Minnesota Geospatial Information Office

Annual Report

2026

MINNESOTA IT SERVICES
GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION OFFICE

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

By Alison Slaats

Minnesota Chief Geospatial Information Officer (GIO)
and Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) Director

Over the past year, MnGeo and its partners made significant progress strengthening Minnesota's geospatial foundation through modern tools, stronger data partnerships, and expanded access to geographic information that supports decision-making across government, communities, and industries. This report highlights the work completed between July 2025 and June 2026 to advance geospatial technology, strengthen foundational data, and deliver modern services for Minnesota's geospatial community and the people we serve.

This year marked significant progress across Minnesota's geospatial ecosystem. One major milestone was the modernization of the Minnesota Geospatial Commons. The updated platform provides a more intuitive, scalable experience for accessing and sharing geospatial data, helping ensure foundational information remains easy to find, use, and apply across state agencies, local governments, and communities throughout Minnesota.

MnGeo also launched MnTopo 2, expanding access to Minnesota's first- and second-generation lidar and derivative datasets through modern tools designed for today's large and complex elevation data. These improvements support landscape analysis, natural resource management, and hazard planning for risks such as flooding and wildfire.

Progress continued across Minnesota's statewide foundational datasets. County participation increased again this year, strengthening statewide parcel, address point, and road centerline layers while expanding contributions to the National Address Database (NAD) and increasing the reach of authoritative local data.

The MnGeo Public Land Survey System (PLSS) Monument Grant Program also reached a major milestone. Twenty-five counties have completed grant-funded restoration and certification work, with the remaining nine counties expected to finish next year. This nearly $10 million legislative investment strengthens a critical component of Minnesota's land information framework for decades to come.

MnGeo's work also received national recognition this year. The Executive Map Portfolio, developed with the Office of Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan, earned a Special Achievement in GIS Award from Esri, recognizing the value of intuitive geospatial tools in supporting informed decision-making and transparent government.

As you read this report, I hope you see what I see every day: a geospatial community committed to collaboration, accessibility, and innovation. Together, we are strengthening Minnesota's geospatial foundation and building tools that help communities make informed decisions and deliver better outcomes for Minnesotans.

ABOUT MINNESOTA'S GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION OFFICE

The Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) provides coordination, guidance, and leadership for the state's use of geographic information systems (GIS). It is an office within Minnesota IT Services (MNIT), the state's IT agency, and is led by the State of Minnesota's Chief Geospatial Information Officer, Alison Slaats.

GIS offers a collection of tools and processes to create, manage, map, and analyze location data. Simply, it is a system of record, visualization and analysis, and engagement using location-based data, technology, and techniques. GIS is used to inform decision makers and improve outcomes around public safety, transportation planning, preservation of resources, access to health and other services, and more.

State of Minnesota agencies use GIS for a modern government approach that enhances customer experience and improves the lives of Minnesotans. The MnGeo team supports state agency and geospatial community efforts ranging from a public geospatial data sharing website to tools for optimizing neighborhood bicycle and pedestrian access and protection of historic resources.

The Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council advises MnGeo, helping identify geospatial community needs and opportunities to better serve the public with GIS technology and data. Council members represent a cross-section of organizations that include counties, cities, universities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, federal and state agencies, Tribal governments, surveyors, and other partner groups that use and benefit from geospatial technology.

Fiscal year (FY) 2026 by the numbers

25
Geospatial applications supported and hosted by MnGeo

294
GIS web services* supported and hosted by MnGeo

900+
Resources on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons

172M+
Views of the geospatial image server

26
State agencies and boards supported by MnGeo

**A GIS web service is a geospatial resource, such as a map or location data, made available over the internet for use within various applications. GIS services enable multiple users to access and use a resource without needing to download or install it on their own device.*

FEATURED PROJECTS

Minnesota Geospatial Commons

Since 2012, MnGeo and a cross-agency team have supported the Minnesota Geospatial Commons as the state's public-facing geospatial resource catalog. In FY2026, MnGeo completed a two-year Technology Modernization Fund project to update the platform.

The modernized Commons improves how agencies, local governments, researchers, planners, students, and the public find and use geospatial data. The platform now offers expanded map services, built-in data previews, and more streamlined navigation. MnGeo also moved the platform to a modern cloud-based service model that improves performance, strengthens security, and reduces manual maintenance.

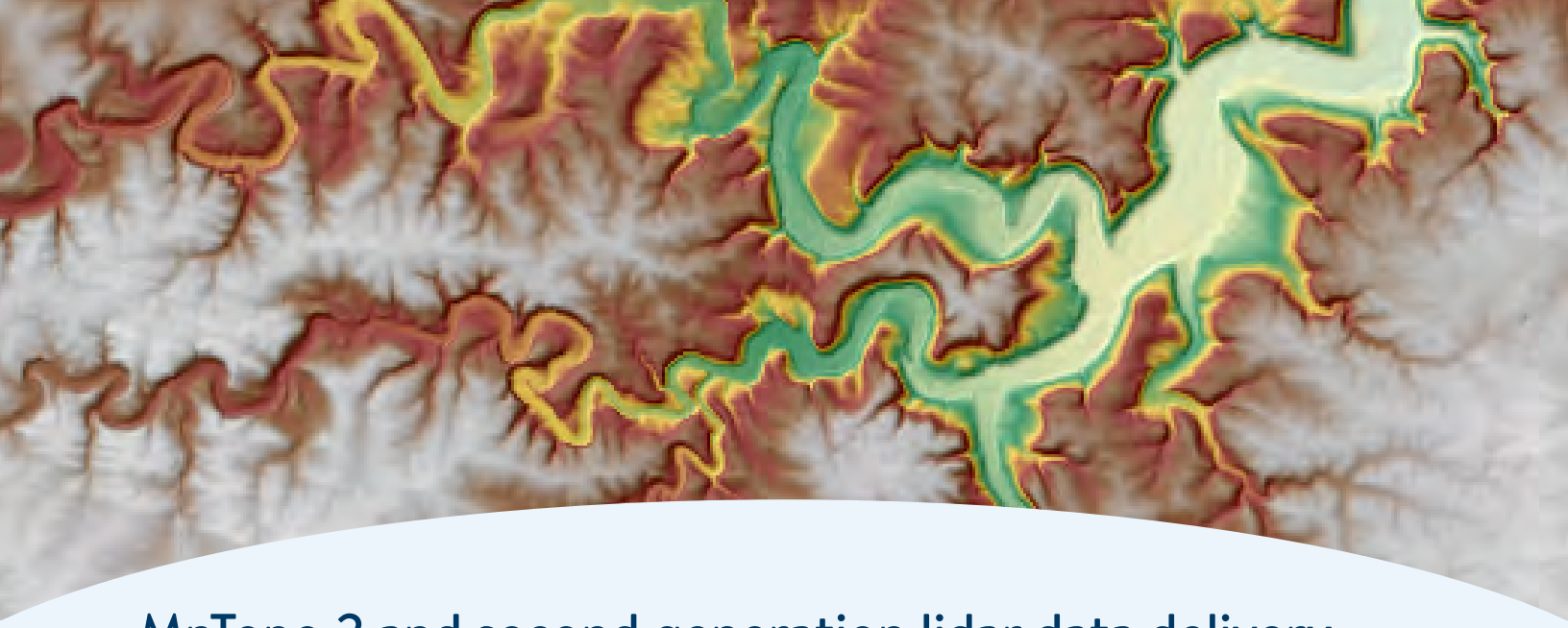
This work delivers immediate value. Agencies can share and access geospatial information more efficiently, reduce duplication, and accelerate decision-making.

For Minnesotans, that means better-informed policies, faster response to emerging needs, and improved services powered by accurate, real-time data. The project demonstrates how targeted investments can modernize critical systems, strengthen collaboration, and improve the digital experience across state government.

MnGeo supported the transition by hosting monthly information sessions and biweekly office hours for publishers. The transition also gave organizations an opportunity to review their inventories and retire resources that were no longer appropriate for sharing. The modernized Minnesota Geospatial Commons currently has 34 publishing organizations and serves over 900 geospatial resources, including web services, downloadable data, and online mapping applications.

> *"I just came across [the Minnesota Geospatial Commons] website as I am learning GIS — and it is awesome! Thank you for making all this data available [...] this is a fantastic use of my tax dollars!"*
>
> — **Mik Kocikowski** (Mound, MN)

The Minnesota Geospatial Commons is a collaborative public platform where publishers share — and users access — geospatial resources such as data, maps, services, and applications. It serves as Minnesota's central hub for location-based information and supports hundreds of thousands of users each year. State agencies, local governments, researchers, and planners rely on the platform to inform decisions that shape transportation, public safety, environmental protection, and economic development. Students and educators also use these resources for research and projects, developing the next generation of geospatial professionals.



MnTopo 2 and second generation lidar data delivery

From 2021 to 2024, statewide lidar data was collected in Minnesota for the first time in more than a decade. This second generation lidar collection provides much higher accuracy than the previous statewide collection. Lidar, short for light detection and ranging, uses laser-based mapping to create detailed three-dimensional views of the landscape.

While the Geospatial Advisory Council's 3D Geomatics Committee worked to create derivative datasets, including a seamless statewide digital elevation model (DEM), contours, and hillshades, MnGeo launched a web application, MnTopo 2, to share these products with the public.

The size and complexity of the second generation lidar data brought new challenges to MnGeo. To meet changing technological demands of sharing such large datasets, MnGeo used a variety of modern, cloud-based solutions to provide the geospatial community with organized, convenient, and fast access to these data.

MnTopo 2 gives users access to first-generation (2008-2012) and second generation lidar data products for Minnesota, supports interactive exploration of data, and provides quick links to data by area of interest. New workflows allow users to consume and analyze data without downloading large files, reducing storage needs and helping ensure users work from current data.

