**What is the role of GIS?**

One of the requirements of risk assessment and integrity management is to know and understand your system. It's really impossible to have any type of a management plan or effective strategy to minimize risk if you don’t understand what you own, where you own it, and what surrounds it.

GIS is really a visual repository for all of that information. It can give you the critical information about an asset. It tells you where that asset exists; you can find out when it was built; who it was put in by; you know the specifics of that piece of equipment and you can also understand what goes on around it.

GIS also takes into account a spatial perspective, and when you think about infrastructure businesses, they're all spatial businesses. GIS offers the ability to add the spatial component of all the analyses that were doing.

The GIS toolset is consumable by all portions of a utility community. There are specific GIS tools available for power users—people who are creating information or performing analyses. There are tools to be able to take this valuable and rich information into the field to validate it and update and to use inside of the working context.

GIS really is about bringing data together. One of the most powerful aspects of GIS is data management and the ability to bring together all that data—age, condition, operating characteristics, history, predictive information—in one location. GIS gives users the ability to pull those pieces and parts together.

Thank you very much Bill, and for future inquests, Bill’s e-mail address is bmeehan@esri.com.