

# FGDC Annual Report to OMB

## Format for Agency Reports – FY 2003

The following outline should be used by FGDC Member Agencies (or Bureaus) for their Annual Spatial Data Reports, which will be consolidated by the FGDC and submitted to OMB. Reports **should be brief, using bullets where possible**. Please provide only the information that will be useful for OMB to assess the agencies' achievements and for establishing future direction.

### Part A

#### GENERAL FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES REPORT (All Agencies)

1. Agency or Bureau:

**USDA Forest Service**

2. Name of Contact for Report:

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5. Subcommittee or Working Group Participation (Subcommittees or Working Groups your agency is involved with, but does not lead).

Subcommittees

**Base Cartographic  
Federal Geodetic Control  
Cadastral  
Spatial Water  
Vegetation**

Working Groups

**Clearinghouse  
Metadata Ad Hoc  
Sustainable Forest Data – Co-Lead  
Homeland Security  
Civilian Remote Sensing Ad hoc  
Biological Data Working Group**

6. Strategy: Has your agency prepared a detailed strategy for integrating geographic information and spatial data activities into your business process - in coordination with the FGDC strategy, pursuant to OMB Circular A-16? If yes, briefly describe.

**In 2002 the Forest Service (FS) developed a new Geospatial Strategy Team. Recognizing that technology is growing at an ever-accelerating pace and that the FS geospatial vision must be expanded to embrace these changes, this team has developed a strategy for integrating geospatial information technologies and data into Forest Service business policies and processes. The goal of the Geospatial Strategy is**

**“ To provide quality Forest Service geospatial information is available to internal and external customers in a timely manner.”**

7. Compliance: How are your spatial data holdings compliant with FGDC Standards? Also, please list the FGDC Standards you are using or plan to use in your organization.

**Not all Forest Service spatial data holdings are compliant with FGDC standards. The Forest Service's, large, widely dispersed, decentralized organizational structure poses many challenges for the assurance of total compliance with FGDC standards. Over the past 2 years much work has been done to develop a management framework to support, encourage and verify that spatial data is FGDC compliant, and is accompanied by FGDC compliant metadata.**

- **The agency has established a GIS Data Dictionary, which is undergoing continuous evolution and expansion. An operational principle governing the Change Management process for this GIS Data Dictionary is that its standards will be FGDC compliant for all areas covered by an FGDC standard and that elsewhere the standards will strive to represent the broadest consensus achievable.**
- **The Forest Service Geospatial Executive Board (GEB) sponsored the development and implementation of the Resource Mapping Evaluation Tool (RMET), which has been used to assess Forest Service spatial data holdings and determine compliance. The tool has been very helpful in determining where data compliance is lacking, so that efforts to correct this can be made.**
- **The Forest Service has also developed a Metadata Policy, which provides guidelines for providing FGDC compliant metadata.**
- **Through the FS FGDC Coordinating Committee, every effort is made to be involved in the FGDC Standards Development process to ensure these standards meet our business needs.**
- **Efforts to convert legacy data to FGDC standards are underway.**

**The Forest Service uses the following FGDC Standards:**

**Content Standard for Digital Orthoimagery**

**Content Standard for Framework Land Elevation Data**

**Geospatial Positioning Accuracy Standard, Part 3: National Standard for Spatial Data Accuracy**

**Cadastral Data Content Standard**

**NSDI Framework Transportation Identification Standard**

**Federal Standards for Delineation of Hydrologic Unit Boundaries**

**National Hydrography Framework Geospatial Data Content Standard**

**Vegetation Classification Standard**

**Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata: Extensions for Remote Sensing Metadata**

**Content Standard for Remote Sensing Swath Data**

**The Forest Service intends to use any required, existing FGDC standards for any geospatial information we generate and/or share.**

8. Redundancy: Prior to collecting data, how does your agency ensure that the data are not already available?

**The Forest Service avoids duplicative data collection through coordinated program management. The Forest Service Information Resources Board (IRB) is working to inventory all Information Assets (IA) and IA investments in an effort to ensure that the agency is coordinating plans for future IA investments to avoid duplicative spending. This process will be enhanced with the new Forest Service Natural Resources Applications (FSNRA) Geospatial Strategy, which will enable the integration of natural resources databases. The FSNRA integration is based upon the 1992 Forest Service Information Framework, which established the policy of “collect data once – use many times.” Internal coordination among various program areas combined with the FSNRA interface will provide further efficiency by enabling the Forest Service to reduce overall lifecycle costs; and optimize data acquisition, availability, distribution, and application support services.**

**Externally, the Forest Service will continue involvement with partners at the National level, for purposes of planning, program coordination and policy development. Participation in the National Digital Elevation Program (NDEP) and the National Digital Orthophoto Program (NDOP) and other such interagency programs ensures that resources are effectively leveraged to ensure mutual needs are satisfied and redundancy is avoided. At the Regional, State and local levels, cooperation on the working level is also critical to ensure the national policies, programs and plans are implemented.**

**The Forest Service will utilize the Geospatial One Stop Portal to review the posting of geospatial data acquisitions by other agencies to see look for opportunities to leverage funds for joint data acquisition and to ensure that we do not engage in collection of data where it already exists. The Forest Service will post acquisition plans, initially for large scale acquisitions and eventually for all data collection/acquisition activities.**

9. Collection: Do your agency contracts and grants involving data collection include costs for NSDI standards?

**National contracts include costs to cover collecting data to NSDI standards. Our National GIS Data Services Contract deals primarily with contracting work to convert legacy data to conform to NSDI standards, rather than actual collection of data. Contracts for actual data collection exist at the Region and Forest level and should contain provisions for NSDI standards. The agency has established a GIS Data Dictionary, which is undergoing continuous evolution and expansion. An operational principle governing the Change Management process for this GIS Data Dictionary is that its standards will be FGDC compliant for all areas covered by an FGDC standard and that elsewhere the standards will strive to represent the broadest consensus achievable.**

10. Clearinghouse: Is all the data and/or metadata that your agency is able to share with the public published on the NSDI Clearinghouse? If not, please cite barriers encountered.

