



Modernizing Access to Our Public Land Act, 2024 Accomplishments Report

Within the Modernizing Access to Our Public Land Act (P.L. 117-114) the following language was present:

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter through March 30, 2031, the Secretaries shall submit a report on the progress made by the Secretaries with respect to meeting the requirements of this Act to— (1) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; (2) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; (3) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and (4) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

This report enumerates the progress in implementing the MAPLand Act since the April 2023 report. As required by the MAPLand Act, this report is being submitted to the Committee on Energy and National Resources of the Senate; the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

The Forest Service, the Department of the Interior (DOI), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) have been coordinating through interagency meetings since June 2022 to implement the requirements of the Modernizing Access to Our Public Land (MAPLand) Act. Accomplishments made by the agencies and departments since the April 2023 report are listed below.

Accomplishments Since April 2023

Coordination and Governance

- Collaboration among subgroups of subject matter experts to develop interoperable data collection and reporting standards. Subgroups by data theme met and gained awareness and understanding of each agency regarding current laws, regulations, missions, data management, and philosophies.
- Coordinated efforts with external partners including: The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, the Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Council, the National Geospatial Advisory Committee, the Federal Geographic Data Committee, The Office of Management and Budget, the Geospatial Transportation Subcommittee, and the Udall Foundation.
- In coordination with the Department of the Interior, developed a public GeoPlatform hub site, <https://mapland-act-geoplatfrom.hub.arcgis.com/>, to share information about MAPLand Act and data links to agency data required by the Act.

Standardization of Data Collection and Reporting

- Review of the agencies' current national data standards against MAPLand Act requirements.
- Determined Identification of core attributes for all MAPLand Act datasets.
- Determined consistent datum and coordinate system for all MAPLand Act datasets.

- Developed conceptual schema documents for recreation sites, easements, roads and trails, recreation shooting and hunting restricted areas, shooting ranges.
- Provided conceptual schemas for agency review and managed an internal review period of 30-days per theme that resulted in 36 comments.
- Review of agency comments, responses, and revised conceptual schemas.

Forest Service Specific Accomplishments

- Recreational Shooting and Hunting Closure Areas
 - Closure order data dictionary and application development
 - Data call for recreational shooting and hunting closure areas
 - Digitizing areas and populating geospatial database.
- Easements
 - In FY2023, digitized 1,200 public access easements.
- Roads
 - Updating Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) Production Guide
 - Developed ArcPro MVUM Templates
- Trails
 - Updating MVUM Production Guide
 - Developed ArcPro MVUM Templates
 - Developing ArcPro Over Snow Vehicle Use Map (OSVUM) Templates
 - Forest level OSVUM development
 - Forest level data clean-up
- Communications
 - *Inside the Forest Service* article, published externally
 - USDA Symposium
 - Forest Service Directors
 - Deputy Chief

Next Steps

As required in Section 3 of the MAPLand Act, “Not later than 30 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall jointly develop and adopt interagency standards”. Thirty months after the date of enactment is October 2024. The Interagency MAPLand teams are targeting October 2024 for Agency adoption.

Challenges

Continuing from the 2022 efforts, funding is a limiting factor to ensure complete implementation of MAPLand Act. Each agency is diverting capacity away from other efforts to support implementation of viable interoperable data standards required by the MAPLand Act.

Interpretation of parts of the Act has been challenging. As stated in the 2023 report, the interagency MAPLand Act team was unsure whether to include recreation sites. After further investigation with general counsels by the agencies and collaboration among the team, we determined to include recreation sites, however, due to the vagueness of the language in the law this challenge delayed the efforts of the recreation subgroup and ultimately disrupted the timeline and milestones.

Interpretation of the MAPLand Act and balancing MAPLand Act implementation with other agency legal requirements continue to be challenging. Through the efforts in the subgroups, agencies have determined travel management areas are not included in the Act language,

however, are needed to represent access to Federal lands. Due to the need being identified and a decision to include travel management areas happening in early 2024, the addition of a standard for travel management areas may affect the October 2024 timeline.

Coming to consistent and uniform standards has proven challenging because the individual agencies have laws, regulations, interpretations of laws, missions, and policies that have impacted decisions about their data management and data storage which has resulted in some agencies storing very detailed data, and others, storing more generalized data. Putting these together to meet MAPLand requirements and stay true to the other requirements continues to be a challenge.