Notes from RMS River Database Vision call 2.14.13

Introductions

- Risa Shimoda - RMS
- Sera Janson Zegre - Consultant to RMS, Admin. for Ntl. BLM River Database
- Joan Harn, NPS DC - River recreation, stewardship
- Susan Rosebrough - NPS Seattle
- Dave Penrose - President, Society of Freshwater Science
- Peter Bonsall - NPS DC, GIS intern
- Richard, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, GIS analyst on watershed pollutant loadings
- Zack Cole, University of FL - Ecospatial modeling, river
- Lelia Mellen - NPS VT/NH - Water trails
- Tom O'Keefe AW - Online database for whitewater rivers (10,000 river reaches)
- Doug Whittaker, AK - Consultant river projects, use databases
- Randy Welsh - USFS VA. Program lead for WSR
- Frank Biasi - Director Digital Development, National Geographic, Colorado - Websites, mobile apps(envisionthejames.org and other sites)
- Jennifer Reed - Artic Wildlife Refuge (*excited to be on call, but not available today*)
- Jane Polansky - TN State Parks
- Scott Murray – Upper Reach/Roanoke River Basin Association

1. **Overview of vision (Risa)**

2. **Overview of audience: suggestions for additions or modifications**
   a. (Frank) Have more of a breakout in recreational opportunities such as fishing, camping
   b. (Peter) Bump logistics for science and educators up from low to medium
   c. (Sera) Special regulations and restrictions (under "logistics" or "designation" column heading)
   d. (Jane) For water trails, include dams and access/portage around them in "logistics" or "recreational opportunity" column heading
   e. (Tom O'Keefe) General question: think about in incremental parts… what's the sequence for such a big effort?

3. **Overview of data, discussion about**
   a. (Zack) Public interface should allow interaction with public, via a Wiki approach (group sourced)
   b. (Doug) The bigger it gets, the more authority it takes on. If everyone helps, we might be unsure of data accuracy. It needs to be moderated at higher level.
   c. (Frank) This is a big enough effort that it needs to be authoritative for professional crowds in various organizations. The core database needs to start out as a curated authoritative source (e.g., starting with NHD), built incrementally with a network of authorities and stewards responsible for attributing the data within a given attribute and geography.
   d. (Tom) AW allows permissions for region, state, or reach in response to contact by individuals pointing out opportunities to improve their site.
   e. (Sera) National BLM database is similar; different permissions exist for BLM employees to edit/update
   f. (Frank) USGS has a comprehensive system of river and streams.
   g. (Tom) AW's been working with folks out of Denver/Ft. Collins for updates to their rivers database

4. **Overview vision**
    a. Is it a vision for the database or the (sexier) end use?
    b. Substitute "atlas" for "database" and support it internally with an 'operational vision.'
    c. Consider including that it is in part group sourced

The National River Recreation and Stewardship ___ is a convenient resource for all US rivers that shows users where and how to enjoy them in the context river systems. It also serves river managers and stewards as a reference tool for rivers flowing across jurisdictions.

5. **Overall proceeding**
    a. (Tom) Suggested that to have success, restrict to a geographic scope at first: e.g., update NRI, or eligible / suitable rivers
    b. (Sera) Refer to the NPS data inventory document (attached) for smaller steps
    c. (Susan) Suggested NRI and Candidate rivers as priorities
    d. (Frank) Agreed on NRI from a conservation point of view, best conservation tool and "bang for buck". Suggested instead focusing on one attribute layer with Nationwide scope to demonstrate that this is a nationwide product. Priority attributes need to be informed by the priorities of DOI or funders. Depends on who's funding or doing the work
    e. (Doug) Advised that we make decisions regarding (1) structural issues (variables and sources), (2) who certifies the accuracy, and (3) who pays and gets outside interest. If the size and scope become too big everyone will steal it, and we'll need to wonder about the accuracy. Pay attention to this. Develop a good structure (content), then decide which content to outsource, and which you'll claim as the authority.
    f. (Sera) RMS will not be the authority on the data but the coordinator of the resources.
    g. (Zac) The next step, regardless of platform, defines what variables are going to be important. We're not going to be the authority of data, but will define what variables are important.
    h. (Doug) What's important is the transparency and citation of sources.
    i. (Joan) Starting with the NRI requires more discussion, regarding the tools needed to improve data that's out there now. Prepared to focus on implementing recommendations in report in the context of WSRs and attribute database.
    j. (Susan) Suggested bridging the WSR database and NRI (Candidate rivers): all agencies are working on this now.
    k. (Risa) Our structure, foundation must be able to 'hold' whatever layers we apply to it.
    l. Working on existing dataset, layers…

6. **Next Steps**
    a. (RMS) Focus on integrating available data for which there is most interest, aligning their attributes/variables (using the same cartographic): WSRs, candidate rivers, perhaps NRI
    b. (Frank) Reach out to USGS about developing dataset of NHD
    c. (Risa) We will
        - Follow up with notes, NPS inventory document and request for additional input
        - Ask invitees to indicate a level of interest in the discussion
        - Explore (with Frank and Tom) setting up a USGS meeting
        - In a couple of months: Send an update, possibly set up a conference call