

Stipa comata - Bouteloua gracilis Gravel Herbaceous Vegetation

COMMON NAME	Needle-and-thread Grass - Blue Grama Gravel Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Gravel Wash
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Medium-tall sod temperate or subpolar grassland (includes sod or mixed sod-bunch graminoids) (V.A.5.N.c.)
ALLIANCE	<i>Stipa comata - Bouteloua gracilis</i> Herbaceous Alliance
CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL	3
USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM	Upland

RANGE

Globally

This community has only been identified at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. It is likely to occur elsewhere, but needs further review.

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

This community occurs primarily in draws among the south hills and is scattered throughout the length of the Monument.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Globally

Information not available.

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

This community occurs in the bottoms of narrow draws and is made up of small rock fragments and sand presumably washed in following heavy rains. Soils are shallow and poorly developed.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Globally

Information not available.

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

Stratum

Herbaceous

Species

Artemisia frigida, Bouteloua gracilis, Gutierrezia sarothrae, Heterotheca villosa var. *villosa, Stipa comata*

DIAGNOSTIC SPECIES

Globally

Information not available.

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

Aristida purpurea var. *longiseta*, *Artemisia frigida*, *Gutierrezia sarothrae*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Globally

Information not available.

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

This community is mostly 30-60% vegetated and dominated by a combination of grasses and forbs typical of upland prairie slopes. *Artemisia frigida* and *Gutierrezia sarothrae* are the most conspicuous components of this community. Other frequently-encountered species include *Calamovilfa longifolia*, *Calylophus serrulatus*, *Dalea candida* var. *oligophylla*, *Elymus elymoides*, *Paronychia depressa*, *Phacelia hastata* var. *hastata*, and *Psoraleidum tenuiflorum*.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES Information not available.

CONSERVATION RANK

RANK JUSTIFICATION

DATABASE CODE

COMMENTS

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

This community appears similar to *Stipa comata* - *Bouteloua gracilis* - *Carex filifolia* Herbaceous Vegetation, but the topographic position, composition, and soil type are all somewhat different from most stands of that type. Further work needs to be done on the classification of this community. The stands assigned to it at Agate Fossil Beds NM do not fit well with any existing community. Thus, they have been placed in a new community, but they need to be compared to other community descriptions as those are developed to establish their distinctiveness or that they fall within the normal range of variation of an existing community.

Because of the narrow, linear nature of this community, it is underrepresented on the vegetation map.

REFERENCES