

San Diego Regional GIS Council Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2025

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

WELCOME AND SDRGC NEWS

Monique Larragoitia, SDRGC Chair, announced:

- Welcome to all SDRGC members
- Survey link shared and request to submit answers before the meeting break
- Thank you for all the location suggestions for the next SDRGC social
 - Possibility for one or two socials to accommodate the members

GEONEWS

USGS UPDATE

Drew Decker with USGS reported:

- New lidar data is in work for San Diego County through the USGS 3D Elevation Program (3DEP). Lidar data is QL2 with a targeted data density of 4 points per square meter. The region covered is San Diego County, without the military properties. Funds are provided by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Data were collected in late fall 2024 with completion expected in early 2026. Latest news is that pilot data was reviewed by USGS. Link: <https://usgs.gov/3DEP>
- The 3D Hydrography Program's (3DHP) goal is the first systematic remapping of the Nation's hydrography. 3DHP will use the 3DEP lidar as the source to develop new surface water features across the nation. Here, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is working on several pilot projects generating 3DHP data. The "Data Collaboration Announcement" (DCA) is a mechanism for funding and for partnering with USGS and other federal agencies to acquire new 3DHP and 3DEP data. I strongly recommend anyone or any organization interested in generating new elevation-derived hydrography in the greater San Diego region to reach out to me. Information on the DCA, including a link to an instructional webinar on the FY25 DCA, can be found here: <https://usgs.gov/3DNTM/DCA>
- The quarterly USGS Hydrography Community Calls are a good way to learn about the 3D National Hydrography Program (3DHP). 3DHP is a revision to the current NHD whereby surface water features will be derived from recent high resolution elevation data. Our calls cover program status, generating new data, and data applications. Anyone can be added to the our contact list. To subscribe or get information on past calls, visit: <https://usgs.gov/3DHP/HCC>
- USGS has moved its web map viewer, known as The National Map Viewer, to a new version which includes a 3D viewing option. More information available here: [New USGS National Map 3D Viewer | U.S. Geological Survey](#)
- USGS has released a new instructional video. This is "Key Characteristics of US Topos and OnDemand Topos." Learn how to distinguish a US Topo from an OnDemand Topo. The link to this and many other National Map Training videos is: <https://usgs.gov/NGPvideos>
- Please contact Drew Decker (ddecker@usgs.gov, 619-225-6430) with any questions or requests for presentations on the above topics.

SANDAG UPDATE

Andy Gordon with SANDAG reported:

- SANDAG has moved offices:
 - New address is 1011 Union Street, Suite 400, San Diego, CA 92101
- New Parcel Lookup Tool and Geographic Boundary Viewer application in collaboration with SanGIS

- Application has been migrated to Experience Builder:
<https://geo.sandag.org/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=1d105857933641e0a8496d2769b31aec> (also linked via SanGIS website)
 - Old version will remain until the end of the month, then be retired
- Capital Projects Viewer for Fiscal Year 2026:
 - Our Board of Directors recently adopted SANDAG's FY 26 budget
 - Visit <https://www.sandag.org/funding/budget> to view full details along with an interactive map of capital projects
- New San Diego Regional Bike Map application released for Bike Anywhere Day:
 - Includes a filterable summary of bike facility mileage in addition to map of bike network
 - <https://www.sandag.org/projects-and-programs/bikeways-and-walkways/bike-map>
- Draft 2025 Regional Transportation Plan will be released later this month:
 - Visit <https://www.sandag.org/regional-plan/2025-regional-plan> for more info and a link to the mapping application once the plan is released

SANGIS UPDATE

Brenda Maldonado with SanGIS, on behalf of Tod Chee, reported:

- Imagery:
 - All final billings have been sent out.
 - 2024 Imagery is available for pickup.
 - 2025 Imagery is coming later this year.
 - We have been receiving signed "intent to participate" letters. If you have yet to confirm, please do so as soon as possible. Official quotes and agreements will go out closer to fall.
- Data:
 - Updated Law Beats, gas stations, land use, and land ownership layers all coming within the next few weeks
 - Visit www.sangis.org for data updates. SanGIS data refresh happens on the first Tuesday of every month.
- Owner Name field was previously included in the Parcel layer. Due to recent changes in California state law concerning data privacy, we are no longer permitted to display ownership information on public-facing websites. Specifically, [Assembly Bill 1785](#), effective December 9, 2024, "As a result, the Owner Name field has been removed, and we do not anticipate it being reinstated in the public version of the dataset at this time.
- You may still download the parcel layer with ownership information if you create a log in via SANDAG (<https://rdw.sandag.org/Account/Login>), but it would be a manual process.

