nyc OASIS

The New York City Open Accessible Space Information System Cooperative (OASIS) is a public and private partnership committed to developing an accessible information system to help enhance the stewardship of open space so these areas are linked, diverse, and sustainable for the benefit of NYC.
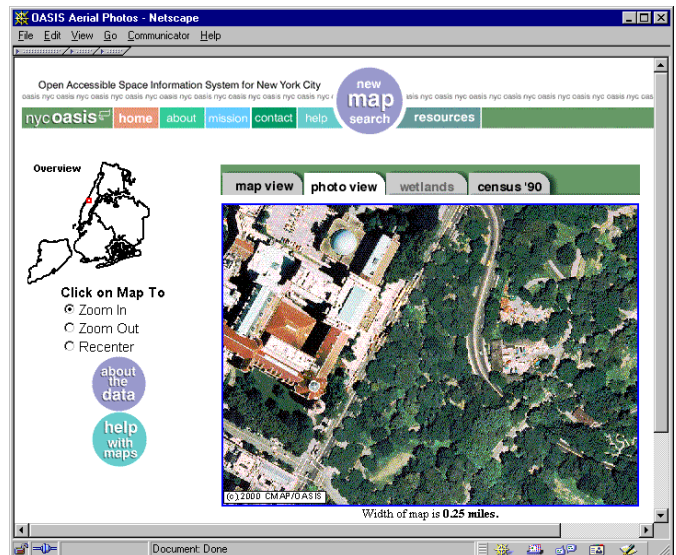
July 2001

An OASIS in New York City

On March 14, 2001, more than 30 nonprofit organizations, private companies, government agencies, and academic institutions launched New York City's first interactive mapping website dedicated to open space resources. The site – **www.oasisnyc.net** – was developed by NYPIRG's Community Mapping Assistance Project for the U.S. Forest Service, and is intended to enhance the stewardship of open space for the benefit of New Yorkers by providing comprehensive and detailed information about the "green infrastructure" of the city.

Called the "Open Accessible Space Information System" (OASIS), the website is "based on the belief that a common, free, open space inventory accessible to anyone on the Internet is invaluable to NYC's greening and planning communities," said Steven Romalewski, CMAP director. "We've designed it as a model for other cities to follow."

OASIS includes **aerial photo-images of the entire five boroughs** (*like the American Museum of Natural History and Central Park, above right*) provided through the City's NYC Basemap, as well as **detailed land use data for each tax parcel in New York.** With OASIS, the public can:

- create maps of open space by ZIP Code, Community Board, borough, and/or neighborhood;
- view high resolution aerial imagery;
- identify potential open spaces such as vacant lots; and
- identify other natural resources and landmarks such as wetlands and wildlife areas, or schools.

Many organizations have contributed to OASIS. The Forest Service, led by Matt Arnn in New York City, initiated the project and has continued to support it through its *Urban and Community Forestry Program.* ESRI has been a key concept and technical leader,

donating staff time and software (especially ArcIMS, which powers the mapping functionality of the site). Agencies including the City Department of Parks & Recreation, City Planning, the State Department of Environmental Conservation, and U.S. EPA have provided staff time and data. CMAP — especially Marty DeBenedictis & Christy Knight — planned and built the OASIS site, collecting data sets and information, cleaning and weaving layers, and developing the interactive maps.

The Municipal Art Society of NY has award the OASIS partnership its Municipal Art Society's Certificate of Merit, noting that "the public accessibility and vast potential of OASIS NYC as a resource deserves to be applauded." The website itself has been accessed by almost 40,000 web users, and many organizations already have linked to it. In a profile in the *New York Times* in late March 2001, reporter Denny Lee wrote that OASIS offers "an unparalleled view of the entire city."

For more information, visit **www.oasisnyc.net**.