

USGS National Hydrography Dataset Newsletter

Vol. 19, No. 1, January 2020

[A New Way to Make Decisions about Hydrography Specifications](#)

[NHD Training Update](#)

[NHD, WBD, and NHDPlus HR Status Updates](#)

[NHDPlus High Resolution Beta Production Status](#)

[WBD 4-digit Improvement Status](#)

[Photo of the Month](#)

[Hydrography Quiz](#)

[Upcoming USGS Hydrography Calls, Trainings, and Meetings](#)

A New Way to Make Decisions about Hydrography Specifications

Contact: Christy-Ann Archuleta (carchule@usgs.gov)

The USGS has a new way to make decisions about specifications, which are rules or instructions describing “what” a product must be at different points in product creation – from acquisition to public delivery of products. The USGS National Geospatial Program (NGP) worked with internal groups to design a new, streamlined process that supports making specifications available as quickly as possible, while still adhering to [USGS Fundamental Science Practices](#) to meet rigorous scientific integrity standards.

The new process makes improvements in three primary ways. The first is the formation of review boards staffed with subject matter experts from across the USGS who weigh in on topics related to data needs and requirements. The second is engagement with governance groups outside of USGS in discussions about specifications, such as the National Hydrography Infrastructure Working Group (NHI WG). The third is the recording of specifications into a centralized National Map specifications database called Spec-X. This enables changes to specifications to be published online much more quickly than the previous process of disseminating the information through a formal USGS publication.

NGP has formed two specifications boards - the Hydrography Specifications Review Board (HSRB) and the Elevation Specifications Review Board (ESRB). The HSRB manages USGS specifications related to NHD, WBD, and NHDPlus High Resolution products and services. It has the authority to:

1. Make decisions on proposed hydrography data acquisition and data product requirements and associated specifications;
2. Solicit and evaluate proposed updates from the NHI WG;
3. Make decisions on proposed changes to the information content of the Spec-X database, including changes to database content, update policies, revision cycles, and standards referenced; and

4. Authorize publication of specifications and information available through the Spec-X database.

New specifications or changes to existing specifications are submitted to the HSRB through an internal proposal process. Once a specification proposal has been accepted by the HSRB, it is evaluated, and a decision is made whether or not to move the proposal forward. If it enters the HSRB proposal docket, the HSRB researches the proposal and votes to accept or reject it. If hydrography specifications involve elevation data, the Elevation Specifications Review Board is engaged and both boards work together on the proposed specification. If the proposal is accepted, the new specification information is entered into the Spec-X database. An online front-end is under development for the Spec-X database. For a preview, please visit <https://usgs-mrs.cr.usgs.gov/SPECX/>.

For more information, please contact the HSRB Facilitator, Christy-Ann Archuleta (carchule@usgs.gov), or the HSRB Chair, Al Rea (ahrea@usgs.gov).

NHD Training Update

Contact: Joel Skalet (nhd@usgs.gov)

Due to recent retirements and ongoing personnel changes, no NHD trainings will be held in February or March. We hope to commence training again in the near future, possibly this spring.

To register for NHD training, or for more information, please contact Joel Skalet (nhd@usgs.gov, 608-238-9333 x152).

