

Using the USGS National Map to Locate and Download Present-Day and Historical Digital Topographic Maps

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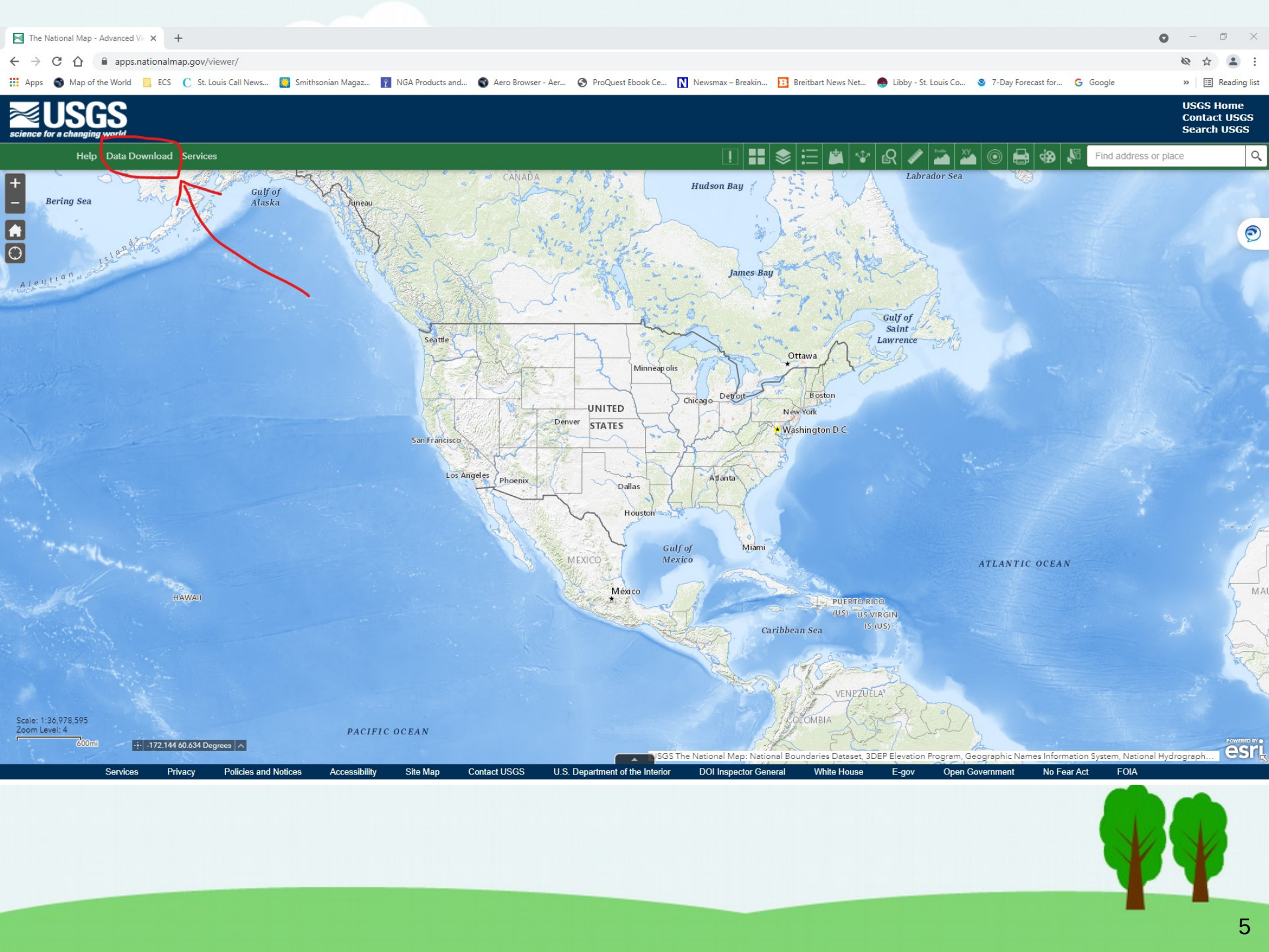
Outline

- Introduce two methods for locating and downloading both historical and present-day topographic maps.
- Provide an example of the usefulness of topographic maps in conducting research.



Method #1





Method #2



The National Map

usgs.gov/core-science-systems/national-geospatial-program/national-map

HOME

COMPONENTS OF NGP

The National Map

The National Map Viewer

3D Elevation Program (3DEP)

Center of Excellence for Geospatial Information Science (CEGIS)

User Engagement

Board on Geographic Names

The National Map Corps

The National Geospatial Technical Operations Center (NGTOC)

National Hydrography

National Digital Trails

Small-Scale Data

SUPPORTING THEMES

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

SUPPORT

TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

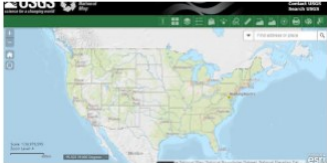
DATA AND TOOLS

MAPS

The National Map

As one of the cornerstones of the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) [National Geospatial Program](#), The National Map is a collaborative effort among the USGS and other Federal, State, and local partners to improve and deliver topographic information for the Nation. It has many uses ranging from recreation to scientific analysis to emergency response.


The National Map Viewer



The National Map Viewer (TNM Viewer) is the one-stop destination for visualizing all the latest National Map data. It uses easy-to-navigate foundational base maps and makes it simple to interact with all our data themes to create your own map.

[Let's make MY MAP!](#)


TNM Training courses



The National Map offers you Video training courses to help you learn all you can do with The National Map.


[Access Training](#)

The National Map Liaisons



The National Map (TNM) Liaisons partnership network cultivates and maintains long-term relationships with partners and develops agreements for The National Map and other initiatives that support USGS science.

[Contact Us](#)

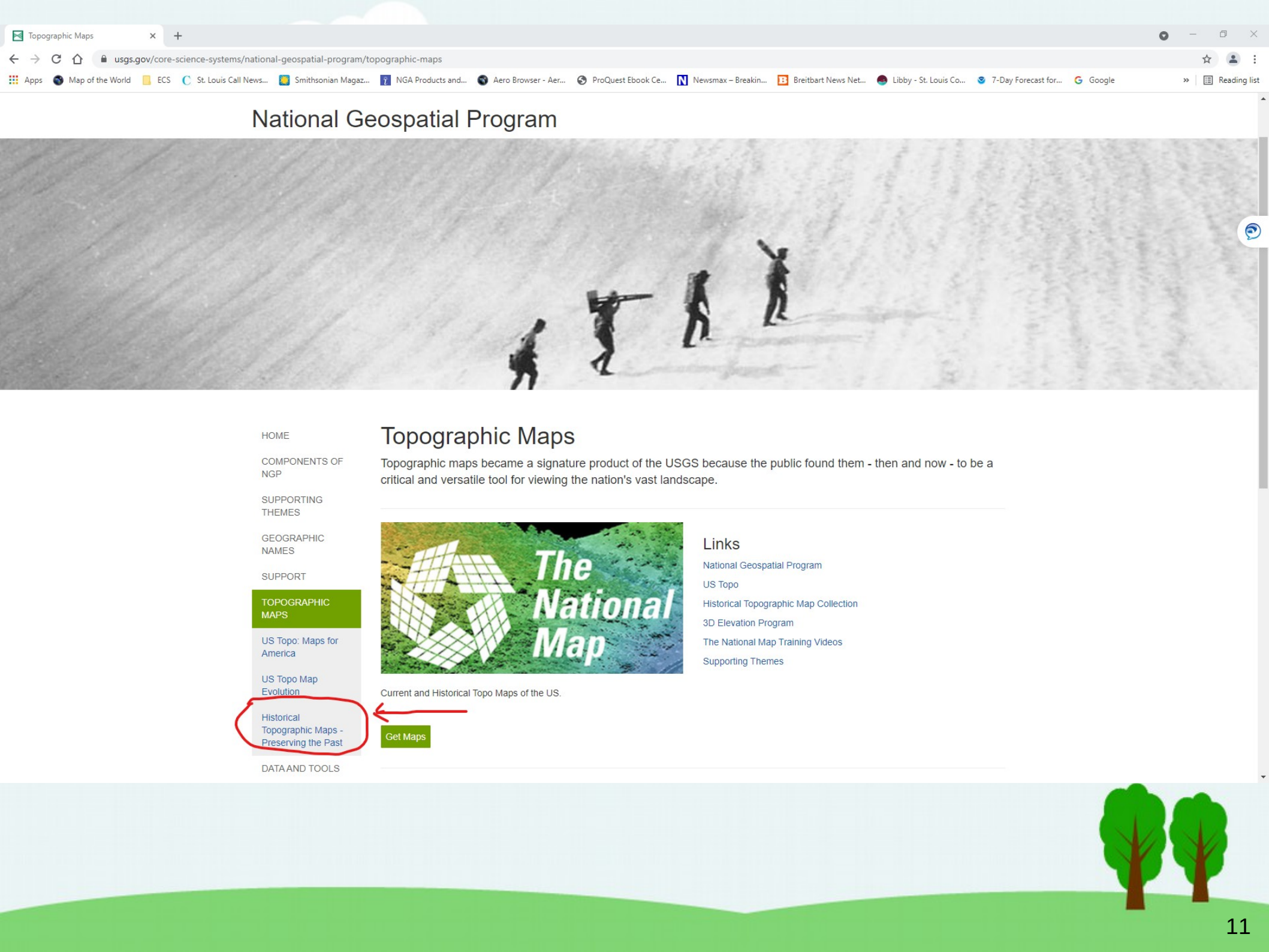


The National Map is a suite of products and services that provide access to base geospatial information to describe the landscape of the United States and its territories. *The National Map* embodies 11 primary products and services and numerous applications and ancillary services.

