

Accessing Mineral Resources Branch Digital Geoscience Data and Information

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The Digital Information Services group is responsible for developing and maintaining the Mineral Resources Branch (MRB) Geographic Information System (GIS) and associated databases, the NovaScan geoscience publications database, supplying digital data and services to clients and staff, and developing and maintaining the MRB Internet web site. The branch currently provides access to its geoscience information through several applications and is in the process of developing new ones.

NovaScan is the geoscience publications database for Nova Scotia and its offshore regions. A new enhanced Internet search interface is currently under development which will allow the public to access, search and download records contained in NovaScan. We hope to make this web site available by the end of the year. Currently NovaScan can be accessed through the Provincial Library's Internet-accessible Ncompass catalogue database at the following address: <http://ncompass.library.ns.ca>.

A Public Access GIS has been developed for the use of clients in the DNR Halifax Library. This is a user-friendly query and display system that uses a customized version of ArcView® 3.x to access a variety of spatially referenced, digital geoscience data on Nova Scotia. It can display and query data sets, overlay various themes of geoscience, topographic and land-use information, and plot the resulting maps in colour.

A collection of digital geology maps, databases and images of Nova Scotia (in DXF, ARC export, ArcView® shapefiles, TIFF, JPEG and in PDF format) has been developed, and is available for viewing or free download from the MRB web site (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/meb/pubs/pub3.htm>).

In order to provide better descriptions and easier access to its digital products, the branch has written metadata for each of its digital products. A metadata search tool has been developed that will allow clients to search texturally and spatially for digital products, provide a description of the data, and a link to download the data. This will be done through a publicly accessible web site that should be available by the end of the year.

The Mineral Resources Branch has created several Internet Map Server (IMS) applications that allow the public to view, query, plot and download digital maps and databases over the Internet. Two applications were released in December 2004 and can be accessed at the following URLs: Nova Scotia Geoscience Maps, Databases and Images at <http://gis2.gov.ns.ca/website/nsgeomap>; and the Nova Scotia Mineral Resource Land Use Atlas at <http://gis2.gov.ns.ca/website/mrlu27>.