
Unified Climate Access Network (UCAN)

Issue Area	Efficient Delivery of Climate Information to NRCS Field Offices via the Internet Using the Unified Climate Access Network (UCAN)
What's the Challenge?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivery of climate information to NRCS Field Offices nationwide to support natural resource management.• Standardizing data file formats, analysis software and user interfaces at eight climate centers to allow seamless access by NRCS offices to climate information.• Developing a fault-tolerant, Internet-based distributed data network that supports the NRCS need for climate information.• Maintaining historical, near real-time and real-time climate and metadata databases accessible through the Internet.
What Are We Doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NRCS National Water and Climate Center (NWCC), Forest Service (FS) and World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB) is partnering with six Regional Climate Centers (RCCs) and National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) to develop and implement UCAN.• Hourly, daily, monthly and normals climate datasets have been converted to netCDF, the standard climate data exchange format, and are resident at several RCC computer systems.• More than a dozen software packages have been documented and are ready for coding.• A prototype user interface has been developed to extract data via the Internet.• An Internet-based "data request broker" has been prototyped to service data and product requests from users.
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A UCAN demonstration is currently available on the Internet. The demo provides users with a basic interface and the ability to retrieve climate information from any netCDF dataset.• A metadata (data about the data) database design has been completed and awaits resources for implementation.• A USDA Information Technology funding waiver is being prepared to allow continued UCAN development.
What's Left?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtain USDA signed funding waiver to continue UCAN project funding.• Obtain NRCS Phase 1 deliverables for historical database..• Code the documented software to process climate information.• Continue work on data and metadata synchronization for historical and near real-time datasets• Implement User Interface to Demo for historical data.• Identify long-term, interagency funding for UCAN operations.