

TESTING A PROTOTYPE SPATIAL DATA EXCHANGE FORMAT---
THE FEDERAL GEOGRAPHIC EXCHANGE FORMAT EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

Successful exchange of digital cartographic and geographic data is dependent upon many factors. Recent standards development activities have attempted to address some of these factors, including data exchange formats. The Standards Working Group of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee on Digital Cartography has developed a prototype spatial data exchange format. This format, the Federal Geographic Exchange Format (FGEF), is designed to be a Federal governmentwide standard for the exchange of digital cartographic data, geographic data, spatially referenced data and associated attribute data. To help determine its strengths and weaknesses, assess its feasibility for use, and provide data for refinements and improvements, the format is being tested by a number of Federal agencies. Four levels of testing have been identified: (1) an agency tests the format for its ability to handle just its own data, (2) an agency develops capabilities to handle all FGEF data types, (3) two agencies exchange selected data types, and (4) two agencies exchange files that test all data types. The testing of the prototype FGEF is expected to be completed in the spring of 1987. This paper outlines the methodology used and reports on some preliminary testing results.

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