

TNMCorps News



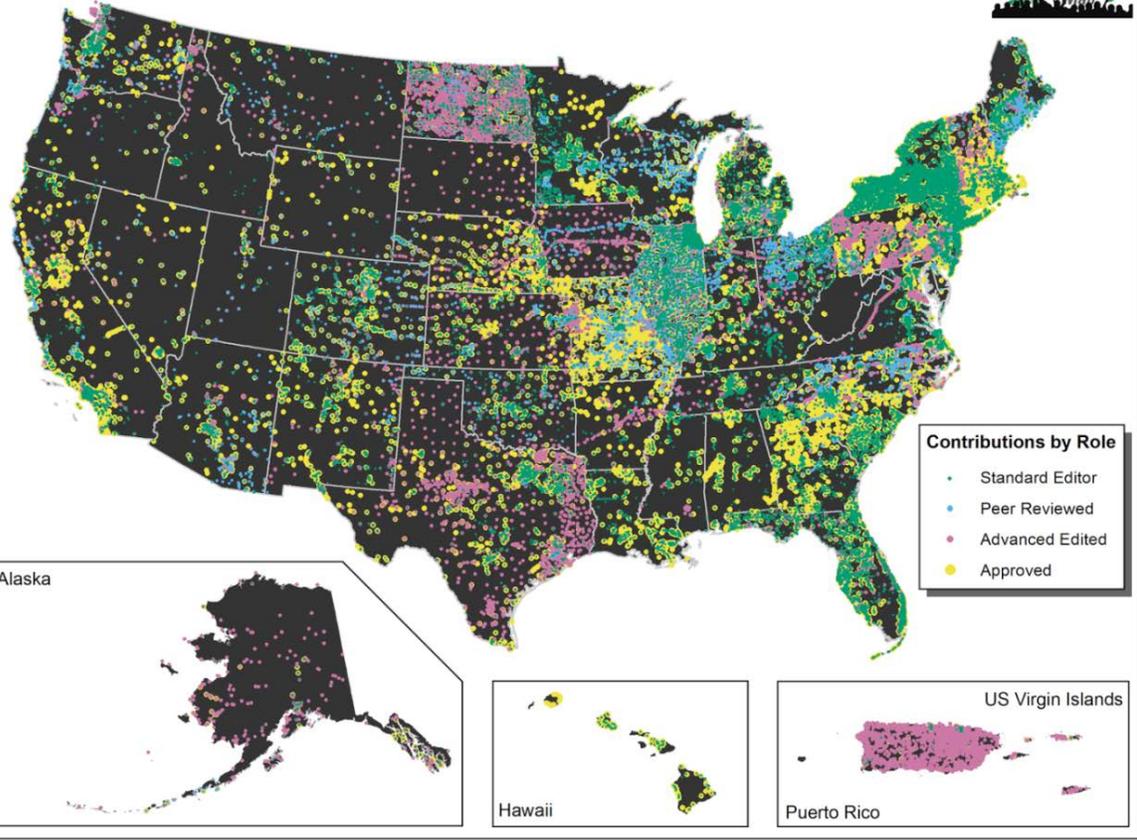
VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

THE NATIONAL MAP CORPS

JANUARY 2018

2017: Year in Review

The National Map Corps 2017 Contributions



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 [2017: Year in Review](#)
- 2 [Fending off the Winter Blues](#)
- 3 [Courthouse Pilot Project](#)
- 3 [Making the Call](#)
- 4 [Resources Review](#)
- 5 [More than a Dot on the Map: Ouray County Courthouse](#)
- 6 [Aerial Photo Interpretation Part 3: Fire Stations/EMS](#)
- 11 [Blast from the Past: Earth Science Corps](#)
- 11 [TNMCorps Cryptogram](#)
- 12 [Recognition](#)

2017
16,914
ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS

2017
8
EQUIVALENT FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

ALL TIME
61,669
ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS

ALL TIME
30
EQUIVALENT FULL TIME EMPLOYEES

- 1,300 New Editors
 - 724 Contributing Editors
 - 6 Newsletters
 - 5 Mapping Challenges
 - 379 Recognition Badges
- TNMCorps was highlighted **5x** during [USGS Mapping Month!!](#)

2017
84,569
UNIQUE POINTS EDITED

2017
94,275
TOTAL EDITS

ALL TIME
308,346
UNIQUE POINTS EDITED

ALL TIME
409,596
TOTAL EDITS

Edit Summary by Role

STANDARD
53,007

PEER REVIEW
11,408

ADVANCED
27,325

USGS ADMIN
1,286

Review Queue

97.15%
EDIT ACCEPTANCE RATE

106,494 Accepted Edits

Fending off the Winter Blues

With the holidays over and a few months of cold, snowy weather ahead (depending on where you live of course!), it's easy to slip into those *Winter Blues*:



