

BC Environmental and Occupational Health Research Network GIS Group

Informal minutes: October 29, 2007

Attendees:

Eleanor Setton (UVIC)

Meghan Winters (UBC PhD student)

Dawn Mooney (CHSPR –staff)

Christine Ronning (Interior Health)

Anders Erikson (UNBC MSc student)

Jay Douillard (CATCH – Committee on Action Towards Children's Health – Okanagan)

Continuing discussion from previous call:

BCEOHRN has made funds available to support this peer-to-peer group. The funds are meant to support activities that promote networking among group members and that fall within the topic of environmental/occupation health research. Since last call, Dawn discussed opportunities to hold a special session on health mapping at the Canadian Cartographic Association conference, scheduled for May 13th – 15th, 2008. The conference organizers are supportive. As a group, we need to develop a session theme and identify one or more speakers on the topic. A suggested theme is: mapping as knowledge – challenges for visualizing health data. We would use BCEOHRN funds to bring speakers in, and to support travel to the conference for members.

Action: group members should identify potential speakers for the next call.

Eleanor followed up on the BC Recreation and Parks Survey data set – have not yet been given the contact info for the original group who conducted the survey, but the data seem to include addresses for all community centres, recreation centres, ice rinks, pools, etc in BC. Unfortunately, the data are not geocoded yet. Eleanor will update group if/when more info becomes available.

Updates from members:

- Dawn is working on updates to the Canadian and BC pharmaceutical atlases (for example, <http://www.chspr.ubc.ca/node/223>), also mapping primary care and working on reports re: home care and an emergency department patient satisfaction survey. Dawn is also learning Flash, useful for animating web applications, in this case, animated trends over time on maps. Eleanor mentioned InstantAtlas, as an example of an interesting template: <http://www.instantatlas.com/>
- Jay is working on a community research project looking at how parents access services. He is making an interactive map of parent resources, aiming to increase awareness of services, using Google maps with a post-GIS database for location driven querying (search by proximity). Jay is happy to share his experience/expertise in this area with other members. He is also interested in hearing about other members' uses of EDI data (Early Development Instrument – survey of development in kindergarten) from HELP.
 - **Action:** Christine and Anders will send contact info to Jay, Eleanor will send Carlos Silva's contact info

- Christine is still actively promoting GIS use at Interior Health, but it is still not widely recognized as a valuable tool. Still, interest has increased since the CPHA conference in Ottawa. She is working on community profiles (BC Stats based) and looking at economic, environmental and community impacts due to loss of timber from pine beetle infestations. A uranium and radon mapping project is about to start.
- Anders is finishing classes, and is expecting to receive birth outcome data next month. Meanwhile, he has been working with the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) data – using it to classify watersheds as high, medium, or low in terms of potential pollution. He has also found an Environment Canada data set for watersheds that reports bioassay information for fish – this may be a means of validating his classification of the watersheds. Eleanor mentioned the federal contaminated sites data base, as well as the provincial contaminated sites database.
 - **Action:** Eleanor will send Anders links/contact info for these datasets.
- Eleanor is continuing to work on a prototype web mapping application meant to allow public users to explore data on health, environment and community, and also on developing estimates of population exposures to environmental carcinogens. She mentioned the SKI conference in Fernie BC Feb 15th and 16th.
 - Action – Eleanor to send SKI conference link to group

Next call: to be scheduled

THANKS TO ALL!!!