

Earth Resources Observation Systems (EROS) Program

History of EROS Program Development

- Sept. 21, 1966, Secretary of the Interior announced the establishment of the Earth Resources Observation Satellite (EROS) Program. (The name of the program was later changed to Earth Resources Observation Systems Program.)
- October 21, 1966, Interior Under Secretary Luce provided specifications to NASA for the first Earth Resources Survey Satellite to meet needs of Interior and other resource agencies.
- July 12, 1967, Memo from Under Secretary Luce to Assistant Secretaries and bureau heads establishing the EROS Program.
- FY 1969 NASA obtained approval and funds to start the Earth Resources Technology Satellites (ERTS) A and B.
- FY 1969 First EROS Program direct appropriations.
- Dec. 10, 1970, USGS requested permission to distribute NASA aircraft and ERTS imagery to the general public.
- 7 ○ FY 1970 Interior appropriation bill provided \$^{4.1}~~1.9~~ million including ". . . an increase of \$300,000 for development of a central data reception center." OMB impounded \$3.0 million of the signed appropriation which effectively delayed beginning the EROS Data Center and adversely affected USDI coordination with NASA, whose Earth Resources Program was not cut.
- October 1971, EROS Data Center prepared for initial operation at temporary location at Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- March 9, 1972, NASA accepted USGS offer to distribute experimental aircraft and space-acquired imagery.
- 1972, Initial sale of data from the EROS Data Center in temporary location.
- *April 14, 1972, EDC ground breaking*
- July 22, 1972, ERTS-1 launched from Western Test Range.
- July 25, 1972, EROS Data Center began receiving, processing, and distributing ERTS images.
- 1973, Interior requested funding (with agreement from NASA, Agriculture, Commerce) for FY 74 to initiate ERTS-C. Request was not approved.

- o August 3, 1973, Earth Resources Survey Act of 1973 (S. 2350), introduced by Senator Frank E. Moss. The Act would amend the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 to provide for coordinated application of technology to civilian needs in the area of Earth resources survey, and to establish within NASA an Office of Earth Resources Survey Systems.
- o August 7, 1973, Official dedication of EROS Data Center at new facility north of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- o January 1, 1974, Operation of EROS Data Center in new facility.
- o FY 1974, Congressional authorization to NASA for ERTS-C.
- o May 13, 1974, Earth Resources Observation Administration Bill of 1974 (S. 3484), introduced by Senators James Abourezk, George McGovern, and Milton Young. The Act would establish within the Department of the Interior the Earth Resources Observation Administration.
- o May 22, 1974, Earth Resources Observation Administration Bill of 1974 (H.R. 14978), introduced by Representative James Symington. Companion bill to S. 3484.
- o June 28, 1974, Earth Resources Survey Systems Bill of 1973 (H.R. 15711), introduced June 28, 1974, by Representative Olin Teague. Companion bill to S. 2350.
- o FY 1975, Budget approved for NASA funding of ERTS-C (Presidential Decision)
- o November 26, 1974, To increase the effectiveness and promote the use of Earth resource technology satellites (H.R. 17534), introduced by Representatives Symington, Bell, Brown, Colter, Davis, Downing, Esch, Flowers, Fuqua, Gunter, Hechler, Milford, McCormack, Mosher, Pickle, Roe, and Winn. The Bill would establish, as policy of the United States, the continuation of experimentation with Earth resource remote sensing satellite systems through January 1, 1980.
- o January 16, 1975, To provide for continuing Earth resources satellite experimentation (S. 156)
- o January 1975, Name of ERTS changed to Landsat. *introduced by Senators Abourezk, Broderick, Domenici, Hollibaugh, Hatheway, Magnuson, Matsui, Steffens, Symington, Thurmond, Tower, Weicker, and Williams. (Comps to H.R. 2547.)*
- o January 23, 1975, Launch of Landsat-2.
- o 1974-1976 Joint NASA-Interior technical planning of advanced Landsat data distribution system to improve quality and reduce time.
- o Fall 1975, FY 1977 Interior request for their part of ground digital processing system denied by OMB.
- o FY 1976, Approval and funding of NASA portion of advanced ground digital data processing system.

- FY 1976, Interior request for increase denied.
- December 1975, FY 1976 & Transitional Quarter Congressional add-on of \$2.5 million to initiate Interior portion of digital data processing system.
- August 24, 1976, Earth Resources Information Satellite System Bill of 1976 (S. 3759) introduced by Senators Moss and Ford. The Act would develop, establish, and validate an Earth Resources Information System, direct NASA to continue a research and development program, and provide, if necessary, for establishment of a corporation to operate the domestic ground segments of such a system . . .
- September 1976, Earth Resources Information Satellite System Bill of 1976 (H.R. 15736) introduced by Representatives Teague and Fuqua. Companion bill to S. 3759.
- September 30, 1976, Award of contract to TRW, Inc., to design and build the EROS Data Center's Landsat digital image processing system.
- February 7, 1977, Earth Resources and Environmental Information Bill of 1977 (S. 657) introduced by Senator Ford. A bill to develop and establish an Earth Resources and Environmental Information System; to direct NASA to continue research and development and to establish the space segment of the system; to direct the Department of the Interior to establish the data handling segment of the system.
- May 24, 1977, Testimony by Interior Assistant Secretary Davenport on S. 657 before the Senate Subcommittee on Science and Technology, Senate Commerce Committee. Although testimony strongly supported Interior's interest and involvement in the Landsat program, the conclusion was that support of S. 657 was premature, and that the Department would work closely with the President's Science Adviser to evaluate institutional arrangements.
- July 1, 1977, Frank Press, President's Science Adviser, established ad hoc review group under the auspices of the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology (FCCSET) to address the issue of including an MSS on Landsat-D, ground data processing of Landsat-D data, and alternative approaches and institutional arrangements for funding of Landsat-D. The review group's report has been completed and is being reviewed by the Administration.