



# Metadata: Making Data More Valuable

## NBII Services

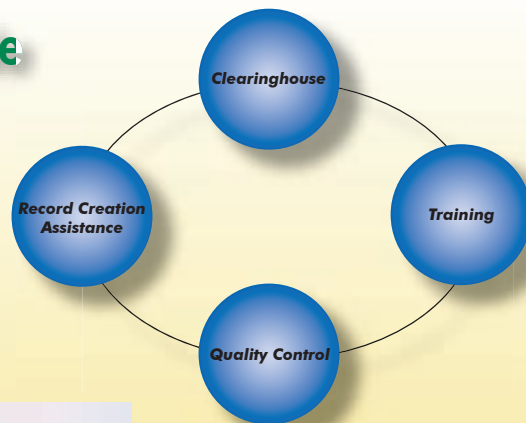


### Clearinghouse

The National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) Metadata Clearinghouse is an important element of the NBII. Through the NBII Clearinghouse, Internet users can search through an assortment of standardized descriptions of different biological databases or information products to identify those that meet their requirements. The NBII Clearinghouse includes metadata descriptions of biological databases and information products developed and maintained by U.S. Geological Survey scientists, as well as data and information developed and maintained by other NBII participants, including federal, state, and local government agencies; private sector organizations; and other partners around the nation and the world.

The NBII Clearinghouse also functions as a registered node of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Clearinghouse since many of the biological databases described in the NBII Clearinghouse are geospatially referenced. Because the focus of the NBII is on all types of biological data and information, the NBII Clearinghouse also accommodates metadata descriptions of data sets and information products that are not explicitly geospatial, such as the results of laboratory research.

Individual metadata records can be contributed to a "principal node" of general records in the Clearinghouse, or a separate node can be established for all of an organization's records. Partner records are stored in a Web-accessible location and are "harvested" by the NBII on a regular schedule. This harvesting model allows flexibility in building more effective search mechanisms, such as browse trees.



### Quality Control

Accurate metadata records are essential to the integrity of the Clearinghouse; therefore, the NBII provides a quality assurance program in which records are reviewed for content and accurate application of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) standard. Records are evaluated through the use of a metadata parser (mp) and given a final review by a qualified metadata expert. If significant changes are needed, records are returned to the original creator for edits. Then the records are checked again in the same manner and submitted to the NBII Clearinghouse.



### Record Creation Assistance

Establishing institutional metadata practices and learning the FGDC standard for spatial and/or biological metadata can be a daunting task. The NBII eases the transition by offering record creation assistance by a metadata expert. Our specialist will create records for new or legacy data sets as a means of preserving information about the data. Final records are reviewed by the data set creator, quality controlled, and submitted to the NBII Clearinghouse.



### Training

For the most effective searching and retrieval of information from the NBII Metadata Clearinghouse, metadata must be created according to established guidelines. The NBII offers metadata training workshops to ensure metadata creators are familiar with basic concepts related to creating metadata. Workshops provide an opportunity to: create metadata through hands-on exercises, prepare metadata files to be served on the Clearinghouse, and retrieve metadata records from the Clearinghouse.

The NBII metadata workshops use the FGDC Biological Data Profile, which incorporates all elements of the FGDC Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata and adds elements that specifically describe biological data. The NBII currently uses Intergraph's SMMS metadata creation tool for its NBII metadata workshops.

**Find us  
on the Web at:  
[www.nbii.gov](http://www.nbii.gov)**

### New Partners Welcome!

The NBII invites and encourages new partnerships. If your organization is interested in any or all of the services offered free of charge, please contact Viv Hutchison by e-mail at <vhutchison@usgs.gov> or phone 703-648-4311.