

Charter for the NHD Workgroup of the California GIS Council

Adopted September 14, 2017

Group Name

National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) Workgroup of the California GIS Council (CGC)

Problem Statement

The mapping of surface water features in the United States has been within the purview of the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) since its creation in the late nineteenth century. Today, the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) is the surface-water component of [The National Map](#). The NHD includes the Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD.) Together, this geospatial database provides a standard framework for water mapping, planning, and modeling use by local, regional, state, tribal, and federal government agencies as well as research and educational institutions. It was created by USGS, but USGS lacks sufficient resources to improve and update the data, and it relies on participation from the States to accomplish this. The dataset does contain errors and is not complete in some areas; it needs active maintenance in order to meet the needs of the stakeholders and the public. This maintenance (also called stewardship) of the data requires a partnership. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR,) effective July 1, 2016, accepted the role of Steward for the California portion of the NHD and WBD and has begun reaching out to other government organizations for participation in updating the data.

It is the goal of the NHD Workgroup to aid the improvement of the overall quality of the California portion of the NHD by establishing a network of local hydrography experts who can inform and support the NHD Stewardship Program within the framework of the California GIS Council.

Mission Statement

The NHD Workgroup seeks to:

- Identify the key people within the various government agencies and research and educational institutions who can provide guidance and reference data such as imagery, elevation, and local hydrography datasets that can be used by the editors of the NHD to correct errors of geometry and attribution.
- Identify potential sub-stewards who can participate in updating the NHD under the principal stewardship of DWR.
- Recommend changes and additions to the *“California Mapping and Editing Business Rules for NHD Updates and Improvements”* document currently posted at <http://www.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary/NHD/index.cfm>
- Communicate with USGS to learn of successful practices of NHD stewards in other states and evaluate those practices for application in California
- Assist with developing a coordinated path forward for the ultimate merging of a program fully integrated with high resolution elevation (LIDAR) data and/or orthophotography.

- Keep the broader California geospatial community abreast of progress, trends, opportunities, and other important developments around NHD and WBD via the Council's communication channels and web meetings.
- Provide a way for the Council membership and others to help identify the areas in need of updating and to inform the prioritization of stewardship activities.
- Gather use cases, success stories, and other examples of integration of the NHD and WBD into relevant water issues in the State.

Authority

The NHD Workgroup will report to and receive direction from the CGC. This Workgroup is empowered to perform outreach activities using the platform of the CGC, including its website and email list.

Ownership

Participants volunteer their time to serve because they recognize the need of their own agencies or institutions as well as their stakeholders to have access to a more accurate and complete NHD for California.

Communication Strategy

The NHD Workgroup plans to meet as needed by teleconference and communicate via email, and will provide a report to the CGC at its quarterly meetings. This report will be posted on the CGC website as well. The chair and/or individual members of the NHD Workgroup will respond to questions by the CGC Executive Committee upon request.

Success Indicators

Success occurs when:

- The NHD Workgroup is formalized by crafting a charter that has been accepted by the CGC.
- The NHD Workgroup identifies and refers potential sub-stewards to DWR.
- The NHD Workgroup identifies and refers potential sources of useful reference data to DWR.
- The NHD Workgroup recommends amendments to the California Business Rules.
- The NHD Workgroup develops its own brilliant ideas for NHD Stewardship and presents them to the principal NHD Steward (DWR).
- The NHD and WBD are accepted more broadly into governmental, academic, commercial, and other agency workflows, enabling defensible science-based outcomes.

Participants

Jane Schafer-Kramer, Department of Water Resources, Chair

Danielle Bram, California State University, Northridge

Jason Schwenkler, California State University, Chico

Tim Lindemann, U.S. Forest Service

Ahmed Rhuma, U.S. Forest Service

Drew Decker, U.S. Geological Survey

Carol Ostergren, U.S. Geological Survey

(Other CGC members are welcome to join.)