*"It's cold outside."
"The roads are sloppy."
"Daylight is at its annual low."*

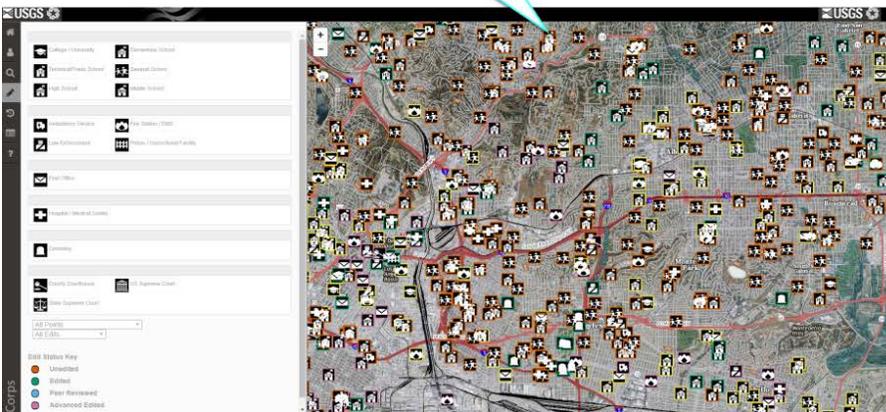


But fear not! Winter is actually a great time to participate in The National Map Corps! While you might be trapped indoors, you can still explore a warm and sunny vacation destination by taking a virtual tour with TNMCORPS! How, you ask? Why, as part of the editing process, of course!



When editing points, you will first locate an [authoritative source](#), and then confirm that the point is on the [correct building](#). To identify the correct building you can use sources such as Google Street View™ to examine building facades and signage, which also gives you the opportunity to take in the scenery! This can be a nice escape from those winter blues, especially when editing in areas like California, Florida, and even Hawaii! And who can turn down palm trees during the dreary winter months?

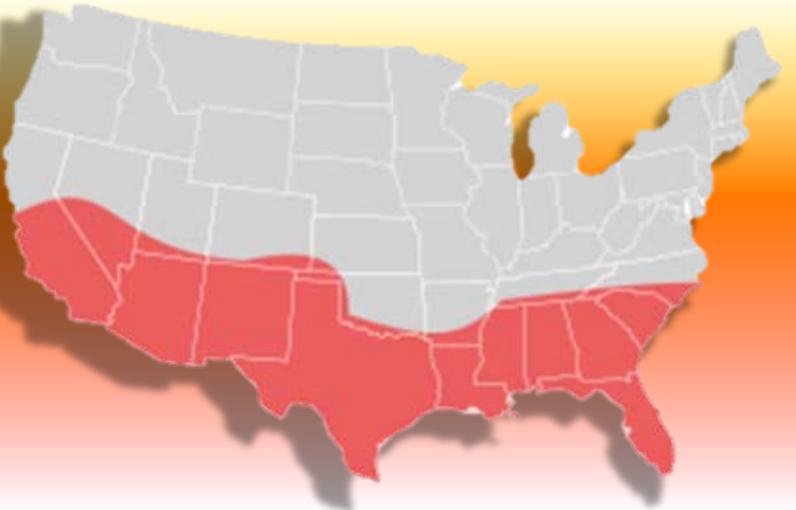
Many unedited points in southern California...



