

Crowdmapping

Explore the nature of geographic data using a selected application of geospatial crowdsourcing, volunteered geographic information, or citizen science.

Introduction

Geospatial data are an extremely valuable resource. These data are important for decision-making across many sectors of society. Traditionally, the required accuracy was achieved through government control of data collection and maintenance. Increasingly though, the national mapping agencies are sharing the responsibility for collecting and maintaining base data (e.g. road data) with the private sector and with the public. OpenStreetMap is the largest and best-known example of a crowdsourced geospatial dataset.

In this assignment, I would like you to select one crowdmapping project and explore the types of geospatial data being collected by making one or more contributions of your own.

Process & Tasks

Explore some of the following applications and select one that is of greatest interest to you. You may also suggest another crowdmapping application to use for the assignment, but you need my approval.

- Georeference night-time city photos from ISS at <http://crowdcrafting.org/app/nightcitiesiss/>
- Cropland capture at <http://www.geo-wiki.org/games/croplandcapture/>
- David Rumsey Map Collection, Georeferencer for historic maps at <http://www.davidrumsey.com/view/georeferencer>
- OpenStreetMap at <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=16/43.6582/-79.3809>
- Humanitarian OSM Team at <http://tasks.hotosm.org/>
- Another citizen science or volunteered geographic information application of your choice, pending prior instructor approval!

Most likely, you will have to register to be allowed to submit contributions. If there is an option to annotate your contribution(s) with an additional event ID or originator ID, then please use the code #RyersonGEO441 to give credit to our course.

The submission of this initial assignment will require you to provide a “before” and an “after” image, or another figure illustrating your contribution. In addition, you should describe the crowdmapping application and your contribution with reference to concepts discussed in the lectures. Special attention should be paid to the importance of geography and GIS in society (Lecture 1), the nature of the geographic data collected in the selected application (Lecture 2), and issues of georeferencing and uncertainty (Lecture 3). This assignment refers to Longley et al. (2011), Chapters 1-6.

Objectives

- To be aware of recent developments in crowdmapping, citizen science, VGI, and the GeoWeb
- To be able to outline the importance of GIS and Geographic Analysis in society
- To understand the nature of different types of geographic data and how they represent features on the Earth’s surface
- To understand principles of georeferencing and uncertainty in geospatial data

Format

Please submit a 2-page report that includes the items outlined above (i.e., images and description of the selected app and of your contribution, and a discussion of how the georeferenced data represent geographic phenomena, and how they may be affected by data uncertainty).

Remember to work on your own project from start to finish, use an automatic spell-checker, and review your final write-up. Also check it against the above format and contents requirements.

Deadline for Assignment 1 – Thursday, 29 January 2015, at 12noon (submission to me or through the essay dropbox).