



National Association of County Surveyors

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY SURVEYORS – ISSUE NO. 16

OFFICERS 2008-2010

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Fall 2008



Message From The President
Warren D. Ward

Greetings,

I went to my first NACo meeting on July 11, 2008, in Kansas City. NACo is of course engaged in all the national issues, and I sincerely look forward to working for our profession on the NACo Board of Directors. Our members should also know that I am not the only county surveyor involved with NACo: Reid Demman from Utah and David Claypool from Minnesota are both on the GIS Committee.

This year's theme adopted by NACo is "Restore The Partnership." The NACo leadership intends to work towards better interaction with State governments. Among many proceedings, I observed with great interest as a Coloradoan struggling to pay my fuel bills how NACo prepared a policy statement that encouraged the swift exploration for oil and oil shale in Wyoming, Utah and Colorado, with Colorado eventually being stricken from the final document.

As I write this message, our Congress is debating the credit crisis, and our profession is hurting from a building slowdown. I was

surprised and interested to receive an offer from the White House to participate in a group phone conference briefing as a member of NACo.

I, of course, accepted and listened to the White House Staff describe both the specific credit crisis being addressed, and the rationale for the \$700B rescue proposed by the President and the Treasury Secretary. Many of the participants asking questions were senators, mayors and state treasurers from both parties.

I have also participated with ACSM/NSPS on their annual Lobby Day in Washington, DC. We visited numerous senators and representatives lobbying for several legislative issues of interest to our profession, including a proposed Railroad Monumentation Preservation bill.

It has been an honor to participate in the political process that is America. I will do my very best to bring back successful results to NACS in the near future.

A White House Briefing

In the past few weeks, we have all taken part in various ways in this serious page of American economic history. We heard our President suddenly warn us of great economic “risk” ahead, and urge Congress to act *immediately* on a 3-page bill introduced by, of all departments, the Treasury. It was an overwhelming task to fathom either politically or in sheer economic size and scope.

By virtue of representing NACS on the NACo Board of Directors, my email found its way onto a White House list of State and Local Government contacts, and on October 1, I was indeed invited to attend a White House Briefing on the economy via conference call. I RSVP’d without hesitation.

Between October 1 and October 9, I have participated in 5 such conference call briefings presented by the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. Briefings were conducted by Pierce Scranton, Chief of Staff, Council of Economic Advisers, The Honorable Neel Kashkari, Interim Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in charge of implementing the Economic Rescue Plan, and others.

I listened intently to the briefing of the economic situation at hand, and then listened to the questions from other listeners, which included several state treasurers, mayors, representatives, commissioners, sheriffs, and others. Some of the statements made are:

- The current stalemate of the credit and lending markets of America has the most impact on the average consumer and worker.
- Counties, including county employees, are “on the hook.”
- The Economic Rescue Plan will not be a net loss of \$700B, nor will it be an enrichment of Wall Street CEO’s. However, it is hoped that It will allow the market to function for the average consumer.

After the White House Staff had been given time to explain why and how the business of lending had become frozen, and why these drastic, unprecedented measures had been taken to get our community lending and credit flowing and functional, many listeners who introduced themselves as both Democrats and Republicans stated that they had a much clearer understanding of the situation, pledged their support, and thanked the White House for it’s efforts.

I too am now a supporter of the Economic Rescue Plan.

Sincerely yours,

Warren D. Ward, PLS
President, NACS



Warren Ward meets staff of Representative Mark Udall in Washington, DC



Outgoing President Kenton Ward discusses politics at NACo Conference, July, 2008

NACS BOOTH AT ESRI




The NACS once again had a booth at the ESRI Surveying and Engineering Summit and the ESRI Annual Users Conference in San Diego California in August. Past President Kenton Ward is pictured beside the booth at the Summit.

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Responses to the question presented to the NACS membership:

"I haven't refined my question very well but, in light of the budget tightening all municipalities seem to be facing, I would be interested in hearing how other counties and cities are focusing their attention to make sure the legal responsibilities don't get lost or cut by the budget axe. Part of our professional responsibilities is to serve the public, the survey profession and keep our respective entities out of legal binds. At budget squeeze times, like now, there is inevitably discussion of cutting whole departments; if the survey department of an agency is eliminated it could open the agency up to legal shortcomings. I would like to hear from others what they have experienced in this area."