The National Map supports data download, digital and print versions of topographic maps, geospatial data services, and online viewing. Customers can use geospatial data and maps to enhance their recreational experience, make life-saving decisions, support scientific missions, and for countless other activities. Nationally consistent geospatial data from *The National Map* enable better policy and land management decisions and the effective enforcement of regulatory responsibilities. *The National Map* is easily accessible for display on the Web through such products as topographic maps and services and as downloadable data. The geographic information available from *The National Map* includes boundaries, elevation, geographic names, hydrography, land cover, orthoimagery, structures, and transportation.

The majority of *The National Map* effort is devoted to acquiring and integrating medium-scale (nominally 1:24,000 scale) geospatial data for the eight base layers from a variety of sources and providing access to the resulting seamless coverages of geospatial data. *The National Map* also serves as the source of base mapping information for derived cartographic products, including 1:24,000 scale US Topo maps and georeferenced digital files of scanned historic topographic maps. Data sets and products from *The National Map* are intended for use by government, industry, and academia—focusing on geographic information system (GIS) users—as well as the public, especially in support of recreation activities. Other types of georeferenced or mapping information can be added within *The National Map Viewer* or brought in with *The National Map* data into a GIS to create specific types of maps or map views and (or) to perform modeling or analyses.





National Geospatial Program

HOME

COMPONENTS OF NGP

SUPPORTING THEMES

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

SUPPORT

TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

US Topo: Maps for America

US Topo Map Evolution

Historical Topographic Maps - Preserving the Past

DATA AND TOOLS

Topographic Maps

Topographic maps became a signature product of the USGS because the public found them - then and now - to be a critical and versatile tool for viewing the nation's vast landscape.



Current and Historical Topo Maps of the US.

Get Maps

Links

- National Geospatial Program
- US Topo
- Historical Topographic Map Collection
- 3D Elevation Program
- The National Map Training Videos
- Supporting Themes

National Geospatial Program

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Historical Topographic Maps - Preserving the Past

Historical Topo Collection



Explore the Historical Topo Collection

topoView

Links

- National Geospatial Program
- 3D Elevation Program
- National Hydrography Dataset
- US Topo
- Alaska Mapping
- The National Map Training Videos

Contacts

Contact USGS:
<https://answers.usgs.gov/>

USGS Frequently Asked Questions:
<https://www.usgs.gov/faq/>
Social Media:
<https://www.usgs.gov/connect/social-media>
Phone: 888-275-8747

In 2009, USGS began the release of a new generation of topographic maps ([US Topo](#)) in electronic form, and in 2011, complemented them with the release of high-resolution scans of more than 178,000 historical topographic maps of the United States. The topographic map remains an indispensable tool for everyday use in government, science, industry, land management planning, and recreation.

Historic maps are snapshots of the nation's physical and cultural features at a particular time. Maps of the same area can show how an area looked before development and provide a detailed view of changes over time. Historical maps are often useful to scientists, historians, environmentalists, genealogists and others researching a particular geographic location or area.

The goal of The National Map's Historical Topographic Map Collection (HTMC) is to provide a digital repository of USGS 1:250,000 scale and larger maps printed between 1884, the inception of the topographic mapping program, and 2006. The [National Geospatial Program](#) (NGP) is accurately cataloging and creating metadata to accompany high-resolution, geo-referenced digital files representing the legacy lithographic maps. These maps are either no longer available for distribution in print or are being replaced by the new generation of US Topo maps.

HTMC maps are published in Portable Document Format (PDF) with geospatial extensions (GeoPDF®), patented by TerraGo Technologies. They are available for download free of charge from these applications ([see FAQs](#)):

- [The National Map Download Client](#) is our primary application for finding and downloading maps and other data products of the USGS National Geospatial Program.
- [TopoView](#) provides the best visual overview of the HTMC. It serves maps in GeoTIFF, JPG, and



topoView | USGS

ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/

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USGSscience for a changing world

