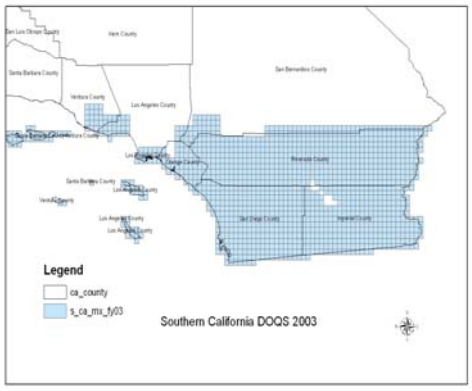
U.S. - MEXICO BORDER FIELD COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Welcome to the second issue of the Department of the Interior (DOI) U.S.-Mexico Border Field Coordinating Committee (FCC) newsletter. The purpose of our newsletter is to communicate relevant developments and other information that may be useful as we manage, protect, inventory, and monitor natural and cultural resources along our international border with Mexico.



Update on the Digital Orthophotography along the U.S.-Mexico Border

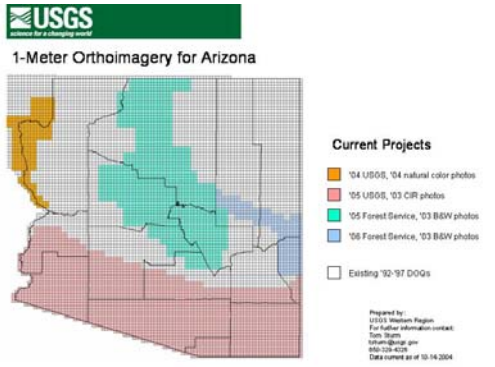
Digital Orthophotos are derived from aerial photography and have been processed to remove image distortions derived from the tilting of the camera and terrain relief. Digital Orthophotos or DOQs is a uniform scale image, therefore you can perform measurements and mapping within the accuracy of the scale of the orthophoto. Along the U.S. side of the border with Mexico, second generation DOQs at a scale of 1:12,000 are being produced for public use. First generation DOQs were completed during the 1994-98 timeframe. Currently, new DOQs are available for the California, portions of the New Mexico, and portions of the Texas border areas. In Mexico, DOQs at a scale of 1:24,000 also are available for most of the border area.

California

New color-infrared aerial photography was flown over the California border area in 2002 to produce new DOQs covering approximately 281 quadrangles. The following figure shows the location of the new data. The DOQs are available from the USGS through the Earth Explorer system at http://earthexplorer.usgs.gov. Eventually the DOQs also will be available from the State's California Spatial Information Library (CaSIL) at http://gis.ca.gov under Data Collections. This is an FTP site with an index that directs you to one-degree blocks of the data.

Arizona

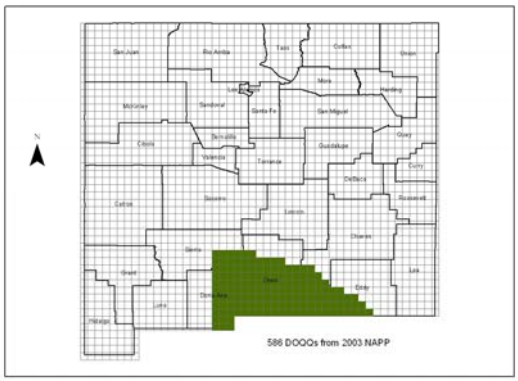
During FY05, the USGS will be creating new DOQs along the Arizona/Mexico border from color infrared photography collected in 2003. The figure below shows the location of the planned project. For more information, contact Tom Sturm at tstrum@usgs.gov.



New Mexico

New color-infrared aerial photography was flown over portions of the New Mexico border region in 2003 to make new DOQs over approximately 142 quadrangles.

