



## Summer Vacation!

This summer, a few members of The National Map Corps had the opportunity to visit some interesting places! We thought it would be fun to share our travels with you:

### ERIN

As a geographer, a trip to the southernmost point in the continental United States was a required stop when visiting Key West, FL. The anchored concrete buoy is a tourist attraction and on the day I visited there was a long line of people waiting to take their picture with it. I



snapped a picture of the buoy and the beautiful setting, but skipped the long line. According to [Wikipedia](#), it is one of the most visited and photographed attractions in Key West, and it graces many of the souvenirs available in the countless tourist shops. From this point, you are closer to Cuba than to Miami, FL. Wikipedia also says that the *actual* southernmost point in the continental US is 10 miles away at Ballast Key. However, that is a privately owned island and visitors are not allowed. Surprisingly, many geographic point of interest tourist spots are not in the exact location of the actual point of interest.

Years ago while studying abroad in Ecuador (Equator in Spanish) we visited the equator [monument\(s\)](#). Yes, that is right, there are [two](#) and both claim to be on the actual equator. There are many [interesting examples](#) of this. It just goes to show that mapping can be tricky, it isn't always completely black and white, and accuracy and precision are always improving.



Two equator lines, about 240 meters apart

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## SAM

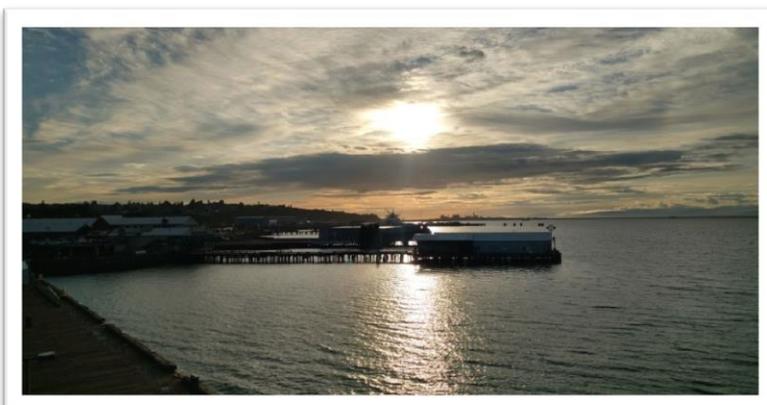
[The Great Sand Dunes National Park](#) - *A Mountaineer's Beach!* Over spring break, everyone dreams of vacationing at a sandy beach, right?? Instead of a sandy beach, this spring Sam explored a sandy mountain, otherwise known as the Great Sand Dunes National Park - *the perfect beach for mountaineers!!*

The Great Sand Dunes are the tallest sand dunes in North America. The sands that form the dunes are remnants of a [sand sheet](#) that was left behind when [Lake Alamosa](#) fell subject to natural climate change. The predominant southwest winds through the San Luis valley now pick up remnants of the sand sheet and deposits sand at the base of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains as the winds are lifted over the mountain range.



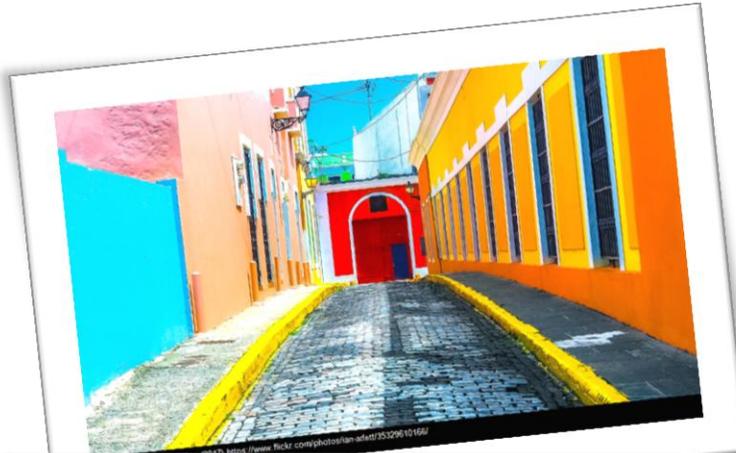
## EMILY

[Port Angeles, Washington](#) - Although many people probably don't have the small town of Port Angeles on their vacation destination radar, it's a pretty interesting place! Not only is it the birthplace of NFL legend [John Elway](#), but it is home to the main [Olympic National Park](#) visitor's center! Emily spent a couple of days there in early June to see her husband off on a sea kayaking expedition down the Washington coast.



