

SKY-HI NEWS

County introduces new GIS features

By Hank Shell

hshell@skyhidailynews.com

Grand County's Geographic Information Systems Department has added some new features to its "maps and apps" webpage.

New applications include maps that display board of county commissioners districts, election precincts, public lands and public safety information.

The new features were included in the department's upgrade of its parcel viewer map, said Martin Woros, the county's director of information systems.

"I felt that this was a good value," Woros said. "I saw that with the same investments I had already earmarked previously to keep supporting my online application for my parcel viewer, I now have the rest of these."

The new applications, from California-based GIS firm Esri, were part of a \$29,000 overhaul of the county's parcel view application.

Woros pointed to the land use public notification map and its applicability to construction projects and shifting town boundaries as one of the tangible benefits of the new applications.

The map allows users to identify properties within a given distance of a subject property or roadway, or within a given administrative area. In the case of construction projects, the county can quickly identify all properties near a specific area and use the application to generate mailing labels to notify those property owners who may be affected.

The public safety information map also has very important benefits for the county, Woros said. County officials can use the system to disseminate information during an emergency, including things like evacuation routes.

"It gives us that leverage that if we needed that, we could provide information through that portal," Woros said.

The "my local services" map was another new feature that Woros touted as a practical tool for residents. The map helps users locate things like libraries, museums, recreation centers and recycling locations.

"It's our attempt to reach out and bring information to people in the community and dependent on the community to find those things that are necessary," Woros said.

The new applications have been in the works since last December. Woros said the county had to create a "data crosswalk" for its current data to work with the Esri system. Kyle Potts, a summer intern and student at the University of Northern Colorado, assisted Woros and the GIS department in putting the new systems in place.

"There are some rough edges, I'll agree to that," Woros said, "but right now, this is the future. This is where we're going, and it's only going to get better from here."

To access the new applications, visit <http://grandgis.com/mapsandapps>.

Hank Shell can be reached at 970-887-3334 ext. 19610.