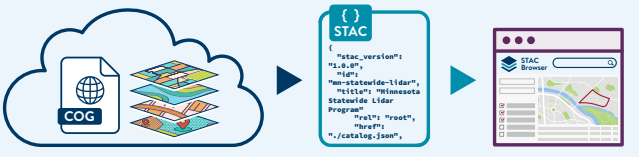
For 13 years, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR's) MnTOPO application has been the primary resource for accessing the first generation of data.

With the release of MnTopo 2, the DNR was able to retire this application. MnGeo worked closely with partners (through the 3D Geomatics Committee) that invested into the statewide lidar data collection to inform the development process.

A soft launch of the application allowed major users to provide feedback that was then incorporated into the application before its release to the broader public, putting people first in its design. To introduce users to the new application and technologies, MnGeo also hosted training sessions for the public, state agencies, GIS leaders, and external partners.

The delivery of the second generation lidar data and MnTopo 2 was a major accomplishment, delivering the $27 million lidar data acquisition directly into the hands of the geospatial community that helped fund the collection, and extending the investment return by providing additional lidar-derived deliverables. MnGeo looks forward to continuing working with the 3D Geomatics Committee in delivering the remaining second generation lidar-derived datasets.

Lidar data delivery process



Cloud-optimized geoTIFFs (COGs)

SpatioTemporal Asset Catalog (STAC)

STAC Browser (Web interface)

PLSS Monument Grant Program

The Public Land Survey System is the foundation for all land ownership in Minnesota. Physical survey markers called monuments are used to identify key locations and land information. Fewer than half of the original 306,675 PLSS monuments in Minnesota are certified with published geographic positions and many monuments are damaged, buried, or missing.

The PLSS framework affects land transactions, emergency service areas, natural resources access, school district utility services, commercial and residential zoning, and property taxes. Connecting historical PLSS information with modern tools to meet present-day needs is important work to support these essential services to Minnesotans.

Minnesota's GIO worked with the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council's PLSS Preservation Committee to administer the PLSS Monument Grant Program, established in 2023 by Minnesota Statutes chapter 381.125 to help counties restore, maintain, and update PLSS survey markers.

In May 2024, the GIO, with guidance from the committee, awarded 34 counties with $9.1 million in grants to fund the restoration and certification of monuments by licensed land surveyors. At the end of June 2026, 27 of the 34 grant projects are complete, and seven will continue into FY27. More than 4,000 corners have been restored, maintained, or updated, and over 20,000 PLSS records have been digitized for enhanced accessibility.

34
Counties awarded PLSS grants

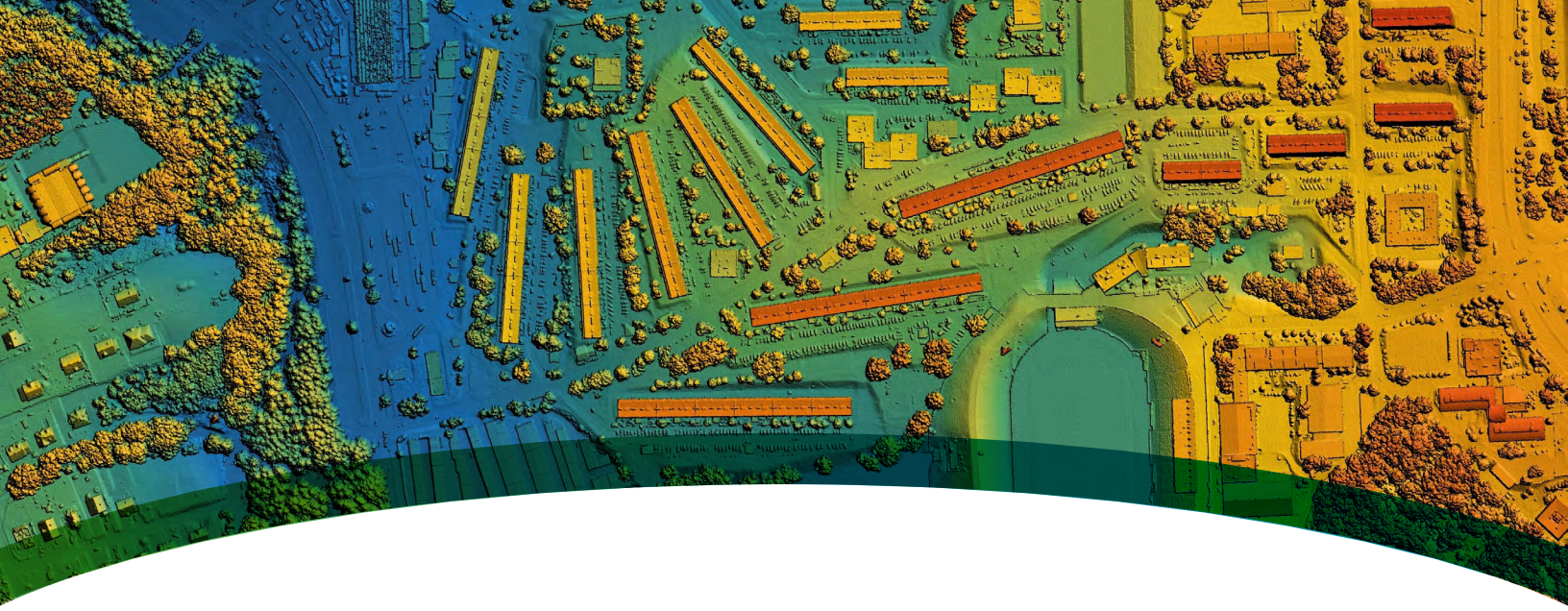
$9.1 million
PLSS Grant funds awarded

In July 2025, MnGeo's Survey Coordinator conducted a field visit and inspection of ongoing PLSS corner work in Waseca and Cook Counties that is funded by the grant program. These site visits provided an opportunity to observe field practices, review monument recovery and perpetuation methods, and discuss local implementation of grant-supported activities with county staff and surveying professionals.

Work underway in these counties demonstrated how targeted state investment is supporting the long-term stewardship of Minnesota's cadastral infrastructure. These significant investments are important first steps towards statewide PLSS restoration. The land surveying community estimates it will take 35 years and a total of $350 million to complete PLSS restoration statewide.

Photos: *(Top) An undocumented PLSS monument excavated in the field by Polk County while conducting PLSS Grant Program work; image provided by Polk County.*

(Bottom) Excavation of a PLSS monument in the field during a MnGeo Survey Coordinator site visit to Waseca County for the PLSS Grant Program; image provided by MnGeo.



GOALS AND PRIORITIES

MnGeo aligns its work with Governor Walz's One Minnesota goals and MNIT's Strategic Plan to create an innovative digital government that works for all. MnGeo produces and improves geospatial services and systems that benefit the statewide community.

MnGeo strategic priorities

1

Improve access to statewide foundational geospatial data

2

Lead coordination and communication for Minnesota's geospatial community

3

Provide outstanding technical support for statewide geospatial technologies

1 Improve access to statewide foundational geospatial data

The Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council (GAC) plays an important role by gathering feedback from the geospatial community to help identify statewide data priorities. MnGeo then uses this feedback to guide its support of foundational datasets. By compiling and standardizing statewide datasets and sharing them broadly, MnGeo supports data-informed work including better planning, safer communities, and more informed public investment.

Expanding statewide coverage

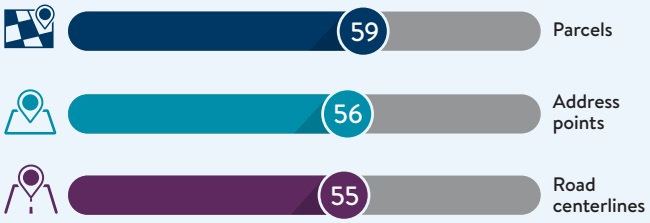
Parcels, address points, and road centerlines remain Minnesota's most requested geospatial datasets. MnGeo collects and standardizes authoritative county data and relies on voluntary county participation to include their data in public statewide datasets.

The Geospatial Advisory Council's Open Data Subcommittee actively works with counties to understand and address barriers to public data sharing. The subcommittee established the opt-in process that informs MnGeo's data collection, processing, and sharing of these data.

County participation across the three public datasets increased by an average of 21% in FY26, representing data from an average of 65% of Minnesota counties.

Creation of each of these datasets relies on Minnesota Geospatial Standards approved by the Geospatial Advisory Council. Each dataset is available on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons and is refreshed quarterly.

Number of counties included in public statewide datasets
(out of 87)



Parcels and government-owned lands

Parcel data is a core geospatial dataset that provides essential information for a broad range of public services across sectors. This data supports work like:

- Landowner notification about construction, wildlife management, and lead service line removal.
- Broadband analysis, emergency planning, flood risk assessments, and regional planning.
- Agriculture, invasive species response, and grant eligibility.

All 87 Minnesota counties provide parcel data to MnGeo each quarter. MnGeo converts the data to a common format and coordinate system, combines it into a statewide dataset, and shares it with all state agencies and the University of Minnesota. This process improves data consistency and reduces individual data requests to counties.

Making this data publicly available expands the many ways it can be used to inform decision making across the state.

