



November 10, 2015

Coordination Group Meeting

FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee Update to Coordination Group

Presented by

Marianne Burke, Subcommittee Chair



The National Vegetation Classification (NVC)

The **National Vegetation Classification (NVC)** is a central organizing framework for how all vegetation in the United States is inventoried and studied, from broad scale formations (biomes) to fine-scale plant communities.

The **purpose** of the NVC is to produce uniform statistics about vegetation resources across the nation, based on vegetation data gathered at local, regional, or national levels.



The Mission of the FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee

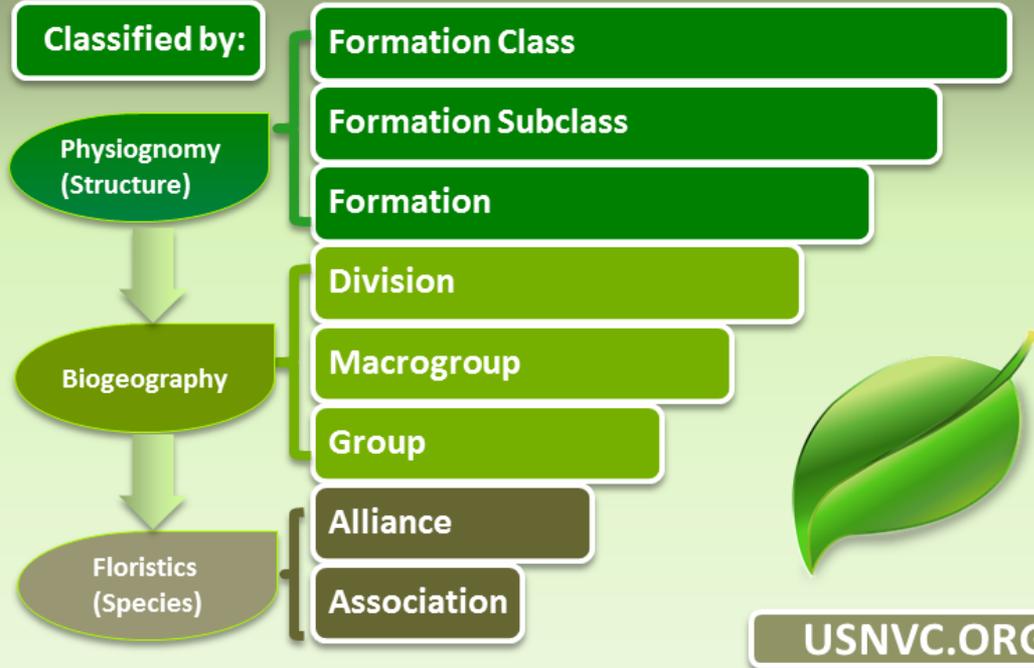
The **mission** of the Vegetation Subcommittee is the coordination of terrestrial vegetative data-related activities among Federal agencies and the establishment of mechanisms for the coordinated development, use, sharing, and dissemination of terrestrial vegetation data.



Launch of Hierarchy Explorer

May 2015, Beta version

U.S. National Vegetation Classification 8-Level Hierarchy for Natural Vegetation



Hierarchy Explorer is Highly Searchable

Select the state

Search by keyword

Specify keyword field

Select hierarchy level

fgdc
Federal Geographic Data Committee

Explore The Classification



The USNVC Hierarchy Explorer provides detailed descriptions of vegetation types in the U.S. with ecological context and geographic ranges.

Some levels of the USNVC are under development and review. For details see [Status of the USNVC Natural Vegetation Hierarchy April 2015](#).

Beta Release of the USNVC for the Conterminous U.S. – May 5, 2015

The U.S. National Vegetation Classification

USNVC Hierarchy Explorer

Explore the classification by searching the NVCS database by **keywords**, by **selecting a subset of the hierarchy**, or by **selecting states on the map**. These criteria can be used in combination or separately.

Search by Keyword:

Keyword fields to search:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Colloquial Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Translated Name
<input type="checkbox"/> Synonymy	<input type="checkbox"/> Floristics	<input type="checkbox"/> Concept Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Classification Code	<input type="checkbox"/> Classification Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Database Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Dynamics	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Full Citation
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Range	<input type="checkbox"/> State/Province

Select: All | None | Default

Select a unit of the hierarchy to search:

Select state(s) on the map:



Select hierarchy levels to be shown in results:

- Class
 - Subclass
 - Formation
 - Division
 - Macrogroup
 - Group
 - Alliance
 - Association

Download the NVCS database (6MB, Delimited Text Format)

<http://usnvc.org/explore-classification/>

Output from previous search

Explore The Classification



The USNVC Hierarchy Explorer provides detailed descriptions of vegetation types in the U.S. with ecological context and geographic ranges.

