How to Make Wild Horse and Burro Maps in BLM's Geocommunicator

Welcome to Geocommunicator (Geocomm). This is the BLM's web-based application that makes a wide spectrum of data and information available to the public on maps. What is useful about this application, is that users can construct their own maps based on the latest available information from BLM.

While Geocomm contains information such as oil and gas lease boundaries, mining claims, rangeland allotments, etc. the purpose of these instructions is to provide information about Wild Horses and Burros (WH&B). This boundary information is of two types:

1. Herd Areas (HA) and
2. Herd Management Areas

Herd Areas (HA) are geographic areas of the public lands identified as habitat used by wild horses and burros at the time the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 was passed.

Herd Management Areas (HMA) may be established in those HAs, within which wild horses and burros can be managed for the long-term. HMAs are designated through the Land Use Planning process for the maintenance of wild horse and burro herds.

Note: This is the first time we have tried this. Your comments on these instructions would be welcome. Please use the feedback form to make any suggestions or need for clarification.

Accessing Geocomm and WH&B Info

To access the application, simply start your browser and click or type in the following link:

http://www.geocommunicator.gov/blmMap/Map.jsp?MAP=GA

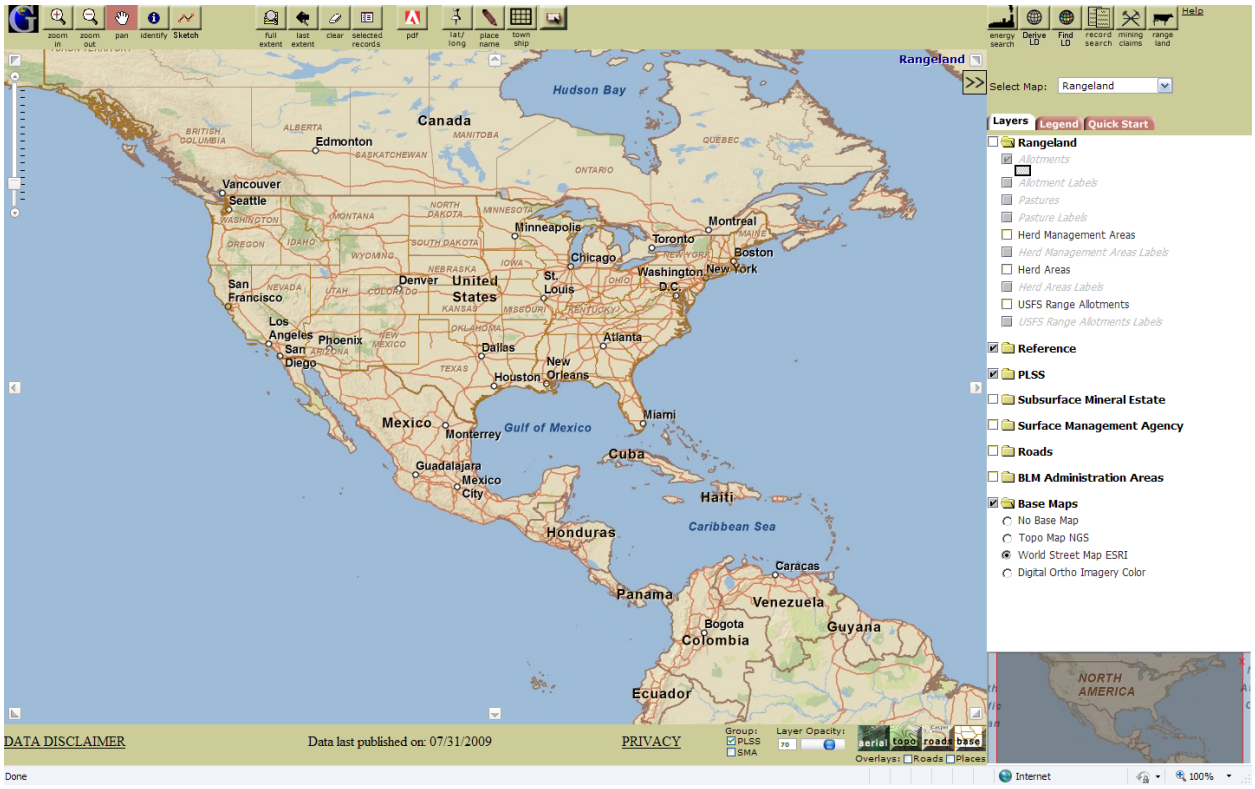
The above link is a shortcut but if you forget the above link, you can always do the longer way as shown below (you are always welcome to browse and experiment with the rest of the site):

1. Type into your browser: http://www.geocommunicator.gov
2. In the left navigation, click on "*Interactive Maps*"
3. Click on "*Rangeland*" in the submenu.

If you have problems, please see the "Internet Setup for NILS Geocommunicator".

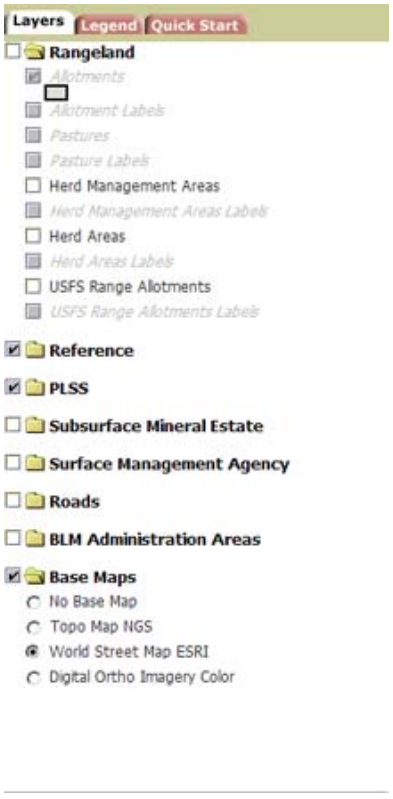
Customizing What You See

Here is what you will see after you have done the above:



Choosing Data to Display for WH&B

Your first step in making your map is to tell Geocomm what data to display. On the right side of your screen, there is a white area with check boxes. The right-hand graphic is a close-up of it. Note that there are certain check boxes already checked.

