

## **WBD Steering Committee Minutes**

*February 22, 2016*

*8 a.m. PST, 9 a.m. MST, 10 a.m. CST, 11 a.m. EST*

### Attending:

Nate Booth (Chair), Al Rea, Kim Jones, Steve Aichele, Pet Steeves, David Blodgett, Elizabeth Stevens-Klein, Laura Davenport, Jay Stevens, Wendy Blake-Coleman, Tommy Dewald, Mike Eberle

Excused: Steve Nechero (Co-Chair), Vicki Lukas

### 1. **Welcome** (*Nate Booth-Chair*)

- a. USGS activities
  - i. New associate director for water is Don Cline. He came on board about four weeks ago from the National Weather Service. He is expected to be a strong advocate for hydrography at USGS.
- b. WBD National technical coordinators
  - i. Kim Jones, Elizabeth Stevens-Klein, and Laura Davenport are the current WBD National Technical Coordinator team
- c. Governance
  - i. The following is an early idea and is open for discussion with the understanding that the WBD is critically important dataset that needs adequate resources and time allocated to it. In the future, hydrography will focus around integrated products (nhd, wbd, nhd+). We are proposing a change in the current governance model to create a joint steering committee around hydrography as a whole. This would improve efficiency and coordination. Steve Nechero and Vicki Lukas have been approached with the idea and both are supportive.
  - ii. Will work toward development of a draft joint charter for reaction before the next WBD steering committee meeting.
  - iii. Dissolution of current WBD steering committee would need to go to SSWG for a vote.
  - iv. Many of us already participate in NHD management discussions and most of us would stay on merged committee (Response to comment about makeup of joint committee from Wendy Blake-Coleman).

### 2. **NRCS** (*Steve Nechero-Co-Chair, Laura Davenport*)

- a. NRCS activities
  - i. Steve Nechero is excused and provided no comments
  - ii. Sue Buto mentioned that Steve is assisting Jeff Simley on WBD focused article for an AWRA Water Resources Impact issue with NHD/WBD focus that Jeff Simley is editing.
- b. NRCS WBD update (Laura Davenport)
  - i. Editor tools for 10.2.2 were certified in November 2015. Will touch base with Kim Jones on new tools. Next 6 month update to geocommunicator data is due in March

### 3. **Hydrography program updates** (*Al Rea, Steve Aichele*)

- a. NHD, NHD+ HiRes, HRBS
  - i. NHD+ HR is moving forward. Programming stumbling blocks are still occurring. Region 6 is complete and distribution data model has been devised. Will roll out to the public in the next month or so. Next main effort is Region 01 in New England. This region will include international border and coastal issues - big issues that need to be tackled for remaining regions to process smoothly. The hope is to process 4-5 regions this FY. Hopes for improved efficiency as tool development moves forward.
  - ii. Ele-hydro integration meeting was held in Reston in December. There was good discussion and fairly clear consensus on ele-hydro integration (data and

programs) to focus on combined data model. Planning meeting has been scheduled for March 8 to get started on next steps.

- iii. HRBS – closed data collection since last meeting. There was good representation across organizations. The data report is in work by the contractor (Dewberry). The report is in review and is due to be complete at end of April. This is just a data report – with no recommendations or costs. USGS will work through the data and then make program decisions and implementation scenarios.

4. **HU12 pour points in NHD/WBD** (*Dave Blodgett*)

- a. Program has been discussing pour points as a point of interoperability between NHD and WBD. For instance, modelers often tie to outlets or pour points. All contributing catchments end in a pour point. Knowing one will give us upstream data. The commonality between NHD and WBD is where they drain to.
- b. Streamgages – WBD follows delineation rules so that confluences are WBD breaks. Outlets can also be defined at monitoring locations. New OGC standard recognizes both – geomorphic and anthropogenic outlets. Outlet location defines the watershed – i.e. gage or confluence. Need to elevate the importance of outlets to drive interoperability –
- c. First rule of WBD is choose outlet location but they aren't cataloged. Let's focus on and establish locations. Sue has started canvassing groups for methodologies. The HUC8 pour points are already events in NHD. Some HU12 have been done for various modeling efforts.

