USGS Center for EROS - *Who We Are*

The nearly 600 members of the workforce of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) conduct science for a changing world. Operated by the USGS, EROS is a national data reception, processing, archiving, distribution, and research facility for remotely sensed data and other forms of geographic information. The Center's employees manage the world's largest civilian archive of global land remote sensing data, and they ensure that anyone can readily access the data for the lowest costs possible. Scientists, resource managers, and planners worldwide use the Center's data and technologies for applications in homeland security, global change, wild land fire, agriculture, volcanology, population sustainability, and drought, to name only a few. Thus, the Center's work is dynamic, multi-scale (global, national, regional, and local), and potentially affects millions of lives each day.

The people of EROS conduct projects in the areas of science, land satellite data processing, data management, information technology, engineering, and administration. Sixty-eight percent of the Government and contractor staff has degrees in post-secondary education. Workforce skills include, but are not limited to, hydrology, geology, geography, forestry, sensor systems, satellite systems engineering, computer operations, network engineering, satellite data acquisition, math, accounting, facilities management, and administration. Some of the employees have unique expertise in international work, enabling the USGS to address issues of sustainable development, resource management, land cover change, and famine early warning in many countries around the world.

A combined Government and contractor work environment has proven to be successful for over 35 years at EROS. About 80 government employees direct the work of the Center. USGS support service contractors employ most of the Center's staff. This partnership combines government and industry strengths and ensures workforce flexibility, a powerful combination. The largest USGS support service contract at EROS is called the *Technical Support Services Contract (TSSC)*. The purpose of the TSSC is to conduct the Center's mission operations under the leadership of the USGS. The TSSC provides support in the areas of earth science applications, satellite systems engineering, software development, computer operations, information technology services, satellite data reception and processing, photo and digital product generation, data and information management, archiving, customer services, science applications, outreach, warehousing, and logistics. Historically, the TSSC has been a mission-type, cost-plus-fixed-fee contract. In 2002 the contract was changed to a performance based, cost-plus-award-fee contract, and was awarded to the Science Applications International Corporation. Under a performance-based contract the Government defines requirements in terms of desired outcomes while the contractor is responsible for accomplishing the desired outcomes. The Government states the "what" and "when," and the contractor determines the "how" and "who." The Government measures the contractor's performance and awards the contractor accordingly. The first TSSC was established in 1972 and has been recompeted every 5 years. While the TSSC is the largest service contract at EROS, and in the Department of the Interior, several other USGS service contracts are used at EROS for other operations, including satellite flight operations, facility maintenance, physical security, custodial services, and accounting services. Specific USGS EROS service contractors can be found in the Table 1. – USGS EROS Service Contractors.

Most of the EROS workforce is located at the Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. However, dozens of staff are located at offices throughout the country and world. These employees work side-by-side with many of our partners while championing the work of the USGS. The Center supports a strong visiting scientist program, hosting scientists and post doctorates from local universities to as far away as the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand. Additionally, EROS projects benefit greatly from a robust student intern program.

The Center was established in 1971 to receive, process, and distribute data from National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Landsat satellites, as well as aerial photographs gathered for the USGS and other agencies. The original 115,000-square-foot building was completed in 1973. In March 1996, the Center completed a 65,000-square-foot addition to house equipment and people for NASA's Earth Observing System Program and Landsat 7 data handling. EROS is the fourth largest USGS center, and is the largest center owned by the USGS. The Center's most recent fiscal year budgets have been around the $65 million mark. EROS is located 16 miles northeast of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Table 1. – USGS EROS Service Contractors.

The U.S. Geological Survey Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science

The Center for Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) is owned and activities are managed by the Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Several private companies, under contract to the USGS, or under contract to partnering federal agencies, support the mission of USGS EROS.

Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)
Primary Technical Support Services Contractor

SGT
Information Technology

Tri - Star
Logistics

Raytheon Intelligence and Information Systems
ECS Operations and Maintenance

Computer Sciences Corporation
Mission Operations Center Landsat - 5

Honeywell
Mission Operations Center Landsat - 7

Aerospace
Technical and Administrative Support

DCT, Inc.
Facility Maintenance and Operations

ATA, Administrative and Technical Services, Inc.
Security

Optimum Management Systems, (OMS) LLC
Finance

Pleasant Valley
Custodial Service

EROS Cafeteria
(via the Business Enterprise Program Division of the Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired)
Food Service

University of California Center for Water Resources
Climate Research and Field Studies for the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET)