

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTIONS POLICY STATEMENTS

Analog Geospatial Materials

(This Collections Policy Statement and the statement on Digital Geospatial Materials replace the former Collections Policy Statement titled Cartographic and Geospatial Materials.)

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I. Scope

This Collections Policy Statement deals with analog (physical) geospatial resources presented graphically in the form of maps¹, atlases, globes, charts (aeronautical and hydrographic), three-dimensional models, and aerial photography and remote sensing images.

For treatment of digital geospatial resources, see the [Digital Geospatial Materials Collections Policy Statement](#).

For treatment of cartography as a subject, see the [Geography and Cartography Collections Policy Statement](#).

The majority of the Library's cartographic and geospatial materials (Library of Congress Classification Schedule G1000-G9980) are housed in the Geography and Map Division. Analog cartographic materials often complement or supplement textual works and may appear in the Library's other format or subject collection areas. Recommendation, selection decisions, and custodial responsibilities for cartographic materials, regardless of their form, format, or content, reside in the Geography and Map Division.

II. Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement

As the nation's de facto national library, the Library of Congress strives to build an expansive, yet selective, collection that records the creativity of the United States and is reflective of the nation's diversity and complexity. The Library's mandate is to have collections that are inclusive and

¹ J.B. Harley and David Woodward in *The History of Cartography, Volume One, Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987) define maps as "graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world."

representative of a diversity of creators and ideas. A priority includes acquiring material of underrepresented perspectives and voices in the Library's collections to ensure diverse authorship, points of view, cultural identities, and other historical or cultural factors. The Library also seeks to build a research collection that comprises a globally representative sample of international materials that are diverse in voice and perspective, relative to their places of origin, further supporting the Library's mission to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for Congress and future generations.

Diverse collecting is mentioned within many of the Library's Collections Policy Statements. In addition, the Library has adopted several specific collection policies in an effort to ensure it is building an inclusive and representative collection. For more information, see the Library's Collections Policy Statements on [Ethnic Materials](#), [LGBTQIA+ Studies](#), [Women's and Gender Studies](#), [Independently Published and Self-Published Textual Materials](#), and [Countries and Regions with Acquisitions Challenges](#).

III. Research Strengths

The Library has assembled an unparalleled collection of cartographic materials in analog or traditional cartographic formats. It holds the largest map collection in the world with original materials dating from the 14th century to the present, providing coverage of every country on earth, the oceans, as well as maps of the heavens and other planetary bodies. The strength of the Library's cartographic collection is the comprehensiveness of its global and temporal coverage of planimetric, topographic, hydrographic, and thematic spatial data. In geographic terms the collection is worldwide in scope with unmatched strength in coverage of the United States, North America and the Western Hemisphere. From a historical perspective the collection documents the history of cartographic innovation and production from the 15th century to the present. While non-Western traditional mapping is well represented, the Western traditions of map design, production and printing dominate the Library's holdings. The strength of the Library's analog holdings is in printed rather than manuscript materials.

IV. Collecting Policy

The Library acquires cartographic materials on a worldwide basis without regard to time period, language, geographic area, size, or format of the material. Precedence should be given to acquiring the official cartographic and geospatial publications of U.S. federal, state, and local mapping agencies and the national mapping agencies of all other countries.

Although the intention is always to collect on a worldwide basis, retrospective collecting is focused primarily on the United States or landmark items that document the history of cartography. The objective is to achieve comprehensive cartographic coverage of all geographic regions throughout the world by acquiring cartographic materials that make a significant contribution to knowledge. "Comprehensive" in the context of this statement is interpreted to encompass complete geographic coverage of all parts of the world (terrestrial as well as celestial), rather than the acquisition of all cartographic products. Partial geographic coverage or representative coverage of a particular country or region is unsatisfactory, and for cartographic material to function as a primary resource for documenting the environmental, cultural, and political aspects of spatial change over time, it is often important to

collect multiple editions of maps and map series selected for permanent retention.

