

July 7, 2011

SUBJECT: GISCI Resolution

Dear WVAGP Members:

On June 15, 2011 at the WVAGP Annual Meeting, the membership approved a resolution that recognizes the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI) as the organization capable of providing a complete certification program to the broad spectrum of GIS professionals in the West Virginia GIS community.

On the attached pages are the resolution and a frequently asked questions section on GISCI Certification. For more information about GIS certification, please consult the GISCI (<http://www.gisci.org>) and WVAGP (<http://www.wvaggp.org/GISP.asp>) websites.

Sincerely,



Robert Shaffer, President
WVAGP

GIS PROFESSIONAL (GISP) CERTIFICATION

Resolution

Whereas, the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI) is an independent, non-profit organization providing the geographic information system (GIS) community with a complete certification program; and

Whereas, the GISCI was created as a federation of GIS professional associations capable of representing the broad spectrum of the profession; and

Whereas, a certified GIS Professional (GISP) has met the minimum standards for ethical conduct and professional practice as established by the GISCI; and

Whereas, the WVAGP supports software certification programs like the ESRI Technical Certification program which complements the GISP certification; and

Whereas, the WVAGP supports the GIS/LIS certification programs offered by The American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) and other GIS-related professional associations that focus on the application of GIS to a specific discipline or sector of private/public practice; and

Whereas, the work of GIS professionals is recognized as being different from that of licensed surveyors, and that NCEES Model Rules for "Inclusions and Exclusions of Surveying Practice" set forth in the WV State Code serve as a basis for GIS professionals to only work within their sphere of knowledge and education; and

Whereas, certified GIS Professionals adhere to the GIS Code of Ethics and do not practice beyond the limitations of one's own knowledge or perform activities included within the practice of a licensed surveyor in accordance with the NCEES Model Rules; and

Whereas, the WV Association of Geospatial Professionals encourages certification of GIS Professionals through the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI); be it

RESOLVED, that the WV Association of Geospatial Professionals recognizes the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI) as the organization capable of providing a complete certification program to the broad spectrum of GIS professionals in the West Virginia GIS community.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why does WVAGP encourage GIS Professionals (GISP) to become certified?

A certified GIS Professional (GISP) has met the minimum standards for ethical conduct and professional practice as established by the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI), an independent, non-profit organization providing the GIS community with a complete certification program (<http://www.gisci.org>). The GIS Certificate Institute is the largest GIS certification program in West Virginia and as of May 2011 there were 26 certified GIS Professionals working or residing in the State.

Who oversees the GIS Certificate Institute (GISCI) that certifies GIS Professionals?

Member organizations represented on the Board of Directors that oversee the operation and management of the GISCI includes the Association of American Geographers (AAG), the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), the University Consortium of Geographic Information Science (UCGIS), the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA), and the Geospatial Information & Technology Association (GITA).

Does WVAGP support other GIS certifications programs?

Yes. Although GISCI was created as a federation of GIS professional associations capable of representing the broad spectrum of the profession, WVAGP encourages its members to seek other specialized certifications in GIS software or other GIS-related professional associations that focus on the application of GIS to a specific discipline or sector of private/public practice.

As examples, WVAGP supports software certification programs like the ESRI Technical Certification program; or the GIS/LIS certification programs offered by The American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS); or GIS course certification by the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO). All the aforementioned programs complement the GISP certification program and further recognize additional competency skills of the GIS profession.

How does the certification of GIS professionals contrast from that of licensed professional surveyors?

The work of GIS professionals is very different from licensed surveyors, and the NCEES Model Rules for "Inclusions and Exclusions of Surveying Practice" set forth in the WV State Code serve as a basis for GIS professionals to only work within their sphere of knowledge and education. Certified GIS Professionals adhere to the GIS Code of Ethics and do not practice beyond the limitations of one's own knowledge or perform activities included within the practice of a licensed surveyor in accordance with the NCEES Model Rules. GIS Professionals who do not follow the GIS Code of Ethics could possibly lose their GISP credential or be censured.

In the future will GISP certification require an examination?

Possibly. The current GISP certification requires no examination but instead is based on an individual attaining enough points in the following categories: education, experience, and contributions to the profession. On 28 January 2011 the GISCI made a public proposal to update requirements for GISP certification. Key among the proposed certification updates is the addition of a required examination based on the U.S. Department of Labor's new Geospatial Technology Competency Model and related resources. On 30 May 2011 the GISCI Board of Directors approved a resolution to update the GISP certification process to align the certification with the Competency Model.

Is GIS Certification a mandatory or voluntary program?

GIS Certification is a *voluntary* process that allows GIS Professionals to be recognized for a demonstrated level of expertise in their profession. GIS Certification is not a mandatory requirement for employment by the State of West Virginia.

Who should pay for GIS Certification?

It is the responsibility of the individual and not his or her employer to pay for the certification fee. Currently the fee for GIS certification is \$250 for five years (\$50 per year). WVAGP will reimburse 50% of the GIS certification or renewal fee for its members who reside or work in West Virginia.

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See the GISCI website for additional frequently asked questions.

http://www.gisci.org/certification_faqs.aspx