

Winter 2009 - 2010  
[www.uccs.edu/coga](http://www.uccs.edu/coga)



## Geography is Greater than Five Percent of Social Studies

In 2010, the National Council for the Social Studies conference is being held in Denver – the first time in forty years. At the 2009 conference in Atlanta, sessions designated “Geography” constituted only 5.6 percent of all sessions (“Global Connections” comprised 11.6 percent, with U.S. History, Civics and Government,

World History, Economics, and other listings making up the bulk of the offerings). What does this mean for you? If you are in higher education and would like to propose a session as part of the College and University Faculty Assembly, contact Chrystal Johnson at [johnsocs@purdue.edu](mailto:johnsocs@purdue.edu). If you teach in an elementary or secondary school in Colorado, are a member of the Colorado Geographic Alliance, and would like to propose a geography session or a poster presentation, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/> for details. ***If your geography proposal is accepted for the November 2010 National Social Studies Conference, the Colorado Geographic Alliance will pay your registration to the conference (up to five proposals)!***

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## Upcoming Workshops

### Geography and Technology

Learning about geographic information technologies is extremely timely for today’s classrooms. Spatial relationships are analyzed using maps in digital form within a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) environment, combining data from other maps, charts, and databases. GIS, Remote Sensing, and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) constitute part of the geotechnology industry, which is one of three key industries identified by the United States Department of Labor for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Introducing your students to the basics of geospatial technologies provides them with a powerful decision-making toolkit.

### Introduction to Geospatial Technology

Saturday, January 30, 2010, Highlands Ranch

Saturday, March 6, 2010, Pagosa Springs

For more information, or to reserve a place in either geospatial technology workshops, email [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu).

### Census 2010: Move that Pile of Census Material from the Corner of the Classroom, February 6, 2010, Denver

Learn about the uses and limitations of census data in geographic analysis as the United States prepares to undertake this decennial extravaganza. Understand the changes in the 2010 forms and the rationale behind those changes. Investigate resources available from the Census Bureau and identify ways to use them in your classroom. Email [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu) to register.



## Climate Change in Rocky Mountain National Park, Friday and Saturday, March 12-13, 2010, Estes Park

What is climate change? How is it affecting our national treasures? What changes in the national parks did Ken Burns ignore in his series on PBS? Come learn about climate change in the national park with Rocky Mountain National Park as a case study. Email [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu) for details.

### Looking ahead: Summer Institute in Mid June

Sustainability. Farm to table. Healthy eating. Local agriculture. Retailers large and small. Lobbyists. Learn about how food traditions, processes, and policies affect what is on your students' tables. Develop lessons that offer ways to determine how students can assess food production and marketing geographically.

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## The Big Picture

Read a recent editorial in *The Washington Times* by David Keeling, a member of the American Geographical Society Writers' Circle and professor of geography at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green:

“Geographic awareness needed: The only route to good decisions based on reason”.

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/oct/28/geographic-awareness-needed/>

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## Fall 2009 Workshops

This fall began with teachers discussing opportunities for incorporating literacy learning with exposure to geographic concepts. If you are interested in checking out some of the books the participants discussed, visit the COGA website at <http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/curriculum/curriculum.html> and click on “How to Choose a Good Book for Literacy and Geography”. Thanks to the teachers and the teacher consultants who made this conversation so successful.



Photo by Janet Pommrehn



Other teachers spent a Saturday in Fort Collins or Grand Junction discovering multiple uses for incorporating geospatial technology into geography, history, math, and science classes. In cooperation with ESRI, COGA is encouraging participants to learn about available resources that can become powerful tools for understanding the integration of spatial concepts across the curriculum.

Teri LeFebvre, Curriculum Specialist in Mesa County Valley School District observed that “the Western Slope had the opportunity to learn from many experienced professionals sharing their expertise in geospatial technology. We were thrilled with the opportunity to grow in our understanding in how these tools are used in classes. We truly appreciated the applicable lessons for many grade levels and content areas. Following the workshop many participants are eager to follow up with software downloads to school computers and additional training to incorporate this technology into lesson plans. The workshop reinforced 21st Century skills and meaningful learning for students.”



Maggie Childers and Jane McAuley

## Colorado State Geography Standards Presented to State Board of Education



The Colorado State Board of Education devoted the majority of its day-long work session on to hear an overview and take public comment on the state's 13 proposed revised model content standards, the product of a statewide conversation held in 220 meetings over a two-year period around the state.

