

Suggested Projects: Presidential Innovation Fellows

20. EZ-GPS

A remarkable accomplishment by a Presidential Innovation Fellow would be to secure a government-wide EZ-GPS standard. This would allow any user to enter a GPS coordinate and obtain an organized listing of, and access to, all current and historical government data relevant to the location. A search can be refined by entering additional search terms and synonyms (e.g., air quality and health risk).

The government data also should use a common standard for easy map-based representations and overlays. The Department of Defense has such standards for its battlefield display systems. It should be easy for individuals and companies to acquire, integrate, and use all of the government data.

Each dataset also should be linked with online discussions of the definitions, reliability of the measurements, and other statistical issues.

In practice, the EZ-GPS system will need to evolve, with user-oriented research and feedback. A contract with Google or other search engine companies can produce large databases of search inquiries and evolve more sophisticated, probability-based, results that meet user needs more quickly and efficiently. The federal government's EZ-GPS system also should be designed to use a centralized strategy of focus groups, networks of beta-testers, and other techniques of the private sector.

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