

# GIS/LIS NEWS

The Newsletter of the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium

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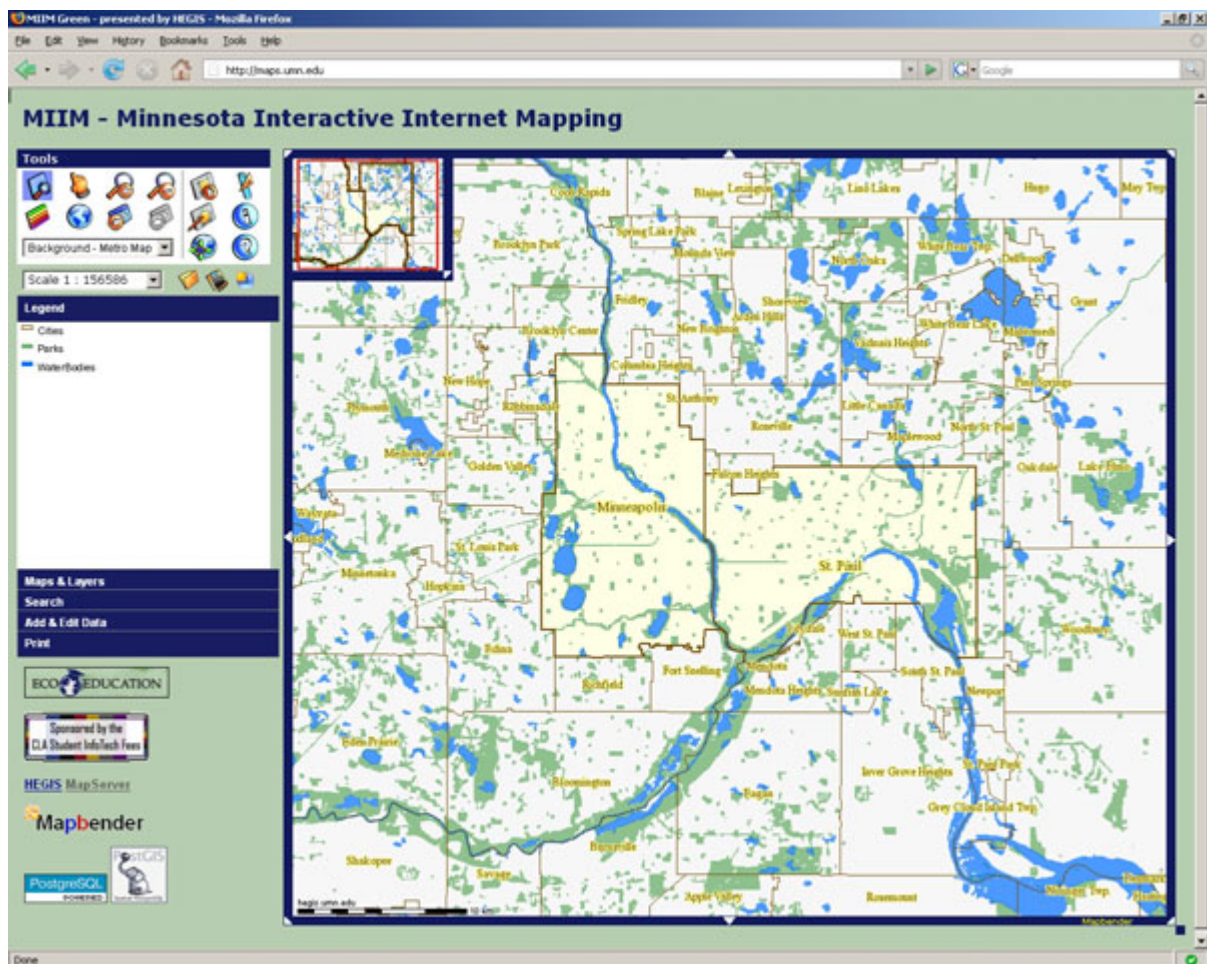
## **K-12 Education**

### **Students Discovering Geography with MIIM**

By Steven Manson, University of Minnesota

The Minnesota Interactive Internet Mapping (MIIM) Project is a web-based mapping application that introduces K-12 and post-secondary students to principles of geography and GIS. While MIIM provides digital maps and imagery in a manner similar to services like Google Maps, the project works with educators to identify features tailored to instruction. Key among these is a broad range of data, interactivity, security, ease of use, customization, analytical capabilities, low resource demands, and sustainability.

