SoNAS Secure Data Transfer

SoNAS is offered by ITS Research Computing as a method to securely exchange data amongst computers anywhere in the world or across campus. Data is encrypted from end-to-end. To gain access to the data, the ftp site maintained by ITS allows for both anonymous and ONYEN based user authentication. The SoNAS method of electronic data exchange satisfies the UNC policy to transmission of sensitive data. It is a very useful, handy, and easy way to exchange data with someone that you interact with frequently. If you only plan a one-time or very limited data exchange, then SoNAS is perhaps not worth the effort to set up.

Essentially, you will be provided with a "drop box" on a secure server that is maintained by ITS. This "drop box" is a server folder that you decide who has access to it. When you have sensitive data to exchange with someone, you simply place your data file in the drop box using a Secure FTP utility (described later on), then notify your recipient that it is ready to be retrieved. The recipient then uses a Secure FTP utility to authenticate and access the drop box, and download the file to their machine.

ONYEN users: For those with valid ONYEN accounts, you can upload, download, and delete data from the drop box once you request access and the ITS Research Computing administrators have created a secure directory (drop box) for that user and/or the user's group of collaborators.

Non-ONYEN users: Anonymous users are allowed to upload data only, no downloading. The University is investigating the possibility of establishing "guest ids" for purposes of downloading, but the timeline is not established. If downloading is necessary, please consider establishing a University PID for your affiliate, after which an UNC ONYEN can be created:
http://pid.csit.unc.edu/Home/GetyourPID/OtherAffiliates/tabid/1082/Default.aspx

A University affiliate can login as "ftp" or "anonymous", no password required. This is useful for University collaborators without UNC PIDs and ONYENs but who require data sharing. Anonymous users should send an email to research@unc.edu to notify them that you have dropped data on the site including: your name and affiliation, a list of file names, and the name of the particular intended University member. Data put on the site without an email will not be delivered to the intended person's drop box and will be deleted within 48 hours. Email notification is not necessary for those ftp users with ONYENs.

The site requires all users to use FTPS (FTP over SSL / TLS) Explicit Protocol for both authentication and data transfer. This means that the ftp user's data is fully encrypted from end-to-end.
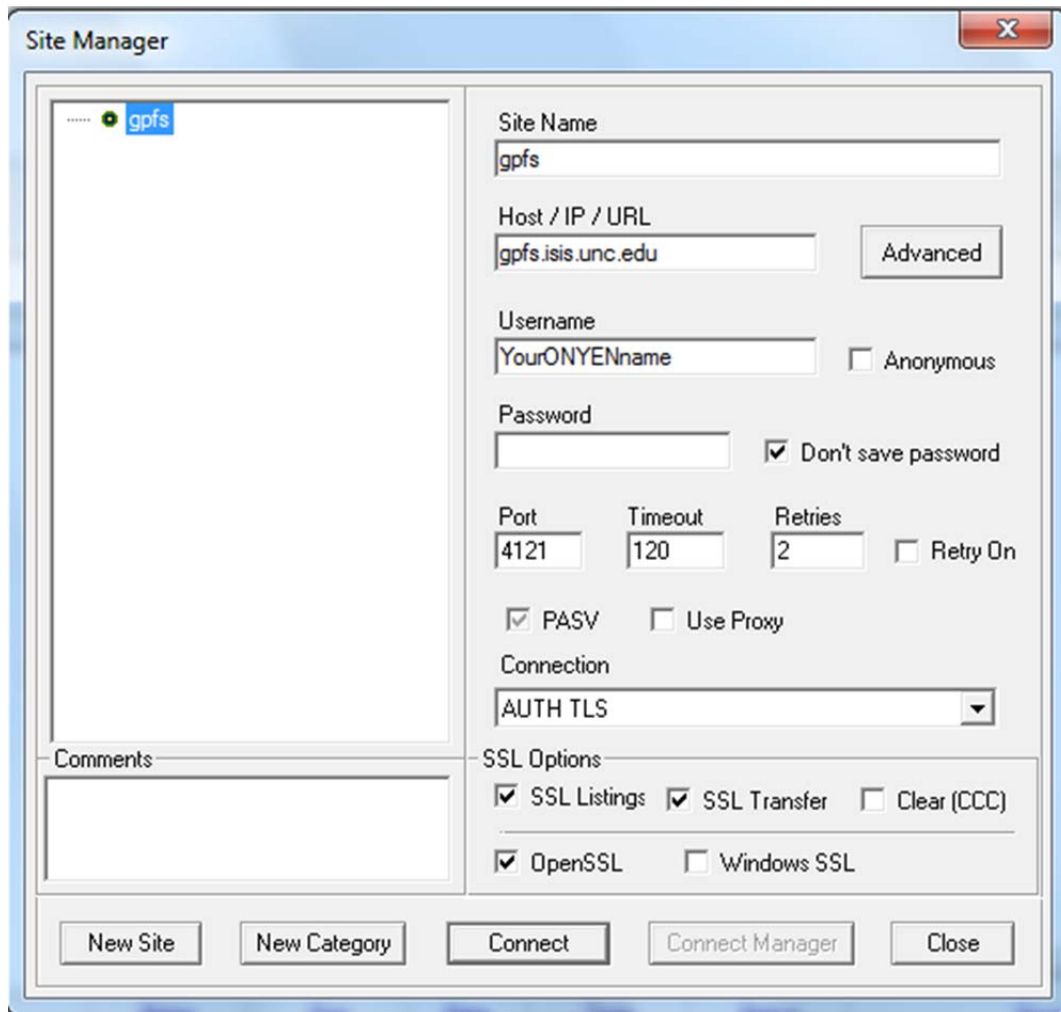
How to get started:

