APPLIED GIS 2026

GIS in Action: Mapping Solutions to Real-World Challenges

Monday, November 9, 2026 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

California State University, Northridge

RUN OF SHOW

8:00–8:45 AM | Registration, Breakfast & Morning Networking

Attendees arrive, check in, receive name badges, and enjoy coffee and pastries. Organization tables open for attendees to meet participating agencies, companies, and professionals. Live entertainment will be provided during morning networking.

8:45–9:00 AM | Welcome & Opening Remarks

Welcome attendees to Applied GIS 2026. Introduce the conference theme, recognize the hosting department and GAERG, review the day's program, and share event announcements.

9:00–9:45 AM | Opening Keynote

"Observing a Changing Planet: NASA Earth Science, Climate Insights & the Future of Earth Observation"
Speaker: Dr. Duane Waliser, Chief Scientist, Earth Science and Technology Directorate, NASA JPL

9:45–10:30 AM | Industry & Professional Panel

Panel Title: *GIS in the Real World: From Spatial Data to Decisions*

Current Panelists:

- Josh Ball — Project Coordinator, Canopy Team
- Luke Bryden — Hydrologist, Carpinteria Water District

This panel will highlight how GIS and spatial thinking are applied in professional settings. Panelists will discuss their career paths, how they use geospatial data in their work, and how students can prepare for careers in GIS, environmental science, water resources, and related fields.

10:30–10:45 AM | Networking & Refreshment Break

Attendees can enjoy refreshments, visit organization tables, connect with panelists, and network with fellow participants.

10:45–11:15 AM | Remote Sensing, Earth Observation & Applied Geospatial Science

This session will explore how remote sensing, earth observation, and geospatial science support environmental monitoring, mapping, research, and decision-making.

Planning Note: A proposed CGST at CSUN panel may replace this session if confirmed.

11:15 AM–12:30 PM | Geography Goes Viral

Geography Goes Viral returns to its original 11:15 AM–12:30 PM time slot.

Current Panelists:

- Evan Loveitt - LA In A Minute
- Malia Milingio - LA History Girl
- Jason Farhang - Weather Daddy

This session will explore how geography, GIS, mapping, and spatial storytelling reach audiences beyond traditional academic and professional settings. Speakers will discuss communicating geographic concepts through social media, digital media, public engagement, visual storytelling, and other accessible platforms.

12:30–1:30 PM | Lunch, Networking & Student Poster Presentations

Attendees will enjoy lunch while connecting with students, faculty, professionals, and participating organizations. Student posters and presentations will be available throughout this period, giving attendees opportunities to explore student research and applied GIS projects.

Live entertainment will accompany lunch and networking.

Optional, staggered mini-tours of the CSUN Sanborn Map Collection may be offered during this period, pending confirmation of access, capacity, and logistics.

1:30–2:15 PM | Faculty & Geography Educator Panel

Panel Title: *Where Is Geography Education Going?*

This panel will explore the future of geography education, interdisciplinary learning, workforce preparation, and the role of geography and GIS in preparing students for evolving careers.

Current Panelists:

- Joshua Fisher - Chapman University
- Sanchi Adhikari - CSUN
- Steven Steinberg - CSUN/Long Beach

2:15–3:00 PM | Drone Skills, Second Chances & Workforce Development

Proposed Panel Title: *Drone Skills, Second Chances & Workforce Development: From UAS Training to Career Pathways and Community Resilience*

Proposed Participants: Sheila Steinberg, Hilary Johnson, Captain Hayes, and Dr. Hayes

Status: Proposed; participant names, titles, and project roles to be confirmed.

This mini-panel will highlight a project supporting formerly incarcerated individuals through drone skills and workforce development. The discussion will explore how UAS training can contribute to career pathways, community engagement, and resilience.

3:00–3:15 PM | Afternoon Refreshment Break

Attendees can enjoy refreshments, visit organization tables, and take a brief break before the afternoon sessions.

3:15–4:00 PM | GIS for a Resilient Los Angeles

This proposed panel will explore how public agencies use GIS to support urban services, infrastructure, emergency response, planning, and community resilience.

Current Panelists:

- LADWP
- LA Sanitation
- LA Transportation
- LA Emergency Preparedness
- LA Parks and Recreation

Agency participation is pending confirmation.

4:00–4:35 PM | Afternoon Networking, Student Posters & Map Collection Mini-Tours

Attendees will have a final opportunity to network with professionals, visit organization tables, and explore student posters and presentations.

Optional, staggered mini-tours of the Sanborn Map Collection may also be offered, pending confirmation of access and logistics.

Live entertainment will accompany the afternoon networking period.

4:35–4:50 PM | Student GIS Awards & Recognition

Recognize outstanding student work and celebrate contributions to applied GIS, mapping, and geospatial research.

Proposed Award Categories:

- Best GIS Project
- Best Cartographic Design
- Best Environmental Application
- Best Planning & Community Application
- Best Remote Sensing/UAS Project
- Emerging Technology Award

4:50–5:00 PM | Closing Remarks

Thank keynote speakers, panelists, participating organizations, faculty, students, volunteers, and attendees. Share final acknowledgments and formally conclude **Applied GIS 2026**.