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/20091111standards-sbe.pdf>

Copies of the entire draft standards may be found online here:  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/DraftStandards.html>

FROM: Colorado Department of Education

*The Colorado Department of Education would like to determine what you know about the revised Colorado Academic Standards and what support you might need to most effectively implement them following the December 2009 adoption. Therefore, CDE has contracted with WestEd to conduct an on-line survey to gather your input. Your responses will be very useful in helping the CDE design the best plan to support you, your students, your school(s), and your district as it rolls out its newly revised Colorado Academic Standards. If you are willing to participate in this survey, please go to the following link using either a school/district or a personal computer:*

*[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=JR0\\_2f\\_2f3K01dWBual1hYZFLg\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=JR0_2f_2f3K01dWBual1hYZFLg_3d_3d)*

*It should take about 15 minutes to complete the survey. In order to provide the greatest level of security, your responses will be completely anonymous. We will not ask for your name, the name of your school, or the name of your district. We will not be able to determine what computer is used to complete the survey or where in the state the computer is located. All responses will be reported in aggregate. If you have questions about the objectives of the survey or the survey itself, please contact Jennae Bulat at [jbulat@wested.org](mailto:jbulat@wested.org). Thank you in advance for your support of this important initiative.*

*For more information, contact: Angela Norlander, Office of Standards and Assessments, 303-866-6931, Email: [standards\\_review\\_com@cde.state.co.us](mailto:standards_review_com@cde.state.co.us)*

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## What Could You Do with a Set of GPS Units?

Would you like to use GPS units in your classroom, but do not have the budget for your own set? Through a generous grant from *GIS Colorado*, an organization of GIS professionals, the Colorado Geographic Alliance has purchased a loaner set of eleven eTrex GPS units. We have outfitted the GPS units with rechargeable batteries, battery chargers, and download cables. Depending on your needs, and the demand for the units, we will make loans of the units for one to two weeks. All we ask is that you cover the cost of sending the units to and from your school. Email us as [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu) to reserve your time.



## **Academics and Professionals Sharing Perspectives with Teachers**

At the recent National Council for the Social Studies Conference, Kenneth Stein, Professor of Contemporary Middle Eastern History, Political Science and Israeli Studies at Emory University, lamented that too few academic practitioners share their expertise and perspective with teachers who are in the classrooms preparing the next generation of learners. In our state, professors and graduate students from Colorado College, Colorado State University, University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, the University of Colorado at Denver, and University of Northern Colorado understand the value of giving their time to talk with teachers about topics including sustainability, geospatial modeling, urbanization, South America, remote sensing, pedagogy, and globalization. Thanks to those professors who have participated in programs sponsored by the Colorado Geographic Alliance. And to those of you whose topics have not yet come up, please respond positively when you are requested to support a workshop or speak in a classroom! Professional geographers are also encouraged to join the Colorado Geographic Alliance and offer their services.

GIS professionals are encouraged to sign up to be a GeoMentor. A GeoMentor “adopts” a school, class, or club and supports the educators in working with youth. Using tools of geography (such as maps and globes, atlases, charts, imagery, and field work), the GeoMentor helps the educator and youth develop skills in geographic thinking. Sponsored jointly by National Geographic Society and ESRI, this program hopes to create partnerships across the country between individuals who have geospatial expertise and educators whose students need to be aware of this important technology. For more details visit: <http://edcommunity.esri.com/geommentor/index.cfm>

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## **Pre Service Teachers Introduced to Spatial Thinking**

Coordinator Steve Jennings has been making presentations about geography education to methods class of pre-service teachers, introducing them to COGA as well as to some of the fundamentals of geography and geography education. So far, Steve has visited with a fraction of the pre-service teachers in the state. He would like to expand that outreach. If you are a pre-service teacher, working with a student teacher, or if you teach a methods class, please let us know and we will arrange to have Steve come to your campus.

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## **Geography Plays Roles in Science, Technology, Math and Engineering (STEM)**

Did you stop by the Colorado Geographic Alliance booth at STEMpalooza in Denver this past October? The following lucky people – Carol of Denver, Dana of Erie, and Andrew of Aurora – each won a prize from the National Geographic Society. Check out the COGA website for opportunities regarding geospatial technology resources and curriculum ideas – [www.uccs.edu/coga](http://www.uccs.edu/coga). And be sure and sign up for My Wonderful World at <http://www.mywonderfulworld.org/> where you can download your own Action Kit.

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## **National Geographic Student Summit**

The National Geographic Society is offering a series of springtime week-long programs for middle and high school students and their teachers in Washington, D.C. If you are interested in behind-the-scenes access to National Geographic scientists, editors, and photographers; active, student-driven exploration through inquiry, engagement, and reporting; and hands-on activities at monuments, museums, and organizations throughout the city, check out the information at: <http://ngstudentexpeditions.com/studentsummit/index.html>.

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## National Geographic Responds to Critical Need for Student Continuity of Learning During Flu Season

National Geographic Channel, National Geographic Education, and National Geographic School Publishing are responding to the urgent call of U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to provide continuity of learning to keep students, sick or well, engaged in meaningful education activities if they are kept home during flu season.