M886 Southern Vancouverian Dry Foothill Forest Macrogroup [↗](#)

▼ G206 *Quercus garryana* - *Pinus ponderosa* - *Pseudotsuga menziesii* Forest & Woodland Group [↗](#)

Vegetation Classification

Search Results

[Print Summary](#)

11 records matching the following criteria:

Search Term: *Pinus ponderosa*

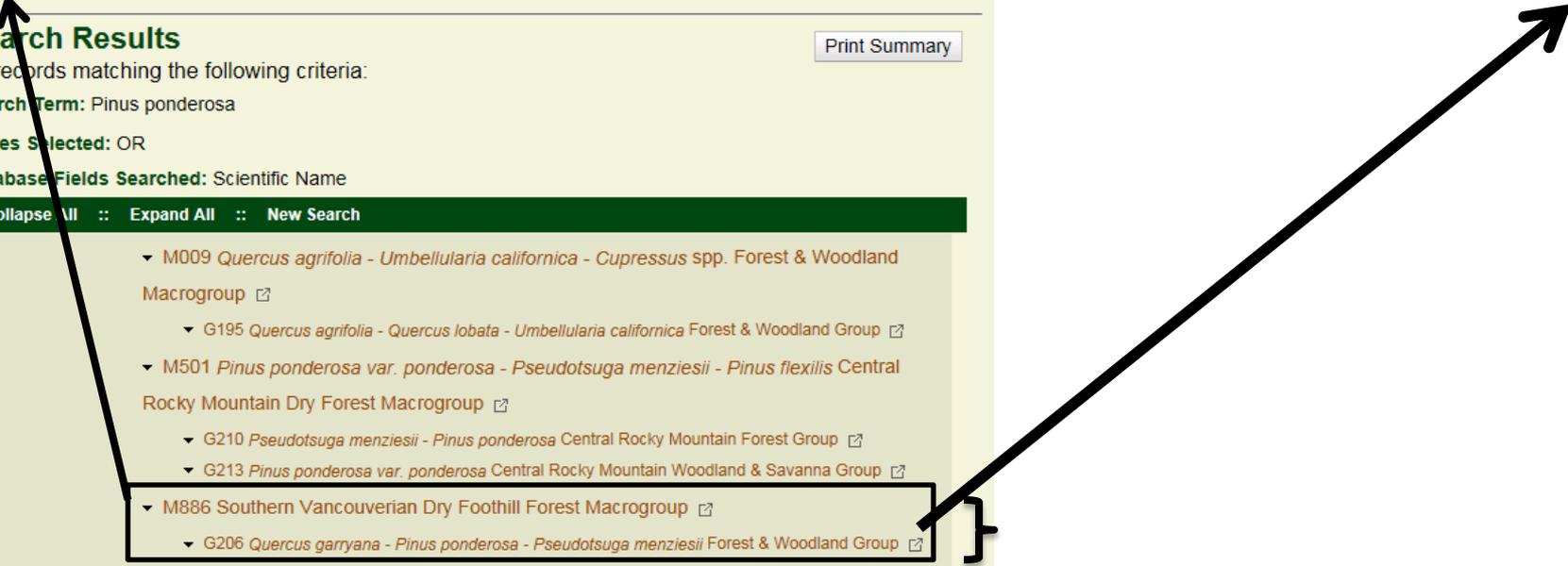
States Selected: OR

Database Fields Searched: Scientific Name

[Collapse All](#) :: [Expand All](#) :: [New Search](#)

- ▼ M009 *Quercus agrifolia* - *Umbellularia californica* - *Cupressus* spp. Forest & Woodland Macrogroup [↗](#)
 - ▼ G195 *Quercus agrifolia* - *Quercus lobata* - *Umbellularia californica* Forest & Woodland Group [↗](#)
- ▼ M501 *Pinus ponderosa* var. *ponderosa* - *Pseudotsuga menziesii* - *Pinus flexilis* Central Rocky Mountain Dry Forest Macrogroup [↗](#)
 - ▼ G210 *Pseudotsuga menziesii* - *Pinus ponderosa* Central Rocky Mountain Forest Group [↗](#)
 - ▼ G213 *Pinus ponderosa* var. *ponderosa* Central Rocky Mountain Woodland & Savanna Group [↗](#)
- ▼ M886 Southern Vancouverian Dry Foothill Forest Macrogroup [↗](#)
 - ▼ G206 *Quercus garryana* - *Pinus ponderosa* - *Pseudotsuga menziesii* Forest & Woodland Group [↗](#)
- ▼ M023 *Calocedrus decurrens* - *Pinus jeffreyi* - *Abies concolor* var. *lowiana* Forest Macrogroup [↗](#)
 - ▼ G344 *Calocedrus decurrens* - *Pinus lambertiana* - *Abies concolor* Forest & Woodland Group [↗](#)
- ▼ M034 Rocky Mountain & Great Basin Montane Riparian Forest Macrogroup [↗](#)
 - ▼ G506 *Picea engelmannii* - *Picea pungens* - *Populus angustifolia* Riparian Forest Group [↗](#)

[Collapse All](#) :: [Expand All](#) :: [New Search](#)



Official Launch of the NVC

Calendar for January 2016 (United States)

January						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 Launch	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Phases of the moon: 2: ☉ 9: ● 16: ☾ 23: ☽ 31: ☾



