

A WEB-BASED TOOL FOR TRANSLATING UNSTRUCTURED DATA FROM DATALOGGERS INTO STANDARD FORMATS

Sean C. Arms ¹

Jennifer Oxelson Ganter ¹

Jeff Weber ¹

Mohan K. Ramamurthy ¹

¹UCAR/Unidata



Overview

- The Problem: Data Friction
- The Logger Problem
- Standard Formats to the Rescue (...or not)
- ρζητα
 - Architecture
 - Workflow
 - Current Status

Data Friction

- The Problem: Data Friction
- Examples:
 - The data I need is stuffed into a netCDF file, but I don't know how to use it and don't have the time to learn.
 - I might like to learn, but I don't have the time.
 - Just what exactly IS netCDF? Looks like Egyptian Hieroglyphics.

Data Friction

```
1. lesserwhirls@micromac: /Users/lesserwhirls/Desktop/AMS2013/pzhta/data (less)
CDF
time
name_strlen
station_id_strlen
Conventions
featureType
timeSeries
title
Greenland Borehole Dataset
institution
University of Alaska, Fairbanks
processor
Vladimir E. Romanovsky
comment
READ ME STUFF HERE :-))
lat
long_name
standard_name
latitude
degrees_north
long_name
long_name
standard_name
longitude
degrees_west
long_name
long_name
standard_name
longitude
units
meters
long_name
ESheight above mean sea-level
positive
Bup
axis
standard_name
height
station_id
ccf_role
timeseries_id
long_name
station_name
standard_name
station_id
time
long_name
Time from datalogger
units
days since 1970-01-01
coordVar
yes
columnId
1
soil_temperature_1
missing_value
-999
standard_name
soil_temperature
valid_max
-50
long_name
Soil Temperature at 25 cm
source
Thermometrics SN101
comment
Probe was exposed!
valid_min
-20
units
degC
coordVar
bno
columnId
2
coordinates
time lat lon alt
soil_temperature_2
missing_value
-999
long_name
Soil Temperature at 50 cm
source
Thermometrics SN102
units
degC
coordVar
bno
columnId
3
coordinates
time lat lon alt
<E8><B><8A><94><B7><CC><A><E><ILL><FB><N><8D><B6><9D><N><8D><B9><N><8D><BB><E3><N><8D><BE><86><N><8D><C1><N><8D><C3><CC><N><8D><C6><on><8D><C9><R><N><8D><CE><XN><8D><D0><FB><N><8D><D6><AN><8D><D8><E4><N><8D><D9><N><8D><DE><FN><8D><E0><CD><N><8D><E3><pl><8D><E6><ST><8D><E8><B6><N><8D><EB><YN><8D><ED><FC><N><8D><EF><N><8D><F3><B><8D><F5><E5><N><8D><F8><88><N><8D><FB><N><8D><FD><CE><N><8E><an><8E><ACAT><8E><B7><N><8E><HZ><8E><FD><N><8E><M><A0><N><8E><PCN><8E><R><E6><N><8E><U><89><N><8E><X><N><8E><AZ><CF><N><8E><A><N><8E><U><8E><B8><N><8E><IN><8E><FE><N><8E><A1><N><8E><DN><8E><E7><N><8E><P><8A><N><8E><5><N><8E><7><D0><N><8E><FS><N><8E><AV><N><8E><P><B9><N><8E><BN><8E><FF><N><8E><G><A2><N><8E><JEN><8E><L><E8><N><8E><C><8B><N><8E><R><N><8E><T><D1><N><8E><WU><8E><ZW><8E><N><8E><BA><N><8E><JN><8E><P><N><8E><A3><N><8E><gFN><8E><E9><N><8E><L><8C><N><8E><o><N><8E><D2><N><8E><tuN><8E><N><8E><BB><N><8E><I><N><8E><A><N><8E><81><A4><N><8E><84><GN><8E><86><EA><N><8E><89><8D><N><8E><8C><N><8E><8E><8E><D3><N><8E><91><N><8E><94><N><8E><96><BC><N><8E><99><N><8E><9C><BN><8E><9E><A5><N><8E><A1><N><8E><A3><EB><N><8E><A6><8E><N><8E><A9><N><8E><AB><D4><N><8E><AE><N><8E><B1><AZ><N><8E><B3><BD><N><8E><B6><N><8E><B9><N><8E><BB><A6><N><8E><BE><IN><8E><C0><EC><N><8E><IN><8E><C6><ZN><8E><C8><D5><N><8E><CB><XN><8E><CE><ESC><8E><on>
```

Data Friction

- The Problem: Data Friction
- Examples:
 - My data file is in netCDF, but I don't know how to use it and don't have the time to learn.
 - I might like to learn, but I don't have the time.
 - Just what exactly IS netCDF? Looks like Egyptian Hieroglyphics.
 - I love csv files, but the file layout always changes!
 - and...And...AND half the time there isn't enough information available for me to feel comfortable using the data!

