



**Promoting synergy in the innovative use of environmental data across academia, non-profits, local and state governments, industry and the Federal government**

***A workshop hosted by NatureServe and the US Geological Survey, with funding from the National Science Foundation***

\*\*\*\*\*

*Dates: December 2-4, 2015 (travel dates December 1 & 4)*

*Location: Department of the Interior, South Interior Building Auditorium, 1951 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington DC*

\*\*\*\*\*

**STUDENT COMPETITION**

\*\*\*\*\*

We seek the active participation of advanced undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in applied biodiversity and ecological informatics. To facilitate student involvement in the workshop, we invite submissions of self-contained or openly deployed mobile or web applications, map mashups, or compelling and dynamic visualizations that demonstrate innovative approaches to the integration, analysis, and visualization of environmental data. These should leverage existing and openly available datasets or services. Products/tools should be relevant to the management and conservation of biodiversity, ecosystems and/or the services they provide.

The students submitting the top 8 products will be offered a **travel and accommodation award** to participate in the December ecoinformatics workshop. A three person panel of judges from among the workshop organizers will score products according to the following criteria:

**Relevance:** How does the product address information needs that can support decisions regarding the improved management of biodiversity?

**Innovation:** How novel is the approach to data integration and/or analysis?

**Use of environmental data:** Does the product demonstrate the value of existing datasets on biodiversity, climate, environment, etc.? Ideally products will combine Federal with Non-Federal data or services – or they will present a compelling demonstration of the potential of combined data from public and private sources. Ecosystems.data.gov and data.gov are good places to start looking for Federal data and services.

**Clarity:** Is the product user-friendly and the intent clear – or does the analysis make a clear case?

**Visualization:** Is the visualization component clear and compelling?

#### **Submission requirements:**

Students must submit an abstract of no more than 250 words describing the product and how it achieves the requirements. They must also submit the product or a link to it. A wide variety of formats will be accepted but submissions must be:

1. Released under any of the Creative Commons (CC) License types.
2. In a shareable format that anyone can use. Some examples are:
  - a deployed and publically available website with a publically shareable URL
  - a fully self-contained R-script that will produce the full visualization or analysis in a single step as configured, with all data included or linked from a public source
  - a map context file that can be plugged in to an openly available web viewer (such as the one at the FGDC Geoplatform)
  - an APK file for Android – or a link to an app released through official Apple or Google distribution channels
  - a zipped folder with HTML that will run locally and draw from public data sources and libraries.

Submissions will be disqualified if they require languages that do not run natively in a web browser or R-Studio, or libraries that must be installed to run them (automated links to public libraries are fine), or components such as data sets that are not publically available. **If we cannot run it, we cannot evaluate it.**

The top 10 submissions will be made available on the workshop website and all 10 students will receive formal written recognition. In addition, students submitting the top 8 will be offered an award for travel and accommodation to participate in the workshop. A plenary session will be dedicated to lightning presentations from the students to describe their work.

**Technical Questions:** If you have technical questions about acceptable formats or configurations please email Derek Masaki ([DMasaki@usgs.gov](mailto:DMasaki@usgs.gov)) with "Data Synergy Workshop Student Competition" in the subject line.

**Submission procedure:** Please submit zipped files or URLs to [Brighid\\_Milan@naturereserve.org](mailto:Brighid_Milan@naturereserve.org). Emails must include in the subject line: "Data Student Competition", the title of the product, and your last name. In the body of the email, please include your full name, affiliation, complete contact information, and your abstract.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2015 5:00 PM Eastern Daylight time**

*Winning submission will be notified by November 6. Contestants should be available to travel to Washington DC from Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup> through Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.*