The North America Node meeting took place on June 24, 2011 during a boat tour in Lago Magiore, which provided additional inspiration to the North America Node-Team USA. The participants in the meeting were Jon Hempel (North America Node Leader-USDA-NRCS-NSSC), Jim Thompson (North America Scientific coordinator-West Virginia University-Geospatial Research Unit), Phillip Owens, (North America Node partner-Purdue University), Janis Boettinger (North America Node partner-Utah State University); Sabine Grunwald (North America Node partner-University of Florida), Nathan Odgers (Post-Doctoral fellow- West Virginia University-Geospatial Research Unit) and Zamir Libohova (North America Node “secretary”- USDA-NRCS-NSSC).

The topics discussed included:
- Funding;
- Memorandum of Understanding between USDA-NRCS-NSSC and University partners;
- Training/Workshop/Capacity Building;
- Coordinating work with Canada and Mexico.
**Funding**
Jon Hempel pointed out that funding from NRCS is very limited; however other agencies such as EPA, BLM and USGS-EROS might be interested and help with funding. Norm Bliss at the EROS center has been working on some gridded SSURGO/STATSGO products and may help generate the versions < 1 maps according to the GlobalSoilMap.net specifications.
Sabine Grunwald suggested submitting a NSF proposal with the focus on climate change. The NASA proposal submitted last year with Jim Thompson and Janis Boettinger received excellent remarks but was not funded.
Phillip Owens suggested that Educational Grants can be used under the training/workshop/capacity building as they are relatively easier to get.

**Memorandum of Understanding between USDA-NRCS-NSSC and University partners**
All participants agreed on the need to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NRCS- and the University partners as a way to facilitate the cooperation and leverage funding.
Phillip Owens added that an MOU allows for internal university funding for graduate students to become available with the focus on GlobaSoilMap.net project. This also will serve as basis for establishing a communication protocol and formalize the partnership for the North America Node.
Jon Hempel agreed that in the short-term to send an invitation letter to the respective Deans inviting them to join the GlobalSoilMap.net effort then mention the MOU.
Jim Thompson suggested that as part of partnership with the Universities, NRCS could offer travel funding. In this way, he argued the benefits are mutual.
Zamir Libohova suggested adding to the MOU the strengths that each University brings to the partnership (Purdue University-Legacy data; University of Florida-Geostatistical, and Utah State University-Remote Sensing) all key pieces of the GlobaSoilMap.net effort.

**Capacity Building/Training/Workshop**
Sabine Grunwald emphasized the need for capacity building as part of this effort and suggested a workshop to bring together the interested partners in addition to the universities.
Jim Thomson added that training can be funded under capacity building.
Nathan Odgers asked if other non-governmental agencies and organizations may be interested to participate in the workshop.
Janis Boettinger mentioned the USAID and Homeland Security Department as two possible institutions that might be interested. She argued that other agencies may become interested if we compare the GlobaSoilMap.net costs of generating the products vs. NASA and prove that the GSM.net products are more suitable for modelers.
Jon Hempel argued that the project need to become more visible and a coordinator on communication for the North America Node might help in this regard. This would facilitate among other things more data gathering argued Janis Boettinger quoting Utah State University as having lots of data.

**Coordinating work with Canada and Mexico**
Jon suggested that a joint meeting with Canada perhaps in North Dakota would be a good idea. He argued that the Basin and Range study conducted by Janis Boettinger at Utah State University may serve as a focal point to bring many agencies together.

**To DO list:**

**Letter of Invitation** - Jon Hempel agreed to send a letter of invitation to the respective deans asking them to join the GSM effort and introducing the MOU idea.

**MOU** – Jon Hempel and Zamir Libohova with work on a MOU draft and circulate to the group for comments and suggestions.

**GSM.net web site** for North America Node under the USDA website - Zamir Libohova will work with the USDA-NRCS-NSSC web designers to put few templates to select from.