The “Logger Problem”

- What’s the big deal?
 - Vast amount of datalogger output available
 - Typically in ASCII CSV format
 - N number of files, $\sim N$ number of layouts
 - Not in a format to easily enable search, subset capabilities, other services
 - Value* added by placing into spreadsheet
- The “Logger Problem” is Huge for the Advanced Cooperative Arctic Data and Information Service (ACADIS) Project

Standard Formats to the Rescue!

- Solution: Standard Formats!

Standard Formats to the Rescue... or not...

- Solution: Standard Formats ☹️

Standard Formats to the Rescue... or not...

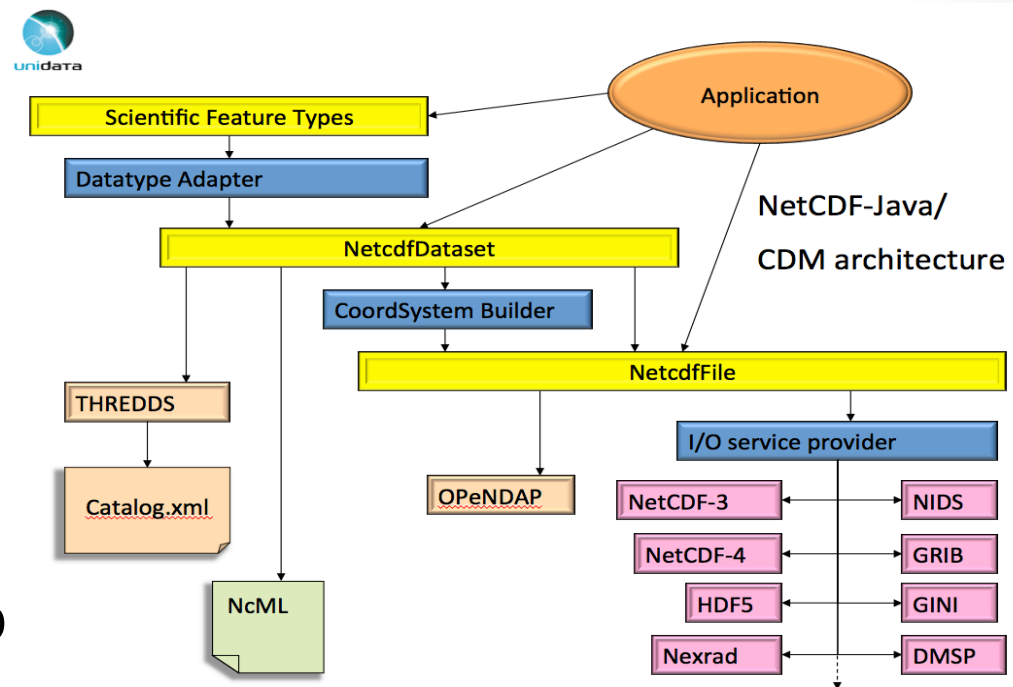
- Solution: Standard Formats ☹️
- Why this Does Not Work:
 - Data come in a format that works for the PIs
 - Why put effort into transforming into a new format with very specific conformance constraints (e.g. CF)
 - Usually code must be written to convert “useful” dataset into “standard” dataset
 - Even more work to do before getting to the science stuff!

ρζητα

- What is ρζητα?
 - Vision: General Purpose Data Format converter
 - Goal: Get data into standard format ***while providing data users with the format they want***
 - Why?
 - Enable services such as search, subsetting, aggregation, etc. for observational datasets, without writing readers for each “flavor” of ASCII data

ρζητα - Architecture

- Basic Idea
 - Common Data Model (CDM)
 - netCDF-Java
 - I/O service provider (IOSP)
 - Web interface for collection of metadata
 - as needed
- The Idea is to get into CDM, then use IOSPs



ρζητα - Architecture

- Java WebApp
 - Java
 - Apache Tomcat
 - Spring MVC
 - netCDF-Java(CDM)
 - JavaScript
 - jQuery, SlickGrid, jWizard