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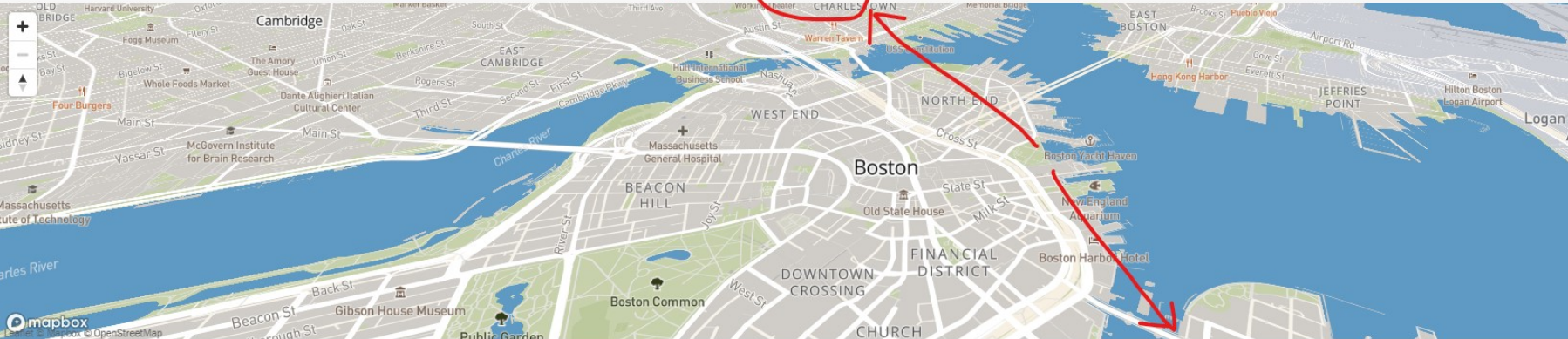
topoView

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ABOUT

HELP



Boston

Now & Then

Use the slider below to reveal the Boston area in 1893. The historical topographic mapping collection lets users explore how physical and cultural features change over time. The maps are particularly useful to scientists, historians, genealogists and others researching a specific geographic area. A series of maps of the same area published over a period of time can show how an area looked before development and provide a detailed view of changes over time.

Accessing USGS Topographic Maps Has Never Been Easier

TopoView highlights one of the USGS's most important and useful products, the [topographic map](#). In 1879, the USGS began to map the Nation's topography. This mapping was done at different levels of detail, to support various land use and other purposes. As the years passed, the USGS produced new map versions of each area. TopoView shows the many and varied topographic maps of each of these areas through history. This can be particularly useful for historical purposes, such as finding the names of natural and cultural features that have changed over time.


This interface was created by the [National Geologic Map Database project](#) (NGMDB), in support of topographic mapping program managed by the [National Geospatial Program](#) (NGP). Geologic mapping and topographic mapping at the USGS have a long tradition together (see [1888 report](#)). The NGMDB project is proud to assist the NGP in bringing these maps to the Web.

Packed With New Features And Downloadable File Formats


The maps shown through topoView are from the USGS's [US Topo series](#) and earlier [Historical Topographic Map Collection](#) (HTMC). The term "US Topo" refers specifically to quadrangle topographic maps published in 2009 and later. These maps are modeled on the familiar 7.5-minute quadrangle maps of the period 1947-1992, but are mass-produced from national GIS databases on a repeating cycle. US Topo maps repackaging geographic information system (GIS) data in traditional map form. This benefits non-specialist map users, as well as applications that need traditional maps.

The goal of the HTMC, which started in 2011, is to provide a digital repository of USGS 1:250,000 scale and larger (more detailed) maps printed between 1884 (the inception of the topographic mapping program), and 2006. Currently, there are more than 178,000 maps in the HTMC and the collection continues to grow. NGP is accurately cataloging and creating metadata to accompany high-resolution, georeferenced digital files of each of these printed maps.


At present, both the US Topo series and HTMC maps are offered as GeoPDFs through [The National Map](#) and the [USGS](#)




View and Download maps now




Learn more about the NGMDB project



Want to see more? Check out our video demo





topoView | USGS

Get Maps | topoView

ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#4/40.01/-100.06

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Reading list

topoView

+

-

?

📍

📏

📱

LocationMap Name

Search by location

1880202

All250K100K63K48K24KHTMCUSTAll

The latest version of topoView includes both current and historical maps and is full of enhancements based on hundreds of your comments and suggestions. We've made finding and exploring USGS topographic maps easier than ever.

Getting Started

- 1 Enter a location in the location search above to see all maps at that location
- 2 Simply click/tap anywhere on the map to show all maps at that point
- 3 Search by quadrangle name in the map name search above

Use the timeline and scale filters to dynamically refine your search or to visualize the progression of mapping by the USGS throughout history. Help us make topoView more useful by sending us comments on the site's usability and performance. We value your suggestions. Thank you for using topoView!

Leaflet © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap | Improve





Example of Usefulness in Research





15 min x 15 min topo from 1937





