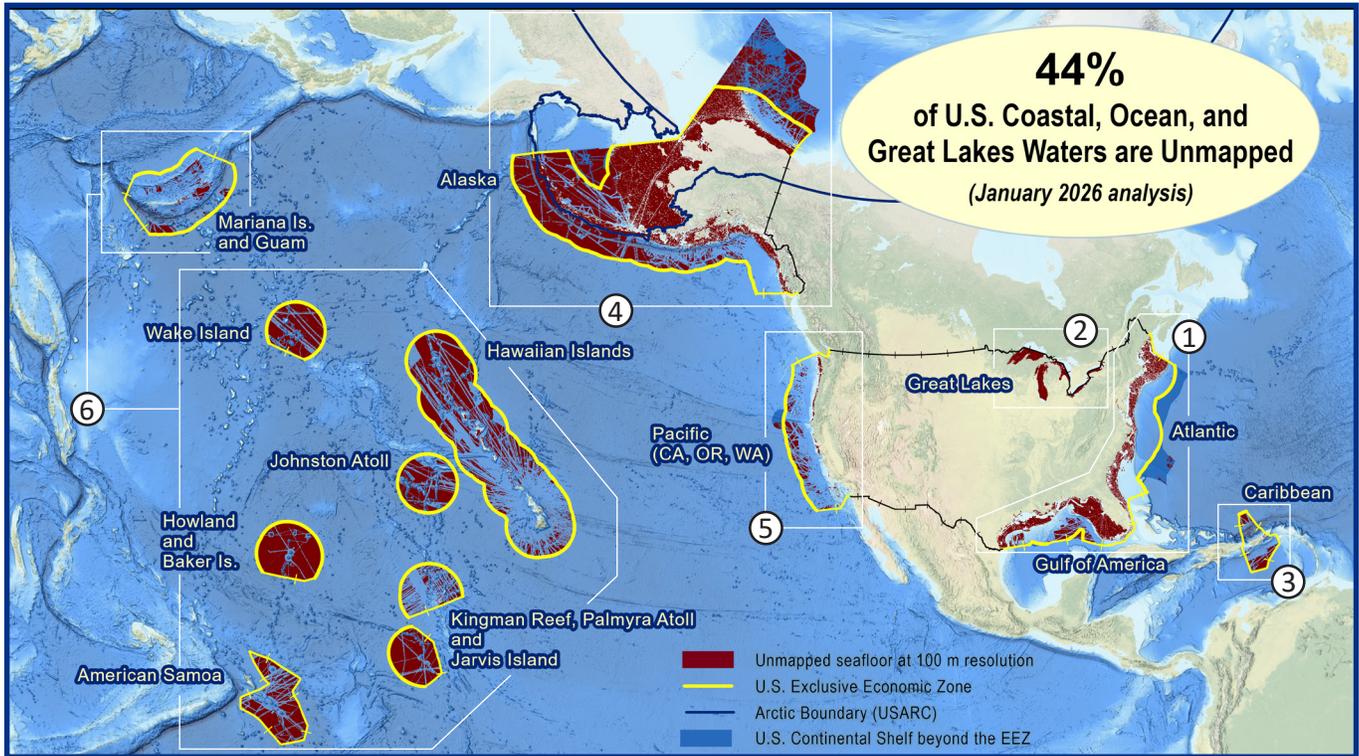
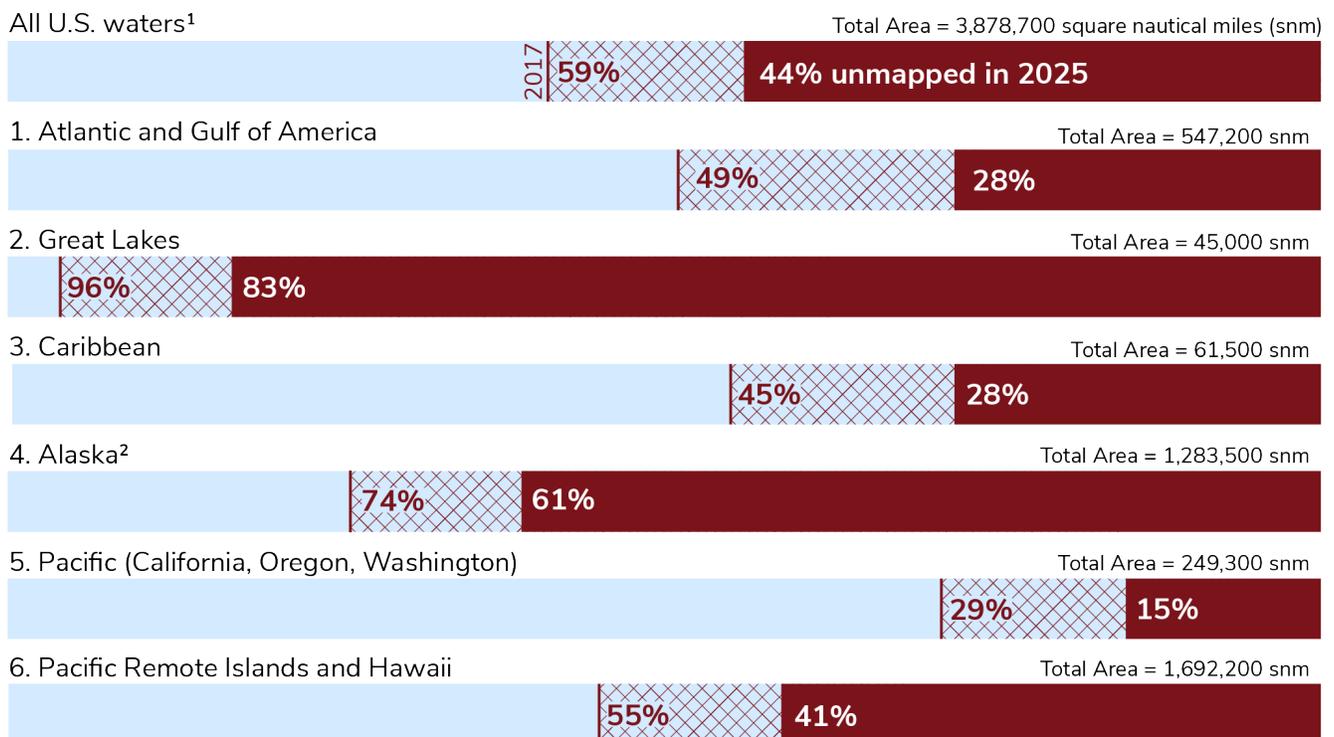