Vic Whittaker, City Surveyor
City of Olympia, Washington

I guess the simple response is that we simply can't avoid fulfilling legal obligations, regardless of our budget. However, as you know, there is a lot of gray area between what are the actual minimum legal requirements. And as City's are forced to tighten their belts, they will seek out innovative ways to meet those obligations. Many times, these innovations stretch current thinking, focusing more on satisfying the intent of the legal responsibilities; versus the prescriptive "do this." This can create tension with legal staffs and make program staff uncomfortable. Because it is uncharted territory, I think we will see more of this in the future. That is why in PW, we are focusing more on creativity, and flexibility.

Mike Jackson, County Surveyor
Lane County, Oregon

During one of the budget meetings with the County Commissioners present, a discussion of discontinuing our Assessment and Taxation (A&T) office services was bounced around. The price of doing this was soon found to be not in the counties interest. If this service is cut (I am sure you already know this) then the job of managing this service is left to the State. The problem that the State can withhold moneys from the Counties share of taxes to pay for managing the system. It works out to be a higher rate than what we currently spend.

Dan Day, County Surveyor
Cowlitz County, Washington

In Washington State, no statutory requirement exists for mandatory County Surveyors. Those counties that have county surveyors do so because they found the justification.

My particular position exists because of a dispute between our county public works department and the state board of registration regarding unlicensed practice of land surveying. The county government felt it more prudent to hire a full time surveyor rather than dispute the problems in court with the board.

That said, over the last 11 years that I have been here, it has been relatively easy to convince department management that they made the right decision. I have used numerous different data to justify my existence, almost all of which come back to the purpose of public employees: protection of the public and public assets.

I would imagine that almost every county and city in the nation is having budget issues. The reasons to keep licensed surveyors employed by local government must revolve around undisputable facts regarding public service, safety and protection. Those are reasons or justifications that heads of local government find hard to ignore (think re-election).

The reasoning I use to justify licensed land surveyors in local government begins with concrete, first-hand experiences where my work, intervention or expert advice has helped preserve the public good. I save every example of work I have performed in which the solution could not have been properly or legally reached without my opinion, work, research, layout or other function in some form or amount. These types of examples make for a powerful argument.

Also, I try to gather stories or examples of my peers in other jurisdictions that had similar results. Sometimes it is hard to get your supervisors to listen to you, but they may well listen to their contemporaries from other counties or cities.

1. I keep a list of pursuits that only a licensed land surveyor can perform that could be useful to local government, the public or both. My thought is to have this list for reference if a question arises such as "Is there enough work to justify your employment full time?" I then have the data to say "Here are things I can do, but don't do now, that are in the public interest or interest of local government. If I remain employed, and we re-direct our time and effort, we can justify full time employment with an increased benefit to the public.

Maybe that list of pursuits could include:

1. section corner recovery, inventory, cataloging or indexing, maintenance
2. benchmark recovery, inventory, cataloging or indexing, maintenance
3. right-of-way survey, research, and establishment independent of capital improvement projects
4. inventory and survey of lands owned by local government (many jurisdictions have no idea of all the land they own!)
5. inventories of signs, culverts and other agency assets with locations and characterizations
6. assistance to local GIS programs
7. water, sewer, storm drain asset location and indexing or mapping
8. inspections for monumentation compliance for new subdivisions or other regulated projects
9. construction staking for other county or city agencies that might now contract for such services
10. help to law enforcement during accident or crime scene reconstruction or investigation

Of course, another way to find justification is to remind heads of local government that many of the functions performed by a surveyor cannot be done by others. All states define what constitutes the practice of land surveying. Local government sets a bad example by performing professional work regulated by state law without the benefit of the particular professional. Thus it is very important to remind heads of government that the public protection includes performing work in a LEGAL manner, not just a correct or adequate manner.

Finally, you must think about money. If an agency must have a certain function performed, such as a design, is it more cost effective to have the function performed in-house or performed by an outside consultant. Many heads of government have the mistaken notion that consultants can perform the work less expensively. That probably stems from the general perception that a consultant seems to be only a part-time worker. However, if the consultant works on a fair number of projects, and due to their higher costs to do business, the consultant's fees begin to outpace the cost of full time employees. Thus it is very important for you to know where that break point really is. Many times I have shown that, due to the fee structure of consultants, work that our department intended to farm out would be less expensive and better controlled by keeping the work in-house.

