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MAGIC: The Connecticut Spatial Data Center

Mr. McGlamery's discussion centered on the University of Connecticut's Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC) website. The University's map library was renamed MAGIC approximately 4 years ago.

Since 1992, MAGIC has been working at the federal and state level to bring together an online collection of spatial data for Connecticut. There are currently 20,000 data sets for Connecticut on the website. These data sets include attribute data, digital cartography and photographic data.

What is special about spatial? Spatial data is not a map–it is data that is to be used in a Geographic Information Software (GIS) program. All of the data is integrated into a georeferenced system, so that there are tables of data associated with each map. The user must have a GIS program to be able to use it. Map libraries then collect spatial information regardless of its format. They collect maps, tables (such as Excel files) and data.

What role does MAGIC play in the delivery of information as a library? MAGIC collects, describes, and provides access to data. The website contains data, reference aids, and web links. All of the data on the MAGIC website is spatial, and is integrated into a geo-referenced system. The data is in the public domain (free). The primary users are UConn faculty, students, and staff (1/3 of users). Secondary users are other citizens of Connecticut. However, people outside of the state access and use the data as well. 9000 gigabytes of data are downloaded per month from the MAGIC site, mostly state-level data, with spikes in March and November, probably corresponding to the academic calendar.

The data has been collected from many sources such as the Department of Environmental Protection, Census Bureau, U.S. Geological Society, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Economic and Community Development. Available data includes town boundaries and profiles, roads, hydrography, railroads, land use and cover, power lines, census tracts, arial photographs, etc. MAGIC is currently working with the Library of Congress, Harvard University, Yale University, Brown University and the Royal Library of the Netherlands to amass a comprehensive collection of maps of Connecticut before 1800 that will soon be available on the website.

What does the future hold? Future prospects for MAGIC include realistic 3-D visualization, interactive modeling and query with local and regional data, and discovery and extraction of Connecticut spatial data.