5. **WBD FY16 data improvements** (*Kim Jones*)

- a. Initial fy16 planning was to prioritize names review and MODs.
  - i. MODs have been put on back burner for now – pending some discussion of model and implementation.
  - ii. Names review is in progress. The nation is nearly done with Islands and AK still in work. Sending to state stewards for review. Effort will likely be complete by FY end.
- b. Coastal areas adjustment to NOAA 3-nautical mile line is in the beginning stages. A coastal pilot in Massachusetts with Pete worked well and the method will be continued in the state. The NHD+ team pointed out possible issue in region 03 so this has become high priority as it may affect NHD+ processing. Kim has reached out to stewards to discuss the area. This is a braided, complex area and the Steward believes the area needs to stay in region 3. Meetings are in work to resolve the issue. The West coast is largely done, the East and Gulf coasts are in work. Texas may have coastal work in progress. Kim is following up with Steward.
- c. NHD+HR improvements – NGTOC is flagging errors found on the HU4 boundaries and will pass on to WBD where needed. If not many edits, Kim and Elizabeth will repair under steward maintenance funding. If a lot of edits then resources may be short to deal with issues – may need to flag and wait for refresh.
- d. Pour points are on the radar screen as discussed previously by Dave B.
- e. US/Canada harmonization still in work. Red River basin recently completed.
- f. Still working on MODS but on back burner to better integrate with NHD.

6. **Data, Tools and Stewardship support update** (*Elizabeth Stevens-Klein, Kim Jones*)

- a. Elizabeth has been on the team since Nov 16, 2015
- b. Tools: 10.2.2 version is new and last version for 10.2. The name addin from esri is completed and working well.
- c. 10.3 tools are in build. Undergoing fy16 enhancements. NGTOC is adding a compare tool to view/track jobs – helps both editors and NQC process.
- d. SOI changes for FY16: After consideration on enhancement requests, several internal processes have been added rather than requiring editors to complete:
  - i. The “state” and “area/sq km” fields will be populated by NGTOC on the back end. “HUCLASS” will be renamed “HUDigit”, “HULevel” field will be removed (legacy)

- e. Fy17 – tentative ideas: keep HUMod only at HU12 and smaller delineations, data reviewer to increase validation capability, workflow manager to indicate editing stage of a job, matching up WBD metadata forms with NHD forms.
- f. Working to update national seamless to a monthly refresh.
- g. Distribution – staged products only: national seamless, WBD broken out by region
- h. Metadata has been updated
- i. WBD needs to be standardized across downloads. Working toward better integration of NHD and WBD datasets
- j. Integration of WBD and GNIS
- k. Conducting monthly technical exchanges and tool training
- l. Investigating MOU status for WBD stewards with geospatial liaisons

**7. NWIS in WBD** (*Sue Buto*)

- a. Tool and process revisions have taken place as we work through a request from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Ft. Worth, TX district) to delineate NWIS drainage area for ~750 gages in Texas. Previous methodology left out HU12 coded as “closed basins”. New method includes closed HU12 in total drainage area. Contributing DA calculated as Total area minus non-contributing area.
  - i. AI is a bit uncomfortable with total DA and non-contributing as it stands. It isn’t quite enough information. Some areas that may never contribute and others that could under certain scenarios. WBD is a good place to store that information.
  - ii. The process doesn’t yet include nuances that are yet to be worked out.
- b. The USACE delineations are proposed to be reviewed by UT WSC with input from local experts (Regional SW specialist, TX WSC, TX State Steward). Draft Statement of Work in progress. Texas WSC doesn’t have the capacity to do the work of review this FY.
  - i. Texas WSC is working on non-contributing area delineations for these gages under separate agreement with USACE. Highlights the need to convene a non-contributing area workgroup to discuss issues and develop rules and data delivery mechanisms.
- c. Pilot delineations have not been delivered to national dataset. Need review in light of new delineation method for total drainage area. Mississippi data has not been delivered – several requests for the data have been sent out.
- d. Bureau approving official thinks we need Bureau approval for first released datasets. Subsequent data will be pre-approved if methods remain the same.

