

Northern Cordgrass Wet Prairie

Site Characteristics: This community occurs in shallow pond basins, swales, meadows and in concentric bands peripheral to most temporary and seasonal wetlands, ponds and lakes. It also occurs on floodplains and terraces of streams and rivers. Sites are generally level to gently sloping. The soils are deep, typically poorly drained, with clay or silt loam soils that have a characteristic gleyed layer. Less commonly, stands may occur on organic soils. Parent materials include alluvium and glacial till. The community is subject to seasonal inundation, but standing water typically does not persist for more than a few weeks. The water table is typically high, within 1 m of the surface; the sites are typically flooded for part of the winter and spring. In the east, stands can experience droughty conditions in the summer and fall, while in the south and central portion of its range they can remain saturated for much of the growing season.

Vegetation Characteristics: The vegetation is dominated (60-100% cover) by fine-textured grasses, low sedges, and rushes, with a mixture of forbs. Prairie Cordgrass may form near monocultures in places. The most common species are White Panicle Aster, White Doll's Daisy, Canada Bluejoint, Woolly Sedge, Clustered Field Sedge, Sartwell's Sedge, Upright Sedge, Fowl Bluegrass, and Prairie Cordgrass. Other species that are often present are Indianhemp, Mountain Rush, Prairie Blazing Star, Field Sowthistle, Marsh Hedge-nettle, and Canada Germander. In general, this wet prairie type may be distinguished from other wet meadow types because of strong grass dominance (rather than sedge), high forb diversity, and typically mineral soils. Woody plants are scattered to very infrequent.

Range:

Conservation Status: G3 – Vulnerable

Management Considerations: Prairie Cordgrass is an early colonizer of suitable habitat and is tolerant of sediment deposition. Stands of Prairie Cordgrass have high production rates, however the rough-edged leaves make for poor forage quality, and it is not readily eaten by livestock or wildlife. Its tall height and thick growth provide shade and cover for wildlife and certain bird species (Hansen et al. 1988a).



Iowa NRCS Plant Community Description

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6/13/2013

NORTHERN CORDGRASS WET PRAIRIE						
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STRATA	FUNCTIONAL GROUP	IA CofC	SEEDS/LB	STATE STATUS
<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	Indigo bush, false indigo	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB, LEGUME	5	59200	
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big bluestem	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	160000	
<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	Indian hemp	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	1	500000	
<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	Showy milkweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	72000	T
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly weed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	68800	
<i>Baptisia alba</i>	White wild indigo	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB, LEGUME	6	27200	
<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	False aster	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-FORB	5	2560000	
<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>	Bluejoint	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	5	4480000	
<i>Calamagrostis stricta</i>	Northern reed grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	7	2302499	
<i>Carex aquatilis</i>	Water sedge	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	7	795776	
<i>Carex atherodes</i>	Hairy-leaved lake sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	8	464000	
<i>Carex emoryi</i>	Riverbank sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6		
<i>Carex laeviconica</i>	Long-toothed lake sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6	192000	
<i>Carex pellita</i>	Wooly sedge	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	4	448000	
<i>Carex praegracilis</i>	Expressway sedge	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	5	1062277	
<i>Carex sartwellii</i>	Running marsh sedge	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	7	1014748	
<i>Carex spp.</i>	True Sedges	Herbaceous Layer	SEDGE, COOL SEASON			
<i>Carex stricta</i>	Common tussock sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6	848000	
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	Brown fox sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	3	1600000	
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	6	96000	
<i>Cornus spp.</i>	Dogwood	Shrub Layer	SHRUB			
<i>Crotalaria sagittalis</i>	Rattle box	Herbaceous Layer	A-FORB, LEGUME	6	72000	
<i>Dichanthelium clandestinum</i>	Deertongue grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	4	350000	
<i>Eleocharis erythropoda</i>	Red-rooted spikerush	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	4		
<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>	Northern willow herb	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	3	960000	
<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	Wild licorice	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB, LEGUME	4	62400	
<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	Sneezeweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	2080000	

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<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Saw-tooth sunflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	240000	
<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	Downy sunflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	112000	
<i>Heterotheca villosa</i>	Hairy false goldenaster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	5	1120000	SC
<i>Hierochloa odorata</i>	Holy grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	7	320000	
<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	Squirrel-tail barley	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	0	192000	
<i>Juncus arcticus littoralis</i>	Bog rush	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6	3000000	
<i>Juncus dudleyi</i>	Dudley's rush	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	2	51200000	
<i>Juncus torreyi</i>	Torrey's rush	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	3	25600000	
<i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	Rice cut-grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	2	544000	
<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	Prairie blazing star	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	176000	
<i>Lythrum alatum</i>	Winged loosestrife	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	3	48000000	
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Wild mint	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	4800000	
<i>Muhlenbergia racemosa</i>	Marsh muhly	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	1280000	
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switchgrass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	5	224000	
<i>Poa palustris</i>	Foul meadow grass	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	5	2080000	
<i>Potentilla norvegica</i>	Norwegian cinquefoil	Herbaceous Layer	A-FORB	2		
<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	Common mountain mint	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	3520000	
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2	496000	
<i>Rudbeckia subtomentosa</i>	Fragrant coneflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	433600	
<i>Salix spp.</i>	Willow	Shrub Layer				
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	5	240000	
<i>Schoenoplectus americanus/pungens</i>	Threesquare	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	7	192000	
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	192000	
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	Slough grass, cord grass	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	105600	
<i>Spiranthes cernua</i>	Nodding ladies'-tresses	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4		
<i>Stachys palustris</i>	Woundwort	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	256000	
<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>	Heath aster, frost weed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	3	3200000	

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<i>Symphyotrichum lanceolatum</i>	Panicled aster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	700000	
<i>Symphyotrichum novae-angliae</i>	New England aster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	3	1056000	
<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	American germander	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	320000	
<i>Thalictrum dasycarpum</i>	Purple meadow-rue	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	176000	
<i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	Gama grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	3	5920	
<i>Vernonia fasciculata</i>	Ironweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	1	384000	
<i>Viola sagittata</i>	Arrow-leaved violet	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	7		

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