

## National Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Charter

On August 17, 2004, the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) announced the decision to establish the EROS Data Center as a “national capability” of the USGS. The EROS Data Center is a national data reception, processing, archiving, distribution, and research facility for remotely sensed data and other forms of geographic information. It holds the world’s largest collection of civilian remotely sensed data covering the Earth’s land surface, archiving millions of satellite images and aerial photographs. This archive, co-located with its attendant engineering and scientific expertise, provides a unique capability for developing and promoting science applications of remotely sensed data to identify, monitor, and understand changes on the landscape and across the interface between nature and society. Formerly the Earth Resources Observation Systems Data Center, the Center will rededicate its resources and capabilities to become the National Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS).

As a national capability, EROS will focus on the development and implementation of remote-sensing-based terrestrial monitoring capabilities to address national and international science and land management issues of concern to the Department of the Interior, other federal agencies, and the public-at-large. EROS will bring to bear its unique combination of existing capabilities and expertise in geographic information sciences, remote sensing technology, data acquisition, systems engineering, information access and management, and archive preservation. Through its diverse multidisciplinary science staff, EROS will provide an effective and critical link between remote sensing tools and techniques and interdisciplinary science needs. EROS will also assume an important role for establishing national priorities for existing and proposed land remote sensing systems based on the terrestrial monitoring requirements of the USGS and other bureaus within the DOI. EROS will leverage its existing infrastructure to access, archive, process, and distribute national and global remotely sensed data, and will work with the USGS Geospatial Information Office and external partners to implement key information technology and data management capabilities.

As a national capability, EROS will work directly with USGS National Programs and the associated USGS science disciplines to develop and enhance the terrestrial monitoring capabilities of the USGS via land remote sensing systems, data streams, allied technologies, and partners. EROS will work to expand and enhance the beneficial use of remotely sensed data as tools of earth and biological science by providing scientists and managers with a variety of remote sensing education and training resources and opportunities. EROS will work with USGS Regional Executives to ensure that regional monitoring requirements take advantage of existing, cost-effective, remote-sensing-based systems, whenever and wherever appropriate, as well as to ensure that those requirements are considered in the design, development, and exploitation of new systems. EROS will also work to ensure that resultant regional monitoring capabilities are designed to enable integrated science across regions and at national scales. EROS will continue to leverage reimbursable collaborations and external partnerships that advance and facilitate development and implementation of new USGS mission-relevant, remote-sensing-based monitoring capabilities.

If you want to integrate EROS’ expertise into your science, contact [R.J. Thompson](#), EROS Director. Read more about EROS at [edc.usgs.gov](http://edc.usgs.gov).