



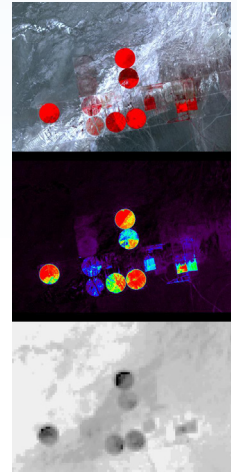
About Railroad Valley

Earth-Observing Satellites Deliver Data on Weather, Water, and More

NASA's Earth-observing satellites provide vital and often time-critical information touching every aspect of life on Earth. Examples include NASA's Aqua, Terra, Landsat, OCO-2 and OCO-3, Suomi-NPP, and EMIT missions. Information received from these satellites guides actions related to weather, agriculture, food security, water, urban planning, climate, transportation, disaster preparedness, and emergency response.

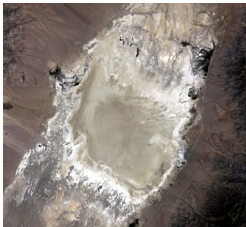
Calibration is critical to ensure data returned is accurate, which in turn lends trust and credibility to the science that informs policy and decision-making.

Since 1993, NASA has relied on Railroad Valley (RRV) in Nevada for conducting ground-based calibration of Earth-observing satellite instruments. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, and international and commercial partners also rely on RRV for satellite operations.



Images of Railroad Valley, Nevada, were captured by the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer.

Railroad Valley: A One-of-a-Kind National Asset



Credit: USGS/Earth Resources Observation Science Center

RRV is the only location in the United States with all the required qualities for satellite calibration. The dry lakebed is large, flat, free of vegetation, of a consistent surface color, undisturbed, easy to access, and with good visibility from space.

NASA has worked with the Bureau of Land Management since 2018 to determine the best way to preserve RRV. At the bureau's recommendation, NASA submitted an application to withdraw the land from public use in 2019. The bureau published a Federal Register Notice of Proposed Land Withdrawal in 2021, which launched a 90-day public comment period. Following the public comment period, NASA conducted an Environmental Assessment as part of its final land withdrawal application package.

Preserved Land in Nevada Ensures Calibration for Satellite Instruments

In 2023, the Department of the Interior approved NASA's request to withdraw more than 22,000 acres of land from public and private use to preserve the area for calibrating Earth-observing satellites. This land withdrawal is in effect for 20-years and protects the area from activities that could change the surface conditions, ensuring NASA can continue delivering accurate information about Earth for the benefit of all.



Nearly 23,000 acres of public lands in Nye County, Nevada, is used to calibrate NASA's Earth-observing satellites.

Contact

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