{js}



github Explore GitHub

 mleibman / SlickGrid

github Explore GitHub

 dominicbarnes / jWizard

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry

Define Discrete Sampling Geometry

ρζητα

localhost:8080/pzhta/create

ρζητα


ρζητα

Select Observation Platform


- ▶ Upload ASCII file or Spreadsheet (.xls, .xlsx)
- ▶ Specify Header Lines
- ▶ Specify Delimiters
- ▶ Specify Variable Names
- ▶ Specify Variable Units
- ▶ Specify Variable Metadata
- ▶ Specify Station Information
- ▶ Specify General Information
- ▶ Download Files

Next


Select Observation Platform




☒ Station (Tower)




☐ Moored Buoy



☐ Radiosonde



☐ Aircraft



☐ Wind Profiler



Questions or comments about ρζητα can be sent to: support@

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)

Example Input

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following content:

Project Information (Rows 1-9):

- 1: Soil temperature at different depths
- 2: Ilu, Greenland
- 3: Location: N 69.2390 W 51.0623
- 4: Elevation (meters):
- 5: Slope: flat
- 6: Aspect: flat
- 7: NSF projects ARC-0520578, ARC-0632400 and ARC 0856864
- 8: PI/Data contact =Vladimir E. Romanovsky
- 9: Professor

Contact Information (Rows 10-11):

- 10: Geophysical Institute UAF tel.: (907)474-7459
- 11: 903 Koyukuk Drive FAX : (907)474-7290

Additional Information (Rows 12-13):

- 12: P.O.Box 757320
- 13: Fairbanks, AK 99775-7320 e-mail: veromanovsky@alaska.edu

Data Dates and Warnings (Rows 14-15):

- 14: Data dates: 09/03/2007-07/04/2010
- 15: WARNING: "999" fields mean not valid data; "-999" fields mean data are absent; all temperatures in grad C

Temperature Data Table (Rows 16-33):

YEAR	DATE	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1	2	3	4
2007	9/3/07	2.10	2.32	1.64	0.50	-0.39	-2.20	-3.04	-3.27
2007	9/4/07	3.63	2.42	1.44	0.44	-0.38	-2.22	-3.06	-3.30
2007	9/5/07	4.21	2.66	1.44	0.40	-0.39	-2.24	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/6/07	2.00	2.28	1.49	0.42	-0.39	-2.24	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/7/07	4.57	2.40	1.34	0.39	-0.39	-2.24	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/8/07	5.32	3.11	1.53	0.40	-0.39	-2.22	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/9/07	4.27	3.13	1.73	0.46	-0.37	-2.22	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/10/07	3.38	2.68	1.70	0.50	-0.34	-2.21	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/11/07	2.29	2.39	1.57	0.47	-0.27	-2.21	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/12/07	0.26	1.48	1.31	0.42	-0.37	-2.19	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/13/07	1.21	1.09	0.92	0.31	-0.38	-2.19	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/14/07	0.03	0.91	0.75	0.23	-0.39	-2.19	-3.08	-3.31
2007	9/15/07	0.15	0.42	0.51	0.16	-0.39	-2.19	-3.07	-3.31
2007	9/16/07	2.47	0.48	0.30	0.09	-0.39	-2.19	-3.06	-3.31
2007	9/17/07	3.16	1.34	0.43	0.06	-0.39	-2.17	-3.05	-3.31
2007	9/18/07	2.53	1.39	0.66	0.13	-0.39	-2.16	-3.05	-3.31
2007	9/19/07	1.45	1.33	0.77	0.16	-0.39	-2.16	-3.05	-3.31
2007	9/20/07	-0.38	0.82	0.70	0.17	-0.39	-2.16	-3.05	-3.31
2007	9/21/07	-1.41	0.26	0.44	0.13	-0.39	-2.16	-3.05	-3.31

Advanced Cooperative Arctic Data & Information Service

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)
 - Define Parsing Information

Define Parsing Information

ρζητα

localhost:8080/pzhta/create

ρζητα

ρζητα

- CF Type: timeSeries
- Upload ASCII file or Spreadsheet (.xls, .xlsx)
- Specify Header Lines**
- Specify Delimiters
- Specify Variable Names
- Specify Variable Units
- Specify Variable Metadata
- Specify Station Information
- Specify General Information
- Download Files

Previous Next

Specify Header Lines

Indicate which lines are header lines:

<input type="checkbox"/>	#	Line Data
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	Soil temperature at different depths NSF projects ARC-0520578, ARC-0632400 and ARC 0856864
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Ilu, Greenland PI/Data contact =Vladimir E. Romanovsky
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	Location: N 69.2390 W 51.0623 Professor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	Elevation (meters): Geophysical Institute UAF tel.: (907)474-7459
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	Slope: flat 903 Koyukuk Drive FAX : (907)474-7290
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5	Aspect: flat P.O.Box 757320
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6	Fairbanks, AK 99775-7320 e-mail: veromanovsky@alaska.edu
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7	Data provided byThomas Ingeman-Nielsen, Department of Civil Engineering Technical University of Denmark
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8	Data dates: 09/03/2007-07/04/2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9	WARNING: "999" fields mean not valid data; "-999" fields mean data are absent; all temperatures in grad C
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10	Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature, Temperature



Questions or comments about ρζητα can be sent to: support@

Advanced Cooperative Arctic Data & Information Service

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)
 - Define Parsing Information
 - Define Variable Metadata

Define Variable Metadata

localhost:8080/pzhta/create

ρζητα

ρζητα

CF Type: timeSeries

Upload ASCII file or Spreadsheet (.xls, .xlsx)

Specify Header Lines

Specify Delimiters

Specify Variable Names

Specify Variable Units

Specify Variable Metadata

Specify Station Information

Specify General Information

Download Files

Previous Next

Specify Variable Names

#	Do Not Use	time	soil_tempera	soil_tempera				
	Do Not Use	time	soil_temperatur	soil_t				
0	Soil temperature at different depths NSF			soil_temperature				
12	2007	1188777600	2.10	soil_thermal_capacity				
13	2007	1188864000	3.63	soil_thermal_conductivity				
14	2007	1188950400	4.21	soil_type	2.66	1.44	0.40	-0.39
15	2007	1189036800	2.00		2.28	1.49	0.42	-0.39
16	2007	1189123200	4.57		2.40	1.34	0.39	-0.39
17	2007	1189209600	5.32		3.11	1.53	0.40	-0.39
18	2007	1189296000	4.27		3.13	1.73	0.46	-0.37
19	2007	1189382400	3.38		2.68	1.70	0.50	-0.34
20	2007	1189468800	2.29		2.39	1.57	0.47	-0.27



Questions or comments about ρζητα can be sent to: support@

Advanced Cooperative Arctic Data & Information Service



Define Variable Metadata

localhost:8080/pzhta/create

ρζητα

CF Type: timeSeries

Upload ASCII file or Spreadsheet (.xls, .xlsx)

Specify Header Lines

Specify Delimiters

Specify Variable Names

Specify Variable Units

Specify Variable Metadata

Specify Station Information

Specify General Information

Download Files

Previous Next

Specify Variable Metadata

Metadata for: soil_temperature_1

Is this variable a coordinate variable (time, lat/lon)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

Specify data type:

Integer ☐ Float ☒ Text ☐

Required metadata:

Missing Value: -999

Instrument Description: Thermometrics SN101

Variable Description: Soil Temperature at 25 cm

Units: degC

Recommended metadata:

Maximum Value (Calibrated): -50

Minimum Value (Calibrated): 20

CF Name: soil_temperature

Additional metadata:

