

Maryland LiDAR Acquisition and Funding
Thursday, January 10, 2019
Crownsville, MD

Elevation WG and DoIT hosted a meeting to bring together federal, state, and local partners to discuss Maryland elevation data: where we are and options for moving forward. Representatives from MDE, MES, MDNR, SHA, DoIT/MEMA, ESRGC, DoIT GIO office, NRCS, Anne Arundel County, and Carroll County were present at the DoIT Crownsville offices with many more joining via conference call.

The main discussion topics included:

- Maryland LiDAR Status - quality level and acquisition dates.
- Funding and Contracting options:
 - Funding:
 - Independent funding
 - Partial USGS
 - Grant Funding
 - FEMA/MEMA grant options: support for products that support mitigation efforts
 - Emergency Numbers Systems Board (ENSB): current funding source for Maryland Statewide Imagery Program. Support for products that can be directly linked to emergency call center mission critical activities.
 - Private Sector: solicit funding from the private sector who use and benefit from these data (Insurance companies, engineering firms, etc)
 - Contracting:
 - Independent proposal
 - State Imagery Contract
 - USGS Contract
- Documentation - the group discussed the importance of documenting Maryland specific use case scenarios to assist in the explanation and justification to potential stakeholders and investors. This would be simple but impactful examples of how quality LiDAR data is important and relevant to many different organizations. The Elevation WG has discussed taking on the task of compiling use cases in the past and can revisit that topic and solicit volunteers if the consensus is that it is a worthwhile endeavor.
 - Floodplain mapping, watershed mapping, change detection were a few uses that were mentioned during the meeting.
 - Participant suggested reaching out to private sector (engineering firms) for use case examples.
- Several individuals expressed concern over the current predictive models that are based on 8 year old data - climate change models were used as an example.
- The group all agreed on the importance of a seamless, standardized LiDAR dataset collected on a routine, predictable cycle. A seamless, standardized product from year to year is critical to performing change detection and a reliable collection cycle enables organizations to more effectively plan and incorporate the data into their project workflows.
- Return on Investment study - Related to the use case documentation outlined above, the ROI study would contain use case scenarios but would also include cost figures for the investment needed to collect the data and the resulting cost savings that would result from this investment. With the recent addition of QL1 Anne Arundel and Calvert data, Maryland could also analyze cost savings between QL1 and QL2 datasets. While the Elevation WG could

potentially take on the compilation of use cases, an official ROI study would require funding. Roger Barlow, USGS has researched this and presented options and cost estimates for an ROI study to the MSGIC Exec Committee and can provide more information.

- Communication - the group discussed the importance of staying in contact with the LiDAR community to discuss any plans, needs, opportunities, etc related to collection of new elevation data. SeaSketch was suggested as a way to coordinate and communicate.
- The group identified the following action items:
 - Budget for a collection - 2020 and beyond
 - NRCS funding for Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Co. is currently the most promising initiative. Funding is dependent on budget which is not known at this time.
 - MDE/FEMA a possible funding source
 - Submit use cases
 - Submit areas of interest and project descriptions for sea sketch - fedmap.seasketch.org
 - Organizations can submit individually or contact Matt, Erin, Roger to submit on their behalf
 - Draft, Review, and Submit BAA - requires some level of funding prior to submission
 - Create LiDAR Benefits/Case Study Paper
 - Identify volunteers or funding source to complete this
 - Develop ROI
 - Identify funding source to complete this study