If you've also had the opportunity to do some travelling this summer, we'd love to hear from you! Send us a picture from your summer vacation with a short description to [nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov](mailto:nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov) and we'll feature you in our September newsletter! Don't forget to use the subject line "**TNMCorps Summer Vacation**" to make sure we receive your contributions. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Volunteer Spotlight: meyerkv



Some locations are more difficult to edit than others, and Puerto Rico can be especially tricky! Our tenacious volunteer, meyerkv, has made it a personal mission to systematically work through the structures data in Puerto Rico and we greatly appreciate his efforts! This is some challenging data, so why does he do it?

In his own words:

*"I was halfway through editing the great state of Maryland when I realized I was getting bored. No criticism of Maryland but after completing mapping goals for West Virginia, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, I wanted to try something different and more challenging. Looking around the National Map I saw that the locations in the eastern Caribbean were untouched. The first step was to take a small bite, i.e. the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI). The USVI is far smaller than Puerto Rico thus more manageable. Also, both territories are adjacent to each other so I hoped there would be some similarities in the types of structures. After taking the lessons learned from USVI, I returned to editing Maryland but that got old the 2nd time around within hours so I started working on Puerto Rico. I have been plugging away since. It has been every bit as challenging and more than I expected."*

Thanks for taking on the challenge, meyerkv!

## Tips and Tricks for Editing in Puerto Rico

If you've been itching to take an island vacation (even just a virtual one), look no further than Puerto Rico! Volunteer meyerkv has been working hard to verify the structures in PR, but there's still much work to be done! If you've been inspired to follow in meyerkv's footsteps, be sure to keep these tips and tricks in mind (continued on page 4).



1. It might seem like an obvious detail, but don't forget that Spanish is the primary language of Puerto Rico!

Most feature names and many authoritative websites are in Spanish. Google translate (or a similar tool) can be a great resource. Use the name as found on the authoritative website AND in the language of the authoritative website.

**IMPORTANT:** If the structure names are in Spanish, please use Spanish when adding the name or address in the editor. If you have used Google translate or similar to translate the website, you will need to "un-translate" the website to see the name as it should be written in Spanish.

**Special Characters**

Some Spanish words contain special characters. You may either include these or leave them out.

Watch out for existing points that had a special character that has gotten "scrambled" at some point.

*Example: Estaci?n De La Policia El Tuque*

The special character "ó" was at some point turned into a "?." You could replace this with the accented letter "ó" or just an "o," Estación or Estacion.

Special characters can be added by holding down the "Alt" key on your keyboard, while typing in the following codes:

á	Alt + 0225	ñ	Alt + 0241
é	Alt + 0233	ü	Alt + 0252
í	Alt + 0237	ï	Alt + 0161
ó	Alt + 0243	¿	Alt + 0191
ú	Alt + 0250		

2. Grade levels and the word "School" are missing from most school names

If possible, find an authoritative website and make sure the name entered is complete. A complete name typically includes the grade level and the word "School" (or "Escuela"). Remember, in Spanish, the word "school" comes before the actual name of the school.

*Example: 'Lucy Grillasca' or 'Lucy School Grillasca' should be 'Escuela Lucy Grillasca'*

3. Many features have incomplete information or abbreviated names

You may run across features that only have abbreviations for names, such as C.S.F.E. These features may take more research than normal. If you are able to verify them, remove the abbreviation and add the whole name as found from an authoritative source. You may also find some features with names that appear to have been "cut off," such as the word 'hospital' in the following example:

Name

Hosp Industrial C.F.S.E.

This name should be changed to 'Hospital Industrial Corporación del Fondo del Seguro del Estado'  
<http://web.fondopr.com/>

4. PO, RR, or HC Boxes should be deleted

These abbreviations are sometimes seen at the end of a physical address. If you see them, please delete them.

