**INFORMATION/BRIEFING FOR CSS AD**

**Date: September 28, 2015**

**From: NGP Director, Mike Tischler**

**Subject: Minnesota Lidar Data Ingestion in The National Map**

The Minnesota (MN) State Geologist wrote to NGP and the State’s Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) urging the two agencies to work together to ensure that MN elevation data are incorporated into the National Elevation Dataset (NED). Minnesota has QL3 lidar coverage for the entire state, but only about a third of it has made it into The National Map (TNM). The purpose of this briefing is to provide background and next steps to the CSS AD to provide a positive response to the State Geologist and to make progress in providing public access to the data.

**Background**

* The Minnesota Statewide Lidar Project was split into 5 phases across 47 counties (45,349 mi2) with a total project value of ~$4.8M. NGP provided $415,000 in partnership funding in 2010 and 2011.
* Data were delivered to NGTOC in multiple deliveries but various errors were found. A meeting between NGTOC, NGP HQ and MNDNR to discuss the required corrections occurred on July 9, 2013. The meeting resulted in MN agreeing to do the corrections when they found the resources to do so. Corrections were not made and the data have not been ingested into TNM.
* Since the beginning of the MN project, the specifications, products and services supported, processing procedures, and responsibilities (EROS to NGTOC) have evolved significantly with the introduction of 3DEP and other advances. The changing environment has further complicated attempts to resolve the issues. Additionally, the expectations documented in the MN agreements are not in alignment with the current operating environment.

**Discussion**

NGTOC requires errors to be corrected prior to ingesting the data into TNM, and changes in personnel and other issues have prevented the State from making the corrections. From the State's perspective, they provided the bulk of the funding and received satisfactory data for their customers and users. All of the data are freely available for download, other agencies and organizations are able to use the MN lidar data and derivatives, and there was nothing in the Cooperative Agreements with USGS that specified delivery requirements in place today. Without additional funding or resources to support these data efforts, delivery to USGS has remained a low priority to the State.

NGTOC does not generally make the corrections required to ingest the MN data into TNM. However, to address the concerns of the State Geologist and to make the data available to other TNM users as a part of the national holdings, priority will be given to processing the MN data to resolve the issues.

**Next Steps**

1. NGTOC will download the data, make corrections and target publication of the data in by March 1, 2016 assuming that the data can be downloaded and converted, and that no additional problems are found. This does not include Phase 2 data for South Dakota, or Phase 5 data.
2. NGTOC will use the data as input to deriving elevation contours to support new US Topo maps for MN in FY16.
3. NGP/NGTOC will continue to review processes and communications with partners to avoid future situations where there are issues in ingesting partner data into TNM.