GIS MANAGERS UPDATE

Abe Coughlin with City of Escondido reported:

- Esri designated a special display for the SDRGC that will be available in the Esri UC Map Gallery this year
 - Going to be a smaller space, compared to the SDRGC map display area in past years
- The display will have 4 sides, with 2 sides approximately 9 ft x 9 ft, and the other two sides 3 ft x 9 ft. Includes a monitor and a monitor/keyboard combo.
- The goal is to highlight the GIS work that the San Diego Region performs
 - Each agency will be able to include a link (i.e. to an Experience Builder application or other item where all agency content is available)
 - Abe is working with Esri on the exhibit design, which will be completed by the end of the week (5/16)
 - **The links for posters/applications still has 6 weeks before they need to be complete – agencies will need to provide Abe with their link(s) and he will create the QR codes**
 - Some SDRGC/agency representatives will need to be present Monday night for the Map Gallery Opening after the Plenary ends
 - For questions, reach out to Abe (acoughlin@escondido.org) directly

- Additional suggestions:
 - Inclusion of military, tribal, colleges and college programs
 - Map with all SDRGC members

PRESENTATIONS

TOPOBUILDER AND ONDEMAND TOPO

Presented by: Drew Decker, USGS

- topoBuilder using best available data from The National Map to create OnDemand Topo maps
 - topoBuilder takes users through a series of steps to generate the topo that want:
 - multi-scale: choose between 7.5-Minute Topo or 100K Topo
 - identify area of interest and extent
 - configure visible map layers
 - Define desired format
 - Modify contour settings
 - Checkout by entering email for digital delivery
 - User receives order number to track the delivery – usually delivered within 24 hours
 - Future updates: user-added content, print utility, GIS data download, additional scales
- The presentation slide deck is available on the SDRGC website: <https://sdrgc.org/Documents/docs.html>**

OPEN DISCUSSION

- Survey results dashboard for the in-meeting survey:
<https://carlsbad.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/cddc11e1c44448359feefad1edf97bb1>
- Esri User Conference – General Announcements:
 - SDRGC does not have an official meet up during the Esri User Conference, however many SDRGC members often attend the social hosted by GPN California (formerly SoCal URISA).
 - Maps and Presentations at the Esri UC:
 - Please email Monique (monique.larragoitia@carlsbadca.gov) if you have a user presentation or map display at the Esri UC. This can also include work from your team or organization.
- Upcoming events this week and next:
 - Virtual MISAC GIS user group meeting taking place Thursday, May 22nd from 2 – 3 PM
 - MISAC GIS: <https://www.misac.org/surveys/default.asp?id=GIS>
 - https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=6-03ND52IEuVSgGaa46SQPil4t_cGsVlhLmFKlyYCVtUOTdWSkZNOUxWNUdQSUdIVFA3VklTRkJPmi4u&route=shorturl
 - Mesa College Showcase (including GIS Program) taking place Thursday, May 15th from 4 – 8 PM.
 - <https://sdmesaportfolioshow.com/>
- Discussion topic – GISP Credential:
 - Value and Recognition of GISP Certification
 - GISP certification can provide a competitive advantage for candidates with otherwise similar qualifications:
 - GISP: <https://www.gisci.org/Want-to-be-a-GISP/What-is-a-GISP>
 - There is a new emerging GISP credential for students, recent graduates and emerging GIS professionals:
 - Pre-GISP: <https://www.gisci.org/PreGISP>
 - SDRGC members expressed mixed reviews on the certification's value; some of who reported allowing their certifications to expire
 - Discussion compared the relative merits of certification versus advanced education credentials
 - Employment and Diversity Considerations

