Here is a brief discussion and a document for the project tracking application.

****

1. What is "Project Tracking"?

"Project tracking" is a web-based database application that follows the workflow of common cultural resources management processes. We created it because there is considerable redundancy in the way that information is collected, reported, and handed along. The redundancy and time lags create their own sets of problems for cultural resource management.

The attached document shows (pages 1 and 2) common information flow pathways in cultural resources management. The next two pages are keyed to the diamonds on the right-hand side of the chart on page 2. Each diamond is a node where information can be collected that will be used later in the work process.

Pages 3 and 4 of the attached document list information one might collect at each of the information nodes. There may be other pieces of information too, but the table and chart illustrate the concepts.

The application itself is intended to collect information from the information-creators. So, a field organization creates information about the fieldwork it proposes to do (or has done). This is more appropriate than having "down the line" entry in which (sometimes years after the fact), a technician enters the details of fieldwork into the statewide database. Why not have this entered right away? Then it is available for searches, to track reports received, to tally workload, etc.

The application follows a common work model:

-- fieldwork authorization is sought from lead agency/land managing agency
-- if fieldwork proceeds, an investigation report is generated with a more or less standard cover sheet that summarizes the investigation
-- the report is reviewed for accuracy, for content, and either returned for revision, accepted, or commented upon.
-- there may be additional reviewers, so the report is forwarded to other reviewers for their comment, like a routing slip attached to a document
-- ultimately, a document is completely reviewed and is considered through its review, now its destination (or routing slip) says to file it (often in a SHPO archive)
-- the electronic record remains the property of the lead agency and the system administrator. Aggregation of information from the record is pretty straightforward. Page 5 shows typical "answers" that one could derive.

To make this work, we have to define user roles based upon their organization role. This is shown on Page 6 of the attached document. Note that users/organizations may take on different roles. For example, a lead agency organization may also be the field organization and a review organization.

The application allows users to have differential access. For example, one can create a user within an organization that can view, but not edit, records. So, one might have a minerals specialist in BLM who can log in and view, but cannot change, a review record.

Page 6 shows the major program "loops" as they currently are running. In the upper frame, one creates a fieldwork authorization. In the middle frame, one converts a pre-field authorization into an investigation cover sheet (after doing the fieldwork). The lower frame shows the review loop process

2. How do I gain access to try it out?

We have created three logins, corresponding to the three roles:

Username and pwd (same in all cases):
dugfield
duglead
dugreview

The application is at:

https://64.42.18.211/gnomon/login.htm

Note that you will be asked to accept a security certificate. You can safely do so, even if your browser warns you about "out of date". This is an encryption key certificate and will not gather any information about you from your computer.

When you are logged in, try creating a fieldwork authorization for yourself.

Make sure you fill in emails for the field organization and the lead agency. Use your email address in both so you can see the correspondence that is generated automatically by the program.

Depending upon the state you choose, you may get somewhat different looking forms.

Note that most dialogs require that you choose "add to list" when choosing multiple record sorts of entries (maps, cadastral, resources, counties, municipalities).

3. How will it be deployed?

Initially, we will do a prototype deployment. Wyoming has identified itself as a prototype state (and there are others) and has recently proposed training dates in late June for field office staff and contractors.

Ultimately, deployment can be on a state by state basis and we intend to try and make this system "converse with" existing state systems. For example, see the last page of the attached document.

This is a very brief overview of project tracking. I am happy to do on-line demos via NetMeeting or even with small groups simply logged in and me on a speakerphone.

I have a list of additions to the pages that seem to run across all states. These are being made now. However, we are not trying to replace the entire site record with this process -- rather, we are trying to allow for real-time search of on-going projects, answers to "where's my project in the process?" that do not involve long telephone chains, more rapid conveyance of NRHP and management status decisions. In short, we constantly fight the "input bulge" -- adding required fields to the application to fit a particular, limited, need.

Note that the intent is that this spans agencies too, and is not uniquely focused for BLM needs. The thought here is that shared information is useful to all, no matter whose fencelines one looks over.

-- Eric