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16 December 2004

Secretary Gayle Norton
Department of the Interior
1849 - C St., NW
Washington, DC 20240

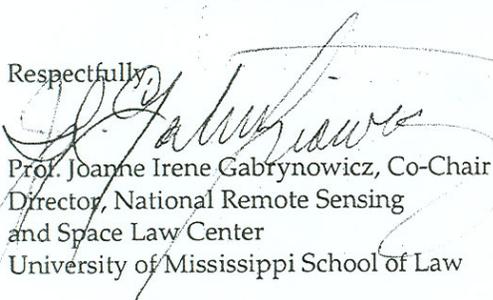
Re: Recommendation from the Advisory Committee for the U.S. Department
of the Interior, National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive
(NSLRSDA); FACA Committee File No. 216019

Dear Ms. Secretary:

On October 18, 2004, the National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive Advisory Committee (Committee) convened its first meeting under a two-year Charter. The Committee was established, consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and other applicable laws, to assist the Office of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, in coordination with the USGS Earth Resources Observation Systems (EROS) Data Center (EDC) Sioux Falls, SD, in carrying out responsibilities under the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992 (P.L. 102-555). This Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to consult with and seek advice from users and producers of remote sensing data and data products in determining the initial content of, or in upgrading, NSLRSDA's basic data set.

The Committee submits, herein, its recommendations for a Landsat follow-on mission.

Respectfully,


Prof. Joanne Irene Gabrynowicz, Co-Chair
Director, National Remote Sensing
and Space Law Center
University of Mississippi School of Law


Dr. Samuel Goward, Co-Chair
Professor, Department of Geography
University of Maryland

CC: Chip Groat, Barbara Ryan, Jay Feuquay, R. J. Thompson, Tom Holms, John Faundeen

**Recommendations for Landsat Data Continuity Program
from the
National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive Advisory Committee**

Recognizing that the Office of Science and Technology Policy has identified a critical, national need for a “sustained operational program and ... a long-term plan for the continuity of Landsat data observations.”¹

Supporting the position taken by the Secretary of the Interior that “[w]hile our sister agencies are responsible for the atmosphere, weather, the oceans and space exploration, Interior monitors the land.”²

Recognizing the position taken by the USGS that EROS Data Center “will be elevated to the status of ... national capability.”³

Therefore the National Satellite Land Remote Sensing Data Archive Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee) **recommends** that the Secretary of the Interior establish adequate funding for a Landsat Data Continuity Program (LDCP) with responsibilities for:

- Long term land remote sensing archive.
- Landsat 5 and 7 missions.
- Landsat Data Continuity Mission (LDCM).

The Committee believes that the future of the Landsat Data Continuity Program is best managed by the department of the government that has strategic responsibility for land monitoring and management, the Committee **recommends** that the Landsat Data Continuity Program be managed by the DOI as part of its land monitoring and management mandate.

Agreeing with OSTP’s characterization that “Landsat is a national asset and its data have made – and continue to make – important contributions to U.S. economic, environmental, and national security interests.” the Committee **recommends** that the LDCP manager report directly to the Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

¹ Memorandum for the Secretaries of State, Defense, the Interior, Agriculture, Commerce Health and Human Services, Transportation, Homeland Security; Administrators of EPA, NASA; Directors of OMB, Central Intelligence, National Science Foundation; and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Washington, D.C., August 13, 2004.

² Remarks by the Secretary of the Interior, Earth Observation Summit, Washington, D.C., July 31, 2003.

³ Memorandum to All USGS Employees from Chip Groat, Director, Subject: Changes to USGS Geospatial Programs and Services, August 17, 2004.