



Photo by Scott Newton
Kari Hull and son Erik, who's almost three, take it easy after a jog through Meinig Park earlier this week.

Landsat I negatives are worth \$7 million

Oregon State University now holds the largest collection of Landsat I satellite imagery in the western U.S., thanks to a \$7 million gift from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The USDA gave OSU's geography department more than 700,000 photographic negatives—valued at \$10 each—of the earth's surface, acquired between 1972-78 by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Landsat I satellite.

The 70-millimeter film, which details features of the earth's surface larger than 80 meters in size, will be used for teaching and research at the university, and will be made available to the public.

"This collection is an invaluable addition to our department, and to OSU," said geography chairman Thomas Maresh.

"We have a well-established expertise in a

variety of imagery analyses, such as thermal infrared and SLAR (side-looking airborne radar), and the acquisition of the Landsat I imagery will expand that expertise into yet another dimension," he added.

Oregon State is one of four universities to receive satellite imagery from the USDA, which uses the photos to monitor agricultural production around the world.

The other institutions—University of Arizona, UC-Santa Barbara and Wisconsin at Milwaukee—were given Landsat II and Landsat III imagery taken after 1978, while OSU received all of USDA's Landsat I photos.

"Because the USDA is most concerned with current Landsat flights, earlier imagery has been stored," explained Maresh.

"As I understand it, the USDA simply ran out of storage space and selected four universities out of

more than 60 which were interested as recipients of the photographs."

Maresh said the four universities have formed a Landsat consortium, agreeing to code and classify the imagery in the same manner and make it available to each other on an exchange basis.

"Not only do we now hold nearly all Landsat I negatives in existence," he noted, "but we will have immediate access to the other three schools' imagery of subsequent Landsat II and III flights as well."

To utilize the four-spectral band negatives, taken by Landsat I in an orbit 570 miles above the earth, the geography department has acquired color enlargers, a contact printer and a VariScan Viewer, which uses high quality optics to project segments on negative film on a large viewing screen.

That equipment, along with microfiche indexes of

the satellite imagery, will be housed in a combination teaching-research laboratory on the second floor of Wilkinson Hall on the OSU campus.

"This collection is a very valuable resource," said Maresh. "While we want to protect it, we also want to make the imagery available so it can be used—not only by professors and students in our own department—but by persons in other disciplines on campus, such as geology and oceanography, and public agencies and individuals."

"So we're planning on having one or two people, possibly graduate students, on hand in the laboratory to handle the data and monitor its use by various viewers because there are so many applications that can be made of the imagery."

As an example of the imagery's application, Maresh cited a project by

Jon Kimerling and Charles Rosenfeld, who are studying the downwind emissions from the Boardman Power Plant in eastern Oregon.

"Kimerling and Rosenfeld are using a variety of photographic imagery such as thermal infrared and SLAR, to monitor possible effects the power plant's plume is having on vegetation," said Maresh.

"With the Landsat imagery now available, they have comparative regional data on vegetative cover from nearly a decade ago, which should add considerably to their research potential."

"That's just one example," Maresh added, "but the application of the satellite imagery will also extend across disciplines to areas such as coastal navigation."

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