



QA Certification of NPSpecies

Created by: Mark A. Wotawa 6/23/2003

(instructions updated 1/9/2004)

Last Modified by: Alison Loar 2/23/2007

This document contains the certification form to formally document the results of the Quality Assurance (QA) review of organism lists and associated fields in the master, online NPSpecies database. The responses on the form will become a permanent part of NPSpecies so users will be able to view a history of the reviews at any time and query subsequent additions or edits of records that occurred after the last review.

The following web site should be consulted for more detailed documents, procedures and exercises on the quality assurance and review/certification of NPSpecies: <http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/apps/npspp/>

Why Certify?

The certification is a quality control (QC) step to provide documentation that the organism lists and associated attributes for a park and a taxa category have been reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Because NPSpecies is a dynamic database that will continue to be populated into the future, it is necessary to document when, and which data have been reviewed for completeness and accuracy so that users can qualify the use of the data for scientific, management and interpretive purposes, among others. Additionally the NPS is required to ensure and document the quality of data that it disseminates (see *Director's Order 11b: Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated by the National Park Service*).

When to Certify

A QA certification should be completed after the first formal review of species checklists for a park and a taxa category. The need for subsequent reviews and certification will vary from a few to many years depending on any changes in the park boundary, man-made or natural events affecting biodiversity, the extent of data added or edited after the time of the previous review, and/or management priorities.

Who Can Certify

Certification forms will only be accepted from NPSpecies [Point-of-Contacts \(POC\)](#).

In practice, the POC will coordinate the review with local experts that are well-versed in the biology, taxonomy and nomenclature of species at the respective parks. Upon completion of the review, the POC will complete the form cooperatively with the reviewers and then submit the form along with an NPSpecies data file, if applicable.

After the POC submits a completed certification, the Servicewide I&M Program will conduct QA procedures as an additional check to ensure data quality. If any inconsistencies are found, the POC will be contacted before the certification record and any data are uploaded into NPSpecies.

After the certification process is complete, the Servicewide I&M Program will conduct a download of the certified data from the master online NPSpecies to the desktop NPSpecies, and archive the file as a backup copy. The POC should do likewise.

What to Certify

The certification applies to the review of the values in one or more field-elements of the database as specified in the certification section. The certification will apply to the review of species checklists and associated data contained in the master online version of NPSpecies. In practice, at this time, the review

will likely be conducted in the desktop version of NPSpecies upon data that are downloaded from the master online version. When a review and certification is completed for data in the desktop version, the desktop data file must be submitted with this form so that the data are replaced in the online version. See the document entitled *Uploading NPSpecies Data from the Desktop Version to Online* for more information.

The certification of reference, voucher and observation data, including the certification that sensitive data have been appropriately flagged will be addressed in other documents.

How to certify

After the review is complete, the certification is simply the completion and submission of the form contained in this document.

If the review was conducted in the desktop version of NPSpecies, the data file and submission form for *Uploading NPSpecies Data* will also need to be submitted along with this certification form. See the NPSpecies web site for procedures and forms for uploading data.

Certifications should be sent by Email from the POC to the following.

Alison Loar
NPSpecies Data Manager
National Park Service Cooperator
1201 Oakridge Drive, Suite 150
Fort Collins, CO 80525
alison_loar@partner.nps.gov
Office: 970-267-2112
Fax: 970-225-3587

NPSpecies QA Certification Form

This QA certification form contains 4 parts: Submitter, Scope, Certification and Qualification. All items must be completed each time the data are certified. The only exception is the Qualification section cannot be completed for the very first certification as it relates to previous certifications, but should be completed for all subsequent certifications.

Note that the values “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are available as values for many of the field-elements in NPSpecies and the certification applies to these values like any other (i.e. the reviewers are certifying that the true value is “Unknown” or “NA”).

SUBMITTER (POC)

This section identifies and verifies the NPSpecies POC who is the only person from which certifications will be accepted. The information provided in this section will be for internal communication purposes only and will not be released through NPSpecies. The following web site provides the list of [NPSpecies POCs](#).

M1) Specify whether this certification form refers to the data in an accompanying MS Access desktop file of NPSpecies that needs to be uploaded to the online version or that this certification form refers to the data that is already online.

☒ Refers to data in the accompanying file.

☐ Refers to data already online.

M2) First Name _Whitney_____

M3) Last Name ___Granger_____

M4) Area Code and Phone Number _337-291-3079_____

M5) Email Whitney_Granger@nps.gov_____

M6) NPS Affiliation (e.g. park, I&M Network, cooperator, etc.) __GULN_____

M7) Position _DM_____

SCOPE

This section defines the scope of the certification - in particular the parks and taxa categories that have been reviewed. This information is necessary because different individuals may certify different lists or different data on different dates, depending on resources and expertise.

NOTE: IF THE SCOPE ENTRIES THAT FOLLOW DO NOT APPLY TO ALL OF THE ENTRIES IN THE CERTIFICATION SECTION OF THIS FORM, THEN SEPARATE FORMS NEED TO BE COMPLETED.

S1) Enter the date of this certification: __09132007__

S2) Enter the names and affiliations of the individuals that participated in this certification:

Name	Affiliation
Debbie Benesh	Texas Nature Conservancy
Whitney Granger	NPS
Paul Harcombe	Rice University

S3) List the parks, check the taxa categories, and provide any details that this certification applies to.