Recent Planning Workshop

Chapel Hill, NC Oct. 29, 20, 2015

NVC launch will

lead to release of pent up
demand for changes

Which will

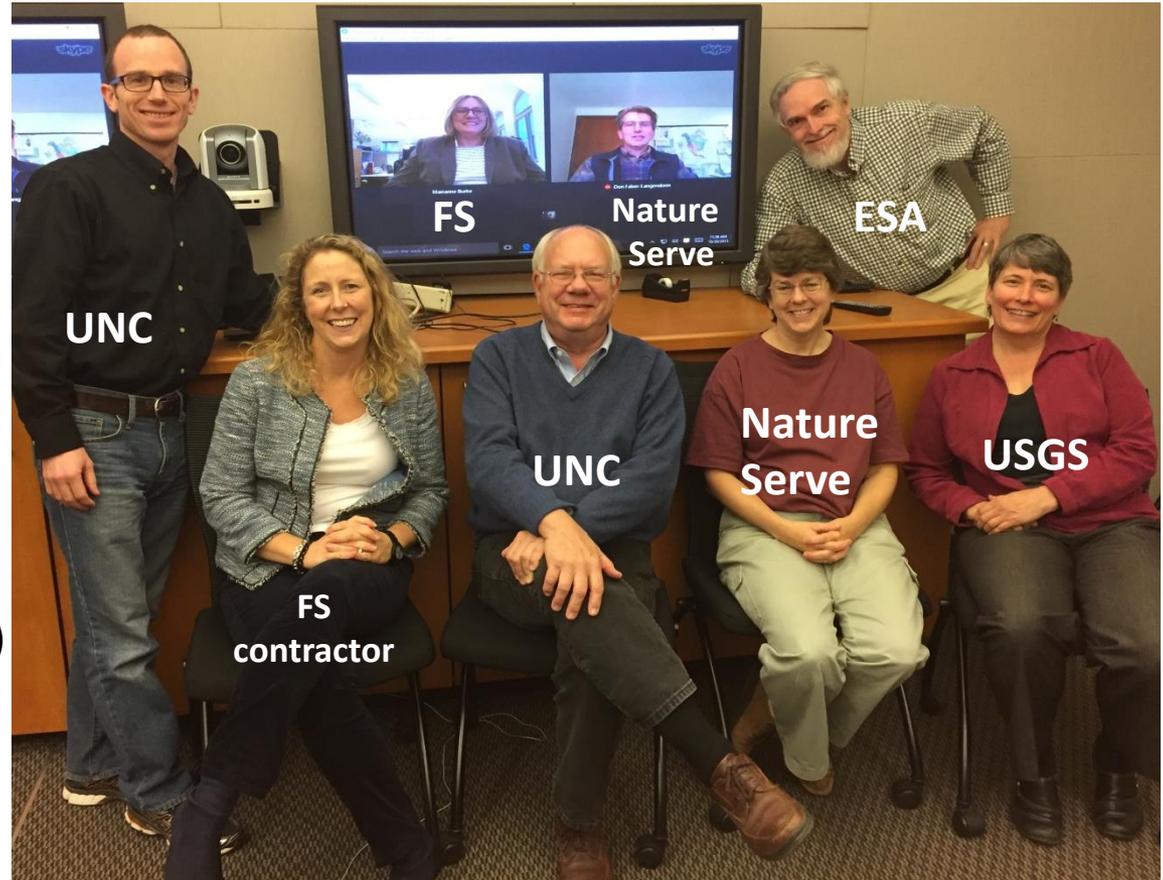
lead to increased need for
submission and peer
review tools and for the
proceedings.

Which will

lead to increased demand
for access to the underlying
data (fully functional Vegbank)

