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NSGIC Releases Findings From Biennial Geospatial Maturity Assessment Survey

December 13, 2019, New Orleans, LA - National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) has released its biennial comprehensive Geospatial Maturity Assessment (GMA) report, which provides NSGIC members and other partners with a summary of geospatial initiatives, capabilities, and issues within and across state governments. For the first time, NSGIC has modified the GMA survey to produce report cards for each state on central data themes and coordination topics.

The 2019 GMA, augmented with individual state report cards and framework data theme analysis, is an authoritative resource on the status of state geospatial programs. This deeper dive can assist states in setting goals, identifying peer states for collaboration, pinpointing areas requiring attention, and connecting states with opportunities and resources. It also provides an important tool for federal partners to identify areas for key coordination, cooperation, and collaboration, and for the private sector to build software and services that comprise the tools that make it all work.

"The state report cards produced by NSGIC through the Geospatial Maturity Assessment marks a watershed moment for really being able to gauge where states are with their GIS programs, both on their own and in relation to neighboring states. The GMA report should prove to be an invaluable resource for Geospatial Data Act implementation. We hope it helps to identify states that need help and provide them with resources to improve," said Karen Rogers, NSGIC President and Wyoming state representative.

The framework layers assessed in the GMA are nearly evenly split between those which the federal government plays the lead role and those led by state government. This report card effort demonstrates that many states have figured out key factors to the successful organization and coordination necessary to create and maintain geospatial data programs. The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI), however, will only be as strong as its weakest link, argues the report. Many states still struggle to gain adequate support and funding to maintain their data and be able to contribute to the NSDI.

The GMA report provides fundamental examples of where national coordination can be augmented by state-led coordination. NSGIC is uniquely qualified to coordinate with state government personnel who can adequately respond to questions regarding their state's geospatial maturity as it relates to the framework layers. This critical baseline evaluation will support the implementation of 2018's Geospatial Data Act so the federal government can adequately and effectively dedicate resources to start strengthening those weak spots.

As illustrated by the range of grades assigned across the framework data themes, states have not been consistently provided with strong federal vision, guidance, and support. In order to create and sustain a strong

and mature NSDI, the federal government should provide leadership and assistance to states to help build their data programs. The GMA report cards provide an objective assessment of the status of state datasets and programs. This information should be used by lead federal agencies to determine where to begin and chart where we need to go as a nation, one state at a time. NSGIC stands ready to facilitate the necessary conversations and coordination.

Collaboration, transparency, and increased efficiency in government are hallmarks of mature state GIS programs. NSGIC advocates for wider adoption of such state coordination, which in turn will further the nation's geospatial maturity.

This report and corresponding resources can be found in a PDF format on the website, nsgic.org/2019-NSGIC-GMA.

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The National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) promotes the efficient development and management of location-based information resources, and advocates for innovative, strategic use of these assets to advance the interests of states, tribes, regions, local governments, and the nation. For more information, visit nsgic.org or email Geospatial Programs Manager Jamie Chesser jamie.chesser@nsgic.org. .