

Forest Estate Dataset

The Forestry Department has, for the first time, released its Forest Estate geospatial datasets. These up-to-date datasets differ considerably from the widely circulated version created by the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) in several important ways:

- The large scale of the maps used by FD allows for the digitization of all (large and small) parcels of land under the management of the Agency: those small parcels of land that were previously omitted have now been included:
- There is clear differentiation between gazetted forest reserves and un-gazetted crown lands
- Names of forest reserves are not now interchanged with plantation names and appear as they were gazetted.
- There is now greater spatial accuracy of boundaries.

The creation of the datasets was a collaborative effort of the Forestry Department The Nature Conservancy and the Trees for Tomorrow Project. The datasets defines legally, descriptively and spatially all the forest reserves, according to the Jamaican Gazettes. The National Cadastral Index from the National Land Agency was used as the base dataset from which most of the Forest Reserve parcels were referenced.

Legal survey diagrams from the Jamaica Survey Department together with contracted commissioned land surveyors were used to identify some of the reserve boundaries (especially in the Blue and John Crow Mtns.). In addition, GPS devices were used to find old survey monuments to make other adjustments. This has been an ongoing process, therefore the dataset will be released in versions. The first version can be downloaded at the link below.

In this new version, internal boundaries, which define properties adjacent to each other, were dissolved, notably in the Blue Mountains and John Crow Mountains.

The names in this new dataset are based on what has been recorded in the gazettes for legal references and consistency.

The Forest Estates comprise three (3) categories:

- Forest Reserves (FR)- Government and privately owned lands that have been gazetted as Forest Reserves
- Forest Management Areas (FMA)- Private lands co-managed by the Forestry Department and gazetted as Forest Management Areas and

- Crown Lands (CL)- Lands transferred to the Forestry Department for management by the Commission of Lands.

For further information and specification please contact:

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