

National Bulletin: 430-23-15

Date: 09/08/2023

Subject: SOI–Comment Period for Removing gSSURGO from the  
List of National Geospatial Data Assets

**Action Required By: October 30, 2023**

**Purpose:** This national bulletin solicits comments on the proposed delisting of the gridded Soil Survey Geographic (gSSURGO) geodatabase from the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) [National Geospatial Data Asset \(NGDA\) list](#).

**Expiration Date:** November 30, 2023.

**Background:** The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-16 and Supplemental Guidance define NGDA as a geospatial dataset that has been designated as such by the FGDC Steering Committee and meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Supports mission goals of multiple federal agencies
- Is statutorily mandated
- Supports Presidential priorities as expressed by Executive Orders or by OMB.

Currently, the Soil and Plant Science Division manages five NGDAs:

- National Cooperative Soil Survey Soil Characterization database
- Major Land Resource Area dataset
- U.S. General Soil Map
- Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database
- gSSURGO geodatabase.

gSSURGO is an alternative format of SSURGO where the MUPOLYGON layer has been rasterized and renamed MapunitRaster\_30m. In addition, gSSURGO includes the Value1 table, which contains a handful of aggregated data columns not already present in the muaggatt table. If a user was to query both formats, they would get the same soil data.

Making a distinction between gSSURGO and SSURGO or other SSURGO formats creates additional bookkeeping of metadata and National Archives and Records Administration records that are otherwise identical, which has the potential to confuse users. No NGDA lists exist for other SSURGO interfaces, such as Web Soil Survey or Soil Data Access. For these reasons, it is argued that a separate FGDC NGDA record for gSSURGO is redundant.

**Explanation:** The Soil and Plant Science Division is proposing to merge gSSURGO with SSURGO. The merge will not affect the distribution of gSSURGO.

Those who wish to provide feedback on this proposal should send comments to Stephen Roecker by October 30, 2023.

**Contact:** Direct questions to Stephen Roecker, Geospatial Research Soil Scientist, at 402-437-4084 or [stephen.roecker@usda.gov](mailto:stephen.roecker@usda.gov).