

ITAC Conference Call

May 28, 2014

Attendance:

Michael Lewis
Terri Moore
Nate Booth
Dane Ohe
Gary Krammes

Scott Gain
Bob Avery
Kate Flynn
Kris Lund
Marijke van Heeswijk (New member)

Daniel Pearson (New member)
Jennifer Carlino (Guest)
John Hoffman (Guest)
Kim Martz

Agenda:

- Introductions
 - o Existing ITAC members
 - o New ITAC members
 - Data Chief: Marijke van Heeswijk (WAWSC)
 - GIS: Daniel Pearson (TXWSC)
- 11:10-11:30 EDT
 - o John Hoffman – WSFT and National Hydrologic Data Advisory Committee (HDAC) – Discuss the roles of the two groups, with group discussions of how each could benefit from ITAC activities and how/where the two groups can effectively engage
- 11:30-11:45 EDT
 - o Jennifer Carlino – Overview of CDI and group discussion of how/where ITAC and CDI can effectively engage
- 11:45-12:00 EDT
 - o Next Steps for ITAC
 - Select a Study Chief Representative
 - Agenda items for next call
 - Thoughts/plans about FY14 face-to-face meeting

Minutes:

Michael opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. New members, Data Chief - Marijke van Heeswijk (WAWSC) and GIS Support - Daniel Pearson (TXWSC), and guests Jennifer Carlino (Community on Data Integration (CDI)) and John Hoffman (Water Science Field Team (WSFT) and Hydrologic Data Advisory Committee (HDAC)) were welcomed to the meeting. Introductions were made over the phone.

John Hoffman (WSFT, HDAC) –

Nate opened with an overview of ITAC's perspective to help guide John's discussion.

John provided an overview of the WSFT. The WSFT is comprised of a dozen technical specialists distributed across the United States. The WSFT reports to the Associate Director for Water. The WSFT are technical liaisons between headquarters (HQ) and the field. John is the Chief and serves as a liaison between the Regions, HQ, and WSCs. This role provides a good opportunity to be connected to ITAC. John commented that he feels there is a role for the WSFT to play, but he is not sure of how to make that happen. He added that he will be replacing his Deputy within the year, and interacting with ITAC may be a good role for that person.

John continued his presentation noting that it's important to discuss how the HDAC can weigh in on ITAC. The HDAC was formed from the merging of three regional committees into a single National committee. Working with the committee may provide ITAC the "shot in the arm" that Nate referred to earlier. It may be good to have a responsibility of that committee to participate on ITAC calls. The WSFT has adopted sponsorship of the HDAC, and John would support a member of the committee being part of ITAC. John added that the goal is to have a standing committee in the next couple of months.

Michael commented that there may be a role for the HDAC in regards to discipline reviews. ITAC is looking for feedback on IT issues. Interaction with this committee may help ITAC identify areas to focus our energies. John asked if Michael is referring to software and platform needs. Michael added that the charter casts a wide net, and Nate is pushing innovation. Nate commented that he hopes ITAC can provide an advocacy role. It's important to identify growth areas across centers. ITAC has an interest in exploring these ideas and helping to advance them. Other ideas mentioned by Nate included ITAC being able to help with integrated "supergages," new governance strategy for field computing, and model archiving.

John commented that these are good and appropriate ideas. There is a new policy coming out on model archiving. He recognizes the need to archive all models. John asked how ITAC would like for the WSFT and HDAC to interact with ITAC; through periodic participation on calls, membership. Michael responded that ITAC needs to have more interaction with its constituencies. Scott commented that when ITAC was formed, there was no WSFT. With regards to ITAC and its constituencies, we now have the WSFT sitting on the side without representation. It seems obvious to have a WSFT representative on ITAC. If we're still amending the charter, we could add this representation. If we have a representative for the technical offices, it seems that there should be a WSFT representative. We should look at the composition of ITAC based on the restructured organization. John commented that the WSFT is not organizationally connected to the technical offices. They are viewed as an "appendage." Scott added that the WSFT perspective is different than that of the technical offices. Michael asked if the WSFT will have a leadership role on the HDAC once it is stood up. John responded that the WSFT provides limited resources. The WSFT will have a presence as three technical specialists will be non-voting members. The original committees were grassroots efforts. It's important to not make the HDAC a HQ committee. It will be led by its voting members. John added that the committee should be stood up some time in June. Michael commented that we will need to put our heads together to figure out how we can interact. John responded that we can continue the discussion, and perhaps, one of the three non-voting HDAC members can be a point of contact for ITAC.

