Reported by Michael L. Smith (UCSD), Chair.

The convener for 2008-09 was Michael L. Smith (UCSD). The recorded was Wendie Helms (UCR).

Campus representatives: Attendees: Julia Gelfand (Irvine), Tracey Hughes (San Diego), Cynthia Jahns (Santa Cruz), Kris Kasianovitz (Los Angeles), Mary Larsgaard (Santa Barbara), Michael L. Smith (San Diego). Kathy Stroud (Davis), Julie Sweetkind-Singer (Stanford), Fatemah Van Buren (Berkeley), Yvonne Wilson (Irvine).

This year, the group’s meetings were held via conference call on December 12, 2008 and by video conference on June 4, 2009. For the June meeting, the northern group met at Stanford and the southern group met at UC-Irvine and the meeting was held via video conference.

The minutes of the June and December meetings will be available at the UC/S MLG web site, which is currently in transition to a server at UCSD.

Major topics discussed at the meetings were:

1. Budget and Financial Issues

At both the December and June meetings the effects of budget cuts on each campus were discussed at length. There is no need to go into detail here, but other than the usual job freezes and collection development reductions, in the short- (and possibly long-) term we will see job freezes for new hires on two campuses where the map librarian retired in the past year (UCB and UCR; see below). Also, the UCLA map librarian position has been open for two years and there is no indication when (or if) this will be filled. Another result was the dissolution of the Government Documents department at UCD, where the map librarian resided, and a reduction of hours to the map collection. UCB also experienced a reduction of hours to the map collection. Outside of the UC system, Stanford experienced job freezes as well as layoffs.

2. New Database Acquisitions

Given the budget crisis, new database purchases were very limited this year. After researching and discussing various online census mapping products and other map databases, there was no group purchase put forward to CDL. UCSD and UCLA did purchase A to Z Maps Online. Social Explorer was purchased by UCSD, UCLA and Stanford. The Columbia Gazetteer subscription through CDL was continued. UCLA will be testing Geolytics’ Neighborhood Change online product.
3. Major consortium map purchase: China / Tibet maps

With money provided by other UCs and Stanford, UCSB purchased a set of China and Tibet maps (over 400 at various scales). These are paper maps scanned and delivered in digital format. Some campuses will get the maps delivered via hard drive, while others will be able to request maps from UCSB and acquire them by FTP. Otherwise, the most notable purchases of GIS data sets were at UCSD, UCB and Stanford.

4. Partnership to Scan Historical California Topographic Maps with USGS

Mary Larsgaard at UCSB entered into a partnership with the United States Geological Survey office in Madison, WI to work on a new project at the USGS which will scan every one of their maps ever published at all scales. This is part of a larger initiative to update each state’s series of topographic maps every three years. As each state comes up in the cycle for the first time, their historical maps will be scanned as well. California represents the first state to be done.

5. Collecting, Managing and Preserving Geospatial Data

At our June meeting, we had a long discussion concerning these issues and how they are dealt with on each campus and where collaboration might be possible. Issues include how campuses go about collecting data, licensing concerns, preserving original GIS data created by professors and researchers, creating a national geospatial data archive (see: http://www.ngda.org/ collaborators include UCSB and Stanford), creating meta-data and access, and providing support and GIS training to users.

6. Digital Philanthropy at Stanford

Julie Sweetkind-Singer reported on several agreements to acquire maps and digital images from collectors and dealers, which will eventually be made available online. These include David Rumsey’s historical map collection of North American maps (see: http://www.davidrumsey.com), map dealer Barry Ruderman’s digital images of his inventories, and a collection of “California as an Island” maps. Julie will also be working with the University of Cape Town to scan maps of South Africa.

GOALS

1. In light of recent retirements, we will welcome and integrate new representatives to the UC/Stanford Map Libraries Group from UCB, UCR and UCSB.

2. Despite Mary Larsgaard’s retirement, UCSB’s scanning of California USGS maps is in place and will continue in partnership with the USGS. UCSD has also joined the project, and will
provide scans of San Diego and Imperial Counties. Other libraries are being pursued to participate.

3. Cynthia Jahns (UCSC) has a LAUC grant to create an inventory list of potential scanning projects at UC map collections.

4. The group website will be migrating from UCSC (Cynthia) to UCSD (Mike). Also, the group has set up a wiki, and we hope to build on its content throughout the coming year.

5. While there wasn’t much progress made this year, we continue to be interested in scanning historical (out-of-copyright) Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of California. A prior initiative with the Library of Congress did not materialize. We will continue to pursue other avenues.

Announcements

There were several retirements this past summer: Mary Larsgaard at UCSB, Fatemah Van Buren at UCB and Wendie Helms at UCR. UCSB is moving quickly to replace Mary; a job announcement was posted with a closing date in early August. At Berkeley, Brian Quigley, the current Head of the Mathematics-Statistics Library, accepted a 50% time position as interim Head of the Earth Sciences and Map Library. Nothing will change except the hours. At Riverside, Lizbeth Langston, Head of Information Services at the Science Library, will step in as the temporary map librarian. The map collection will continue to be staffed by Margarita Yonezawa, Map Collection Assistant and map cataloger. There is hope the UCR position will be replaced in the future.

The 2009/2010 chair of UC/SMLG will be Cynthia Jahns from UCSC. The next meeting will be another split video conference in December.

Michael Smith (UCSD) continues the Chair of the UC Map Bibliographers Group (a separate office from the chair of UC/SMLG). As outgoing chair of UC/SMLG, Mike will be the recorder this year.

Michael L. Smith
UC San Diego
August 26, 2009