Issues in Data Sharing](#)

---

#### [Ron Stanfield Authors Latest 'Managing GIS' article in ArcNews](#)

---

#### [GIS-Pro 2010 Conference Highlights](#)

---

#### [URISA Journal – Volume 22, Number 1 Published](#)

---

#### [Census Bureau Seeking Comment on Proposed Urban Area Criteria](#)

---

#### [What is Pam Sig up to today?](#)

---

#### [Release of Geospatial Technology Competency Model](#)

---

#### [Draft Address Standard Submitted to FGDC](#)

---

#### [Donate to URISA's 50/50 Fund](#)

[\(back to top\)](#)

---

## 48<sup>th</sup> URISA Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, September 28- October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

The 48<sup>th</sup> URISA Conference (GIS-Pro) was held in Orlando, Florida. GISCorps held multiple events including a poster exhibit, presentation and the annual meeting. The efforts and services of GISCorps volunteers and Core Committee members were recognized at a breakfast award

ceremony. To see the photos taken at those activities, click [here](#).

The photo album is also on GISCorps' [Facebook page](#).

Check our website, LinkedIn, and FaceBook for further updates.

[\(back to top\)](#)

---

## Introductory Membership - A New Initiative from URISA International

URISA International has announced a new membership opportunity. GISCorps volunteers who are not current due-paying members of URISA and haven't been members for the past 2 years can become a member at a considerably low rate through December 31, 2011.

To learn more about this initiative, visit URISA's trial membership page at: [http://www.urisa.org/intro\\_membership](http://www.urisa.org/intro_membership)

*"URISA International embraced the idea and concept of GISCorps from its inception and has been a great support through our journey. The leadership and members' encouragement has been a source of inspiration for all of us and we would love to see more of our own volunteers join this esteemed organization. I have been a member of URISA for over two decades and cannot think a better organization in the geospatial world than URISA. Please consider joining URISA to enjoy the organization's revered network of professionals and many professional development opportunities including: technical and leadership workshops, conferences, webinars, and several highly regarded publications."*

*Shoreh Elhami, GISCorps Co-founder*

[\(back to top\)](#)

---

## 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>

[\(back to top\)](#)

---

## Featured Project:

### Post Disaster Assistance in Shkodra, Albania

Nine of our volunteers have concluded their tasks for a project in Shkodra region of Albania. The project was commissioned by Free Libre Open Source Software Kosovo ([FLOSSK](#)), a non-profit organization in

Kosovo. FLOSSK requested the assistance of GISCorps volunteers in creating an accurate base map for a region in northwest of Albania known as Shkodra. This region was struck by flood in January 2010. At completion, they helped develop several data layers including a detailed road network (on Open Street Map – OSM interface), damaged buildings, and various Points of Interests.

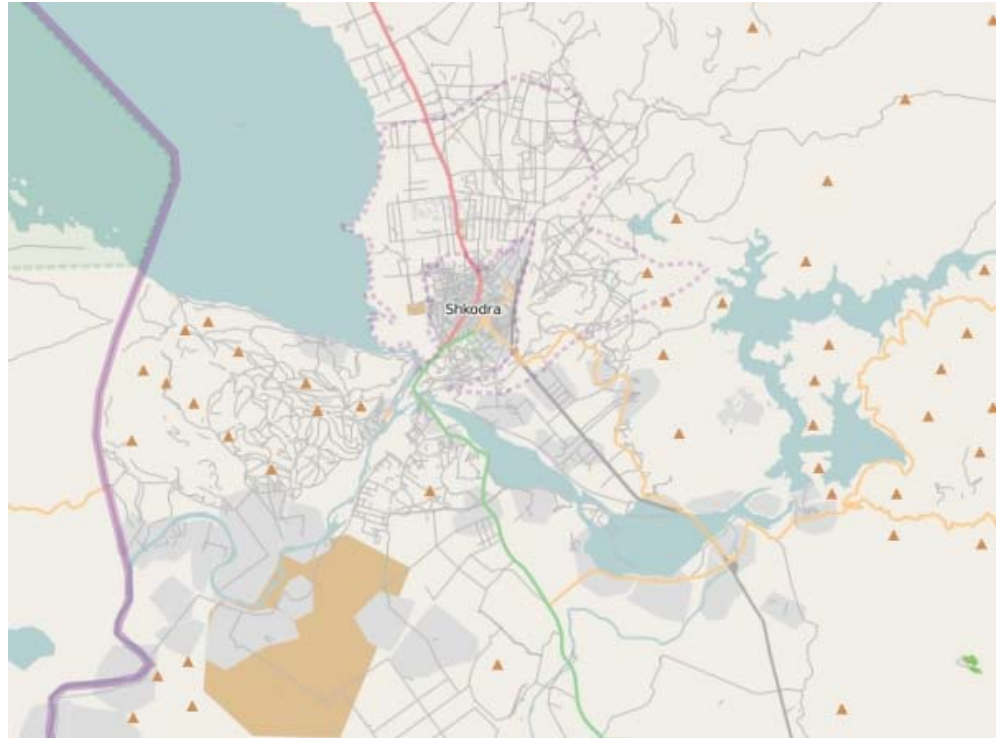


Figure1: Digitized roads and damaged structures

For this project volunteers from five countries were recruited. Miguel Morgado from the UK was designated as the Project Manager and he worked with eight other volunteers:

- Michele Morettini and Massimiliano Rossi from Italy
- Takeo Shibata, Andrew Ross, Janet Vaughn, Adebayo Adepegba from the US
- Doug Brown, from Mexico
- Kerice Masters from Jamaica





Figure 3: digitizing structures and points of interests in downtown Shkodra

Quotes from the volunteers:

*"I had the opportunity to work with an international team, gain experience in working remotely and learn new tools and techniques. Moreover, I was introduced to the open source software community and improved my knowledge of UNIX Operating system. Last but not least, I've met in this experience very nice people and this gave me the input for learning more in details the history and culture of the Balkans. ...I also improved my management capacity and coordination with other professionals, and gained experience for future projects."*

*Michele Morettini, Italy*

*"...New Friends, enhanced knowledge on mapping and natural resource management problems in the Balkan region. New approach to open source software and methodologies."*

*Massimiliano Rossi, Italy*

[\(back to top\)](#)