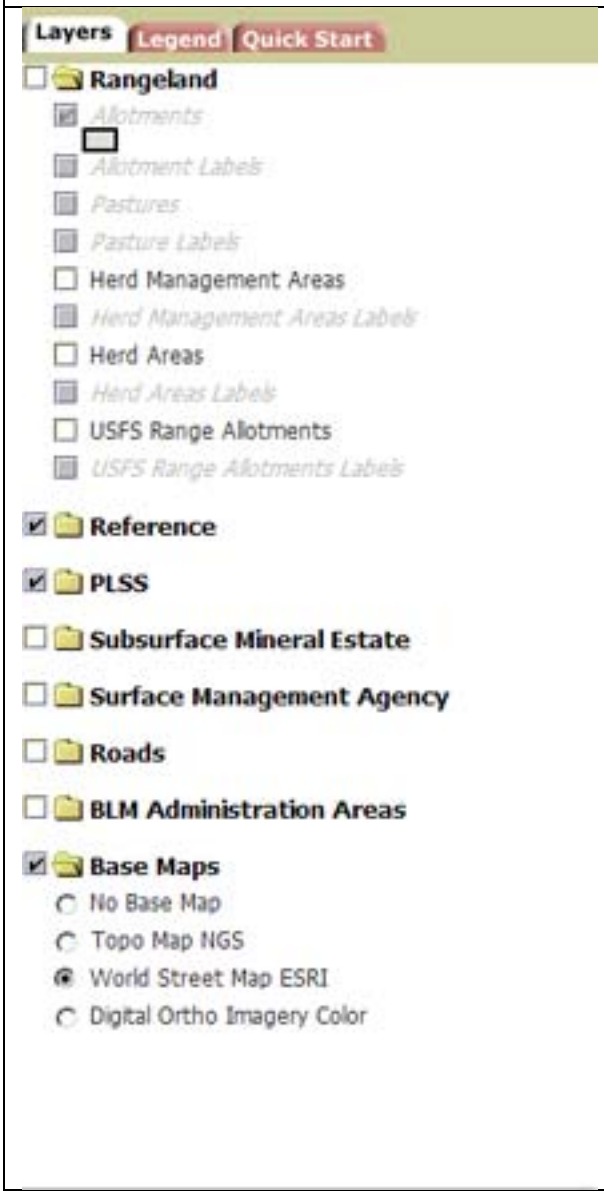
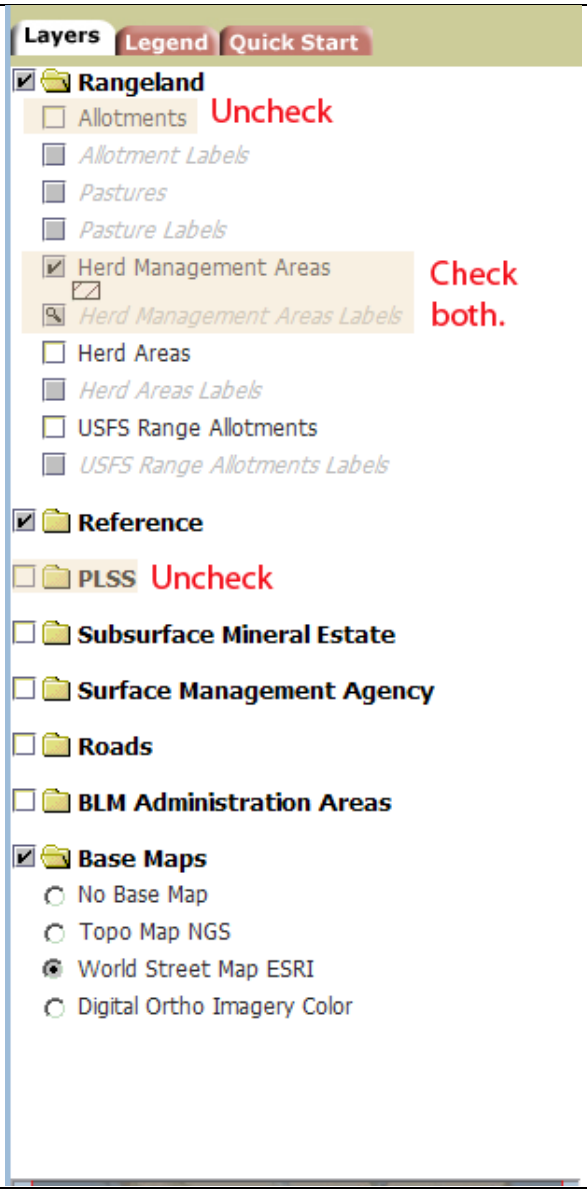


To display the WH&B information correctly, we will need to make some changes to these selections by simply checking new boxes and unchecking some others. For the purposes of these instructions, we will assume you want to see only Herd Management Areas.

Here is what needs to be changed:

1. Uncheck "*Allotments*"
2. Check "*Herd Management Areas*"
3. Check "*Herd Management Areas Labels*"
    a. Note that in the check box, a magnifying glass appears. That means that labels will not be displayed until zoomed into at a certain level.
4. Uncheck "*PLSS*" (Township and Range display)

The following graphic shows the before and after definitions in Geocomm:

Before	After
	

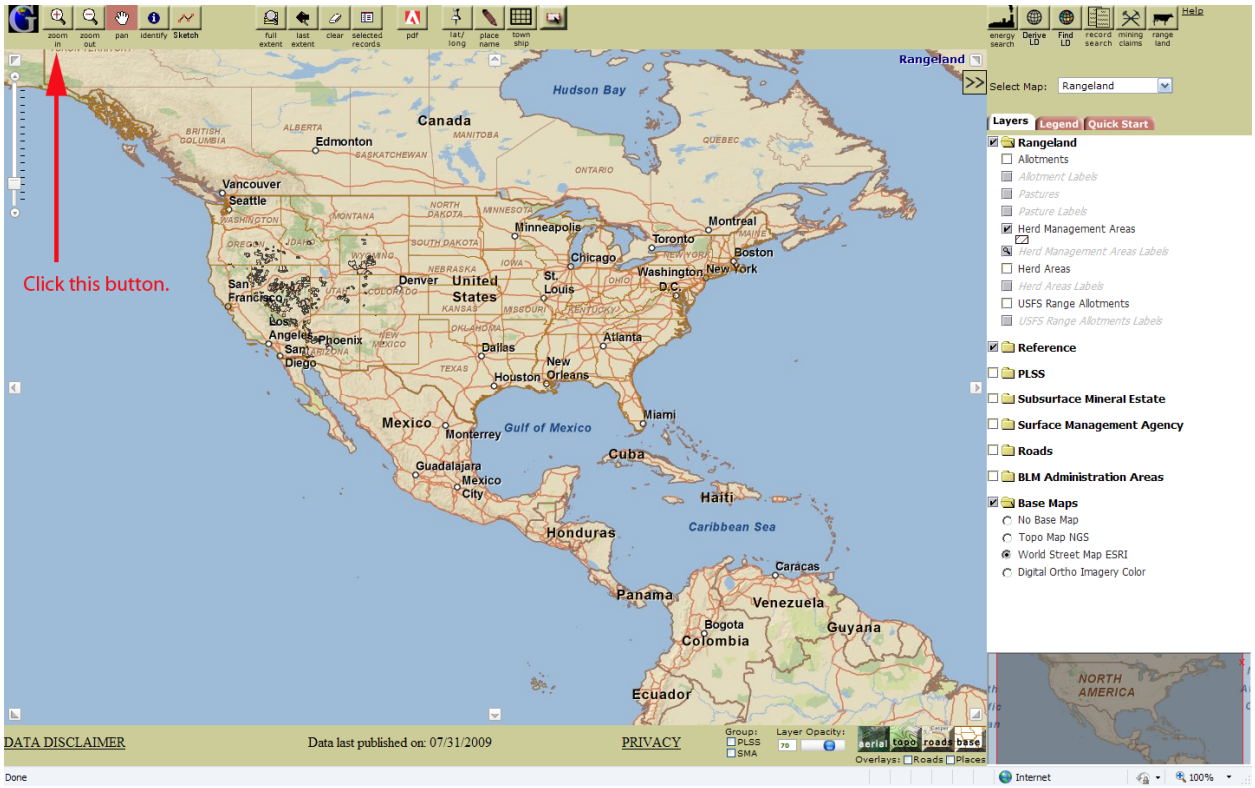
You will notice that on the main map, little black splotches have shown up. Those are the Herd Management Areas.

Zooming in To An Area of Interest

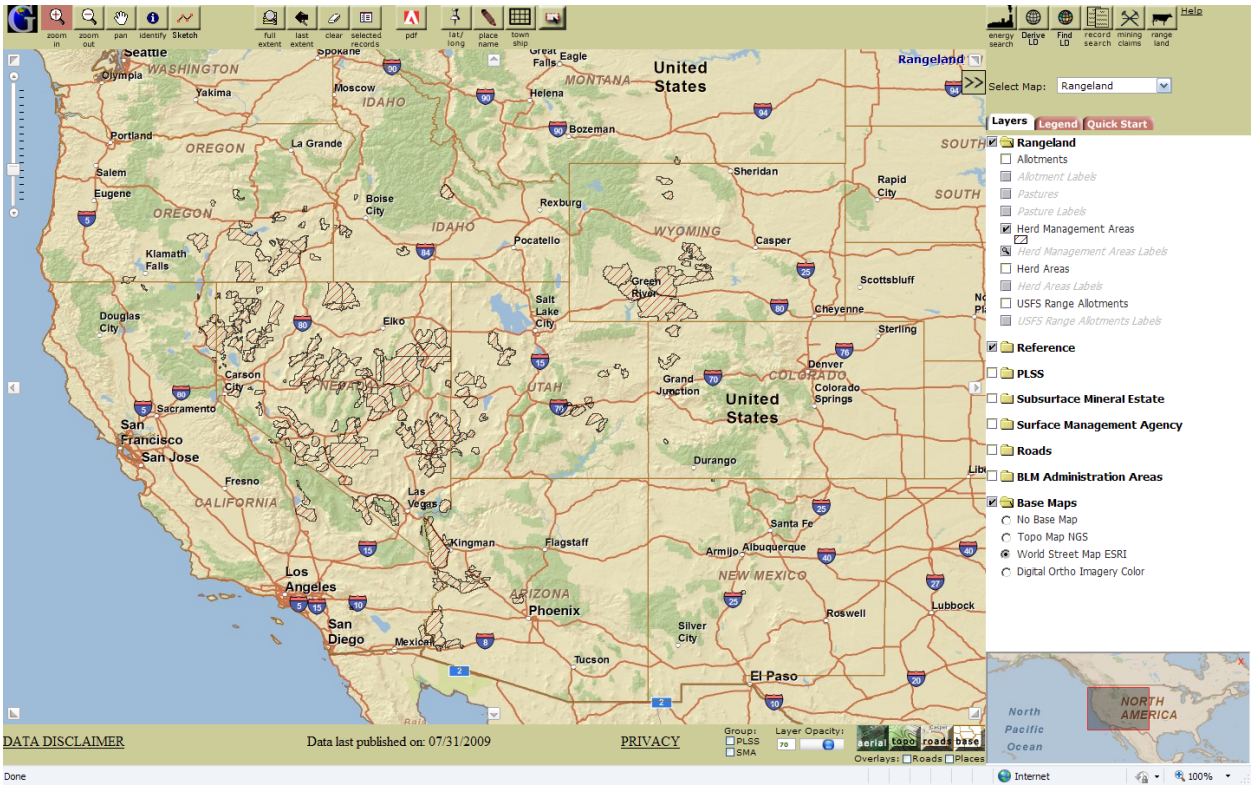
Obviously one can't get much information from a map at this scale. But, one of Geocomm's strengths is the ability to zoom into a specific area. Depending on the speed of your internet connection and amount of information to be displayed on your screen, this may take a few minutes.

Let's suppose that you wanted to see all of the HMAs in the west and don't want to see any other states/countries.

1. In the upper left corner of your screen, you will see a button titled "Zoom In".
2. Click it as shown below:



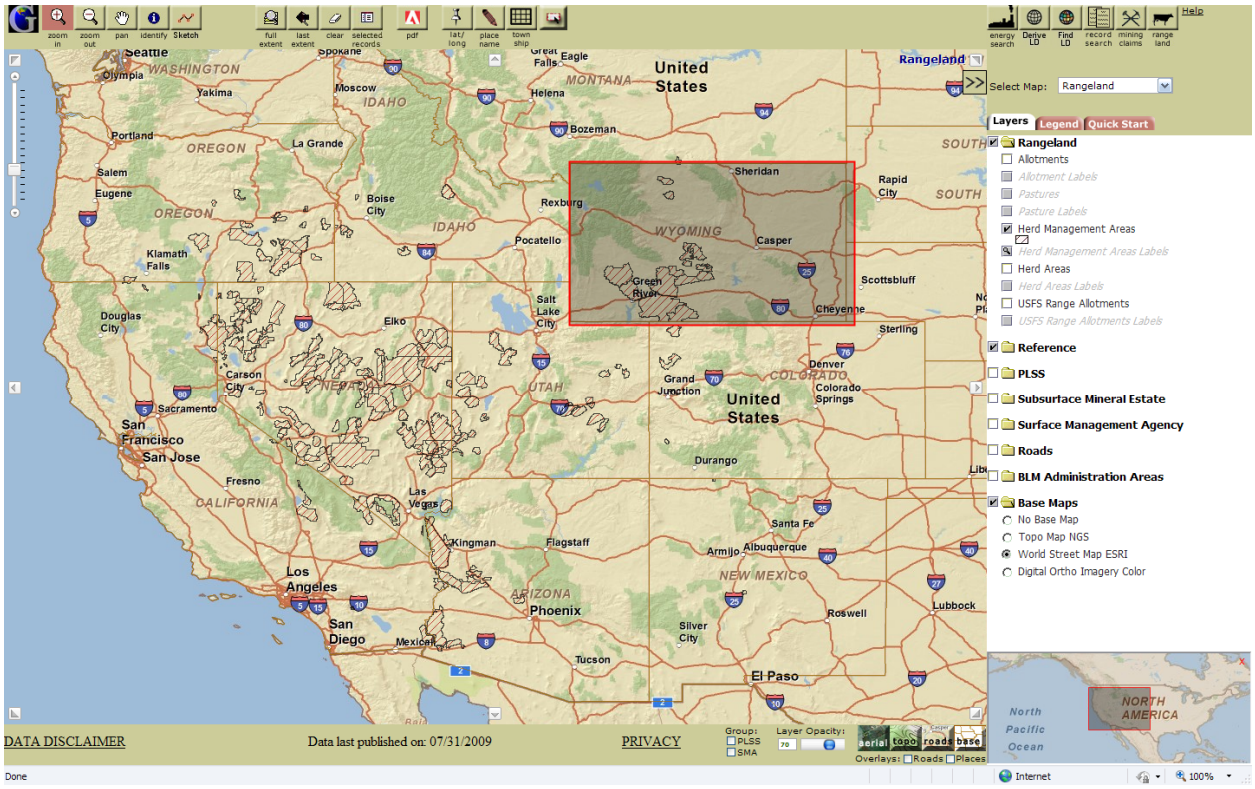
3. You are now in the "Zoom In" mode.
4. Place your mouse cursor in the upper left corner of where you want your map to start (in this case over the "W" in Washington State).
5. In your mind, decide where you want the lower right hand corner to be (in this case the Southeast corner of the State of New Mexico).
6. Holding down the left mouse button, drag the box with your cursor from the upper left to lower right.
7. If you have done this correctly, this is what your map should look like:



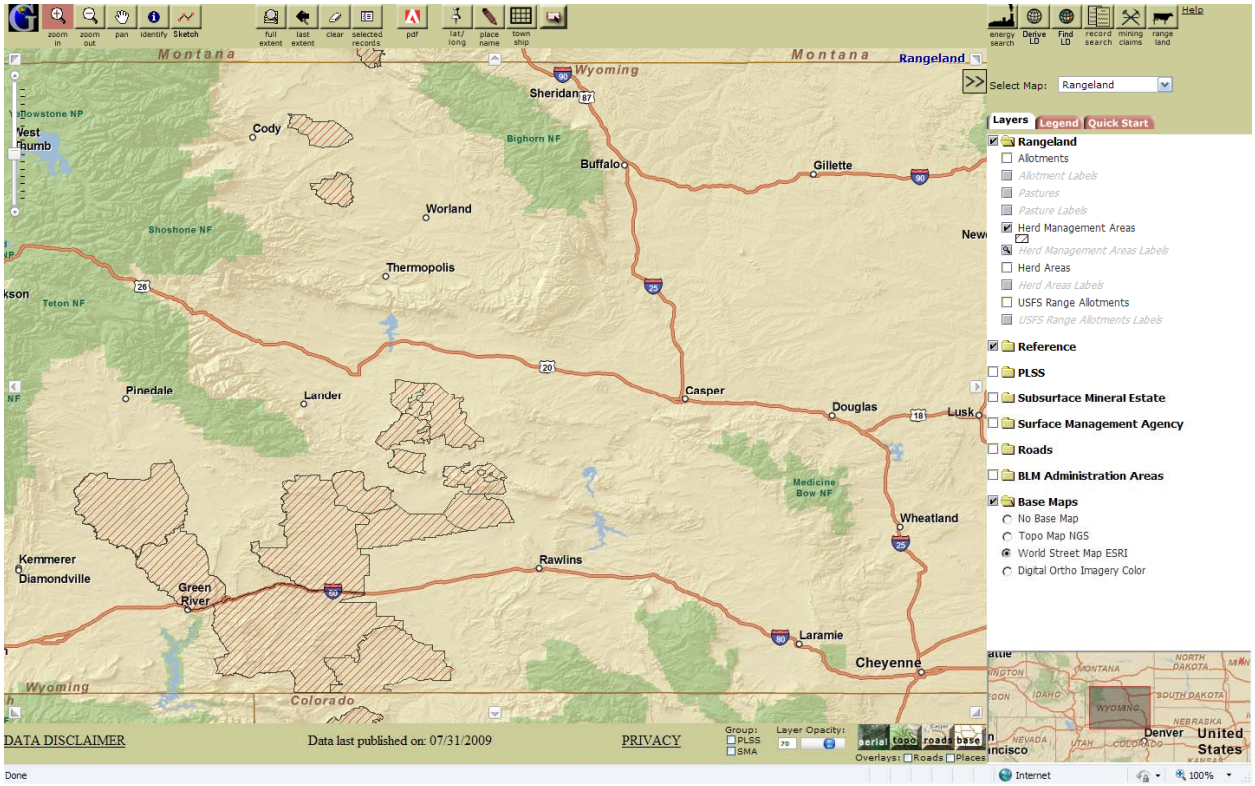
Note that the scale has changed and you can see more detail. This is an important function that must be done correctly to get the maximum benefit from the system