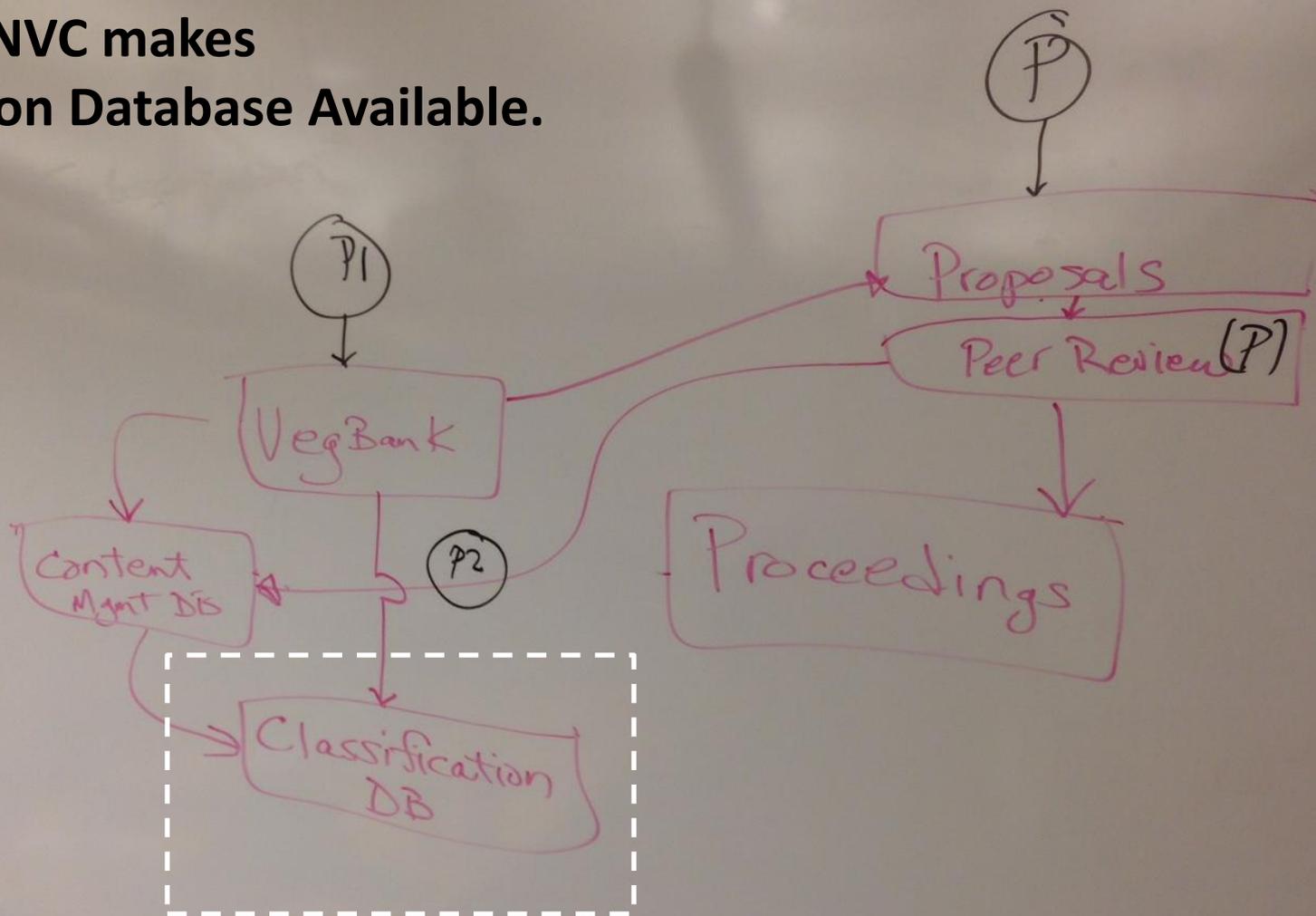
And the

need for education and
outreach

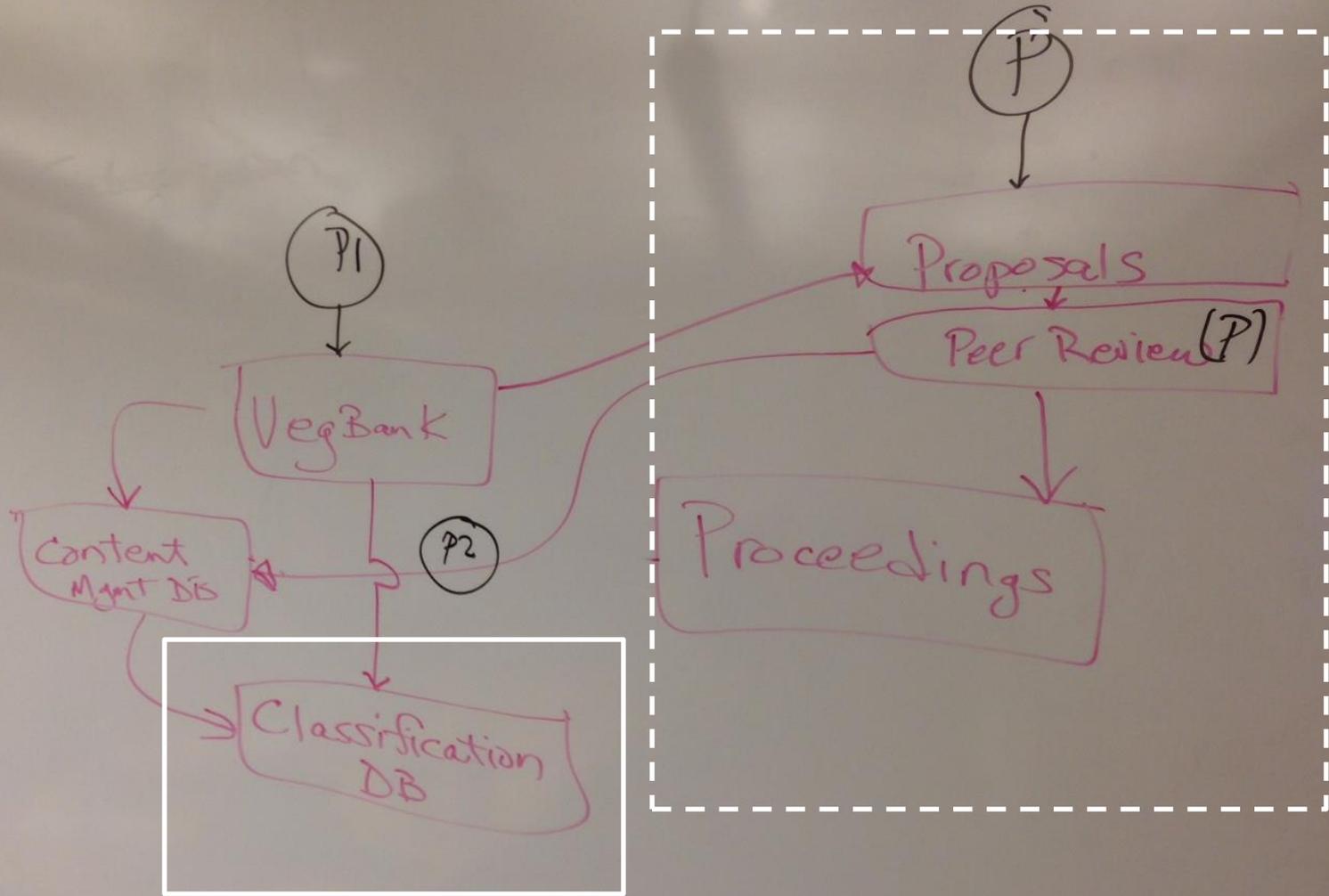


Launch of NVC makes Classification Database Available.

