



United States Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
Office of the Director
Reston, Virginia 20192

Mr. Tom Rohlffing, Chair, Oregon Geographic Information Council
Oregon Geographic Information Council
C/O Geospatial Enterprise Office
530 Airport Road SE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Mr. Rohlffing:

Dr. Applegate shared with me the letter you sent expressing your concerns with the transition of our existing hydrography datasets to the new 3D Hydrography Program (3DHP) and asked that I respond in more detail. In response to your concerns, and as a result of ongoing meetings with stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Geospatial Program (NGP) has made multiple adjustments to the original transition plan, including 1) extending support for editing of the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), 2) migrating the existing NHD geometry from the final NHD into the 3DHP to provide seamless, wall-to-wall hydrography data until higher-quality, elevation-derived datasets are available, and 3) developing processes to bring new hydrography data currently under development or under contract into 3DHP.

The 3DHP has been developed to meet broad and diverse national requirements based on extensive user-community input, including documentation of user requirements and benefits in the National Hydrography Requirements and Benefits Study ([HRBS; Dewberry, 2016](#)) from 21 Federal agencies, all 50 states, and a sampling of Tribal, local government, private, and non-profit organizations. During its development over the last three years, the program plan has been shared with stakeholders across the country including stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest. The 3DHP is designed to provide better support to a wide range of applications, including flood risk management, hazard response and mitigation, climate-change science, infrastructure management, and natural-resources management. The NGP is actively engaging with partners in the Pacific Northwest to acquire new data based on elevation and incorporate local knowledge of hydrologic systems into the 3DHP.

The decision to phase out editing of the NHD and the Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD) and provide only static copies of the data was not taken lightly, and we acknowledge that, despite efforts to minimize impacts to other programs, there will be some disruption during the shift from NHD to 3DHP. The NGP notified NHD stakeholders as early as possible to mitigate any challenges. We have valued the participation of partners and local data stewards in developing and improving data for the NHD and WBD and anticipate strong continued local engagement in the 3DHP. However, resource constraints dictate that we must phase out editing of the existing datasets to implement the 3DHP.

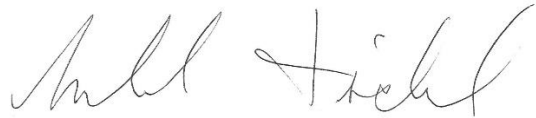
Staff from the NGP have been meeting regularly with representatives from State and Federal agencies in the Pacific Northwest, including the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to develop mitigation strategies during the transition period. We understand that Pacific Northwest partners have unique requirements for hydrography data to support natural-resources management and the USGS is committed to providing these data and developing modern platforms for access, update, and delivery.

The NGP is currently collaborating with the regional BLM office to investigate alternatives that would mitigate disruption and support the BLM's specific needs during the transition. The NGP will continue these discussions to find the best mutual path forward.

Lastly, these meetings with stakeholders in the Pacific Northwest have included discussion of the further development of the 3DHP. Though the initial implementation is based on previously documented user needs, the NGP expects to work with partners as we implement the 3DHP and make additional improvements to better support specific use cases. The USGS and NGP look forward to continued collaboration through the interagency 3DHP Working Group and other interested stakeholder groups to meet your needs for foundational hydrography data.

If you have additional concerns or would like to discuss any of these topics in more detail, please feel free to contact me directly at mtischler@usgs.gov or 703-648-4725.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Tischler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Tischler" clearly distinguishable.

Michael Tischler, Ph.D.
Director, USGS National Geospatial Program