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Geospatial Information Librarian

Evaluating Geospatial Data

Learning objective: Review available metadata to evaluate a geospatial dataset for authority, quality, and fitness for use.

Directions: Access the metadata for **one** of the following geospatial datasets:
- NLCD 2016 Land Cover (CONUS): go.osu.edu/metadata1
- Drinking Water Source Protection Areas - Ground Water Public Water Systems: go.osu.edu/metadata2

Answer the following questions. If you cannot find the answer within the metadata provided, indicate that in your response.

1) What individual, agency, or organization created the data? Would you consider this to be an authoritative source? Why or why not?

2) What is the geospatial data format (raster or vector)?

3) What is the resolution/scale of the data? If raster, report cell size. If vector, report scale.

4) What is the spatial reference of the data?
- Coordinate system (Geographic, UTM, State Plane, etc.)?
- Projection (Unprojected, Transverse Mercator, Albers Equal Area, etc.)?
- Datum (WGS84, NAD83, NAD27, etc.)?

5) What is the geographic extent of the data?

6) What time period is covered by the data?

7) When were these data created/published? How often are the data updated?

8) What attributes are included in the dataset? Is information about the attribute units/codes available?

9) How were the original data created (scanned maps, aerial/satellite imagery, etc.)?

10) Was all of the information you needed to answer these questions available in the metadata? If not, what other questions would you want answered before deciding to use (or not use) these data?

11) In addition to the questions above, what other factors might you consider when assessing the quality of this dataset?

12) In addition to the questions above, what other factors might you consider when assessing this dataset's fitness for use for a given application?