In general terms the Library collects cartographic materials that:

- a. broaden and enhance worldwide geographic and thematic coverage
- b. build upon the strength of existing collections
- c. provide more detailed or larger scale geographic coverage
- d. fill identified gaps in existing collections and map series
- e. upgrade the condition and quality of the cartographic collections (duplicate material may be acquired with the intention of improving the condition of materials within the Library's holdings)
- f. document the work of distinguished cartographers and map publishers, particularly those from the United States (this includes the acquisition of complementary papers and correspondence)
- g. document and illustrate historical events
- h. illustrate the technical process of map making, including the variety of printing techniques employed in the publishing of cartographic materials
- i. document and illustrate developments in thematic cartography
- j. document historical non-Western/non-European cartographic traditions
- k. document the development of geographic information system technology
- l. preserve restricted access materials

Limiting criteria: The following are factors that influence and affect the Library's access to and decision making with regard to the acquisition and retention of cartographic materials:

- a. **Scale:** Due to space considerations, map scale has traditionally been a factor in acquisition and retention decisions relating to map series. In general, the Library does not acquire map series on a national basis at scales larger than 1:20,000. Exceptions are made for those nations whose primary national topographic series is at a larger scale, and for selected regional and urban areas. Larger scale and more comprehensive map series are collected in digital formats only, including large scale cadastral and infrastructure mapping.
- b. **National security classification restrictions:** Since many cartographic products have military and strategic value, cartographic materials at large scales and of strategic areas, produced by both U.S. and non-U.S. national mapping agencies, may be classified and not available to the Library. Provisions may be made for the acquisition of this material when the national security classification is removed.

Formats and resources:

- a. Atlases (G1000-G3122): The atlas format comprises world, national, regional, urban, thematic, facsimile, and historical publications which the Library endeavors to collect on as comprehensive a basis as possible. Because of their bound format, maps in atlases have had a better survival rate than separate sheet maps and are important sources for documenting the history of cartography and the cartographic process. Emphasis is presently placed on acquiring items that build on the Library's strengths in general world, national, and thematic atlases, as well as atlases of counties and urban areas of the United States.
- b. Globes (G3160-G3182): The aim is to acquire a representative selection of globes--terrestrial, celestial, planetary--that illustrate the history of globe production. Emphasis is given to collecting and preserving items representing the history of globe production in the United States.
- c. Maps (G3190-G9980): Single-sheet maps and series maps form the nucleus of the Library's analog cartographic collection and have traditionally served as the Library's primary geospatial reference resource. For selected single-sheet maps or map series, at least one copy of all editions may be collected. The Library attempts to collect as completely and comprehensively as possible series maps at the desired map scales. (See: Limiting criteria – a. Scale, on page 3.)
- d. Nautical charts: The Library collects comprehensively nautical/hydrographic charts issued by U.S government agencies, and as comprehensively as possible those issued by all the other non-U.S. national nautical chart publishing agencies. Some Federal government-produced nautical charts are also available electronically on optical media as well as online.
- e. Raised relief models: The Library collects representative examples of raised relief models in all media, including digital elevation data.
- f. Photocopies, microforms, and scanned imagery: To enhance the preservation of existing collections and in cases where the original format is not available, the Library may acquire microform, photocopy, facsimile, scanned imagery or other forms of reproduction. These formats may provide access to important items and collections residing in international libraries and archives.
- g. Aerial photographs and remote sensing images: Analog aerial photographs and remote sensing images are acquired very selectively to document and illustrate developments in these methods of monitoring the earth's surface. Digital data and optical media provide better opportunities to collect and retain a more comprehensive collection of remote sensing imagery.
- h. Printed/plotted digital cartographic data: To document the evolution of emerging electronic technologies, the Library collects representative examples of cartographic material produced in hard copy using electronic processes.
- i. Published textual materials: Published ancillary textual works dealing with the cartographic process, bibliographies of cartographic material, and the history of cartography are collected as comprehensively as possible and are addressed more fully in the [Geography and Cartography Collections Policy Statement](#).

V. Best Editions and Preferred Formats

For guidance regarding best editions for material acquired via the Copyright Office, see: <http://copyright.gov/circs/circ07b.pdf>.

For guidance regarding recommended formats for material acquired via all other means; e.g., purchase, exchange, gift and transfer, see: <http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs>.

