

The Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC) – Program Overview

White Paper

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By Andrew Faust, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Overview of WROC

Seven regional planning commissions (RPCs) created the Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium (WROC) to assist in coordinating mapping services for members of WROC. The goal of the consortium is to build and sustain a multi-participant program to acquire digital orthoimagery and elevation data throughout Wisconsin. WROC is planning for imagery projects in 2010. The WROC approach brings a number of potential benefits to its members, including the following:

1. Cost savings
2. Specifications and standards support
3. Data sharing between members
4. Procurement support

To facilitate a cooperative approach for orthoimagery data acquisition, WROC is working with the Wisconsin land information community to strengthen relationships between local, regional, state, and federal entities. This collective effort to acquire orthoimagery and elevation data is a major step forward in the vital task of acquiring and distributing up-to-date geospatial data. The benefits of a consortium approach, however, should not come at the expense of meeting each member's specific needs. To that end, WROC is designed to allow all participants to receive products and services tailored to their individual geospatial needs.

WROC will lead an effort to make geospatial data users aware of potentially redundant orthoimagery efforts – i.e., projects with similar data acquisition times and specifications that can be merged or eliminated. Streamlining orthoimagery efforts prevents duplication of effort, which saves time and money.

WROC Consultant Selection Process

WROC went through a quality-based selection (QBS) process in May 2008 to select a mapping and imagery consultant. A selection team of more than 30 people – comprising representatives from various levels of government – was formed to evaluate statements of qualifications (SOQs) submitted from interested consultants. From the pool of SOQs, the selection team short-listed two consultant teams. The selection process culminated with the remaining contenders giving oral presentations and being interviewed by the selection team. The final outcome was the selection of the Ayres Associates/Aero-Metric team for the 2010 WROC program.

Program Activities and Timeline

WROC is planning a 2010 spring leaf-off flight for aerial imagery acquisition using digital mapping cameras. Options will be available for color, color IR, and black-and-white digital imagery. Options will also be available for different pixel resolutions and map accuracy standards.

Importantly, additional geospatial products and services – namely, photogrammetric mapping, LiDAR, and remote sensing data – are also available.

Over the next 12 months, WROC will work with the consultant team to provide consortium members project specifications and cost estimates. Letters of intent (LOI) will be signed by each WROC member to help the consultant team allocate resources and define the size and scope of the consortium program. Regional partnerships will be formed based on the LOI. Individual contracts will be created for each project.

Conclusion

The recognition of the inherent problems in discontinuous geospatial data and the lack of a coordinating entity to remedy these problems has led to the creation of WROC. Members of the Wisconsin land information community need to develop a set of common goals to help share the burden of costs and make vital geospatial data more widely available across jurisdictions. WROC is prepared to lead this effort through its first major initiative, the 2010 mapping program.

WROC moves the Wisconsin land information community closer to the ultimate goal of a truly statewide mapping initiative. Regardless of when that goal is reached, WROC will continue its effort to foster partnerships and strengthen regional ties. A key feature of a consortium program is that as more and more counties, cities, and others join, a groundswell of support can occur that brings in even more members. And the more participants there are, the more costs can be shared. Increasing awareness of current imagery projects and programs can also help eliminate duplication and wasteful spending.

Orthoimagery is a critical layer in all land information systems in the state. It is vital that we create a sustainable program that meets as many of the objectives of the participants as possible. Local governments in Wisconsin have invested tremendous amounts of time and money in their existing map products and geographic information systems. By working together we can save everyone involved time and money – and at the same time create superior products and help solidify the formation of a sound mapping program.