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MEMORANDUM

September 23, 2003

To: Geography Senior Staff

From: Barbara J. Ryan /s/ *Barbara J. Ryan*  
Associate Director for Geography

Subject: Support and Promotion of the U.S. National Grid

I want to remind everyone of the importance of promoting the use of the U.S. National Grid (USNG) among our Federal, State, and local partners, particularly its importance for disaster readiness, response, and recovery applications.

The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) adopted the USNG as a National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) standard in December 2001 as FGDC-STD-011-2001. That same month, John Marburger, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, identified the implementation of the USNG as one of the three most important immediate steps that the Government could take to improve homeland security. In June 2002, we revised the technical specifications for our primary series maps to make the USNG our primary grid. It is also our policy to implement NSDI standards in *The National Map*. Pursuant to that policy we have implemented some initial support for the grid in *The National Map* viewer. We have also entered into a verbal agreement with the National Geodetic Survey to promote the implementation of the USNG especially among State and local agencies.

Like all standards, the USNG will be truly effective only if widely implemented. Support for the grid in *The National Map* is an important early step, but it is only one. Public education and promotion are equally important. So I am asking that the regions take steps to assure that support for the USNG is included when presenting information about *The National Map*. Regional and local conferences are key opportunities to promote the USNG, especially when we are discussing the importance of *The National Map* for emergency response applications. I am also asking that we look for ways to include information about the USNG in the educational materials we provide to the public.

Thank you for your continued support with this very important aspect of *The National Map*.