

Changes to MIRIS Land Cover/Use Classification System

Last Updated July 1, 1998

Changes made to the MIRIS Land Classification include a restructuring of the forest and wetland groups, new names for some group headings and categories, the addition of some new categories, and revised descriptions of feature assignments.

URBAN: RESIDENTIAL

1. A separate category was added for duplex housing, which was formerly a part of the single-family category. The major housing types are now identified as separate Level III categories.
2. The Mobile Home category was expanded to include mobile homes on individual platted properties as frequently occurs in rural areas.
3. New description for Single Family category. Density criteria eliminated. Added criteria for evaluating large, platted rural residential parcels.

URBAN: COMMERCIAL

1. Eliminate use of the Level II code #12 as a mapping category.
2. Changes the former Neighborhood Business category to 'Other Retail/Services.' The category now includes strip commercial development, historic neighborhood business areas, some entertainment uses and any other area use for the sale of goods and services.
3. Changed the former Shopping Center category to Retail Center. The category now includes large discount retail establishments associated with national or regional chain stores.
4. Added an Office category in order to separate professional business activities from retail functions. This category gives definition to office park developments that are becoming common in suburban areas
5. Added a Public Assembly category in order to separate from retail functions. These land uses were formerly identified under the Level II map code #12

URBAN: INDUSTRIAL

1. Eliminate use of the map code #13 by adding Level III category, Other Industrial.

URBAN: TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION, UTILITIES

1. Added two new utility categories, Waste disposal and Other Utility, to further define this broad group of features.
2. Provided a separate category for transmission line and pipeline corridors because the category reflects a level of intensity of land use development far less than other utility functions.

URBAN: EXTRACTIVE

1. The Open Pit category was divided into two new categories, Open Pit: Sand and Gravel and Open Pit: Rock, that give definition to the two major types of materials that are extracted from the surface.

URBAN: OUTDOOR CULTURAL, RECREATION

1. Changed the name of the Level II class from Outdoor Cultural/Public Assembly/Recreation to Recreation/Open Use.
2. Added three new categories, Marina/Boat Launch, Resort/Group Camp, and Campground to give added definition to recreational land uses.

AGRICULTURE

1. Added separate category for farmsteads so that aggregation can occur as either an agricultural or urban (residential) land use.
2. Separated ornamental horticulture from orchards and vineyards.

OPEN FIELD

1. Changed the name of former Level I description, Open Field, to Upland field.
2. Added third level of definition to the Savanna category to differentiate hardwood and conifer components.
3. Added the category, Vacant, to define open spaces associated with urban development that are frequently different than rural grasslands in terms of appearance, use, context, and composition.

FOREST

1. Changed name of former Forest group to Upland Forest. Moved Lowland Hardwood and Lowland Conifer categories to the Forested Wetland group.
2. Combined former Northern Hardwood and Central Hardwood categories into the Other Upland Hardwood category. The former separation was inconsistent with actual interpretation practices where designation was based on a regional boundary line rather than species composition.
3. Added the category, Clearcut, in order to give spatial definition to the significant change in cover type associated with this timber harvesting activity.

WATER

1. The description of the Reservoir category was enhanced to include category assignments of various types of man-made basins.

WETLAND

1. Reorganized this group under three new major headings, Forested (formerly Wooded), Non-Forested (formerly Non-Wooded), and Aquatic Bed. Classification by Forested and Non-Forested groups is consistent with other standard wetland classification schemes.
2. Moved the Lowland Hardwood and Lowland Conifer categories from the former Forest group to the new Forested Wetland group and assigned new map codes.
3. Moved Shrub/Scrub category from the former Wooded group to the new Non-Forested group and assigned new map code.
4. Added the category, Other Non-forested Wetlands, in order to accommodate feature signatures that are not fully apparent on various types of imagery.
5. Moved the Aquatic Bed category to the new Level II heading and assigned a new map code.
6. Added new categories to the Aquatic Bed group to cover special conditions for statistical aggregation purposes.

BARREN

1. Added the category, Other Barren, to cover eroded soil conditions, etc.