NSPS Executive Director Report – June 20, 2017

Certified Floodplain Surveyor (CFS)
NSPS is preparing a letter of support for the establishment of a CFS program by the Tennessee Association of Surveyors (TAPS) and the Tennessee Office of Emergency Services, following the model operated in North Carolina by the state surveying society (NCSS) and the, and taking advantage of the offer of assistance from NCSS to get the program started. NCSS, with assistance from the North Carolina Emergency Management/Risk Management Office and NSPS, recently presented a webinar about setting up a CFS program. Since then, the number of state societies expressing interest in the program has risen to 10.

Even though FEMA has indicated that it will not offer expedited processing of LOMA submittals from states other than NC, the benefits of the training and collaboration among surveyors and review agencies is considered very valuable.

News Flash: NSPS has recently begun to receive a number of inquiries from the public asking how to find a Professional Surveyor in their area to provide services related to a LOMA submittal. Upon further research, NSPS has learned that apparently FEMA is sending notifications to landowners informing them that they might be able to reduce their flood insurance premiums based on a LOMA application, and that a Professional Surveyor can assist them.

Highlights from 2017 NSPS Spring Meetings/Conference
In conjunction with the NSPS spring conference (held with MAPPS) in March, many NSPS members participated in the annual Capitol Hill Day activities, presenting the NSPS perspective on issues of interest to the surveying profession that are to be considered during this session of Congress, as well as discussing some issues affecting individuals’ respective states.

During its annual meeting, the NSPS Board of Directors voted that it will may not continue (on an annual basis) to hold its NSPS Capitol Hill Day in conjunction with MAPPS. Discussion has begun regarding whether “Lobby Day” might consist of NSPS members visiting with their respective national legislators during the week when of them are at home on break.

The Board also voted that it will not hold NSPS Spring business meetings jointly with MAPPS every year.

The annual Student Competition was held just prior to the beginning of the conference with nine (9) schools represented. A decision was taken by the competition committee and the participating schools that the competition will not be held every year at the same time and location as NSPS Spring meetings.

During the conference, NSPS and PRIA (Property Records Industry Association) presented an interesting, and well-attended, program on the concept of creating programs to get more Surveyors’ plats recorded in local government GIS databases as a means of improving the quality of that data. Some such programs already exist, with what is reported to be good results.

During the NSPS Board of Directors meeting, Certified Survey Technician (CST) program pioneers Bob Moynihan and Ron Torrence were honored for their efforts in making the program successful through their 30 years of continuing service on the CST Board since the program’s beginning.

Minutes of BoD meetings can be viewed on the NSPS website, http://www.nsps.us.com/?page=Minutes.
Boy Scouts Jamboree Donations
In response to a solicitation by NSPS for donations to support the NSPS team that manages the Surveying Merit Badge booth during Boy Scouts Jamborees (a once every four years event), more than $8500 has been donated this year by state surveying societies/chapters and individual Surveyors. NSPS thanks all who have contributed to date, and urges societies and individuals to establish an annual contribution program to support the perpetuation of the team’s participation in future Jamborees. The 2017 Jamboree will take place in July.

NSPS Advocacy

Public Sector/Private Sector Professional Surveyors
NSPS recently responded (http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/nsps.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/Public_Private_Surveyors/NSPS_Policy_on_public_privat.pdf) to a question posed by some members of the Professional Land Surveyors of Ohio (PLSO) regarding the NSPS position on whether all surveying activities should be conducted by the private sector.

Hydrographic Surveys – Separate License?
NSPS is researching a recent report of an effort to create a separate (perhaps national) license to conduct Hydrographic surveys, perhaps even as they relate to land boundary issues. As NSPS members are aware, NSPS (in cooperation with The Hydrographic Society of America) operates a Hydrographic Surveying certification program which was created years ago at the request of the federal government. This certification does not qualify those who hold it to perform services specifically assigned to those who are professionally licensed as surveyors (or engineers). NSPS will report further on this issue as information continues be received.

