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Where Have All the U.S. Government Surveyors (and Other Geospatial Professionals) Gone?

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NGS Mission

To define, maintain and provide access to the **National Spatial Reference System (NSRS)** to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs.

Disclaimer

This presentation is based on personal experiences and research, advice/info from colleagues, and is not intended to represent the policies or procedures used by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Thanks.

Agencies with Geospatial Data...



Typically employ personnel to manage that data.

Where to find workforce data?

- Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
 - provides federal human resources policy, oversight, support, and administration of benefits
 - *“the focal point for providing statistical information about the Federal civilian workforce”*
 - Responsible for the Enterprise Human Resources Integration-Statistical Data Mart (EHRI-SDM)

Where to find workforce data?

- Enterprise Human Resources Integration-Statistical Data Mart (EHRI-SDM)
 - Quite an acronym... but we're still not there yet!
- The EHRI-SDM data is delivered/shared via
 - **FedScope**
 - Quarterly dataset from 2010-present
 - Annual from 2009 back to 2004
 - 1) Web-based navigation *or*
 - 2) Download of raw data
 - Series of ASCII text files (CSV)

Where to find workforce data?

- FedScope
 - Query different OPM occupational series
 - But know there is variation across agencies
 - Regardless of pay scale, duties, agency, etc, every position is defined by a Series or “Job Family”
 - Defined by [OPM Position Classification Standards](#)
 - Sounds easy, right?

Pay Scale

XX-1234-00

- For *most* positions, especially in regards to those in the geospatial field
 - GS – General Schedule
- Yes, there are many others
 - WG, IA, ZP, GG, IC, WS, NO, IM, SL, ZT...
- *Not* important to know them all for the purposes of this discussion

OPM Series XX-1234-00

- Series numbers are a good start
 - But remember *there is variation across agencies*
- Series with clearly defined geospatial duties
 - 0150 – Geographer
 - 1370 – Cartographer
 - 1371 – Cartographic Technician
 - 1372 – Geodesist
 - 1373 – Land Surveyor
 - 1374 – Geodetic Technician
 - 0817 – Surveying Technician

***But don't
stop there!***

OPM Series XX-1234-00

- Series numbers are a good start
 - But remember *there is variation across agencies*
- Series with roughly defined geospatial duties
 - 0301 – Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series
 - **Classified** as 0301
 - **Titled** as “*GIS Specialist*”

FedScope Query by Series

Series	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
0150	943	987	1,020	1,004	1,010	1,010
1370	582	572	600	590	599	599
1371	457	439	400	316	279	279
1372	73	74	73	74	74	74
1373	364	368	373	377	382	382
1374	23	25	23	25	23	23
0817	282	285	309	290	293	293
Total	2,724	2,750	2,798	2,676	2,660	2,660

FedScope Query by Series

1373 – Land Surveyor

Agency	2022
USDA (FS)	87
Army (USACE)	55
DoN (NAVFAC)	12
DoI (BLM)	169
DoI (FWS)	25
	348

FedScope Query by Series

1372 – Geodesist

Agency	2022
DoC	59

- Detailed data lists them all as NOAA
- *Who employs the other 15?*

OPM Series – things I've seen

- 0817 – Engineering Technician
 - Surveyor
 - GIS Technician
 - Civil/Site Draftsperson
 - also used for more related positions...
- 1311 – Physical Science Technician
 - Hydrographic Surveyor → no separate series...
- 1301 – Physical Scientist
 - All sorts of positions, many times supervisory or “interdisciplinary” roles (qualified by series)

Point Being: as much as OPM wants uniformity, which is good... there's still a ton of variation out there.

OPM Series – Interdisciplinary Example

Supervisory Interdisciplinary Chief Survey Section

- USACE Northwest Division, Portland District
- GS-____-13
 - 0810 – Civil Engineer
 - 1301 – Physical Scientist
 - 1370 – Cartographer
 - 1373 – Land Surveyor
- It's one position, but the duties are recognized as being interdisciplinary, so the series is a little more broad
- You would apply for the series you're qualified for
 - Won't see that until you hit the Application process itself
- Why no 1372 (Geodesist)? ...

Wrapping Up

- FedScope exists
 - It answers the simple questions
 - But there's very little uniformity in position classification across Federal agencies
 - Hydrographic Surveyors – no series...
 - Engineering Technicians – huge variations
 - GIS – Geographer vs. non-Geographer...?
 - DoD data is not totally clear (understandable)
 - *How can an organization make a path forward if they don't even know what the current status is?*

Thank you for your attendance and participation!

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