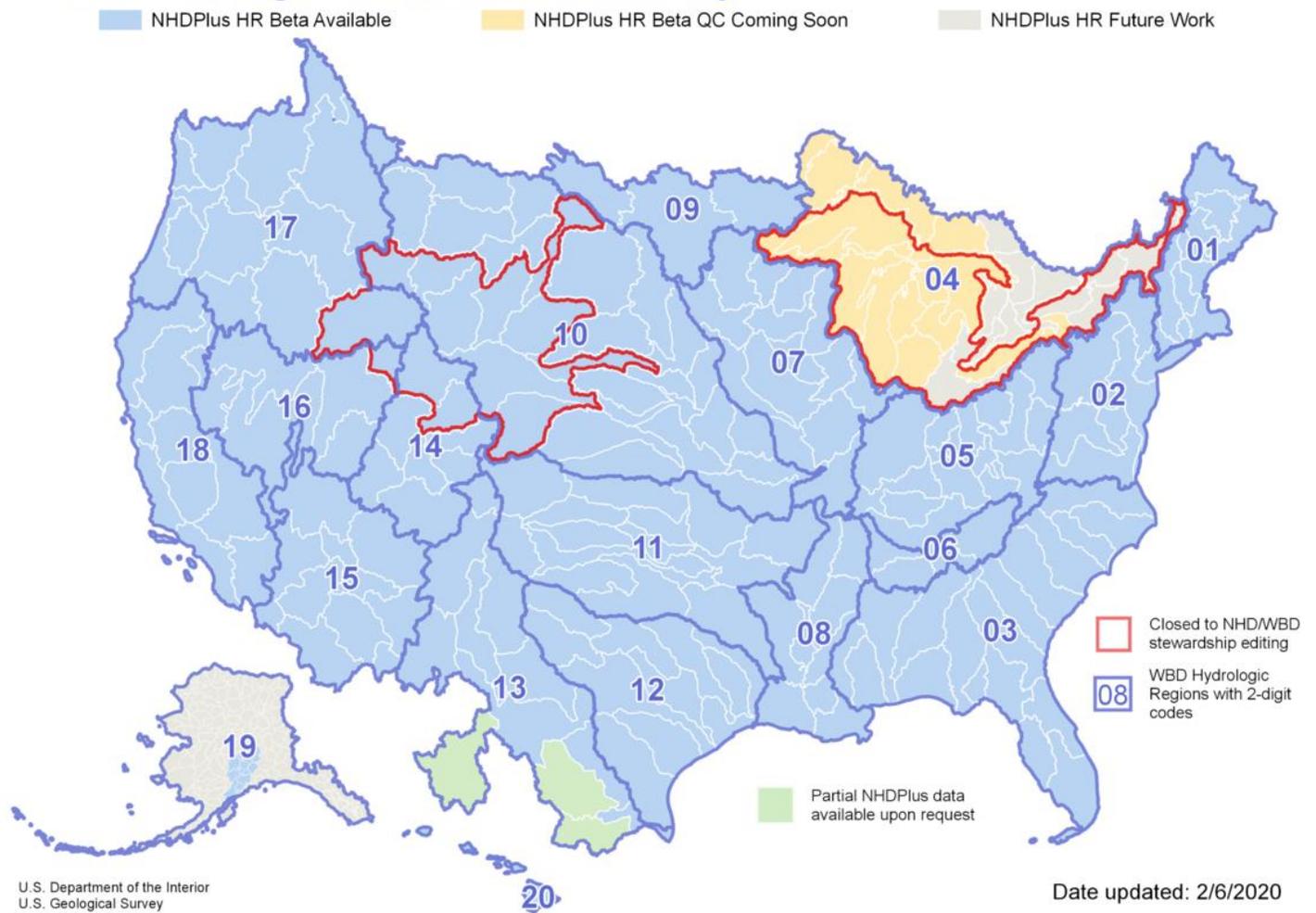
NHD, WBD, and NHDPlus HR Status Updates

NHDPlus High Resolution Beta Production Status

Contact: Karen Adkins (kadkins@usgs.gov), Hayley Thompson (hnthompson@usgs.gov)

The map below provides an overview of NHDPlus HR availability. This status map is updated frequently on the [NHDPlus HR webpage](#).

NHDPlus High Resolution Availability



- Red outline - These areas are currently closed to NHD and WBD editing. Please contact the National NHD Point of Contact (Joel Skalet, nhd@usgs.gov) or National WBD Point of Contact (Lily Niknami, lniknami@usgs.gov) for more information on the status of NHD and WBD editing in these areas.
- Blue areas - NHDPlus HR Beta is currently available and Beta QC is either in process or completed for these areas. Please see the [NHDPlus HR Beta QC](#) section of the [NHDPlus HR webpage](#).

- Yellow areas - The NHDPlus HR Beta is in production and the USGS is currently seeking volunteers for the upcoming Beta QC for these areas. Please see the [NHDPlus HR Beta QC](#) section of the [NHDPlus HR webpage](#) for more information. Please contact the National NHD Point of Contact (Joel Skalet, nhd@usgs.gov) or National WBD Point of Contact (Lily Niknami, lniknami@usgs.gov) for more information on the status of NHD and WBD editing in these areas.
- Gray areas - NHDPlus HR Beta will be produced at a later date. These areas are currently open for NHD and WBD editing.
- Green areas - The NHDPlus HR Beta was produced using contributing areas in Mexico to improve the NHDPlus HR Beta along the Rio Grande River. Minimal hydrography was included in the Beta build but will be improved when the areas are refreshed. The NHDPlus HR Beta production data with minimal hydrography content is available upon request.

