



Determine Appropriate Reference Type

This document provides guidance to selecting the appropriate Reference Types.

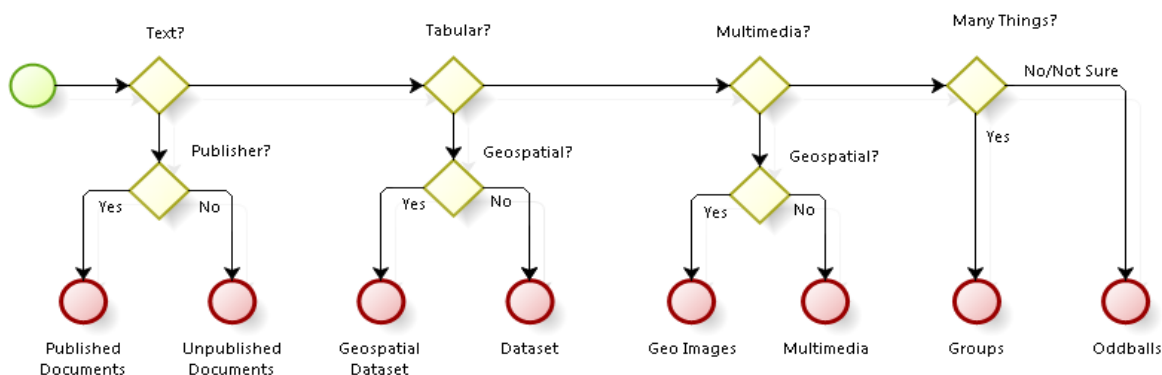
Introduction

A Reference Type categorizes the information resource being described in the record. In general, categorization is topic (e.g., about birds, water quality, etc.) and format (e.g., hard copy vs. digital) agnostic and focused more on intent and use (e.g., textual information for reading vs data vs images for viewing). Some Reference Types are very explicit (e.g., journal article, protocol, standard operating procedure) while others are more general (geospatial database, generic database).

ServCat offers a wide range of Reference Types with the intent that information not be pigeon-holed inappropriately. With the large variety, there will be cases where more than one type is acceptable. In these cases, perhaps spend minimal time focusing on the minutia of subtle differences (e.g., Raster Dataset vs. Geospatial Dataset) as opposed to being sure that there are not gross misclassifications that are blatantly incorrect.

Decision Tree Guide

To begin, perhaps ask questions about the information resource.



Example questions:

- **Geospatial?** - Can it be easily read and displayed by GIS software?
- **Many Things?** - It is too difficult, time consuming, or inappropriate to describe a set of things individually? Is this describing a project or effort by one or more individuals that resulted in the creation of one or more other information resources? (e.g., reports, maps, datasets, etc)?
- **Multimedia?** - Is it primarily visual, graphical or include sounds?
- **Publisher?** - Is there clear indication of a publisher? Most publishers will be companies or organizations, not people. Is there a price or ISBN number?

- **Tabular?** - Is most of the information contained/organized in tables (i.e., columns and rows)?
- **Text?** - Is there more text than images or tables? Is it something that you generally read?

Suggested Reference Types

Datasets

- Generic Dataset
- Tabular Dataset

Geo-Images

- Aerial photograph
- Satellite Image
- LIDAR Image

Geospatial Dataset

- Geospatial dataset
- Raster Dataset
- Relational Database
- Vector Dataset

Multimedia

- Photograph
- Movie/Video
- Audio recording
- Map
- Mapbook-Atlas
- Poster
- Presentation
- Aerial photograph
- Satellite Image
- Web Sites

Oddballs

- Software
- Survey
- Web Sites

Published Documents

- Published Report
- Published Report Section
- Book
- Book Chapter
- EIS (Environmental Impact Statement)
- Journal Article
- Conference Proceeding Paper
- Newsletter
- Brochure
- Dissertation
- Thesis
- Plan

Unpublished Documents

- Unpublished Report

- Resource Brief
- Field Notes
- Brochure
- Data Standard
- Dissertation
- Docket
- Email
- Help Documentation
- Memorandum
- Permit
- Plan
- Proposal
- Protocol
- Protocol Development Summary
- Survey

Definitions

Definitions for each Reference Type can be found here:

<https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DataStoreReports/Public/Reference%20Types>