To help address the needs of students who will be impacted, National Geographic Channel and National Geographic School Publishing are providing a special programming block and free education resources that will be made available during what is expected to be peak flu season. Beginning November 16th, National Geographic Channel will air two-hour programming blocks from 11am -1pm ET, weekdays, over a six-week period. All programming is G-rated and culled from the network's award winning specials and ongoing series including Explorer, Naked Science, and Wild Spaces.

For those who do not subscribe to the National Geographic Channel, over half of the programs to be shown on air will also be made available anytime online via the NGSP continuity of learning portal, National Geographic Home Zone: [www.NGSP.com/homezone](http://www.NGSP.com/homezone) , and at [www.natgeotv.com/education](http://www.natgeotv.com/education).

All programs in this block are complemented with free web-based activity guides and resources provided by National Geographic School Publishing. The educational materials are suitable for elementary, middle school and high school students, and applicable to science, social studies and other disciplines. The free web-based activity guides and resources materials are available at the Home Zone website.

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## Giant Maps Available for Your School or District!

When the Giant Map of North America visited Colorado Springs in September, one volunteer during display at a community center observed “No one seems to think of Geography as a ‘school’ activity when you are in your stocking-feet on a giant map. While the appeal of physical geography is that the features appear on the map (lakes, mountains, landforms, states and capitals), with smaller groups or older

kids, we could ask more thoughtful questions. ‘Why is Hawaii way over there? What does it mean that mapmakers have to compromise?’ When a five-year-old at a festival that includes a bounce-castle and cupcakes says the best thing he did there was play on the giant map, you really have something!”



If you are interested in reserving a giant map from National Geographic, please visit the website for details: [www.nationalgeographic.com/giantmaps](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/giantmaps). Then check with the Colorado Geographic Alliance to see how we might help you finance this event. Email the coordinators at [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu). For more details about the map's visit in Colorado Springs, see a power point at [http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/news\\_events.html](http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/news_events.html).

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## Check out the Curriculum Page on the COGA Website

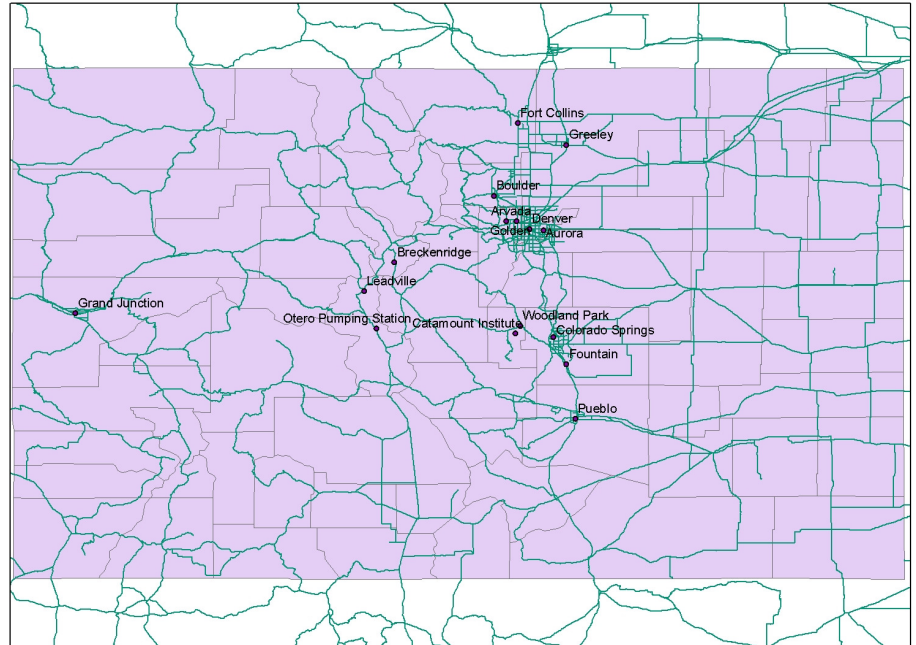
<http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/curriculum/curriculum.html>

Several lessons developed through workshops have been added to the list of available lesson plans, but we need additional ideas and sample lessons. If you have a particularly good idea or example, please contact the coordinators to share your concepts.

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## Workshop Locations, 2007-2010

Concerned that there has not been a COGA workshop in your area? During the past three academic years, the Colorado Geographic Alliance has hosted workshops in a variety of locations around the state. In addition to offering stand-alone workshops, the Colorado Geographic Alliance has provided resources for district-wide programs and nonprofit organizations, and has collaborated with other educational groups to support geographic professional development. Please contact the coordinators at [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu) if you would like to explore hosting a workshop at your site, or developing a program in partnership with COGA.



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