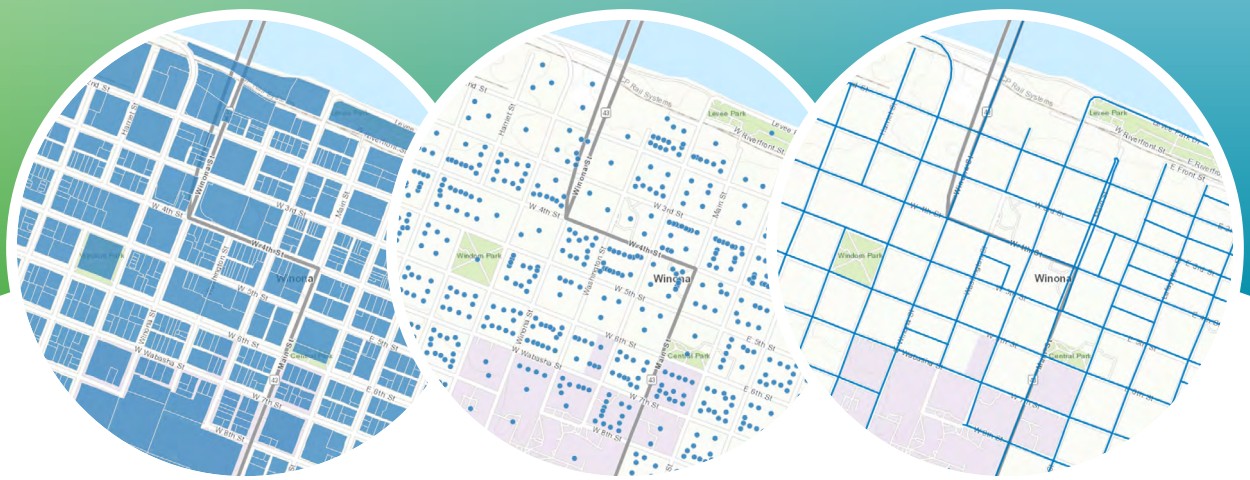
MnGeo supports public access to parcel data when counties agree to participate. While all counties provide parcel data to MnGeo, they must opt in to make their data part of the statewide publicly available dataset.

At the time of writing, 59 counties have agreed to include their data in the public version of the statewide parcel dataset. This 7% increase in participation represents 68% of Minnesota's counties and over 80% of parcels across the state.

MnGeo's parcel resources webpage links to county-provided parcel datasets, web maps, and additional data sources. The Minnesota Parcel Data Story Map provides more information about parcel data and the benefits of this statewide data.

From one dataset to two: Expanding parcels to government-owned lands

MnGeo also produces a government-owned lands dataset derived from the parcels, enabling agencies and local governments to coordinate land management, infrastructure planning, and habitat protection. Information within the parcel data is used to identify government landownership in the following categories: county fee, federal, state, tax forfeit, and Tribal. Future updates to this data may include additional government ownership types such as municipalities. See the Government-Owned Lands of Minnesota Story Map to explore more about the dataset's creation and many uses.



Photos (L-R): *Parcel, address point, and road centerline maps of Winona, MN.*

Address points and road centerlines

Like parcel data, address points and road centerlines are compiled into statewide datasets. However, these datasets are collected through the Next Generation 911 (NG911) data submission process. In this process, counties and other local entities submit their data in a standardized format designed to support NG911 and other emergency response systems.

MnGeo then extracts, stores, and shares this data in a standardized, multiuse format that:

- Aids emergency dispatchers to locate callers and route responders.
- Supports mutual aid, cartographic basemaps, and regional planning.
- Verifies election and census addresses.
- Feeds national address databases used by major location service providers.

Currently, 56 and 55 counties are included in the public statewide address points and road centerlines, respectively. For MnGeo to provide these datasets to the public, counties must have the data in the NG911 database and allow public sharing. As more counties complete data readiness for NG911 and opt in to have their data shared, coverage will increase. See the NG911 project highlight for more information about the NG911 data readiness effort.

Broadening impact: Statewide address points in the National Address Database

In April 2026, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) updated the National Address Database with Minnesota's opt-in, statewide address point dataset on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons. The update sourced data published earlier in the year, which included 52 counties (up from 18 in the last NAD extraction), nearly tripling Minnesota's coverage in this national resource.

The statewide address points inclusion in the NAD expands the use of authoritative, locally created data to the highest levels of government and beyond. In the private sector alone, the data is used for:

- Improved location services.
- Goods and services delivery.
- Business and shipping service expansion.
- Commercial law-enforcement solutions.

Organizations that use the NAD to improve their software and services include many critical partners in the IT and geospatial industry, including: Esri, TomTom, Here, Apple, Google, Smarty, GeoPostcodes, DroneSense, Overture Maps, and more. View the NAD StoryMap to explore real-world uses of the NAD.

MnGeo will continue working with federal partners to keep the NAD updated as additional counties opt in and contribute their data. However, the frequency of NAD updates is dependent on USDOT workflows.

Explore the NAD interactive map to see where nationwide data is being contributed.

GLO Historic Plat Records

For many years, MnGeo has maintained a website for accessing Minnesota's historic Public Land Survey System records from the federal government's General Land Office (GLO), predecessor to the Bureau of Land Management. This year, MnGeo launched a new web experience that replaces the legacy GLO Historic Plat Map Retrieval System.

GLO records document the original federal surveys of land in Minnesota and form the foundation of today's land ownership framework. These records include township plats, survey notes, and related materials that established section lines, corners, and boundaries across the state. They remain essential for land surveyors retracing original boundaries, attorneys and title professionals researching property history, land managers making resource decisions, and historians studying settlement patterns and landscape change.

The updated platform provides users with a streamlined and intuitive way to explore the history and geography of the PLSS and original GLO surveys in Minnesota. The new experience enhances usability while maintaining reliable access to the trusted records relied upon by researchers, surveyors, historians, and the public.

This transition reflects MnGeo's ongoing commitment to improving public access to Minnesota's foundational land records. By modernizing the delivery of these historic documents, MnGeo is helping ensure continued access to information that underpins property rights, infrastructure development, natural resource management, and historical research across the state.

Photo: *Minnesota GLO Plat Retrieval Map*

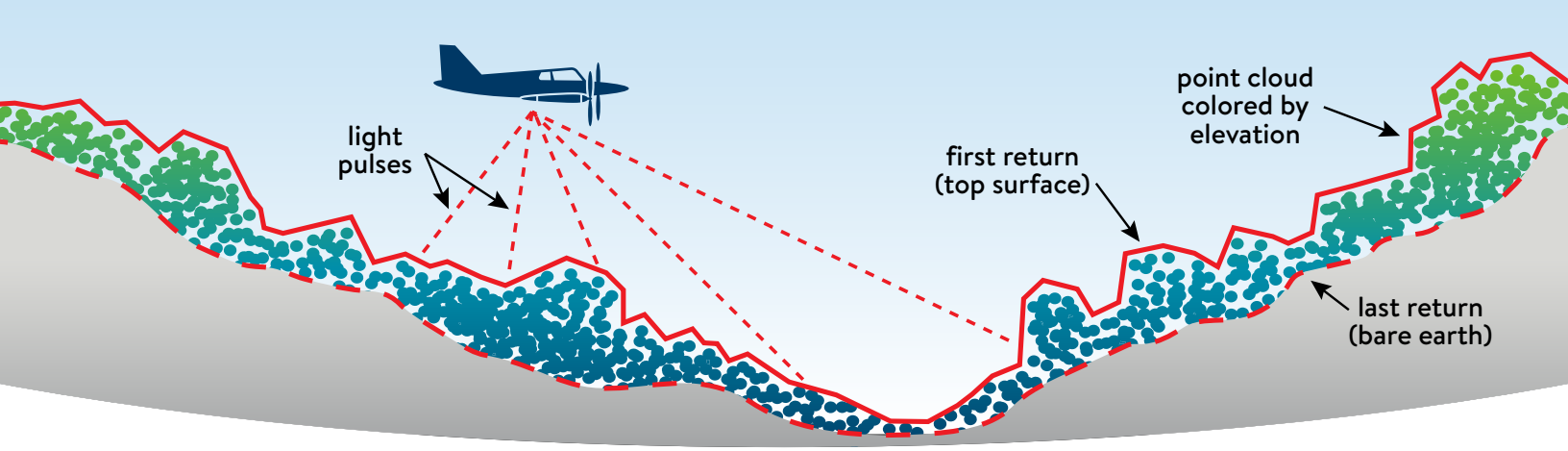


***Photo**: Diagram of an aircraft capturing lidar data using light pulses emitted from the plane.*

Elevation and imagery: Insight without the downloads

By expanding statewide access to high-value elevation and imagery data, MnGeo reduces technical barriers and improves how agencies analyze, plan, and respond.

Lidar-derived elevation products

Minnesota has upgraded its statewide elevation data, giving state and local governments a more accurate picture of the land and infrastructure that communities rely on every day. This improved data helps public agencies better plan roads and bridges, manage flood risk, protect natural resources, and support emergency response, especially as communities face more frequent severe weather and changing environmental conditions.

As described above in the MnTopo 2 and second generation lidar data delivery project, MnGeo continues its commitment to collaborating with the GAC 3D Geomatics (3DGeo) Committee to deliver high-quality lidar-derived datasets across the state in coordination with the U.S. Geological Survey's 3D Elevation Program. Making this information available statewide reduces duplication, lowers costs, and ensures agencies and local governments work from the same trusted data. By working together with 59 local, state, and federal partners collectively funding the second generation lidar data acquisition, Minnesota saved millions of dollars.

MnGeo finalized the infrastructure to deliver lidar-derived datasets created by subject matter experts on the 3DGeo Committee to the public. A seamless, statewide lidar-derived DEM — a 3D digital representation of the ground used to determine elevation — is now available at 0.5-meter resolution through the MnTopo 2 application, providing a consistent view of terrain across county and watershed boundaries.

The digital elevation model:

- Represents a seamless ground surface without buildings or vegetation.
- Supports flood modeling, water management, and environmental analysis.
- Uses a modern data distribution approach to enable faster access and easier reuse.

Contours, hillshades, hydrographic position index, and DEMs in other resolutions are currently in development. Additional expected statewide datasets include a digital surface model and normalized digital surface model, hydro breaklines, lidar point cloud tiles, and building footprints. These datasets are crucial for natural resources management, watershed monitoring, land use planning, and many other purposes across industries.

