

WebPanel 1. List of authors and affiliations

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WebTable 1. Levels, definition, and example of the hierarchy for natural vegetation

	Natural Hierarchy Level	Definition	Example
Upper levels	L1 – Formation Class	Broad combinations of dominant general growth forms adapted to basic moisture, temperature, and/or substrate or aquatic conditions.	Scientific name: Mesomorphic Shrub & Herb Vegetation Colloquial name: Shrub & Herb Vegetation
	L2 – Formation Subclass	Combinations of general dominant and diagnostic growth forms that reflect global mega- or macro-climatic factors driven primarily by latitude and continental position, or that reflect overriding substrate or aquatic conditions.	Scientific name: Temperate & Boreal Shrub & Herb Vegetation Colloquial name: Temperate & Boreal Grassland & Shrubland
	L3 – Formation	Combinations of dominant and diagnostic growth forms that reflect global macroclimatic conditions as modified by altitude, seasonality of precipitation, substrates, and hydrologic conditions.	Scientific name: Temperate Shrub & Herb Vegetation Colloquial name: Temperate Grassland & Shrubland
Mid levels	L4 – Division	Combinations of dominant and diagnostic growth forms and a broad set of diagnostic plant species that reflect biogeographic differences in composition and continental differences in mesoclimate, geology, substrates, hydrology, and disturbance regimes.	Scientific name: <i>Andropogon – Stipa – Bouteloua</i> Grassland & Shrubland Colloquial name: Great Plains Grassland & Shrubland
	L5 – Macrogroup	Moderate sets of diagnostic plant species and diagnostic growth forms that reflect biogeographic differences in composition and sub-continental to regional differences in mesoclimate, geology, substrates, hydrology, and disturbance regimes.	Scientific name: <i>Andropogon gerardii – Schizachyrium scoparium – Sorghastrum nutans</i> Grassland Colloquial name: Great Plains Tallgrass Prairie
	L6 – Group	A relatively narrow set of diagnostic plant species (including dominants and co-dominants), broadly similar composition, and diagnostic growth forms that reflect regional mesoclimate, geology, substrates, hydrology, and disturbance regimes.	Scientific name: <i>Andropogon gerardii – Hesperostipa spartea – Muhlenbergia richardsonis</i> Grassland Colloquial name: Northern Great Plains Prairie
Lower levels	L7 – Alliance	A characteristic range of species composition, habitat conditions, physiognomy, and diagnostic species, typically at least one of which is found in the uppermost or dominant stratum of the vegetation. Alliances reflect regional to subregional climate, substrates, hydrology, moisture/nutrient factors, and disturbance regimes.	Scientific name: <i>Andropogon gerardii – Sporobolus heterolepis</i> Grassland Colloquial name: Northern Mesic Tallgrass Prairie
	L8 – Association	A characteristic range of species composition, diagnostic species occurrence, habitat conditions, and physiognomy. Associations reflect topographic climate, substrates, hydrology, and disturbance regimes.	Scientific name: <i>Andropogon gerardii – Hesperostipa spartea – Sporobolus heterolepis</i> Grassland Colloquial name: Northern Mesic Big Bluestem Prairie

Notes: The name of the Level can be added to the type name for clarity, where needed.

WebTable 2. Examples of agency use of the USNVC levels

	<i>USNVC level</i>	<i>Possible agency application</i>
Upper	Level 1 – Formation Class	
	Level 2 – Formation Subclass	1. US Army Corps of Engineers – Stewardship
	Level 3 – Formation	1. US Army Corps of Engineers & Environmental Protection Agency (wetland mitigation) 2. Environmental Protection Agency – National Wetland Condition Assessment 3. National Marine Fisheries Service – Status and Trends of Wetlands in the Coastal Watersheds of the Conterminous United States (assessment)
Mid	Level 4 – Division	
	Level 5 – Macrogroup	1. US Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (forest assessment) 2. Bureau of Land Management (regional assessments, land-use plans)
	Level 6 – Group	1. National Park Service Vegetation Inventory Program (natural resource inventory) 2. Fish and Wildlife Service (natural resource inventory, ecological integrity assessment) 3. US Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (forest assessment) 4. LandFire (fire modeling) 5. US Geological Survey – GAP Analysis Program (habitat distribution) 6. Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (habitat inventory) 7. Western Governors Association Initiative on Wildlife Corridors and Crucial Habitat (wildlife habitat inventory) 8. State Natural Heritage Programs (natural resources inventory)
Lower	Level 7 – Alliance	1. National Park Service Vegetation Inventory Program, State Natural Heritage Programs (natural resources inventory)
	Level 8 – Association	1. National Park Service Vegetation Inventory Program, State Natural Heritage Programs (natural resources inventory)