New Mexico DOQQ FY04

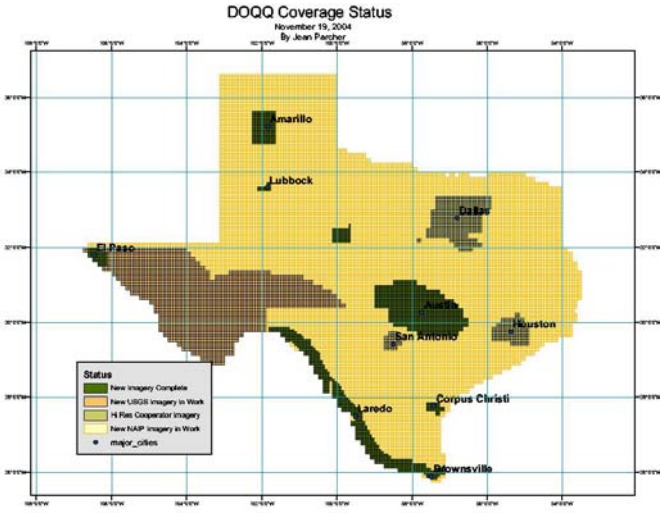


The figure above shows the location of these new data. The DOQs are available from the USGS through the Earth Explorer system. Additionally the DOQs can be procured on an external drive by contacting Lin Neifert at lineifert@usgs.gov and from the New Mexico Clearinghouse at http://rgis.unm.edu/intro.cfm. The New Mexico Clearinghouse will offer them online in compressed MrSid format starting in January 2005.

Texas

In Texas, there are several different programs updating new color-infrared DOQs for the border area. In FY 03, the USGS created 110 DOQs along the Rio Grande as a cost share with the Texas Water Development Board and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. These data are available from the USGS through the Earth Explorer system. Additionally the USGS flew high resolution 6-inch color photography and created approximately 11 DOQs around the El Paso area for the Department of Homeland Security. The high resolution data can be viewed in the National Map at http://nationalmap.usgs.gov and downloaded or purchased from the EROS Data Center at: http://edc.usgs.gov/products/aerial/hiresortho.html

In 2004, the USGS began making DOQs for the extreme western border area of Texas, from Big Bend to El Paso. The figure below shows the location of these new data. When the project is complete, the data will be available from the USGS through the Earth Explorer system. Additionally the DOQs will be available by an external hard drive by contacting Lin Neifert.









The Texas Water Development Board and International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) in cooperation with the Farm Services Administration flew 92% of the State of Texas during June-November 2004 through the National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP). The new digital imagery at 1-meter resolution will be made into MrSid compressed DOQs and Geotiff full-resolution images within 4 months of flight completion and made available to the public. IBWC has provided extra funding to fly into Mexico, within a 5-mile buffer area for production of new photographic image maps of the border. Specific information and progress can be tracked at http://naip.csr.utexas.edu. Upon final certification (Spring 2005), all the data will be available from the TNRIS website at http://www.tnris.state.tx.us.

Data for Mexico

Geospatial data for Mexico are available for purchase from the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía, e Informática* (INEGI), the official mapping agency of Mexico. Status graphics are available at http://antares.inegi.gob.mx/map/prueba/index.html?c=388.

Information regarding the availability of digital orthophotos (*ortofotos*), digital elevation models (*MDE*), and vector data (hydrography, transportation, boundaries, etc) (*datos vectoriales*) at the 1:50,000 scale is available at http://www.inegi.gob.mx.

Step by step navigation details for finding data availability and ordering data from INEGI in Mexico can be found on the Texas Mapping Partnership web site at http://tx.usgs.gov/geography.

This summary of mapping products for the U.S.-Mexico border region was prepared by Jean Parcher, Acting Chief Texas Mapping Partnership Office. She can be emailed at jwparcher@usgs.gov.

