

USDA Forest Service Natural Resource Manager



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Topic: Natural Resources Manager (NRM) Watershed Classification and Assessment Tracking Tool (WCATT)

Summary: The NRM WCATT application supports classification information for watersheds that contain U.S. Forest Service lands. Watersheds are integral parts of broader ecosystems that can be viewed and evaluated at a variety of spatial scales. Classification information is the product of watershed assessment following the Watershed Condition Framework (WCF) approach. Priority watersheds are documented in WCATT and plans for on-the-ground restoration as well as completion of restoration plans is tracked.

Watershed condition assessment is the process of describing watershed condition in terms of three discrete classes that reflect the level of watershed health. Primary emphasis is placed on a suite of indicators that directly or indirectly impact soil and hydrologic functions and riparian and aquatic ecosystems. The product of the assessment is classification of each watershed in one of the following discrete classes: Functioning Properly, Functioning at Risk, and Impaired Function. Restoration projects serve to improve conditions which ultimately lead to a reassessment and updated watershed classification.

Key Points: WCATT provides a comprehensive approach for:

- Documenting watershed condition assessments and classification results.
- Tracking and monitoring priority watersheds, restoration plans and restoration plan accomplishment.
- Providing a means to display watershed condition, classification and priority watershed restoration history.

Key Features:

- Spatial and tabular documentation of the process for watershed assessment, classification and watershed restoration accountability.
- Storing Watershed Restoration Plan and Restoration Accomplishment Report documents associated with watersheds.
- Reporting of annual performance measures for documenting status and improvement of watershed condition at Forest, Regional, and National scales.
- Spatial and tabular outputs that can be used in project planning as well as large scale assessments for all watersheds that contain U.S. Forest Service lands.

An interactive map available on the World Wide Web (www) provides the public access to WCF assessment and classification information from WCATT. For those watersheds identified as priority, it contains supplemental information regarding the rationale for selection, partners, and a downloadable copy of the Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Restoration Accomplishment Report.