

BC Environmental and Occupational Health Research Network GIS Group

Informal minutes: January 7, 2008

Attendees:

Ian Parfitt (Selkirk College)

Anders Erickson (UNBC)

Brendan Mather (VIHA)

Dawn Mooney (CHSPR UBC)

Eleanor Setton (UVIC)

Ellen Larcombe (HELP UBC)

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

Mieke Buller (BCCDC)

Ruth Cridland (FHA)

Christine Ronning (IHA)

1. BCEOHRN AGM & Scientific Exchange.

Friday, January 25, 2008

12:00 pm-6:00 pm

Sutton Place Hotel, 845 Burrard Street, Vancouver

RSVP to Pat Atherton if planning to attend.

Call for posters deadline is January 18, 2008

See <http://www.bceohrn.ca/BCEOHRN-AGM.html> for more information

2. BCEOHRN GIS group Web networking tools

Mentorship group page: <http://www.bceohrn.ca/GISNotes.html>

Wiki: <http://bceohrngis.pbwiki.com/>

Action: Eleanor to follow-up with Pat re: chat capability.

3. CCA special session on health geomatics – visualization focus for Canadian Cartographic Association conference May 13th – 15th 2008, Vancouver BC (UBC).

This session is envisioned as a plenary session with a speaker and a concurrent session with a panel of 4 or 5 people. It could also include a poster session. BCEOHRN is willing to pay the costs for a speaker. Some nominations for speaker include:

- Dr Nadine Schuurman, health geographer, SFU
- Dr Paul Sheppard, visualization, architecture and design, UBC
- The cartographer from the NYTimes.

- Dr Mark Monmonier, Distinguished Professor of Geography, Maxwell School of Citizenship, Syracuse University, New York.

Action: Dawn to send request to NY candidates using CCA or BCEOHRN request letter format.

Updates from members:

Anders: Completed course work, now working on thesis project: a watershed-based risk assessment (low, medium, high) for environmental health hazards. NPRI data for point pollution sources and contaminated load data for some locations in the Fraser system will be used.

Brendan: VIHA put out an Invitation to Quote for their GeoConnections funded project to create a GIS Strategic Plan. The quotes are due in today and they will be reviewing them this week in order to select a contractor as soon as possible. They have two contracts, one will be to carry out a high level user needs assessment and write the strategic plan, the other is for a third party to review the strategic plan for quality assurance.

Dawn: Sent call for papers for CCA/ACMLA 2008 conference to group – follow link for online copy <http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/assoc/acml/2008call.pdf>

Eleanor: Attended the Geoscience in Human Health Risk Assessment workshop in Ottawa. Presentations were generally about how geologists can provide info for health risk assessment. Also, some presentations on data sources.

Presentations are available at this website:

<http://www.mclaughlincentre.ca/events/geoscience/index.shtml>

Population Health Data Access and Analysis Platform - GeoConnections Letter of Interest was accepted. Funds, if approved, will augment Platform budget and will support a two day workshop on leading techniques in health geomatics, the development and delivery (of two seminars and the development of four best practices papers (how to documents for key techniques, to be made available online). We are about to hire a full time position to coordinate this, so expect some activity fairly soon.

BCEOHRN education event - scheduled for May 2nd, in Vancouver. This is a full day event focussing on 'linking exposure and health data'. Speakers will be talking about innovative ways to develop exposure data and link it to health outcomes, ranging from individual level to population level. Afternoon work sessions will include a GIS data demonstration (perhaps some of our group can help with this), a session on multi-level modelling (very useful if you are looking for associations between factors and health outcomes using data of different scales) and an information/feed back session for the Population Health Data Access and Analysis Platform.

Working with UBC on estimating exposures to environmental carcinogens, will provide web location etc once we are fully up and running.

About to finalize the air quality monitoring report for the James Bay Air Quality Study, should become public by the end of January. Will likely post on the BAQS website - Eleanor will let folks know where to find it once it is out.

Ellen: presented the results of HELP's Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB) Vernon Asset Mapping project to the HELP Aboriginal Steering committee (ASC). The committee was receptive to the results and reiterated the importance of 'informal' asset --which do not necessarily have address information but are as important as the 'formal assets' included on the map. We are currently in the process of determining next steps for the project. I will be reporting back to the ASC in April.

Jay: Nearly completed work on a interactive ECD asset map that uses Ruby on Rails/Google Map/PostGIS. Members are invited to take a tour of the demo site <http://catch.webhop.org/map/map>. Please Contact Jay if you wish to see the backend/geocoding/admin interface.

Also Jay will be joining the HELP team in February.

Action: Jay and Ellen will add asset mapping information to the wiki

Mieke: Paper published in the Journal of the American Mosquito Control Association and annual report completed for West Nile Virus project, see citations and link below. Also working on an inventory of geodata held by BCCDC.

Mak, S., M. Buller, A. Furnell, L. MacDougall, and B. Henry, 2007. USE OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS TO ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF GROUND AND AERIAL-BASED ADULTICIDING FOR WEST NILE VIRUS CONTROL IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA. Journal of the American Mosquito Control Association. 23(4);396-404

2007 Surveillance Report (West Nile virus) is available for download at:
<http://www.bccdc.org/content.php?item=373#2>

Ruth: Fraser Health has just hired Kate Maness who will be working on GIS for two days a week. Kate comes from UBC where she worked as a GIS technician for the past five years. Kate.Maness@fraserhealth.ca

Christine: Presentation on use of GIS within Interior Health to IHA Board of Directors next week. Hope to inform them of what GIS is, what it can do and drum up some support for the program

Working with Air Quality CORE program (public health) to demonstrate the usefulness of GIS and use as a foothold to move GIS forward and expand within other areas of public health.

Hoping to put together an 'inventory' of organizations that are using GIS within health. Purpose of this is 3-fold: Identify potential partners to work collaboratively with; avoid duplication of existing work; use as an educational tool to show the organizations using GIS and the type of work they are doing.

Christine has also been speaking with IHA IT and plan to submit a GIS tactical plan which will enable them to define where GIS is going within the organization and what IT resources are needed. This will be submitted in July as an application, assessed by IT and hopefully accepted, providing more time and technical skills dedicated to cleaning up geospatial data and thereby freeing more time for interesting analysis work.

Ian: The SGRC is working on an Understanding the Early Years project with the Kootenay Boundary Regional Resources Co-operative and the IHA. The SGRC is providing technical support and may develop and host a Web application once data collection has been completed. Selkirk College GIS students are available to help out with proof of concept Web applications for their Internet mapping course this semester. They are also looking for coop positions for the summer (May – August) term.

Next call:

1pm February 7th 2008