Schools: <http://www.escuelasdepr.com/index.php>

Schools: <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp>

Board of Education: <http://www.ce.pr.gov/>

Police: <http://policia.pr.gov/>

Post Offices: <https://tools.usps.com/go/POLocatorAction.action>

**Information about Address Formatting:**

[https://ribbs.usps.gov/addressing/documents/tech\\_guides/pubs/PR\\_AND\\_USVI\\_ADDRESSING\\_-\\_ENGLISH.PDF](https://ribbs.usps.gov/addressing/documents/tech_guides/pubs/PR_AND_USVI_ADDRESSING_-_ENGLISH.PDF)

Department of Health: <http://www.salud.gov.pr/Pages/Home.aspx>

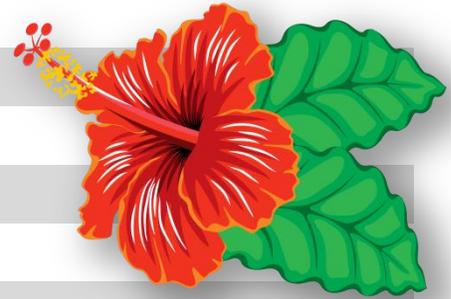
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico: <http://www2.pr.gov/Pages/search.aspx>

Department of Corrections: <http://ac.gobierno.pr/correccion/>

Geographic Data Portal: <http://www2.pr.gov/agencias/gis/Pages/default.aspx>

Firefighters of Puerto Rico: <http://www.bomberos.pr.gov/>

Government Agency Directory: <http://www2.pr.gov/Directorios/Pages/DirectoriodeAgencias.aspx>



## Tips and Tricks for Editing in Alaska

Have you ever been to the state of Alaska? If you haven't, TNMCorps Editor provides the perfect venue for taking a virtual trip!! Many of Alaska's unedited structures are in small, rural towns adjacent to forests and/or wilderness. Mapping those structures provides insight into the different cultures and lifestyles in Alaskan communities, many of which are only accessible by water.



[https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/education/2016/09/14/two-small-alaska-schools-shut-their-doors/#\\_](https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/education/2016/09/14/two-small-alaska-schools-shut-their-doors/#_)



### Confirming a Structure Exists: Authoritative Sources in Alaska

Smaller community agencies often don't have the resources to maintain a robust website or collect detailed information. This can prove challenging for editors trying to locate an authoritative source. Some of the resources TNMCorps staff uses in these situations include Facebook, Alaska DCCED, Alaska DPS, and Alaska EED. Keep reading for more information about these resources (continued on page 6).

**FACEBOOK** - Small organizations sometimes create Facebook pages for their virtual presence while others have no virtual presence at all. If search results produce a Facebook page, make sure the page is "official" before using its information to update a point.

**UNOFFICIAL PAGE**

facebook

Email or Phone  Password  **Log In**  
Forgot account?

Explore local businesses on Facebook  
Sign up for Facebook today to discover local businesses near you. **Sign Up**

Tenakee Springs School  
Public School · High School

Unofficial Page · Located in Tenakee Springs, Alaska

Posts about Tenakee Springs School

There are no stories available

Address 123 Tenakee Springs Street  
Tenakee Springs, Alaska 99820  
Phone (907) 736-2204  
Website Suggest a website

1 visit

Indicates page was automatically created

Not being maintained

Very few visits

**How can you tell if a Facebook page is official?**

facebook

Email or Phone  Password  **Log In**  
Forgot account?

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ALASKA FIRE SERVICE

BLM Alaska Fire Service  
BBLMAFS

Home

Customized profile images

Customized photos

**OFFICIAL PAGE**

Recent posts

Photos

Fire Information

Map

8,105 people like this

7,923 people follow this

About See All  
P.O. Box 38005 1541 Gathrey Road  
99703  
907-396-5511  
atl.ak.blm.gov/atl.sfp  
Government Organization

People 8,105 likes

People Also Like

National Smokejumpers Associat...  
Nonprofit Organization

Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Ce...  
Government Organization