Jennifer Carlino (CDI) –

Jennifer presented an overview of the CDI to ITAC. She noted that she works in the Core Science Systems Mission Area and is located in Denver, Colorado. She has worked with CDI, helping to facilitate the group.

CDI was chartered as the Council of Data Integration in 2009 to promote USGS-wide data integration. It evolved into an open community of practice with an interest in enhancing USGS science through best practices, innovative technology, and through leveraging skills. The group is comprised of about 350 geographically dispersed USGS members spread across all Mission Areas and external partners. Kevin Gallagher sponsors the community. Jennifer described the operations of the group noting that they have a monthly forum (share user stories, opportunities, and challenges), working groups and focus groups, annual workshop (anticipating a 2015 workshop) and webinars (opportunity to generate ideas, learn about products, network with peers), and an RFP process (proposals, projects, products; new ideas from CDI and USGS transform into accomplishments). The group is challenged to find ways on advancing USGS science. Jennifer shared the CDI Science Support Framework noting that the diagram demonstrates how the group's lead to a building of knowledge and understanding of Earth systems. Jennifer commented that there may be opportunities for ITAC to work with the CDI through participation in workgroups, participation in monthly meetings, or by giving a presentation on who ITAC is at a monthly meeting. Jennifer would like to work with ITAC to come up with ways to integrate the groups.

Nate thanked Jennifer for her presentation and commended Kevin Gallagher for his efforts in continuing the CDI. Michael added that there seems to be opportunities for ITAC to integrate with CDI.

Daniel Pearson commented that the seed money provided by CDI is an incredibly beneficial resource. For projects that take root, there needs to be a step 2 / phase 2. It's important to consider next steps for important projects when seed money runs out. Nate added that the seed money approach is a good way to promote a project, but maybe there is a way for ITAC to help in terms of promoting the longevity of important products and/or projects.

Michael thanked Jennifer and John for their presentations to ITAC and added that they can expect to hear from ITAC.

Next Steps –

Membership – Michael noted that ITAC has new representation for the Data Chiefs position (Marijke van Heeswijk) and GIS Support (Daniel Pearson). He has received one nomination for the Studies Chief position. Michael will wait for a few more days to see if he receives any additional nominations.

Next call – we will get an agenda out earlier for the next call. Look for Michael to follow this meeting up with an email.

Face-to-Face meeting – Michael commented that it's time for ITAC to think about a face-to-face meeting. Previously, ITAC was to meet in New Mexico or New Jersey, but these meetings were cancelled. Michael will check with New Mexico about having the meeting there. Terri noted that this would be a good location as one of the Data Centers is to be located in New Mexico. Daniel added that New Mexico has many relevant water issues. Michael commented that we will look to have the meeting in September if possible.

- Marijke commented that she will be unavailable most of September.
- The Data Conference is the week of September 8

Michael will send email soliciting potential dates for a meeting.

Parting thoughts -

Marijke asked if ITAC is working on any issues that were not discussed or if the group is starting from scratch. Michael responded that we are starting from scratch in that we are not actively working on any initiatives. Nate added that ITAC has reworked its charter and input from Daniel and Marijke is appreciated.

ACTIONS –

- Identify Studies Section representative
- Continue discussions with WSFTA and CDI on integrating with ITAC
- Identify potential dates for a face-to-face meeting toward the end of the fiscal year
- Finalize the charter
- Identify agenda topics for the June call