NSGIC

3DEP

FOR THE NATION

State 3DEP Coordination Best Practices

The National States Geographic Information Council's 3DEP for the Nation project - conducted in cooperation with the USGS 3D Elevation (3DEP) Program and the Federal 3DEP Working Group - addresses the need for high-quality topographic data and three-dimensional representations of the nation's natural and constructed features.

Consistent and quality elevation data is fundamental to effectively modeling natural and built environments and assessing the potential impact of natural hazards, agriculture, forestry, and urban development. The acquisition of elevation data requires coordination across government entities and the private sector. State agencies are uniquely positioned to work closely with the local and regional governments that comprise the state, the federal agencies responsible for national data initiatives and managing lands within the state, and the non-governmental and private sector organizations operating within the state.

Primary to this coordination is the relationship between federal agencies active in the collection of 3DEP data and the state agencies responsible for addressing statewide and regional issues related to public safety, economic development, infrastructure management, and the protection of natural and cultural resources. By coordinating closely, federal and state agencies are able to consider regional elevation data needs within a national perspective and move 3DEP acquisition forward in a manner that leverages economies of scale and maximizes the extent and value of the data collected.

The Federal 3DEP Working Group provides federal agencies a forum for the exchange of information about 3DEP activities and plans and has established a set of best practices for a unified federal approach. The NSGIC 3DEP for the Nation project provides a similar forum for state agencies. In an effort to build upon federal 3DEP coordination experiences and best practices, the NSGIC 3DEP for the Nation project convened a 2019 workshop with Federal 3DEP Working Group members to explore the challenges to and opportunities for improving the coordination of 3DEP data acquisition and use within states. The following best practices were derived from the discussions held during the workshop and are intended for use by state agencies active in 3DEP acquisition.

State 3DEP Coordination Best Practices

- **Know your state-wide community**
  Identify state and regional 3DEP stakeholders and engage them in the process. Think outside of the box - non-profit conservation groups, regional planning organizations, surveyors, and foresters.

- **Know your federal partners**
  Identify federal liaisons and regional contacts for your state for those agencies active in the acquisition and use of elevation data.

- **Perform regular outreach to stakeholders**
  Engage stakeholders at all levels through working groups, conferences, workshops, and regularly scheduled check-ins via phone and email.

- **Develop and advocate for your plan**
  Set goals and objectives and develop an organized plan of action. Manage and promote the plan as a multi-year, living document, aligning and adapting to state, regional, and national priorities as able. Utilize the NSGIC 3DEP Acquisition Planning Guide.

- **Publicize your efforts**
  Create a website or online workspace that informs stakeholders, solicits input, and facilitates funding partnerships.

- **Innovate funding**
  Engage in established funding programs and seek out new opportunities. Utilize/create legislation to facilitate the pooling of small contributions. Build elevation data use cases relevant to pressing issues and decision-makers. Pay federal 3DEP acquisition 'forward' when fiscal years are out of sync.

- **Establish and promote data distribution**
  Identify data distribution methods that best support your community and utilize or develop a data access site. Encourage access to data via workshops, data application showcases, and community updates about new data and services.

- **Promote the use of 3DEP data**
  Develop lidar and IfSAR data application story maps, training opportunities, posters, and other education materials to inform and engage data consumers and decision-makers. Include stakeholder applications from all sectors.