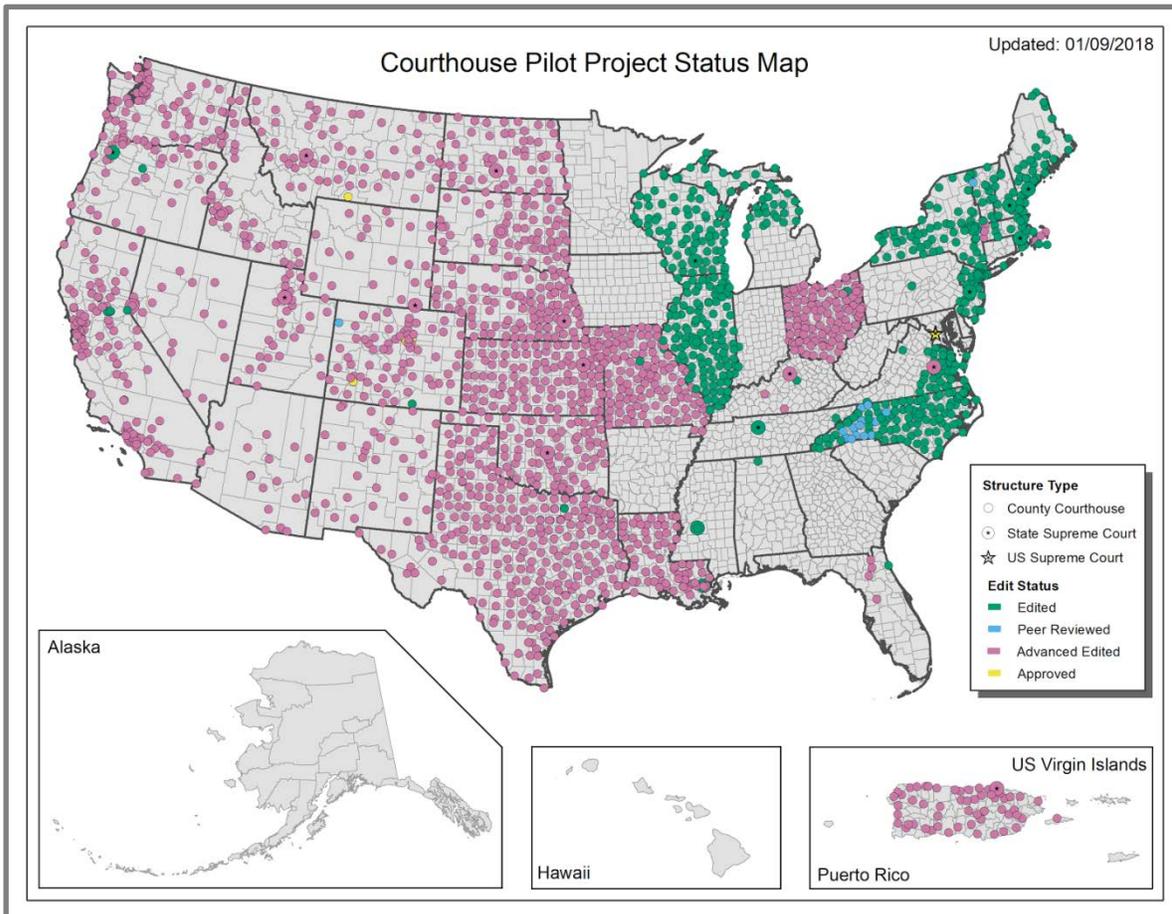
*Blue skies!
Palm trees!
SUNSHINE!*



So cozy up with a warm blanket and take a virtual tour of the Sun Belt while helping out The National Map Corps!



The Courthouse Pilot Project is up and Running!



If this is the first you are hearing about our courthouse pilot project, check out the article, "Order in the Court!" in our [November 2017 newsletter](#). Since officially announcing this project in November, over 2,000 courthouse points have been added to the map! We are thrilled about the enthusiastic response and want to say **THANK YOU** to everyone who is participating in the pilot project! If you would like to participate but you aren't sure where to start, check out our [Mapping Challenges page](#), and make sure to read the [Courthouse Pilot Project User Guide](#).

Making the Call

Sometimes when you're researching a point (especially a rural fire station!), it can be really difficult to track down its exact location or address using only online resources. In such cases you may need to call the organization to inquire about those details. You are certainly not obligated or required to make a phone call, however if you think it might be useful, here's a simple script you can follow:

"Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a volunteer for The National Map Corps with the U.S. Geological Survey. We are currently updating the [type of structure, e.g. fire stations] data for the US Topo maps, and I was hoping you could confirm the address of [name of feature]."

If they have additional questions that you aren't sure how to answer, tell them they can contact The National Map Corps team at nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov, and don't forget to thank them for their time!

Calling an organization can be used as a last resort for obtaining information that isn't easily identified on a website or Facebook page, but if it's not something you're comfortable with that's OK. We're always here to help!



Resources Review

Whether you're new to the editing process, or you're a seasoned veteran in need of a refresher, it's always a good idea to read and revisit the many resources available to TNMCorps volunteers!

User Guide

The [National Map Corps User Guide](#) is the most comprehensive source of information for learning about the TNMCorps [online editor](#) and the editing process. It includes step-by-step guidance on different types of editing scenarios, links to other great resources, and helpful documentation for identifying [authoritative sources](#), properly [formatting names and addresses](#), and understanding the [different types of structure features](#) we collect. We also have a [Quick Start Guide](#) if you're eager to jump right in and learn "on-the-job"!

Q&A Page

The [TNMCorps Q&A Community](#) is a hub designed to be built by the community, where all volunteers have the opportunity to both ask and answer each other's questions. If you're unsure about [what to name a courthouse](#), [whether or not to include hyphens in a name or address](#), or how to [distinguish between a general and elementary school](#), check out the [Q&A page](#)! If you have a question that hasn't already been asked, and you think other volunteers might benefit from the answer, we encourage you to add your inquiry to the forum.