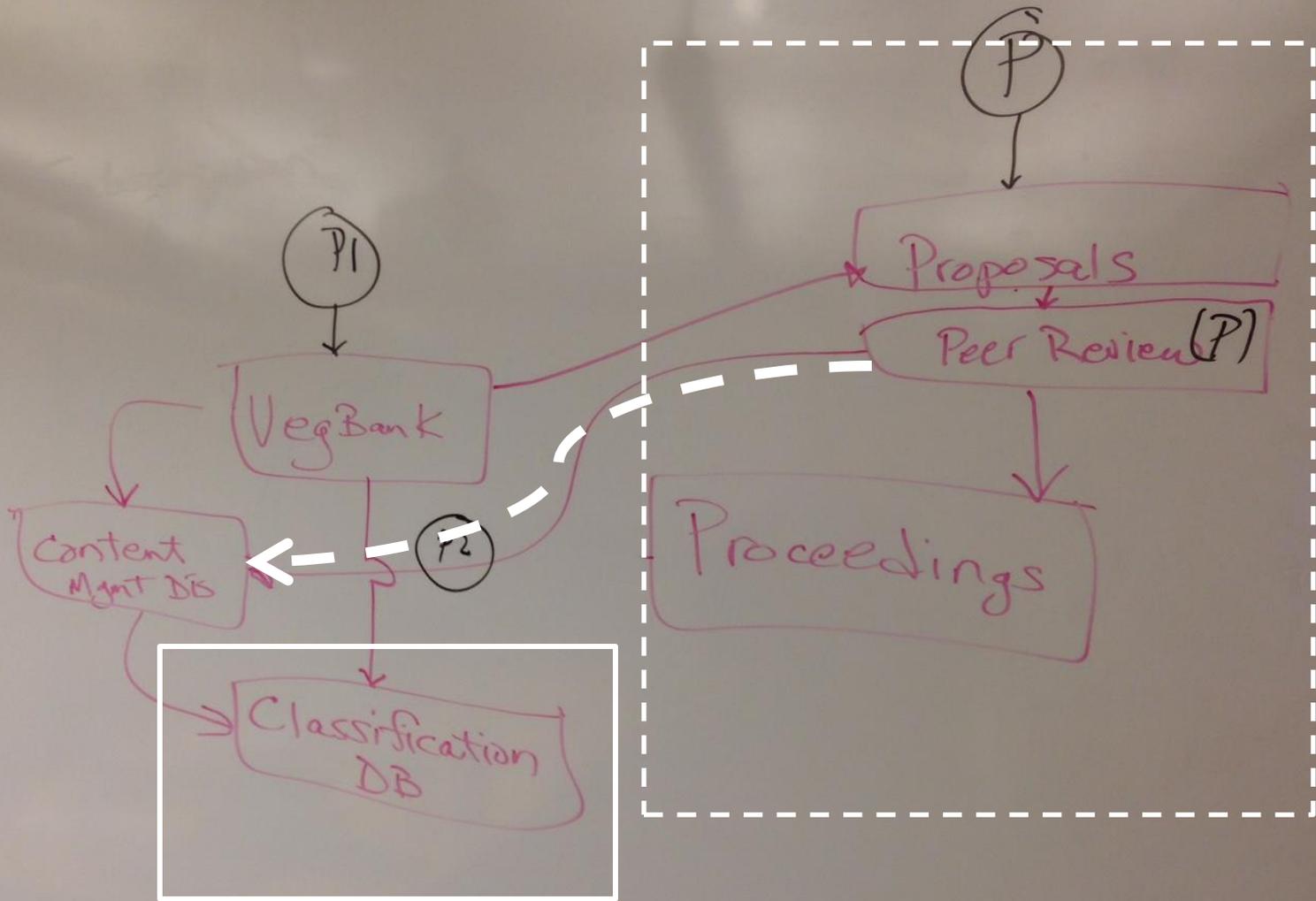
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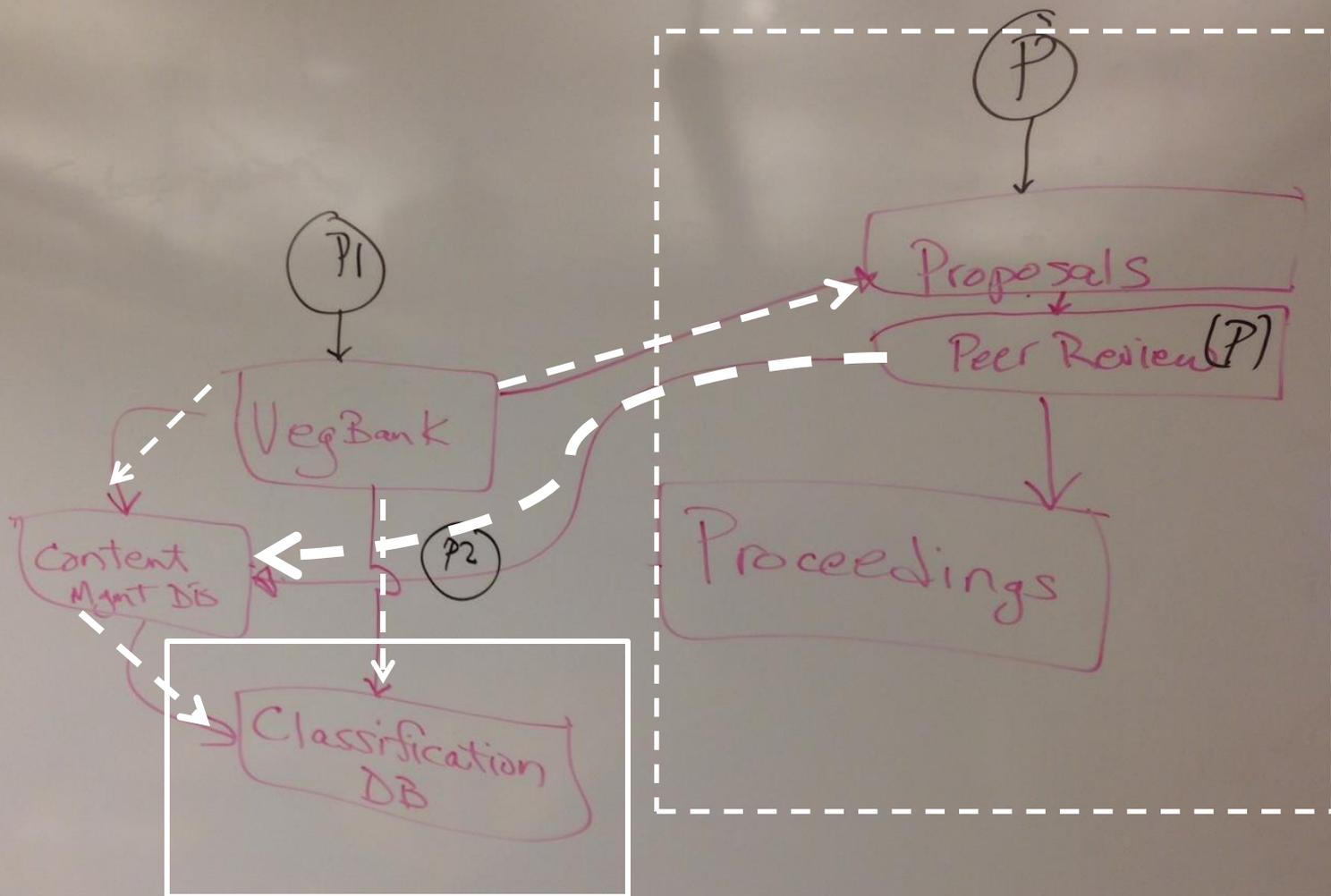
