

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**[Docket No. 950728196--5196-011****Use of the "NAD / GWS 84" Datum Tag on Mapping Products***[Note error: GWS should be WGS.]***AGENCY:** Office of National Geodetic Survey, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.**ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: The Office of National Geodetic Survey, redefined and readjusted the North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27), creating the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). The World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS 84) was defined by the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA). The interagency Federal Geodetic Control Subcommittee (FGCS) at its meeting on December 7, recommended that "All maps and charts produced for North America, at scales of 1:5,000 or smaller, that are based on *either* the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) or the World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS 84), should have the horizontal datum labeled as NAD 83/WGS 84".

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following supplementary information was reviewed by FGCS membership. A **Federal Register** notice published on June 29, 1979 (44 FR 37969), by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provided notification of the establishment of a new Datum (NAD 83) to which the geographic and plane coordinate values for the National Network of Horizontal Geodetic Control would be referenced. A **Federal Register** notice published on June 14, 1989 (54 FR 25318), by NOAA affirmed NAD 83 as the official horizontal datum for all future U.S. surveying and mapping activities performed or financed by the Federal Government. Furthermore, this notice said that to the extent practicable and feasible, all Federal agencies using coordinate information should provide for an orderly transition to NAD 83.

Both NAD 83 and WGS 84 were originally defined (in words) to be geocentric and oriented as the Bureau International de l'Heure (BIH) Terrestrial System. In principle, the three-dimensional coordinates of a single physical point should therefore be the same in both NAD 83 and WGS 84 systems; in practice, small differences are sometimes found. The original intent was that both systems would use the Geodetic Reference System of 1980 (GRS 80) as a reference ellipsoid. As it happened, the WGS 84 ellipsoid differs very slightly from GRS 80. The difference is 0.0001 meters in the semi-minor axis.

Effective January 2, 1994, the WGS 84 reference system was realigned to be compatible with the International Earth Rotation Service's Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF).

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