

# Who benefits from knowing about your data?

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The information that is collected in this “**Science Data Exit Survey**” form will help ensure that the value and scientific legacy of your work conducted at the USGS continues well into the future. You are the person with the most knowledge and understanding about how and why the information was collected, who could (and should) use it, and how it may be accessed in the future. Many people within your office and the USGS, as described below, can benefit from documenting the data you created or worked on.

## Local Benefactors

**Supervisor** – The Supervisor can help determine what data, hardware and/or other equipment needs to be transferred or routed to other employees or other entities. Supervisors can use this information in many ways including: identifying critical data resources; determining future task plans for other employees; or defining emeriti agreements. A Supervisor may employ local or regional data management staff to assist in evaluating data identified in this form.

**Science Center Directors** – SC Directors are responsible for all information that is collected and managed within their office. Well-documented data and other information items are valuable assets that will allow for the Centers to re-use their data in ongoing and future research. Information from the Exit Survey also improves the Science Center’s compliance with many Federal directives, such as Fundamental Science Practices, Survey Manual Chapters, information security, data preservation, and data access, among others.

**IT personnel** – USGS IT personnel are required to delete, destroy, surplus, or otherwise re-allocate IT resources from departing staff. It is critical for them to understand ongoing needs for any data files and information stored on equipment before this occurs. Examples could include important data stored on a hard drive, including federal records, PII data, copyright data or litigation data, a web server that the employee was managing that still has important customers, or software license keys.

**Science Center Data Managers** – Persons familiar with USGS data management principles could be well-positioned to coordinate the future activities for the data that the departing employee leaves behind. This could involve records management components, property transfers, IT coordination, etc. Often there are no local data managers available, and this could be an opportunity for the [Science Data Coordinator Network](#) to provide guidance. Science Center Data Managers may also be involved in conducting the Exit Survey and ensuring that the data are well-documented.

## USGS Beneficiaries

**Records Management** – The USGS Records Management Program office provides capability to store official Federal records after an employee has departed. The USGS RMP would greatly benefit from understanding data that is relevant to their efforts. They have capabilities for long-term preservation of

digital and physical data assets. This office also provides guidance in determining how long USGS is to retain Federal records and when to transfer permanent records to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The Program provides local support in the form of [Records Liaison Officers and Coordinators](#). Each Mission Area and Program has been assigned a point of contact; please contact this network for help on filling out the Exit Survey or for questions about records management in general.

**Library** – Some libraries already have a process in place to assist in cataloging and storing data, such as field photographs and field records (notebooks). However, libraries often are not notified that a person is leaving, and if they are, it is often too late in the process to catalog and store the data. This form would alert those involved in filling out the form that resources may already exist, and would give libraries more time to be part of the process.

**Human Resources** – While most HR departments are not concerned with data, HR could serve as a spring-board to ensure that such a survey is performed.

**Publication Service Centers** – Such centers may need to terminate or otherwise adjust publication products with which the departing scientist is involved.

**Laboratory Managers** – Analytical lab equipment or computers may have vital components in the preservation of laboratory procedures. Managers may need detailed documentation on the status of this equipment. Departing scientists may have data-release holds with analytical laboratories—often for pending publications—that they may wish to release. In addition, most of the higher-level instruments in a lab have their own type of data file that can only be viewed within the framework software that comes with the instrument. These data files are often overlooked, and the information lost.