

FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee Update



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Chair, FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee

US Forest Service (lead agency)

June 7, 2016

Progress report for the FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee

❖ Topics in report

- Purpose and mission of Vegetation Subcommittee
- Launch of Hierarchy Explorer
- Accomplishments
- NVC adoption update
- Crosswalk training
- Current focus

Mission of the FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee

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.



The National Vegetation Classification (NVC)

The **National Vegetation Classification (NVC)** is the 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.

4 Key Stats: U.S. National Vegetation Classification (USNVC)



THE PARTNERSHIP



Subcommittee Accomplishment – Launch of the USNVC

Adaptable, Ecology-Based U.S. National Vegetation Classification For Monitoring Multi-Scale Change Debuts Today

Public Release Of A 20-Year Collaborative Effort To Devise A Unified And Consistent National Reporting System For Plant Communities Opens New Avenues For Broad-Scale And Long-Term Analyses Of Landscape Change.

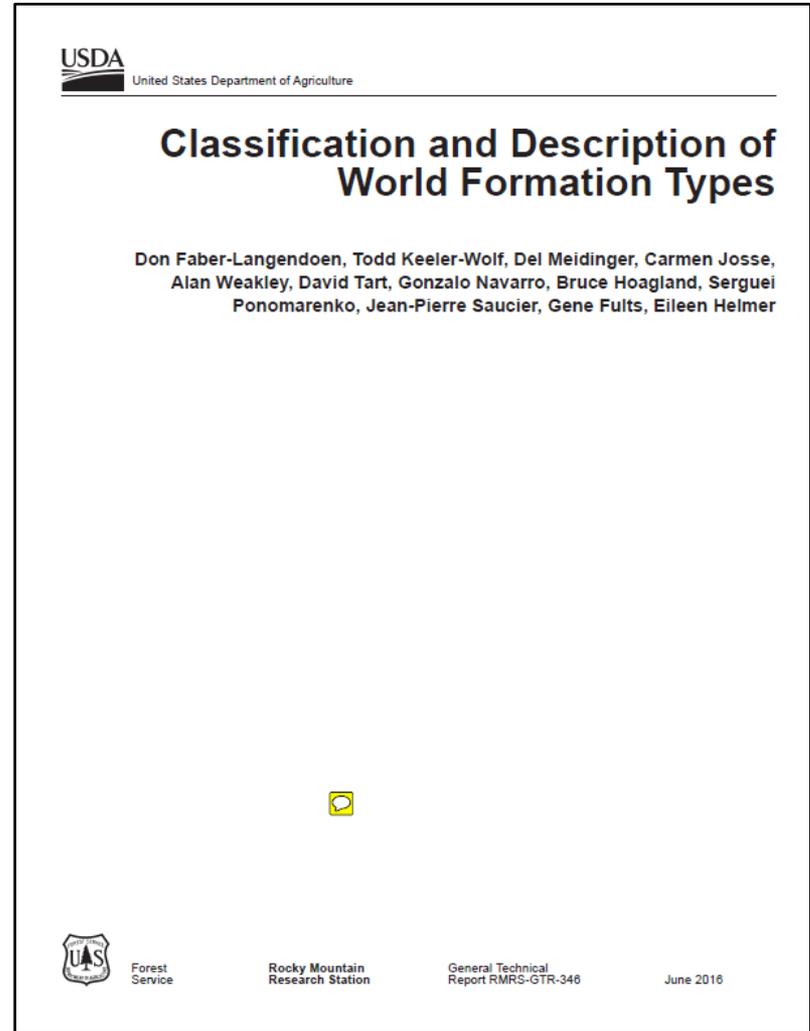
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, 23 February 2016

Contact: Liza Lester, 202-833-8773 ext. 211, LLester@esa.org

- ❖ Launch of new Hierarchy Explorer www.usnvc.org
- ❖ News Release on February 23, 2016 www.esa.org

Subcommittee Accomplishment - Publication of top 3 levels of the NVC hierarchy

- ❖ Publication (In press)
- ❖ Online version available
by June 30, 2016



Other Subcommittee Accomplishments –

❖ Database Content

- Developed the peer review process
- Board added 10 editors to help with peer review process.

