



United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service

# AEOIP Webinar Series

Development of successful pathways for Earth Observation -  
data uptake into land management decision-making  
USFS Perspective

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# A Bit of History

- In ~2016 I had a conversation with Lawrence Friedl during one of the monthly Civil Applications Committee meetings. Lawrence was concerned that there seemed to be a lot of ad hoc, uncoordinated engagements going on between USFS personnel and people at NASA. From his perspective, and the perspective of NASA, it wasn't clear what the Forest Service priorities were, and no one person had a handle on all these activities. This made it difficult to allocate limited NASA resources in a programmatic way.
- The partnership which followed, was envisioned as a way to bring everyone to the table, figure out who's doing what, AND to ensure that data users and data managers are connecting with each other efficiently and effectively.
- **Though the partnership started out as a NASA-USFS centric effort**, it quickly became clear that other federal civil agencies needed to be included in the engagement, and the effort was rebadged under the name **"The Applied Earth Observations Innovation Partnership"** to be more inclusive.
- The first workshop was held in April 2019 in Salt Lake City. And then the pandemic hit... impacting our ability to have face-to-face meetings.



# The Applied Earth Observations Innovation Partnership

- The value of the partnership
  - Remote sensing data are the raw materials for geospatial production in land management agencies.
  - Land management agencies are dependent on current, accurate geospatial information for evidence-based decision-making at all levels of the agency, from the field, to the regional offices, to the Washington Office.
  - It's not often easy to determine who the correct person or persons are to engage with to get access to needed data sets (or even if the data exists).
  - The original intent of the AEOIP was to build stronger, more direct connections between the data suppliers (NASA, NOAA) and the data users (USFS, USGS, NOAA, and others). Many of these connections in the past were ad hoc and may have come about by luck or happenstance.

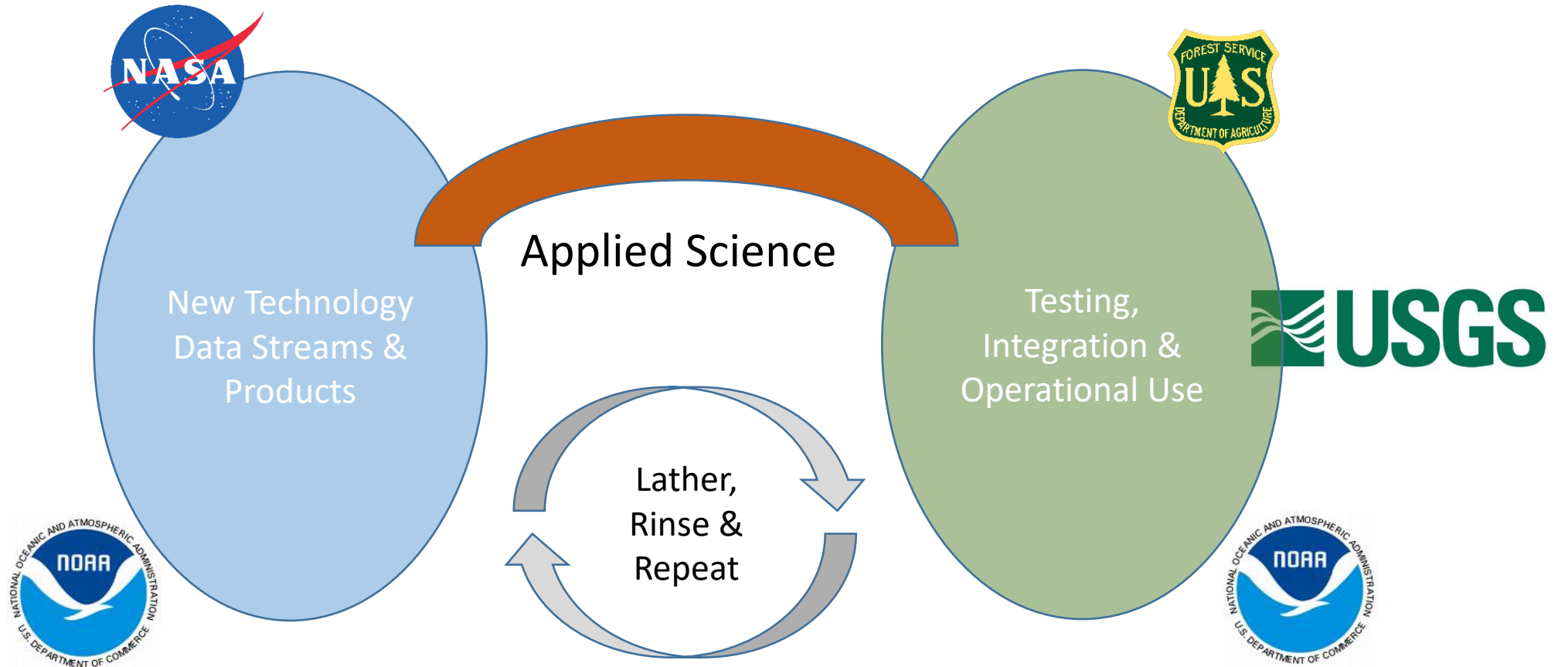


# The Applied Earth Observations Innovation Partnership

- **Goal(s):** Fostering interagency partnerships in order share and demonstrate the capabilities of NASA data products, as well as to develop connections and strengthen partnerships between NASA and the federal land management agencies.
- **Objectives:**
  - ✓ To provide an understanding of NASA missions and projects, data, and tools supporting natural resource management;
  - ✓ To share and prioritize land management agencies operational needs with NASA;
  - ✓ To identify opportunities for collaboration; and
  - ✓ To expand awareness of NASA data sources and tools and collaboratively explore ways to advance information access, delivery and use.



# Bridging the Gap





# Lessons Learned

**Through the workshops, webinars and the Pitch Fest, the partnership has gained insight into the remote sensing needs of the land management agencies and agency practitioners who use remotely sensed data, answering key questions:**

- What are their challenges in accessing data?
- What are their gaps in data sourcing?
- Do they know where to go and who to talk to?
- What are the agency priorities?
  - Where can NASA funding and support be best applied?

As the National Remote Sensing Program Manager for the Forest Service, this has been a particularly valuable and insightful effort shedding light on my agency needs.



# In Closing: Why the AEOIP?

- Building awareness, identifying key contacts and needs,
- Starting the dialog,
- Fostering momentum and engagement,
- Promoting research-to-applications pathways in the land management agencies



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# Thank You!



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