North America Route Program
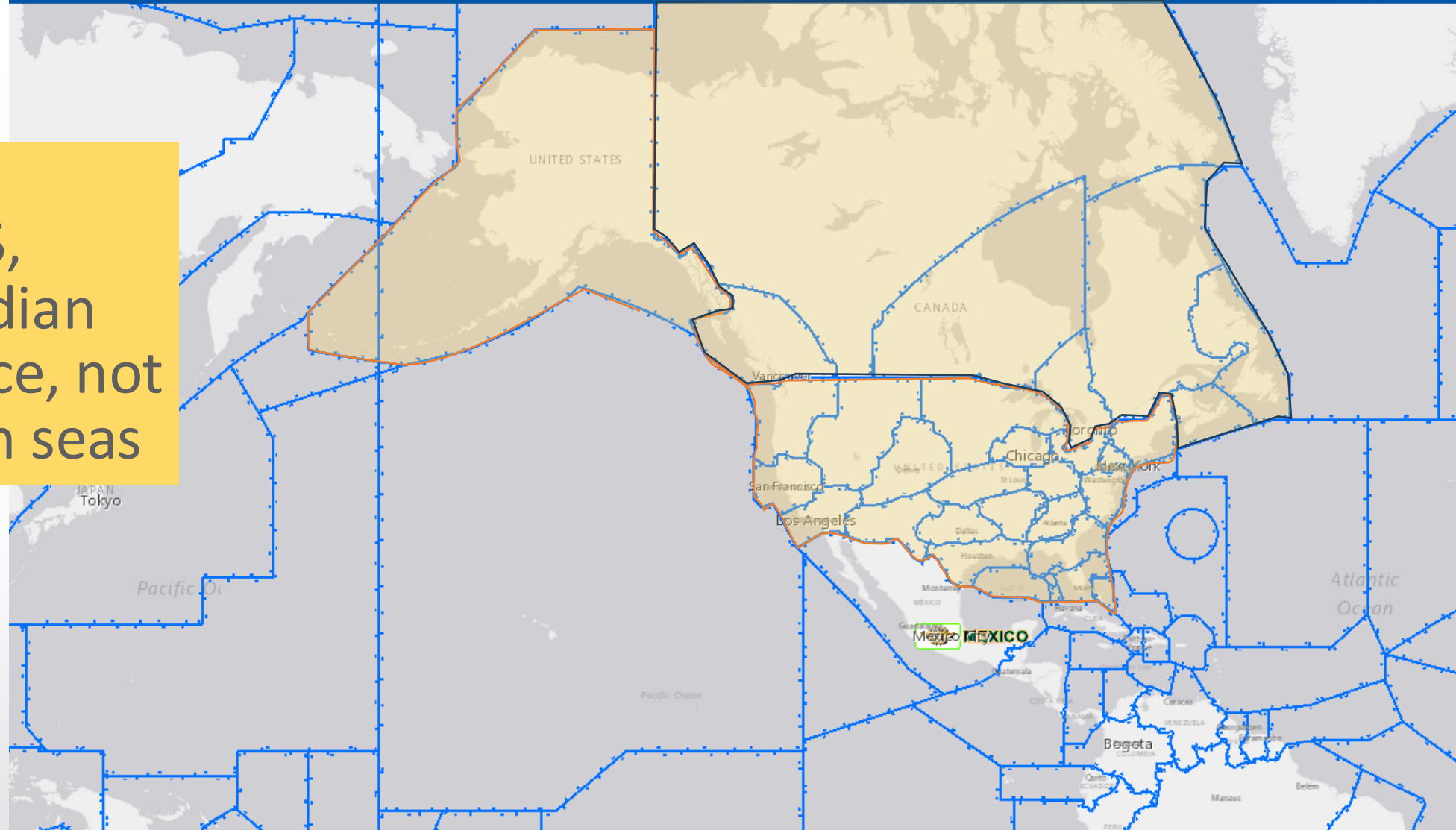
Free Route Airspace (FRA) and the North America Route Program (NRP)

- NRP is the implementation of FRA in the United States and Canada

- NRP has existed for over 25 years

Federal Aviation
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NRP applies to conterminous US, Alaska and Canadian Sovereign airspace, not delegated or high seas

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Current Implementation (last updated 2008)

Airspace users can file optimized routes with the following rules

- For the first 200 NM and last 200 NM, the flight will use published ATS routes and/or procedures (SID/STAR)

- FL290 and above

- One fix/waypoint in each ACC

- Fix/waypoint within 30NM of either side of the USA/Canadian border

- "NRP" is included in the Remarks section of the flight plan

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Competing ICAO Long Term Aspirational Goals – FRA vs PBN

- PBN airways have been implemented along the east coast of the USA

- Some of these airways have 6 mile lateral spacing

- Designed for high volume operations

- Some airways are directional with heavy climbing/descending traffic

- PBN structure designed to segregate grouping of city pairs

- FRA operations create safety problems in this environment

Adjustments to FRA/NRP in progress

- Disallow FRA east of the 85th Longitudinal line, working with Canada on the boundary of FRA airspace in their airspace

- Update the definition of a waypoint

- Update automation requirements for distances between waypoints to reflect current capabilities

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