Mary Barton, County Surveyor
Marion County, Indiana

Thank you for this sharing. Here in Marion County, we are without a licensed land surveyor as an employee of my office or, presently, even of the county. My term will end this year, and plan to make do until then. I feel pretty protected under the auspices of the existing statutes and of the constitution of

Indiana, and for these four years, have convinced the Office of Budget, and the county council not to require me to survive merely on what is in the corner perpetuation fund.

Warren Ward, County Surveyor
Grand County, Colorado

In Grand County, Colorado, the county surveyor budget is holding steady as of October 1, 2008. No increase, no decrease.

Bill Karr, County Surveyor
Chippewa County, Michigan

Here in Michigan, we have 83 counties and approximately 43 elected County Surveyors. In the other 40 or so counties, the office has either been abolished by County Board action or the office is simply vacant. There is a provision in our law that eliminates the office, when the population of the county exceeds a certain number. Very few of the elected County Surveyors have significant budgets and none, to my knowledge, are a full time position. You may be aware that we have a statewide remonumentation program. Each county has a representative to this program. If there is an elected County Surveyor, they are automatically that Counties' representative.

The Remonumentation Program is funded by a \$4.00 fee that is added to each document recorded that pertains to land. The money collected at the County level is deposited into a State fund, which in turn is redistributed to each County annually based on a three part formula. Three years ago, the state wide budget was \$10,000,000.....last year I believe it was \$6,500,000. I would not be surprised to see it drop to \$5M or possibly less for 2009. While this affects the private surveying firms that rely on the program from year to year, (each county contracts with private monumentation surveyors), this decrease really impacts our residents. In my particular County, we have concentrated our remonumentation efforts in populated areas. By verifying existing corners and replacing lost corners, we have been able to reduce, dramatically the cost of property surveys to the public.

Anyone interested in more information regarding the program can go to DELEG-Office of Land Survey and Remonumentation (State of Michigan). There are a number of links you may find of interest.

Bill Wallace, County Surveyor
Martin County, Florida

In our county, the reality of the importance of providing accurate and inexpensive surveys was presented in such a manner as to eliminate any reduction of FTEs within this Division.

There was a large reduction in budgeting fees for outside consultants. By so doing, all the other Divisions realized they could come to THEIR Survey Division for their projects without attempting to obtain funds for these outside consultants. This has actually increased the workload of our Survey Division!

Ken Holmbeck, County Surveyor
Sherburne County, Minnesota

I worked for a County Surveyor in the late 1970's and early 1980's, during times that were worse than they presently are (although I believe they will eventually become much worse), and the County Board restricted pay increases and replacement of personnel who retired or quit. The full-time County Surveyor and staff had been established for about 15 years by that time and therefore withstood those difficult economic times, even though we only did PLS retracement surveys, section corner maintenance, and plat checking, and did no other work for other departments

At this County, roughly half the work we perform is for the County Engineer, preparing Highway ROW plats for both reconstructs and overlays, conducting preliminary design (topographic) surveys, construction staking, and as-built surveys. The other half is primarily PLS maintenance, with some occasional work performed for other departments such as proposed building expansion surveys, surveys of properties to be purchased by the County Parks, trail surveys, etc. The crews and office staff enjoy the opportunity to work on these different types of survey work.

With a very significant slow down in subdivision plats, we have recently decided not to fill a vacant plat-check technician position, and with a slow down in highway reconstruction funding and more planned overlays, we are using that extra time to concentrate on "existing" ROW maps (i.e. monumentation plats) of highways having little documentation and not having been surveyed for 30 years, and to catch up on long-deferred Section Corner maintenance that has occurred during the recent land development boom and highway reconstruction boom in our County.

I believe that regardless of what we may be required to do for the County in the short term, it's important to retain long-trained and seasoned governmental Land Survey staff for the future when they will be needed again.

John Lyons, County Surveyor
Hillsborough County, Florida

Tax Reform in Florida impacted our budget preparation significantly for the fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2008. Most of the budget in our Survey Division is funded by ad valorem (property) taxes and based upon projected revenue shortfalls: 6 positions were eliminated. The Hillsborough County budget is zero based and we build the budget based upon our need to meet statutory requirements and provide support for high priority capital projects. Essentially, we are putting together a business plan that is built on logical work adaptable to available funding. There are no indications of the cutting of whole departments; however, every budget request is scrutinized on cost and benefit.

