

LANDSAT IMAGERY USERS AND USES OVER TIME: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF USER SURVEY RESULTS

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ABSTRACT:

On behalf of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Land Remote Sensing Program, the Policy Analysis and Science Assistance Branch at the Fort Collins Science Center has conducted surveys of Landsat imagery users registered with USGS. The surveys were intended to provide a baseline of information regarding the users and uses of Landsat imagery and to explore impactful changes to the program, such as the implementation of the free and open data policy in 2008 and the launch of Landsat 8 in 2013. The results of these surveys have been used to better understand the Landsat user community and to demonstrate the importance of Landsat data for the scientific community and the public. Surveys conducted in 2012 and 2014 each collected data from more than 11,000 current Landsat users. The results from these surveys were compared to identify significant changes in users and uses over time, particularly changes related to alterations in the Landsat program, as well as to assess any longitudinal trends. Differences between established and new users from the 2012 survey were explored, as well as differences between the respondents to the 2012 and 2014 surveys. Preliminary results indicate that, though Landsat users and uses increased dramatically after the free and open data policy went into effect, the types of users and uses has remained relatively constant since then, with few significant changes. For example, it appears the enactment of the free and open data policy may have resulted in an increase in the percentage of academic users, but since then the distribution of users across sectors appears to have remained constant. The results demonstrate that Landsat imagery is being consistently used across a wide variety of sectors and application areas and that many users have become dependent on the imagery to effectively complete their work.

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