

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Justification for Reestablishment

National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive Advisory Committee

The National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive (NSLRSDA) has Legislative and Executive mandates. It has been name-specified and made an integral part of United States remote sensing, commercial, national security, and space policies. NSLRSDA shares various interagency responsibilities with the Department of Commerce, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the National Archives and Records Administration.

The United States Congress has found that, "It is in the best interest of the United States to maintain a permanent, comprehensive Government archive of global Landsat and other land remote sensing data." (Public Law 102-555)¹ Therefore, it has mandated that the U.S. Department of the Interior "provide for long-term storage, maintenance, and upgrading of a basic, global, land remote sensing data set...and shall follow reasonable archival practices to assure proper storage and preservation of the basic data set and timely access for parties requesting data."² The U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Earth Resources Observation Systems (EROS) Data Center (EDC) is the designated site for the NSLRSDA (also known as The National Imagery Archive@USGS EDC).

National Space Policy "requires a continuing capability for space-based Earth observation to provide information useful for protecting public health, safety, and national security. Such a capability contributes to economic growth and stimulates educational, scientific and technological advancement."³ Therefore, "the U.S. Government will...[p]roduce and archive long-term environmental data sets."⁴ To that end, the National Space Policy directs that "The Department of the Interior, through the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), will maintain a national archive of land remote sensing data and other surface data as appropriate, making such data available to U.S. Government and other users."⁵

¹ Land Remote Sensing Policy Data Act of 1992, 15 U.S.C. 5601 et. seq.

² Land Remote Sensing Policy Data Act of 1992, 15 U.S.C. 5652(b).

³ National Space Policy, National Science and Technology Council, September 19, 1996, Intersector Guidelines, paragraph 3(a)(iv).

⁴ National Space Policy, National Science and Technology Council, September 19, 1996, Intersector Guidelines, paragraph 3(a)(iv).

⁵ National Space Policy, National Science and Technology Council, September 19, 1996, Civil Space Guidelines, paragraph 6.

The National Landsat Remote Sensing Strategy designates “the Secretary of the Interior as [a] member...of the Landsat Program Management in accordance with section 101(b) of the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992, 15 U.S.C. 5602(6) and 5611(b). Specific agency responsibilities...are...maintain[ing] a national archive of existing and future Landsat-type remote sensing data within the United States and mak[ing] such data available to U.S. Government and other users.”⁶ The Strategy requires the Department of the Interior to “identify funds necessary to implement the National Strategy for Landsat Remote Sensing...[I]n order to effectuate the strategy.”⁷

President Clinton ordered the “release [of] certain scientifically or environmentally useful imagery acquired by space-based national intelligence reconnaissance systems, consistent with the national security [and that they be] declassified and transferred to...the United States Geological Survey of the Department of the Interior... Upon transfer, such imagery shall be deemed declassified and shall be made available to the public.”⁸

In order to “support and to enhance U.S. industrial competitiveness in the field of remote sensing space capabilities while at the same time protecting U.S. national security and foreign policy interests” the Clinton Administration has authorized “U.S. firms to operate private remote sensing space systems; [license requests] will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992.”⁹ Licenses granted pursuant to this authority require licensees to “make available unenhanced data requested by the National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive in the Department of the Interior on reasonable cost terms as agreed by the Licensee and the Archive. After a reasonable period of time, as agreed with the Licensee, the Archive may make these data available immediately to the public at a price equivalent to the cost of fulfilling user requests.”¹⁰

A NSLRSDA Advisory Committee is necessary to significantly influence the guidelines or rules relating to the selection of data for archival deposit, maintenance, and preservation as well as access management policies and procedures. An advisory process is indicated in the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992, 15 U.S.C. 5652. Archiving of Data. (c)(3): “In determining the initial content of, or in upgrading, the basic data set, the Secretary of the Interior shall – (3) consult with and seek the advice of users and producers of remote sensing

⁶ Presidential Decision Directive/NSTC-3, Landsat Remote Sensing Strategy, White House Office of the Press Secretary, May 10, 1994, Fact Sheet, paragraphs III(a)(3), IV, and IV(d).

⁷ Presidential Decision Directive/NSTC-3, Landsat Remote Sensing Strategy, White House Office of the Press Secretary, May 10, 1994, Fact Sheet, paragraph IV.

⁸ Release of Imagery Acquired by Space-Based National Intelligence Reconnaissance Systems, Executive Order 12951, February 22, 1995.

⁹ Foreign Access To Remote Sensing Space Capabilities, White House Press Release Fact Sheet, March 10, 1994.

¹⁰ Form for Licensing of Private Remote Sensing Space Systems, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

data and data products.” This type of assistance and guidance is not readily available within the Department or from any other advisory committee or source within the Federal Government, and, because of the ongoing need for advice on these subjects, a public hearing would not suffice. Further, the foreseeable recommendations of a Committee will lead to significant improvements in the effective and cost efficient delivery of the archive services required by statute and presidential policies. A well-composed and structured advisory committee will provide important, perhaps critical, perspectives and viewpoints influencing NSLRSDA operations. Reestablishment of the Committee is in furtherance of the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992 and U.S. remote sensing, commercial, national security, and space policies.

In order for the Secretary to be advised by a broad spectrum of remote sensing data users and producers, committee membership will be composed of 16 members, as follows: three from academia, with one laboratory research-data user and two classroom educator-data users; three from government, with two Federal data users and one State data user; four from industry, with one data information technologist, one licensed data provider, one value-added or other data provider, and one commercial industry; one international non-USA representative; and five others, with non-affiliated individuals at-large from any sector. Expertise in information science, natural science, social science, and policy/law are represented within the sectors listed above.