

Multi-State GIS Cloud Services Assessment

Recommendations Summary

Montana, Oregon, Utah & Colorado
February 2011

RFI Purpose

Determine the economic and technical feasibility of using the cloud to provide government GIS services.

Responses

There were 23 respondents representing a broad range of large and small cloud computing companies and a variety of business models.

Analysis

From the responses, it's clear that there are viable vendor solutions that meet the technical and general business requirements of the states. Despite the minimal cost information provided in the responses, it is evident that there is significant cost advantage to using cloud services even at the 4-state volume levels, but aggregating usage from more states, local governments and, especially, Federal agencies presents a major opportunity for even a more dramatic price reduction.

Model

The recommended model, which differs from the standard provider model, is one of "pricing based on the aggregate volumes from all participating entities". This approach translates the collective demand for government GIS services within the cloud into a pricing structure which incrementally (e.g., monthly) changes based on cumulative resource usage.

Recommendations

1. Fully explore the extent of Federal interest in cooperative cloud-based services and impact of the recent GSA cloud contract announcements prior to acting on recommendation #2.
2. The four state CIOs should continue to pursue cloud-based GIS services by sponsoring an RFP procurement project in conjunction with WSCA/NASPO.
3. The interested states form a government GIS "community cloud" governance structure that assures the best possible contract terms by representing the aggregate GIS service demand of government organizations.
4. The RFP project team should conduct a workshop to develop the detailed RFP requirements and for informational purposes, include multiple cloud providers delivering presentations to enhance the knowledge and perspectives of the participants.