



# Landsat Portrait of America



← A mosaic of Landsat 8 satellite images showing the contiguous United States of America →



## The Legacy of Landsat

The Landsat Program is a central pillar of our national remote sensing capability and represents the world's longest continuous remotely sensed record of the Earth's surface.

As a joint initiative between NASA and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the first Landsat satellite (originally ERTS-1) was developed and launched in July 1972. Landsat satellites have provided uninterrupted space-based data of the Earth's surface for more than 45 years and have established the United States as a world leader in land remote sensing. The data collected by Landsat satellites support government, commercial, industrial, civilian, military, and educational applications throughout the United States and worldwide.

In 1975, NASA Administrator Dr. James Fletcher predicted that if one space age development would save the world, it would be Landsat and its successor satellites. Since then, Landsat data have contributed to understanding the Earth's environment, spawned revolutionary uses of space-based data by the commercial value-added industry, and encouraged a new generation of commercial satellites that provide site specific, very high resolution images.

This Landsat 8 mosaic of the U.S. was created by Descartes Labs ([www.descarteslabs.com](http://www.descarteslabs.com)) in 2017 and used with permission.

