

Toward A Coordinated Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Nation

The National Spatial Data Infrastructure is the means to assemble geographic information that describes the arrangement and attributes of features and phenomena on the Earth. The infrastructure includes materials, technology, and people necessary to acquire, process, store, and distribute such information to meet a wide variety of needs.

Recommendations:

- 1. Effective national policies, strategies, and organizational structures need to be established at the federal level for the integration of national spatial data collection, use, and distribution.**
- 2. The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), which operates under the aegis of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), should continue to be the working body of the agencies to coordinate the interagency program as defined in OMB Circular A-16. However, the charter and programs of the FGDC need to be strengthened to:**
 - Expand the development and speed the creation and implementation of standards (content, quality, performance, and exchange), procedures, and specifications for spatially referenced digital data, and**
 - Create a series of incentives, particularly among federal agencies, that would maximize the sharing of spatial data and minimize the redundancy of spatial data collection.**
- 3. Procedures should be established to foster ready access to information describing spatial data available within government and the private sector through existing networks, thereby providing on-line access by the public in the form of directories and catalogs.**
- 4. A spatial data sharing program should be established to enrich national spatial data coverage, minimize redundant data collection at all levels, and create new opportunities for the use of spatial data throughout the nation. Specific funding and budgetary cross-cutting responsibilities of federal agencies should be identified by the OMB and the FGDC should coordinate the cross-cutting aspects of the program.**