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I am a retired forester and also do GIS work for a property assessment company in Maine.

I have relied on the the data maintained and provided by the Maine Geolibrary to do my work for forest landowners and town governments for the last 10-years.

The data is critical to inform land management decisions at all levels of government and the private sector. For example, it is critical to evaluate the health of watersheds or forest pest risks. It can be very useful for long-term planning.

It is also increasingly useful for communities to help improve community development in an ecologically sensitive way while also providing services to their residents. For example, having accurate and precise satellite imagery can help new businesses search for optimal locations to place their business.

Unfortunately, this remote type of data is "current" only when it is acquired. With changes in development and natural processes, the data needs to be reacquired on a periodic basis.

I strongly support funding new staff to make it easier for users to find and obtain the best data they need. It is also critical to inform governments, businesses, and non-profits on what information is available and how it could help with their work.

Please the proposed appropriations.

Thank you for your service.