For information regarding electronic resources, open digital content, web archiving, and data sets, see the following Supplementary Guidelines: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/electronicresources.pdf>, <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/opencontent.pdf>, <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf>, and <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/datasets.pdf>.

VI. Acquisition Sources

Whenever possible the Library attempts to acquire materials through non-purchase means, such as copyright, exchange, gift, or the Cataloging in Publication program. The Library of Congress collections are heavily dependent upon materials received through the copyright deposit provisions of U.S. copyright law ([17 USC section 407](#) & [17 USC section 408](#)). For copyright demand, the U.S. regulations allow for the Library to receive analog and some digital materials. When items are offered in both formats the Library's default is normally the Best Edition print version, unless the publisher has arranged a special relief agreement with the Copyright Office. For materials not available to the Library through copyright deposit, or other non-purchase means, the Library acquires materials through purchase. Purchase is used predominately for non-U.S. publications that are not widely available within the United States. The Library utilizes an array of traditional methods of library acquisition (firm orders, subscriptions, and approval plans) with vendors located in different areas of the world. In addition, the Library uses its six Overseas Operations Offices to broaden its acquisitions opportunities outside the United States.

Analog geospatial resources are often considered ephemeral, difficult to identify, and have limited distribution outlets. Currently, international geospatial material vendors, geospatial data clearinghouses and online discovery tools, and publisher/producer web sites all assist on making analog geospatial materials more accessible. The Library acquires geospatial resources using its standard acquisition sources: government deposit, government transfer, purchase, exchange, copyright, and donation. The Library benefits from its participation and association with a number of associations that promote the distribution, use, and preservation of cartographic and geospatial resources, including the Federal Geographic Data Committee, the Cartographic Users Advisory Council, the International Map Industry Association, the National States Geographic Information Council, etc.

Government Deposit: See the [Government Publications--United States Collections Policy Statement](#). Government agencies, federal, state, and local, are the primary producers of analog and digital geospatial data in the United States. At the federal level, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the U. S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of the Census provide extensive geospatial content. The Library aims to acquire a comprehensive collection of the cartographic products issued by all U.S. federal

government agencies. By law, *U.S. Code, Title 44, Public Printing and Documents, Section 1718*, the Library should receive all non-classified cartographic publications issued by federal agencies. The Library also receives cartographic resources through the U.S. Government Publishing Office's Federal Depository Library Program. Standards developed by the Federal Geographic Data Committee are voluntarily being adopted by state and local agencies as well as by private firms. Cartographic materials issued at state, regional, and local government agencies also are broadly collected. The Library will need to keep abreast of new trends as government map-producing agencies shift emphasis away from generating products to providing online enabling services, e.g., mapping on demand.

Government Transfer: The transfer of superseded cartographic materials from other federal government agencies remains a crucial component of the Library's acquisition program.

Purchase: The expenditure of appropriated funds is directed toward retrospective and current analog materials and digital geospatial resources. Retrospective purchases are acquired primarily through dealer and auction catalogs. The Library also reviews online auctions and catalogs for potential acquisitions. The Library's approval plan instructions include the acquisition of cartographic atlases and maps, and works on the subjects of geography and cartography. Cartographic resources are also acquired through the Library's Overseas Operations offices.

Copyright: Copyright deposit has traditionally provided the primary means for the acquisition of commercially produced analog cartographic materials, and is the principle source of the Library's unparalleled collection covering the United States.

Gifts: The Library continues to receive gifts of retrospective and current cartographic and geospatial materials. The Geography and Map Division and its collections are a beneficiary of the acquisition support provided by the Library's James Madison Council and the Geography and Map Division's Philip Lee Phillips Society.

VII. Collecting Levels

Meeting the Library's Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement (see Section II) and the collecting levels outlined below requires continual evaluation of the publishing landscape, sources of expression, current events, and socio-cultural trends to thus maintain effective collecting policies and acquisitions methods. Changes in publishing or in the creation of materials covered by this policy statement may necessitate collecting efforts not explicitly referenced here. Such efforts will be handled on a case-by-case basis while the Library evaluates the need for policy statement updates.

For explanation of the Collecting Levels used by the Library, see <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpc.html>.

For all parts of the world the effort is to acquire coverage at the research level, level 4.

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