

Questions:

1. Describe and justify your choices in making map 1.

For my version of map 1 I wanted to focus on making the map more visually appealing. The elevation data blended in with the parks given the similar color, it wasn't fully clipped to the counties, and there was some overlap in the elements.

For the ohio map I chose population data for the gradient and used a red dashed border to highlight summit and portage counties. I forgot to include a scale bar for ohio. I also omitted the legend for the inset map because I couldn't find a good balance for the layout.

I ended up going with a grey color palette for the elevation data, but mine was more simple compared to the gradient in the example. I wanted to do brown but couldn't find a good palette when trying to look through all of them. I opted to manually add some elements during the final stages after failing to make them look right after combining the two maps.

2. Compare the cartographic decisions you made in your individual process to the decisions made by the groups in-class. Make direct reference to how your group made decisions in-class, and how those decisions impacted the final "frankenmap".

Since I didn't attend class I won't answer this question (not to get out of it, just understanding I won't get the points). I looked at the code that was posted, though.

3. Describe your choices in making map 2 (the one of your choosing). Include why you chose the problem and where you obtained your data. Finally, your map is a communication piece. What was the intent of your communication and do you feel as though you achieved your goal?

I chose to make a map of Gallatin County, MT and its protected lands. I'll be spending the summer there for a research experience and wanted to highlight some of the areas we'd be traveling to. My data came from USGS (elevation), the montana state library (counties, yellowstone), gallatin county government GIS site (bozeman boundary), open street map (in r, MSU point), and the NFS (gallatin national forest). The main goal of the map was to show how much of gallatin county is protected land and its proximity to MSU. I believe the goal was achieved, the map isn't too crowded and its easy to understand.

4. With respect to tmap and the process of creating static maps, what did you learn?

Both tmap and ggplot2 build maps in similar ways with the layering system. I learned how to stack different map elements to ensure good visual hierarchy. Layout control took up most of my time with how extensive the tmap customizations are. It was a lot of trial and error to find a good balance, and getting creative in order to make a subtitle in map 2. Learning how to manually add elements was nice too. I ended up doing that after I finished map 2 (I got frustrated with map 1 and started on map 2 instead) but it would have been helpful when making map 2 also.