



1. Organizational Approach to GIT:

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) (<http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/>) is an autonomous forest management agency that makes limited use of GIT at this time. However, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (<http://www.dnr.state.ga.us/>) has used GIT for several years, including remote sensing (RS), and has been developing a department-wide approach to GIT for over a decade. GFC hired a new GIS Coordinator in March 2002. GFC maintained the position previously, but had been without a Coordinator for about one year due to heavy budget constraints that have forced GFC to cut back in areas such as staffing, hardware, software and training. In addition, lack of funding prevents the development and implementation of enterprise standards for the use of GIT. GFC's 1999 budget of \$200,000 for GIT has been reduced to \$29,000 as of 2002, excluding the Coordinator's salary. GFC is not receiving any outside assistance in regard to GIT at this time. GFC has roughly 200 personnel who use GIS and GPS on a part time basis in offices throughout the state. GFC's System's Administrator works to coordinate and manage GFC's computer systems. Both the Administrator and the Coordinator are located in GFC's Administration Section. GIT use had been uncoordinated and left to the discretion of the individual foresters due to the lack of a GIS Coordinator. The new Coordinator hopes to increase GIT use and coordination through federal funding for individual projects in urban forestry, fire and forest management. Although GFC anticipates GIT funding cuts of an additional five percent in 2003, federal grants for GIT efforts will be supplemented with reallocation of funds within GFC. It is hoped that having a GIS Coordinator will provide increased GIT funding in GFC in 2004. There are no policies regarding GIT use for GFC.

2. GIT Applications and Data Utilized:

The GFC uses GIT primarily for **private** landowner services and for limited **fire** applications. However, the funding cuts described above have resulted in minimal use of GIS and digital mapping by GFC. At the present time, the main use of GIS is in the creation of stand alone maps and drawings, which are developed from GPS data collected by GFC staff and used as a component of forest management plans such as forest stewardship and planning for **private** landowners. No data standards are used and data are not suitable for incorporation into any larger data structure or database. The only other application of GIS has involved the collection of GPS data concerning **fire** control resources such as rural fire departments, and data on fire sizes such as GPS shape files. Fire data are not developed using external standards and are only valuable as an internal resource. The GFC currently uses ArcView 3.1 and has Corvallis Microtechnology (CMT) and Trimble GeoExplorer II GPS units.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently assisting in **wildlife** applications of GIT such as the state's portion of the Gap Analysis Program (GAP), by developing a similar LANDSAT Thematic Mapper (TM)-based land cover database. The Department of Revenue worked with Space Imaging to demonstrate to the Department and the Georgia Association of Assessing Officials how satellite data could be used to increase efficiency and accuracy in generating tax revenue from timber harvesting activities on **private lands**. This project was initiated by Space Imaging, but the application was adopted and expanded by the Department of Revenue. The newest product is an updated GIS application using additional data, such as Department of Transportation layers and county tax map layers, acquired through the Georgia GIS Data Clearinghouse, described below. This new application is expected to be released in 2002.

3. Statewide and Other GIT Linkages:

The Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) provides statewide information technology (IT) and GI/GIT coordination, and serves as the official statewide lead for GI/GIT in the state (<http://www.gagta.com/>).

GTA will be hiring a GIS Director in 2002. The GIS Coordinating Committee (GISCC) is the authorized statewide GI/GIT coordinating group (<http://www.gis.state.ga.us/Coordination/GISCC/giscc.html>), which oversees the operations of the Clearinghouse described below. Although the GFC currently has no linkage to these groups, one role of GFC's new GIS Coordinator will be to reestablish connections with them.

The Georgia GIS Data Clearinghouse (<http://www.gis.state.ga.us>) has operated at the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Georgia since 1996. It is anticipated that the GTA and the universities will continue operating the clearinghouse. Furthermore, GTA has directed GISCC to develop a plan that will expand clearinghouse services to include Web mapping servers.