

SUCCESS STORY

▶▶▶ GIS HELPS THE HO CHUNK NATION GROW

PROBLEM

The Ho Chunk Nation is confronted with the challenge of managing existing tribal lands interspersed within a 15 county area in central and southwestern Wisconsin as well as making informed decisions about new land acquisitions. Managers recognized the difficulties in managing these lands and turned to GIS more than a decade ago in an attempt to better manage their properties.

SOLUTION

Progress was initially slow, however since ADC's involvement the Nation has made great progress in significantly improving the storage, maintenance, and retrieval of information. The Nation developed a GIS department within the Heritage Preservation - Division of Natural Resources.

GIS staff were aware of the size and scope of a large 15-county project, and asked ADC to help improve their GIS. ADC developed initial base layers of the public land survey, roads, and helped organize land records from many sources for the 15 counties. The information was then projected into a common coordinate system and we provided on-site training and assistance. On-site services provided an opportunity for Ho-Chunk staff to sit with ADC staff, and get hands-on experience in development and management of GIS data. Much of the lands data was combined from Bureau of Indian Affairs, State of Wisconsin, county, and Ho-Chunk records. The primary goal of the on-site training was to get GIS staff familiar with the use of ArcInfo and develop a set of procedures for continued improvements of the lands database.

RESULTS

Currently, the Nation is using the GIS system for some of its daily activities and are presently involved in projects that map a myriad of Ho-Chunk interests. Examples of some of the mapping projects include cultural features, wolf territories, comprehensive lands inventory, casino promotional program customer ranges, surface water quality monitoring, Ho-Chunk housing sites, Nation business economic impacts, and business development. The Nation is continuing to expand upon the number of available data layers as the use of the GIS grows.