Future of Surveying/Workforce Development
With the understanding that the future of the surveying profession not only involves maintaining an adequate number of Licensed Professionals, but also requires an adequate number of qualified Survey Technicians, NSPS intends to incorporate both issues into its role as the lead organization for the Future of Surveying Task Force (NCEES ceded this role to NSPS prior to the 2016 meeting of the Task Force) by supporting the participation of the Young Surveyors Network and the NSPS Workforce Development Committee in the Task Force. NSPS encourages its members and all state societies to utilize the links that can be found on the NSPS website to State Career and Technical Education offices: https://www.careertech.org/cte-your-state, and to local workforce boards: http://www.service locator.org/workforce contacts.asp for information about how that office can work with our organizations. Upon requests from members/state associations, NSPS has written letters in support for a number of surveying education programs, including the most recent letter related to the establishment of a Surveying Technician program at Maryville Community and Technical College located in Kentucky.
NSPS Comments on General Services Administration’s CIBORG Proposal
NSPS has sent a Letter to Mary Anne Sellman, US General Services Administration (GSA), dated May 15, 2017 expressing its concern about a planned procurement document, stating (in part), “It does not appear that the GSA and NGA conducted an analysis of state licensing laws regarding the practice of surveying with regard to the CIBORG proposal. The scope of work includes services defined as the practice of surveying........and fails to include a requirement that a licensed surveyor be in responsible charge of the work”.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
During the communications leading up to the letter written by NSPS supporting the two-year program at Maryville Community and Technical College located in Kentucky, it was disclosed by representatives at the school that one thing which could affect whether that program would be created is information from the BLS noting an anticipated drop in Survey Technician jobs. Executive Director Curt Sumner had a lengthy conversation with BLS staff about the fact that Survey Technicians are currently in high demand, and that the anticipated drop in demand for Survey Technician jobs (as stated on the BLS website) is not likely to occur because, regardless of “new technologies” there will remain a demand for the Survey Technicians to utilize those technologies in gathering data.

Accordingly, although there may not be a significant increase in Survey Technician jobs, the current demand is not likely to drop significantly. NSPS expects that there will be a change in the next BLS statistics related to Survey Technician jobs.

Direct Point Positioning Survey (DPPS) –
During the NSPS 2017 Spring Board of Directors meeting, NSPS voted to send a follow-up position paper (http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/nsps-ym.com/resource/resmgr/govt_affairs/NSPS_Position_on_DPPS.pdf) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) reiterating the position of NSPS opposing the BLM- proposed DPPS solution for future surveys in Alaska, or anywhere else.

National Surveyors Week - 2017
By all accounts, National Surveyors Week 2017 activities by the respective state societies was a big success, with many Proclamations obtained from governing bodies, from local to national. Thanks to all state societies and local chapters for their stellar work in getting recognition for National Surveyors Week.

Interaction with Council of European Geodetic Surveyors (European equivalent to NSPS)
In April, NSPS Executive Director Curt Sumner accepted an invitation from CLGE to make a couple of presentations during its Spring 2017 conference/business meetings in Lausanne, Switzerland. He was joined on the trip by NSPS Head of Delegation to FIG/FIG Foundation Chair John Hohol. Executive Director Sumner spoke on the topic of the surveying system(s) utilized in the U.S., and on the state of surveying in the U.S. Sumner and Hohol also attended the business meeting of CLGE to ask for support from its 38 member countries for the NSPS proposal to host the 2022 FIG Congress. The proposed location is Orlando, FL. The last FIG annual meeting (Congress, or Working Week) held in the Western Hemisphere was the ACSM/ASPRS-sponsored Congress in 2002 in Washington, DC.
NSPS Participates in NGS Symposium on NAD 2022
NSPS Director David Doyle spoke on behalf of the organization during the April 24 NGS Summit in Silver Spring, MD on the provisions of NAD 2022 template for model legislation (http://www.nsps.us.com/resource/resmgr/NGS/Template_Draft_-_Final.docx). NSPS worked closely with NGS in the development of model legislation language for states to use in calling for adherence to NAD 2022 provisions for surveys.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
NSPS will again participate in the annual ASCA conference which will be held in Denver, CO in July 2017. NSPS again has a group of members volunteering, this year from the Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, and led by PLSC and NSPS Board of Directors member J B Guyton. NSPS President Elect Kim Leavitt and his brother Darren are taking the “sandbox” demonstration to the conference. The follow up with school counselors and state school counselor associations following NSPS participation in the 2016 ASCA conference has been encouraging.

NSPS Government Affairs Program Creates “PLATS” (http://nsps.site-ym.com/page/PLAT)
The NSPS Political and Legislative Alert Team (PLAT) is an arm of NSPS that mobilizes grass roots action on national public policy issues of interest to the surveying profession. The purpose of PLAT is to identify and engage surveyors who know, have relationships with, or are willing to establish relationships with members of Congress to influence policy in a manner favorable to the profession.

Results of Journalism, Map/Plat Competition, and Scholarships
The NSPS/AAGS Scholarship competition (managed by the NSPS Foundation) attracted 42 applications from students studying at 22 schools vying for the 14 scholarships offered in the 2017 program. Thanks to the diligence of this year's judges, the winners have been notified and scholarships are being awarded in record time.

Judging has also been finalized for the NSPS Map/Plat Competition and the NSPS Journalism Competition.

NSPS offers its congratulations to all of the recipients of scholarships and awards, and its sincere appreciation to all who participated. All members are asked encourage surveying students in the college/university

Appointments!
NCEES “Surveying Programs of Distinction (SPoD)”
NSPS has named NSPS Board of Directors member Henry Dingle (SC) to serve on the selection panel for this award.

NOAA Hydrographic Panel!
NSPS is submitting the name of Immediate Past President Tony Cavell in nomination for a seat on NOAA’s Hydrographic Panel.