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Integrating and Stewarding Spatial Data for West Virginia Trails

Presenter

Evan Fedorko
GIS Analyst
WV University Morgantown, WV
evan.fedorko@mail.wvu.edu

Co-Presenter

Kurt Donaldson
Manager
WV University

Even within the relatively small geographic area of West Virginia, there are many agencies, organizations and businesses that collect and manage digital information about trails. Well organized data sharing will enhance the ability of agencies to complete their daily tasks, such as the development of high quality maps, monitoring of their trails and maintenance of their properties. An easily updateable and shareable statewide compilation of trails data will also have enormous benefits for users of the data. No longer will it be necessary for data users to obtain multiple datasets in order to explore trail opportunities.

Currently, the statewide GIS data clearinghouse (<http://www.wvgis.wvu.edu>) distributes seven different trail datasets. Additionally, the WVDOT State Trails Coordinator maintains a detailed tabular database (http://www.wvdot.com/3_ROADWAYS/rp/3d5_trails.htm) of trails in the state. A disconnect exists between this high quality value added database and the geographic data maintained by trail stewards. Harmonizing these and other databases will result in an overall improvement to spatial data for trails in West Virginia.

We propose a stewardship and data standards (based on the Federal Trails Data Standard) framework for GIS data for West Virginia and utilize those standards to create an integrated trails data product for West Virginia. We present lessons learned and comments on the process of integrating and maintaining datasets of this nature.