

*The National Geodetic Survey's
1996 Photogrammetric Survey of the Southeast Louisiana Coastline*

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The coastal mapping program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is carried out by the Photogrammetry Division of the National Geodetic Survey (NGS). This program exists to produce official shoreline maps of the outer coast and estuaries of U.S. domestic waters, including the Great Lakes and U.S. territories. The primary aim of the program is to provide data for the compilation of nautical charts, a responsibility of another NOAA office. Thus, the primary customer of the Photogrammetry Division is an internal one. The data collected and information produced during the course of its work, however, is also of great value to others. A policy of the Division is to pursue cooperative arrangements with other organizations in conjunction with the execution of its own mission. Projects are consequently designed and carried out to meet needs in addition to its own, at no extra cost to the program. Cooperative ventures of this nature have proven quite worthwhile for everyone concerned.

One such project is currently being conducted in southeast Louisiana. The project extends from Atchafalaya Bay, eastward around the Mississippi Delta, northward to Bay St. Louis, and westward to Baton Rouge, enclosing a land and water area of about 14,000 square miles. The project contains 84 flight lines, extending for about 4200 linear miles. In all, about 2900 frames of 1:48,000-scale aerial photography will be acquired. Natural color and false color infrared (IR) photography are being acquired along most of the flight lines. Along the outer coast, black and white IR photography is being collected in lieu of the color IR, because black and white IR is an excellent emulsion for delineating the land-water interface, which is of primary interest to the nautical charting program. The photography will be available through NGS's Information Services Branch.

A number of other organizations are contributing to the success of this project through *quid pro quo* arrangements. Participating organizations include the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the National Biological Survey, and Louisiana State University. It is this kind of cooperation that gives taxpayers the most return on their tax dollars. Downsizing and the drive toward privatization of Federal activities, however, are causing the Division to narrow its focus, which is having a chilling effect on collaborative efforts such as this one.