



United States Department of the Interior

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Earth Resources Observation and Science Center
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To: All

From: Frank Kelly, Director, USGS EROS

Subject: Fiscal Year 2015 USGS EROS Center-wide Priorities

These FY 2015 priorities represent a targeted and focused set of Center wide priorities that best align our Center resources for meeting our overarching grand challenge, i.e., to track land changes (land use, cover, and condition) as they are occurring, and provide real-time intelligence to stakeholders on the potential threats and management options to mitigate adverse consequences. Four priorities, aligned with our strategic goals, have been identified for FY 2015; they are:

Goal 1. The world's primary source of remotely sensed land images of the Earth.

Strategic Objective: Invest in the structured collection, preservation, and delivery of operational, timely and accurate remotely sensed land data.

1) Implement a Remote Sensing Systems Information Capability

Become the Nation's Requirements Capabilities and Analysis for Earth Observations (RCA-EO) source through implementation and operation of a capability to elicit, characterize, manage, maintain, and prioritize user community requirements; and assess system capabilities. The Earth Observation Requirements Evaluation System (EORES) will be implemented to support the Nation's Land Imaging Requirements (NLIR) elicitation. [Observing Systems Branch]

Goal 2. Authoritative providers of land change science information and knowledge.

Strategic Objective: Provide services and support on the use and understanding of land change monitoring products and future conditions for both USGS and non-USGS products.

2) Develop and Initiate Implementation of a User-Focused Information Services Capability

The Center must define and begin implementation of a user-focused information services capability as a consequence of our data services paradigm shift – moving from a provider of data to a provider of information services and solutions. The capability will provide the foundation for a more cohesive and aggressive strategy for communications, applications services, outreach, and other user and stakeholder support that draws upon shared responsibilities across the Center. [Data Services Branch; Policy and Communications Office; Applications Branch]

Goal 3. Leaders in understanding how changes in land use, cover, and condition affect people and nature.

Strategic Objective: Develop and support a focused Land Change Monitoring, Assessment, and Projection (LCMAP) program.

3) Develop a EROS Land Change Monitoring, Assessment and Projection (LCMAP) System

In FY 2015, a high priority is to move our EROS LCMAP concept into the preliminary analysis, requirements, and design phase for a Center-level system that exploits the Landsat archive to full advantage. The objectives for an EROS LCMAP are to provide (1) analysis-ready Landsat data and derivatives that are user focused; (2) continuous monitoring for change through a collection of algorithms to identify types and timing of abrupt and gradual change on a per-pixel basis; (3) change detection using flag pixels identified as exhibiting change and documentation on type, timing, and duration of change; and (4) assessments on land change (land-cover conversion, change in condition) in order to produce cyclical and special-topic assessments of land change. [Applications Branch; Research Branch]

Support Objective: An area of emphasis critical to supporting the science and operations activities of the Center continues to be:

4) Execute a Center-wide Process for Planning, Prioritizing, and Measuring our Work

We continue to place more emphasis on improving processes for planning, selecting, and “doing the right projects” to better focus our efforts on achieving the EROS mission. To reach our goals, we need objective measures to provide a benchmark against which to evaluate our work and investments, and inform our decisions. These measures will be integrated into processes across the Center, and incorporated into our strategic efforts for FY15 and beyond. [Coordination and Requirements Office]

As this fiscal year comes to a close, we have much to be proud of; and we are well on our way to meeting many, if not all, of the priorities set forth in 2014. It is through the hard work and dedication of the entire workforce at EROS that we continue to bring focus and clarity to advancing our land change monitoring, assessment, and projection goals.

As stated, our 2015 priorities are fewer in number, yet provide the framework for furthering our vision for being the world’s primary source of remotely sensed land images of the Earth; authoritative providers of land change science information and knowledge; and leaders in understanding how changes in land use, cover, and condition affect people and nature.

As a world-class Center for land remote sensing, we must continually and proactively plan for our future; a future that has endless opportunities if we continue together toward our mission and vision.

Your on-going feedback on these priorities is important to us. Please provide comments via erosfeedback@usgs.gov.

USGS EROS Center Mission and Goals
(Unchanged for FY 2015)

EROS Mission Statement: Contributing to the understanding of a changing Earth

Goals

1. To be the world's primary source of remotely sensed land images of the Earth.
2. To be authoritative providers of land change science information and knowledge.
3. To be leaders in understanding how changes in land use, cover, and condition affect people and nature.

This mission focus and associated goals are consistent with the USGS Climate and Land Use Change research focus on land change science and are consistent with the USGS vision to provide "science for a changing world."

USGS EROS Guiding Principles
(Unchanged for FY 2015)

Steward Leadership

- Branches, teams, and our contract partners first, foremost, and always put the USGS and EROS Center mission first.
- Stewards, ensuring long-term preservation of land remote sensing data and information holdings, dedicated to understanding a changing Earth.
- Committed to the continuation of the Landsat record.

Requirements Focused

- Responsive to community requirements.
- Undertake projects that are appropriate mission-relevant activities.

Collection and Access to Data

- Underscore the Landsat archive as the centerpiece of EROS and the land change science program.
- Dedicated to timely access of the EROS archive holdings to all parties requesting data at no cost in the use of land change information and knowledge.

Science Relevance

- Emphasize the advancement of science, technology, and societal benefits of remote sensing products and services.
- As a USGS science center, ensure that stakeholder science needs and priorities are considered in all areas – operations, research, and administration.
- Adhere to science best practices, such as transparency, peer review, and communications.