

README for “North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present” datasets.
Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
2020

LINKS TO DATASET

A. Dataset archive link:

<https://doi.org/10.21949/1519373>

SUMMARY OF DATASET

The North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present dataset is from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)/Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS') National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD). The NARN is a comprehensive database that provides ownership, track age rights, type, passenger, STRACNET, and geographic reference for North America's railway system at 1:24,000 or better within the United States. The data set covers all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Mexico, and Canada. Data is currently listed 1995-2015 and later datasets will be listed as they become available.

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

0. Title of Dataset:

North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present [datasets]

1. Description of Dataset:

The North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present dataset is from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)/Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS') National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD). The NARN is a comprehensive database that provides ownership, track age rights, type, passenger, STRACNET, and geographic reference for North America's railway system at 1:24,000 or better within the United States. The data set covers all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Mexico, and Canada. Data is currently listed 1995-2015 and later datasets will be listed as they become available.

2. Dataset archive link:

<https://doi.org/10.21949/1519373>

3. Authorship Information:

Principal Data Creator or Data Manager Contact Information

Institution: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

Address: 1200 New Jersey Ave SE, Washington D.C. 20590

Email: frapa@dot.gov

Data Distributor Contact Information

Name: National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD)

Institution: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), The Office of Spatial Analysis and Visualization (OSAV)

Address: 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington D.C. 20590

Email: ntad@dot.gov

4. Date of data collection and update interval:

Quarterly

5. Geographic location of data collection:

United States of America, Dominion of Canada, United Mexican States

6. Information about funding sources that supported the collection of the data:

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

B. SHARING/ACCESS & POLICIES INFORMATION

0. Recommended citation for the data:

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)[distributor]. (2020). NARN 1995-Present [datasets]. <https://doi.org/10.21949/1519373>

1. Licenses/restrictions placed on the data:

These data are in the Public Domain.

2. Was data derived from another source?:

Yes. The North American Rail Network was created using the preexisting FRA network 1:100k, the FRA Automated Track Inspection Program (ATIP) data, and the data provided to NGA by ORNL. The source data of the spatial features was based on FRA's ATIP foot by foot coordinates, where it existed, and the NGA/ORNL spatial content.

3. This dataset and its documentation was created and shared to meet the requirements enumerated in the U.S. Department of Transportation's "Plan to Increase Public Access to the Results of Federally-Funded Scientific Research" Version 1.1 <<

<https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/Official%20DOT%20Public%20Access%20Plan%20ver%201.1.pdf> >> and guidelines suggested by the DOT Public Access website <<

<https://ntl.bts.gov/publicaccess/>>>, in effect and current as of April 10, 2019.

C. DATA & RELATED FILE OVERVIEW

1. File List for the North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present [datasets] collection. The below list describes the files related to the collection.

A. Filename:

Current list of .zip files that are available and contained within this collection.

- rail100k_1995.zip
- rail2m_1995.zip
- rail2m_1996.zip
- rail100k_1997.zip
- rail2m_1997.zip
- rail100k_1999.zip
- rail2m_1999.zip
- rail100k_2000.zip
- rail2m_2000.zip
- rail100k_2001.zip
- rail2m_2001.zip
- rail100k_2002.shp.zip
- rail2m_2002.zip

- rail100k_2003.zip
- rail2m_2003.zip
- rail100k_2004.zip
- rail2m_2004.zip
- rail100k_2005.zip
- rail2m_2005.zip
- rail100k_2006.zip
- rail2m_2006.zip
- rail_2007.zip
- rail_2008.zip
- rail_2009.zip
- rail_2010.zip
- rail_2011.zip
- rail_2012.zip
- rail_2013.zip
- rail_2014.zip
- rail_2015.zip

A.1 Filename:

rail_.shp

Short description:

A Shapefile containing the geospatial data for the NARN 1995-Present dataset. Data is currently listed 1995-2015 and later datasets will be listed as they become available. The files found in each zip are the archived shapefiles, classified by vintage date.

A.2 Filename:

rail.xml

Short description:

An XML file containing full FGDC compliant metadata such as descriptions, tags, access use, and other contextual information. Listed are the archived XMLs, classified by vintage date.

B. Filename:

bts_NTAD_NARN_RAIL_DMP_20200319.pdf

Short description:

A PDF file containing the Data Management Plan that was created for current and future management of the data and associated files.

C. Filename:

bts_NTAD_NARN_RAIL_20200319_README.txt

Short description:

The README.txt file that includes human-readable information about the data, variable definitions, contact information, and other contextual information. The file you are reading now.

E. Filename:

NARN_DataDictionary.PDF

Short description:

A PDF file that contains the data dictionary for the NARN dataset from the years 2016-Present. Listed are the archived PDFs, classified by vintage date.

F. Filename:

bts_NTAD_NARN_RAIL_Metadata.json

Short description:

The machine-readable .json metadata file based on Project Open Data metadata schema v1.1.

D. METHODOLOGICAL INFORMATION

1. Description of methods used for collection/generation of data:

The North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-present was created using the preexisting FRA network 1:100k, the FRA Automated Track Inspection Program (ATIP) data, and the data provided to NGA by ORNL. The source data of the spatial features was based on FRA's ATIP foot by foot coordinates, where it existed, and the NGA/ORNL spatial content.

2. Instrument- or software-specific information needed to interpret the data:

The data and documentation files can be opened with Esri ArcMap and any GIS software package.

E. DATA-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. NARN data table

Data is updated quarterly. Dataset Manager is contacted to verify changes to data resulting in NTAD update. The metadata is updated in the same manner. For the most recent data, please visit the NTAD catalog at <https://data-usdot.opendata.arcgis.com/>

A. Number of variables (columns):

The data dictionary found in (PDF documentation) provides definitions for the variables

B. Data Dictionary/Variable List:

Because of the large number of variables, please refer to the Data Dictionary found within the file NARN_DataDictionary.pdf for names, definitions, and formats of variables.

C. Missing data codes:

None

F. UPDATE LOG

This bts_NARN_20200319_README.txt file was originally created on 2020-03-19 by Dominic Menegus, Geographer, dominic.menegus@dot.gov

[Note changes or update to the readme.txt file, e.g.:]

2020-03-19: Original file created