

The Metadata Tool is arranged in a tabular format. The top row of tabs represents the sections within the FGDC CSDGM. The second row of tabs represents the sub-sections within each corresponding section. Click in the text box of the appropriate element to enter data. Or click the dropdown arrow for the appropriate element and click a value in the list. Click the plus sign button to start a new entry for that tab.

The easiest way to complete a metadata record would be to work through each of the tabs from left right. Start with the top left and complete all the tabs in the secondary row and then move to the second tab on the first row then work through the secondary tabs and so on. This is for minimal metadata so it is advised that you complete all fields if possible.

Many of the fields contain tool tips that advise the user on the type or format of the information contained in that field. Hover your mouse over the field to see the tool tip.

The FGDC metadata editor provides text boxes in which you can type the information for most of the elements. However, for some, the standard expects one of several predefined values. The editor provides a dropdown list from which you can chose the appropriate value. For other elements, you can either chose one of the predefined values from the list or type your own information.

Some elements in the standard can be repeated many times. For example, you can add an unlimited number of keywords describing the subject of the data. Each repeating element has a toolbar containing buttons allowing you to add, delete, and browse through your entries. When a single element can be repeated, the toolbar is located immediately below the text box.

Following the FGDC CSDGM guidelines, fields have been defined as required. To have minimally informational metadata that will work in a clearinghouse these fields should be completed with as much detail as possible. The fields are not required in the tool so that a user can use parts of the overall tool such as bounding coordinates or keywords.

#### General Guidelines:

Dates are in the YYYYMMDD format listing as much information that is known.

Enter names with the first name then last.

Limit the use of non-alphanumeric characters such as punctuation or special symbols.

Limit the use of abbreviations and acronyms.