



# ILLINOIS GIS NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ILLINOIS GIS ASSOCIATION

**It's Coming!**  
**R U**  
**READY?**  
 GIS Can Prepare **U**  
 4 the Unknown Disaster  
**Get Prepared**

**April 19-20, 2011**  
**GIS in Action...in Disasters...in Preparation!**  
 I Hotel & Conference Center, Champaign Illinois

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# Don't miss it!

## The 5000th GISP.....Who Are You?

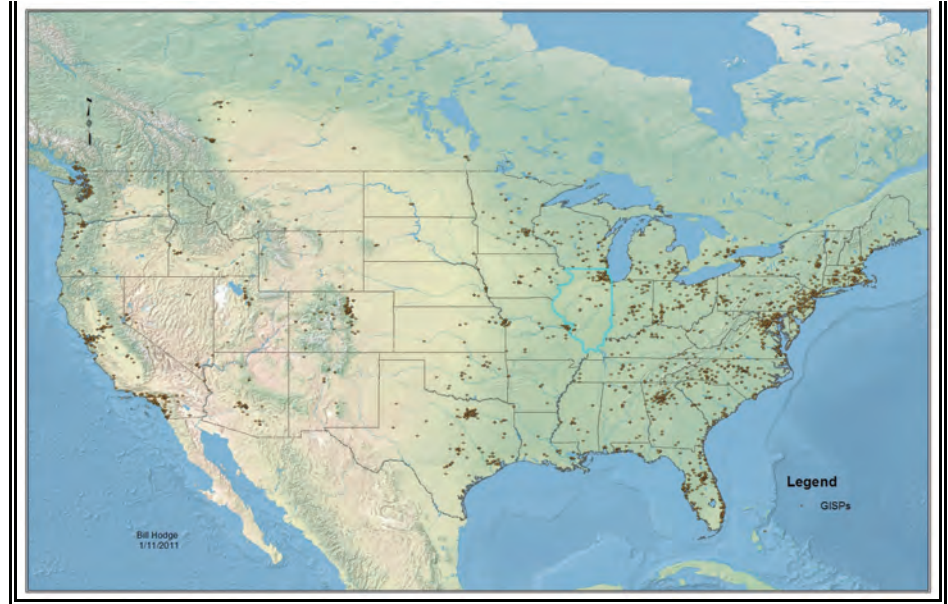
Bill Hodge, GISP, and Sheila Wilson, PhD, GISP

As part of the legendary rock group, The Who, Peter Townshend wrote and performed one of the classic rock songs of all time, "Who Are You?" That song and its question were picked up by the wildly successful TV show CSI and it has become a staple for another generation.

The song serves as a perfect lead into an important conversation, this time concerning that of the GIS Professional (GISP), with the focus upon one GISP in particular, a specific someone yet to be identified. After a well-debated beginning surrounded by several years of discussion within the industry and culminating with the first certified cohort of 25 in 2003, the GIS Professional Certification (GISP) is off to a great start. With 4,773 Certified GIS Professionals as of November 25, 2010, the 5,000th Certified Professional is waiting somewhere within the wide world of the geospatial, and that person will step out of the shadows sometime in 2011 to occupy a milestone position in the Certification Timeline. Who is that person and what can we tell about them? One way to speculate using firm ground is to investigate those individuals that have already achieved certification. What is there about this group that can give us a preview of Number 5000? Let us investigate together...

The 'typical' GISP is about as typical as a genius in Mensa but here are some general statistics about who GISPs are:

- We have about 10-15 years experience.
- We can be found in all 50 of the United States, Canada, and more than 30 other countries, but are predominately from North America, at this writing.
- We work hard and have a strong moral character, diligently following a strict Code of Ethics and Rules of Conduct.
- We strive to mentor other GISPs and less experienced GIS practitioners.



As of November 25, 2010, there were 4,773 GIS Professionals certified from around the world. Of these, 4,557 reside in the US, and 117 live in Illinois.

- We are active in the GIS community, participating in GIS organizations, presenting at conferences and meetings, organizing GIS events, writing articles, and contributing whenever possible.
- We are leaders in the GIS community: many of us are on the Boards of other organizations, assist with federal GIS standards development and implementation, and much more.
- We love GIS!

GIS is changing our world for the better, and GISPs are at the forefront of the change, leading the charge. We are continually improving and innovating GIS and the GIS profession. We make jobs easier, more efficient, and more cost-effective by finding better ways to share and communicate information.

The Department of Labor has recognized the immense value of GIS and has declared the geospatial industry as one of the nation's top growing industries, as a green industry, and predicts significant growth in the next several years. Many government agencies recognize the value of GISPs and are now requesting GISPs on staff with contractors. Many employers recognize the value of

GISPs and are now requiring those in the GIS department to either have their GISP or be working towards it.

Becoming a GISP is not an easy task. One must meet benchmarks in education, professional experience, and professional activities plus continuing education and activities once one is certified. Do you have what it takes? Do you qualify to become a GISP? We invite you to visit the GISCI web site at [www.gisci.org](http://www.gisci.org) in order to take a closer look at what certification entails.

Will you be the 5,000th GISP? Well, whether you are the 5,000 or any other number of certified GIS Professional, we would love to welcome you to our ranks!!

### About the Authors

Bill Hodge, GISP, is the GIS Division Manager for the City of Midland, TX. He directs the city's enterprise GIS operations.

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