Confluence

[Confluence](#) is a software platform the USGS uses to distribute information among team members (including editors like you!) and share [Project Updates](#). If something pertinent changes about the editor, we'll post a headline on the Project Updates page along with links to where you can find more information. Confluence is also the primary source for our [Tips and Tricks page](#), [Mapping Challenges](#), [FAQs](#), a more in-depth discussion of the [structures we collect](#), and a host of other detailed information. It's the catch-all site for anything related to The National Map Corps, but if you still can't find what you're looking for, email us at nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov.

More than a Dot on the Map: Ouray County Courthouse

Mattie Ross: "Do you need a good lawyer?"

Ned Pepper: "I need a good judge!"

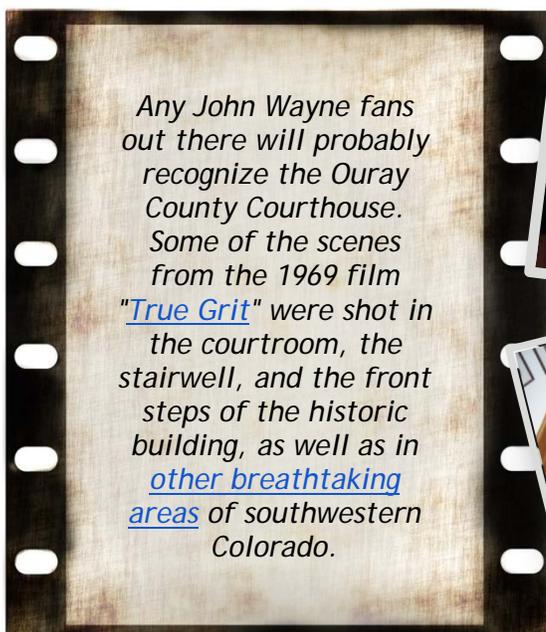
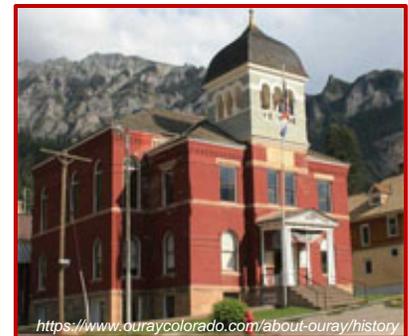
True Grit (1969)

If you've been participating in our [Courthouse Pilot Project](#), then, like us, you may have been learning more about courthouses than you've ever wanted or needed to know! Whether your past experience has inspired negative, positive, or even neutral feelings towards such structures, you know that courthouses represent much more than a dot on a map, and certainly more than just a building you begrudgingly drag yourself to for jury duty or some other contestation of the law.



In the past, as they do now, courthouses have stood as symbols of [power, order, democracy, and even permanence](#). Such symbolism made courthouses exceptionally important in the 'Wild West,' where justice was often doled out by [vigilantes](#) in a fashion that could be cruel, unfair, and inconsistent. This was common in mining towns whose volatile, impermanent boom and bust communities frequently didn't last long enough to justify the creation of a permanent courthouse building. One mining town that did survive the gold and silver rush of the late 1800's is the idyllic mountain town of [Ouray, Colorado](#), named for the famous [Ute Chief](#).

During the peak of the silver boom, when Ouray was a thriving community of roughly 5,000 people, the local residents decided they were tired of having to conduct judicial business in different buildings all over town. To remedy this inconvenience, the community [petitioned the county](#) to use their tax dollars to construct a courthouse. Their petition was successful, and in March of 1888, construction of the [Ouray County Courthouse](#) was completed. Despite requiring several thousands of dollars' worth of [historic renovation](#) in recent years, this historic courthouse (complete with original seats fitted with wires for holding cowboy hats) still functions as an active combined court for the [7th Judicial District of Colorado](#).



WANTED: Editing Tips

As you're editing courthouses, keep in mind that we aren't collecting historic courthouses that no longer serve as a functioning court.

If an historic courthouse is still actively used to conduct proceedings, then that building should be collected (e.g. The [Ouray County Courthouse](#))

If an historic courthouse is no longer used to conduct proceedings, then that building should not be collected (e.g. the [Old Lincoln County Courthouse in New Mexico](#)).

Be sure to check out the [Florida Courthouse Editing Example](#) in our [User Guide](#) for more information on dealing with unique historic courthouse scenarios.

Aerial Photo Interpretation Part 3: Fire Stations/EMS

This article is the third in a series of newsletter articles highlighting aerial photo interpretation for different structure types. This month we will focus on Fire and EMS stations.

Check out our [September Newsletter](#) for Part 1: Cemeteries, and our [November Newsletter](#) for Part 2: Post Offices.