2026 PROGRESS REPORT: Unmapped U.S. Waters

To safeguard our national security and economic prosperity, ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization is foundational to maritime commerce, domestic energy and seafood production, tourism and recreation, and understanding of our natural resources, among other interests. The 2020 [National Strategy for Ocean Mapping, Exploring, and Characterizing the United States Exclusive Economic Zone](#) and the global [Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project](#) make comprehensive ocean mapping a priority for the coming decade. Derived from the [U.S. Bathymetry Gap Analysis](#) first conducted in October 2017, this seventh annual report tracks our progress toward mapping the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.



Percent of U.S. unmapped seafloor at 100-meter resolution in 2025



¹ Areas include the full extent of the U.S. Continental Shelf, as declared in [88 FR 88470](#).

² The Arctic portion of all U.S. waters in the Alaska region is 787,000 snm and 68% unmapped at the end of 2025.

Mapping the Seafloor

Multibeam and LiDAR surveys
by trained hydrographers and other personnel
from government, academia, and private sector

primary sources of bathymetry

Coastline

Representing ~0-40 meters water depth, mapping in this area is ideal for aircraft using LiDAR technology and autonomous systems using multibeam sonar technology. Concerns about safe navigation require a high level of data accuracy.

Shallow water

Representing ~40-200 meters water depth, mapping this area is ideal for ships using multibeam sonar technology alongside autonomous systems as a force multiplier. Conditions are not usually suitable for aerial survey methods. Concerns about safe navigation require a high level of data accuracy.

Deep water

Representing water depths >200 meters, mapping this area is ideal for ships using multibeam sonar technology and deepwater capable autonomous systems. Conditions are not suitable for aerial survey methods and navigation safety is not a primary concern in this area.

other sources



Uncrewed aerial vehicles



Satellite-derived bathymetry



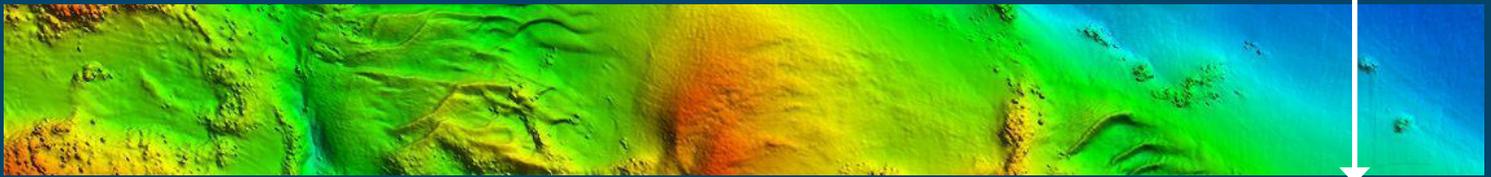
Sidescan sonar



Single beam bathymetry



Crowdsourced bathymetry



Strategies for Filling Gaps

NOAA archives bathymetric data obtained from governments, industry, research institutions, and citizen scientists. Those same institutions and more use those data in many applications.

Partnerships, data sharing, and innovations in both data acquisition and processing continue to be critical elements for accomplishing U.S. seafloor mapping goals. Also, the coordination of new data collections promotes the integrated ocean and coastal mapping goal to “map once, use many times.”

How can you help?

1. [Share your survey plans](#), and
2. [Share your data](#).

Want more details and to run statistics for a different U.S. area of interest?

Visit <https://gis.charttools.noaa.gov/bathy-coverage-report/>.

Crowdsourced bathymetry is the collection and sharing of depth measurements from vessels with standard navigation instruments during routine maritime operations. It can be a powerful source of seafloor information in areas where more comprehensive surveys are not likely to occur in the near future. For more information, visit: <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/iho-data-centre-digital-bathymetry>

Track our progress

<https://iocm.noaa.gov/seabed-2030-status.html>

