

Joint Order, Establishing the Task Force and Study on Changes required to modernize the Acquisition, Maintenance, Storage and distribution of Geographic Data in Maine

WHEREAS, the technology supporting geographic information systems has changed substantially since the Office of Geographic Information Systems (AKA MeGIS) was established; and

WHEREAS, the use of geographic information has expanded exponentially throughout all levels of government, and private sectors of the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, geographic information systems are a foundational tool in studying and evaluating the effects of public policies, supporting economic development, and communicating complex issues to stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, a repository for geographic information is urgently needed to store, maintain and distribute geographic information to geographic systems users; and

WHEREAS, the amount of geographic information has exploded exponentially and continues to increase dramatically; and

WHEREAS, the need for professional staffing to oversee and manage the acquisition, storage and distribution of geographic data from public, private and non-profit sources has outstripped the capacity of the Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems as established under Title 5 MRSA §1991 - §1996; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Library of Geographic Information Systems is inadequately supported to meet its legislative mandate as established under Title 5 §2001- §2006; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that access to parcel, engineering, zoning and other geographic information data developed by Maine communities is important to the efficient operations of state agencies; and

WHEREAS, access to historical geographic information provides key context to changes in the state's resources, development and environmental patterns to inform decision making and research; and

WHEREAS, planning for climate change, economic development and many other activities requires research and analysis based on access to both current and historical data; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Technology and Maine office of GIS primary focus is providing software and data protection for state agencies and not for access by non-state agencies; and

WHEREAS, GIS data is far different than ordinary data required by most of the states OIT users and requires different protocols for delivery and storage; and

WHEREAS, many non-state users of data do not use the same software as state GIS users; and

WHEREAS, opportunities for grants and partnerships to acquire and distribute data may not coincide with the state budgeting process and require more flexible access to matching funds required; and

WHEREAS, the ; and

WHEREAS, the importance of accurate geospatial data is recognized as fundamental to the wellbeing, efficiency of both governmental and non-governmental activities in the state of Maine, now, therefore, be it

ORDERED, the Senate concurring, that, the Task Force and Study on Changes Required To Modernize The Acquisition, Maintenance, Storage and Distribution Of Geographic Data In Maine, referred to in this order as "the task force," is established as follows.

1. Appointments; composition. The task force consists of the following members:

A. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate,

B. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House

C. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall invite to participate as voting members of the task force, as follows:

i. A representative appointed by a statewide association of engineers or surveyors a representative appointed by the Maine Library of Geographic Information Board;

ii. A representative appointed by the Chancellor of the University of Maine System;

iii. A representative from an institution of higher learning not associated with the University of Maine System;

iv. the Chief of the Penobscot Nation or the chief's designee;

D. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House also shall invite to participate as nonvoting ex officio members of the task force, as follows:

i. The Governor or the Governor's designee;

ii.

iii. the Executive Director of the Maine Library of Geographic Information and the Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems;

iv. The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry or the commissioner's designee;

v. The Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection or the commissioner's designee;

vi. The Commissioner of the Department of Transportation or the commissioner's designee;

vii. The Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife or the commissioner's designee;

viii. and, the Commissioner of the Department of Marine Resources or the commissioner's designee.

2. Chairs. The first-named Senator is the Senate chair of the task force and the first-named member of the House of Representatives is the House chair of the task force.

3. Appointments; convening. All appointments must be made no later than 15 days following passage of this order. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative Council once all appointments have been made. When the appointment and invitation of all members has been completed, the chairs of the task force shall call and convene the first meeting of the task force. If 15 days or more after the passage of this order a majority of but not all appointments have been made,

the chairs may request authority and the Legislative Council may grant authority for the task force to meet and conduct its business.

4. Duties. The task force shall engage the assistance of a consultant with professional experience as a facilitator to assist the committee to:

A. Review Maine's legislation regarding geographic information systems and make recommendations to the Legislature for legislation regarding any suggested changes to but not limited to Title 5 MRSA §1991 - §1996 and Title 5 §2001- §2006.

B. Review the resources needed to effectively manage the Maine Geolibrary, specifically considering the need for one FTE GIS information officer whose responsibilities will be to advise the geographic information board and the commissioner regarding GIS data needs for acquisition, maintenance and distribution of GIS data; one FTE Geolibrarian with knowledge of GIS data models, concepts, techniques and technologies and information and library science.

C. Consider the optimal administrative setting of the Maine Geolibrary

D. Consider funding mechanisms for the staff of the Maine Geolibrary, including support through the General Fund or through fees charged to data users.

E. Consider funding mechanisms, including general fund and other mechanisms, that support necessary acquisition of orthoimagery, lidar, and other essential datasets.

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5. Quorum. A quorum is a majority of voting members of the task force.

6. Staffing. The Legislative Council shall provide necessary staffing services to the task force, except that the Legislative Council staff support is not authorized when the Legislature is in regular or special session.

7. Reports. No later than September 1, 2020, the task force shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government that includes its findings and consensus-based recommendations, including suggested legislation, for introduction to the First Regular Session of the 130th Legislature. In addition, the task force shall compile an official record of its activities, which must include reports, testimony and other materials submitted to the task force, as well as documentation of all recommendations considered by the task force regardless of whether such recommendations were adopted. The Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government shall report out legislation based on the consensus-based recommendations of the task force.