☒ Calibration Offset

☐ Related Variables

☐ Comment

☐ flag_masks

☐ flag_meanings

☐ flag_values

☐ Instrument Documentation

☐ Calibration Multiplier

done cancel

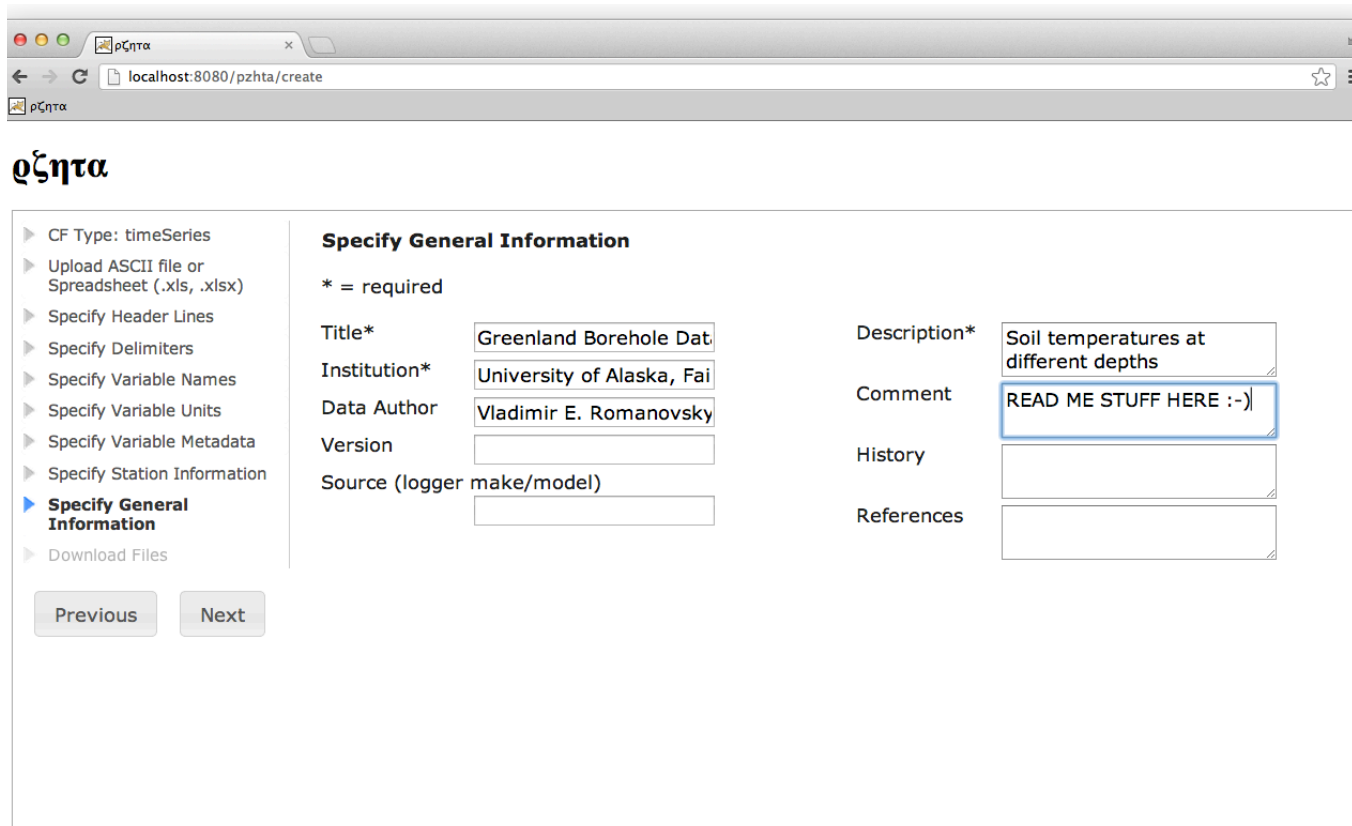
	Not Use	Do Not Use	Do Not Use
0 and ARC 0856864			
-0.39	-2.20		
-0.38	-2.22		
-0.39	-2.24		
-0.39	-2.24		
-0.39	-2.24		
-0.39	-2.22		
-0.37	-2.22		
-0.34	-2.21		
-0.27	-2.21		

Questions or comments about ρζητα can be sent to: s

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)
 - Define Parsing Information
 - Define Variable Metadata
 - Define Global Metadata

Define Global Metadata



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `localhost:8080/pzhta/create`. The page title is **ρζητα**. On the left is a sidebar menu with options: CF Type: timeSeries, Upload ASCII file or Spreadsheet (.xls, .xlsx), Specify Header Lines, Specify Delimiters, Specify Variable Names, Specify Variable Units, Specify Variable Metadata, Specify Station Information, **Specify General Information** (selected), and Download Files. Below the menu are 'Previous' and 'Next' buttons. The main content area is titled **Specify General Information** and includes a legend *** = required**. It contains two columns of form fields: the left column has Title* (filled with 'Greenland Borehole Dat'), Institution* (filled with 'University of Alaska, Fai'), Data Author (filled with 'Vladimir E. Romanovsky'), Version (empty), and Source (logger make/model) (empty); the right column has Description* (filled with 'Soil temperatures at different depths'), Comment (filled with 'READ ME STUFF HERE :-)'), History (empty), and References (empty).



