

Case Study: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources; an Investment in the Administration of State Lands.

Jonathan Haupt (USA)

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SUMMARY

The ability for a government in both developed and developing economies to establish transparent land administration processes plays a vital role in maintaining trust and confidence between the government and the people. Once technologies are in the hands of subject matter experts including land registrars, commissioners, attorneys, surveyors, and other relevant stakeholders, government has boundless opportunities to improve how its services and strengthen its decision making abilities to ensure land and natural resources are administered responsibly and transparently. This paper will explore an example of how the State of Minnesota in the United States (U.S.), with a technology solutions provider, Thomson Reuters, implemented a state-wide enterprise land administration system. The paper will draw a focus to how the new technology better equips the State in the two important areas of: • fostering transparency in land ownership, use and administration; and • attracting responsible land-based investment for local benefits and common resource management. Minnesota encompasses 51 million acres of land. More than 10% of the surface estate and more than 25% of the mineral estate are State-owned and administered. More than 5.5 million acres are designated in state forests, wildlife management areas, parks and recreation areas, or other land management programs. The state-owned lands are administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), consisting of 2,700 employees. In 2009 the State provided the DNR the financial and political backing to modernize its land administration technologies. Loosely structured business processes and data capture were replaced with more than 150 land transaction types in an automated workflow-centric system based on the ISO 19152 Land Administration Domain Model (LADM). This presentation describes: • Why the DNR needs a reliable land and interest inventory and a transparent view of pending and historical land and minerals transactions for all stakeholders. • Why an extensive data conversion project was carried out to ensure each right, restriction and responsibility was represented accurately in the inventory. • Why an accurate and transparent inventory is critical to applications that help citizens and stakeholders identify property characteristics, acquired and granted interests, and spatial information (location, area, and extent). • The challenges and benefits of implementing the LADM, and why the long-term gains for the State are still not entirely recognized. Conclusion The needs and challenges of the Minnesota DNR are not unlike other government agencies responsible for the stewardship of public land resources nor does it differ from the mission of other nations seeking to gain a more transparent, efficient and responsible investment in the administration of State-owned lands. Because of strategic technology investments, the DNR is now better positioned to pursue its mission and prepare for tomorrow's challenges.