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GISCI Executive Director to Step Down in April 2013

At its regular meeting on January 28, 2013, the Board of Directors of the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) accepted the resignation of its Executive Director, Dr. Sheila Wilson GISP. After serving more than three years as Executive Director, Dr. Wilson has decided to step down, as of April 30, 2013.

The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) is a tax-exempt not-for-profit organization that provides the geographic information systems (GIS) community with a complete certification program. Its member organizations include the Association of American Geographers (AAG), Geospatial Information & Technology Association (GITA), National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS), and Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA).

GISCI began GIS Professional (GISP) certification in 2003 under a management services agreement with URISA. Dr. Wilson was hired as GISCI's first full-time Executive Director in late 2009 and has served during a period of great vibrancy and growth across geospatial industries and organizations. She has worked closely with GISCI's Board of Directors, its five member organizations, its active volunteer committees, and other GIS organizations to promote certification as a key credential for GIS professionals in the US and internationally. During her tenure, she experienced the exciting and dynamic change and innovation that has come to characterize the geospatial community, strengthened GISCI's volunteer cadre, saw GISCI certify its 5,000th active GISP, and assisted the Board in identifying and hiring an Exam Development Project Manager.

GISCI remains committed to the advancement of the GIS profession for the benefit of society and individual practitioners and will continue to serve as a leader in advancing the professional development, recognition, and career preparation of current and future GISPs. Several activities are underway that support these goals. The Board has embarked on a methodical, multi-stage process to carefully explore, develop, and implement a competency-based examination by 2015, reflecting a conviction that portfolio-based certification augmented by such an examination has the potential to further advance the profession. GISCI will also publish an updated website later this year that will support online applications and renewals and streamline the entire process for applicants and reviewers. The GISP certification lasts for five years, and there are now many cohorts of GISPs who are approaching their renewal dates. GISCI looks forward to working with those GISPs to ensure that their professional credential remains current.

The Board of Directors, working with Dr. Wilson over the next three months, will plan a seamless transition to new management and leadership for GISCI. We are very grateful for Dr. Wilson's leadership and passionate service to the community, and her plans to remain involved with GISCI through volunteer activities. We wish her well in all her other future endeavors.