

Carex nebrascensis Herbaceous Vegetation

COMMON NAME Nebraska Sedge Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM Nebraska Sedge 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 (V.A.5.N.k)
ALLIANCE CAREX NEBRASCENSIS SEASONALLY FLOODED
HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE
CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2
USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM

RANGE

Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge

Cattail wetlands occur throughout the Refuge, occupying depressions, drainages, seeps, springs, and ponds where saturated soils or shallow standing water is present on a more-or-less permanent basis. This type is especially prevalent around the Refuge pools.

Globally

This sedge meadow type is widely distributed from the western Great Plains into the western mountains of the United States, ranging from South Dakota and Montana to possibly as far west as Washington, south to California and east to New Mexico.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

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Cattail wetlands occupy flats, slow-flowing drainages, sidehill and toeslope seeps and springs, and the edges of ponds, pools, and reservoirs.

Globally

In Nebraska and Colorado, this community occurs as bands parallel to streams and is dominated by medium-tall (<1 m) herbaceous species. This community is also found in nearly level, poorly drained sites that are wet or saturated for much of the year (Jones 1992). In eastern Wyoming and the panhandle of western Nebraska, soils were gleyed sandy, silty loam, clay loam, or clays (Jones and Walford 1995, Steinauer and Rolfsmeier 2000). In Colorado, these wetlands form open meadows that occur along the margins of stream banks, lakes and seeps on the plains. The soils are generally saturated for much of the growing season and are subject to compaction by livestock.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

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<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Herbaceous	<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> , <i>Juncus</i> spp., <i>Scirpus americanus</i> , <i>Scirpus validus</i> , <i>Typha angustifolia</i> , <i>Typha latifolia</i>

Globally

Stratum

Species

Herbaceous *Scirpus acutus*, *Scirpus tabernaemontani*, *Typha angustifolia*, *Typha latifolia*

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Lacreek National Wildlife Refuge

Stratum

Species

Herbaceous *Typha angustifolia*, *Scirpus americanus*

Globally

Stratum

Species

Herbaceous *Scirpus acutus*, *Scirpus tabernaemontani*, *Typha angustifolia*

OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES

Globally

Stratum

Species

Graminoid *Eleocharis palustris*, *Leersia oryzoides*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

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Naturally occurring, emergent wetlands growing along slow-moving creeks are dominated by prairie cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*), spikerush, three-square bulrush (*Scirpus americanus* or *Scirpus pungens*), and softstem bulrush (*Scirpus validus*). Vegetative cover for emergent wetlands established along streams is dense, between 75-100% in most cases. Emergent wetlands that have formed around and in constructed pools and reservoirs are dominated by species of cat-tail (*Typha angustifolia* and *Typha latifolia*) and bulrush (*Scirpus validus* and *Scirpus americanus*). These sites may also support some wetland shrubs such as sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*). Typically, vegetative cover in emergent wetlands of disturbed sites ranges from approximately 50-90%.

Globally

Woody species are rare. Stands are dominated by the perennial graminoid *Carex nebrascensis*, a widespread species that generally forms small to medium-sized meadows. In Nebraska, common species include *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Carex hystericina*, *Carex pellita* (= *Carex lanuginosa*), *Eleocharis erythropoda*, *Equisetum* spp., *Juncus balticus*, *Schoenoplectus pungens* (= *Scirpus pungens*), and *Triglochin* spp. (Steinauer and Rolfsmeier 2000).

CONSERVATION RANK G4. This type is widely distributed, but many examples have been heavily grazed by cattle, lowering their floristic quality.

DATABASE CODE CEGL001813

SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS

Scirpus acutus - *Typha latifolia* - (*Scirpus tabernaemontani*) Sandhills Herbaceous Vegetation

Typha latifolia Southern Herbaceous Vegetation (southeastern states)

Typha latifolia Western Herbaceous Vegetation (western states)

Typha spp. - *Scirpus spp.* - Mixed Herbs Great Plains Herbaceous Vegetation (A more species diverse association.)

COMMENTS

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An effort was made to split this type into two map units based on hydrologic patterns, semipermanently and seasonally flooded.

Globally

In the Black Hills, classification of stands was problematic due to identification problems with *Carex nebrascensis* and *Carex aquatica*. The two are difficult to distinguish based on available keys and written descriptions (Marriott and Faber-Langendoen 2000).

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