In addition to the new lidar data collection enabling an accuracy never reached before, users can now compare lidar-based elevation datasets over time. This is a significant opportunity to assess Minnesota's changing landscapes.

Some areas of statewide lidar data are redacted from the publicly available dataset due to the sensitive nature of the data in these areas. Example areas of redaction include military bases and Tribal lands. MnGeo has coordinated a workflow led by the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa to accommodate access requests for the redacted Tribal data in their area.

Aerial imagery

MnGeo continues to provide a popular set of web-based map image services for the Minnesota geospatial community, with over 172 million views this year. These services provide on-demand access to current and historic statewide and regional imagery without requiring local downloads or storage, supporting:

- Urban planning, infrastructure assessment, and land use analysis.
- Environmental monitoring, including ecosystem change and climate impacts.
- Disaster response and recovery for floods, wildfires, and severe weather.
- Agriculture through crop and soil condition analysis.
- Faster performance for many users compared to working with local files.

By centrally hosting and delivering imagery data, MnGeo makes large, complex datasets easier to use, helping analysts spend less time managing files and more time applying insights. This data as a service reduces the need for duplicative data management and expedites access to newly available data.

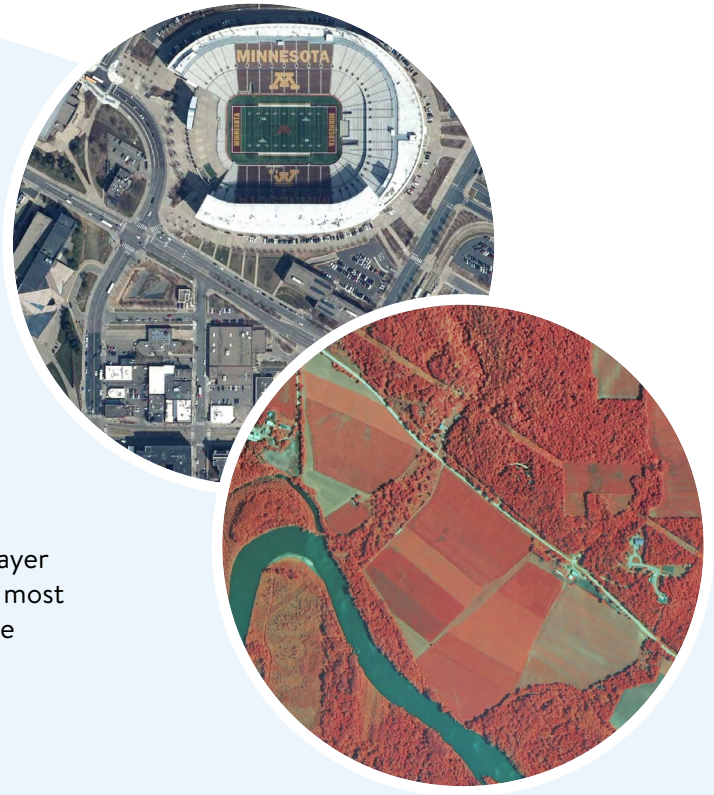
In 2025, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency acquired new statewide aerial imagery through the National Agricultural Imagery Program. MnGeo made this imagery available statewide through their imagery services.

Additional imagery datasets added within the last year include:

- 2025 7-county Twin Cities metro region | spring | natural color and color-infrared | 1-foot resolution
- 2025 Wabasha County | spring | natural color | 2-inch resolution
- 2024 and 1938 Lyon County
- 2023 Beltrami County | spring | natural color | 9-inch resolution
- 2018 McLeod County | spring | natural color| 4-inch resolution

Learn more about MnGeo's image services

- The Geospatial Image Service provides over 70 statewide, regional, and county-level imagery datasets from multiple sources and years, along with hillshades and scanned topographic maps. Counties voluntarily provide MnGeo imagery to include in this service — these requests are completed on an ongoing basis. Users can easily select, compare, and apply datasets to support planning, analysis, and day-to-day operations.
- The Composite Image Service provides a single layer image service that automatically switches to the most recent set of available imagery that is appropriate depending on the scale and extent of the view.



Photos: *Aerial images from MnGeo's image services.*

2 Lead coordination and communication for Minnesota's geospatial community

Awards

Two important awards this year underscore MnGeo's leadership and the positive impact of its coordination across the community.

Esri Special Achievement in GIS Award

Minnesota received a 2025 Special Achievement in GIS Award from Esri for the Executive Map Portfolio — an interactive suite of maps developed through a partnership between MnGeo and the Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. The tool helps state leaders visualize key data from the One Minnesota Plan across three areas: climate, children and families, and the economy.

Designed for mobile use, the portfolio supports quick, informed decision-making while promoting public transparency. The project brought together technologists, policy and communications staff, agency experts, and academic partners.

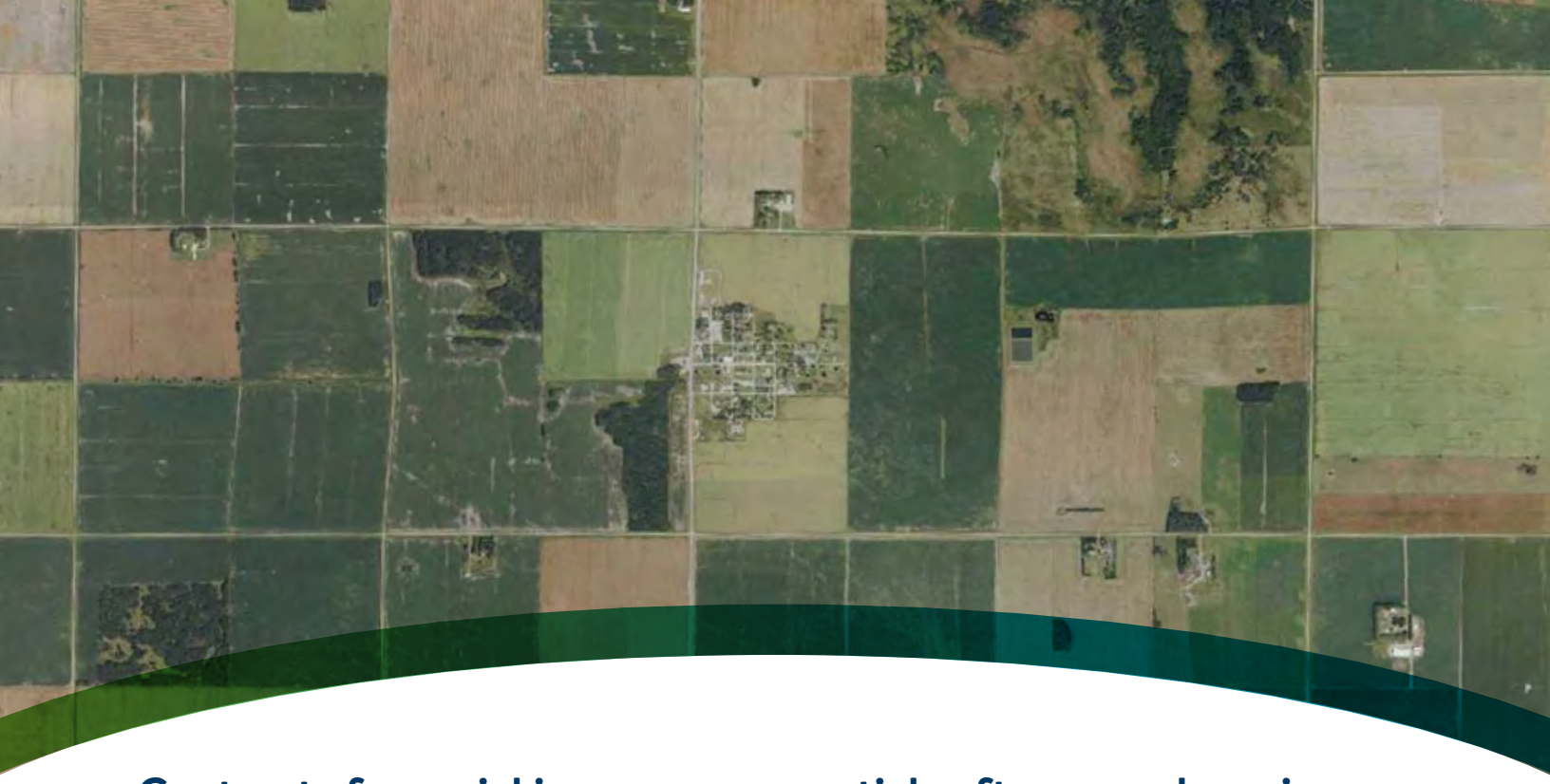
Photo: *Minnesota GIO, Alison Slaats, presents the Esri Special Achievement award to Governor Tim Walz.*

Polaris Leadership Award

MnGeo GIS Data and Coordination Specialist Megan Sisko received the Polaris Leadership Award at the 2025 Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium's Annual Conference — one of the most prestigious honors in Minnesota's geospatial community.

The Polaris Leadership Award celebrates established leaders who bring energy, creativity, and inspiration to the GIS field. Megan's nomination, supported by colleagues from MnGeo and the broader geospatial community, reflects her far-reaching impact, dedication to collaboration, and the deep respect she's earned among her peers. This recognition is embodied by the work that Megan does each day to support the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council, answer incoming inquiries for geospatial support, and communicate important information, news, and events to state agencies and the public.

Photo: *Megan Sisko, MnGeo GIS Data and Coordination Specialist*



Contracts for aerial imagery, geospatial software and services

MnGeo works with the MNIT Procurement Team and the Department of Administration's Office of State Procurement (OSP) to negotiate and administer an Enterprise Agreement (EA) with Esri for GIS software and services for state government. The Esri EA supports multiple state agencies sharing a single contract with a vendor rather than each agency holding their own individual contract. The Minnesota GIO and MnGeo team communicate closely with state agencies to understand their needs and inform this procurement process. This agreement provides participating agencies with significant savings on software license costs. The use of common geospatial software promotes sharing of workflows, data, and knowledge among state agencies, optimizing how agencies can collaborate and provide consistent quality service to Minnesotans.