You may not realize it, but every time you participate in TNMCorps you are conducting aerial photo interpretation. This part of the process of editing structures can be quite fun and interesting. In order to identify the correct building associated with a structure point, you must do a little bit of detective work by searching for clues in the imagery. You may be an expert at this, or you may be new to it. Either way, here are some helpful tips and tricks for interpreting the aerial photography background layers and identifying building types.

Fire Station / EMS:

Fire stations are quite variable and can be very easy or very difficult to edit. In urban areas, fire stations are often identifiable on aerial imagery, whereas in rural areas you may have to do some more digging, including looking for on-the-ground imagery.

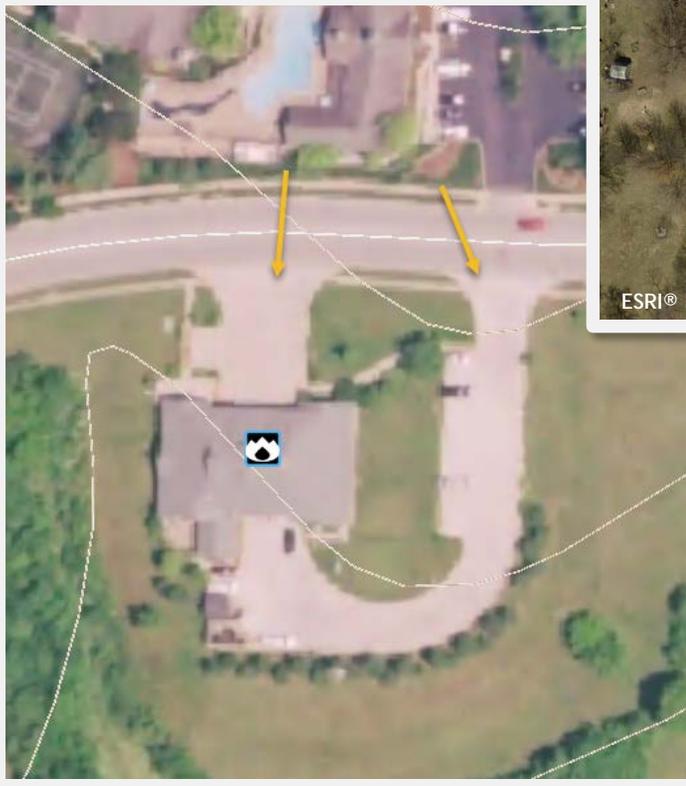
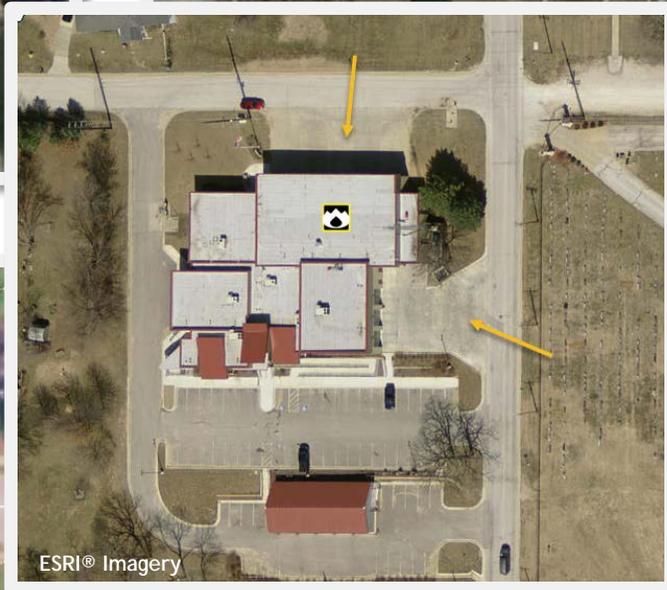
Fire Trucks and Emergency Vehicles

You may be able to see fire trucks and other rescue vehicles in the driveway. These can be identified by size, shape, shadows, and sometimes color (i.e. red and white). Note the shadow from the truck ladder in this example.



