

The United States at Night

NASA has a wonderful satellite image of the United States at night.¹ If you are looking for solitude, this is clearly the map to have.



While the image obviously shows where the population densities are highest, it also shows other light-emitting activities. For example, there is a large diffuse source in the image near its top and a bit to the west of center. This is the Bakken Shale Oil Fields of North Dakota. The satellite is “seeing” the light from the oil rigs and the gas that is being flared.

The picture is not exactly what you would see if you were in space looking down on the United States. Instead, the image is a composite that takes advantage of the unique visible/near IR capabilities of the Suomi imaging suite.

G.R. Moore 30 May 2015

¹ City Lights of the United States 2012, December 25, 2012.
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=79800>. Accessed May 30, 2015.