**NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program**
**Category 6**

# The National Vegetation Classification Standard:
## Implementation and Outreach for the State of Oklahoma

## INTERIM PROJECT REPORT

*October 1, 2008*

**Cap Grant – Category 6 Interim Report:  Coordinate Solutions**

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**Project Title:**

The National Vegetation Classification Standard: Implementation and Outreach for the State of Oklahoma

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**Executive Summary**

The goal of this project is to provide assistance and outreach in the implementation of the National Vegetation Classification Standard, Version 2 to vegetation scientists, plant ecologists, wildlife biologists, and any others that may collect or utilize floristic and/or vegetation data. Coordinate Solutions, with assistance from the Oklahoma Biological Survey (OBS), is providing outreach support and training on the standard to local, tribal, and state government agencies, college and university research units, and other individuals and groups in or around the State of

Oklahoma involved in all manners of floristic and vegetation collecting and mapping.  By the completion of this project, Coordinate Solutions will have:

- Created and distributed FGDC-approved education materials related to the National Vegetation Classification Standard, Version 2;
- Utilized existing, established  online research tools, such as the [Oklahoma Vascular Plant Databases](#), to publish and promote the new vegetation standard training materials;
- Updated the existing Vegetation of Oklahoma (Hoagland 2000), a vegetation classification for the state of Oklahoma base on the original National Vegetation Classification;
- Held two workshops in Oklahoma related to the National Vegetation Classification;
- Attended several local and regional conferences to promote the implementation of the National Vegetation Classification Standard.

## Project Narrative

### *Summary of Project Activities*

Coordinate Solutions and the Oklahoma Biological Survey/Natural Heritage Inventory have divided project goals into five phases.  The project team has conducted work on several of the phases concurrently.  To date, the project team has made substantial progress in completing phases 1 (development of educational material) and 2 (updating the vegetation of Oklahoma classification).  Additionally, per the goals outlined in phase 5, the project team has attended two conferences to promote the National Vegetation Classification Standard, specifically, and the NSDI, in general. The remaining two phases (online distribution of training materials; training workshops) are contingent upon the completion of the training materials. Progress on each phase is summarized below and in table 1.

### *Phase 1: Develop Educational Materials*

Coordinate Solutions and the Oklahoma Biological Survey have been developing an Implementation Quick Start Guide for the National Vegetation Standard, Version 2.  This document is a distillation of the key components of the National Vegetation Classification, Version 2, with regional examples to aid in the contribution and further development of the National Vegetation Classification for Oklahoma.  The document also contains a brief introduction to the Federal Geographic Data Committee and the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.  In addition to the implementation guide, the project team is developing ancillary educational materials, including fact sheets (for distribution at conferences and training seminars) and a PowerPoint presentation (for use at the training seminar).

A rough draft of the Quick Start Implementation guide is complete and has been submitted to the entire project team for review.  Work on ancillary training materials is ongoing.  Once all materials are complete and appropriate revisions are made, the materials will be sent to Dr. Douglas S. Powell, National Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, United States Forest Service, for further review.  Additional revisions to the training materials will follow.

*Phase 2: Update Vegetation of Oklahoma*

The Vegetation of Oklahoma, a statewide vegetation classification based on the National Vegetation Classification (1997), was originally developed by reviewing extant literature (164 publications) on the vegetation of Oklahoma and the updating of each vegetation classification to conform to the Standard. Version 2 of the National Vegetation Classification, though, represents a substantial revision to the original classification.

Co-PI, Dr. Bruce Hoagland, has been working with Don Faber-Langendoen, senior Ecologist with NatureServe, to revise the upper levels of the National Vegetation Classification hierarchy for Great Plains grassland and shrublands. The pre-existing alliance and association (levels 7 and 8 of the hierarchy) of the Oklahoma vegetation classification have been assigned to these new upper-level types. Faber-Langendoen has also revised the upper-level classification for the eastern deciduous forest. Coordinate Solutions and the Oklahoma Biological Survey are now in the process of assigning Oklahoma's lower-level classifications to the appropriate revised upper-level types.

*Phase 3: Online Material Distribution*

Upon completion of the training materials and review and acceptance by subject matter experts, Coordinate Solutions will make these materials available online at the **Oklahoma Vascular Plants Database**. Additionally, Coordinate Solutions will utilize several online forums, such as the OKGIS, the MidAmerica GIS Consortium (MAGIC), and other relevant local and regional GIS and ecology LISTSERVs to distribute the training materials. At the time of this interim report, the training materials are not publication ready.

*Phase 4: Training Workshops*

Coordinate Solutions and the Oklahoma Biological Survey will hold two training workshops in early 2009 using the materials developed in phases 1 and 2. Workshops will be announced on various online forums (e.g. OKGIS and MAGIC listservs), the OVPD website, and Oklahoma GIS Council Meetings, and will target, local, tribal, and state agency personnel, state and regional herbarium staff, and any others involved in vegetation collecting and mapping (e.g. conservation and resource managers, environmental consultants, and field ecologists).

*Phase 5: Conference Participation*

On July 7 and 8, 2008, Coordinate Solutions attended the 13th Annual Inter-Tribal Environmental Council (ITEC) to promote the National Vegetation Classification, Version 2, specifically, and the National Spatial Database Infrastructure, in general. ITEC is compromised of 41 Native American Tribes from Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas and is designed to foster stewardship of air, land, and water.

Approximately 230 individuals representing approximately 30 different tribes attended the conference. Coordinate Solutions created a project poster describing the National Vegetation Classification and the forthcoming training opportunities; distributed fact sheets related to the

National Spatial Data Infrastructure; and promoted both the National Vegetation Classification Standard and FGDC-endorsed standards, in general, to various individuals involved in the collection and dissemination of geospatial data.

On September 29, 2008, Coordinate Solutions attended the 11th Annual South Central Arc Users Group Conference (SCAUG). SCAUG is an organization dedicated to providing resources and tools for Geographic Information System users and professionals in Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Approximately 300 geospatial professional from the south-central region attended this year's conference.  Just as with the ITEC conference, Coordinate Solutions promoted the National Vegetation Classification standard and the NSDI and standards in general and promoted the upcoming National Vegetation Classification trainings.

| Phase | Status | Percent Complete |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1: Training Materials | Ongoing | 75% |
| Phase 2: Vegetation of Oklahoma | Ongoing | 80% |
| Phase 3: Online Distribution of Training Materials | Contingent upon completion of phase 1 | 0% |
| Phase 4: Training Workshops | Contingent upon completion of phases 1 and 2 | 0% |
| Phase 5: Conference Participation | Ongoing | 66% |

**Table 1:** Status of each phase of the project.

**Deviations and Revised Timeline**

To date, Coordinate Solutions has not deviated from the original project plan.  Coordinate Solutions is on schedule to complete phases 1 and 2 in the near future, which will enable the completion of the remaining phases of the project.  Coordinate Solutions, therefore, doesn't need to revise the timeline at this time.