The Forest Service is currently providing access to geospatial data through <http://fsgeodata.fs.fed.us>. The geospatial data sets provided through this web site includes: roads and trails, streams, water bodies, political and administrative boundaries, land ownership, and constructed features. These features are currently bundled together by individual quadrangles, and are commonly known as Cartographic Feature Files (CFFs). CFFs contain the vector representation of the point and line features shown on Forest Service Primary Base Series (PBS) maps. CFFs are downloadable in Arc Export (.e00) format. In addition, raster PBS quadrangle maps are provided through the web site. These softcopy PBS files are downloadable in Geotiff format.

The FSgeodata web site is currently being revised to include an ArcIMS web interface. The interface will allow users to query data based on metadata or geographic areas of interest. The development of the web application is complete. We are currently working with the USDA OCIO and the Forest Service IRM staff to configure a data base server within the USDA Fort Collins, CO web farm. Once the data base server has been properly configured to address USDA and Forest Service web security requirements, the new FSgeodata site will become operational. Forest Service geospatial data holdings, including metadata will be published through the NSDI Clearinghouse.

11. E-Gov: How are you using geospatial data in your mission activities to provide better services? (Please list)

12. Geospatial One-Stop: How is your agency involved in the Geospatial One-Stop?

The Forest Service has been very active in the Geospatial One-Stop since the initiative was launched early in FY2002. While the Forest Service is not a lead agency for any of the framework themes, we are a data provider for elevation, orthoimagery, hydrography, administrative boundary and cadastral data. We will be a provider of transportation data, in the near future. Therefore, Forest Service has provided FGDC and OMB with a point of contact to be involved in the standards development for each of these themes. The Forest Service has identified a Primary Point of Contact to be involved in coordination of Geospatial One Stop activities within the Forest Service and with our external partners. We have found funding within our budget to support Geospatial One Stop standards work and interoperability tool-set development and portal development. Forest Service Senior Executives, and the GEB are aware of the Geospatial One Stop initiative and are incorporating its requirements into Forest Service Geospatial Policy.

Forest Service is providing access to daily MODIS Active Fire maps and geospatial data to the wildland fire fighting community and the public through the Geospatial One-Stop portal. The Forest Service is using the NASA MODIS satellite system to map and monitor fires within the entire United States. Access to the Active Fire maps, geospatial data, metadata, and satellite imagery is linked to the Geospatial One-Stop web site. Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Data is available via the Geospatial One Stop Portal. Elevation and Orthoimagery and hydrographic data sets produced by the FS are also available via the portal as part of our cooperative partnerships with the

**USGS. More FS national spatial data sets will soon be available through the Geospatial One Stop portal upon the conversion from legacy formats and the generation of FGDC compliant metadata.**

13. Enterprise Architecture: Is geospatial data a component of your enterprise architecture? Please provide a brief summary of how geospatial data fits into your enterprise architecture.

The Forest Service Enterprise Architecture (EA) that is currently being developed will provide an overarching IT Framework to serve Forest Service business requirements. Geospatial Data is a component of this project, and is addressed in the Forest Service Data and Applications Architecture Framework (February 2002). In line with the FS Enterprise Architecture strategy, is the FS Geospatial Strategy, which defines how the FS EA will incorporate geospatial tools, data and activates. The plan addresses how geospatial activities fit into the overarching FS EA, as well as the USDA EA and the interagency Geospatial EA, which defines processes and procedures for federal agencies, state and local governments and others involved in serving data as part of the Geospatial One Stop initiative. The Forest Service Data and Applications Architecture Framework and Geospatial Strategy document are available upon request.

14. Partnerships: What efforts are being taken to coordinate data and build partnerships at the field level for data collection and standards development? Identify partnerships and data sharing activities with other federal agencies, state, local, and tribal governments and other entities.

The GEB has directed the field to continue and increase their level of involvement in cooperative agreements with federal agencies, state and local governments and tribes. A letter from the GEB chair to Regional Foresters and Station Directors was signed encouraging this effort and highlighting the benefits of cooperative partnerships. The Forest Service is active in I-Teams in Utah, Montana and other regions where I-Teams are at work. An additional spreadsheet listing the various partnerships and FS participation in geospatial data sharing groups is enclosed as an attachment. Because of the Forest Service's decentralized and dispersed nature, it is difficult to capture all the various cooperative partnerships, and this listing does not represent every partnership in which Forest Service is involved. National Cooperative Partnerships Include:

**Geospatial One Stop**

**Federal Geographic Data Coordination Group/Subcommittees and Working Groups**

**National Digital Elevation Program (NDEP)**

**National Digital Orthophoto Program (NDOP)**

**US Board On Geographic Names (BGN)**

**Lewis and Clarke Bicentennial Commemoration Committee/Mapping Subcommittee**

**National Atlas**

**National States Geographic Council (NSGIC)**

**Civil Applications Committee (CAC)**

**National Aerial Photography Program (NAPP)**

**National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)**

**USGS/FS Single Edition Program**

**USDA GeoData Committee**

**Ecological Society of America**

**NatureServe**

15. Concerns or Lessons Learned: Are there areas or issues regarding spatial data that require attention, or lessons learned that you would like to share with others? Please describe.