MnGeo also participates in OSP negotiations to establish enterprise contracts for GIS software and maintenance (GIS Enterprise Contract) that allow state agencies, local governments, and other qualifying organizations to acquire and receive GIS software and supporting services through a simplified procurement process. There are three GIS vendors that hold a GIS Enterprise Contract. Over the past five years, over 550 organizations have used a GIS Enterprise Contract to purchase GIS software and services.

OSP also leads a Master Contract Program for aerial imagery, supported by MnGeo and partners. This program is designed to provide faster and easier contracting for aerial imagery with associated derived products and data processing services to support a wide variety of geospatial business needs. The contract is currently in the process of being renewed. Over the past five years, seven organizations have used this program to purchase imagery.

Organizations can use contracts established by OSP by registering their organization through Minnesota's Cooperative Purchasing Venture (CPV). The CPV allows eligible organizations to purchase goods, services, and utilities through contracts created by OSP. Eligible groups include counties, cities, towns, townships, school districts, other government bodies, and certain tax-exempt nonprofits and charitable organizations.

Shared contracting enables consistent, fair, and efficient procurement of geospatial software and services, maximizing investments across state government.

Photo: *Aerial image of Minnesota farmland.*

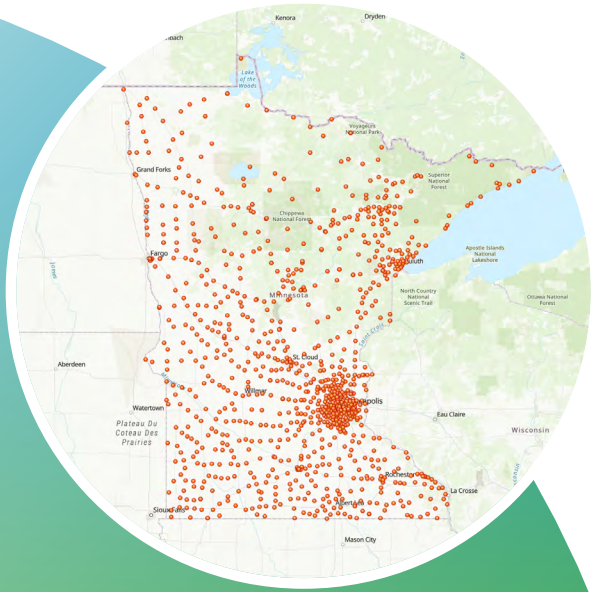
Resource navigation

As the state's geospatial lead, MnGeo provides several resources to help navigate the many sources of geospatial information. In addition to the Minnesota Geospatial Commons, MnGeo maintains a series of webpages cataloging GIS data and map resources by topic. These pages are especially helpful for finding resources that are not available on the Geospatial Commons, or in helping clarify appropriate datasets for different uses. Through collaboration with state agency and external partners, MnGeo maintains awareness of the current state of geospatial technology and data in Minnesota and connects information seekers to appropriate resources.

In addition to providing resource webpages, MnGeo answers an estimated 500 or more inquiries each year from the public, geospatial partners, and state agencies. While people can be pointed to existing resources to answer many of these, others require hands-on assistance or connection to another state agency or external organization.

Current MnGeo topic pages

- Air photos
- Critical infrastructure
- Elevation
- Equity and inclusion
- Geology
- Land ownership
- Land use / land cover
- Soils
- Utilities and telecommunications
- Water



Regional coordination

MnGeo collaborates with regional geospatial groups across Minnesota. Staff attend, participate in, and present at regional GIS user group meetings, including Northeast, Southeast, and Pine to Prairie groups. MnGeo also connects organizations that share similar challenges so they can learn from one another and build stronger support networks.

The Minnesota GIO serves on the MetroGIS Coordinating Committee. MetroGIS is a regional GIS initiative supporting the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area by providing a collaborative forum to promote and facilitate the sharing of geospatial data.

In November 2025, the committee voted to maintain and fully restore MetroGIS rather than decommission or scale back its work. MetroGIS' innovative work frequently serves as a model for statewide GIS efforts, making strong coordination between regional and statewide GIS groups essential.

MnGeo also organizes and facilitates the Arrowhead Geospatial Collaborative, which includes county, regional, Tribal, state, and federal agencies working to improve GIS data in northeast Minnesota. This year, the group's PLSS section corner data model was adopted, with modifications, as a state standard. The region's shared data format helped local PLSS corner data become part of national datasets through collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

The Collaborative's ongoing work to align geospatial data boundaries has also drawn statewide interest, with the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council's Boundary Alignment Subcommittee seeking to learn from their experience. The group continues to tackle complex issues, such as meandered lands and regional trails data, to meet shared needs, serving as a model for other regions of the state.

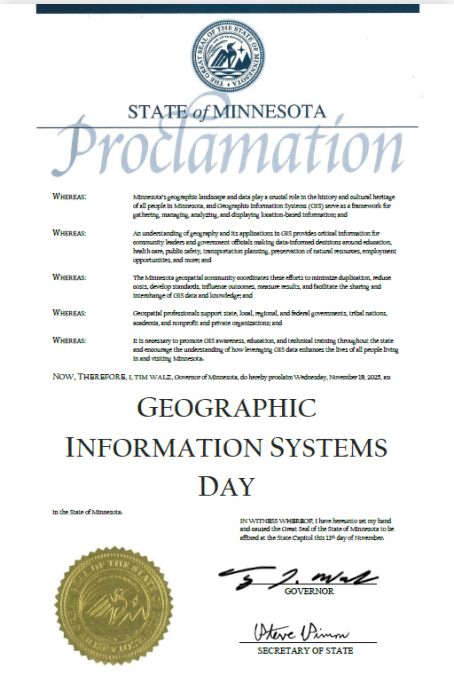
Photo: *Critical infrastructure map — Minnesota fire stations.*

Culture of collaboration

While MnGeo is charged with coordination of the state's geospatial technology, we are fortunate to have an active geospatial community in Minnesota that makes this possible — supporting and participating in a collaborative environment. That community includes Minnesota executive leadership recognizing the value of the geospatial field. In November, Governor Tim Walz proclaimed GIS Day in Minnesota.

MnGeo supports Governor Walz's call by connecting internally and externally to solve real-world issues facing Minnesota communities. As a result, increased partnership is being seen across agencies and sectors to leverage geospatial technology.

> *"...It is necessary to promote GIS awareness, education, and technical training throughout the state and encourage the understanding of how leveraging GIS data enhances the lives of all people living in and visiting Minnesota..."*
>
> **— Governor Walz**



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: Minnesota's geographic landscape and data play a crucial role in the history and cultural heritage of all people in Minnesota, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) serve as a framework for gathering, managing, analyzing, and displaying location-based information; and

WHEREAS: An understanding of geography and its applications in GIS provides critical information for community leaders and government officials making data-informed decisions around education, health care, public safety, transportation planning, preservation of natural resources, employment opportunities, and more; and

WHEREAS: The Minnesota geospatial community coordinates these efforts to minimize duplication, reduce costs, develop standards, influence outcomes, measure results, and facilitate the sharing and interchange of GIS data and knowledge; and

WHEREAS: Geospatial professionals support state, local, regional, and federal governments, tribal nations, academia, and nonprofit and private organizations; and

WHEREAS: It is necessary to promote GIS awareness, education, and technical training throughout the state and encourage the understanding of how leveraging GIS data enhances the lives of all people living in and visiting Minnesota.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TIM WALZ, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, November 19, 2025, as

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS DAY

in the State of Minnesota.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 13th day of November.

GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF STATE

Communications

To further statewide collaboration, MnGeo publishes Minnesota GIS News, an e-newsletter that shares updates from MnGeo, Minnesota state agencies, and the Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council. These messages also highlight major activities from across the community, delivering over 2,000 subscribers regular updates on geospatial datasets, services, technology, training, events, and more. MnGeo similarly sends internal newsletters to over 600 state agency subscribers. Combined, MnGeo sent 45 newsletters throughout the year, keeping the community connected and informed.

Agency connectedness

Through cross-agency collaboration, MnGeo can better understand state agency needs and allocate resources and attention for priority efforts. One of the major pathways for this collaboration is the State Agency GIS Collaborative, a group of state agency staff, including MnGeo, that plans, promotes, and facilitates communication and collaboration for state employees interested in geospatial topics and technology. The Collaborative provides education, information sharing, networking opportunities, and technical resources while also creating a space to learn from one another and optimize an enterprise approach to geospatial technology at the State of Minnesota. The group is led by the GAC State Government members, helping facilitate exchange of information between the two organizations and communicate necessary guidance back to the council.

Through the Collaborative, MnGeo maintains leading GIS contacts at each agency as a resource for all state agency staff. These connections also serve as sources to help maintain the wealth of cataloged geospatial resources on MnGeo's website.

Throughout the year, MnGeo also sought out other opportunities to connect State of Minnesota staff. In the fall, MnGeo hosted a training session at the 2025 MNIT Week, an annual opportunity for MNIT employees to come together, celebrate accomplishments, and explore new ideas through professional development.

External partnerships

MnGeo also connects with other GIS organizations across Minnesota to meet shared goals and optimize the use of GIS statewide.

Advancing the profession

Each year, a representative from MnGeo serves on the board of the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium, a nonprofit organization made up of geospatial professionals focused on developing and supporting the GIS/LIS community in Minnesota for the benefit of its people and contributors. MnGeo and the Consortium increasingly work together to uplift one another's missions.