WBD 4-digit Improvement Status

Contact: Kimberly Jones (kjones@usgs.gov), Lily Niknami (lniknami@usgs.gov)

WBD 4-digit Improvement - Work Completed

- Regions 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, and 22
- Mexico contributing 4-digit hydrologic units in Region 13
- Region 19 (19020202, 19020301, 19020302, 19020401, 19020402, 19020501, 19020502, 19020503, 19020504, 19020505, 19020601, and 19020602, 19020800)

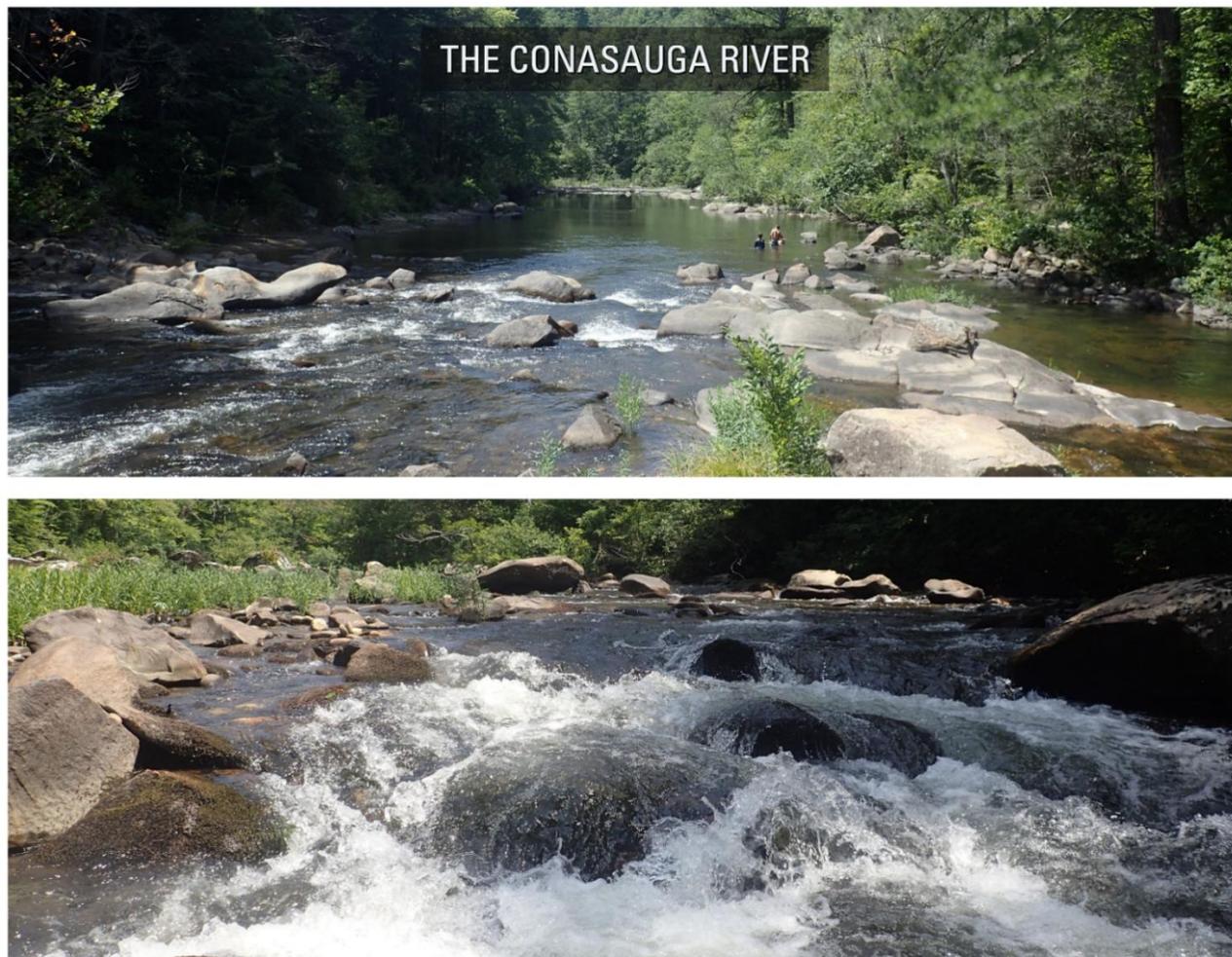
WBD 4-digit Improvement - Currently in Work

- Region 19 (19020101, 19020102, 19020103, 19020104)

WBD 4-digit Improvement - Future Work

- Region 19 (not listed above)
-

Photo of the Month



This month's photos, submitted by Jon Beck, are of the Conasauga River. It originates in the Chattahoochee National Forest in the Southern Appalachians and is famous for its diversity of aquatic life. The small watershed features 76 native fish species, more than the Columbia and Colorado River watersheds combined. The clear water and multi-colored fish make it an ideal spot for snorkeling. The streams and rivers of the Southern Appalachians include more than 400 species of fish, more than half of the species found in all the US and Canada.

We'd love to see photos of the hydrology near you or from your travels! Please send submissions to Alexander Jones (ajonesi@usgs.gov).

