

## ***Relationship to Other Programs***

Although not technical criteria or procedures, this section briefly addresses some policy and application concerns presented by cooperating agencies.

### **Wetland Regulatory Programs**

The procedures described in this document are for mapping riparian areas for resource inventory purposes only, and have no relationship to any wetland regulatory program. These mapping conventions do not supplant the procedures for identifying wetlands subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, as described in the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual (Corps of Engineers 1987) or other Federal, State, or local wetland programs.

### **Federal Geographic Data Committee Vegetation Standard**

A Vegetation Classification Standard was recently adopted by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). That standard was established to "enable Federal agencies to collect vegetation information in a standard format and apply a standard classification system to vegetation in reports and on maps. This uniform National Vegetation Classification Standard (NVCS) should complement regional or local classifications that are designed to meet more specific objectives."

The Riparian definition and mapping conventions contained in the present report were likewise developed to provide uniformity, but more importantly to be consistent with the Wetlands Standard adopted by the FGDC in December 1996. The Wetlands Standard (Cowardin et al. 1979) is the basis for all wetlands maps prepared by the NWI. Because all riparian mapping to be accomplished by the Service will be done in concert with NWI wetland maps, the riparian mapping conventions were prepared to be synchronous with the existing wetland standard.

Although the FGDC vegetation standard contains associations of vegetative communities that would fit the riparian definition, in reality those communities can be both riparian and upland. This makes them incompatible with the present mapping system. Users of the Service's riparian classification system should be able to convert most of the riparian data to fit the NVCS vegetative standard.

### **Riparian Mapping Direction**

The Service will conduct riparian mapping in response to requests from cooperating agencies rather than as part of a comprehensive effort to map all riparian areas in the western United States. Therefore, riparian mapping will be done only to meet the requirements of cooperating agencies and offices. Updating riparian maps will occur only when funding is available from the cooperating agencies.