



Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network Inventory and Monitoring Program Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Electronic File Naming Guidelines and Standards

Version 1.0 (May, 2012)

DRAFT

The following table lists all changes that have been made to this Standard Operating Procedure since the original publication date. Any recommended or required changes added to the log must be complete and concise and promptly brought to the attention of the Data Manager. The Data Manager will review and incorporate all changes, officially complete the revision history log, and change the date and version number on the title page.

Revision History Log:

New Version #	Previous Version #	Revision Date	Author (full name, title, affiliation)	Location in Document and Description of Change	Reason for Change

Developed by:
Dennis Skidds, National Park Service, Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network.

Recommended Citation

NPS, 2012. Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network Electronic File Naming Guidelines and Standards, U.S. National Park Service, Kingston, RI.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	3
II. Scope	3
III. Standards for File Name Components	3
IV. Electronic File Name Syntax Standards.....	5
V. Special Case for Files Posted to the NPS Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA)	7
VI. References.....	7

I. Introduction

The following guidelines were developed to ensure that files stored on the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network's data servers are named in a consistent manner that facilitates their discovery and retrieval by Network staff members. Naming records consistently, logically, and in a predictable way will allow similar records to be efficiently distinguished from one another, and the establishment of accepted naming conventions relieves staff members and cooperators of the need to develop their own standards.

II. Scope

These standards apply to the Northeast Coastal and Barrier Network, and implementation of these standards by network staff is mandatory. In addition, these naming standards should be provided to all contractors producing electronic files as deliverables, and when appropriate, should be included as deliverable specifications within new agreements or contracts.

The following table outlines the types of digital file categories that are considered "Electronic Files" for the purposes of this guidance document.

Digital File Type	Description	Examples
Raw Data	Data which has not been processed. Data that cannot be calculated or derived from other information.	GPS files, digital photos, sound/video recordings, telemetry data, remote-sensing imagery.
Processed Data	Data which a staff member or cooperator has input into a computer and manipulated to create an output product.	Relational databases, tabular or spreadsheet data files, GIS feature classes/projects, digital maps.
Documentation	Any materials (text, video, audio, etc., or combinations thereof) used to explain some attributes of a file, system, or procedure.	Proposals, correspondence, meeting agendas/summaries, spreadsheets, metadata, manuals, sound/video recordings.
Reports	Synthesized accounts or summaries of events, processes, systems, or analyses.	Final reports, publications, plans. Can be published or unpublished.
Administrative Records	Files which serve to document the functions, policies, decisions, or other activities of the Network.	Contracts, agreements, purchase orders, study plans, specifications, research permits, personnel records, budget documents, email.

III. Standards for File Name Components

File names will consist of a series of up to eight components separated by underscore characters ("_") and followed by the appropriate file extension. Each component will offer users information concerning a unique aspect of the file. Inclusion of each component within a file name should be considered "mandatory if applicable."

The components of a file name will adhere to the following format:

ParkCode_Date_Author_ShortTitle_DocumentType_Status_Sensitivity_ReferenceID.Extension

The following provides a brief description and examples each component.

1. **ParkCode**: The initial part of an electronic file name will indicate the park, network, etc. Options include
 - a. Single park code:
 - ASIS – Assateague Island National Seashore
 - CACO – Cape Cod National Seashore
 - COLO – Colonial National Historical Park
 - FIIS – Fire Island National Seashore
 - GATE – Gateway National Recreation Area
 - GEWA – George Washington Birthplace National Monument
 - SAHI – Sagamore Hill National Historic Site
 - THST – Thomas Stone National Historic Site
 - b. Two parks, list them in alphabetical order.
 - i. GEWATHST
 - ii. FIISSAHI
 - c. More than two parks:
 - i. NCBNNY – for the NCBN parks in New York
 - ii. NCBNMD – for the NCBN parks in Maryland
 - iii. NCBNVA – for the NCBN parks in Virginia
 - iv. NCBN – where parks are mixed or the file applies to the entire network.
2. **Date**: The Date component will adhere to the format **yyymmddtttt**, with the “tttt” time component referring to military time, when applicable. The date can be abbreviated as appropriate. For example, for working drafts, the “tttt” portion might be appropriate, while for annual reports, the “yyyy” component might suffice.
3. **Author**: The Author component will consist of the primary author’s last name. This section will not include second authors, et al, etc.
4. **Short Title**: A short title or content description. The Short Title component should be as brief as possible while still remaining informative to users.

Examples:

MammalInv – Mammal Inventory
HerpInv – Amphibian and Reptile Inventory
BirdInv – BirdInventory
VegProtocol – VegetationProtocol

5. **DocumentType**: The Document Type may contain easily recognizable abbreviations and should not include spaces between multiple words.

