

3.9. Verification processes. As technology progresses and the capabilities of field personnel increase (with new college courses in GIS, continuing education courses, etc.), the collection and transfer of data can occur with processes that would seemingly save effort and cost to an organization. For example, in Figure 3.4 the inventory forester would transfer cruise reports (hard copies) and maps (hand-drawn) to information system analysts in an annual update process. Several verification processes were noted in an effort to maintain the consistency and quality of data moving from the field to the information systems department and vice versa.

a. How might these processes in the flow chart change if the inventory forester were to provide spatial data that was digitized in the field office, and cruise data that was collected with a hand-held data collector?

The inventory forester would be transferring spatial databases and other digital data files to the information systems analysts rather than hard-copy maps and data files. This eliminates (perhaps) the need for both the digitizing process and the inventory data input processes (assuming the inventory data is formatted corrected by the inventory forester) for the information systems analysts, and shifts some of the responsibility for data quality to the inventory forester.

See associated flow chart #1.

b. Could the verification responsibilities shift under these circumstances?

Yes, the verification of the spatial databases and associated digital inventory data files should be performed by the field forester. If not, the process becomes less efficient, as more data may be rejected by the information systems analysts because the inventory forester had not checked the quality of the data before sending it forward.

See associated flow chart #2.