

New Hampshire DOE Signs Statewide GIS License Agreement with ESRI
Concord, New Hampshire—July 16, 2012—Over 200,000 students in New Hampshire schools now have the ability to learn and apply 21st century geospatial concepts using the ArcGIS software developed by Environmental System Research Institute (ESRI). Thanks to a statewide partnership between ESRI, the world's leading geographic information system (GIS) software developer, and the New Hampshire Department of Education, this new partnership will allow every public and private school throughout the state unprecedented access to ESRI's state-of-the-art GIS tools for use in education and research. The agreement also includes school administrative use for tasks like creating district maps and efficient bus routes.

According to Judy Tumosa of New Hampshire Fish & Game, "This partnership will provide a wonderful opportunity for teachers to use GIS to gather, display, analyze and share their data as they study their watersheds". Kevin Heany, social studies teacher at Monadnock Regional High School says, "Our environmental studies students have been actively involved in collecting data from the nearby Ashelot River. Giving them the opportunity with ArcGIS to map and visualize their own data, as well as the capability to actively participate in monitoring the water quality is exciting,"

Recognized non-formal education groups such as 4-H Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys Clubs and Girls Clubs will also have access to the software. Shane Bradt, director of the UNH Cooperative Extension Geospatial Technologies Training Center, is excited that "Not only will this ESRI license provide a wonderful opportunity to engage kids in geospatial inquiry in the classroom, but the availability of GIS to afterschool groups will further integrate spatial thinking into the next generation of NH students".

The partnership with ESRI was made possible through the collaborative effort of the New Hampshire State Department of Education, New Hampshire Geographic Alliance (NHGA), New Hampshire Fish and Game, and UNH Cooperative Extension. This collaborative effort would not have been possible without individual efforts from teachers like Plymouth Regional High School teacher, Ina Ahern, who was awarded the Christa McAuliffe Sabbatical Fellowship in 2008-2009 with a project which promoted GIS in New Hampshire schools, as well as Robert Woolner, geography teacher at Hopkinton Middle High School, who began using GIS with his students in 1997, and is chair of the NHGA geospatial literacy initiative. This group has formed a team of New Hampshire Education GIS Specialists (NHedGIS) that will not only manage the state account, but also provide professional development for teachers as part of a strategically planned effort to foster geospatial literacy across the state.

"I have been working with future teachers, teaching them how to effectively use the software in their classrooms to support geographic inquiry," says Dr. Lara Bryant, an assistant professor at Keene State College, who teaches a GIS in K-12 education course and is also the coordinator of the NHGA. "It is now exciting that the software will be available to them when they begin teaching. GIS really allows teachers to create an inquiry based learning environment; one in which students can ask questions, explore spatial data and begin to derive possible solutions to the variety of geographic issues our communities face." ESRI Education Manager, Charlie Fitzpatrick, added "This is a huge opportunity for students of New Hampshire to build their career options. GIS is in every industry, GIS is STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics), GIS is green, and GIS is growing."

Professional development that introduces geospatial technologies to educators and schools throughout the state will be provided through a variety of opportunities. The NHedGIS team is creating online professional development workshops through the New Hampshire Digital Resource Consortium (www.nhdrc.org) as part of their *Institute in a Box* series. The team will also be presenting workshops at state teacher conferences such as the New Hampshire Council for Social Studies Fall Conference, New Hampshire Science Teachers' Association Fall Conference, and the Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference. A variety of other workshops and institutes are also planned to aid teachers in the implementation of this powerful technology in their

classrooms.

For additional information regarding the New Hampshire ESRI partnership, visit <http://www.nhedgis.org>