The project is a collaboration between the University of Minnesota and Eco Education (<http://www.ecoeducation.org>), an environmental education organization based in Saint Paul, that has served over 130,000 students since 1991. The project is being tested by elementary school teachers in three schools in the Twin Cities in grades 5-7 and by students in several University of Minnesota undergraduate courses.



MIIM is an exciting way to bring GISc into broader use. Kathy Kinzig, Executive Director of Eco Education, notes that “GIS is a technology that is being used more and more to help us understand and address environmental issues. The tools will only get better. Eco Education wants to integrate the use of this technology into our environmental education programming to excite students about the complex ways to look at issues using GIS and to potentially prepare them for using these skills in their future.”

MIIM uses several open-source projects, including Mapbender, MapServer, and PostgreSQL/PostGIS. This combination of technologies is appropriate for educational settings that do not offer extensive teacher

training, dedicated computer labs, software budgets, or technical support. Once the initial Fall 2007 rollout is complete, a larger set of courses will incorporate the project. The basic application is readily available to anyone at <http://maps.umn.edu>

At the University of Minnesota, the project is led by Len Kne, an MGIS student; Professor Steven Manson; and K-12 Coordinator Anise McDowell. Key EcoEducation staff include Executive Director Kathy Kinzig; AmeriCorps Community Technology Empowerment Project (CTEP) member, Jen Elliott; and Program Coordinators Christopher Feider and Faith Krogstad. This work is supported in part by NASA, the McKnight Foundation, and the University of Minnesota Office for Public Engagement and College of Liberal Arts Infotech Fees Committee.

For more information, contact Steven Manson at [manson@umn.edu](mailto:manson@umn.edu) or give MIIM a try at <http://maps.umn.edu>

## **Non-Profits**

### **GITA Conference in February 2008**

By Alan Laumeier, 2007 Minnesota GITA Chapter President

On February 7, 2008, the Minnesota Chapter of the Geospatial Information & Technology Association is sponsoring a daylong conference on: "Utilizing GeoSpatial Technologies to Improve Asset Management and Reliability." The conference will help you learn how GIS will better administer and track your location-based facilities and assets.

The keynote speaker is Xavier Lopez, Director of Oracle's Location Services group. Mr. Lopez leads Oracle's efforts to incorporate spatial technologies across Oracle's database, application server, and eBusiness applications. He has twelve years of experience in the area of GIS and spatial databases. He holds advanced engineering and planning degrees from the University of Maine, MIT, and the University of California, Davis. Mr. Lopez has been active in numerous academic and government research initiatives on geographic information. He is the author of a book on government spatial information policy and has authored over 50 scientific and industry publications in areas related to spatial information technology.

The event will be held at the Eden Prairie Training Center, 7500 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie, Minnesota (see maps below). Any experienced GIS person who wishes to advance the uses of GIS technologies is encouraged to attend the conference. Topics with panel discussions are:

- GeoSpatial Database Options
- Field Data Collection
- Mobility and Staking
- Scheduling / Asset Management
- Outage Management
- Aerial Photography

Confirmed conference supporters are Oracle, Powel, Inc., and Intergraph, as well as others.

Conference cost is \$55.00 for GITA members and \$65.00 for non-members. For more information, visit <http://www.gita.org/> and navigate to chapters tab, Minnesota.