



President's Message for August 2003

My first BAAMA meeting was on a nice, sunny morning in 1998. As someone who happened to be studying both at the time, the topic of the meeting -- "Water and GIS" -- naturally intrigued me.

The meeting was at the Berkeley Yacht Club. I dutifully paid my \$20 membership fee, entered the meeting and quickly discovered a great community of peers. I honestly can't remember much about that morning's presentations (due to my own bad memory; Presentors, please hold your mail!), but I do remember how helpful and exciting it was to simply meet and talk to people already using GIS in their work. For someone who had just started a GIS internship, the knowledge and insights of my senior colleagues contributed as much to my GIS education as any coursework or trial-and-error experience.

Meeting your (past, present and future) colleagues is a long BAAMA tradition. It is with this in mind that I'm very happy to announce BAAMA's latest initiative - BAAMA Connections. BAAMA Connections is neither a mentoring program nor a job search service. Instead, it is a vehicle by which BAAMA members can share their experiences with those just entering the field. New professionals can learn from their more experienced colleagues, and we hope that even the most seasoned professional can tap into the enthusiasm of those for whom everything is new and exciting.

The knowledge and experience of its members are BAAMA's greatest assets. We hope that you will help to spread some of that wealth by participating in BAAMA Connections.

Jeff Kapellas
BAAMA President (2003-2004)