At the Consortium's annual conference, the state GIO presents the State of the State presentation, highlighting the great work completed by the community throughout the year to an audience of 600 attendees. Additionally, MnGeo staff offer various conference sessions about MnGeo projects, technology, and initiatives.

In 2025, MnGeo's Survey Coordinator organized Meet Me at the Corner, an annual half-day event that brings together land surveyors, GIS professionals, and county partners for hands-on learning and collaboration about the PLSS and land surveying. These gatherings strengthen knowledge of the PLSS among the GIS community, bridging a historical gap between the two professions while promoting best practices in PLSS restoration and highlighting the critical role accurate geospatial data plays in supporting Minnesota's communities and infrastructure. In Minnesota, preserving survey corners is about more than distance and bearings, it's about who shows up at the corner, how they collaborate, and what comes next.

***Photo**: Sally Wakefield and fellow panelists of women across sectors of the geospatial profession after hosting a panel session at the 2025 Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium Annual Conference about the positive impacts of community on professional development. L-R: Carla Coates (HSEM DPS), Sally Wakefield (MNIT MnGeo), Stacey Stark (UMN, U-Spatial), Kari Geurts (MNIT partnering with DNR), Leanne Knott (Goodhue County), Michelle Trager (Rice County), and Heidi Gaedy (de maximis Data Management Solutions)*

Cultivating awareness

MnGeo also coordinates with the Minnesota County GIS Association (MCGISA) to support shared goals, stay informed on activities, and best meet the needs of the geospatial community. In 2026, MnGeo co-hosted a public information session with MCGISA and the GAC to help the geospatial community navigate recent judicial changes to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and its impact on GIS data management and sharing. MnGeo brought in experts from the Minnesota Department of Administration's Data Practices Office and judicial branch to review relevant state statutes, clarify what changed, and help attendees consider what this may mean for GIS data at their organization. GIS managers across sectors shared how they plan to accommodate the new statutory requirements. Together, MnGeo and the other co-hosts helped state and local governments — and organizations that handle government data — stay aware of GIS-relevant legislation to support statute-compliant geospatial data practices statewide.

Promoting GIS use and education

In 2025, MnGeo presented at two major community events that demonstrated the transformative power of geospatial technology in solving real-world problems:

- **Esri Equity & Social Justice Seminar** — Hosted by the geospatial software company Esri, MnGeo presented alongside Ashley Oolman, Chief Equity Officer for the Office of Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. State government, nonprofits, and the private sector came together to share about how GIS is being applied to equitably serve communities.
- **Community Mapping Expo for Minnesota Nonprofits** — At this event, representatives from 25 nonprofit and 22 government organizations came together to learn about the power of geospatial collaboration for the common good of Minnesota communities. The event was hosted by GAC nonprofit member Jessica Fendos, and Local Government Information Systems.

Minnesota's GIO spoke to the University of Minnesota's incoming GIS master's students, offering an overview of the state government's GIS landscape and the skills needed to thrive in it. MnGeo and GIS staff from other agencies shared similar insights at the GIS Career and Networking Fair hosted by UMN's GIS Student Organization. Each year, MnGeo hosts a booth at the fair to help attract and inspire the next generation of GIS professionals to careers in Minnesota state government.

MnGeo also attended GEOFEST, hosted by the Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education, University of Minnesota, and Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium. This event provided educators with valuable information and resources to support the integration of GIS into K-12 curricula.

***Photo**: MnGeo staff pose with attendees of the Minnesota Mapping Expo; Alison Slaats kicked off the event by sharing about MnGeo and the geographic approach used at the State of Minnesota; this year's theme was Helping Communities Thrive with GIS - Nonprofit & Government Collaboration*

State and national involvement

Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council

The Minnesota Geospatial Advisory Council is the statutory statewide coordinating body for the Minnesota geospatial community. It advises and complements MnGeo's work to improve services through coordinated, affordable, reliable, and effective use of geospatial technology.

In 2025, the council strengthened representation by adding two at-large seats and filling all positions for its FY2026-27 term. Council members represent local, regional, Tribal, state, and federal government; higher education; business; nonprofit organizations; land surveying; and other sectors. The Minnesota GIO serves as a non-voting member. New term members have engaged the geospatial community to get feedback from nearly 200 participants through two statewide surveys. That input is shaping priorities related to foundational datasets, PLSS preservation, geospatial standards, and K-12 GIS resources.

The GAC's newly set priorities focus on:

Data development, storage, and services

Data standards, guidelines, and best practices

Emergency preparedness and services

Open data

Outreach

PLSS preservation

The GAC advanced key initiatives throughout the year by:

- **Expanding county participation** in statewide parcel, address point, and road centerline data sharing, strengthening data consistency and accessibility.
- **Adopting a** new geospatial data standard to support long-term maintenance of the Public Land Survey System.
- **Awarding a** Governor's Exemplary Geospatial Project Certificate for the first time in three years, reinforcing commitment to geospatial excellence.
- **Delivering** high-resolution lidar-derived datasets in collaboration with MnGeo, enabling enhanced flood modeling, infrastructure planning, and environmental analysis.
- **Presenting at the** Minnesota GIS/LIS Annual Conference, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing within the GIS community.
- **Completing three** priority projects, moving these initiatives into long-term maintenance.
- **Collecting feedback** from nearly 200 community members to guide priorities for the term.

MnGeo provides administrative and logistical support to the GAC, maintaining records and web content, hosting collaboration sites for its committees, and providing virtual and in-person meeting spaces. This year, MnGeo worked closely with GAC leadership to launch several new initiatives, including an operations handbook, new member orientation, and committee leadership training and retreat.

Midway through the council term, the GAC Chair and Minnesota GIO met individually with council members to discuss their experiences on the council so far and identify opportunities for GAC leadership and MnGeo to help them maximize their impact for the remainder of the term.

Working across sectors and with MnGeo, the council continues to strengthen alignment and collaboration — enhancing Minnesota's geospatial infrastructure and supporting informed decision-making across government and communities.

National States Geographic Information Council

MnGeo and Geospatial Advisory Council members are members of the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) and participate in many NSGIC activities, committees, and workgroups. Participation ensures that Minnesotans are represented and provides input to national conversations about geospatial policy and initiatives.

MnGeo and GAC leadership regularly represent Minnesota at NSGIC conferences. In 2025, GAC Chair Tanya Mayer attended the NSGIC fall conference alongside MnGeo. MnGeo Director Alison Slaats and Program Manager Sally Wakefield attended the NSGIC Midyear Meeting in the Washington, D.C. area in February 2026.

During the February event, Slaats and Wakefield participated in NSGIC's Day on the Hill, meeting with legislative staff for Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar. They highlighted MnGeo's key role in coordinating geospatial work across Minnesota, connecting efforts among local and state governments to federal investments. They emphasized how several federal programs provide significant value to Minnesotans by delivering essential data, funding, and support for Minnesota's geospatial initiatives. Programs highlighted include the Digital Coast Act, the 3D Elevation Program, the 3D Hydrography Program, and Next Generation 911.

MidAmerica GIS Consortium

This year, the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium and MnGeo jointly agreed to Minnesota being a formal member of the MidAmerica GIS Consortium (MAGIC). MAGIC is a regional, multistate network of dedicated leaders in the field of mapmaking, location services, and data management. MAGIC hosts a biennial symposium, monthly board meetings, and other networking, outreach, and education events. MnGeo and the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium will coordinate on participation and representation. MAGIC membership will provide more opportunities for the Minnesota geospatial community to learn and share with colleagues in other states.

Statewide Emergency Communications Board

MnGeo continues to participate in and contribute to the NG911 GIS workgroup of the Statewide Emergency Communications Board. The workgroup supports the geospatial community's development, maintenance, sharing, and implementation of the geospatial data necessary for Minnesota's Next Generation 911 service. MnGeo brings its expertise in geospatial coordination, standards, and requirements for NG911 to contribute to conversation, craft deliverables, and develop statewide guidelines for the public safety and GIS communities. In return, MnGeo learns from the community which helps inform MnGeo's NG911 support for the Department of Public Safety.

National Emergency Number Association

As part of MnGeo's work with the Department of Public Safety's Emergency Communication Networks Division (DPS-ECN) on the state's NG911 GIS readiness program, MnGeo works closely with the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) — the standard-setting body for 911 in the United States and Canada. MnGeo staff serve on NENA working groups, including Indoor Mapping, Addressing for NG911, and Utilization of GIS Data in Next Generation Core Services. Staff also participate in national NENA conferences. This engagement enhances the state's ability to support those seeking assistance with NG911 data preparation, while also keeping state government informed about changes coming to NG911 GIS data requirements. Minnesota representatives at NENA ensure that the development of standards and best practices will benefit all.

Federal Geographic Data Committee

MnGeo is part of the Federal Geographic Data Committee, advancing initiatives related to the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. Within the past year, staff focused on the Address Subcommittee, contributing to a national strategy for the management of geospatial address data.

3 Provide outstanding technical support for statewide geospatial technologies

MnGeo supports MNIT's mission to partner with other state agencies to deliver secure, reliable technology solutions to improve the lives of all Minnesotans. Over the past year, MnGeo supported 26 agencies, boards, and councils with over 25 different efforts, including the following projects.

Transforming campaign spending transparency

Transparent campaign finance data strengthens accountability and public trust. The Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board partnered with MnGeo to modernize campaign expenditure maps.

MnGeo replaced a labor-intensive, post-election mapping process with a streamlined system that produces live maps and charts. The new tools track campaign spending as it occurs and display expenditures for every political party receiving funding in Minnesota, across House and Senate districts.

Users can also generate PDF reports of expenditures statewide or by district. Visit the Campaign and Independent Expenditures web mapping application to see spending across election cycles.