❖ Hierarchy refinement

- Completed the concept for Division descriptions
- Revised nomenclature for the associations and alliances



Other Recent Accomplishments – (cont.)

❖ Tool maintenance

- Maintained VegBank
- Debugged problems with aging VegBank tool

❖ Federal Agencies approved another year of funding FS FIA and USGS

❖ Documented large amount of public activity on NVC websites



Subcommittee Accomplishment – Federal agencies are using the NVC

Agency	Level of Classification
USGS-GAP	Macrogroup and Group
FS-FIA	Group
BLM	Macrogroup
LANDFIRE (Multiple Agency)	Macrogroup and Group
NPS	Alliance and Association
F&WS	Alliance and Association

- ❖ Some use very fine levels of classification
- ❖ Minimum level used is the macrogroup.

Current foci of Vegetation Subcommittee

- ❖ Create policy for adoption for Forest Service
 - Develop crosswalk training
 - Train field units on how to crosswalk

- ❖ Improve sustainability of NVC
 - Identify needs for each tool
 - Outline all options and advantages and disadvantages
 - Incorporate into proposal to encourage other agencies to contribute financially.

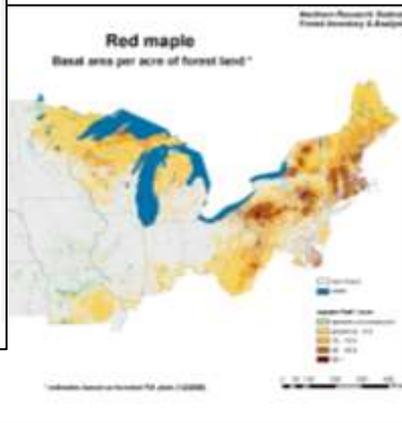
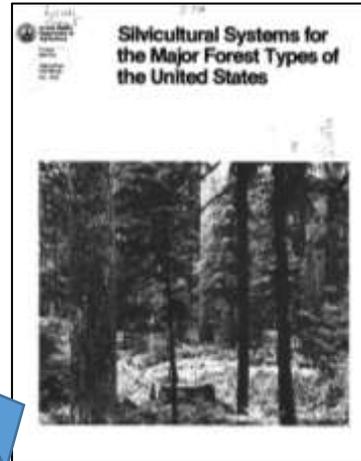
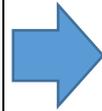
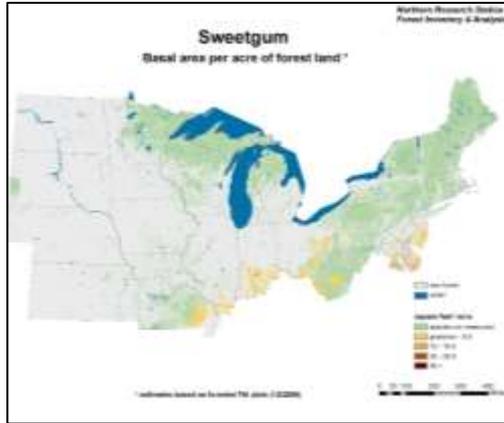
Accomplishment – Forest Service has agreed to use the NVC

Results of survey of willingness to crosswalk to the NVC

Specialist	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R8	R9	R10
Ecologist	Macro-group		Group	Macro-group		Group	Macro-group	Macro-group	Macro-group
Silviculturist	Macro-group		Group	Macro-group	Macro-group	Group	Macro-group	Macro-group	Macro-group

- ❖ Existing Vegetation Classification Interagency Working Group laid groundwork.
- ❖ Regional Ecologists and Silviculturists were part of decision making body
- ❖ FS leadership agreed to the crosswalk.
- ❖ Planning to offer training on how to crosswalk.

