

For Immediate Release

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GITA Announces GECCo Partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Aurora, Colo., April 27, 2011—GITA has entered into an agreement with the Infrastructure Information Collection Division (IICD) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to expand the association's Geospatially Enabling Community Collaboration initiative. The \$400K grant will fund four GECCo workshops per year for the next three years, as well as provide program updates and information at various geospatial and homeland security-related conferences, enhancing industry outreach and partnerships.

GITA has conducted six GECCo workshops in various locations since 2005. The purpose of the GECCo initiative is to facilitate an interactive dialogue at the local level among community infrastructure stakeholders and emergency responders to begin to address collaboration and information exchange issues that inhibit effective response and recovery in times of emergency. An interactive, cooperative approach is employed to enhance existing security-related efforts and enable community stakeholders to develop a framework by which public and private organizations can better collaborate in order to protect critical infrastructure and respond more effectively to emergency situations.

Robert M. Samborski, GITA's Executive Director, said, "We are really looking forward to being able to expand and accelerate our GECCo initiative through this partnership with DHS/IICD. We now have, for the first time, a sustained commitment that will enable us to plan ahead and develop a coordinated series of workshops in communities across the U.S., as well as contribute our growing body of knowledge to the important effort of protecting our critical infrastructure assets." Potential 2011 GECCo workshop locations include Dallas/Fort Worth, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Seattle and other areas, which will be determined jointly by GITA and DHS.

...Include quote from DHS/IICD...

The next GECCo workshop will be held in the Dallas/Fort Worth area in June 2011. Contact GITA at info@gita.org for more details.

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The Geospatial Information & Technology Association (GITA) is the professional association and leading advocate for anyone using geospatial technology to help operate, maintain, and protect the infrastructure, which includes organizations such as utilities, telecommunication companies, and the public sector. Through industry leading conferences—along with research initiatives, chapters, membership, and other programs—GITA provides education and professional best practices. www.gita.org