Introducing the Getting Started with HDF Manual

I About this Manual

Getting Started with HDF is designed to serve as a basic introduction to the data models, interfaces, and utilities supported by HDF. It contains fundamental descriptions, definitions, and simple examples that demonstrate how to begin using the HDF library and its utilities. To use this manual most effectively:

See:		For:
Chapter 1:	Introducing HDF	An answer to the question "what is HDF" and an outline of what to expect from HDF as a file format.
Chapter 2:	The HDF Data Models	A brief introduction to each of the data models currently supported by HDF.
Chapter 3:	The Bare Necessities for Reading and Writing Data	Instructions and examples demonstrating how to perform simple read and write operations using each application interface.
Chapter 4:	HDF Utilities and Software Applications	A list of utilities and tools available for working with HDF files.

II Conventions

The only convention used in this manual is that of the typeface. As a result, you will find the following three fonts used throughout these pages:

1. `Courier` is used to identify all code examples.
2. **Times/Bold** is used to identify the name of a function call or utility.
3. ***Times/Bold/Italic*** is used to identify a word whose definition is included in the glossary.

III Using Other HDF Documentation

At this point in time, several HDF documents are actively undergoing review and reorganization. These documents include the *HDF Specification*, *NCSA HDF Calling Interfaces and Utilities Manual*, and the *NCSA HDF Vset Manual*. Under the planned restructuring, the *HDF Specification* will undergo little change, however, the *NCSA HDF Calling Interfaces and Utilities Manual* will be combined with the *NCSA HDF Vset Manual* to produce three new documents.

These new HDF documentation will include *Getting Started with HDF*, an *HDF User's Guide*, and an *HDF Reference Manual*. Of these documents, only *Getting Started with HDF* is complete. Until the user's guide and reference manual are available:

If you need to:	**See the:**
Obtain a current version of HDF	NCSA ftp server (ftp.ncsa.uiuc.edu).
Install HDF	Current *README* on the ftp server.
Get quick help on an HDF function call	HDF man pages.
Learn basic HDF concepts	*Getting Started with HDF.*
Consult the *HDF Specification*	*HDF Specification.*
Consult the *HDF User's Guide*	*NCSA HDF Calling Interfaces and Utilities.*
Consult the *HDF Reference Manual*	*NCSA HDF Calling Interfaces and Utilities.*

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> **Portions developed at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.**

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