Gail Oliver, County Surveyor
St. Johns County, Florida

St. Johns County has a population of approximately 175,000 people encompassing 609 square miles. The Surveying and Mapping Division is housed within the Land Management Systems Department, along with GIS and Real Estate. Since 1994 the Surveying and Mapping Division has maintained an office staff of three with two – 3 person field crews. Over the years we were tempted to grow with the explosion of work request but instead opted to outsource the work we could not handle in-house. Most projects outsourced were the larger transportation projects while focusing on supporting Road and Bridge and smaller Engineering projects in-house. This actually worked well with the current funding cuts on capital projects as we are not faced with laying anyone off at this point. As a matter of fact we are busier than ever doing even more work in-house because there is no "real" money to contract work out.

Edward Elam, County Administrator/Surveyor
Ford County, Kansas

So far we are not cutting back in Ford County, Kansas, but I have many hats so County Surveyor is only one. My biggest problem is finding qualified staff to work. I have lost my field chief and have not been able to replace him. So, in my case, it isn't the economy that is the problem but rather finding qualified help. On another topic I am concerned about the number of County Surveyors that are a member of this organization. In Kansas there aren't very many. When I ask others to join they indicate they don't see any reason to be a member. If you have any suggestions how to get them to see the advantage I would be

happy to share.

Thomas O'Malley, County Surveyor
St. Louis County, Minnesota

Back in 2003, the State of Minnesota was facing severe budget problems which, in turn, reduced funding for state sponsored programs. In the County Surveyor's office, we found ourselves to be a target in early budget proposals which called for reducing our staff by more than half. The attached letter was sent to our County Commissioners in response and in the end we were spared from the worst. It may provide some "talking points" which county surveyors can tailor to their own situation and you are welcome to share it with them if you wish.

Dear Commissioners:

The current proposal by the Public Works Department for budget year 2004 includes the permanent elimination of nine survey technicians from the County Surveyor's staff. This would eliminate more than half of our entire staff in the Land Survey Division. I know that the Board is anticipating a substantial reduction in revenues in future years and must make a lot of hard choices. But such a drastic cut to our staff would probably put an end to our principle mission of preserving the integrity of the Public Land Survey System in Saint Louis County. It will also make it extremely difficult to do all the necessary section corner work for the Department.

Although we are a relatively small part of the Public Works Department, presently making up about four percent of the Department staff, we are an important part. Highway construction projects generally require additional right-of-way which needs to be correctly referenced to parcel boundaries which are based on the Public Land Survey corners. Also, many of the County road maintenance projects destroy or bury the section corners which fall in the roadway. These corners must be recovered and/or replaced and certified afterward.

Also, the preservation of real property rights throughout Saint Louis County is dependent upon maintaining the landmarks and associated records of the Public Land Survey System from generation to generation. Given the sheer size and geographic diversity of Saint Louis County, this is a huge and difficult task. With our present staff, I believe we are making steady progress toward that end. If this system is not adequately maintained, it will soon deteriorate. There will be more and more confusion over property boundaries and reliable surveys will become even more costly and time consuming.

Recovering and restoring these landmarks, with credibility, is a very specialized kind of work requiring training and experience in researching, analyzing and evaluating old survey records and in searching for and evaluating physical evidence of these landmarks. Our current employees have accumulated important experience doing this specialized kind of work over the years. If these people are lost at this time, it will be very difficult for the County to retrain new people for this work in the future.

In addition to providing land surveying services directly to the Public Works Department, we also play an important role for many other local interests. Following are a number of County Departments which benefit directly or indirectly from the work that we and our technicians do: Land Department, County Recorder, Examiner of Titles, Planning Department, County Attorney, County Auditor, County Assessor, County Sheriff and Communications/ 911. Our work also benefits the real estate industry, the forest products industry, utility companies, mining companies, private land surveyors, land developers and, of course, property owners.

Historically, the County Surveyor's Office/Land Survey Division has been funded primarily by local general revenues. The State of Minnesota has always been reluctant to provide any funding for the preservation of these local landmarks. Now that the State has a serious budget problem on its hands, it should not be solved at the expense of the Public Land Survey System.

