

# Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard (CMECS)

FGDC Coordination Group  
July 20, 2010



# Features

- Provides framework for organizing ecological relationships
- Assures consistent names and descriptions of coastal and marine ecological features
- Includes geology, chemistry, physics, biology in single structure
- Articulates with existing FGDC standards
- Allows local and regional users to report to single national standard

# Domain

All waters, substrates, benthos and sub-benthos of the coastal marine realm extending:

- **Landward** to tidal splash zone of coasts, intertidal euhaline and brackish wetlands, and deep waters of Great Lakes
- **Up river/estuary** to head of tide, where tide  $\geq 0.2$  ft (0.06 m) for at least part of month
- **Seaward** to deep ocean, including all continental and ocean waters and bottom

# CMECS Components

**Water Column  
Component  
(WCC)**



Structure, characteristics, and processes of water column and associated biota

**Benthic Biotic  
Component  
(BBC)**



Composition of biota on sea floor surface

**Surface Geology  
Component  
(SGC)**



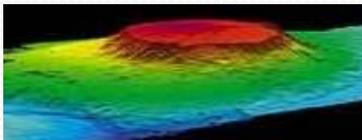
Geological composition of surface and near-surface substrates; surface features, including biogenic structures

**Sub-Benthic  
Component (SBC)**



Character of sediments and soils below substrate surface

**Geoform Component  
(GFC)**



Major geomorphic character or structural character of coast or seafloor

# Applications

- Regional and national resource inventory and assessment
- Essential Fish Habitat/Critical Habitat delineation
- Conservation and restoration planning
- Ecosystem services management
- Facilitating data sharing



# Relationship to FGDC Standards

- **National Wetland Standard** (FGDC-STD-004)
- **National Vegetation Classification** (FGDC-STD-005-2008)
- **Soils Geographic Data Standard** (FGDC-STD-006)
- **Shoreline Metadata Standard** (FGDC-STD-001.2-2001)

# Stakeholder Outreach

- Coastal States Organization
- Association of State Wetland Managers
- State natural resource agencies
- NatureServe state network
- Long Term Ecological Research program (LTER)
- EBM Tools network webinars
- Regional governance entities

# Timeline

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- Complete requested revisions to draft standard September 15, 2010
  - Publish *Federal Register* notice/open public comment period October 1, 2010
  - Close public comment period (+120 days) January 26, 2010
  - Organize comments; develop suggested improvements and needed revisions; incorporate into draft May 1, 2011
  - Complete responses to public comments; submit complete package to FGDC September 15, 2011
  - Publish comments in *Federal Register* October 1, 2011
  - Accept CMECS as national standard November 1, 2011

# *Questions?*