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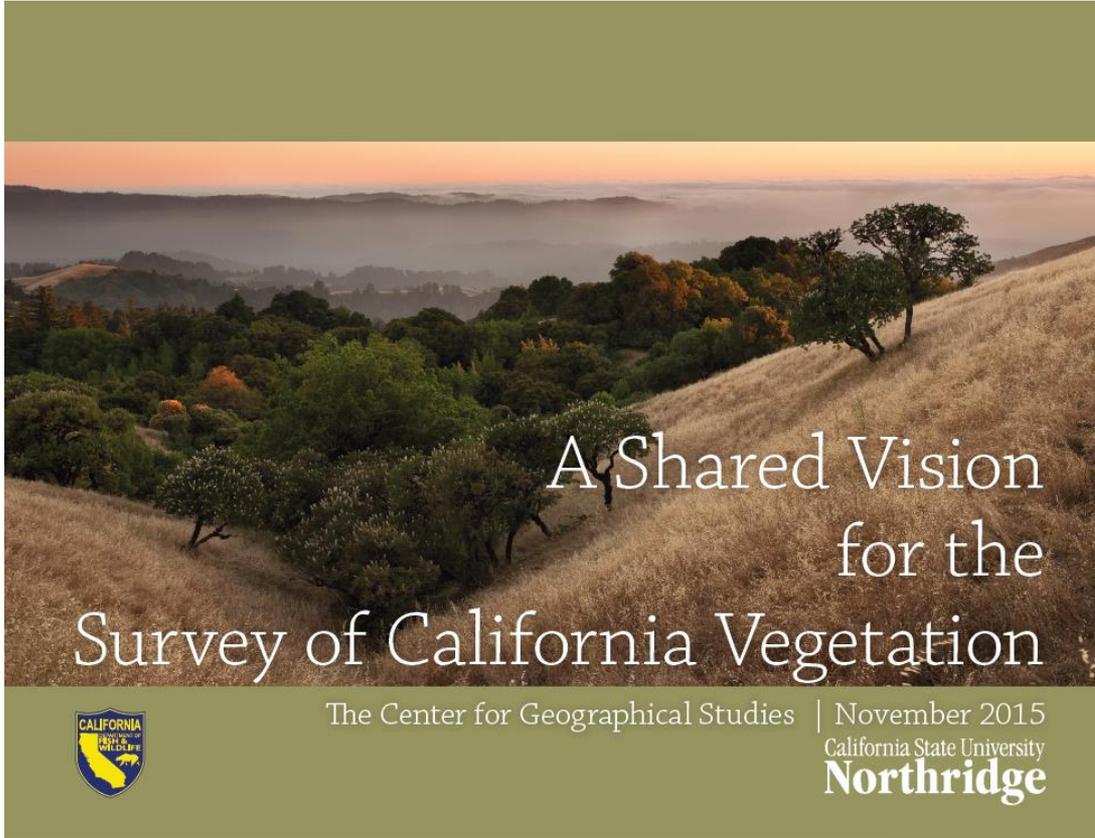
P = Person



