Spartina pectinata - Scirpus pungens Herbaceous Vegetation

COMMON NAME	Freshwater Cordgrass - Three-square Bulrush Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Prairie Cordgrass - Bulrush Wet Meadow
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	Temporarily flooded temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.j.)
ALLIANCE	*Spartina pectinata* Temporarily Flooded Herbaceous Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 3

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Palustrine

RANGE
Globally
This community is found in eastern Wyoming and eastern Montana.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site
This community occurs adjacent to the Laramie River.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION
Globally
This community is usually found as narrow bands along the margins of low gradient or standing open water and in depressions where the soil is saturated or flooded for short periods during the growing season (Jones and Walford 1995). Soils are fine textured and often have a high organic content.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site
This community occurs in narrow bands adjacent to the Laramie River on alluvial soils.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES
Globally

Statum	Species
Herbaceous	*Spartina pectinata, Scirpus pungens*

Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Statum	Species
Herbaceous	*Spartina pectinata*

DIAGNOSTIC SPECIES
Globally
Spartina pectinata, Scirpus pungens

Fort Laramie National Historic Site
Spartina pectinata

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Globally

This community is dominated by tall graminoids approximately 1-2 meters tall. Vegetation cover is usually high. *Spartina pectinata* is dominant and can form near monocultures. *Scirpus pungens, Poa pratensis, Carex praegracilis*, and *Carex nebrascensis* are all common constituents of the herbaceous stratum (Jones 1992). Shrubs and trees are not abundant, but *Salix* spp. can be found in many stands.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Herbaceous cover for this community is typically greater than 75%, with grasses and tall forbs 1-1.5 m in height. The community is heavily dominated by *Spartina pectinata*. Other species commonly found include *Asclepias speciosa* and *Verbena hastata. Bromus inermis* and *Cirsium arvense* are common on drier margins.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES Information not available.

CONSERVATION RANK G3Q

RANK JUSTIFICATION

DATABASE CODE CEGL001478

COMMENTS

Globally

This type is poorly described across its range. The stands at Fort Laramie NHS are similar to others described elsewhere in Wyoming (Jones and Walford 1995), but as the type is better described, these stands should be compared to the global range of variation to verify their placement.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Stands of *Spartina pectinata* also occur under *Populus deltoides* along the east side of the Laramie River, west of the Fort Site. Some stands include scattered individuals of *Salix exigua* and/or *S. amygdaloides*.

REFERENCES

Jones, G. 1992. Wyoming plant community classification. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, The Nature Conservancy, Laramie, WY. 184 pp.

Jones, G. and G. Walford. 1995. Major riparian vegetation types of eastern Wyoming. A report submitted to the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Division. 245 pp.