

USGS Mapping Productivity Record Slashed



USGS has exceeded its highest map cells production in one year since the record of 2,500 new quadrangle maps were published in 1972. Since the first release of the US Topo series of revised digital topographic maps less than nineteen months ago, the US Geological Survey (USGS) has published more than 30,800 7.5-minute cells covering more than 50% of the nation's land area and setting standards for production efficiency.

For the past 125 years, USGS topographic maps have provided resource managers and the general public with accessible, accurate geographic knowledge for uses that range from recreation to scientific analysis to emergency response.

To meet the need for modern computer-accessible topographic maps that are frequently updated, the USGS established the new US Topo digitally-based national map series. Modeled on the traditional, instantly recognised, paper-based 7.5-minute topographic series, these new maps use the best available government digital data.

A further efficiency gain is that rather than having USGS personnel print, distribute, and store paper copies, the entire US Topo collection is available as digital files and is distributed free of charge, through the Web, via the USGS Store. Digital US Topo map files are designed to be easily printed on demand.

Improved production processes instituted by the USGS National Geospatial Technical Operations Center (NGTOC) will allow the entire contiguous US to be remapped every three years. The USGS is on track to meet this goal.