

DRAFT

PHOTO INTERPRETATION CONVENTIONS

CHINCOTEAGUE NW, CHINCOTEAGUE SW

I. MARINE SYSTEM

- A. The marine/estuarine breaks will be made using the previous NWI mapping effort.

II. ESTUARINE SYSTEM

- A. There are three distinct marsh map units:

1. High Marsh - E2EM1P, E2EM/SS1P - These are the areas that are clearly high marsh with a bright white/green/tan signature, usually a fringe along the upland edge, and isolated higher "islands" within larger marsh sections.
2. Mixed Marsh - E2EM1U - These are the extensive areas of marsh that are generally dark green/brown and have many small creeks snaking throughout. These marshes consist of a complex mosaic of high and low marsh hydrology and species composition which would make actual delineations of high/low overly complicated if even possible.
3. Low Marsh - E2EM1N - These areas most commonly lie between the E1 and E2EM1U, and also may occur as pannes within larger marsh units. The signature is often the shiny, blue/grey with thin vegetation (green/brown) dispersed throughout. These areas show as marsh on the topos.

- B. Subtidal ponds and creeks (dark blue to black signature) within the marsh areas are classified E1UBL. All E1UBL creeks that are pen-width or larger will be delineated.

- C. Oyster reefs (E2RF2N) will be mapped using photo signature or collateral data. These areas are noted as Flats on topos and do have a dark textured signature occurring as both subtle stippled patterns and thin white bands. E2RF2/USN is also acceptable.

- D. Unvegetated pannes or tidal flats that are completely surrounded by salt marsh are classified E2US4P or E2US4N (in effect as of 6/15/93, "4's" will be added at draft).
- E. Pure stands of Juncus romerianus (black needlerush) will be classified E2EM3P.

Generally dark green in signature, Juncus romerianus is taller than the surrounding vegetation and usually grows in circular colonies.

Additional stands of E2EM3P may be added at the draft map review stage, when further field work will help positively identify additional stands of Juncus romerianus.

- F. A light or lime green smooth signature found in the upper reaches of the salt marshes was found to represent a mixed subclass of scrub-shrub and emergent species (E2SS1/EM1P, E2EM1/SS1P).
- G. The oligohaline modifier will not be used at the initial photointerpretation stage. As per Regional request, Region 5 personnel may add the oligohaline modifier where it is deemed necessary to ensure regional consistency.
- H. Due to inaccessibility, the network of barrier islands in the Atlantic Ocean were not field checked. These areas should be checked at draft map review, if possible, to ensure accuracy of the photo interpretation and classification.

III. PALUSTRINE SYSTEM

- A. Regional conventions for the use of the B water regime and Pf label will be followed (see attachments).
- B. Forested areas on Nimmo map units with little or no signature will be mapped as a saturated wetland. Wetter pockets will be mapped according to signature. However, Nimmo map unit areas that will be scrutinized closely include the interface between Nimmo map units and Dragston map units and areas where it appears the hydrology has been significantly altered to the extent that the area is no longer functioning as a wetland. Closely following the soil survey is based upon the fact that the Nimmo map unit was very accurately delineated in Accomack County (Rodney Lewis, District Conservationist, Accomack Field Office, S.C.S.).

IV. RIVERINE SYSTEM

- A. Intermittent streams will not be pulled unless vegetated.
- B. Perennial rivers designated on the topographic map will be pulled if they are pen width or larger.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS

- 1. Split subclasses are acceptable.
- 2. Special modifiers will be used when appropriate (beaver, drained, impounded, excavated).
- 3. Sewage disposal ponds are classified PUBKx.



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National Wetlands Inventory, Region 5

Regional Convention

Areas of hydric soils in basin shaped depressions that are subject to plowing and other forms of intensive agriculture; and that retain some aspect of wetland hydrology, shall be delineated and classified as Palustrine farmed (Pf). The definition of the farmed special modifier should be met:

The soil surface has been mechanically or physically altered for production of crops, but hydrophytes will become reestablished if farming is discontinued.

If wetland hydrology is no longer apparent, and/or if there is evidence that hydrophytic vegetation cannot or will not revegetate the site, then the site should be classified as upland.

Areas of standing water and hydric soils observed during field work had the following signature characteristics:

- a.) dark blue to black color.
- b.) obvious shapes expected from depressional landscape features, i.e. circular or "raindrop" shaped.
- c.) sharply defined margins between lighter colored upland zones in the fields. Areas with blurred or large transitional zones often proved not to be holding water, even after a reported eight weeks of unusually wet weather.
- d.) usually small (less than one acre).
- e.) if drains are apparent on the photography then areas with characteristics a. to d. should be scrutinized. Obvious hydrologic change (i.e. light bands on either side of a drain dissecting a depression) usually indicate that the site is no longer functioning as a wetland.

P.I.'s should use the above characteristics to delineate farmed wetlands. It is understood that other areas under cultivation may meet the definition of farmed wetland, but the only reliable, and therefore mappable signatures, are those with the above mentioned characteristics.

In effect as of 1-11-93.



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National Wetlands Inventory, Region 5

Regional Convention

Forested wetlands on the Lower Coastal Plain, which exhibit the following characteristics shall be classified with the B water regime modifier:

- a.) flat topography with little or no visible surface drainage, usually expansive in nature.
- b.) no visible standing water in the understory (i.e., not subject to ponding or flooding).
- c.) not associated with floodplain hydrology.

When applied to the above mentioned wetlands the B water regime modifier is being used to describe seasonal saturation, a condition created by a water table which saturates the soil column on a seasonal basis, but is dry at some point during the year. In the field, forested wetlands of this type are generally dominated by facultative species and exhibit few signs of wetland hydrology at the surface, but do have hydric soils and evidence of a seasonal high water table.

In effect as of 2-19-93