Unless you are comfortable with downloading, installing, and configuring software, please consider allowing the Epid IS Support staff to assist you in this set-up and to give you a quick demonstration on how to use it. If you have not used FTP to move data prior to this, it may seem a little intimidating, but it really is easy once the set-up is complete and you've had an initial how-to demo.
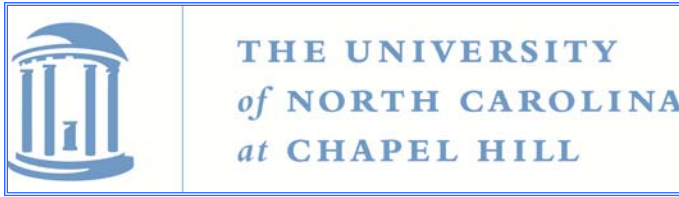
Step 1: Fill out the "**SoNAS User Access Request Form**" located on the last page of this document, and email it to research@unc.edu. ITS administrators will then create a directory file folder (drop box) for you on a secure server and allow the people you have designated to have access to it. You'll need to provide the desired name of the folder plus the ONYENs of the people that you wish to grant access. You may choose to have more than one drop box created, allowing you to have several folders with different ONYENs granted rights to those folders.

Step 2: Download and install CoreFTP, the recommended free FTP software program.
http://www.coreftp.com/

Step 3: Invoke the CoreFTP software and configure the settings as depicted in the picture below. For the 'Username', enter your ONYEN. Press the <connect> button to gain access to your newly established secure drop box.

CoreFTP:

SoNAS User Access Request Form

Request Type:

☒ Secure FTP data transfer Service

☐ NFS Exports

☐ CIFS Shares

Name of User: _____

Onyen of User: _____

Phone Contact: _____

Department: _____

Directory Name requested (otherwise, requester's onyen is used): _____

Onyens of Users you wish to share files with or group membership creation requests (if applicable). See SoNAS Info or Secure FTP Info docs for more details or email research@unc.edu:

_____

Would you like a shortcut in your directory to point to another filesystem location?

 eg. /netscr/$onyen, /largefs/$onyen or /gpfs/project/$project_name: _____

Any other comments or requests:

_____