



URISA – Ontario Chapter send out an email survey asking its members if they are using GIS to help in their conservation efforts. The questions we asked were:

1. Has your municipality/ organization used GIS to help its conservation efforts? Yes/No
2. If yes, how has GIS contributed towards conservation and “going green”?
3. What tangible or cost benefits have been achieved?

Here is what **Paul Beach, Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, Manager - Community Geomatics Centre** had to say.

The Municipality and Public Utilities Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie have used GIS to help with its conservation efforts. It has scanned and digitally captured hundreds of thousands of documents in effort to make information more accessible. Scanned documents include water, waste water and electrical engineering drawings and hundreds of thousands of sewer lateral cards.

Features that have been digitally photographed include: traffic and utility poles, vaults and multi directional intersection photos. Other digital drawings captured include: signalized intersection drawings, paint drawings and railway crossing drawings.

All of the above digital images have been hyperlinked to the appropriate features in the Geographic Information System (GIS). Within the GIS, a user can click on a segment of road and access all of the engineering drawings that pertain to that segment of road. In the past, staff would have to drive down to the office where all of the paper copies of these plans were stored. Now, staff can access the plans from their own desks in remote buildings or locations, thereby saving significant amounts of driving.

When a traffic or utility pole is damaged, staff can view what was on that pole from their own desks

before driving to the site, thereby reducing additional trips out with needed parts etc.

The GIS system, with the capability to geographically index and make available hundreds of thousands of corporate documents definitely increases efficiencies and reduces inter office travel and office to field travel. It also allows staff in different locations to view the same data from their own desks, which reduces the need to travel to meetings in a common building where the paper documents are present.

The tangible benefits are reductions in fuel consumption and vehicle exhaust pollution.

If you would like to share how your municipality/organization is using GIS in its conservation efforts, please email Susan Giannou, Communications Chairperson at [communicate@urisaoc.ca](mailto:communicate@urisaoc.ca).



## Readership Contest

**How many times do you see URISA - OC or URISA - Ontario Chapter in this issue of our Newsletter?** *Remember to count both text and graphic images.*



enter and  
Win

To enter, send us an email with the number you counted. Include your First and Last Name, email address, mailing address, telephone number and send to [communicate@urisaoc.ca](mailto:communicate@urisaoc.ca).

[Click here for full contest details.](#)