Next to its people, the land is Saint Louis County's greatest asset. The landmarks and associated survey records of the Public Land Survey System are a precious asset to this land. To assure the long term value and usefulness of all this land, it is essential that the rights and interests of all the various owners and other parties of interest are protected now and in the future. Maintaining the long term continuity of the system we currently have in place is the best way to do that. If the County doesn't do it, no one will.

Thank you for your consideration.

Reid Demman, County Surveyor
Salt Lake County, Utah

I have not as of yet been asked to cut my efforts and/or Department as of yet. However, we are currently in the middle of our budget process and with the projected shortfall of both our general and municipal services funds, there is that possibility. My understanding is that the most likely cuts are going to come from public works operations and planning and zoning/ building permit areas. We just don't know yet. My best arguments for funding survey functions are; the fact that the county's ability to collect taxes is based on, described and relies upon the protection and perpetuation of the PLSS in those PLSS states. I also remind the legislative body that my office has helped many counties who over the years have failed to fund such efforts, and who now find themselves in a mess due to property disputes, discrepancies in property descriptions and the additional the burden new development places on the taxation infrastructure. We'll see what happens.

Jerrod Hahn, County Surveyor
Wells County, Indiana

In Indiana there is a push for local government reform with a few rumors about taking the duties of the local elected surveyors and spreading them between various state and local agencies. If you do away with the people charged with maintaining section corners, which control property lines, you are going to allow a "chop shop" to happen with real property.



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Comments on other subjects:

Bryan Thorp, County Surveyor
Benton County, Washington

Has anyone tried going paperless or less paper on Plans and Specs and what is the best way to have electronic signatures to insure non-tampering?

Bruce Ducker, County Surveyor
Osceola County, Florida

In Florida, there was a law pushed through to reduce property taxes which affects counties especially with schools and public safety being high priorities. Osceola County has had to reduce our workforce considerably. This is also coupled with the decrease in new home starts, which was a funding mechanism for roads and schools. As far as the county survey section, well we have been forced to delay major capital purchases. We are not able to purchase the GPS equipment needed to bring us up to date. Fortunately, the survey section has not gone through a reduction of force.

James Joy, County Surveyor
Rio Blanco, Colorado

I would like to see a report published as to;

- which states have full time county surveyors
- which states have part time county surveyors
- which states have no county surveyors
- what states have a program(s) in place to provide the public, or other professionals, a recovered monument list, together with what they're tied to and how their position was determined.
- And, if possible, a nation wide summary of county surveyor salary and/or budget (this should be public information).

Chet Nowaczyk, County Surveyor
Marathon County, Wisconsin

When towns were remonumented with stones or Irons after the original surveys where the notes and maps were recorded or filed somewhere in the state other then the local courthouse. We have found maps with narratives, but no field notes in our court house.



Tuesday, Sep. 09, 2008

Survey under way to help resolve Bibb, Monroe border dispute

By Jennifer Burk - jb Burk@macon.com

Terry Scarborough walked down a drainage ditch off Interstate 75 north, just past the Bass Road exit. The surveyor expertly hopped a rusty barbed-wire fence and made his way through trees and brush to a spot where two men in orange vests waited.

The pair had found an old bedrail marking a corner of a nearby piece of property. It was one of many clues Scarborough and his crew think will ultimately help them solve a 100-year-old mystery, the location of the 12-mile line dividing Bibb and Monroe counties.

What they know is this: A straight line runs from where Crawford, Bibb and Monroe counties meet to the old Ocmulgee River ferry. What they don't know is where the ferry was, and its exact location hasn't been known for at least a century, Scarborough said.

"It's a pretty daunting task, really," said Scarborough, who began the survey Aug. 1. "We've got a whole lot of work to find out where that ferry was."

Although the border has been in dispute for years, tempers flared most recently in 2004 with the announcement that the Bass Pro Shops complex was going to be built near the county line on what appeared to be the Bibb side of the border.

With millions of dollars in potential tax revenue at stake, a Monroe County grand jury asked Gov. Sonny Perdue to order a survey to be sure of the line.

Perdue appointed Scarborough in August 2005, but the survey failed to start until this year because of attempts on behalf of the counties to settle the dispute without a survey and fee negotiations. The two counties will split the \$346,180 cost of the survey.

First, surveyors will scout out the western corner, using old surveys, markers, streams, trees and Global Positioning System technology to identify the location, according to survey plans Scarborough submitted to the secretary of state's office.