Examples:

Journal	Thesis	BookChapter
Report	Dissertation	Dataset
TechReport	Book	CoopAgreement
GPS	Proposal	TripReport

6. **Status:** The Status of the document (e.g., Draft, Unpublished) should be listed here for anything but a final report, which may optionally be labeled “Final.”
7. **Sensitivity:** If the electronic file is considered sensitive, labels such as “SENSITIVE” or “NPSONLY” should be used for this component. All labels in this section should appear in all caps.
8. **ReferenceID:** Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) Reference ID – to show that the document has been catalogued and is a final version.

IV. Electronic File Name Syntax Standards

The following general guidelines should be followed when composing file names:

1. Electronic file names should be short as possible, but include all applicable information.
2. File names should be unique. Efforts should be made to minimize the likelihood of more than one file on the Network servers having the same name
3. Version numbers (e.g. version1, v2, etc.) should not be used within file names. The electronic file date component (yyyymmddtttt) will be used to denote electronic file versions.
4. In general, lower case characters are preferred. Exceptions include NPS unit codes and other such acronyms (e.g., NCBN, ASIS, GATE). It is also acceptable to mix upper and lower case letters in a filename to separate a concatenation of words, such as the words in a report title.
5. Avoid spaces in file names, instead using the underscore to separate components.
6. Avoid using special characters other than the underscore (_), and period (.).
7. Use only generally recognizable abbreviations or spell words out.
8. Avoid uncommon acronyms, abbreviations, and codes, such as those that require users to refer to another source for their descriptions. NPS unit codes and acronyms in common use within and outside the National Park Service and related to natural resource management are acceptable (e.g., USGS, NOAA).
9. Use leading zeroes for numbers 1 through 9. For example, within the date “20080301.”
10. Use the default extension recommended by the software application associated with the document. (E.g., .doc; .xls; .mdb; .rtf)

The following table provides examples for naming a variety of different types of electronic files.

**Reference Sheet
Examples of Electronic File Names**

ParkCode_Date_Author_ShortTitle_DocumentType_Status_Sensitivity_BibkeyID.Extension

File Type	Examples
Published Report <u>NPS Natural Resource Technical Report</u> for a bird data synthesis project for Gateway National Recreation Area	GATE_2006_Mizrahi_BirdInventory_TechnicalReport_649999.pdf
Journal Article in PDF format on vegetation mapping using Lidar at Assateague Island national Seashore.	ASIS_2006_Nayaghandi_LidarVegMapping_Journal.pdf
Final DATA Database for odonate inventory at George Washington Birthplace NM and Colonial NHP with sensitive data	COLOGEWA_200610_Chazal_OdonateSurvey_Final_SENSITIVE_650030.mdb
RAW DATA GPS Downloaded File of transect locations for a herpetological inventory in Assateague Island national Seashore.	ASIS_20041115_Brotherton_HerpKMPosts_GPS_Raw.ssf
Final DATA Metadata file associated with shapefile containing GPS shoreline data from Fire Island national Seashore	FIIS_20071017_line.shp.xml
Processed Data Excel Spreadsheet of Arthropods in Assateague Island National Seashore.	ASIS_20080208_Orr_ArthropodList.xls
Unpublished Document MS PowerPoint Presentation on GIS projects for NE Region GIS Managers Conference, May 16, 2006, not using optional fields.	20060516_Stevens_I&MNERGIS.ppt
Map produced for final report, herpetological survey of Sagamore Hill NHS.	SAHI_20041202_Skidds_HerpInvSpRichness_Map_Draft.jpg
Digital Photo JPEG format by Norbert Psuty – GPS training at Fire Island national Seashore; fifth photo in sequence of 7 of the same subject.	FIIS_20071017_Psuty_GPSTraining.jpg

V. Special Case for Files Posted to the NPS Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA)

Files posted as electronic holdings to the NPS Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) are generally for public consumption and may not require that all of the file-name components necessary for cataloging files on the Network's servers and workstations. For such files, an abbreviated file naming convention is recommended:

ParkCode_Date_Author_ShortTitle_DocumentType.Extension

An example, therefore, of a file name for an annual report posted to IRMA might be:

ASIS_2011_Psuty_ShorelineTrend_AnnualReport.pdf

Official copies of such files kept on the Network's servers or workstations, however, should adhere to the more comprehensive naming conventions outlined in the previous sections.

VI. References

Lineback, P.L., 2006. Sierra Nevada Network Electronic File Naming Guidelines and Standards, U.S. National Park Service, Three Rivers, CA.

NPS, 2007. Mid-Atlantic Network Electronic File Naming Guidelines and Standards, U.S. National Park Service, Fredericksburg, VA.