

**Notes from Geospatial/GIS Meetup
August 18, 2026**

Zoom

Attendees: Janet Reyes, facilitator

Via Zoom: Andrew Haglund, Collins Senaya, Kodjovi Zondokpo, Luis Barrios, Mark Long, Mary-Michelle Moore, Mike Cohen, Will Porter

Announcements

This meeting was recorded; video is available [here](#). The passcode to view is xA^uh4Jm

The 2026 [ArcGIS StoryMaps Competition](#) will accept submissions from September 8 - December 11. The theme is "Maps are for the Bold."

At our **next [meetup](#), on Tuesday, September 22**, Janet will provide an overview of geospatial resources at UCR. Meetups scheduled for October and December are anticipated, although Janet will not be facilitating them. (From the chat: reach out to STEM Teaching Librarian Mary-Michelle Moore at libstemteam@ucr.edu if you are interested in presenting or have leads for presenters.)

The [Esri Fall Education Open House](#) will take place on October 7 from 12:30-5:00 pm at Esri's headquarters in Redlands. Registration will open soon.

The [Spatial Data Science Conference](#) will be held in New York October 20-21.

Shared links

[Today's presentation slides](#)

[Free GIS-themed Zoom backgrounds](#)

Presentation

Janet presented her takeaways from the **2026 Esri Education Summit and User Conference**, which she attended in person July 11-15.

Recordings from the [Plenary sessions](#) are available to all UCR affiliates. For those who registered to attend the User Conference, recordings of dozens of conference sessions are available for viewing once you log into the conference website. In late October, some content will be made publicly available on the [proceedings page](#).

The information shared in the presentation was derived from sessions relating to:

–Education Summit–

- **AI and GIS: An Introduction**
- **AI and GIS: Ethics**
- Best Practices for **Teaching with ArcGIS StoryMaps**
- Establishing **Governance Practices** for ArcGIS
- **Guide to the Geographic Approach**
- Using Esri Technical Certification to Validate **Student Workforce Readiness**
- **Classroom to Career: Preparing GIS Students for the Workforce**

–User Conference–

- Plenary
- **GIS Support Services** in Academic Libraries and Centers
- **Accessibility** Essentials for GIS and Mapping
- ArcGIS Pro
 - **Geoprocessing** Tips & Tricks
 - Preparing Your Data for the **NSRS 2022 Shift**
- ArcGIS Geostatistical Analyst: **Spatial Interpolation** Using Kriging
- ArcGIS **Experience Builder**: Best Practices for Building Exciting Apps

The [slides](#) contain the specific takeaways shared. (The slides consist of contents pasted from an [ArcGIS StoryMaps Briefing](#) that unfortunately froze in edit mode.) Many links to presentation materials are included.

Discussion

Regarding the Esri Technical Certification for GIS Fundamentals, **Mark** asked if Esri provides support for faculty to integrate certification preparation into their curriculum. In researching after the meetup, Janet found this [blog post](#) (which doesn't give specific ideas) and this [related exchange in Esri Community](#). In general, it appears that the faculty would be advised to review the [learning plan](#) in Esri Academy and integrate the objectives found there into their syllabus.

Mike asked about whether [gaussian splats](#) used in the processing of drone imagery was mentioned at the conference. That was not a topic in any session Janet attended.