**GIS Professionals Contribute to COVID-19 Response**

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GISPs Contribute Through Geospatial Science & Data Management

The Geographic Information Systems Certification Institute (GISCI) is pleased to see the increasing role that GISPs and other geospatial science practitioners are playing in the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We support the increasing public dialog surrounding the place our profession’s ethics occupies in our profession as we continue to meet our obligations to society, our employers, and individuals.

GISCI has incorporated the disciplines of Geographic Information Systems/GIScience as a central part of its GISP® Professional Certification program since its inception in 2003. We administer the GISP®, a GIS Professional certification awarded to qualified candidates, part of whose qualifications include rigorous training and experience in data management and geographic scientific analysis.

Over the last 50 years, geospatial science (GIS) has emerged as a profession, increasingly crossing interdisciplinary lines with other technologies and professions. GISPs are highly trained in areas of data gathering, integration, curation, analysis, and security, as well as cartographic representation of the outcomes of that analysis, and this makes them ideal participants to assist in the COVID-19 pandemic response.

GIS has firmly established itself within a wide range of disciplines, and GIS practitioners are working within such varied fields as geography, medicine, engineering, consulting, surveying, combat operations, logistics and intelligence gathering and assessment within every branch of the military, forestry, planning, government operations at all levels, floodplain management, meteorology, insurance and risk analysis, banking, location based services, logistics, utility management, and other industries too numerous to mention.

All have at their heart the need for accurate data gathering, storage, integration, curation, analysis and subsequent map/graphical display. GISPs and geospatial science practitioners are highly skilled with extensive education and training in the science required to meet these needs and continue to provide invaluable support within all these areas.

The public has been tremendously well served and advised by a multitude of mapping representations and disease dashboards during the current COVID-19 global pandemic. GISPs bring a unique understanding of the spatial nature of data and the science associated with analyzing and presenting these data when working with professionals in epidemiology, health care, public health, logistics, and related fields. GISPs continue to support critical analysis and presentation of information to medical professionals, first responders, public policy decision makers, and the general public, informing, in real time, accurate forecasts to those charged with keeping us all safe.

GISPs continue to provide this critical support within the ethical boundaries required by our profession’s Code of Ethics. GISCI recognizes that ethical behavior is a complicated process and requires thoughtful evaluation of different perspectives within the boundaries of our obligations to society, employers, individuals and our fellow professionals.

We applaud these scientifically trained and disciplined professionals in these difficult times, as they work together to provide answers in the face of a new, complicated and constantly changing threat. GISCI encourages all GISPs to consider increasing their awareness of their obligations and welcomes a continuing dialogue on the role GIS Professionals will play in the future.

The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) is a non-profit organization that promotes the advancement of proficient GIS professionals through its international GISP® (Certified GIS Professional) certification program. The Institute fosters rigorous professional and ethical standards, community engagement, and professional mentoring within the GIS industry.

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