### Supporting the Lone GIS Professional

David A. Howes Compliance Services International

Jan Benson NOAA - Alaska Fisheries Science Center

> Allison Bailey Sound GIS

2008 Washington GIS Conference May 6, 2008



# Program

- Presentation 1: *The concept and rationale* David Howes
- Presentation 2: A federal agency perspective – Jan Benson
- Presentation 3 A solo consultant perspective – Allison Bailey
- Discussion

# **David A. Howes**

- Geospatial Information Scientist
- Compliance Services International, Lakewood, WA
- Education:
  - Ph.D. Geomorphology (State University of New York at Buffalo, NY)
  - M.Sc. GIS (University of Edinburgh, Scotland)
  - B.Sc. (Hons.) Geography (University of Salford, England)
- Years Working in GIS: 17
- Primary interest in GIS: Physical environmental processes/spatial analysis



#### Jan Benson

- AFSC GIS Coordinator
- NOAA-Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Seattle, WA
- Education:
  - M.S. Cartography (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
  - B.S. Zoology (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
- Years Working in GIS: 17+
- Primary interest in GIS: Data visualization, education

# **Allison Bailey**

- Principal
- Sound GIS, Seattle, WA
- Education:
  - M.S. Marine Studies/Remote Sensing and GIS (University of Delaware)
  - B.A. Biology, cum laude (Carleton College, Northfield, MN)
- Years Working in GIS: 17+
- Primary interest in GIS: Spatial analysis, GIS for marine resource management



## Supporting the Lone GIS Professional

#### The Concept and Rationale

#### David A. Howes Compliance Services International

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- General observations since the late 1980s
- Recent conversations at an EPA NHDPlus workshop
- 2008 ESRI Developer Summit Presummit Seminar

# Background – Developer Summit

- Presummit presentation: Introduction to Planning, Developing and Maintaining ArcGIS Applications (available from http://edn.esri.com)
- Excellent presentation geared towards development teams
- Much of relevance to the lone GIS professional
- Triggered an intense four-day informal survey of conference attendees leading to the current ongoing effort

# **Objectives**

- Consider the plight of the lone GIS professional
- If their experience can be improved, try to help them to be more successful
- Be positive

# Types of Lone GIS Professional

- Full-time GIS professional
- Part-time GIS professional with other responsibilities
- Professional in another field using GIS to organize/analyze/present data

#### **Rationale for "Lone" Status**

- Choice
- Project requirements
- Staff shortages
- Funding limitations

# Many Globes to Juggle

Technical	Administrative	Application
Programmer/ developer/tester	Accountant	Trainer
System administrator	Marketer	Author
Designer	Consultant	Domain specialist
Researcher	Manager	
Analyst		

#### Life As Atlas

 Increasing -weight of data number of tools/options -technological complexity number of stakeholders - responsibilities -possibility for error - expectations Googlization - make maps/ data available on the web

#### Consequences

- Fear of new software/methods use old versions/standards
- Fail to capitalize on value of new capabilities 5% rule – most of us are probably (guilty of) using about 5% of the capabilities of most programs
- Overload
- Discouragement
- Where to start?
- Isolation

# Are We Trying To Do Too Much?

 Alan Cooper – Design Engineering: The Next Step

http://www.cooper.com/insights/journal\_of\_de sign/articles/design\_engineering\_the\_next\_st. html

- Interaction designers
- Design engineers
- Production engineers

# **Simplify Things**

- Gordon Ramsey Ramsey's Kitchen Nightmares (BBC)
- Focus on something and be the best at it

#### **Resource Concerns**

- Overwhelming amount of information
- Too many possibilities
- Tool focus as opposed to task focus
- Lack of community focus
- Domain focus

Someone in a completely unrelated discipline may have just what you need

#### Needs

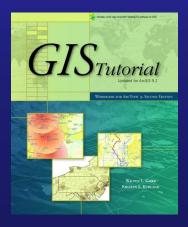
- Interaction with others in same situation (something in common)
- I need something from here, something from there how do I put it all together?
- Just help me get started...
- Shared experience

l'm not alone

# What Do We Have Now?

- GIS forums
- Online help
- General web search
- Conferences
- Books
- Blogs
- Colleagues





- How useful are they?How are they useful?
- What experience do you have with these or other resources?

Open my search options (default)		Need help?	
You are here: <u>Home</u> > Forums			
User Forums			
ESRI hosts these forums for our community of GIS professionals to browse and post focused questions, or actively help others.		Annual Grand Prize Winners May 1, 2006 - April 30, 2007	
Software Discussions		1. Miles Hitchen 1805 pts.	
ArcCAD     ArcExplorer     ArcSIS Business Analyst	AnSIGE (9.1 and other)     AnSIGE (9.1 and other)     Ansights     Ansights	<ol> <li>Dan Patterson 1399 pts.</li> <li>Neil Clemmons 1213 pts.</li> </ol>	
<ul> <li>ArcGIS Business Analyst Server</li> <li>ArcGIS Data Interoperability</li> </ul>		MVP Winners for May 1, 2007 - Oct. 31, 2007	
<u>ArcGIS Desixtop</u> <u>ArcGIS Exclorer     <u>ArcGIS Exclorer     </u> <u>ArcGIS Exclorer     </u> <u>ArcGIS Exclorer     </u> <u>ArcGIS (ar AutoCAD  <u>ArcGIS (or AutoCAD          </u> <u>ArcGIS (or AutoCAD                                     </u></u></u>		<ol> <li>Michael Knight 741 pts.</li> <li>Dan Patterson 495 pts.</li> <li>Neil Clemmons 444 pts.</li> <li>Miles Hitchen 405 pts.</li> <li>Lakshmanan Venkatsan 37- pts.</li> <li>Honorable Mention</li> <li>Philip Thompson 198 pts.</li> </ol>	
ArcLogistics Route	PLTS	Most Valuable Professionals	
<u>ArcPad</u> <u>ArcReader</u>	RouteMAP IMS     Tracking Server	The Most Valuable Professionals (MVP) program was created by ESRI to recognize and reward	
Industry Discussions		users who help other users. For	
Business     Cartoaraphy     Defense     Education     Engineering	Government     Health     Natural Resources     Utilities & Transportation	details about the program, the prizes, and the Official Contest Rules, see the <u>MVP Program</u> page.	

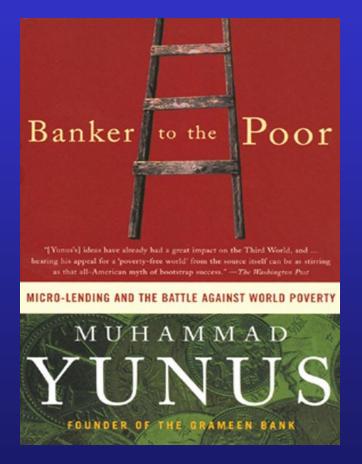
## What Can We Do?

- Gather feedback
- Establish network critical mass of people with relevant knowledge and common situation
- Provide a neighborhood
- Develop web resources
- Produce publications

# **Tom Nolan's Recommendations**

- Experience
- Mentoring
- Networking
- Patience
- Persistence

# **Muhammad Yunus**



- Creator of micro-credit
- Borrowers must organize themselves into groups of five like-minded people
- Trust is critical

Image from http://audiobooks.borders.com

# "*Beg, borrow, steal"* and Contribute