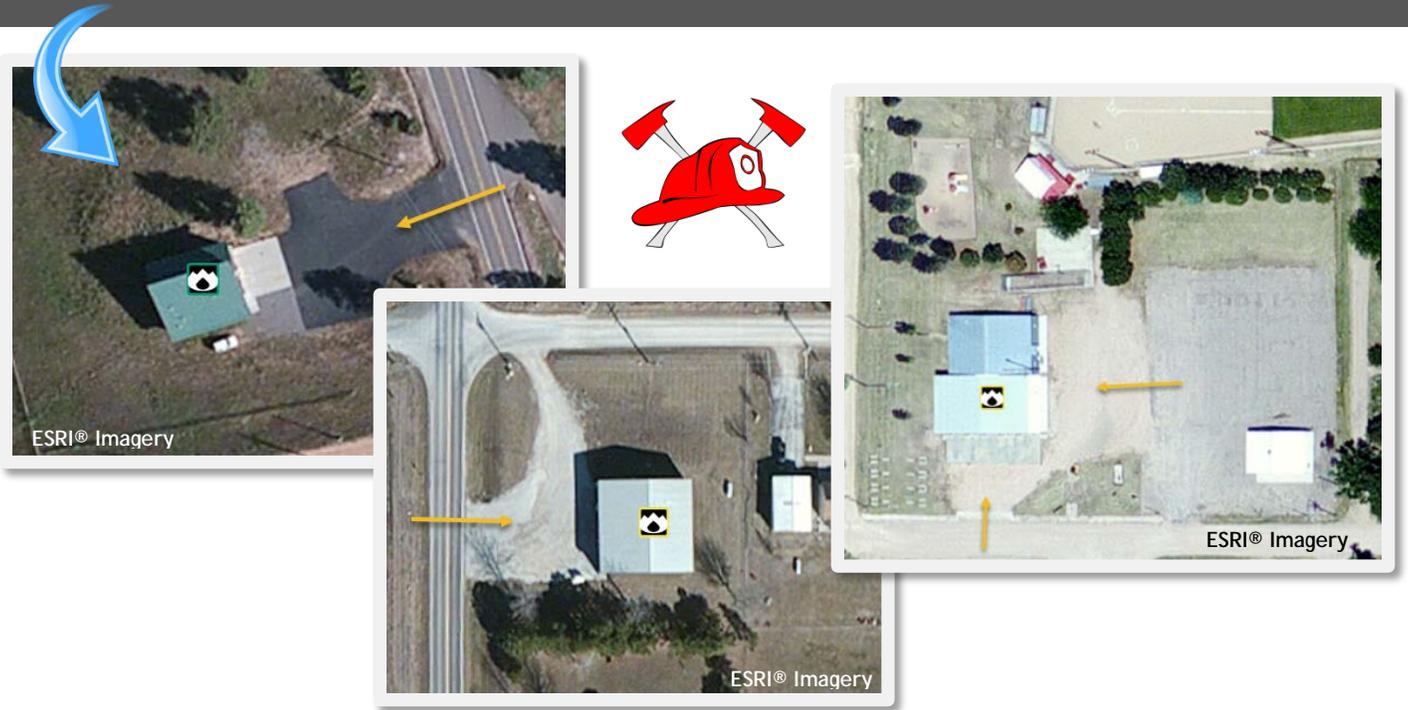
Aerial Photo Interpretation (Continued)

Large driveways, often with two entrances:



Aerial Photo Interpretation (Continued)

Rural fire stations are typically smaller buildings, but will still often have a large driveway:



Unique building → match to picture on website:

This tip applies to all structure types, and may be especially helpful for fire stations as many have pictures of the stations on their authoritative websites.