- Additional required or preferred qualifications (like GISP) may reduce applicant pool size and potentially impact diversity initiatives
 - Nick Camacho noted:
 - The City does not formally recognize GISP certification achievement
 - Contrast with Professional Engineer (PE) certification, which typically results in a 10-15% salary increase
 - He personally values master's degrees over GISP certification when making hiring decisions
- Career Advancement Strategies
 - Abe Coughlin raised the question of how we achieve better pay if not focused on credentialing
 - Rob “Space” Kraft commented on the need to advance into higher-level management and executive positions to create the positive impacts sought after
 - Joseph Paoletti II emphasized:
 - The importance of leading by example
 - Growing integration of AR and wearable technology with GIS
 - Increasing future use cases for GIS
 - The value of adaptability in how data is utilized and professional nimbleness in changing landscapes
 - Significant opportunities for career movement and skill development
- Industry Perspectives
 - Abe acknowledged the changing perspectives in the geospatial workforce over time, in context of this discussion
 - Nick observed that GISP certification doesn't seem recognized or rewarded, particularly in the public sector
 - Abe advocated for more visibility and noted how many professionals explore ways to market and brand themselves – including the GISP credential
 - Jennifer Benavides provided historical context. GISP was originally developed for professionals without specific academic backgrounds in GIS.
 - For interested individuals, URISA has a board that discusses certification matters (Jennifer attended in November): <https://thegpn.org/>
 - Jennifer highlighted the challenge to convince employers to grant “bonuses” or promotions based on GISP certifications, if within the geospatial profession people don't have a clear career path
 - Posed the question, what is the benefit of the GISP when someone already has a graduate degree in GIS? Especially when the graduate degree already qualifies them for a higher role
 - Abe posed the question, will GIS take over IS, or will IS consume GIS?
- Compensation Strategies
 - Monique Larragoitia shared her experience gaining salary increases by strategically working across multiple agencies
 - At Carlsbad, Monique observed applications analysts have similar scope to GIS analysts but receive higher compensation
 - Additional insights:
 - Leadership generally prefers developing talent in-house
 - Public sector compensation typically lower than private sector
 - Carlsbad recognizes GIS value; focus now on highlighting and reflecting that value

SDRGC MEETING ATTENDEES FOR 5/14/2025

Abe Coughlin
Adam Attar
Alex Sainz
Amanda McGarry
Andrew Haney
Andy Gordon
Atsushi Nara
Aurora Moreno-Resendiz
Axel Pliego Flores
Aydan Scott
Barbara Kent
Branden Belajac
Brenda Maldonado
Brittany Burson
Carl Sorenson
Catherine Lee
Chris Schuchardt
Crystal English
Dante Lee
Dawn Martin
Deniz Ozakcay
Dennis Gerrits Jr.
Diana Henderson
Drew Decker
Eduardo Aguilar
Erick Pate
Falisha Field
Gavin Runyon
Hayette O'Leary
James Crandall
Jen Gordon
Jennifer Maria-Benavides
John Elliott
Joseph Paoletti II
Joshua Logsdon
Julie Uhren
Kari Palm

Kevin O'Brien
Kurtis S Baron
Lindsay Weiner
Lorie Roberts
Louise Wedley
Luciane Musa
Luis Garcia
Marlene Martinez
Matt Funk
Matthew McSpadden
Maya Holdren
Melisa Caric Lee
Michael Robles
Michelle Kinzel
Mohamad Alsheikh Yassin
Monique Larragoitia
Nicholas Camacho
Oliver Sandoval
Paulena Lam
Philip Mai
Rachel Russell
Rob "Space" Kraft
Robert O'Donnell
Robert Shanaberger
Russell Mercer
Sam Adams
Sara Jadhav
Scott Rothberg
Stephanie A Friesse
Suzanné Walther
Teal Rose Aerial LLC
Tegan Goodman
Vaishali Kulkarni
Yasnaia Massie
Yuko Oliver
Zahra Khani
Zhan Shi