



# NGS Invites Public Comment on Retiring the U.S. Survey Foot After 2022

NOAA's National Ocean Service sent this bulletin at 10/21/2019 10:00 AM EDT



## Public Comment on Retiring the U.S. Survey Foot

The National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Office of Weights and Measures and NOAA's National Geodetic Survey (NGS) have co-issued a [Federal Register Notice \(FRN\)](#) to retire the U.S. Survey Foot After 2022.

We are soliciting public comment to ensure that this change is made in an orderly fashion with minimal disruption.



*Detail of Bronze Yard No.11  
NIST Museum Collection*

### Important Dates:

- October 17, 2019 - First FRN Published inviting public comment on deprecation of the U.S. survey foot after 2022.
- December 2, 2019 - Comment period deadline. Submit all comments electronically by this date.
- June 30, 2020 - Final Rule - A second FRN will formally announce the change will be published before this date and will describe the details and the change process.
- December 31, 2022 - The U.S. survey foot will be deemed obsolete and superseded by the foot (formerly known as the international foot) equal to 0.3048 meter exactly for all applications.

### Submitting Comments:

NIST and NOAA are managing the submission and posting of public comments online. Use the "Submit a Formal Comment" link near the top right of the [Federal Register webpage](#). You can also search for the FRN at <https://www.regulations.gov/>.

## Background

The definition of the foot was updated in 1959 in the United States, but a previous definition of the foot is still in use and has caused confusion over time. The legally defined "international foot" and the older "U.S. survey foot" differ by only 0.01 foot per mile.

However, having both definitions in use often has resulted in confusion in surveying and mapping where computing accurate coordinates over large distances are commonly required. Retiring the U.S. survey foot will eliminate this confusion, and after 2022 the international foot will simply be called the foot. [Read more on the NIST website.](#)



*Surveyor's Chain (1/2 Gunter)  
National Museum of American History*

The modernization of the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS) in 2022 is the perfect time to move the United States toward a single, uniform definition of the foot. Both NOAA and NIST have decided to deprecate the US foot through two co-issued Federal Register Notices, and by conducting public outreach.

## Learn More

- Register for our December 12, 2019 webinar titled, "[Putting the Best 'Foot' Forward: Ending the Era of the U.S. Survey Foot.](#)"

**Register  
For This Webinar**

- Read the story "[A Tale of Two Feet](#)" from the National Ocean Service.
- View our recorded public webinar titled, "[Fate of the U.S. Survey Foot after 2022: A Conversation with NGS.](#)"
- Watch a short video on this topic, titled "[Two Right Feet? U.S. Survey Feet vs. International Survey Feet.](#)"