General instructional guide for map viewers

Visualizing your map:

Once the Map Viewer loads in your browser, you will see the default base map, which is usually a "Streets" map. This displays the region, along with the major roads and highways. This default base map can be changed to help visualize the region from different perspectives. To change the base map, click on the drop-down box menu at the top of the page, and select the preferred base map. Choices typically include relief maps, topographic maps, and satellite imagery maps, in addition to the "Streets" layer or layers.

How to navigate the map:

In the toolbar on the top left of the page, you will notice the hand 🖐 and magnifying glass 🔍 icons, which allow you to pan around the map by clicking and dragging, or to zoom by drawing a box around the area of focus.

You can also manually zoom and pan at controlled increments using the slider and arrows on the far left of the map. Note that the slider and arrows may be covered by the Map Layers window; this window is described more fully below.

Searching the map:

To search for a specific area, you can type the area's name into the Find Area box at the top of the page.

To return to the original full region, click the globe icon 🌐 and it will zoom to the fullest extent of the map.

The Identify icon ℹ️ provides information about the item you select.

The Map Layers and Map Tool windows:

The Map Layers window (the box that loads at left on the map screen) contains the list of available data layers that can be viewed on the map. The Map Tools window (the box found on the right side of the map screen) contains the legends for active layers. The Map Tools window also provides options for you to share your created map with others.

You can turn the Map Layers ◆ and Map Tools ▤ windows on and off by clicking on the toggle buttons, which are next to each other on the far left of the top toolbar. Turning these windows off will give you an unobscured view of the map, but will prevent you from being able to select or deselect new layers for viewing.

Working with Data Layers:

To activate or deactivate a data layer, check the box next to it in the Map Layers window. The Map Viewer will populate the selected data onto the map instantly, and the layer's legend will appear in the Map Tools window. You can also quickly clear (or deactivate) a data layer by clicking on its legend in the Map Tools window.

More than one layer can be active at a time, but the other active data layers may appear hidden. The gear icon ⚙ beside the layer name allows you to adjust the transparency of each layer, so that other activated layers are visible. To do this, click the gear and adjust the slider bar to alter the layer transparency. With this function, the relationships between multiple data layers and the underlying geography can then be examined.

Sharing your created map:

To share any map that you have created—including the zoom extent, activated layers, and transparency settings—simply click on the "Share this Map" section at the top of the Map Tools window. There you will find a URL that can be copied and pasted into a new browser tab or window, an email, or a document. Clicking on the URL from any of these sources will load the Map Viewer and the created map with all the parameters you specified.

Additional technical support:

For additional technical information or support, please contact nemac@unca.edu.