Again, this scale is not as detailed as we would like. So, suppose we wanted to see all HMAs in Wyoming. Note that the background on the “Zoom In” button has changed to a brick red color. This means you are already in Zoom In mode. So, to zoom in to Wyoming, we place our cursor on the northwest corner of Wyoming and drag to the Southeast corner.

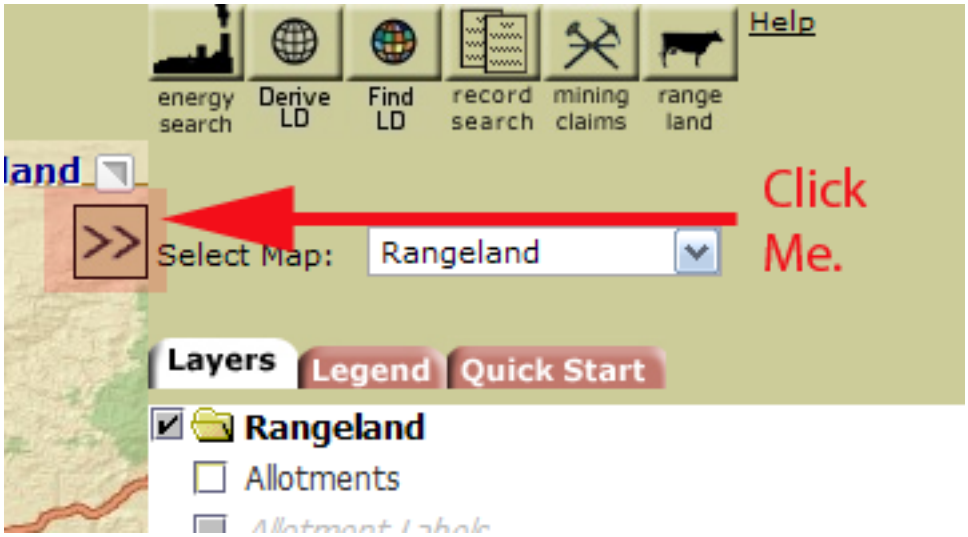
This is what your screen should look like after dragging and before you release the left mouse button:



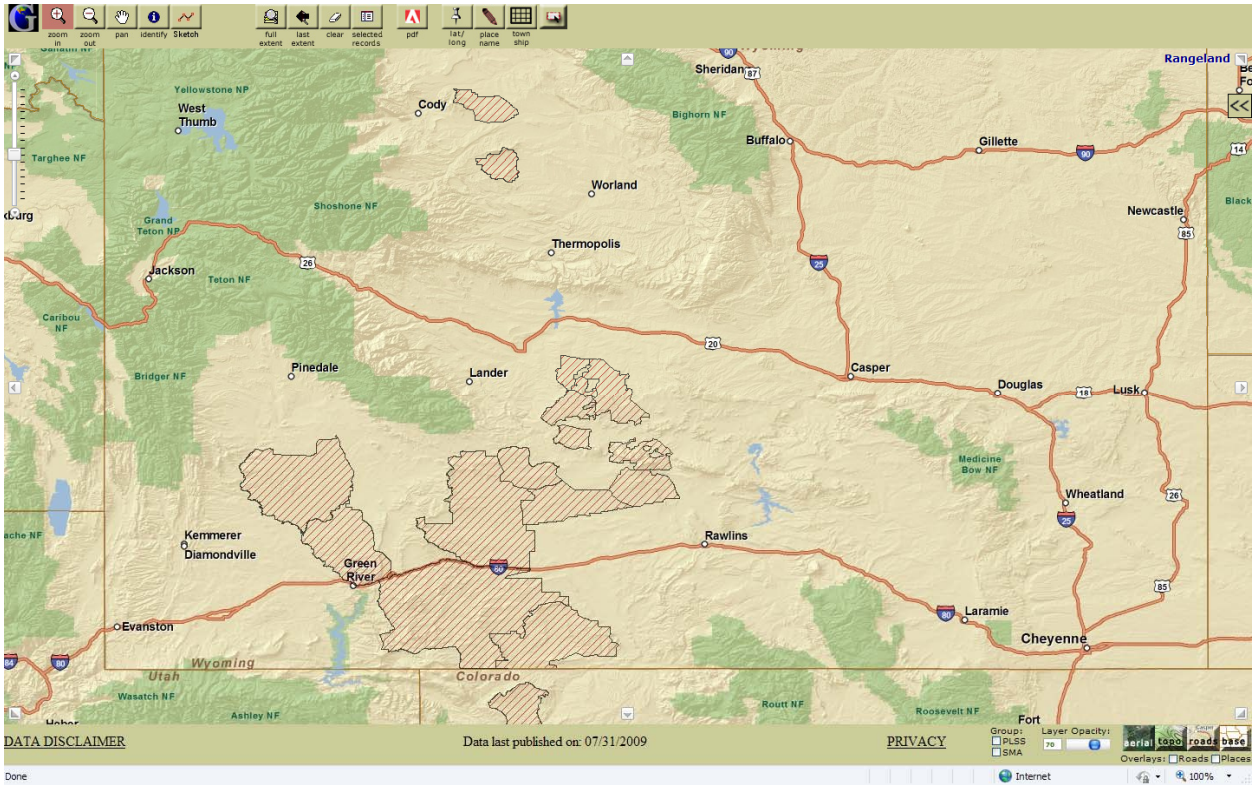
After you release the mouse button, the system will display:



At this point, since we really don't need to see the white area ("Layers") you will see a box with two ">>" in the upper right. Click that and you will go full screen:



Here is what the screen will now look like:

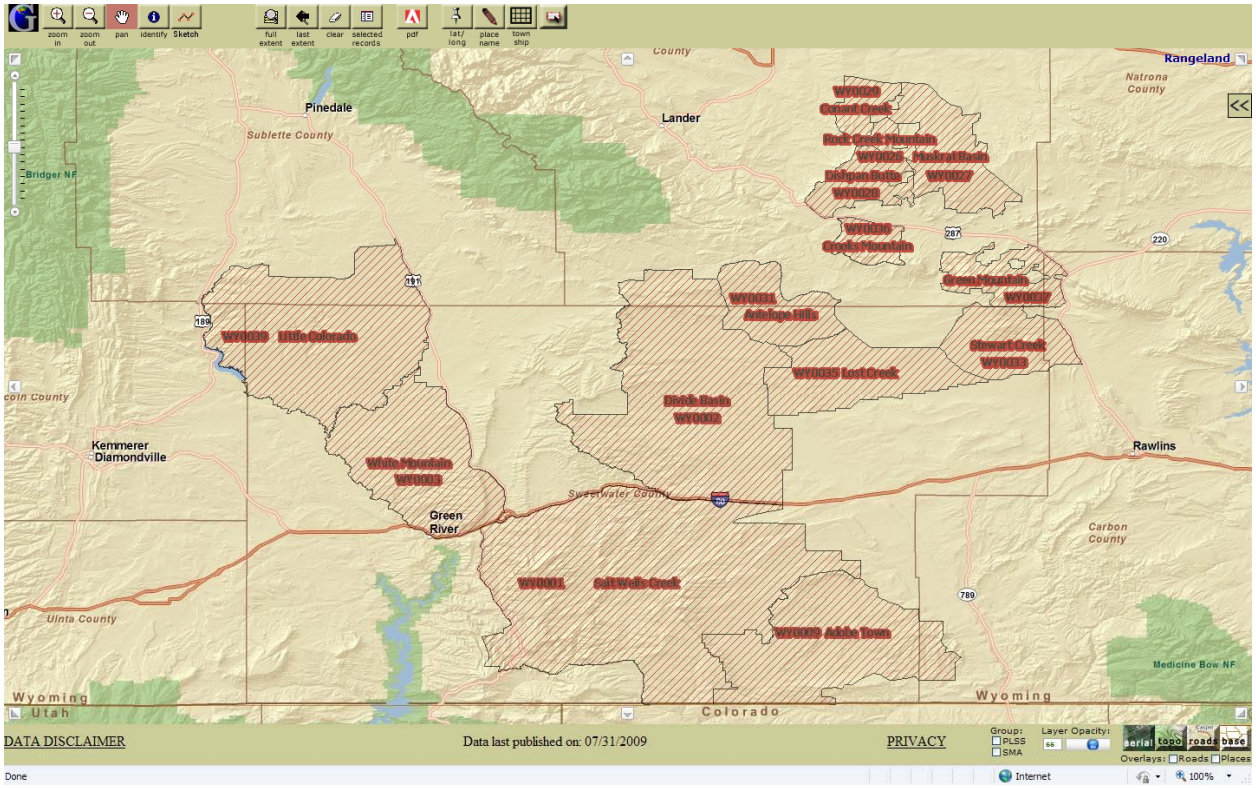


Panning Your Map

At this point, note that the map is not centered. There is an easy way to move the information on your screen without having to redo everything. Remember where the “Zoom In” button is located? The second button to the right of it is the “Pan” button.

This allows you drag your map around the screen until it is oriented where you wish it to be. So we need to center this map of Wyoming. Click on the Pan button and you will notice the mouse cursor change to a double headed arrow. Simply press and hold down the left mouse cursor and drag your map where you would like it.

You now have a map of Wyoming showing all HMAs. Unfortunately, at this scale, it does not show the names of the areas. Suppose we wanted to see all HMAs in Southern Wyoming. Simply zoom in as above and you will see more data:

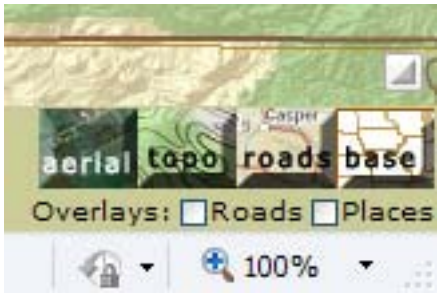


We are almost done making our online map.