P = Person

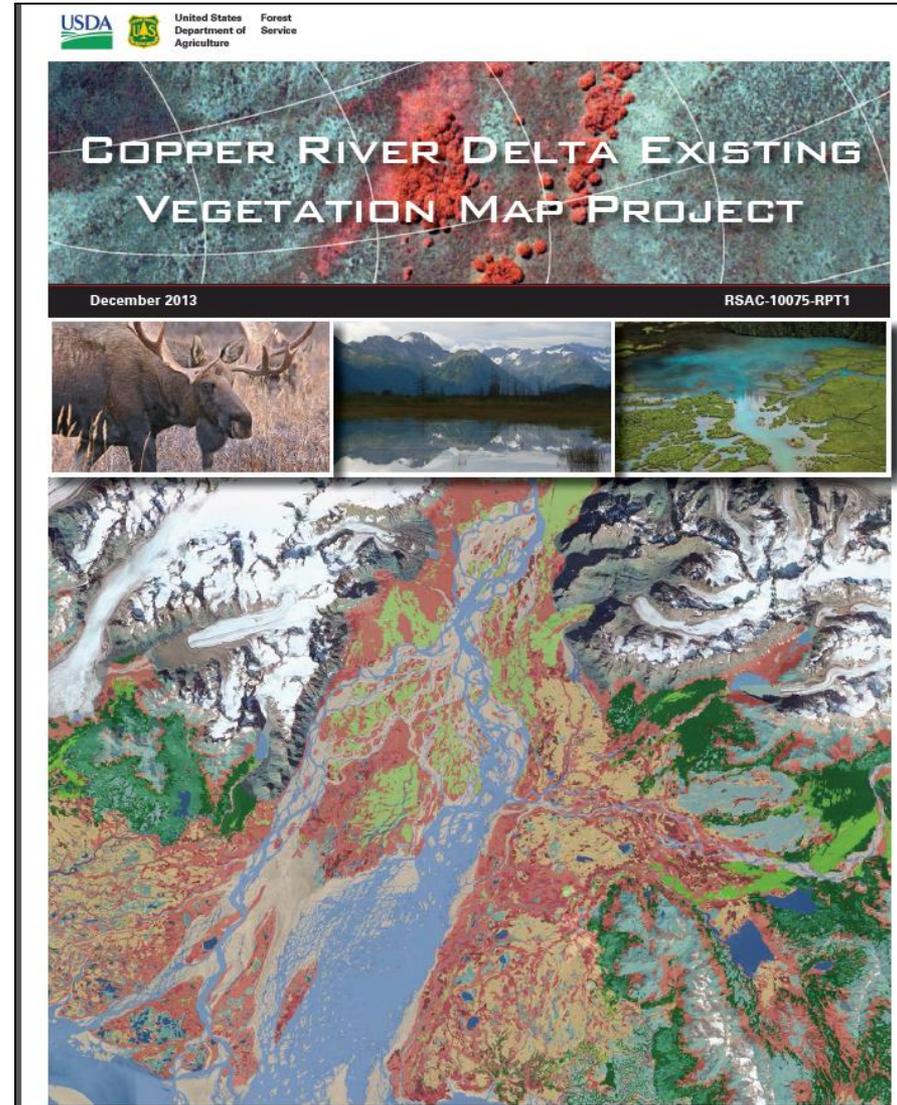


Use of NVC in State Survey



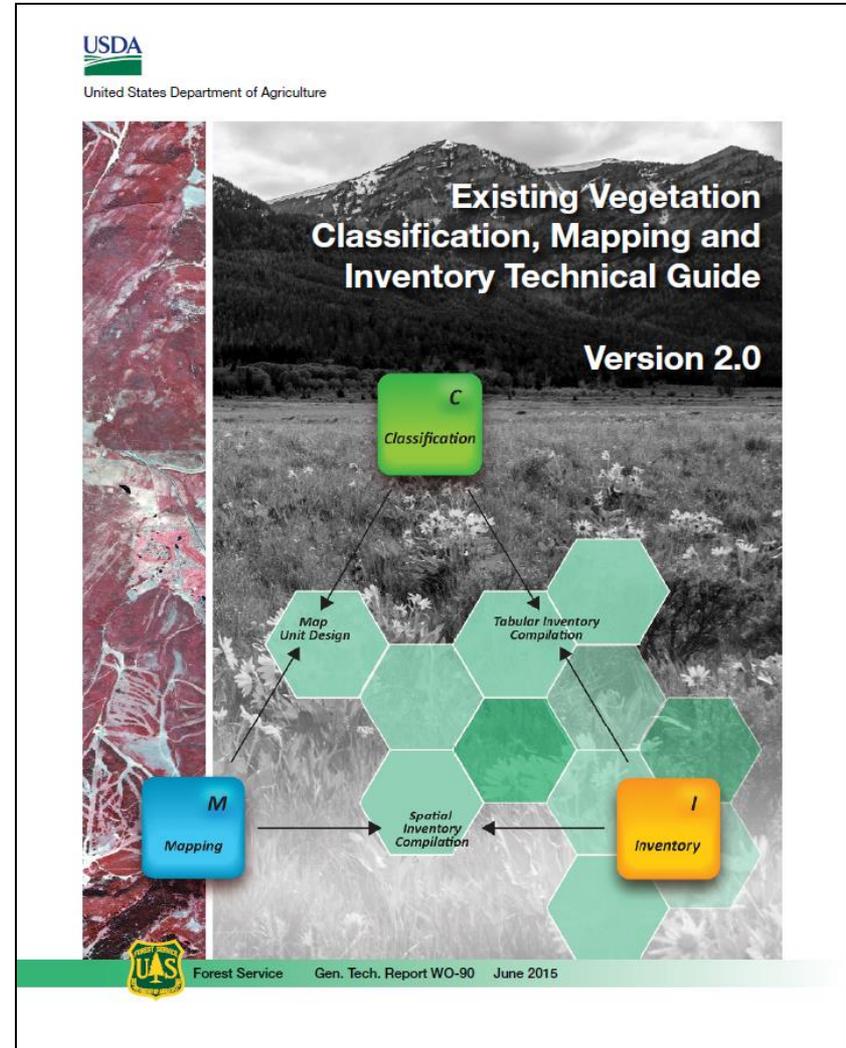
Use of NVC in Forest Service project

...”This map was designed to be consistent with the standards established in the Existing Vegetation Classification and Technical Guide (Nelson and others, in press) and to provide baseline information to support project planning and management of the Copper River Delta.” ...



