

Preface

Since its publication in 1979, *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* has been used in the National inventory of wetlands conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The system has been widely used throughout the United States and is often cited in the scientific literature. There has also been considerable international interest in use of the classification.

Copies from the first printing have been expended and demand requires this reprinting. We have taken this opportunity to correct a number of minor typographical errors, bring plant names into conformity with the *National List of Scientific Plant Names* (U.S. Dept. Agriculture 1982), and to upgrade the quality of plates as well as furnish additional plates. No changes have been made that either alter the structure of the classification or the meaning of the definitions. Such major revisions must be deferred until certain prerequisite tasks are accomplished.

Completion of the list of hydrophytes and other plants occurring in wetlands and the list of hydric soils (see page 3) has been a task of far greater complexity than we envisioned when writing the classification. These lists have received extensive review and are being prepared as computer data bases. In addition, the lists will contain a great deal of ancillary information that will make possible the development of methodologies for their use in both the delineation and classification of wetlands. When the lists and methodologies are completed, reviewed, and tested we will revise the classification and use the lists to add precision to the definitions. At the same time, we will address specific technical problems that have arisen during application of the classification.

The plates at the end of this publication are included primarily to illustrate a variety of examples of wetland classification. We have attempted to include photographs from various regions of the country insofar as possible; however, final selection of plates was based on the availability of both high-quality photographs and the detailed field data required for accurate classification. While on sabbatical leave from the University of Rhode Island in 1985, Dr. Frank Golet took numerous photographs of Alaskan wetlands. Addition of many of these and several photographs from other regions helps somewhat to correct a regional imbalance.

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