Noxious Weed Control Act of 2004

Public Law 108-412 directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to provide financial assistance through States to eligible weed management entities to control or eradicate weeds. Projects will be funded on a competitive basis, considering various factors, including: (1) the seriousness of the noxious weed problem; (2) the likelihood that the project will prevent or resolve the problem or increase knowledge about resolving similar problems; and (3) whether the project is likely to reduce the population of a noxious weed within a State. The Federal funding share is limited to 50 percent, unless: (1) the State meets criteria that accommodates situations where a higher percentage is necessary to meet the needs of an underserved area or addresses a critical need; or (2) the project will be carried out exclusively on Federal lands. The BLM and U.S. Forest Service field offices will provide technical assistance, on a reimbursable basis, to weed management

agencies in developing projects and filing applications for funding of projects (other than for a rapid response). Funds authorized are meant to supplement, not replace, other assistance available for control or eradication of noxious weeds. At a Governor's request, financial assistance can be provided to rapidly respond to outbreaks of noxious weeds that are at a stage at which rapid eradication or control is possible and to ensure their eradication or immediate control when the noxious weed is considered to be an immediate threat to native fish, wildlife, or their habitats, and the proposed response to such threat is technically feasible, economically responsible, and minimizes adverse impacts an ecosystem and adverse effects on non-target species and ecosystems. The Federal share of any rapid response project can be up to full Federal expense.

FCC Says Farewell to Beau McClure

After serving on the FCC for over 10 years as a charter member, Beau McClure is retiring and leaving his position as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Special Assistant for International Programs. To better appreciate Beau's many contributions to the BLM, Department of the Interior (DOI), and borderlands, we need to understand why BLM, a domestic land management agency, would even ask Beau to focus his energy on international issues.

Approximately 40 percent of the world's land surface is arid, semi-arid, or dry sub-humid and therefore susceptible to the processes of desertification. These vulnerable drylands comprise almost half of the continental U.S. west of the 100th meridian and include all or part of 17 western states. BLM is the largest manager of these drylands with more than 264 million acres of surface estate under its administration. And, BLM has over 50 years of experience in dryland management and working with communities. That is why in 1993, Beau was asked to share BLM's experiences and represent DOI during negotiations and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

About that same time, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was being negotiated. A logical choice for BLM was to have Beau coordinate these efforts in the Southwest. He had been coordinating and working with government representatives in Sonora, Mexico, since 1986, just after

BLM acquired a portion of the San Pedro River Basin adjacent to and north of the headwaters are in Sonora, which made collaboration and coordination with Mexico very important.

In November 1993, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) hosted a DOI Border Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with support from the DOI Regional Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC). Originating from this meeting was the idea of the FCC.

As impacts caused by smugglers of controlled substances and illegal immigrants began to significantly impact Federal lands in Arizona in 1998, BLM turned to Beau to coordinate its efforts to mitigate the damage and to help save the lives of migrants crossing Arizona's inhospitable deserts. To do this, Beau organized and chaired a multi-agency effort and then a Borderland Management Task Force. Additionally, he represented BLM on the U.S.-Mexico Border Task Team of the Southwest Strategy and other organizations involved in border issues.

Beau served as Co-Chair of the FCC for its first six years of existence, beginning in August 1994. His endless energy and genuine concern for the protection and prudent management of the natural and cultural resources in the border region earned the respect of everyone that ever met and worked with Beau. He is an ambassador for these resources in the borderlands and will be missed by the Department of Interior. The members of the FCC wish to thank Beau for his years of excellent service but most importantly, for our friendship.

New Publication

Effects of Environmental Contaminants on Fish in the Rio Grande: The U.S. Geological Survey has published a report describing the effects of environmental contaminants on fish in the Rio Grande basin. The report is available online at: http://www.cerc.usgs.gov/pubs/center/pdfDocs/BEST-RioGrande.pdf.

If you would like to submit an article for the FCC Newsletter or announce the availability of a publication or future meeting relevant to the U.S.-Mexico border region, please send your contribution to Lloyd Woosley at lwoosley@usgs.gov.