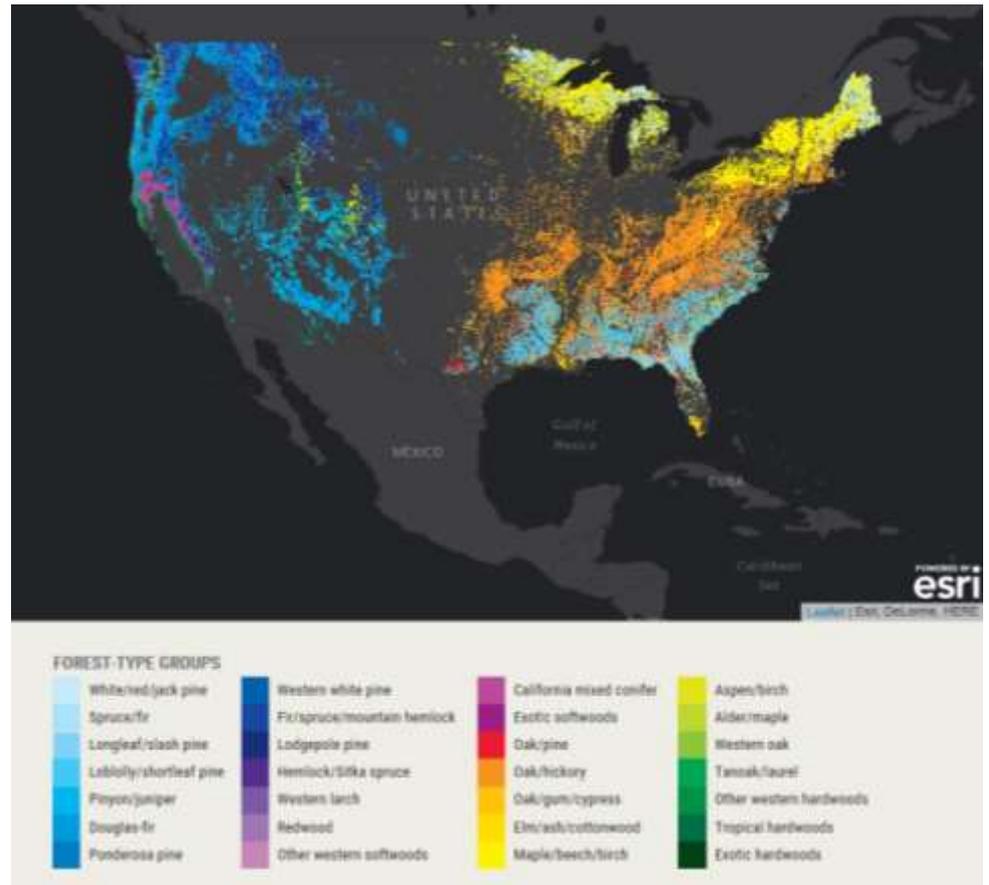
Forest Service Crosswalks Forest Types to NVC using Forest Inventory and Analysis data and Forest Types



- ▼ **1 Mesomorphic Tree Vegetation Class** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B Temperate & Boreal Forest & Woodland Subclass** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.1 Warm Temperate Forest & Woodland Formation** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.1.Na *Pinus palustris* - *Quercus hemisphaenca* - *Magnolia grandiflora* Forest & Woodland Division** ☑
 - ▼ **M305 *Liquidambar styraciflua* - *Pinus taeda* - *Triadica sebifera* Ruderal Forest Macrogroup** ☑
 - ▼ **G031 *Pinus taeda* - *Liquidambar styraciflua* - *Triadica sebifera* Ruderal Forest Group** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.2 Cool Temperate Forest & Woodland Formation** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.2.Na *Acer saccharum* - *Fagus grandifolia* - *Quercus rubra* Forest & Woodland Division** ☑
 - ▼ **M502 Appalachian-Northeastern Oak - Hardwood - Pine Forest & Woodland Macrogroup** ☑
 - ▼ **G495 *Pinus rigida* - *Quercus* spp. / *Morella pensylvanica* Forest Group** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.3 Temperate Flooded & Swamp Forest Formation** ☑
 - ▼ **1.B.3.Nb *Taxodium distichum* - *Nyssa biflora* - *Quercus lyrata* Flooded & Swamp Forest Division** ☑
 - ▼ **M033 *Nyssa biflora* - *Quercus michauxii* - *Taxodium distichum* Basin Swamp & Flatwoods Macrogroup** ☑
 - ▼ **G038 *Nyssa biflora* - *Nyssa ogeche* - *Taxodium distichum* Basin Swamp Group** ☑

Planned work – Training the field How to Crosswalk to the NVC

Training sessions are In development to help Regional Staff cross-walk their FIA data to the NVC.



