

**What's next?**

The FCC's decision in mid-February to yank its support from LightSquared ends one of the most intense battles I have witnessed to preserve high-precision GPS. All the surveyors in our ranks and our friends in industry need to be congratulated for pursuing the issue with so much determination and passion. FCC acted rashly by putting the LightSquared project on the fast track without first conducting sufficiently rigorous scientific tests to verify that users of high-precision GPS would not be negatively impacted by LightSquared's ultrafast mobile satellite service in the L-band. The danger to our GPS has been staved off, for a time. Demand for broadband is likely to go up, not down, as more and more people turn to the airwaves with their smartphones, tablets, and "all-in-one" computers for both personal and business purposes. Communication technology is unmistakably heading towards georeferenced, wireless sharing of data and information. Once it was discovered how to locate people "in place" and track their activities on mobile devices with GPS, the GPS used by our military, the airlines, surveying, agriculture, and others became a "populist" technology, a kind of "citizen georeferencing" helping businesses and private individuals to conduct business much faster and more efficiently. LightSquared may not be viable after the major setback it has been dealt by FCC early this year, but FCC has not abandoned the idea of providing satellite-based communications. Indeed, a proposal for universal broadband coverage was unveiled in October last year. And only days after withdrawing its support for LightSquared, FCC announced the largest sale of broadband airwaves for decades. It could take many years to make broadband available to all potential users in the U.S., but all the recent actions by FCC, as well as the big wireless services providers (AT&T and Verizon), suggest that while the battle was won, the fight continues, and this time, everybody who relies on this scarce resource, the airwaves, will need to be technologically ready to share it. There is a challenge in that which I know we're more than ready to meet head-on.

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