By automating updates and improving data visualization, MnGeo reduced manual work, improved accuracy, and expanded access to timely information for the public, media, and policymakers. This work advances MNIT's commitment to modern, transparent digital services that make government data easier to understand and use.

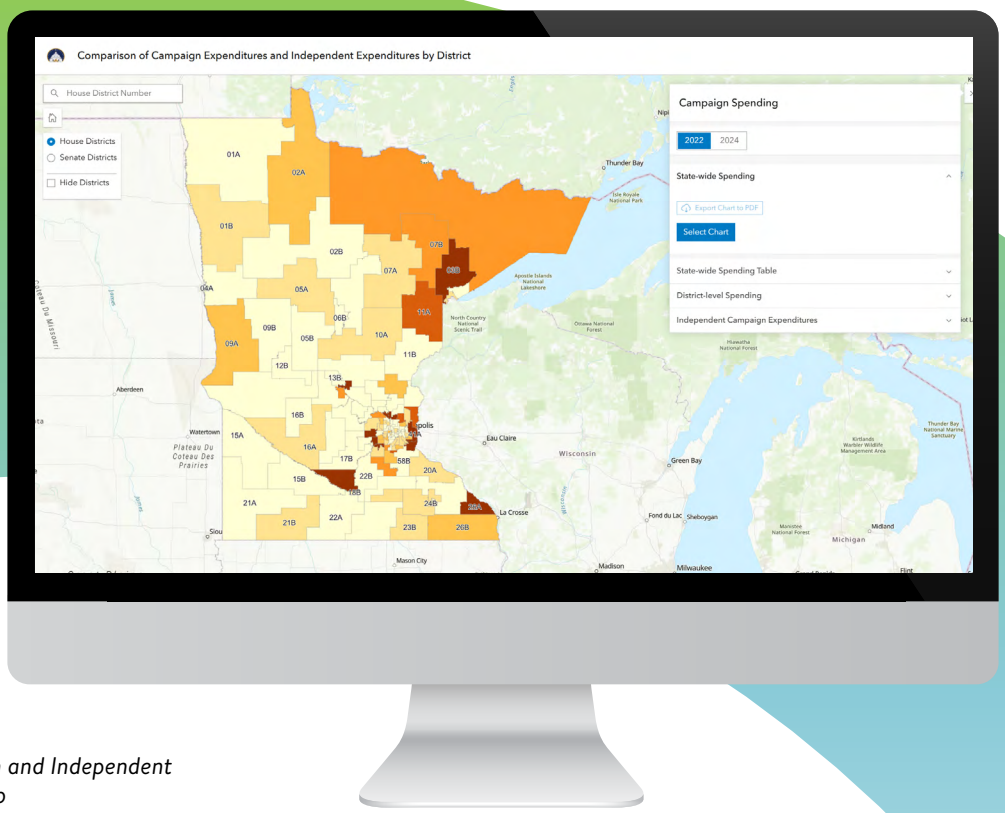


***Photo**: Campaign and Independent Expenditures Map*

Modernizing protection of Minnesota's historic sites

Minnesota is home to thousands of archaeological and culturally significant places. To help protect these resources, the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) maintains the statewide archaeological site inventory, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council's (MIAC's) archaeological and cultural site information, and the Minnesota Statewide Archaeological Predictive Model. Data across these resources have been combined into a single tool — the OSA Portal.

The OSA Portal is the digital system that professionals use to submit, update, and review archaeological site records and their associated mapping data. First launched in 2017, the portal has become essential for preserving Minnesota's historical resources. However, the technology behind it had become outdated, so MnGeo partnered with OSA to modernize the portal. The new portal is reliable, easier to use, and capable of supporting updated data standards and new functionality.

This effort is a collaboration among many state, federal, and Tribal partners who rely on accurate archaeological information for planning and compliance. The following groups rely on the portal to ensure that development, conservation and land-use activities respect cultural and archaeological resources.

- Office of the State Archaeologist *(project steward)*
- Minnesota Department of Transportation *(primary funder)*
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Historical Society
- Tribal Historic Preservation Offices
- Professional archaeologists and cultural resource consultants
- Local government planners and natural resource staff
- Federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service

To protect sensitive locations, detailed site information is available only to qualified professionals, including archaeologists, historic preservation specialists, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, as required under federal and state law.

This application complements the Minnesota Statewide Historic Inventory Portal (MnSHIP), hosted by the State Historic Preservation Office and also supported by MnGeo. While the OSA Portal focuses on archaeological, cemetery, and burial sites, MnSHIP focuses on above-ground historic resources. For more information about the differences between the two applications, see the OSA Portal information page.

Together, the OSA Portal and MnSHIP guide responsible planning, research, and land management across the state to protect Minnesota's historic places and resources.

***Photo**: Office of the State Archaeologist Portal Public Map*

Streamlining Capitol grounds maintenance

The Minnesota State Capitol Complex is home to many trees, landscaped areas, irrigation systems, and public spaces that require year-round attention. Until recently, much of this work was tracked using paper notes and binders, making it difficult for maintenance teams to quickly find information or coordinate tasks.

To solve this problem, MnGeo partnered closely with maintenance experts from the Department of Administration (ADM) to design a modern, digital solution that meets staff needs.

The Capitol Grounds Mobile Data Capture App replaces the old paper-based tracking system with an interactive web map that staff can view and update from a computer or mobile device out on the grounds, enabling real-time updates as crews complete work.

This project provides a modern, efficient way for Capitol grounds staff to track work, respond to issues quickly, and ensure that the grounds remain healthy, safe, and welcoming for everyone who visits the Minnesota State Capitol Complex.

The application makes it faster to locate specific trees, irrigation components, or areas needing attention, with several map layers to inform decision-making and expedite grounds management.

Trees
Health, maintenance history, and care needs

Ornamental beds
Locations, plant health, and upkeep

Turf care
Condition of lawns and scheduled maintenance

Irrigation systems
Spray coverage, line locations, valves, nozzles, and blowout points

Snow removal operations
Manual work areas, shovel and plow routes, storage locations, and parking lots

Enabling location-based emergency services

Across the country, 911 systems are moving from analog technology to Next Generation 911, an advanced internet protocol (IP)-based system. This upgrade helps emergency services keep up with modern communication technologies and better serve communities and first responders.

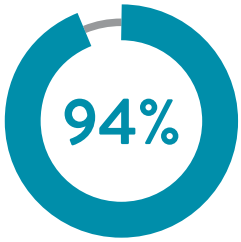
Accurate GIS data is at the core of NG911. This data includes road centerlines, address points, and provider and emergency service boundaries. High-quality GIS data ensures 911 operators can quickly locate callers, send their calls to the right public safety answering point, and assign the correct emergency response team.

Since 2015, MnGeo has worked with DPS-ECN to help Minnesota prepare for this transition. MnGeo helps local data providers meet national and state GIS standards for NG911.

This past year, MnGeo worked closely with vendor partners to enhance the technology data providers use to validate their data, and to extend this functionality to commonly used GIS desktop software. Staff also helped create a set of tools to ease formatting processes for data providers. MnGeo continues to collaborate with statewide and national 911 GIS communities to advance this work. See the Statewide Emergency Communications Board, National Emergency Number Association, and Federal Geographic Data Committee sections earlier in this report to learn more.

While the main goal of the NG911 GIS data preparation is to support emergency services, the data is also valuable for state agencies and the public. The statewide foundational datasets section of this report provides more information about how this data is gathered and shared on the Minnesota Geospatial Commons.

Minnesota's counties that have prepared their GIS data



Data that has been added to the statewide NG911 GIS database

Simplifying access to state services

Minnesota continues to modernize how residents, partners, and professionals access state digital services. One major step forward is LoginMN, the state's new single sign-on system that will allow people to create a single account to access all public-facing state government services. Much like the federal government's login.gov, LoginMN makes it easier to safely interact with Minnesota agencies online.

One of the key applications now using LoginMN is the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and Office of the State Archaeologist Review Application, also known as MORA.

MORA is a critical tool used by Tribal Nations, state agencies, local governments, and developers to ensure that construction and land-use projects do not impact places of cultural, historic, or archaeological significance. Users can submit project details, share documents, track review status, and communicate with MIAC and OSA through one streamlined system.

By integrating MORA with LoginMN, Minnesota has removed barriers that previously required separate logins and credentials for each system. Now, MORA users can sign in more securely and efficiently, spending less time managing multiple accounts.

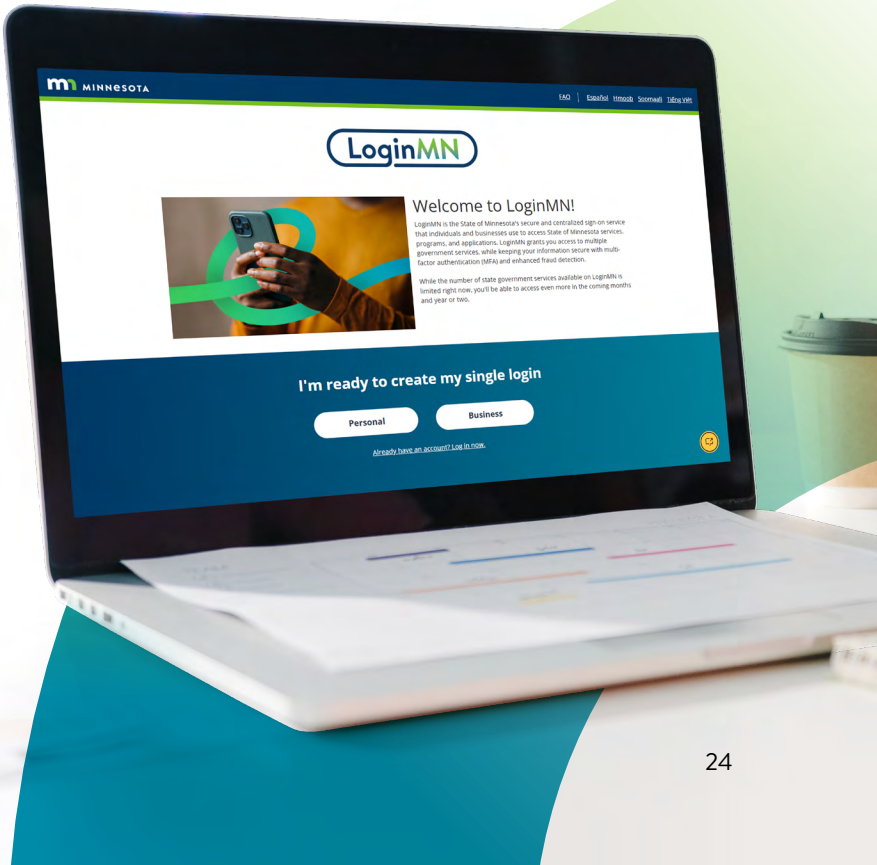
This collaborative effort also involved MNIT, ADM, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. These partners worked closely to build a secure, reliable, and user-friendly experience for the many groups who depend on MORA.