NVC used in Agency Technical Guide

- Guide had substantial input from FGDC Vegetation committee and ESA Vegetation Panel members.
- The project and publication was consistent with the FGDC Vegetation Standard.



Transfer NVC to field for use

- Serving on the Existing Vegetation Classification, Mapping and Inventory Technical Guide Implementation Team Working Group
- Gave presentation to the Working Group on use of NVC
- Gave presentation to field ecologists on use of NVC and suggested standard level of classification for Forest Service.

Bureau of Land Management – Guidance to Field

- **Objectives:** Field offices require the use of the [macrogroup](#) level for Land Use Plans
- **Benefits:** Map legends are standardized for land use management planning at a variety of scales. The all lands approach to inventory and monitoring is used.

Forest Service target

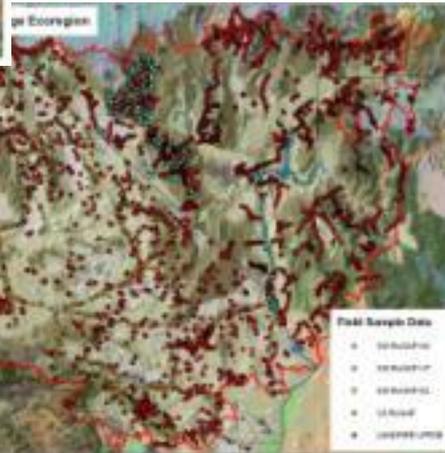
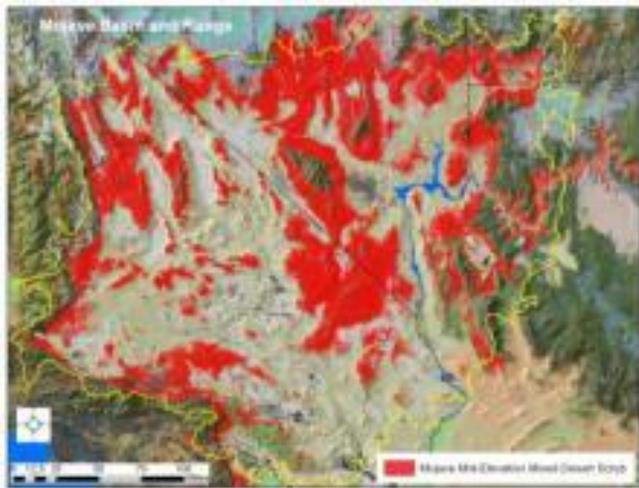


NVCS classification categories related to planning use scales. These are only general examples; assessment and planning needs and purposes should dictate the degree of vegetation description needed.

Scale	Examples	NVCS Classification Categories	
Broad-Scale	Global	Climate Change Assessments	Class
	Continental / National	National Trend Assessments	Sub-class
	National /Regional	Trend Assessments	Formation
Mid-Scale	Regional	Regional Plans & Tread Assessments	Division
	Sub-regional, State & Sub-basins	State-level Conservation Assessments & Plans, RMP's, Sub-basin Assessments	Macrogroup
	Activity Plans / Project Plans	Watershed Assessments, County Plans/ BLM Activity Plans / Project Plans	Group
Fine Scale	Project Plans	Project Assessments & Plans / Special Area Plans (e.g. ACEC's)	Alliance
	Site Plans	Site Descriptions and Plans	Association



LANDFIRE: spatial data & vegetation dynamics models



- **LANDFIRE Partnership:** TNC, USFS, FIA, BLM, USGS, GAP, NatureServe
- **Objectives:** Vegetation mapping in support of fire and fuels management and conservation planning (current & historic distributions, structural characteristics, fuel loadings, etc).
- **Status** Initiating a new national mapping effort using Autokeys produced from crosswalking effort for groups and macrogroups.
- **Benefits** Comprehensive wall-to-wall spatial data for the US to support natural resource planning and management.

Scaling to serve the purpose

The hierarchical structure of the USNVC allows agencies to apply the classification at the appropriate scale to address the management questions.

Regional application – changes in state
(formations, divisions, macrogroups*)

Watershed or landscape application – changes in patterns
(groups*, alliances)

Individual stand application – changes in composition
(alliance, associations)

Agencies are using the NVC

National Park Service projects that employed the NVC

- 159 NPS units are complete employing the USNVC (many are using the previous standard).
- 88 additional units are in progress using the USNVC (in some stage of final production).
- 10 units that are planned (work not begun).
- 10 units, all in Alaska, that are complete that did not employ USNVC (Alaska state classification was used).

Outreach and Education

- Hosted a fieldtrip at the Society for Range Management Annual Meeting in San Jose, California. February 2015



Additional Examples of Outreach and Education FY 2015

- Briefed the Interagency Land Management Adaptation Group
- Hosted a booth at the Ecological Society of America (ESA) Conference in August 2015.
- Secured new funding through an interagency agreement (USFS/USGS) for the Ecological Society of America's Vegetation Classification Panel to continue their work in vegetation classification and education. Fall 2015
- Briefed the Forest Service's Existing Vegetation Classification, Mapping and Inventory Technical Guide Implementation Team, and the National Forest System Ecologists' group. August and October 2015