

Data Management Plan (DMP) for North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present Dataset

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA),
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Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)
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Change log:

2021-08-03: Initial DMP written

2025-05-29: Document revised, including dataset description.

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0. Dataset and Contact Information

Title of Dataset: North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present Dataset

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

This is an ☐ initial DMP or a ☒ revised DMP.

Organizational Contact Information

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

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Data Distributor Contact Information

Name: National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD)

Institution: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)

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

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1. Data Description:

The North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present dataset, formerly known as Rail Network, is from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)/Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS's) National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD). The NARN is a comprehensive database that provides ownership, trackage 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. Datasets will be listed as they become available.

2. Standards Employed:

The data files collected here are saved in the ubiquitous and common geospatial shapefile (.shp) and file geodatabase (.gdb) formats.

As the files created for this ingest were migrations from the original format in a SQL geodatabase, each data file name includes a date stamp indicating when the data in the shapefile was from.

Documentation will include this data management plan, and the metadata and readme files created in 2021.

Documentation will also include the shapefiles, data dictionary, and relevant supporting files created alongside the data from 1995-Present.

A Project Open Data Version 1.1 .xml metadata file will be created to describe the archival location of this data, and that .xml file will be uploaded to data.gov and transportation.data.gov

Necessary software tools: The file formats found in the zip files include: .txt files which can be opened using any text editor; .dbf files, which can be opened with Microsoft Excel; shapefiles (.shp, .shx, and .dbf) which can be opened with any GIS software program; and .pdf files which can be opened with PDF readers.

3. Access Policies:

These data files are in the public domain, and can be shared without restriction. The data files contain no sensitive information.

4. Re-Use, Redistribution, and Derivative Products Policies:

These data are managed by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. The data are in the public domain, and may be re-used without restriction.

Citation of the data is appreciated. Please use the following recommended citation:

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

5. Archiving and Preservation Plans:

The dataset will be archived in the National Transportation Library Repository and Open Science Access Portal (ROSA P). Prior to archiving, the data are stored on the secured BTS networks and drives, which are backed up nightly. The US DOT systems are secured from outside users and backed up daily.

Files in ROSA P are backed up in NTL drives at US DOT, daily; at the Centers for Disease Control, the repository managing facility, daily; and in Amazon Web Service Cloud servers in Virginia and Oregon daily.

The dataset will be retained in perpetuity.

NTL staff will mint persistent Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for each dataset stored in ROSA P. These DOIs will be associated with dataset documentation as soon as they become available for use.

The DOIs associated with this dataset include: <https://doi.org/10.21949/1519373>

The assigned DOI resolves to the repository landing page for the “North American Rail Network (NARN) 1995-Present” dataset, so that users may locate associated metadata and supporting files.

ROSA P meets all the criteria outlined on the “Guidelines for Evaluating Repositories for Conformance with the DOT Public Access Plan” page: <https://ntl.bts.gov/publicaccess/evaluatingrepositories.html>

6. Policies Affecting this Data Management Plan

This document was created 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://doi.org/10.21949/1520559> >> and guidelines suggested by the DOT Public Access website << <https://doi.org/10.21949/1503647> >>, in effect and current as of December 03, 2020.