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# Update on GAP Program Survey

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**T**he USGS Policy Analysis and Science Assistance Branch (PASA), located at the Fort Collins Science Center, has been working on a program evaluation of the Gap Analysis Program (GAP) and the data provided by GAP. The main component of the evaluation project is a survey of users of GAP data.

January 2009. Dr. Rudy M. Schuster is the new Branch Chief of PASA and is now supervising the project. Dr. Schuster is assisting with implementing the survey, analyzing the data, and report writing. Joan Ratz continues as the lead Social Scientist on this program evaluation project.

## Description of Project and Status

This project started in FY07 and will be complete in FY10. In FY07, PASA staff met with GAP staff to determine the scope of the project. PASA staff led discussion groups at the National GAP Conference (September 10-13, 2007 at Asheville, NC) to collect comments from GAP users. The comments from the discussion groups and information obtained from a literature review were used to develop topics included on the survey.

The users of GAP are diverse and widespread; there is no single existing list of all GAP users. Therefore, identifying an adequate sample for the survey was a challenge. PASA used a technique called chain-referral sampling or snowball sampling to identify GAP users. In this process, a set of known users of GAP data were contacted and asked to name others they knew who used GAP. That group of individuals is then contacted and asked to name other GAP users. This process is time consuming but was the most appropriate approach to meet the goal. The process started in late FY07, was a primary focus during FY08 and ended with the first quarter of FY09. The report of the sampling process must be approved through the USGS Fundamental Science Practice review and finalized through the Enterprise Publishing Network.

During FY09, the first draft of the survey was finalized and reviewed. Because the sample includes individuals who are not Federal employees, an Information Collection Request was submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in accordance with requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act. The survey can not be distributed until it is assigned a clearance number by OMB.

## FY 10 Goals

In FY 10, PASA plans to launch the survey as soon as the clearance number is provided. To minimize the time required from survey respondents and the impact on the environment, the survey will be administered online. The data will be analyzed and final reports submitted in FY 10.

This project was under the supervision of Dr. Bernton Lee Lamb until his retirement from federal service in