MSDIS Update – August 2024

Updated Data

- LiDAR data and delivery (see below)

MSDIS General News

As I previously reported, my primary goal since mid-May has been to review the LiDAR data currently available to MSDIS, determine which collections were most current, and rebuild both the LiDAR services and downloads to feature only the most relevant data.

The LiDAR directory of the MSDIS Imagery Server now features the eleven services necessary for statewide coverage at QL2 or better. The oldest of these services dates to 2015, while the newest is from 2023. I have not built a complete statewide coverage out of these eleven services and I have no plans to do so at this time. LiDAR project boundaries are, in my opinion, still too patchwork and irregular to be able to cleanly update a statewide mosaic without having slivers of older projects scattered throughout the finished product.

More difficult than making services available was building a better delivery method for LiDAR downloads. In the past, there have been several major obstacles to ensuring the LiDAR data are available for download. Between missing (or competing) tile grids, thousands of unzipped files, and the time delay of simply getting new data, LiDAR downloads have been my least favorite part of this job for a very long time. As of right now, we are trying a different approach. The Missouri Map is now loaded with a new layer named **Latest Available MO LiDAR Index** that utilizes the tiles available from the USGS LiDAR explorer which have been edited to link directly to USGS data storage. This is not a perfect solution, but it is the best and fastest way that MSDIS can provide LiDAR downloads for all projects currently available.

Needless to say, I want to thank Dave Nail, Katie Philbrick, and Mollie Webb for their assistance and patience with me during this hectic time. Dave and Katie were instrumental in helping determine which projects were necessary for complete coverage while Mollie's continued willingness to provide offsite storage has been invaluable. This work simply would not have been possible without the three of them.

I also want to make clear that this new LiDAR delivery mechanism does not mean that MSDIS will suddenly stop sending data to WashU. Mollie is one of the most important partners that the clearinghouse has, and every single download link to older LiDAR projects (which make up the overwhelming majority of our LiDAR data) still points to the cloud space that she has generously managed for years. Rest assured, I will continue to throw large amounts of data in her general direction until the heat death of the universe.

Unrelated to LiDAR concerns, I had the opportunity to join the other MAGIC clearinghouses for the 2024 MAGIC Clearinghouse Summit, held this year in St Charles, MO. As is always the case, it was great to catch up with everyone, learn about what projects our sister sites have been working on, and compare notes. In addition to the usual suspects, we were joined this year by representatives from Arizona, Connecticut, Indiana, and Minnesota.

MSDIS Downtime

No downtime was reported during August 2024.

Image Server Statistics

Since the replacement of the MSDIS Image Server, we have struggled to find a software to provide a comprehensive breakdown of server and service usage. We had hoped that the statistics pulled directly from ArcGIS Server Manager would be a suitable substitute, but the very bare-bones records were significantly less than what we wanted.

Moving forward, we will no longer publish these numbers in our monthly reports. We will remain on the lookout for a reliable option for parsing the server usage in the hope that we can publish these numbers again. The raw server logs are still being saved if anyone requires them. Should anyone need a rough estimate of usage for certain specific services, we are more than happy to run those numbers via Server Manager.