****Call for papers!!****
The 98th Association of the American Geographers 2002 Annual Meeting
Los Angeles, California
March 19 – 23, 2002

Sponsored Session:
"Landscape Fragmentation and the Analysis of Land Use/Land Cover Change: From Pattern to Process."
Sponsored by the Spatial Analysis and Modeling, and the Remote Sensing Specialty Groups

Session Description:
The relationship between human behavior and land cover change represents a key research challenge for development projects, policy makers and environmental organizations that aim to improve land management. For identifying and mapping changes in land cover, remotely sensed data can allow for the production of maps at greater spatial extents or over frequent time steps than in situ field studies. Too often, however, the distinction between land use and land cover is not well understood. Examining the spatial patterns of such data can be a powerful means for linking pattern to process, and linking land cover to land use.

Identifying and quantifying landscape fragmentation is a major focus in the field of landscape ecology. Satellite imagery analysis is also an excellent tool for the measurement of landscape patterns, because the spatially explicit and extensive overview lends itself easily to studying the spatial arrangement of land cover. Although much of the research analyzing spatial patterns in the landscape has emphasized the impact of fragmentation on biophysical factors (such as natural vegetation and a general decline in the spatial extent and connectivity of wetlands, and wildlife habitat), socioeconomic activity is also impacted by fragmentation. Increasing landscape diversity has more potentially conflicting edges and opportunities for externalities to positively or negatively affect neighboring land uses. An overarching analysis of the causes, impact, and extent of land cover change can make good use of these tools, to link pattern to process, and thus to understand better the human dimensions of land cover change.

Papers will focus on using landscape metrics; integrating GIS, socioeconomic, and remote sensing theory and methods to study landscape pattern; and linking spatial pattern to land use process. Studies may focus on issues in either Northern or Southern countries, tropical or temperate forests, or other pertinent subjects of land cover change.

Please note: Starting this year, the AAG has changed its abstract submission process, to make it entirely web-based. Please register online for the conference, submit your abstract and information, and obtain a participant identification number. To be included in this session, please send your abstracts and participation number to Darla Munroe no later than August 17th. The final deadline for submission is August 31st.

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