Alaska DNR - Division of Forestry (...)  
Public Service

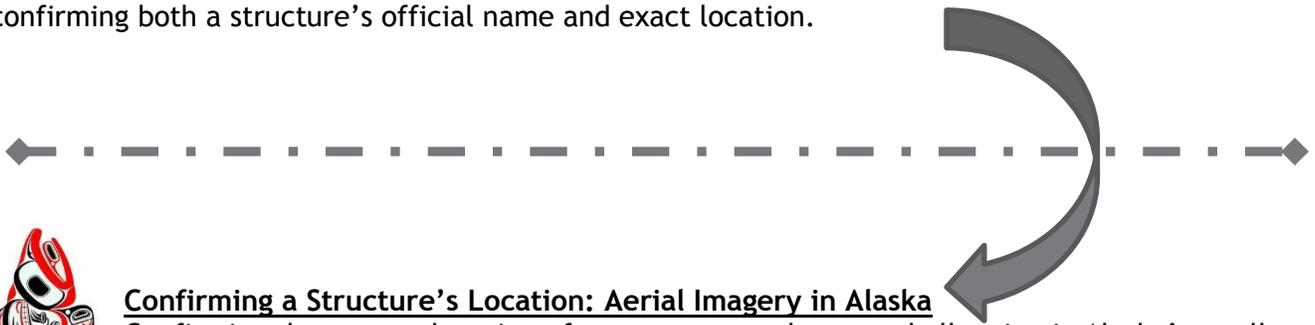
Posts

BLM Alaska Fire Service  
19 likes · 1h

**ALASKA DCCED** - Alaska's [Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development](#) (DCCED) often lists public service entities in a community. This can be helpful for confirming whether a structure exists.

**ALASKA DPS** - Alaska's [Department of Public Safety](#) (DPS) has a [directory of fire departments](#) that helps confirm whether a fire department exists. Most addresses in the directory are PO boxes, so it's not very useful for confirming exact locations. Alas, it helps to confirm the official title of a fire department and whether users should keep or remove a point.

**ALASKA EED** - Alaska's [Education & Early Development](#) (EED) website has a directory of public schools in the state. The directory also provides physical addresses, which makes it quite useful for confirming both a structure's official name and exact location.



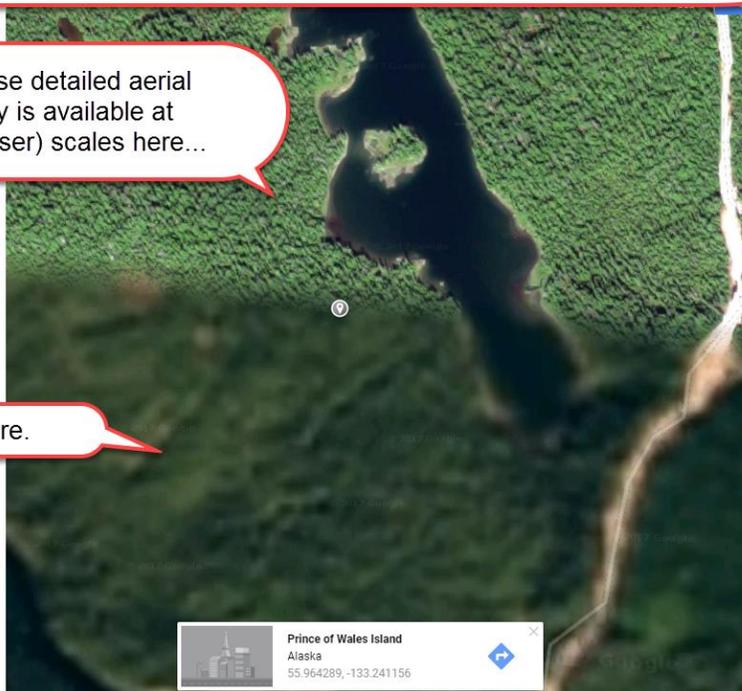
**Confirming a Structure's Location: Aerial Imagery in Alaska**

Confirming the correct location of a structure can be very challenging in Alaska's small rural towns. This is to be expected but rest assured, we have some tips and tricks to help!

