

Metadata

Metadata is information that describes the content, quality, condition, origin, and other characteristics of data or other pieces of information. Metadata for spatial data may describe and document its subject matter; how, when, where, and by whom the data was collected; availability and distribution information; its projection, scale, resolution, and accuracy; and its reliability with regard to some standard. Metadata consists of properties and documentation. Properties are derived from the data source (for example, the coordinate system, projection of the data, and date/year of data) and documentation is entered by a person (for example, keywords used to describe the data). Metadata within this folder is stored in **.htm** files (html document) and also **.xml** files (seen within a shapefile or feature class). If you have ArcGIS Desktop you can view the metadata in ArcCatalog under the tab 'metadata'. If you don't have ArcGIS it is recommended to view the metadata in the **.htm** files by clicking on the **.htm** file. For better metadata viewing it is recommended to use the 'mgmg' stylesheet developed by LMIC (Land Management Information Center). To download the mgmg stylesheet for ArcGIS 9 visit: <http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/chouse/arccatalog.html>.

Listed below is an example of the metadata files for a specific shapefile (data\resource\shapefiles\mn_dnr\spatial\carlsgp.shp):

- **carlsgp.htm** {metadata document}
- **carlsgp_att.htm** {Attached attribute table}
- **carlsgp.shp.xml** {best read in a GIS program like ArcGIS 9x, or ArcExplorer 9x}.