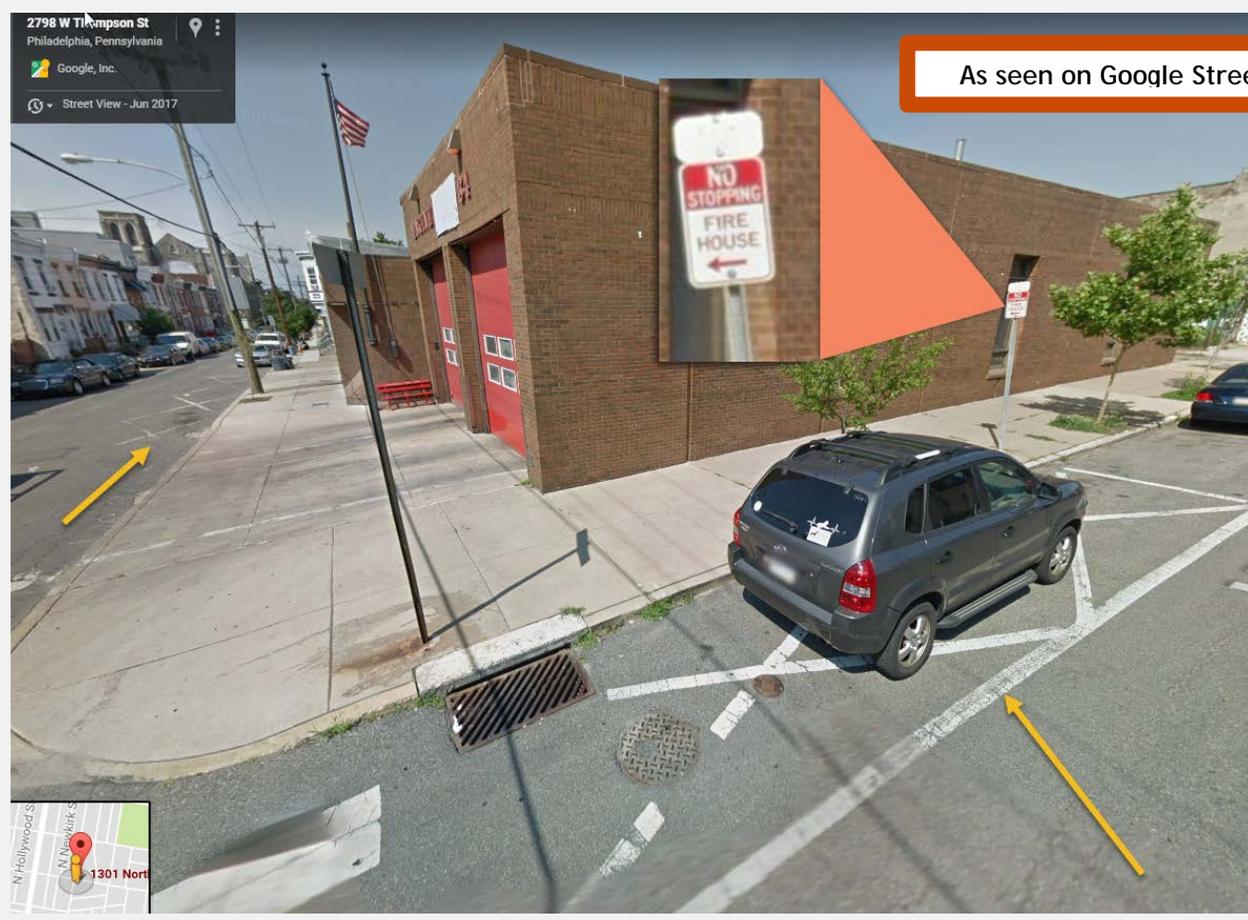
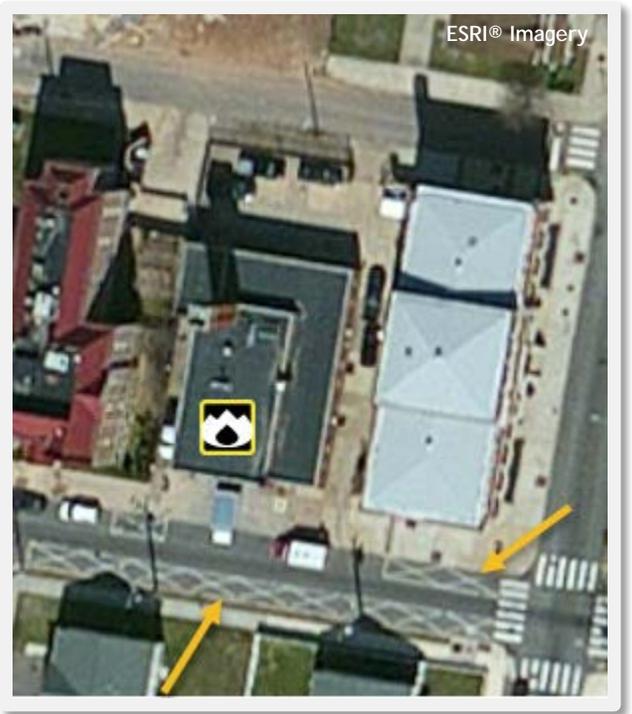
The more distinctive the building, the better. Look for shapes, shadows, and surrounding elements such as landscaping, as seen in this example.



Aerial Photo Interpretation (Continued)

Street Markings

This will vary depending on location, but some municipalities have specific emergency markings on the street outside of fire station entrances, which can often be seen on aerial imagery.



Aerial Photo Interpretation (Continued)

Fire stations are frequently nearby, or co-located with other civic buildings such as the police department or city hall.



This example has it all: large driveway, co-located with another civic office, fire trucks and emergency vehicles, and even a fire training tower.



Here is another good example: a long driveway (with truck lanes), fire trucks and emergency vehicles, and special road marking indicating an emergency no-parking zone.



Blast from the Past: Earth Science Corps

Did you know that the USGS had a volunteer mapping program beginning in 1994? The original program was called the Earth Science Corps and volunteers would "adopt a quad" (quadrangle map) and mark the map with changes that needed to be made. We believe a few of our current TNMCORPS volunteers were involved in this original version of the corps. If any of our original Earth Science Corps volunteers would like to share stories about their experience, send us an email: nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov

Today's tip

► EARTH SCIENTISTS NEEDED: People interested in earth science might be interested in volunteering to help a federal agency revise its maps.

The U.S. Geological Survey has a volunteer Earth Science Corps, in which individuals or groups adopt areas near their homes or favorite recreation spot, and then provide federal agencies with earth science data.

