Peer Review Feedback

Received from “Visualizing US Fires 2020” team, Taos Transue, Huy Tran, and Troy Saltiel

General Questions

1. Are the objectives interesting to the target audience?
   The data is of high interest for a visitor and aiding in interpretation is the primary objective for the visualization.
2. Is the scope of the project appropriate?
   Given the amount of time and possibilities to assist in data comprehension it will be important to set the boundaries for the scope early.
3. Is the split between optional and must-have features appropriate? Why?
   The data acquisition challenge and not having the option to download them in bulk will consume a lot of time. Then coordination of the planned views seem another time intensive task.Otherwise the features seem appropriately prioritized.
4. Is the visualization innovative? Creative? Why?
   The chosen dataset seems ideal to move from static presentation to a dynamic web visualization. The look and feel is much aided by the current form as it is already appropriately chosen and reduces the amount to train the user.
5. Does the visualization scale to the used dataset? Could it handle larger but similar datasets?
   Data collection is the primary bottleneck. Outside of that it has the opportunity to grow in scale.
6. Is the project plan detailed enough? Is a path to the final project clear?
   Yes, the project proposal is rigorous in the sense that the sample visualizations are clearly mentioned and deadlines for each part of the project are thought through.
7. Is an interesting story told?
   Yes, the visualization with a calendar element, provides historical context to the current holistic visualization.

Visual Encoding

- What is the primary visual encoding? Does it match the most important aspect of the data?

  The primary element is an avalanche rose, which uses color to encode one part of the data and orientation to map geographical information. The Information is additionally translated to a map that overlays the information. It seems logical to display geospatial information on a map which is currently not the case.
- What other visual variables are used? Are they effective?

  Color hue is used for danger level and orientation for aerial location, which seem effective when communicating geographic information.
- Is color sensibly used? If not, suggest improvements.

  The colors are all aided by the design of the static display. They are appropriately chosen.

Interaction and Animation

- Is the interaction meaningful? If not, suggest improvements.
  - Highlight the filter instead of graying it out to give a big picture.
  - Aid the color information back to textual information as on the current design
  - Suggested stretch goal to let the user choose a custom path on the map
- If multiple views, are they coordinated? If not, would it be meaningful?

  As mentioned earlier in one of the challenges, the amount of different views will be a challenge to get working together.
- Is there any animation planned? Is it clear? Is it intuitive?

  Currently, there are no animations in the design.

What we learned

The feedback was very helpful, especially considering that you had a ‘neutral’ audience that knew nothing about your project. There, we learned how to explain our approach from ground up and could identify areas we need to improve the design. For instance, how we can make sure that the navigation difference between the rose and the filter will feel intuitive. As expected, data acquisition will be our biggest challenge which they identified as well. The reviewers were very attentive to the details and had good questions on functionality. They also gave us good optional features, but agreed that our current scope is ambitious enough and that we need to be deliberate in setting limits and not get tempted to add more. Our focus will be now to get the

interaction between the map and the main avalanche rose working before thinking of other things to add. Then try to get more data scraped from the avalanche center website and have more to display. Then go into working on the filters and showing supplemental information.