Subcommittee is Addressing Current Needs of NVC – - Content Database

Needed:

- ❖ Upgrade to software and programming time
- or
- ❖ Negotiation of how NatureServe can keep content current for public use
- with
- ❖ dynamic links to and from plot tool databases.
- ❖ Estimated cost: **\$24,000/yr**

The screenshot shows the 'Explore The Classification' web application. At the top, there is a logo for the USNVC Hierarchy Explorer and a brief description: 'The USNVC Hierarchy Explorer provides detailed descriptions of vegetation types in the U.S. with ecological context and geographic ranges (see [Status of USNVC Vegetation Hierarchy](#)). Release of the USNVC for the U.S. - February 2016.' Below this is the main search interface. It includes a 'Search by Keyword:' text input field. To the right of the input field is a 'Download' button with the text 'Download the NVCS database (XML, Delimited Text Format)'. Below the search field are two columns of checkboxes for 'Keyword fields to search:'. The first column includes 'Scientific Name', 'Synonymy', 'Classification Code', 'Dynamics', and 'Parent Name'. The second column includes 'Colloquial Name', 'Floristics', 'Classification Comments', 'Environment', and 'Range'. To the right of these checkboxes is a 'Select: All | None | Default' dropdown menu. Below the keyword fields are two more dropdown menus: 'Select a unit of the hierarchy to search:' (currently showing 'No Subset Selected') and 'Select state(s) on the map:' (with a map of the United States showing state boundaries). Below these are 'Select hierarchy levels to be shown in results:' checkboxes, including 'Class', 'Subclass', 'Formation', 'Division', 'Macrogroup', 'Group', 'Alliance', and 'Association'. At the bottom right of the interface are 'Reset' and 'Search' buttons.

Subcommittee is Addressing Current Needs of NVC – –VegBank reference plots

Needed

- ❖ Upgrade to server, which is about to fail.
- ❖ Replacement of software, so old it cannot be upgraded
- ❖ Improvement of advanced user interface functions for searching and filtering plot data.
- ❖ Estimated cost is **\$341,000 over 3 years.**

VEGBANK LOGIN | DATASETS | LOGOUT
Jump to... ▾

find containing
[advanced search](#) | [browse data](#)

[HOME](#) [FAQ](#)
[SUBMIT DATA](#) [ABOUT](#)
[MY ACCOUNT](#) [SITE MAP](#)

download 0 items

Find Plots

[Browse plots](#)
[Simple search](#)
[Search with a map](#)
[Advanced plot search](#)

Map Key: plots [Larger Map](#)

1-49	50-99	100-249
250-999	1,000-3,000	> 3,000

Plant Taxa

[What is a plant concept?](#)
[Browse plants](#)
[Search plants](#)
[Submit plants](#)

News

» **Map plots:** [Example](#) | [Datacart](#) | [Multiple Datasets](#) (Requires Login)
 » [Save Your Datacart](#) | [Edit Datasets](#)
 » Create a [Constancy Table](#)

Plant Communities

[What is a community?](#)
[Search communities](#)
[Submit communities](#)

My VegBank Account

[Edit profile information](#)
[Manage datasets](#)

Supplemental Data

[People](#)
[Stratum methods](#)
[Cover methods](#)
[Projects](#)
[References](#)
[Search supplemental data](#)

Learn About VegBank

[What is VegBank?](#)
[What is a plot?](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Tutorial](#)
[Cite or link to VegBank](#)
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[Site map](#)
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Recently Added Plots

Project (view all)	Added
FMNF - NatureServe	11-Dec-15
Carolina Vegetation Survey (1...)	11-Dec-15
Carolina Vegetation Survey (2...)	11-Dec-15
Carolina Vegetation Survey (3...)	11-Dec-15

Data in VegBank

Plots	98,147
--Classified Plots	82,201
----to NVC communities	16,327
Plant Concepts	293,137
--accepted by USDA	97,017
----and on plots	9,398
Community Concepts	24,099
--in the NVC	8,887
----and on plots	951

Contribute Plot Data

[Submit plots](#)
[Annotate plots](#)

Tools

[Map your own plots](#)
[VegBranch client database](#)
[Data matrix normalizer](#)



Subcommittee is Addressing Current Needs – NVC Content Database Peer review platform

Needed:

❖ Support for Editor in Chief

❖ Automated process for uploading and sharing proposals.