**8. US/Canada harmonization update** (*Pete Steeves*)

- a. Ongoing efforts with harmonization
  - i. Regional workshops have been and will be conducted to get border agency sign off. Much of border has been addressed but there are still some loose ends.
    - 1. Great lakes – drainage areas in between great lakes need to be addressed. Planning a regional workshop in May. Hoping to have participation from 8 states and single province (Ontario) that border great lakes. How final units look with respect to great lakes is still to be determined. There will be further discussion due to the number and size of islands in the Great Lakes. Island units will need to be delineated in some form.
    - 2. There are workshops that still need to play out: Lake Champlain, St. Johns, St. Croix regions. Potentially by the end of summer or beginning of fall.
- b. Canadian hydrography (housed in NRCAN) out of Sherbrook Quebec is interested in adopting NHD data model. AI Rea and Steve Aichele have also been involved in discussions. Meetings in Boston next week with Pete, Mike Laitta, AI, and representatives from NRCAN. Discussions about developing common, streamlined data model. There will also be discussion around NHD ontologies. Canadian entities are also interested in stewardship model. Potential ramifications – combining human and computer resources to an end goal. Canadian equivalent of the WBD, hosted by

Environment-Canada, may have interested in WBD data model as well. NHD/WBD are well integrated in States.

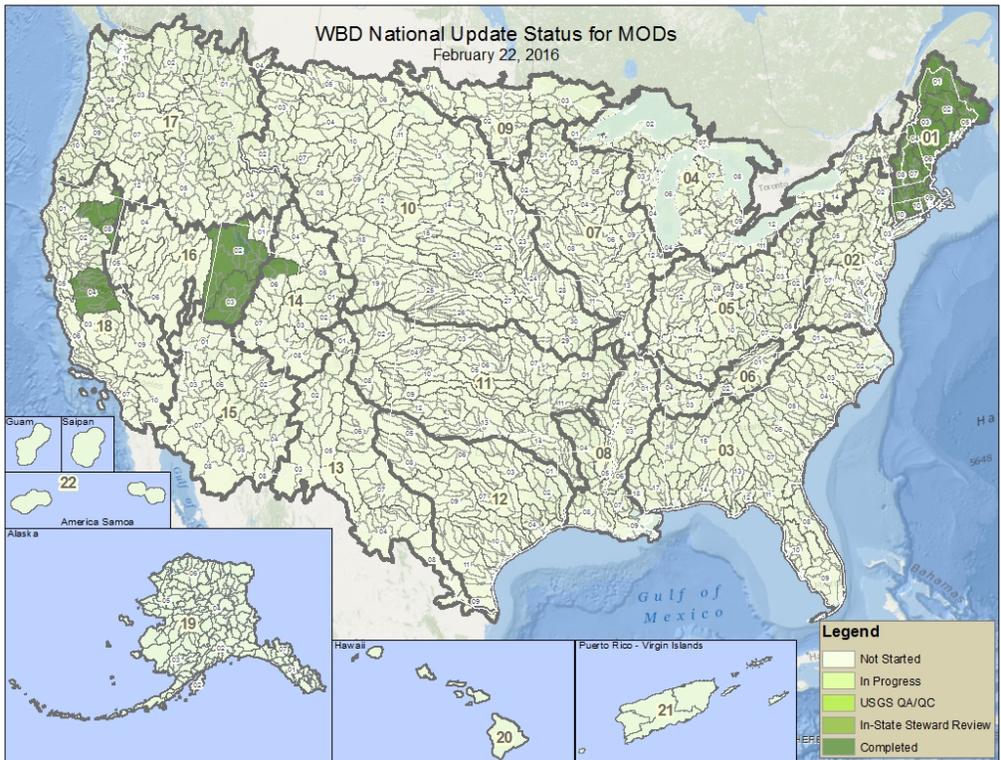
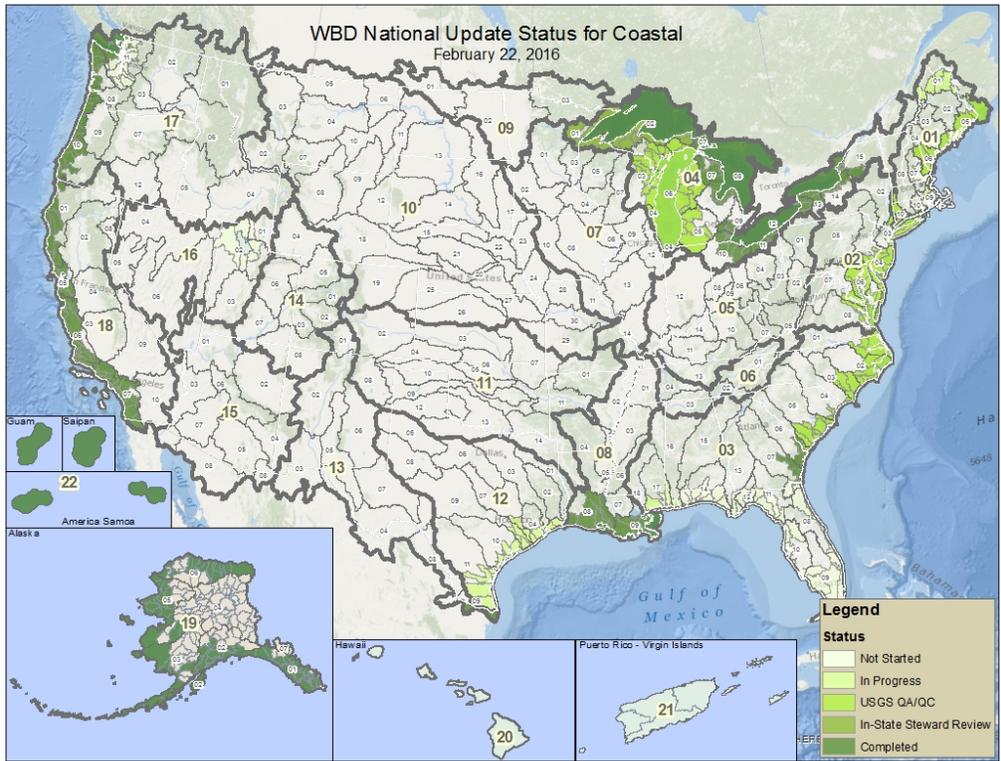
#### 9. Agency round table

