

CORE

Lab 17: The Map Maintenance Dossier

Design a stewardship pipeline for a map after publication

Chapter Chapter 17	Level Intermediate	Time ~2-2.5 hr
Mode Individual or pair	Technology Any course-approved LLM	Deliverable Map maintenance profile

Why This Lab Matters

Chapter 17 treats publication as the beginning of a map’s second life. This lab asks you to design a maintenance pipeline that keeps a prompt-built web map coherent, accessible, documented, and responsibly updateable after release.

Essential question

What cartographic decision should you be able to defend by the end of this lab?

Learning Objectives

- State the cartographic purpose, audience, evidence, and constraints.
- Use an LLM or assistant as a collaborator while preserving human judgment.
- Revise the artifact or prompt based on explicit critique.

At a glance

Inputs: Lab scenario, prompts, data notes, or map concept supplied in the activity.

Outputs: Map maintenance profile; Deployment chain; Small automation pipeline.

Evaluation: Clear purpose, defensible cartographic judgment, concise prompting, and evidence of human verification where needed.

LAB WORK

Setup: Choose a Live or Hypothetical Map ~15 min

Map to maintain
Purpose:
Audience:
Data update frequency:
Likely dependencies: data source / basemap / model / API / fonts / hosting
Design decisions worth preserving:
Design decisions allowed to evolve:
What failure would most damage trust:

PROCEDURE

Part 1 - Map the Deployment Chain ~20 min

Describe the deployment chain for this map: prompt, map specification, files, repository, hosting, data sources, and public URL. Identify where intent is documented and where it could be lost.

PROCEDURE

Part 2 - Design a Small Boring Automation Pipeline ~30 min

Design a small maintenance automation pipeline. It should regenerate the map when inputs change, run basic checks, and report what happened. Include checks for layer rendering, legend completeness, credits/disclosures, contrast, broken links, data schema changes, and successful deployment. Do not allow automation to redesign the map.

PROCEDURE

Part 3 - Monitor Drift and Version Integrity ~30 min

Create a drift monitoring plan. Watch for visual drift, data drift, technical drift, and semantic drift. Define what counts as acceptable change, what requires human review, and what must be versioned with a note explaining intent.

PROCEDURE

Part 4 - Add Human-in-the-Loop QA ~25 min

Create a human review checklist for this map. Include questions no automated check can answer: whether the map still makes sense, whether it feels clear, whether accessibility still feels inclusive, whether the legend read-aloud is understandable, whether keyboard/touch behavior works, and whether public interpretation might have shifted.

PROCEDURE

Part 5 - Set a Rhythm of Review ~20 min

Set a sustainable review rhythm. Specify what runs automatically, what gets checked weekly/monthly/quarterly, what triggers an alert, what deserves immediate intervention, and what should be allowed to age gracefully.

PROCEDURE

Part 6 - Write the Maintenance Dossier ~30 min

Compile my work into a Maintenance Dossier. Include deployment chain, automation routine, drift monitoring, versioning rules, human QA checklist, accessibility care plan, review rhythm, preservation/evolution principles, and graceful obsolescence criteria.

DELIVERABLE

Submission ~20 min

- Map maintenance profile
- Deployment chain
- Small automation pipeline
- Drift monitoring plan
- Human QA checklist
- Review rhythm
- Maintenance Dossier
- 400-600 word reflection on stewardship over control