

Questions November 5, 2014

**Q. I know the County has many assets like roads, bridges and buildings. How do you keep up with everything?**

A. With so many roads, culverts, bridges and other assets it has been hard over the years to keep track of everything. We needed a simple and easy to use system to keep up with fixed county assets. So in 2002 we applied for and received a grant from NACo (National Association of Counties) to start a Geographic Information System or GIS for fixed asset management.

**Q. What is GIS?**

A. GIS is defined as a system to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage and present all types of geographic data. To put it simply, GIS means Smart Maps. Chances are that you may use a GIS many times a week and not realize it. If you go online to look up information on MapQuest, Google Maps, Yahoo Maps or some sort of weather map service, then you are using a GIS.

**Q. How do you as Commissioner utilize the Geographic Information System?**

A. The GIS is utilized by most all the County offices and departments for maps and geographic data. I use the GIS routinely almost every day I'm in the office. As you can imagine with 822 county maintained roads it's hard to remember where they all are. I can use the system to look up where a road is, how wide or long the right of way is, how many culverts are on that road, and the road surface type. I can also determine property ownership along the road.

**Q. What types of information does the County's Geographic Information System provide?**

A. In addition to road asset data the system is comprised of many layers of information and more are constantly being added. Some more examples of these layers are: parcel lines, subdivision boundaries, streams, water bodies, municipal boundaries and parcel land use.

**Q. What other information can be extracted from GIS analysis?**

A.

- We have 554 miles of county maintained roads
- We have 1255 miles of roads in Union County (county, private, state, Forest Service)
- 3122 total roads (county, private, state, Forest Service)
- 506 asphalt (397 miles)
- 295 gravel (14 miles)
- 21 surface treatment (17 miles)
- We have 3431 road culvert locations (some locations have more than one culvert)
- 110 cemeteries
- 506 subdivisions
- 22,894 parcels
- 210,546 total acres in Union County

- 807 fire hydrants
- 44 billboards
- 77 government maintained bridges (36 are county maintained)
- 12 cellular communications towers

The information listed above is just an example of the types of information the GIS can provide. The system can store detailed information and photos for each mapped feature.

**Q. Who is responsible for maintaining the GIS and gathering all the information?**

A. The GIS is maintained by Shawn Seabolt and Jody Payne. The office is directed by Shawn Seabolt who started his mapping career with Union County 20 years ago. He is a former employee of the USFS and has a degree in forestry. He was recruited to map for the County because of his mapping and surveying experience from college and the Forest Service. Since working for Union County, Shawn has obtained his GISP Certification. Jody Payne has spent over 30 years land surveying in the private sector. Jody's surveying and plotting experience have made him a great addition to the GIS and Tax Assessor's office.

**Q. How can I see and learn about our GIS?**

A. The Office of GIS, Planning and Land Use is located in the Union County Courthouse next to the Tax Commissioner's Office. Feel free to come by and check out all the system has to offer. The office also provides printed maps from the GIS, FEMA and the USGS. You can also view some data on their website at: [www.unioncountymaps.com](http://www.unioncountymaps.com).