

File formats for Domestic Geographic Names  
(National, State, Topical Gazetteer, and Federal Codes files)

### File Format for States, Territories, and Associated Areas of the United States

These files are available a National file, individual states, or individual states zipped into a single file.

Name	Type	Length/ Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	Permanent, unique feature record identifier and official feature name as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone</i> .
Feature Name	Character	120	
Feature Class	Character	50	<a href="#">Definitions</a>
State Alpha	Character	2	The unique two letter alphabetic code and the unique two number code for a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> .
State Numeric	Character	2	Some feature records in State files will display State Alpha and Number Codes for a State other than that requested. This is not an error. It indicates that the primary coordinates for the feature reside in another State, but that the feature crosses into and is included in the specified State. This also means that the feature record is included in both State files.
County Name	Character	100	The name and unique three number code for a county or county equivalent as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 31:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 6-4) <i>Codes for the Identification of Counties and Equivalent Entities of the United States, its Possessions, and Insular Areas</i>
County Numeric	Character	3	

Primary Latitude DMS	Character	7	The official feature location as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone.</i>
Primary Longitude DMS	Character	8	
Primary Latitude DEC	Number	11/7	<i>NAD 83 DMS-degrees/minutes/seconds DEC-decimal degrees.</i>
Primary Longitude DEC	Number	12/7	<i>Note: Records showing "Unknown" and zeros for the latitude and longitude DMS and decimal fields, respectively, indicate that the coordinates of the feature are unknown. They are recorded in the database as zeros to satisfy the format requirements of a numerical data type. They are not errors and do not reference the actual geographic coordinates at 0 latitude, 0 longitude.</i>
Source Latitude DMS	Character	7	Source coordinates of linear feature only (Class = Stream, Valley, Arroyo), NAD 83  DMS-degrees/minutes/seconds DEC-decimal degrees.  Note: Records showing "Unknown" and zeros for the latitude and longitude DMS and decimal fields, respectively, indicate that the coordinates of the feature are unknown. They are recorded in the database as zeros to satisfy the format requirements of a numerical data type. They are not errors and do not reference the actual geographic coordinates at 0 latitude, 0 longitude.
Source Longitude DMS	Character	8	
Source Latitude DEC	Number	11/7	
Source Longitude DEC	Number	12/7	
Elevation (meters)	Number	5	Elevation in meters above (-below) sea level of the surface at the primary coordinates from <a href="#">National Elevation Dataset</a>
Elevation (feet)	Number	6	Elevation in feet above (-below) sea level of the surface at the primary coordinates from <a href="#">National Elevation Dataset</a>

Map Name	Character	100	Name of USGS base series topographic map containing the primary coordinates.
Date Created	Date		The date the feature was initially committed to the database.
Date Edited	Date		The date any attribute of an existing feature was last edited.

### File Format for Populated Places, Historical Features, Concise Features

Populated Places – Names features with human habitation – cities, towns, villages, etc. Subset of National file.

Historical Features – Features that no longer exist on the landscape or no longer serve the original purpose. Subset of National file.

Concise Features – Large features that should be labeled on maps with a scale of 1:250,000-scale or smaller. Subset of National file. Last updated October 2, 2009.

Name	Type	Length/ Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	Permanent, unique feature record identifier and official feature name as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone</i> .
Feature Name	Character	120	
Feature Class	Character	50	<a href="#">Definitions</a>
State Alpha	Character	2	The unique two letter alphabetic code and the unique two number code for a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> .
State Numeric	Character	2	Some feature records in State files will display State Alpha and Number Codes for a State other than that requested. This is not an error. It indicates that the primary coordinates for the feature

			reside in another State, but that the feature crosses into and is included in the specified State. This also means that the feature record is included in both State files.
County Name	Character	100	The name and unique three number code for a county or county equivalent as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 31:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 6-4)
County Numeric	Character	3	<i>Codes for the Identification of Counties and Equivalent Entities of the United States, its Possessions, and Insular Areas</i>
Primary Latitude DMS	Character	7	The official feature location as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone.</i>
Primary Longitude DMS	Character	8	
Primary Latitude DEC	Number	11/7	<i>NAD 83 DMS-degrees/minutes/seconds DEC-decimal degrees.</i>
Primary Longitude DEC	Number	12/7	<i>Note: Records showing "Unknown" and zeros for the latitude and longitude DMS and decimal fields, respectively, indicate that the coordinates of the feature are unknown. They are recorded in the database as zeros to satisfy the format requirements of a numerical data type. They are not errors and do not reference the actual geographic coordinates at 0 latitude, 0 longitude.</i>
Source Latitude DMS	Character	7	Source coordinates of linear feature only (Class = Stream, Valley, Arroyo), NAD 83 DMS-degrees/minutes/seconds
Source Longitude DMS	Character	8	DEC-decimal degrees.  Note: Records showing "Unknown" and zeros for the latitude and longitude DMS and decimal fields, respectively, indicate that the coordinates of the feature are unknown. They are recorded in the database as zeros to satisfy the format requirements of a
Source Latitude DEC	Number	11/7	

Source Longitude DEC	Number	12/7	numerical data type. They are not errors and do not reference the actual geographic coordinates at 0 latitude, 0 longitude.
Elevation (meters)	Number	5	Elevation in meters above (-below) sea level of the surface at the primary coordinates from <a href="#">National Elevation Dataset</a>
Elevation (feet)	Number	6	Elevation in feet above (-below) sea level of the surface at the primary coordinates from <a href="#">National Elevation Dataset</a>
Map Name	Character	100	Name of USGS base series topographic map containing the primary coordinates.
Date Created	Date		The date the feature was initially committed to the database.
Date Edited	Date		The date any attribute of an existing feature was last edited.

