



CARTOGRAPHIC AND GIS TECHNICAL NOTE

Managing Geospatial Datasets in Service Centers

Introduction: The Service Center Agencies, along with our partners, are establishing an enterprise geospatial system. This system consists of hardware and software supplied under the Common Computing Environment. The geospatial data—including GIS, CPS, and digital imagery—is also a part of the overall system architecture.

In order to support better Service Center agency program management, geospatial data management in the service centers will become a standard process under the guidelines presented in the Manual for Managing Geospatial Datasets in Service Centers, Version 4.0, dated February 2003. This TECH NOTE provides supplemental guidance and is not intended to replace the manual. To read or download a copy of the manual log onto <http://www.itc.nrcs.usda.gov/scdm/docs.htm>.

Directory Structure / Naming Conventions:

GUIDELINES FOR MODIFYING THE GEODATA DIRECTORY: The top-level geospatial data folder is named "geodata." Under "geodata" a number of subfolders are included for geospatial dataset categories. Additionally, geospatial dataset categories are allowed to have subordinate subfolders—as in the case of 'climate,' which has subfolders for precipitation and temperature. The following guidelines apply to the directory structure:

- **DO NOT** add subfolders between the high level geodata and a standard geodata subfolder
EXAMPLE: F:\geodata\county\ortho_imagery.
- **DO NOT** add subfolders under a standard subdirectory
EXAMPLE: F:\geodata\ortho_imagery\county.
- You may add additional subfolders to the **high level** geodata directory to house unique state/local datasets as long as it does not impact the standard directory tree
EXAMPLE: F:\geodata\coal_mines.

GUIDELINES FOR NAMING STATE / LOCAL / UNIQUE DATASETS: Refer to Page 3 in the Manual for Managing Geospatial Datasets in Service Centers, Version 4.0, dated February 2003 for details. File names contain only the information needed to accurately identify them and make them unique. File names contain the following information in this order:

(Theme name)_(feature type)_(location).(extension)

EXAMPLE: hydro_|_mt035.shp

The naming standards apply to all nationally distributed datasets and it is recommended that the same standards be used on state and/or locally defined datasets. The following guidelines apply when naming datasets:

- **DO NOT** use standard filenames for state/local/unique datasets to insure they are not overwritten in a refresh process.
- Data delivered in multiple projections/datums should be names as follows:
 - roads_a-mo123.shp (standard UTM-NAD83)
 - roads_a-mo123_nad27.shp (UTM-NAD27)
 - roads-a-mo123_msp.shp (Montana State Plane)

Unique Datasets naming examples:

- townshps_a_mn012.shp (Townships Layer)
- coalmines_a_tn023.shp (Coal Mine Dataset)

Statewise vs. Countywide Data naming examples:

- plss_a_mt.shp (PLSS available for state of Montana)
- plss_a_mt031.shp (PLSS available for specific county in Montana)