

Questions from the April 19, 2023 [NOAA Custom Chart version 2.0 Webinar](#)

Similar questions have been combined and some questions have been edited for clarity or brevity. Many of these questions were answered during the webinar. The Q&As below provide answers to the questions that there was not time to address and more complete answers to other questions.

Additional questions or comments about the NOAA Custom Chart application or any other NOAA Office of Coast Survey product or service may be submitted through the Assist form at: <https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/customer-service/assist>

NOAA Custom Chart Application

Do I need to set up an account on the website?

No, anyone can use the online NOAA Custom Chart application at <https://devgis.charttools.noaa.gov/pod> directly without any registration.

Is there an "app" available for downloading?

No, only the online application is available. There are no plans to develop a downloadable app.

Can you show the current display scale in the chart viewer window?

This would be difficult to calculate, because the size of each user's display screen, and thus the scale of the chart shown would vary.

The NOAA Custom Chart Output

What resolution is the custom chart?

The PDF file produced consists of vector data, so resolution does not apply. The image does not pixelate when zooming in.

Are the PDF files of the chart saved as Geospatial PDF files?

Yes, NOAA Custom Chart outputs Geospatial PDF files, although, NOAA custom charts are not intended to be used in digital navigation systems

Could a product be produced to easily use in Google Earth Pro

No, NOAA Custom Chart only outputs Geospatial PDF files. There are no plans to support other formats at this time. Users who wish to see the most up to date ENC data in conjunction with imagery can use the ENC Online Viewer tool at: <https://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/enonline/enonline.html>

How can insets from traditional paper nautical charts be created with NOAA Custom Chart? The NOAA Custom Chart application can only create a single map panel for each custom chart, but separate custom charts can be created for the larger scale coverage that might appear as an inset on a traditional paper nautical chart.

Have you considered the possibility to allow printing a S-52 symbology chart?

The original version of the NOAA Custom Chart Application used only S-52 symbology, the symbols used in the Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) navigation systems used by large commercial vessels. S-52 symbology was created specifically for digital displays and it was determined not to be satisfactory for paper charts.

What units does NOAA Custom Chart display bridge clearances in?

The source ENC data stores bridge clearances in meters. A recent change to the NOAA Custom Chart application now displays bridge clearances in feet if the user selects depths to be displayed in feet or fathoms. The translation of meters to feet often rounds down a whole foot from a bridge clearance shown on traditional paper nautical charts. We hope that an update to the application will be able to display bridge clearances to tenths of feet in the near future.

As NCC symbology is improved, is the same symbology also applied to the NOAA Chart Display Service?

Yes, the symbology used on NOAA Custom Charts and the NOAA Chart Display Service is closely linked and features on each will be portrayed in the same way.

Is there an option to print a chart larger than 36" wide?

Yes, the two plotter paper options provide the ability to plot charts 48" x 36" and 56" x 36".

Question: What happens when you are creating a custom chart using 2 paper charts where there isn't a continuity between them due to scale difference, etc.

Discontinuities will be evident within a NOAA custom chart if there is a significant change in the scale of the underlying ENC data that is used to make the chart. The characteristics of traditional paper chart coverage (or the lack of it) do not affect the NOAA Custom Chart output. These "breaks" across the data on a custom chart aren't necessarily bad. They simply reflect the various scales of the available data. The discontinuities are most noticeable when the density of depth features (soundings and depth contours) changes as a result of data being compiled for ENC cells of different scales. As NOAA reschemes its ENC product suite and reduces the number of ENC scales from over 100 to just 12 standard scales, discontinuities will be greatly reduced. If the change in scales is large and the resulting custom chart is hard to read, the issue can be resolved by making two custom charts in the area, one at each of the different ENC scales.

How can I get NOAA Custom Charts printed?

NOAA Custom Charts can be printed by any commercial print shop. There are also some NOAA Print on Demand (POD) chart agents that have a customer webpage and services specially devoted to printing custom chart PDF files created by the public. A list is at: www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/publications/print-agents.html#ncc

Raster Charts

If you have a traditional paper chart number, can you bring up the equivalent ENC chart number?

Although many ENCs have the same scale and similar footprint as the paper charts that they were originally digitized from, NOAA is rescheming its entire ENC product suite. Thus, the link between traditional paper nautical charts is fading and will cease altogether in the next few years.

Do you plan to provide predefined charts or have a means for users to see the footprints of traditional paper charts or Raster Navigational Charts (RNCs) within the NOAA Customer Chart Application?

No, as shown in the webinar, as the scales of the underlying ENC data are changed as part of rescheming the NOAA ENC product suite, it becomes impossible to fit the different (usually larger scale) data into the same paper size used in the legacy, traditional paper charts. Therefore, there are no plans to create predefined custom charts or have any other references to traditional paper charts within the NOAA Custom Chart Application.

Can we use the original NOAA chart numbers on our custom charts?

You are free to name your custom chart as you wish, but there is a good chance that you will have difficulty having it match the original paper chart footprint and scale as a result of the underlying ENC data being reschemed. It should also be noted that once a traditional paper nautical chart is canceled - as described in the Coast Survey's Farewell to Traditional Nautical Charts webpage at:

<https://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/charts/farewell-to-traditional-nautical-charts.html>. Notices to mariners are no longer issued against those chart number for canceled charts and they are no longer referenced in the USCG Light Lists or NOAA's Coast Pilot sailing directions.

Updates / Notices to Mariners

With the new updates to the chart would they have to reprint a new chart?

If one wanted a custom chart to match the latest data available in NOAA ENCs, it would have to be re-exported and printed anytime the underlying ENC data was updated.

Could the ENC Updates Website be used as a type of LNM?

NOAA is working on a new version of the Online Chart Updates website to replace the current version at: https://distribution.charts.noaa.gov/weekly_updates. This will make it easier to determine when ENC data used for a particular custom chart has been changed. We hope to enable users to load a NOAA Custom Chart personal chart catalog into the new update website and out a list of changes for each chart, for a specific timeframe entered by the user.

How do you determine the release date of the chart being displayed? The LNM release date?

Any given NOAA Custom Chart is likely to be created from data from several ENCs. Local Notices to Mariners (LNMs) are issued by the USCG for specific traditional paper nautical charts, not ENCs. NOAA applies critical updates to both traditional paper nautical charts and to ENCs, but LNM "Last corrected" or "Cleared through" dates associated with paper charts do not apply to ENCs. NOAA posts revisions to ENCs weekly and NOAA Custom Charts created from these ENCs reflect the latest updates available on the day on which the custom chart is created.

Are NOAA ENC charts more up to date then NOAA Custom Charts? If so, what is the typical difference?

NOAA Custom Charts are created directly from the latest ENC data. Therefore, the data on ENCs and custom charts match on the day on which the custom chart is created. The date is printed in the lower left corner of the custom chart.

If I wanted to get the most current data from the NOAA Custom Chart application, I should wait until after 11:00 pm on Thursday?

Yes, NOAA updates its ENC product suite every Thursday night. Custom charts created directly after this time will have the "freshest" data. Timing will become less of a factor soon, as NOAA hopes to change from weekly updates to daily (weekday) updates sometime in 2023.

Chart Carriage

Do NOAA Custom Charts meet USCG carriage requirements for regulated vessels?

The U.S. Coast Guard has asked NOAA to direct the public to send all questions and comments regarding nautical chart carriage requirements to the USCG Navigation Center at:

<https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/contact/contact-us>