Park	Bird	Fish	Mam.	Amph.	Rep.	V. Plnt.	Details
BITH						X	

S4) Enter citation(s) for any accompanying documents produced in support of this certification. A hypothetical example would be: *Doe, John. 2003. Results and issues during the review of the NPSpecies bird list for Rocky Mountain National Park. Cooperative Agreement #000.* Note that these documents should be cataloged in the Natural Resource Bibliography, NatureBib so that they can be digitally linked to this certification in the future.

Citations
649520 Harcombe, P. A. 2007. A Vascular Plant Survey for Big Thicket National Preserve.

CERTIFICATION

This section provides the actual certification of completeness and accuracy of the values for each field-element of the NPSpecies database. It is understood that the following certification is based upon the current knowledge of the participants combined with the current information that was available while reviewing the NPSpecies database for certification. Note that the values “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are available as values for many of the fields and the certification applies to these values like any other (i.e. the reviewers are certifying that the true value is “Unknown” or “NA”). It is recognized that no species list will ever be 100% complete and accurate from every potential reviewer’s perspective at any given time.

NOTE: IF THE CERTIFICATION ENTRIES THAT FOLLOW DO NOT APPLY TO ALL OF THE ENTRIES IN THE SCOPE SECTION OF THIS FORM, THEN SEPARATE FORMS NEED TO BE COMPLETED.

LOCAL CLASSIFICATION FIELDS

C1) ☐X ☐Yes ☐No

Local List: The names on the list(s) include all the names (or all of the subset of non-native names if item S4 above applies) that apply to the park regardless of the Park-Status, AND the Local List checkbox has been checked for all these names. It is understood that by design, the list(s) in NPSpecies may include additional names due to taxonomic issues such as name changes, synonyms, lumping/splitting, etc. as a result of the inclusion of legacy data and that the Local List checkbox therefore identifies only the subset of names that are used locally to identify and reflect the actual organisms for the park locality.

Enter any details on certification of Local List:

C2) ☐XX ☐Yes ☐No

Local Accepted Name/TSN: The Local Accepted Name/TSN has been assigned for each name on the list that does not have the Local List checkbox checked in C1 (or the respective subset of non-native name(s) if item S4 above applies) and the assignment has been reviewed for accuracy. It is understood that the assignment of the Local Accepted Name/TSN allows the references, vouchers and observations for a name not used locally to appear under a name that is used locally.

Enter any details on certification of Local Accepted Name/TSN:

SPECIES CHECKLISTS FIELDS

C3) ☐X ☐Yes ☐No

Park-Status: The Park-Status field has an entry for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy.

Enter any details on certification of Park-Status:

C4) ☐X ☐Yes ☐No

Abundance: The Abundance field has an entry for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Note that “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are choices for Abundance in NPSpecies.

Enter any details on certification of Abundance:

C5) ☐X ☐Yes ☐No

Residency: The Residency field has an entry for every VERTEBRATE name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native VERTEBRATE names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Note that “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are choices for Residency in NPSpecies.

Enter any details on certification of Residency:

C6) ☒ Yes ☐ No Nativity: The Nativity field has an entry for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Note that “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are choices for Nativity in NPSpecies. Enter any details on certification of Nativity:
C7) ☒ Yes ☐ No Cultivation: The Cultivation field has an entry for every NON-NATIVE name on the Local List and has been reviewed for accuracy. Note that “Unknown” and “NA” (not applicable) are choices for Cultivation in NPSpecies. Enter any details on certification of Cultivation:
MANAGEMENT FIELDS
C8) ☐ Yes ☒ No Weedy: The Weedy checkbox has been checked as appropriate for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Enter any details on certification of Weedy:
C9) ☐ Yes ☒ No Pest: The pest checkbox has been checked as appropriate for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Enter any details on certification of Pest:
C10) ☐ Yes ☒ No Management Priority: The Management Priority checkbox has been checked as appropriate for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Enter any details on certification of Management Priority:
C11) ☐ Yes ☒ No Exploitation Concern: The Exploitation Concern checkbox has been checked as appropriate for every name on the Local List (or all of the subset of non-native names on the Local List if item S4 above applies) and has been reviewed for accuracy. Enter any details on certification of Exploitation Concern:

QUALIFICATION

This section qualifies this certification relative to previous certifications. Qualifying the certification will help if NPSpecies data are used for analyses of biodiversity over time. The complete certification history will be available in the online NPSpecies database to facilitate the completion of this section.

Q1) ___Yes ___No ___Unknown

Did any of the park boundaries that this certification applies to change since the last certification? If so, specify the parks, check the taxa categories that may have been affected and provide any details.

Park	Bird	Fish	Mam.	Amph.	Rep.	V. Plnt.	Details

Q2) ___Yes ___No ___Unknown

Did a new survey/inventory occur since the last certification on any of the taxa categories at any of the parks that this certification applies to? If so, specify the parks, check the taxa categories, and provide any details.

Park	Bird	Fish	Mam.	Amph.	Rep.	V. Plnt.	Details

Q3) ___Yes ___No ___Unknown

Did a major natural or man-made event (fire, flood, development, etc.) occur since the last certification that may have affected the biodiversity of any of the parks and taxa groups that this certification applies to? If so, specify which parks, the event, check the taxa categories that may have been affected, and provide any details.

Park	Event	Bird	Fish	Mam.	Amph.	Rep.	V. Plnt.	Details