Introducing the HDF Reference Manual

I About this Manual

The *HDF Reference Manual* is designed to serve as a programmer's guide to the function calls and utilities supported by HDFv3.3. It contains fundamental descriptions, definitions, and examples that demonstrate how to use each function and utility in the HDF library. To use this manual most effectively:

See:		For:
Chapter 1:	Introduction to the HDF Function Calls and Utilities	A brief review of each HDF interface, its data model, and routines.
Chapter 2:	The HDF Function Calls	A complete alphabetical listing of the function calls available in the HDFv3.3 library.
Chapter 3:	The HDF Utilities	A complete alphabetical listing of the utilities available in the HDFv3.3 library.

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 parameters and code examples.
2. *`Courier/Italic`* is used to identify all variable names.
3. **`Courier/Bold`** is used to identify the name of a function call or utility.

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.

The new HDF documentation will include an *HDF Specification and Developer's Guide*, *Getting Started with HDF* manual, *HDF User's Guide*, and an *HDF Reference Manual*. Of these documents, the *HDFv3.2 Specification and Developer's Guide, Getting Started with HDFv3.2,* and the *HDFv3.3 Reference Manual* are now complete. Until the *HDF User's Guide* is 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 HDFv3.2.*
Consult the *HDF Specification*	*HDF Specification and Developer's Guide.*
Consult the *HDF User's Guide*	*NCSA HDF Calling Interfaces and Utilities.*
Consult the *HDF Reference Manual*	*HDF Reference Manualv3.3.*