



Hello my fellow WAMLites.

I was very pleased to see so many of you at our annual meeting in September in Redlands, California at Esri's world headquarters. Let me reiterate my profound thanks to Angie Lee, Patty Turner, and Collen Conner for hosting us. They did a fantastic job and made us feel very welcome. Also, let me thank Esri, in general, for allowing us to use their great facilities, and the other Esri people who helped make the entire conference a great success.

Like all WAML conferences, I walked away with a renewed enthusiasm toward my profession. But this time, I also felt very excited about the future. I recognized three general themes from our presenters and attendees: technology can not only help preserve our collections but actually foster a greater access to them, there is a wonderful amount of digital data being produced, and librarians can inject themselves into teaching about maps and GIS at a variety of levels of education.

Aileen Buckley from Esri gave us a whirlwind, yet practical, workshop ("Building and Sharing Historical Map Collections Online") of how make scanned maps accessible to a wider audience. Her presentation was detailed, and on point. Her notes and instructions should be available to us soon. Bruce Godfrey of the University of Idaho gave a presentation about "Generating Vector Features from Scanned Historical Maps Using Image Enhancement and Remote Sensing Techniques in a GIS," and Stacey Maples talked about "Geospatial Data Discovery at Stanford". Each of them showed us a glimpse of what is possible.



All of our presenters from Esri emphasized the amount of mapping data available. From the Living Atlas to the Esri Data Library, I learned about what information can be easily found.

Lastly, I had many informal discussions about how my fellow librarians were using maps and GIS in classes that they taught. I have been doing this all my career and always welcome the opportunity to learn about new teaching techniques, and new topics. I was heartened by Andrew Nicholson's talk about "A Taste of GIS: Using Open Data and ArcGIS.com in a Freshman Environmental Studies Course." He gave us a detailed look at how he interjected GIS into an entry level class.

All of our speakers and all of my interactions with my fellow conference goers made me excited about future WAML meetings and helped infuse me with practical ideas that I can bring back to my Library.

Most sincerely,

Christopher J.J. Thiry
WAML President

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