

I Can See My School!

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Challenge: Creating and fostering enthusiasm for Remote Sensing and GIS in kids can be difficult. The financial and time constraints can be overwhelming for educators and youth leaders alike.

The 2005 Indiana Statewide Orthophotography Project afforded an opportunity to address this challenge using real-world applications, showing teachers and students practical uses of the orthophotography.

Action: The Indiana Geographic Information Council (IGIC) was the lead on the Huck Finn project. Through a series of lesson plans and activities, Huck Finn encouraged youth to develop creative, large-scale, outdoor artworks to be captured in the 2005 statewide orthophotography.

To capitalize on the effort, IGIC partnered with the Geography Educators' Network of Indiana (GENI) to develop an outreach package for Huck Finn participants. Centered on the 2005 orthophotography, kits included the photos, GPS units, and GIS viewing software. In return, recipients were asked to write a lesson plan or activity.

Results: In all, 10 participants from around the state received the packages and developed activities. The lesson plans covered everything from "Geotechnology and Environmental Ecology" to "Are You Looking at Me," and "Me and My Space." In addition, the project:

- Reached a diverse audience through the boy scouts, 4-H, nonprofits, parks and schools
- Showed Huck Finn participants the real-world implications of their efforts - the artwork they created, plainly visible from above
- Reinforced participation in GIS activities - providing support and guidance encourages understanding and engagement
- Gave youth practical experience with 21st century technology, helping them develop marketable skills for the future
- Tapped into a wealth of best-practices by having the recipients develop their own activities



Figure 1. Girl Scouts at Lake County Park.



Figure 2. Sample of the orthophotography given to educators along with GPS units and viewing software.

FOR FURTHER READING:

Go to: <http://www.in.gov/ingisi/projects/huckfinn/>