

USGS Comment on Sequestration



What is the impact of the US sequestration on the geomatics sector? Can we expect to see more negative effects in the future? GIM International has asked around in the geomatics sector to obtain some expert opinions. This time, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) comments on the sequester impacts relating to the organisation and the greater geomatics/geospatial sector.

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The [U.S. Geological Survey](#) is the nation's largest water, Earth and biological science and civilian mapping agency. Through our [National Geospatial Program](#), we organise, maintain, publish and disseminate the geospatial baseline of the nation's topography, natural landscape and built environment under the banner of [The National Map](#). Also, and we foster a general understanding of broad geographic patterns, trends, and conditions through [The National Atlas of the United States of America](#). Additionally, the NGP increases the efficiency of the nation's geospatial community by improving communications about geospatial data, products, services, projects, needs, standards and best practices as it executes its mission activities.

As a result of the sequestration of the U.S. Federal budget, we have had to postpone [The National Map User Conference](#) that was scheduled for May 2013. This is particularly troubling for us, as we had planned what would have been a very cost-effective and meaningful event. You see, *The National Map* User Conference was really three conferences in one, allowing participants to maximise their travel dollars and time. In addition to the focus on *The National Map*, the Conference also included break-out sessions on the [National Hydrography Dataset](#) (the nation's digital framework of surface waters), and the [Community for Data Integration](#) (a grass-roots community of scientists who collaboratively develop solutions to data integration challenges). Our ability to meet our mission objective of increasing the efficiency of the nation's geospatial community is hindered by our inability to bring together the stakeholders working in these three important areas.

We can probably recover from these lost opportunities this year. However, if this situation becomes the new 'normal', the long-term impacts could be significant and costly. The recent advancements in our field, such as new sensor technologies and exploding geospatial applications, may not be exploited to their full advantage.

More comments on the impact of the US sequestration on geomatics:

Steve DeGloria, ASPRS President - [Paying the Price for Geospatial Isolationism](#)

[Esri's John Day on the Impacts of the US Sequestration](#)

AJ Clark, President, Thermopylae Sciences and Technology - [Sequestration Pushes Private Sector to Advance Mission Goals Cost-effectively](#)