



### ***1. Organizational Approach to GIT:***

The Florida Division of Forestry (<http://www.fl-dof.com>) within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (ACS) (<http://doacs.state.fl.us>) has been using GIT for over a decade. Most of the Division's GIT use at state forests is for project specific applications, without much structured coordination. The majority of data is collected and maintained locally at one of 15 district or state forest offices. The Division, however, is transitioning to an enterprise-wide approach, which will provide the ability for staff to update core data layers that will be made available to land managers at headquarters. Additionally, the Division acquires GIS vector data from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/>). A centralized GIS staff of three dedicated analysts supports headquarters, and a fourth provides technical assistance to field offices. Most of the 32 state forest and district offices have trained staff in some aspect of GIT hardware or software. Overall the Division has 15 advanced level GIT users, and 25-40 casual users. The Systems Project Analyst supervises headquarters' dedicated GIS staff, serves to promote the use of these types of tools within the Division by formulating technical specifications for field staff, makes policy recommendations to management, and also acts as a representative to the Department of Agriculture's GIS users group. In regard to GIT policy, the Division requires that mapping resources be made available for wildlife suppression. Issues center on the training and education of managers to increase the effectiveness of GIT within the Division.

### ***2. GIT Applications and Data Utilized:***

The use of GIT at the Division has evolved from the limited use of desktop mapping applications to advanced environmental modeling. GIT is now used for several applications, such as wildfire risk assessment, **fire** weather, **state land** and timber stand management, **wildlife** monitoring, forest resource **planning**, fire mitigation and public **education**, and **wetlands** restoration activities. GIT is a key component of the Florida Fire Information System, which supports the Division's prescribed burning authorization program, and a statewide wildfire risk assessment project is underway under contract with Space Imaging (<http://corp.pacificmeridian.com/floridafuels/index.htm>), formerly Pacific Meridian. Several key projects will facilitate the corporate use of GIT tools, including the state-wide fire risk assessment and the revised Florida Fire Information System (<http://www.esri.com/library/userconf/proc01/professional/papers/pap826/p826.htm>). The integration of GIS technicians into the Division's four incident teams has solidified the use of these tools for forest fire suppression efforts. The use of infrared imagery for hotspot detection and fire perimeter assessment is increasingly being used. The Division uses ESRI products for its GIS applications and ERDAS Imagine for remote sensing imagery analyses. The Division recently acquired recreation grade GPS devices for use throughout the organization. Both vector and raster data are used extensively within the Division, and digital orthophotos acquired by the State of Florida every 3-5 years are made available to the Division and other state agencies. In addition, the Division works cooperatively with Florida State University's (FSU) Department of Meteorology on weather related projects. Recently, LANDSAT TM data has been acquired internally for fuels mapping. Some customized GIT applications are being utilized. Information related to fire weather and fire danger is provided to fire managers and the public through customized interfaces.

### ***3. Statewide and Other GIT Linkages:***

Although Florida has no official statewide GI/GIT coordinating office or group at this time, coordination of GIT activities within the ACS is facilitated by a GIS Users group. FSU and the Florida Resources and Environmental Analysis Center (FREAC) (<http://www.freac.fsu.edu/>) play a key role in the acquisition

and dissemination of digital orthophotos. As mentioned above, the Division is engaged in collaborative efforts with FSU's Department of Meteorology regarding weather related projects.

In addition, FREAC manages the Florida Data Directory (FDD), the state's official GI Clearinghouse, and now serves as the unofficial lead contact for GI/GIT within Florida (<http://als.dms.state.fl.us/~fdd/>). Much of the Division's GIS vector data is acquired from cooperating state agencies such as the DEP (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/>), which is also helping to support some statewide GI/GIT functions. The University of Florida's GeoPlan Center (<http://www.geoplan.ufl.edu>) is responsible for maintaining the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL) (<http://www.fgdl.org/>), which also provides downloadable GIS layers. These data resources complement the GIS data that the Division maintains in-house.