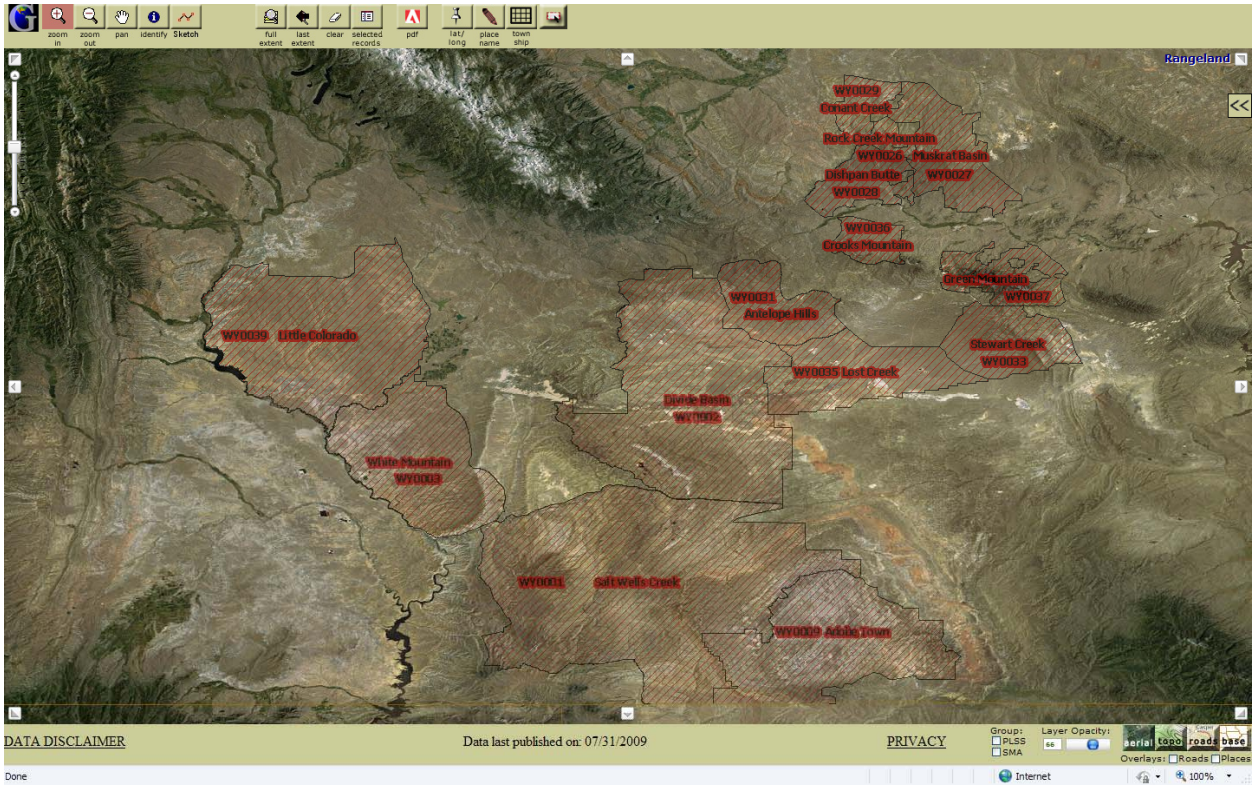
Backgrounds (AKA Base Maps)

The background that we have been using is the default “World Street Map ESRI”. However, there are several other choices. The background can be changed “on the fly”, in other words at any time you want to. There are two ways to change the background.

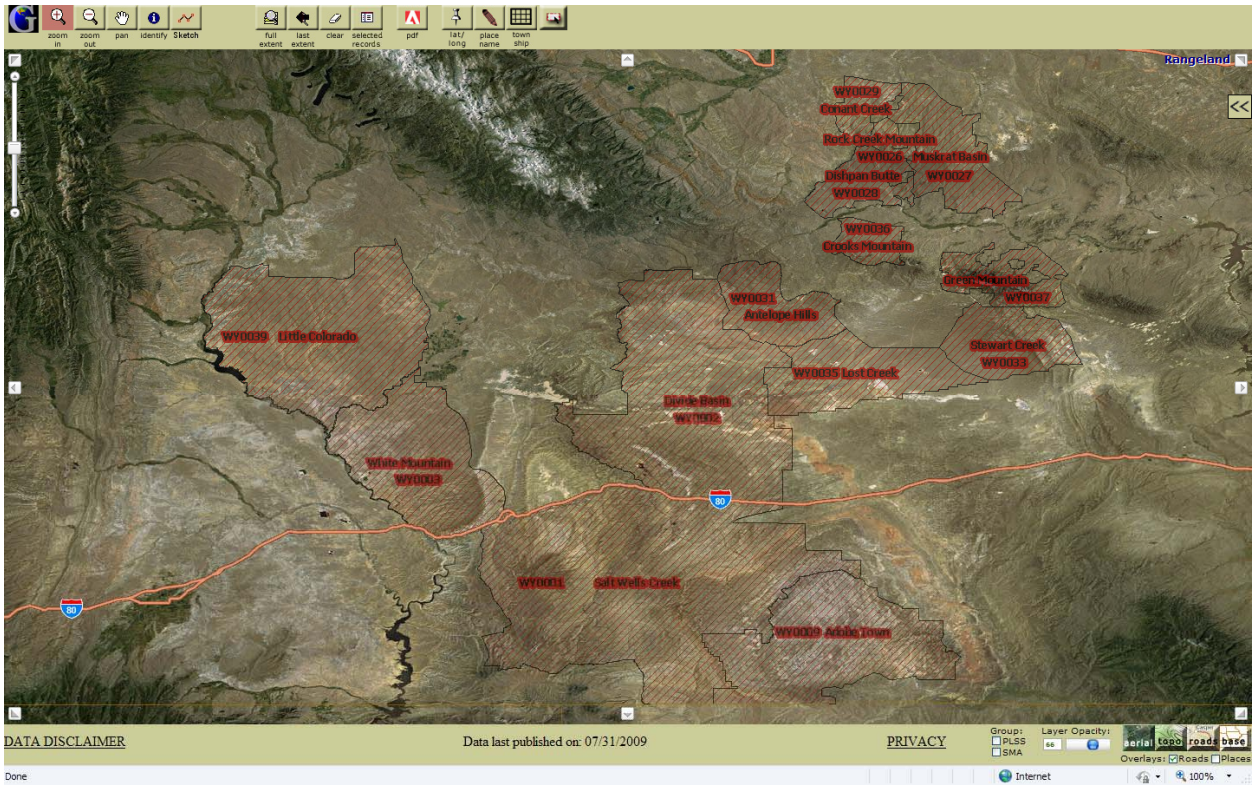
On the above map, there are four buttons on the bottom right hand corner:



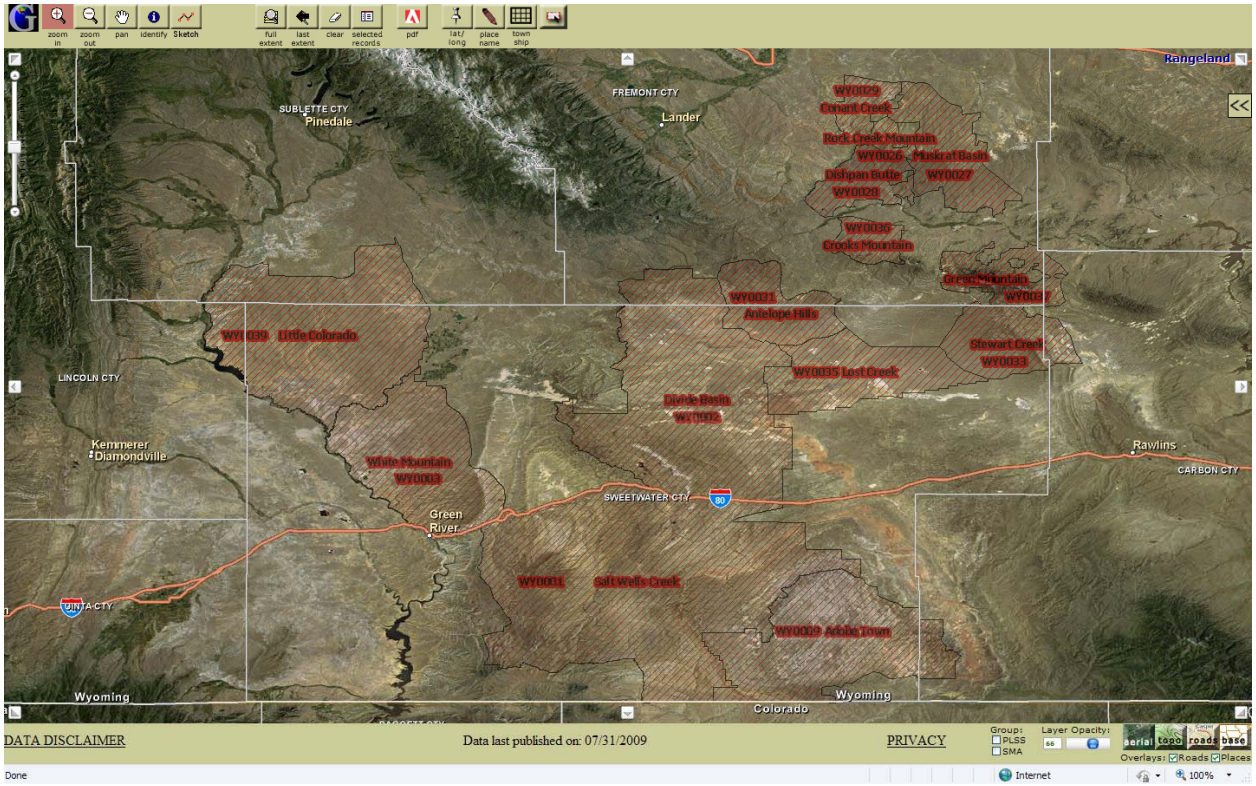
You will notice that there are also two check boxes – Roads and Places. They turn on/off overlays of roads and cities, towns, etc (Places). Let’s change to the “Aerial” view without Roads and Places. Here is the same map but a different background:



Let’s turn on Roads (note the plotting of Interstate 80):



And finally, let's turn on Places:

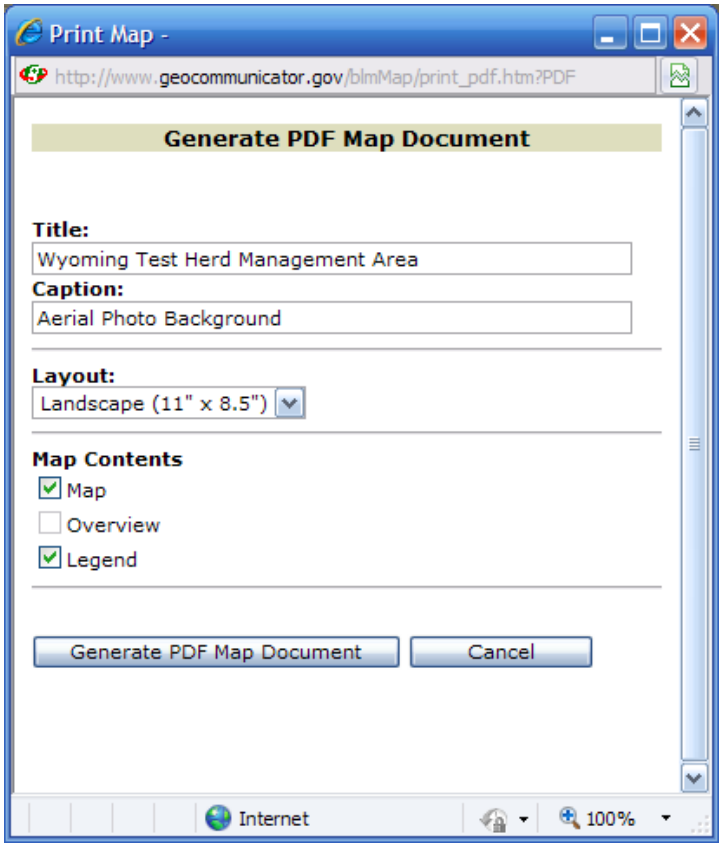


Note the inclusion of County boundaries and names, towns, etc.

Wrapping Up

There are many other things that can be displayed or modified in Geocomm. This was only a Primer in getting you introduced to its capabilities. To save a hard copy for your future use, go back up to the button bar and click the “PDF button”:

A popup window will appear. We have already filled in the fields as an example:



You can then print the map from your PC.

In closing, feel free to experiment with Geocomm’s capabilities. You can’t hurt anything since all of Geocomm is read-only.