

## McCurtain County GIS Pilot Project – An Overview



The purpose of this pilot project, which ran from 2009 – 2010, was to promote and facilitate the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities for public sector employees in McCurtain County, Oklahoma. This encompassed several tasks, including:

- Obtaining buy-in from a significant number of public sector officials and entities
- Constructing (and housing) a central web-based database of all relevant GIS data
- Developing tutorials on how to use the free MapWindow GIS tool
- Performing MapWindow trainings for public sector employees, specialized to particular target participants (such as volunteer fire or tax assessor)
- User group project demonstrations and evaluations

GIS can be a powerful source of information for most involved in public sector work; however, very few rural counties have employees with specialized GIS knowledge. This project attempted to address this discrepancy by creating a single source of GIS data and developing tutorials / providing hands-on training on the easy-to-use MapWindow GIS tool. Local workshops were well attended, and the final demonstration projects created by several user groups suggested that the knowledge transfer was successful and that participants saw the value that GIS could bring to their daily jobs.

The official project website (<http://agecon.okstate.edu/gis/>) contains links for a wide variety of geospatial data that were used during the project, an array of reports from users and program contributors (including specific application demonstrations), and perhaps most importantly, video tutorial files that walk potential users through each step of using the free MapWindow GIS system.

Please review the data, reports, and videos at your leisure. We hope to duplicate the project in other rural counties and regions across the state.

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