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**Northeastern Appalachian geology project: combining small-scale digital geological maps from disparate sources**

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This presentation is the result of an investigation into the difficulties that today's geologists might encounter when attempting to combine into a single project several public-domain State/Provincial and Federal computer-based geological maps. The project area extends from Maine to Newfoundland and includes both the onshore and offshore. The main term of reference for the project was to use the data as obtained via the web and/or in digital format from the relevant organizations and not edit the available maps and/or databases in any significant way. The software used for this project is "Carta for Geology", a GIS-based mapping system developed and marketed by CARIS. This software is designed to create geological map files and to incorporate in its layered structure different map formats in their native language without translation. The final result of the project will be a web-enabled, 1:5 000 000 scale, coloured geological map for part of the Northeastern Appalachian area, classified by Era. The map can be queried further on its stratigraphy.

The maps were obtained in either ESRI Shapefiles or CARIS format. All maps, except for Maine, included a database on the stratigraphy either in .dbf or .xls. Microsoft Access was used to create a stratigraphy database for Maine from data supplied by the Maine State Geological Survey. Similarly, the digital geo-

logical map and database for Prince Edward Island had to be created as part of this project.

The main difficulty was the lack of uniformity in the way the attribute data was organized and displayed in the respective databases. Solving the problem required insertion of a new field, named ERA, in each of the databases. Prior consultation and agreement between the relevant organizations on naming-issues and a common geological terminology would have been helpful. Creating a standardized database format would have simplified cross-border incongruities of the project and also would allow the display of several colour-classified maps instead of just one (e.g., Rock Type, Age, etc.).