



Memorandum of CCRCN Data Responsibility

The Coastal Carbon Research Coordination Network ([NSF 1655622](#), herein *CCRCN*) is an initiative to accelerate the pace of discovery in coastal wetland science by providing the community with access to data, open source analysis tools, and data synthesis opportunities. A major component of the network is to disseminate previously-collected data, both for CCRCN research efforts and for use by the community. In addition to data that is either published or otherwise publically available for scientific exploration (herein *public data*), the CCRCN also seeks to assist users holding *private* data (data that is not yet public) to participate in future data syntheses in a manner that ensures they are properly acknowledged. This is achieved through the release of downloadable, citable public data that clearly attributes the original data to the primary contributor(s). In all cases, we respect the intellectual property rights of the data producers.

This means:

- Proper citations and/or contact information are associated with each data point.
- Citations to all publications containing CCRCN synthetic datasets are posted to our public websites and are included in dataset downloads.
- Private data will not be distributed without the explicit consent of the data owner.
- Only data contributors (not CCRCN personnel) determine if and when to make their private data public.


The CCRCN does not claim ownership of the datasets we curate. Instead we assist data submitters in formatting data releases, securing space on a public data repository, and issuing citable digital object identifiers (DOI). CCRCN personnel are trained to create stable, machine-readable, analysis-ready datasets based on community generated [standards](#). Each data release includes detailed metadata to ensure that the context and purposes of a contributor's study are represented with an appropriate level of detail.

The CCRCN can assist submitters in securing space on a public data repository, [figshare](#), and issuing DOIs through our partnership with Smithsonian Libraries. We recognize that there is no official definition for what constitutes a trusted repository, but we hope that the reputation of the Smithsonian Institution, the status of [figshare](#) as an approved technology, and the commitment of the Smithsonian Libraries to digital object curation, generate a high level of community trust. All data archived by the CCRCN will be listed under a [Creative Commons With Attribution](#) License.

Contributors have the option of requesting a pre-defined embargo period before a private dataset changes status to publically available, typically until associated manuscripts or other products are published. In this case, submitters of private data will specify a date-until-release or request that data releases be made public in conjunction with the publication of manuscripts or other products as required by most journals.

Finally, CCRCN compiles publically available data into a central data clearinghouse. These include both data releases curated by the CCRCN and those originating from other public sources. Datasets are downloaded, reformatted to a common standard, and compiled with other studies using publically available open-source R scripts. These scripts and compiled data files are available on a public GitHub repository, and accessible through the [Coastal Carbon Atlas](#) map interface. The publically available [GitHub data repository](#) is completely separate from our data curation work flows, so there is no risk for accidental public release of private data. The CCRCN provides associated bibliographies to assist users in citing original data sources, but users are ultimately responsible for correctly citing all data used.

The below signatures affirm agreement by the Coastal Carbon Research Coordination Network to the ethical data use outlined here.


J. Patrick Megonigal, CCRCN Director


James R. Holmquist, CCRCN Manager