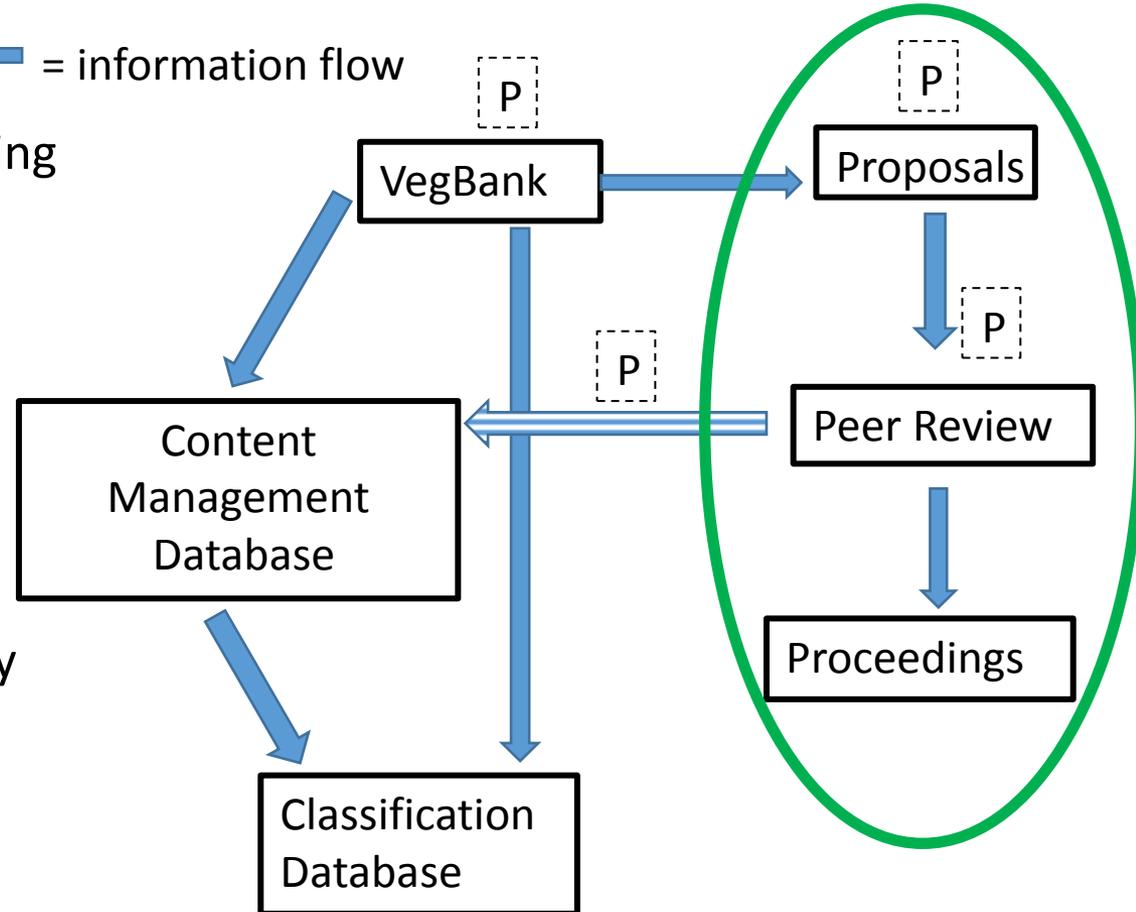
❖ Until automated:

- Plan is to manually process proposals and database.

❖ Estimated cost: Approximately **\$100,000 1st year, \$30,000 subsequent years.**

P = person

 = information flow



On the horizon for the FGDC Vegetation Subcommittee

- ❖ Develop a sustainable and high functioning NVC
- ❖ Shop proposal for needed funding with other agencies.