Hydrography Quiz

Congratulations to **Janet Brewster** who won last month's Hydrography Quiz with the correct answer of the **Hudson River**. Janet is a GIS Specialist with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife in Sacramento, California. She has been using the NHD for many years, and currently is using it most frequently to see stream/river connectivity when there is a barrier to fish migration. She often uses WBD for reviewing and developing native fish ranges. Since the beta version of NHDPlus HR for California was recently completed, she is looking forward to playing around with it in the near future. Thanks, Janet, and well done!

Thanks to everyone else who played along: Megan Hederman, John Studtmann, Barbara Rosenbaum, Jon Becker, Laura Palmer, James McDonald, David Szczebak, and Joanna Wood.

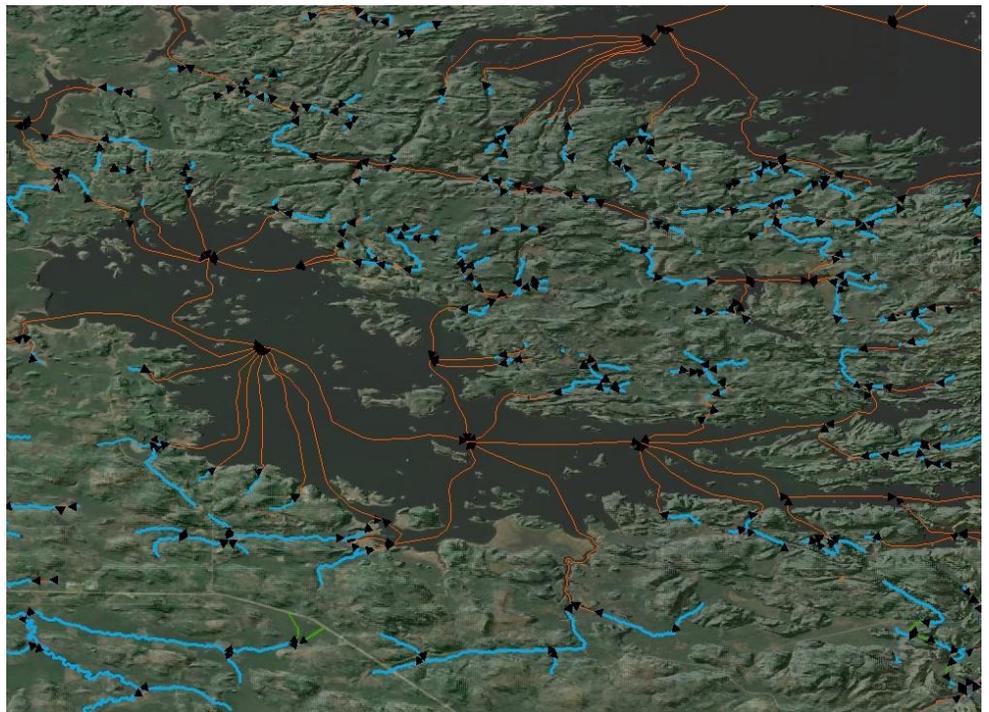
This Month's Quiz

By Alexander Kaufman

This area has been inhabited by humans for thousands of years and it became a National Park in 1975. The Lake depicted below is known for walleye fishing, its clear waters, and more than 200 islands.

What is the name of the lake? As a bonus, what is the National Park in which it resides?

Email your answer to Becci Anderson
(rdanderson@usgs.gov)



Upcoming USGS Hydrography Calls, Trainings, and Meetings

Date	Time	Event
Feb 25	1:00 PM ET	USGS Hydrography Advisory Call
Mar 4	12:00 PM ET	NHD Technical Exchange Meeting (TEM)
Mar 11	12:00 PM ET	WBD Technical Exchange Meeting (TEM)

To be added to the USGS Hydrography Advisory Call email list, please email nhd@usgs.gov. For information on training, please contact Joel Skalet (nhd@usgs.gov, 608-238-9333 x152). For more information on technical exchange meetings, please see the [Hydrographic Data Community \(HDC\)](#) site. For access to the HDC site, please contact Lily Niknami (lniknami@usgs.gov).

Thank you to this month's USGS National Hydrography Dataset Newsletter contributors:

Christy-Ann Archuleta, Kimberly Jones, Karen Adkins, Hayley Thompson, Lily Niknami, Joel Skalet, Vanessa Baez, Alexander Jones, Alexander Kaufman, Al Rea, Drew Decker, and Becci Anderson.

Join Our Community!

For more information, to sign up for the newsletter, or to contribute, please contact Becci Anderson, Hydrography Management and Planning Lead, at rdanderson@usgs.gov.

Visit us anytime at usgs.gov/NatHydro and follow us on Twitter [@USGSNHD](https://twitter.com/USGSNHD)

Any use of trade, product, or firm names is for descriptive purposes only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.