Questions or comments about ρζητα can be sent to: support@unidata.edu

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)
 - Define Parsing Information
 - Define Variable Metadata
 - Define Global Metadata
 - Transform

ρζητα - Workflow

- Workflow
 - Define Discrete Sampling Geometry
 - Upload CSV, XLS(X)
 - Define Parsing Information
 - Define Variable Metadata
 - Define Global Metadata
 - Transform
 - Return netCDF and Transaction Receipt (NcML file)

netCDF file (CF-1.6 Compliant)

```
1. lesserwhirls@micromac: /Users/lesserwhirls/Desktop (less)
netcdf ilu01_07_10 {
dimensions:
    time = 1036 ;
    name_strlen = 3 ;
    station_id_strlen = 3 ;
variables:
    float lat ;
        lat:units = "degrees_north" ;
        lat:long_name = "latitude" ;
        lat:standard_name = "latitude" ;
    float lon ;
        lon:units = "degrees_west" ;
        lon:long_name = "longitude" ;
        lon:standard_name = "longitude" ;
    float alt ;
        alt:units = "meters" ;
        alt:long_name = "height above mean sea-level" ;
        alt:positive = "up" ;
        alt:axis = "Z" ;
        alt:standard_name = "height" ;
    char station_id(station_id_strlen) ;
        station_id:cf_role = "timeseries_id" ;
        station_id:long_name = "station name" ;
        station_id:standard_name = "station_id" ;
    float time(time) ;
        time:standard_name = "time" ;
        time:long_name = "Time from datalogger" ;
        time:units = "days since 1970-01-01" ;
        time:coordVar = "yes" ;
        time:_columnId = "1" ;
    float soil_temperature_1(time) ;
        soil_temperature_1:missing_value = "-999" ;
        soil_temperature_1:standard_name = "soil_temperature" ;
        soil_temperature_1:valid_max = "-50" ;
        soil_temperature_1:long_name = "Soil Temperature at 25 cm" ;
        soil_temperature_1:source = "Thermometrics SN101" ;
        soil_temperature_1:comment = "Probe was exposed!" ;
}
```

Transaction Receipt (NcML file)

```
1. lesserwhirls@micromac: /Users/lesserwhirls/Desktop (less)
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8" standalone="no"?>
<netcdf xmlns="http://www.unidata.ucar.edu/namespaces/netcdf/ncml-2.2">
  <dimension length="1036" name="time"/>
  <attribute name="Conventions" value="CF-1.6"/>
  <attribute name="featureType" value="timeSeries"/>
  <attribute name="title" value="Greenland Borehole Dataset"/>
  <attribute name="institution" value="University of Alaska, Fairbanks"/>
  <attribute name="processor" value="Vladimir E. Romanovsky"/>
  <attribute name="title" value="Greenland Borehole Dataset"/>
  <attribute name="comment" value="READ ME STUFF HERE :-)" />
  <variable name="lat" type="float">
    <attribute name="units" value="degrees_north"/>
    <attribute name="long_name" value="latitude"/>
    <attribute name="standard_name" value="latitude"/>
    <values>69.290</values>
  </variable>
  <variable name="lon" type="float">
    <attribute name="units" value="degrees_west"/>
    <attribute name="long_name" value="longitude"/>
    <attribute name="standard_name" value="longitude"/>
    <values>51.0623</values>
  </variable>
  <variable name="alt" type="float">
    <attribute name="units" value="meters"/>
    <attribute name="long_name" value="height above mean sea-level"/>
    <attribute name="positive" value="up"/>
    <attribute name="axis" value="Z"/>
    <attribute name="standard_name" value="height"/>
    <values>10</values>
  </variable>
  <dimension length="3" name="name_strlen"/>
  <variable name="station_id" type="string">
    <attribute name="cf_role" value="timeseries_id"/>
    <attribute name="long_name" value="station name"/>
    <attribute name="standard_name" value="station_id"/>
    <values>ILU</values>
  </variable>
```

ρζητα - Status

- Current Status
 - Import Single-block CSV, XLS(X)
 - Produce netCDF with NcML Transaction Receipt
 - Prepared for data portal submission
 - Will soon be on GitHub
- Next Steps
 - Enable Mining of Header block
 - Import Multi-block CSV, XLS(X) files
 - Allow Upload of CF1.6 netCDF Discrete Geometry (A.K.A. point) Files
 - Return “Standard” CSV or XLS(X) format
- Somewhat Larger Goals
 - Enable desktop use for easy subsetting on CDM files
 - E.g. Easy grid point times series extraction from netCDF or GRIB files (returned as what the user would like, of course)

ρζητα - Questions

- Unidata Funded by NSF 0833450 (AGS)
 - <http://www.unidata.ucar.edu>
- The Advanced Cooperative Arctic Data and Information Service (ACADIS) Funded by NSF 1016034 (ARC)
 - <http://www.aoncadis.org/>