- a. **EPA: NHD Plus** (*Tommy Dewald*)
  - i. NHD+ Classic (i.e. Medium res V2). EPA uses a WBD snapshot integrated into NHD+. The snapshot is refreshed every 5-6 years to get stable platform for products that rely in NHD+. EPA has a shared interest of HU12 outlets linked to NHD+ network. Activities to make headway on this issue and comparing notes on what needs to be done to accomplish goal. Automated processes in work with minimized manual review is proving to be challenging. Getting together with folks with same goal would be worthwhile.
- b. **A-16 Process:** (*Wendy Blake-Coleman*)
  - i. Baseline NGDA maturity assessments were done in December. WBD is mostly mature. Maturity to inform strategic plans going forward. Themes and datasets are not static but are dynamic
- c. **BLM** (*Jay Stevens*)
  - i. Oregon coastal management program has lidar derived coastline. Jay has some concerns about work required to tie coastline to adjacent features.
- d. **USFS** (*Mike Eberle*)
  - i. USFS is trying to step up to its NHD stewardship role. Conducting a survey within the month to determine what water layer(s) FS is using – i.e use of NHD or static copy of NHD for in-house work. Region 3 has taken on active role for updating NHD. Group in Salt Lake City called “Geospatial tech center” has offered to be go-between between with forests and NHD. First step in long process of getting forests up on NHD and the reasons for not using the National data.

#### 10. Next quarterly meeting May 2016

##### ACTIONS:

1. Develop draft charter for joint governance of Hydrography System (NHD/WBD/NHD+) (Sue, Nate, Al, Steve, ?)
2. Methods to convene a non-contributing area workgroup need to be developed. Funding and time constraints are at issue but group contribution is necessary for NHD+ HiRes. (Group and means TBD)
3. Organize meeting/workgroup to discuss HU12 pour point initiative (Sue B (organizer), Tommy D., Dave B, Al Rea, Kim J.). Gather existing data.
4. Sent out survey for May meeting (Sue B)



WBD National Update Status for Names  
February 22, 2016