Volunteers begin their work by marking changes on USGS maps that aid in revising future maps. They also have a chance to become involved in various scientific studies, and gain work experience.

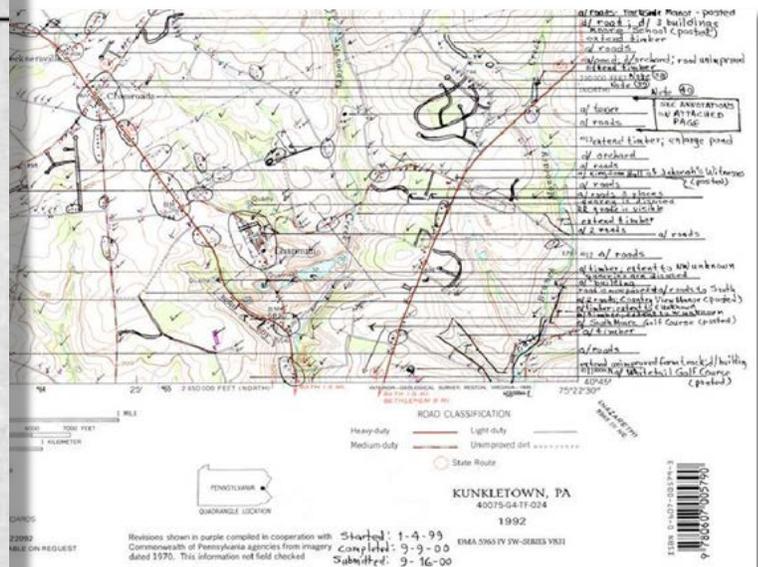
To find out more about the corps: call the USGS at

1-800-254-8040; request information via fax number (703) 648-6265; use the e-mail address of escorps@usgs.gov; or write USGS Mapping Volunteers, MS 513, Reston, VA 22092.

In addition, another program gives volunteers a chance to earn AmeriCorps education awards. Information, and an annual guide listing more than 100 different volunteer opportunities, are available by writing Volunteer for Science, USGS, 601 National Center, Reston, VA 22092.

Stepping out

► JAZZ! Catch the opening of the Jazz Festival at noon today outside the First Bank. Tickets for the weekend-long event are



Source: "Today's Tip." *Great Falls Tribune* 1 Sept. 1995: 27. *Newspapers.com*. Web. 12 Jan. 2018.

TNMCORPS Cryptogram

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
																	16						24		

W																										
24	26																									

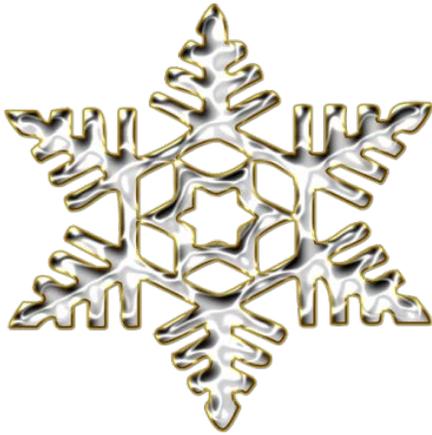
<http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/cryptogramSetupForm.asp>

Answer: We greatly appreciate our volunteers! We couldn't do it without you!

Have a story or photo you'd like to share?

We want them! This could be anything from a photo of you verifying a structure or an interesting story that you discovered while editing. Photos, graphics, and stories may be used in future news releases and social media posts. All materials submitted become part of the "public domain," and can be used by USGS in the future unless otherwise specified.

Please email them to nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov



New Recognition Category Members



Squadron of Biplane Spectators
(6000-6999)



Ring of Reconnaissance Rocketeers
(5000-5999)



Family of Floating Photogrammetrists
(3000-3999)



Flock of Winged Witnesses
(4000-4999)



Theodolite Assemblage (2000-2999)



Alidade Alliance (1000-1999)

- Karen



Stadia Board Society (500-999)

- Karen
- virgilturner
- genovt



Circle of the Surveyor's Compass (200-499)

- genovt
- Starr



Pedometer Posse (100-199)

- AKushner
- JG2017
- Starr
- crj129
- genovt
- TUFFYJCW
- LTPZ
- namorf
- SamAKASTilts
- Keep on Climbing



Society of the Steel Tape (50-99)

- JG2017
- crj129
- namorf
- Keep on Climbing
- Tlattimo2017



Order of the Surveyor's Chain (25-49)

- Evanw
- SpotsyGISDave20
- Watash51
- JoeSwim
- Keep on Climbing
- namorf
- anyakiry
- Doug Morin
- Megan L
- Tlattimo2017
- Tamarack

CONTACT US AT: nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov for suggestions, questions, additions to the next newsletter, or if you would like to be removed from the email list.

