



# Celebrating 50 years of Landsat Vision

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## A Vision to Observe Earth for the Benefit of All

On September 21, 1966, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall announced that the DOI was launching "Project EROS (Earth Resources Observation Satellites) ([http://landsat.usgs.gov/documents/1966\\_Udall.pdf](http://landsat.usgs.gov/documents/1966_Udall.pdf)).

Secretary Udall's vision to create "a program aimed at gathering facts about the natural resources of the earth from earth-orbiting satellites" was an idealistic goal at the time, but on July 23, 1972, the first Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS) was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. In 1975, it was renamed Landsat 1. Since then, six more Landsat satellites have followed, collectively capturing millions of images of Earth, and creating an impressive archive that has been available at no charge since 2008.



Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior (1961 to 1969)

Over the past five decades, the Landsat Program and other international Earth-observation programs have matured. Udall's vision gave the world the confidence to create satellite systems to help people understand the intricate nature of our planet from a new perspective. Landsat satellites monitor forest health, mobilize food resources to drought-stricken areas, observe climate change impact on polar ice caps, monitor crop health and stress, measure the impacts of carbon escaping into the atmosphere, and map rates, causes, and consequences of land cover change.

This December 2007 video (<https://www.usgs.gov/media/videos/idea-worked>) provides a sense of America's long-term commitment to conservation, illustrating the depth of the USGS EROS archive and the contributions of Secretary Stewart Udall.

The USGS Fact Sheets listed below have been created to celebrate 50 years of success of Secretary Udall's vision and bring attention to the societal benefits of the Landsat Program:

- Mapping Water Use - Landsat and Water Resources in the United States (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163037>)
- When Wildfire Damage Threatens Humans, Landsat Provides Answers (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163044>)
- Landsat - The Watchman that Never Sleeps (Mountain pine beetle awareness) (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163045>)
- Landsat Brings Understanding to the Impact of Industrialization (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163054>)
- Urban Planners and Urban Geographers Turn to Landsat for Answers (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163056>)
- Landsat Plays a Key Role in Reducing Hunger on Earth (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163059>)
- Landsat Helps Bolster Food Security (<https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/fs20163060>)

## A Vision for Protecting American Lands

Secretary Udall was also very fond of the outdoors and the beauty of the Earth. During his tenure, he worked to expand the National Park System (NPS). He designated Assateague Island in Maryland and Virginia as a national seashore, and turned Ellis Island in New York Harbor into a national monument. Under Udall's authority, four national parks, six national monuments, nine national recreation areas, 20 historic sites, 50 wildlife refuges, and eight national seashores were created.

In a series called "Image of the Week", USGS is highlighting parks Udall brought into the NPS, as well as others that he cherished and oversaw as Interior Secretary:

- Yellowstone National Park (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Yellowstone-Fire-images>)
- Canyonlands National Park (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Canyonland-image>)
- Hawaii's Volcanoes National Park (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Hawaiian-Volcanoes-images>)
- Guadalupe Mountains National Park ([http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Guadalupe-Mtn-images\\_0](http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Guadalupe-Mtn-images_0))
- Crater Lake National Park (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Crater-Lake-image>)
- Redwood National and State Parks (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Redwood-Parks-images>)
- Glacier Bay National Park (<http://eros.usgs.gov/imagegallery/image-week-2#Glacier-Bay-images>)

To celebrate 50 years of success, NASA and USGS have planned a series of events in 2016 culminating on September 21 with an anniversary celebration in Washington, DC. Pictures and/or other media of this celebration will be made available on the <http://landsat.usgs.gov> and social media (<https://twitter.com/USGSLandsat>).