November 12, 1991

Mr. Darrel Peterson
Director of Marketing
GeoResearch, Inc.
115 North Broadway
Billings, Montana 59101

Dear Mr. Peterson:

In August of 1991, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Utah State Office, began investigating uses for Geolink GPS interface software. After attending the first annual GPS/GIS Conference in Big Sky, Montana, Robin Floor, Cartographic Technician, returned to the Utah State Office with the capability of operating and demonstrating the Geolink software. We have discovered the possibilities for resource-mapping using GPS technology are only limited by one’s imagination. Because it is a resource mapping tool, GPS is capable of meeting accuracies demanded by GIS. It is possible to digitize on the earth’s surface using GPS with an accuracy of 4 meters, which incorporates less error than digitizing from a paper quad, the current accepted method of gathering GIS data. We feel that for resource-mapping, gathering missing data via photo interpretation can be too expensive and deals in accuracies not necessary for the GIS environment. With Geolink/GPS, we can map missing data, such as a road, by simply driving it with accuracies acceptable for GIS. Geolink allows data gathered in the field to be properly attributed. The proper collection of attribute data is essential to merge geographic coordinates with the BLM Land Information System (LIS).

Geolink allows specialists not versed in traditional mapping to go into the field and gather data to be integrated later into a GIS/LIS. By allowing specialists to be more involved in gathering data, we feel this will mean more meaningful trips into the field and a greater likelihood of collecting the proper data. Data could be maintained and manipulated by specialists in their CAD systems and later added to the GIS. In mapping of sensitive areas, Geolink/GPS affords less impact on the land. A single-resource specialist could, for instance, map a sensitive riparian area or calving ground and have much less impact than a survey crew. BLM Fire and Aviation, where realtime mapping is crucial, saw Geolink/GPS as a very valuable tool in selecting helicopter ports for fire containment and mapping the progression of a fire.

To demonstrate Geolink’s capabilities to our resource specialists, we outfitted a minivan with a color PC monitor and drove a predefined route using a background illustrating a road. Our participants were able to see their geographic positions displayed while traveling on the earth’s surface. When they saw how interactive and easy to use this interface was, their imaginations started entertaining many possible uses for it.
We find Geolink to be an extremely valuable resource tool for the Bureau, so much so, that we have purchased a Geolink package and a Professional Model Trimble Pathfinder receiver for each of our District Offices. We feel that we will be utilizing this exciting technology extensively in the future. We would like to express our need to have Geolink modified to have the capability to translate to MOSS. This would save time and the cost of a translator.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

James M. Parker
State Director