

Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States, FGDC-STD-004

Review of FGDC standards program of work

1. What's the problem (issue) that the standard is trying to address?

From http://www.fgdc.gov/standards/projects/FGDC-standards-projects/wetlands/index_html,

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the standard is to provide a system that allows communication about wetlands and their features in a National context. Doing so enhances the ability of all agencies and individuals to interpolate and extrapolate wetland resource data, wetland loss and gain data, and restoration efforts in the same semantic and ecological context. The classification system was developed by wetland ecologists with the assistance of many private individuals and organizations and local, State, and Federal agencies.

Specific objectives of this standard are to:

- a. provide a nationally consistent definition of wetlands and deepwater habitats for mapping and inventory purposes;
- b. describe ecological units that have certain homogeneous natural attributes;
- c. arrange those units in a system that will aid decisions about resource management;
- d. furnish units for inventory and mapping;
- e. ensure that data from widely differing regions of the country are collected and can be interpreted similarly; and,
- f. move toward a system that allows communication about wetlands and their features in a National context. Doing so enhances the ability of all agencies and individuals to interpolate and extrapolate wetland resource data, wetland loss and gain data, and restoration efforts in the same semantic and ecological context.

SCOPE

This standard provides specific ecological and hydrological information for the identification, classification, and mapping of wetlands in the United States and its territories. Adoption of the standard will not change the current status of National Wetlands Inventory maps produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Application of the standard is not regulatory. As the disclaimer on each NWI map states, "Federal, State, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, State, or

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local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies."

2. What are the complementary standards (voluntary or accepted) that support this standard?
 - a. If the standard refers to other standards, have the referenced standards changed in a way that requires changes to this standard?
 - b. Since this standard was adopted or last reviewed, have new standards been adopted elsewhere that should be referenced in this standard?

Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata, FGDC-STD-001-1998. This standard will be replaced by a U.S. national profile of ISO 19115, Geographic information – Metadata.

3. What standard(s) does this FGDC standard support?

Riparian Mapping Standard
National Standards for Wetland Mapping

4. Are the standards in active use?

Yes, according to the 2005 NSDI report submitted by Fish & Wildlife Service to the FGDC. Users include all States that do biological wetlands mapping.

5. Is the standard a 'Government Unique Standard'?
 - a. If so, has it been examined to see if Voluntary Consensus Standards might now be in place?
 - i. If a corresponding Voluntary Consensus Standard exists, should the Consensus standard be considered for adoption to replace the existing standard?
 - ii. If a corresponding Voluntary Consensus Standard does not exist, should this standard be moved to a national standard?
 - b. Is it appropriate to remain in FGDC? Why or why not?

There is no Voluntary Consensus Standard that replaces this standard. While the standard probably should become an American National Standard, there is no driver to do so.

6. Who are the important stakeholders that need input into the review of this standard?
 - a. Which Federal agencies in addition to the agency with maintenance authority should the review committee include?
 - b. Which non-Federal agencies should the review committee include?

The stakeholders are Federal agencies represented on the Wetlands Subcommittee, States (as represented by the National States Geographic

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Information Council and the Association of State Wetlands Managers), and Counties (as represented by the National Association of Counties).

7. Are there editorial errors that you are aware of since this FGDC standard was endorsed? No.
8. Are there technical errors or technical changes that you are aware since this FGDC standard was endorsed?

There might be a need to open up the classification system for special modifiers.

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Based on your answers to the above, the sponsor team recommends the following:

1. The standard to be issued with no modifications.

Justification:

There will be no revision of the Standard for Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States, FGDC-STD-004, until after the FGDC endorses National Standards for Wetlands Mapping, which will include additional special modifiers.

2. The standard to be revised.

Justification:

Specifically:

3. The standard to be changed.

Justification:

Specific areas of concern:

4. The standard to be withdrawn.

Justification: