



# Guest Editorial

By Curt Sumner, LS

## ACSM Outlook



As most readers of *The American Surveyor* know, on the first day of this year all individuals who were members of ACSM became individual members of one or more of the four Member Organizations (MOs) of ACSM. How this change affected the governance of the national organization is that each of the four MOs is now self-governing, and therefore directly responsible for all activities related to that specific MO. All initiatives pursued collectively by the MOs will be the responsibility of ACSM, and all administrative functions for the MOs will be the responsibility of the ACSM staff.

It will take a while to be able to adequately judge the effects of the change. The governing MO leaders are learning to cope with their newfound responsibilities and authority. Still, there are plenty of positive signs.

Possibly the most impressive among these signs is membership. Full individual membership in each of the four MOs is up for the first time in recent memory. This is an indication that folks like the new structure. The challenge for the MOs will be to demonstrate to current and potential members that they are addressing the issues that are important to them.

The National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) is the Member Organization that represents the surveying profession. Its leaders are committed to continuing to work on important surveyor related initiatives begun under the old ACSM structure, and to pursue other issues that affect the future of the profession, as well as everyday practice.

Among the issues affecting the future of the profession are public perception of the relevance of surveyors in light of technological advances, and the recruitment of young men and women to become licensed.

The NSPS leaders are fully aware that some people adhere to the school of


thought that enhanced measurement tools render the surveyor's work irrelevant. It is critical that surveyors and those who represent their interests throughout the country work positively within the geospatial community, and with those who would dictate legislation and policy, to ensure a proper understanding of the important role surveyors play, much beyond measurement.

The following is an update on some of the NSPS initiatives:

- **National Exhibit** NSPS will have possibly the first-ever opportunity to display plats of surveys and provide an explanation illustrating how the surveyor's work affects the individual citizen at an upcoming exhibit at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The one-year exhibit is expected to open in April 2005, with an estimated viewing audience of more than one million people.
- **Homebuyers' Information** Another public awareness initiative being pursued by NSPS through the ACSM Government Affairs Committee is an effort to require that homebuyers be given materials explaining the benefits of a current survey. The materials will be distributed to potential homebuyers when they make application for a loan so that there is adequate time prior to closing for the person most affected by matters of survey to make an informed decision regarding whether they want a survey.
- **Speaker's Kit** With financial assistance from the NCEES and Topcon, NSPS is developing a speaker's kit to be utilized as a recruitment tool for young people from middle school to college. Another aspect of this program is an affiliation with the National Middle School Association through which they will assist with

developing lesson plans that include survey components. NMSA will also promote the lesson plans and speaker's kit to its members. The kit can also be used as a tool in expanding public awareness of surveying. The kit can be used as a stand-alone, or as a supplement to tools already in use. When the kit is completed later this year, a copy will be provided to each state surveying society and each state licensing board. A CD containing the kit's materials will be included, allowing the state societies to reproduce them.

- **NCEES Model Law Implementation** NSPS and ACSM continue to monitor and participate in the ongoing efforts of state registration boards related to the implementation of the NCEES Model Law. To date, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina have implemented some version of the Model Law related to licensing of photogrammetrists. In the South Carolina version, a provision was included for GIS Surveyor. Currently, Oregon and Virginia are in the process of implementation. Probably two of the most critical elements affecting how the Model Law is to be implemented are the "grandfathering" phase (for how long will it extend?) and the development of a fair and equitable examination structure for the various practice areas within surveying.

ACSM and NSPS very much appreciate the support of their long-time member Marc Cheves, and the willingness to assist the national organizations in sharing information about their activities through *The American Surveyor*. 

Curt Sumner is Executive Director of the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM).