

23 October 2006
 Senator Edward M. Kennedy
 Senator John F. Kerry
 United States Senate
 Washington Office
 317 Russell Senate Building
 Washington D.C. 20510

REFERENCE: **NGPS**

Dear Senators Kennedy and Kerry:
 At the recent GPS-CGSIC meeting in September in Fort Worth, Texas, it was learned that the Department of Transportation has eliminated its 2007 funding for the NDGPS (Nationwide Differential Global Positioning System).

NDGPS is unique in that it penetrates or goes around obstacles (trees, buildings, hills) where other systems are blocked and cannot be received.

NDGPS helped the Coast Guard after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. It is essential in navigation, charting, air travel, railroad train control, plate tectonics, weather forecasting, mapping, highway control, geodetic surveying, and precision farming.

NDGPS is vital to today's functions of NASA, FHWA, NOAA, DOT, FRA, Corps of Engineers, and, not-to-forget millions of American citizens, i.e. automobile owners, public utilities, commercial transport business, town governments, environmental protection and others.

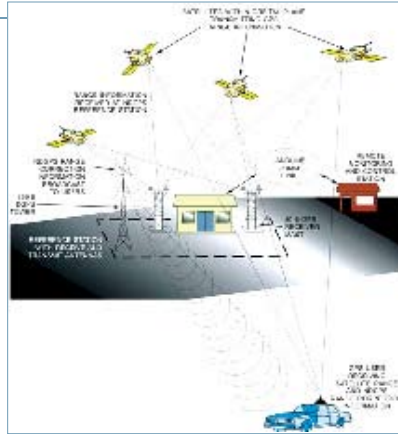
Restoring its funding to the \$30.7 million per year level is necessary for the continued well-being of our country. Please, give it your support in the Senate.

Gunther Greulich

20 December 2006
 Mr. Curt Sumner
 Executive Director ACSM

REFERENCE: **NDGPS**

Dear Curt:
 As we all may know now, the Department of Transportation has eliminated funding for **NDGPS** (National Differential Global Positioning System) from its 2007 budget. **NDGPS** is vital to the operations of government agencies such as NASA, FHWA, NOAA, COT, FRA, the Corps of Engineers, and, not-to-forget, millions of American citizens, i.e., public utilities, automobile owners, commercial transport businesses,



town governments, environmental protections agencies, scientific research, banking, emergency services, and, of course, surveyors, geodesists, and map makers.

As an important component of, or counterpart to, Satellite GPS, **NDGPS** needs a terrestrial control network (on the ground) for differential corrections and refinement of precision. Until now, and for that purpose, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has inherited and maintained a network of about twenty transmitting stations, called "GWEN" I believe, throughout the country. For budgetary reasons, I'm told, DOT wants to close these towers and shut down the system.

Although the National Geodetic Survey does not need or utilize **NDGPS** for its work, the head of NGS agrees that NDGPS is a good thing and necessary for the transportation industry in this country. And that somebody will have to do it.

It is my understanding that lobbying in support of the shut-down by large commercial enterprises has already begun in Congress and Senate (\$3 million spent!). If they succeed, there is great potential and gain for a private data monopoly to take place.

American surveyors depend on greater accuracy and continuing refinement of differential GPS—to be achieved by a terrestrial network. We, surveyors, should hate to finance a private monopoly to do what government has already done well with our taxpayer money. Why pay twice and probably more? A concern for national security may also enter the equation.

The latest issue of the *ACSM Bulletin* (No. 223, Oct. 2006) carried several relevant reports, foremost among them the JGAC activity by Laurence Socci (pp. 13, 16-19). The committee's concern

and proposed legislation to preserve railroad monumentation is analogous to our NDGPS problem. Prominent ACSM member, Richard Randall, answered his own question (pp. 48, 49), "Should ACSM have a Public Relations Program," by recommending that ACSM should have a PR person to communicate with Washington legislative bodies and federal agencies.

I believe ACSM has an obligation to step in on behalf of all surveyors and to investigate the (so far) rumors. The ACSM Joint Government Affairs Committee should explore possible remedies and, before it is too late, write to the Secretary of Transportation and urge ACSM members and others to write letters to their Congressmen and Senators. It may help all of us.

Gunther Greulich, PLS, PE

22 December 2006

REFERENCE: **NDGPS** follow-up

I have just learned about an article in the *GPS* magazine Inside GNSS, Nov/Dec issue, entitled "News 360 Degrees: Loran Revives; NDGPS Fades." In a nutshell the article says that, after a 12-year long dance, Loran might be pulled back from extinction, while NDGPS may have finally been pushed over the edge. The safety-critical mode of transportation would "now have to depend on disparate and un-networked atomic clocks and crystal oscillators that would lose synchronization at various and unpredictable rates."

It appears, that the recent program transfer from FRA to DOT failed to secure operational funding from the White House Office of Management. NDGPS will go off the air in October 2007, unless funding is restored.

Pressure from private companies, which argue the (NDGPS) system provides an unfair taxpayer-supported alternative to their own services, seems to have struck a chord with advocates of privatization.

You may want to read the entire article on the Internet (www.insidegnss.com). The mailing address of the Secretary of Transportation is: The Honorable Mary E. Peters, United States Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

Gunther Greulich, PLS, PE
 Fellow and Life Member
 Former president ACSM