Then, Scarborough and his crew will approximate the location of the ferry based on old county records. To identify a more precise spot, they will look for evidence of an old road that approached the ferry from the east, according to the plans.

Once they find the road that leads to the preliminary ferry location - and compute an approximate county line - archaeological consultants will examine the west bank of the river. The consultants will search for evidence of the approaching road bed or inconsistencies in the soil that would indicate the former existence of footing reinforcements for animals that labored uphill from the river bank. Ground-penetrating radar will be used to pinpoint the reinforcements.

After the location is identified and an 1877 alteration to the county line is accounted for, surveyors will map out a direct line between the points using GPS technology, Scarborough said. The location of the border will be backed up with evidence of prior surveys along the county line, according to the plans.

That, however, is still months ahead. Surveyors are working to find and record known property markers - stakes, stones, bedrails and anything else that could be stuck in the ground - to orient themselves with the area, Scarborough said.

He estimated that the survey could take up to nine months. Once it's complete, the survey will be filed with the Secretary of State's Office, and officials from both counties will have 30 days to contest the findings.

If no one protests, the survey becomes the new county line. In the event of a protest, the secretary of state will determine the line based on law and evidence, according to information from the Secretary of State's Office.

Bibb County Commission Chairman Charlie Bishop said the dispute should have been solved without a survey, but now "it is what it is."

"We'll just have to deal with whatever comes out of it, so to speak, and make the best of it."

Bishop's Monroe County counterpart, Chairman Harold Carlisle, said he's looking forward to having the matter settled.

Information from The Telegraph's archives was used in this report.

To contact writer Jennifer Burk, call 744-4345



**Local Surveyors Role
Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) - Map Modernization Project.
October 7, 2008**

A report from the Indian River County (Florida) Surveyor and Mapper

An aggressive, multi-year Map Modernization initiative to update the nation's flood hazard maps is under way in Florida and across the nation. Today, many of the nation's flood maps are outdated, severely limiting their usefulness. Partnership between state and local governments and the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) are intended to transform the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), which help outline a clear picture of local flood risks, into a more reliable, easier-to-use, and readily accessible product.

FEMA is engaging communities that have an interest in flood hazard mapping to become Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP). These partnerships will help ensure better overall floodplain management and risk identification by producing updated, digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels and implementing state-of-the-art information technology infrastructure. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's flood hazard maps are an essential tool for flood mitigation in the United States. Unfortunately, many of these maps have become outdated, especially in high growth and development areas.

As with hundreds of Counties nationally; the Map Modernization Project is either scheduled or in full swing along the east coast of Florida, in particular our region known as the "Treasure Coast". This area encompasses Indian River, Saint Lucie and Martin Counties. In support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), as part of a Cooperating Technical Partner agreement with FEMA, Indian River County has accepted the lead local representative role during the map modernization program and the County Surveying Section is a primary advisor and technical liaison. The facts remain that the State of Florida is by far the most "at risk" state in the country in terms of flood prone properties, with over 1.8 million flood insurance policies in the state (41% of US total), yet just 5.6% of the overall population.

Local Surveying and Mapping:

The first of the three year project includes scoping and data acquisition. The FEMA project consultant (Watershed Concepts, a division of HSMM AECOM) acknowledged they will review and accept survey grade topographic information into their modeling and mapping efforts. On the other hand, the budget with FEMA is limited and data acquisition is a "fraction" of the overall budget. This is where the local surveying initiatives are an essential part of the success of the project.

The Indian River County Survey Section is supporting the project in various capacities. One key component is data acquisition; current, accurate and reliable data is vital to the Map Modernization mapping and modeling applications. In an effort to educate and draw attention to the importance of data acquisition, the County Surveyor initiated an outreach program to local professionals in the Surveying, Engineering and GIS fields. Joint participation of local governmental and private entities was formed to ascertain available information. Data was reviewed, compiled from participating private firms and governmental agencies. There were a few catches regarding data the FEMA consultant could use. The FEMA consultant's tasks do not include extracting data from hardcopies and/or non geo - referenced drawing files. This limits much of the historical engineering and survey data from inclusion.

