GIS-Based Media System - U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA, along with federal partners have developed a new media tool that is the only one of its kind in the nation. This tool allows users to identify and create media distribution lists for news outlets that cover geographic areas of any shape or size. While tools available to us via the private sector today require us to search for the locations where media are located, this system allows you to select the location of the people you want to reach, and the system automatically identifies which media outlets provide news to them and produces a distribution list for those outlets.

Because of the types of searches it allows, below are some examples of how the system could be used to improve hyperlocal media outreach efforts:

- **Public safety:** Target media serving populations within any mile range (from one-tenth of a mile up to 1,000 miles) from a site of a hazmat/nuclear incident; target media in area where a most-wanted fugitive was spotted; better promote state police activity and arrests.
- **Agriculture:** Select areas of the state where particular crops are grown to highlight state programs benefitting those producers.
- **Border Security:** Promote apprehensions along a particular portion of the border to media outlets that serve people living in that area.
- **Disaster Response:** Target news outlets specifically serving areas affected by hurricane cones without needing to send releases statewide; targeting areas affected by CBRN incidents to provide health and safety information.
- **Transportation Projects:** Select a portion of highway slated for an infrastructure project and promote the work to media serving those who would use that stretch of interstate; in case of bridge collapses, distribute information to media in areas where travelers would need to find alternate routes.
- **Energy:** Promote wind energy in areas of the country where strong winds are prevalent most of the year; promote advances delivering better electricity reliability in an area served by improved infrastructure.
- **Health:** Promote health tips following heat advisories issued in your state by the National Weather Service.

This system provides the federal government a new way to identify and target media outlets. Because it is GIS-based, users can perform searches against any GIS layers, including GIS layers that are internal to individual agencies. The system searches and generates distribution lists for those outlets, allowing users to distribute information to only media serving specific geographic regions of interest, including hurricane cones or demographic layers, and the system allows for buffers to be applied to searches.

As an example, below is an image showing a search conducted against a heat advisory issued by the National Weather Service. Following the search, the system generates a spreadsheet with

the email addresses and phone numbers of the media outlets that cover the selected geographic area.

We're sure you can think of additional uses for the new media tool.