LoginMN has been expanded to more MnGeo-supported applications, including the OSA Portal, MnSHIP, and Commons Operations Portal (a companion application to the modernized Minnesota Geospatial Commons). A user who has access to all these tools can now sign in with just one LoginMN account — no more juggling multiple passwords or creating new profiles for each application.

LoginMN represents an important step in Minnesota's digital transformation, and the integration with the MIAC/OSA Review Application ensures that culturally significant places across the state continue to be protected through a more accessible and secure review process.

What Minnesotans gain

- A simpler, modern login experience.
- Stronger security through a trusted state authentication system.
- Faster access to services, including critical cultural review processes.
- Less time spent navigating logins and more time focused on the work.
- A system that positions Minnesota alongside other states using modern sign-on solutions.



Capturing Minnesota from above

Every five years, the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) updates high-resolution aerial imagery for the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. This imagery is used by state agencies, local governments, planners, engineers, and researchers, to help make informed decisions about infrastructure, development, environmental management, and emergency response.

To support this work, Met Council partners with MnGeo to manage the contract and coordinate the data collection effort. MnGeo serves as the project manager and contract holder, ensuring that the imagery is captured accurately and delivered reliably.

Because planes are already in the air during the regional flight, counties that want sharper imagery can purchase upgraded resolution at a reduced cost. Additional datasets provided include flight lines, photo center points, and quality control information, supporting consistency, quality, and transparency for all partners who rely on the imagery.

Met Council and MnGeo work closely throughout the project, from early planning and vendor selection to final delivery. The collaboration includes procurement teams, technical experts, and regional partners. This effort ensures that Minnesota has consistent, high-quality aerial imagery that many state and local programs depend on.

Coordinating a statewide aerial imagery project is complex and requires:

- Selecting and contracting with a qualified aerial imagery vendor.
- Aligning schedules so counties can participate and "buy up" for higher-resolution images.
- Ensuring flights occur during a short window in early spring — after the snow melts but before leaves emerge.
- Managing invoices, data quality checks, and delivery timelines.
- Updating technical specifications and ensuring all project partners are aligned.

***Photo**: Aerial image of the Twin Cities metro area.*

Advancing agency geospatial data workflows

MnGeo strengthens state agency operations by automating geospatial data workflows, improving data accuracy, and building tools that make information easier to collect, maintain, and share. This work is not always highly visible, but it is essential to keeping services reliable, secure, and efficient.

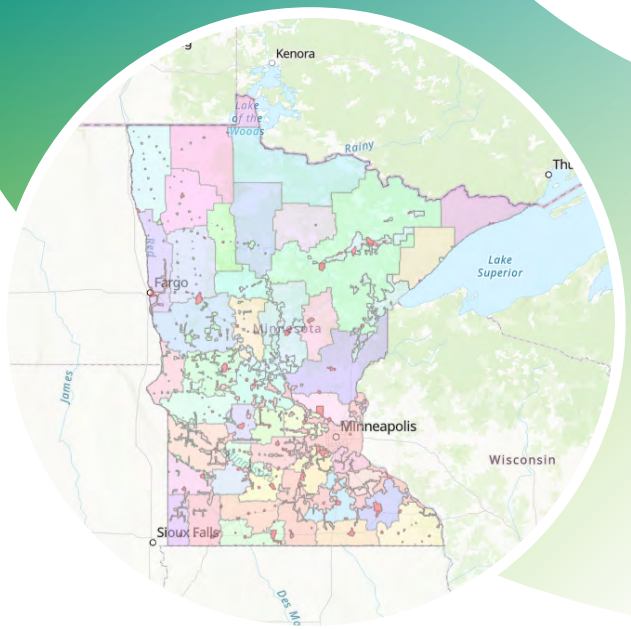
MnGeo helps agencies replace manual processes, modernize data systems, and improve timely access to critical location-based information. The following efforts support public safety, utilities, and internal service delivery, while prioritizing continuous improvement. Together, these projects showcase MnGeo's central role in enhancing the technical foundations of state systems and supporting reliable service delivery throughout Minnesota's state government.

BCA DWI mapping

MnGeo partners with Minnesota's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) to support the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Driving While Impaired (DWI) Analytics Grant, mapping DWI incidents and performing quality assurance to support analysis of impaired driving patterns, assist public safety for DWI enforcement, and reduce the number of impaired crashes and fatalities.

COMM Telephone Exchange Boundaries

In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Commerce (COMM), MnGeo maintains the state's telephone exchange boundary system, providing data updates, hosting, and secure tools that allow local exchange carriers to digitize approved changes and ensure compliance with state and federal requirements. Up-to-date telephone exchange boundaries are publicly available in the Minnesota Telephone Exchange Boundaries application.



PUC EIP and Electric Utility Service Areas

For the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC's) Energy Infrastructure Permitting (EIP) unit, MnGeo maintains statewide energy infrastructure datasets, including wind turbines, solar facilities, and related fatality records, and supports public facing tools such as the Minnesota Wind Farm and Solar Projects application. MnGeo also collaborates with PUC to maintain the Electric Utility Service Areas map and secure provider submission system, digitizing service boundaries and enabling more accurate, frequent updates that support residents, utilities, and energy developers.

MNIT Desktop Support Locations

MnGeo also supports internal MNIT operations through the development of the Statewide Computer Locations Map, an automated, centralized tool that visualizes office sites, technology footprints, and service needs for agencies across Greater Minnesota. This application helps MNIT plan support more effectively, strengthen agency relationships, coordinate resources, and communicate service demands, affirming MNIT's commitment to providing informed, responsive service across the enterprise.

***Photo**: Electric Utility Service Area Map*

LOOKING AHEAD

By Sally Wakefield

MnGeo Program Manager

As MnGeo prepares to mark 50 years of GIS in Minnesota state government in 2027, this time offers an opportunity to pause and reflect on how far Minnesota's geospatial community has come. We look forward to the coming year with pride in our history and excitement for the opportunities ahead. Minnesota remains committed to efficient government, data-informed decision-making, and the thoughtful use of technology to support public services. The value of geospatial information in accomplishing these goals is clearer than ever. As agencies and communities increasingly rely on location-based data to guide planning, operations, and resource allocation, MnGeo's role in enabling this work continues to grow.

The coming year will bring meaningful progress across several major initiatives that continue to strengthen Minnesota's geospatial foundation. Following the successful launch of MnTopo 2, MnGeo will advance the buildout of lidar data derivatives, including completion of the statewide digital elevation model, expanded contours, hillshade products, and terrain-based modeling to support environmental analysis, natural resource planning, hazard mitigation, and infrastructure work.

The new Minnesota Geospatial Commons will also continue to advance. MnGeo will broaden the number of publishing partners, expand service-based data offerings, and leverage the platform's redesigned architecture to explore collaboration with other organizations using the same infrastructure. These efforts will continue to position the Commons as a central, accessible resource for agencies, local governments, researchers, educators, and the public.

MnGeo will maintain its strong partnership with DPS-ECN as Minnesota moves toward NG911 implementation. With statewide road centerlines, address points, and emergency service boundary data nearing full readiness, MnGeo will support the remaining data refinement, validation, and system preparation needed for this important next step in building a modern, reliable emergency communication ecosystem.

In addition, MnGeo is looking forward to expanding its partnership with DPS's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, including dedicating staff to support the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). Ensuring geospatial expertise is available during SEOC activations strengthens preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities statewide.

MnGeo is also engaged in exploring new relationships with other state agencies to expand the use of geospatial analysis to support planning and service delivery. These discovery efforts include exploring potential statewide map-based applications to support business investment in Minnesota with the Department of Employment and Economic Development's First Stop for Business team, working with the Long-Range Planning team at Minnesota Management and Budget to provide geospatial insights to support local planning departments, and continued collaboration with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to examine how services, communities, and families connect across geography.

National coordination also remains a priority. MnGeo will continue to work with the Geospatial Advisory Council's 3D Geomatics Committee and the U.S. Geological Survey to leverage Minnesota's lidar acquisition for the development of a 3D Hydrography Program (3DHP) dataset—a modern hydrography resource supporting environmental modeling, water quality planning, and natural resource management.

As MnGeo prepares to celebrate 50 years of geospatial leadership in state government, one guiding principle remains unchanged: quality, accessible location information empowers informed decisions. In the year ahead, and beyond, MnGeo will continue expanding access to foundational data, advancing geospatial services, and partnering across Minnesota's GIS and technology community to support a stronger, better prepared and more connected future for the state.

MINNESOTA
IT SERVICES
GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION OFFICE

mngeo.state.mn.us

This report is available in alternative formats upon request. To request an accessible format, please email ADA.MNIT@state.mn.us or call 651-556-0519 or 651-201-1118.