



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Reston, VA 20192



MAY 21 2009

Richard B. Thompson
Chief Information Officer
State of Maine
Department of Administrative and Financial Services
26 Edison Drive
145 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0145

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Thank you for sharing information concerning the efforts of the northeastern states to develop a regional approach for lidar data collection. Pursuing opportunities to pool resources to obtain this very useful and important data over large areas is an effective approach for reducing overall costs and meeting data needs of multiple organizations, especially considering the current economic challenges we all face.

As you have heard, the USGS is receiving additional funding to support the collection of elevation and orthoimagery data as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Plans are being developed to meet both the goals of the ARRA in terms of providing stimulation for the economy, and to meet program requirements of *The National Map* and the diverse science needs of the USGS. Our approach is to utilize both direct contracting and the award of assistance funds in the form of cooperative agreements with State and local governments to achieve data collection goals in priority areas.

The opportunity for State governments to submit proposals for ARRA funding for collection of lidar data will be posted as a Program Announcement on Grants.gov, the Federal government site for information on grants and cooperative agreements. The proposals will be reviewed and selected based on a set of criteria intended to meet the goals of the ARRA while also allowing the USGS to meet priority needs for data within *The National Map*. Details on information that should be included in the proposals and the evaluation factors will be outlined in the announcement. We expect this information to be available on Grants.gov within thirty to sixty days.

The USGS is requesting that recipients of the ARRA assistance funds provide matching resources as is done with our annual appropriated funds. Leveraging the dollars in order to increase the amount of data collected by engaging partners to share the costs was one of the compelling reasons for including the elevation and orthoimagery data collection in the stimulus package for the USGS.

I encourage you to watch for the posting of the Program Announcement and to submit a proposal for the collection of lidar in your area of interest. I also appreciate your efforts to work on a regional basis for the benefit of the northeastern states.

Sincerely,

Mark L. DeMulder
Chief, National Geospatial Program