

MINUTES of the BigSkyHUG Winter'2004 Conference Call Jan 27, 2004

ATTENDEES: Paul Spengler, Pam Pedersen, Janelle Luppen, Pat Crowley, Doug Bausch, Dianne Lehm, Val Jaffe.

TOPICS:

1. 2003 HAZUS related activities
 2. Publication date for HAZUS Multi-Hazard (including Flood Module)
 3. Upcoming training opportunities in Montana
 4. Big Sky HAZUS User Group - Legal Status Requirements and Available Funding
 5. Progress on the Montana Statewide Hazard Assessment and Mitigation Plan
 6. Available HAZUS resources
 7. Next meeting arrangements
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1. 2003 HAZUS related activities:

First HAZUS-MH training in Bozeman; National HAZUS User Group meeting - ESRI Conference; FEMA-Emergency Management Institute teacher training (Val); Bozeman HAZUS project completion: Statewide hazard assessment and mitigation plan - contract signed with Montana Disaster and Emergency Services; Southeast HUG growing quickly.

2. Publication date for HAZUS Multi-Hazard (including Flood Module):

Published software is in duplication at the time of this meeting. Software documentation is not as strong as it will be with the first service release after this publication (anticipated for summer 2004). Software DVDs will be distributed anytime now. Contact Doug Bausch, FEMA-Region VIII Doug Bausch (Douglas.Bausch@fema.gov) to receive copy.

3. Upcoming training opportunities and presentations in Montana:

- Intermountain GIS Conference, Billings, Montana. April 23, 2004. See post-conference workshop list and descriptions at <http://mtgeo.org/conference/conference2004/index.html>.
- PreDisaster Mitigation, MDES Helena Office, March 9-10. Contact Doug Bausch (Douglas.Bausch@fema.gov) or Larry Akers (lakers@state.mt.us).
- HAZUS Flood Module demo (Lincoln fire area), Helena National Forest, Helena, March 11. Limited attendance. Contact Val Jaffe (val@teagardenstech.com).

4. Big Sky HAZUS User Group - Legal Status Requirements and Available Funding:

HAZUS User Groups receive limited support funding from FEMA. The HUGs are not FEMA organizations; rather, state and project organizations for at a minimum applying the software product and methodology developed by FEMA and National Institute of Building Sciences. Each HUG must obtain their own funding for their individual organization. To continue the current activities of BigSkyHUG, and to grow with the increasing public interest in Montana, participants in the group must generate new funding sources.

Legal status issues and recognition of responsible individuals Establishing a decision-making Board of Directors) must be addressed at the same time as organization funding development. Monies the organization takes in and spends under the Not-for-Profit corporate name of BigSky HUG, on behalf of its participants, must be (by law) reported to the Internal Revenue Service. To-

date, no one has offered their time or willingness to be a Board Member (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) of BigSky HUG

Note: Unless an existing Not-for-Profit organization with IRS 501C3 status offers to adopt BigSky HUG as a sub-program or activity, the current participants must create an official and self-sustaining organization. To determine if such a "umbrella" and willing organization exists, an interested individual (or individuals) would need to learn of likely organizations and present a proposal to their Board of Directors. The Montana GIS User Group has previously been discussed as possibly an organization of interest; but, no formal action has been pursued to discuss another home for BigSky HUG other than its unique and separate existence. See <http://www.mtgeo.org/giscoord.html> for details on the Montana GIS community.

Val met with Lt. Steve Staneart, Director, The Salvation Army in Helena after the conference call to see if his organization would be interested in partnering with BigSky HUG (as an umbrella 501C organization, or otherwise). He thinks there are mutual benefits to partnering, and encouraged the HUG to submit a formal proposal to meet co-operative organizational goals. See http://www1.salvationarmy.org/usw/www_usw_im.nsf/vw-dynamic-arrays/55D4B2B2AA9B9FDD80256DCA0081BCA0?openDocument for details on their role in disasters.

IMPORTANT!! To continue offering BigSky HUG participants statewide coordination as it exists, and to create a self-supporting organization the following must occur ASAP:

- a. HUG Board of Directors must be formed,
- b. HUG mission statement must be drafted,
- c. HUG priorities must be set,
- d. The most advantageous legal organizational structure for BigSky HUG must be determined and established,
- e. Funding search volunteer(s) are required and searches must be tied to HUG priorities.

No Board of Directors currently exists, and no volunteers have come forth to fill the legal obligations of establishing the organization as a Not for Profit (501C3). This legal status is required to receive or spend monies on behalf of the HUG to carry forward training and networking options expressed by the current BigSkyHUG participants. (This assumption is the best available information. Please comment if you think this legal status and accountability assumption is incorrect.)

Finances and Funding The legal name filing expenses of \$50.00 (\$40 filing + \$10 travel) have been covered by Val to maintain the HUG name over the last two years at the Secretary of State Office. Reimbursement and contributions to defray these organizational are requested. No additional effort will be made by the HUG Statewide Coordinator to continue this corporate name protection when this filing year expires, unless filing fees are forthcoming.

Technical and Montana training session expenses have been afforded by FEMA since the first implementation of HAZUS in Montana (2001). Doug Bausch has generously negotiated coverage for our classroom and his technical assistance to promote HAZUS in this state within FEMA Region VIII. He has also helped us to obtain at least limited assistance offered by Jamie Caplan, FEMA subcontractor and expert in HAZUS User Group creation and coordination. Doug continues to support on-site training and project assistance. He will instruct the workshops at the Intermountain GIS Conference in April.

Jamie Caplan Consulting (JCC) was hired with Tetra Tech EM to develop the publication FEMA 404 "How to Create A HAZUS User Group," a guide for forming multi-hazard HAZUS User Groups. Jamie Caplan has been the Project Coordinator for the formation of many HAZUS User

Groups and HAZUS implementation projects. For more information on Jamie, see <http://www.jamiecaplan.com/>.

FEMA funding will be available for PreDisaster Mitigation Plan updates. Setup expenses for HAZUS application, including hardware/software may be covered under a grant. Paul will discuss grant application options with FEMA and the City of Helena / L&C County for local applications soon. See <http://www.fema.gov/fima/pdm.shtm> for federal funding details and contact Doug (Douglas.Bausch@fema.gov) with your questions.

5. Progress on the Montana Statewide Hazard Assessment and Mitigation Plan:

The Montana Statewide Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan process has been initiated by Montana Disaster and Emergency Services. Contractors are currently in the process of starting the statewide risk assessment. HAZUS will be used to the extent possible in this assessment, however, concerns exist regarding the feasibility of using HAZUS on the Statewide level and data default inaccuracies. The risk assessment methodology is considering the use of the census block data for exposure figures.

Opportunities exist for future HAZUS projects at the local level through the incorporation of those types of projects into local PDM plans, and thus, the State plan. Several funding opportunities will be identified in the State plan, including FEMA's PDM-C. For more information on the Statewide Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan, contact Pam Pedersen of Big Sky Hazard Management at ppedersen@bigsky.net.

6. Available HAZUS resources:

Check www.hazus.org for publications (home page and link to resources). Publications are available on developing a User Group, the Helena Area HAZUS Analysis project, using HAZUS for mitigation planning, etc. Val has one copy of the User Group Toolkit including templates, brochure, and guides in electronic and hardcopy.

7. Next meeting arrangements: Early April 2004. Stay tuned.

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