**Notice the difference in imagery resolutions???**

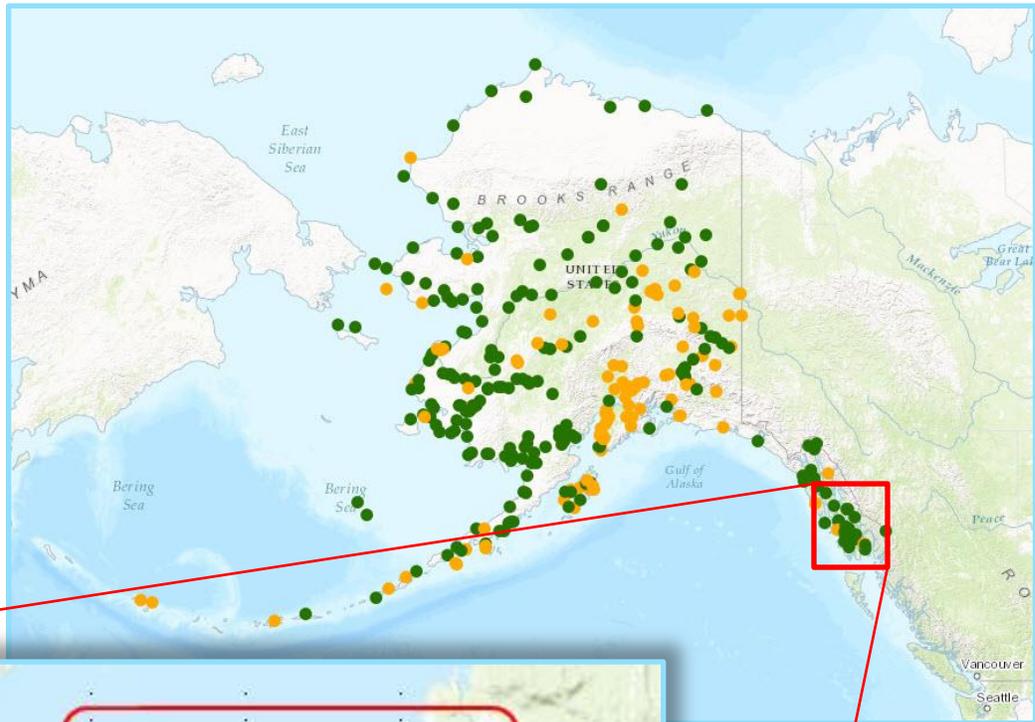
That's because detailed aerial photography is available at larger (aka closer) scales here...

... but not here.



Alaska Community Profile Maps

Alaska DCCED provides an [interactive set of aeriels](#) for smaller communities. While they don't necessarily provide street views, Alaska Community Profile Maps do allow you to zoom in far enough to distinguish buildings.





## 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](mailto:nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov)

## Name that App!

We've been calling the new editor, "new editor" or "TNMCORPS Map Editor". But we could really use some help in coming up with a creative name! If you have any suggestions for a name for our online editor, please email your suggestions to [nationalmapcorps@usgs.gov](mailto: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)**

- Mr Ballwin



**Flock of Winged Witnesses (4000-4999)**

- Cassie Tammy Wang
- geo163



**Theodolite Assemblage (2000-2999)**



**Alidade Alliance (1000-1999)**

- SD Michael



**Stadia Board Society (500-999)**

- Mmmbekka
- USGSTaylor
- TSDNAV



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

- jgaddis
- mmmbekka
- Peregrine
- TSDNAV
- ChrisColeman
- jordanskordahl



**Pedometer Posse (100-199)**

- LouisianaGirl
- gmbule
- Rui L
- TSDNAV
- mmmbekka
- nina.frohling
- jordanskordahl
- rea1961
- ChrisColeman
- SandiD
- Awatters
- jafishe1
- rzolla



**Society of the Steel Tape (50-99)**

- LouisianaGirl
- gmbule
- LTPZ
- TSDNAV
- jordanskordahl
- nina.frohling
- rea1961
- DeniBoy
- Acidion
- ChrisColeman
- awatters
- derrickdgregory
- CourtneyvS
- jafishe1



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

- gmbule
- CourtneyvS
- TSDNAV
- awatters
- nina.frohling
- rea1961
- DeniBoy
- Karst1
- GlennieCastle
- Acidion
- CRSGamer
- ChrisColeman
- TUFFYJCW
- derrickdgregory
- AllisonMakosky
- AspenShadow
- Irhayden
- xfxie
- MMcGuill17
- TehSmithster

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

