GIS Advanced User Focus Group
Spring 2010

Participant no. ______
Date _______________

Part 1: Usability

Search for data using the NCSU Libraries GIS Data Finder

1. Tasks
   http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/gis/

   1. You need to make a map that shows State Parks in North Carolina, using the most current data. What dataset would you choose to use?

   2. You want to examine property value changes in Buncombe County (Asheville) for the past 5-10 years. Try to find parcel data that will allow you to do this.

   3. You need to make a map showing all of North Carolina's towns and cities, and the interstate highways that pass through the state. You also want the map to show county boundaries for North Carolina and the state boundaries for the states bordering North Carolina. Try to locate and download the most current datasets that will provide what you need, using the Libraries' GIS website and data server (you can download to c:\temp).

Part 2: Focus Group

How do you arrive at the GIS pages when you are preparing to conduct research (for example, do you have specific pages bookmarked, do you conduct a Google search, etc.)?

What GIS page do you find to be the most useful entry point for your research (for example, do you start at the homepage or at another page)?

2. Homepage
   http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/gis/

   1. Do you ever come to this page?
2. Is it easy or difficult to find data that you’re looking for from this page?

3. Are there certain things you always use, or always ignore on this page?

4. Would it be helpful if there were instructions available?

3. **Drop down extent selection from home page**
   (Same page)

   1. Have you used the extent search?
      a. If yes, how often do you use it?

   2. What do you think “no limit” means?

   3. Please explain how you think the extent search works: does it include smaller extent subsets within results, or return only the extent that you searched? Which behavior would you prefer?

   4. Do you think the elements in the list are ordered in an intuitive way? If not, what would you find to be more intuitive?

   5. How useful do you rate the ability to search by extent?

4. **Search results screen: possible related terms**

   1. Do you ever use the “possible related terms”?

   2. (If you use them) do you find them helpful or do they get in your way?

   3. (If you use them) do you ever collapse them? Or: (If you do not use them) can you figure out how to collapse them?

   4. Can you guess how the related terms are gathered? If not, does it bother you not to know how they are produced?

   5. (If you use them) do they help you find related GIS data?

5. **Search results table**

   1. Do you understand what information is displayed in each of these columns?
2. Is the data here sufficient for your needs, or is there other data you would like to be shown in results listings?

3. Do you ever sort the data?
   a. If you answered yes, do you like the way the sort function works?
   b. Have you ever wanted a sort order that’s not provided here?

4. Have you ever clicked the red word, “metadata”?
   a. If you answered no, what do you think would happen if you clicked it?

6. Individual results table
   http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/gis/search/datainfo.php?datasetid=3332_NCOM&rk=0&s=ds&e=

   1. Is the information on this page easy or difficult to use? Why?

   2. What parts of the page do you use the most?

   3. Have you ever used the Links at the bottom of the page? Were they useful or broken? Should they be placed at a higher position on the page?

   4. Do you prefer to download the data layers, or open them directly in the software via a mapped drive to the data server?

   5. Is there data that you wish were displayed on this screen that isn’t?

7. Thesaurus of keywords
   http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/gis/search/theme_list.php

   1. Do you ever use the keyword browse to find data? Why or why not?

   2. Have you ever noticed that keywords are not assigned consistently throughout the collection?
      a. If you had not noticed, did you assume that they were?
         i. If you assumed they were, do you believe that the knowledge that they are not would affect your search behavior?
8. Metadata view: HTML

1. Do you ever use this view of data?

2. Do you find this information difficult to understand?

3. What data here do you use? Would it be useful to have some of this available to you somewhere else that it isn't currently?

(Show the other four alternative views)

4. This is the same data presented in four different ways. Which of these do you like the best and why? Would you prefer one of these over the current view?

9. Browse Themes and Sources
http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/gis/datalist.html

1. Do you ever search for data using the thematic and source web pages?

2. Have you found these pages to be useful, up to date, easy to read and follow, comprehensive?

3. Are there any data themes that aren’t covered but should be?

10. Side bar menu options

1. Do you use this sidebar to navigate?
   a. If yes, which options on the sidebar do you use, and why?

2. Is there anything you'd like in the sidebar that isn't there?

11. Other

1. What data is most useful to you about GIS dataset (extent, title, keywords)?

2. Are there other websites that offer search options we don't that you like? Other setups you’ve seen that you especially like?