Understanding the importance of quality vertical data and/or the lack thereof, Indian River County is participating in a buy-up program with an existing Federal Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) LiDAR and aerial photogrammetry initiative. This state mandated project is mapping the coastal areas to the approximate category five storm surge zones. The county has contracted to extend the limits west well beyond the future land use and urban service boundaries including the major municipalities in the county. High quality ortho images and LiDAR data will be provided to augment the available information. The LiDAR data will supply contours and vertical information throughout eastern portions of the county, "certified" to two foot accuracy. Data with this accuracy has not been previously available in the county. To further populate vertical data, the county Survey Section will obtain additional vertical components in areas requiring detail, such as drainage features and areas of high density. Utilizing the existing Indian River County's continuing operating, GPS real time network (RTN) survey staff can efficiently and accurately obtain additional positions and elevations throughout the projects limits.

The new FIRM maps for Indian River County are anticipated to be complete in 2010, the datum will be NAVD88. Indian River County's current permitting datum is NGVD29. In the near future the new FIRM maps "datum" will spearhead the county conversion from NGVD29 to NAVD88. In anticipation of the conversion, the county survey section partnered with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Bureau of Surveying and Mapping (BSM) on an ambitious vertical control project. Approximately two-hundred miles of high order vertical control network surveys were preformed. The network established new vertical control and observed elevations on many of the existing Indian River County Horizontal (GPS) control monumentation. The new network has been accepted and recorded into the National Geodetic Society's (NGS) data base. Additionally; county staff "linked" and adjusted miles of its internal local network to the recorded NGS elevations. A new vertical control "Bench Mark" book and GIS interactive map of the completed network is being prepared. This will insure a dense and readily available NAVD88 vertical network for the public and local surveying firms during the conversion process and into the future.

These are just a few of the ambitious efforts Indian River County has initiated in direct support of the FEMA Map Modernization Project. Local governmental survey agencies have the potential to take a lead role in the technical support and outreach programs. The local surveying and mapping community's interest, involvement and efforts in the Map Modernization Project will continue to play a key role in assuring the accuracy and determination of flood plains in the county. These efforts will increase the potential for quality FIRM maps while also providing a direct benefit to local governmental agencies, residents, surveyors, engineers, real-estate, insurance professionals and the public at large.

Prepared By: Michael O'Brien P.S.M, C.F.M,

Indian River County Surveyor and Mapper

Calendar of Events

ACSM Annual Conference	February 20-23, 2009	Salt Lake City, UT
NACo Legislative Conference	March 7-11, 2009	Washington, DC
NACE Conference	April 19-23, 2009	Peoria, IL
NACo / WIR Conference	May 20-22, 2009	Pendleton, OR
ERSI Survey and GIS Summit	July 11-14, 2009	San Diego, CA
ERSI Annual Conference	July 13-18, 2009	San Diego, CA
NACo Annual Conference	July 24-28, 2009	Nashville, TN

State Association Meetings

Indiana Society Professional Land Surveyors	January 16 – 18, 2009	Indianapolis, IN
Pennsylvania Society of Land Surveyors	January 20 – 23, 2009	Hershey, PA
Wisconsin Society of Land Surveyors	January 21 - 23, 2009	Green Bay, WI
Minnesota Society of Professional Surveyors	January 28 – 30, 2009	St Cloud, MN
Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon	January 28 – 30, 2009	Portland, OR
Professional Surveyors Assoc. of Nebraska	January 29- 30, 2009	Grand Island, NE
Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors	February 10 – 13, 2009	Kalamazoo, MI
North Dakota Society Prof Land Surveyors	February 11 – 13, 2009	Grand Forks, ND
Montana Association of Reg Land Surveyors	February 20 – 23, 2009	Salt Lake City, UT
West Virginia Society of Professional Surveyors	February 26 – 28, 2009	Morgantown, WV
Land Surveyors Association of Washington	March 4 – 7, 2009	Tacoma, WA
Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors	March 11 – 14, 2009	Boise, ID
Nevada Association of Land Surveyors	March 15 – 18, 2009	Las Vegas, NV
Arizona Professional Land Surveyors	March 15 – 18, 2009	Las Vegas, NV
California Land Surveyors Association	March 28 – April 1, 2009	San Diego, CA
Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors	October 8 – 10, 2009	St Louis, MO

If you would like to add your states meeting dates to the calendar please send them to Warren Ward at wward@co.grand.co.us.





National Association of County Surveyors

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Please return your completed application and check for the appropriate amount to:

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