### All Names File Format

All names, both official and variant for all features in the nation. This file contains only Feature IDs and names, and may be used in conjunction with the State and national files to obtain complete records. The key to the other files is the Feature ID. The Official Name for each feature in this file (Feature Name Official = Y) is the same as the Feature Name in the other files.

Name	Type	Length/Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	Permanent, unique feature record identifier
Feature Name	Character	120	Official feature name and variant names, if any.
Feature Name Official	Character	1	Each feature has one and only one official name where Feature Name Official = Y. Features may have variant names, that is names other than the official name, where Feature Name Official is null.
Citation	Character	4000	The authoritative source reference for a feature name or variant. Note: the former Reference Detail field was merged

			with the former Reference Description field to form the new Citation field.
Date Created	Date		The date the name was initially committed to the database.

### Feature Description/History File Format

Includes the following additional feature attributes: Description and History. This file is not a standard topical gazetteer file. If you need these additional feature attributes, you will need to associated the data, using the Feature ID column, with the data in one of our other files, such as an individual state or the national file.

Name	Type	Length/ Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	Permanent, unique feature record identifier
Description	Character	3000	A feature description is amplifying, clarifying, or unusual characteristics of or information about a feature or the feature data. This is unstructured textual data entered when available and not present for all entries.
History	Character	3000	A feature history is a description of the name origin, and physical and/or cultural history of a feature. This is unstructured textual data entered when available and not present for all entries.

### Government Units File Format

Official short names, alphabetic, and numeric codes of States.

Name	Type	Length/ Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	The Feature ID number for the governmental unit.
Unit Type	Character	50	The type of government unit. Values are County, State, Country.
County Numeric	Character	3	The unique three number code and name for a county or county equivalent as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 31:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 6-4)

County Name	Character	100	<i>Codes for the Identification of Counties and Equivalent Entities of the United States, its Possessions, and Insular Areas</i>
State Numeric	Character	2	1) The unique two number code for a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> , or 2) The unique two number code for a principle administrative division of countries other than the United States as specified in FIPS PUB 10-4, <i>Countries, Dependencies, Areas Of Special Sovereignty, And Their Principal Administrative Divisions</i> .
State Alpha	Character	2	The unique two letter code for a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> .
State Name	Character	100	1) The name of a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> , or 2) The name of a principle administrative division of countries other than the United States as specified in FIPS PUB 10-4, <i>Countries, Dependencies, Areas Of Special Sovereignty, And Their Principal Administrative Divisions</i> .
Country Alpha	Character	2	The unique two letter code and name of a country as specified in Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS PUB) 10-4, <i>Countries, Dependencies, Areas of Special Sovereignty, And Their Principal Administrative Divisions</i> .
Country Name	Character	100	
Feature Name	Character	120	Official feature name

### Federal Codes File Format

These files contain features with the following Federal location codes: 1) Census Code (formerly FIPS55 Place Code), 2) Census Class Code (formerly FIPS55 Class Code), 3) GSA Geolocation Code, or 4) OPM Duty Station Code.

The former FIPS 55-3 standard was superseded by ANSI standard INCITS 446-2008. Former FIPS 55 data have been incorporated into the GNIS. The GNIS Feature ID superseded the FIPS55 Place Code (now the Census Code) as the Federal and national standard geographic feature record identifier. The Census Bureau continues to assign five-digit Census Codes for internal purposes. The Census codes and Census Class codes ([Class Code Definitions](#)) will be available in these files and in the [GNIS Federal Codes](#) search site. Legacy systems are highly encouraged to convert to the Feature ID as soon as possible.

**State and County Codes:** INCITS 38:200x (Formerly FIPS 5-2) State codes and INCITS 31:200x (Formerly FIPS 6-4) county codes are separate standards and are NOT affected by this change. See [Census ANSI Codes](#) for additional information.

Name	Type	Length/ Decimals	Description
Feature ID	Number	10	Permanent, unique feature record identifier and official feature name as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone.</i>
Feature Name	Character	120	
Feature Class	Character	50	<a href="#">Definitions</a>
Census Code	Character	5	Formerly the FIPS55 Place Code and FIPS55 Class Code. See <a href="#">Census ANSI Codes</a> , for INCITS 446-2008, <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone.</i> <a href="#">Class Code Definitions</a>
Census Class Code	Character	2	
GSA Code	Character	4	General Services Administration (GSA) location code. Maintained by GSA as a place reference for administrative and personnel purposes. Not otherwise used or referenced by GNIS.
OPM Code	Character	9	Office of Personnel Management (OPM) location code. Maintained by OPM as a place reference for administrative and personnel purposes. Not otherwise used or referenced by GNIS.



State Numeric	Character	2	The unique two number code and the unique two letter alphabetic code for a US State as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 38:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 5-2) <i>Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas of the United States</i> .
State Alpha	Character	2	
County Sequence	Number	3	Sequence of counties containing the feature. #1 contains feature location.
County Numeric	Character	3	The unique three number code and name for a county or county equivalent as specified in <a href="#">INCITS 31:200x</a> , (Formerly FIPS 6-4) <i>Codes for the Identification of Counties and Equivalent Entities of the United States, its Possessions, and Insular Areas</i>
County Name	Character	100	
Primary Latitude	Number	11/7	The official feature location as defined in <a href="#">INCITS 446-2008</a> , <i>Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Its Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Twelve-Mile Statutory Zone</i> .  <i>Decimal degrees, NAD 83</i>
Primary Longitude	Number	12/7	
Date Created	Date		The date the feature was initially committed to the database.
Date Edited	Date		The date any attribute of an existing feature was last edited.