Poa pratensis Herbaceous Vegetation [Provisional]

COMMON NAME	Kentucky Bluegrass Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	
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	Seasonally flooded temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.k)
ALLIANCE	*Poa pratensis* Seasonally Flooded Herbaceous Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 3

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM Upland

RANGE
Globally
This association is found in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota.

Wind Cave National Park
Extensive areas of Kentucky bluegrass vegetation can be found in the eastern half and southwest quarter of the Park, which are predominantly grassland. In these areas, Kentucky bluegrass often occurs with western wheatgrass and little bluestem vegetation. The little bluestem community typically occurs on steeper slopes, with Kentucky bluegrass and western wheatgrass vegetation on gentler slopes and in swales. Stands also occur in other areas of the Park in openings in forests and woodlands.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION
Globally
This association is poorly defined throughout its range and needs further review.

Wind Cave National Park
Kentucky bluegrass stands occur in a wide variety of habitats throughout the Park. Sites generally are flat to moderate in slope, and are found on all aspects.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES
Globally

Stratum	Species
Herbaceous	*Poa pratensis*

Wind Cave National Park

Stratum	Species
Herbaceous	*Ambrosia ludoviciana, Artemisia psilostachya, Poa pratensis, Psoralidium tenuiflorum*

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES
Globally
Poa pratensis

Wind Cave National Park
Poa pratensis

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION
Wind Cave National Park
Stands of Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) typically have moderate to dense herbaceous cover, ranging from 50 to 100%. Kentucky bluegrass contributes at least 75% of that cover. Other common herbaceous species include white sagebrush (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), scurf-pea (*Psoralidium tenuiflorum*) and naked-spike ambrosia (*Ambrosia psilostachya*). Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) may be present, with high coverage in wetter seasons. On steeper slopes, it is not uncommon to find significant amounts of downy indigo-bush (*Amorpha canescens*) with cover greater than 20%. These shrub stands are recognized as a separate map unit for the Wind Cave vegetation map.

Globally
Information not available.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

CONSERVATION RANK GW

DATABASE CODE CEGL003081

MAP UNITS
Kentucky bluegrass often is common or codominant in other grassland types. Only stands in which greater than 75% of the herbaceous cover is Kentucky bluegrass are classified as *Poa pratensis* Herbaceous Vegetation. The Kentucky bluegrass community is one of the types included in map unit 16, western wheatgrass - Kentucky bluegrass complex, on the Wind Cave vegetation map. It is not mapped separately. Kentucky bluegrass stands with standing dead trees and few or no living trees corresponds to map unit 13, western wheatgrass - Kentucky bluegrass complex (with burned ponderosa pine). Kentucky bluegrass stands with leadplant cover greater than 20% are mapped separately as map unit 32, leadplant shrubland.

COMMENTS
Wind Cave National Park
The Kentucky bluegrass type grades into the western wheatgrass - green needlegrass type, and some stands are difficult to classify. Only stands in which greater than 75% of the herbaceous cover is Kentucky bluegrass are classified as *Poa pratensis* Herbaceous Vegetation. Extensive areas of Kentucky bluegrass vegetation can be found in the eastern half and southwest quarter of the Park, which are predominantly grassland. Smaller stands occur in other areas of the Park in openings in forests and woodlands. Kentucky bluegrass often forms a mosaic with western wheatgrass and little bluestem vegetation. The little bluestem community typically occurs on steeper slopes, with Kentucky bluegrass and western wheatgrass vegetation on gentler slopes and in swales.

Kentucky bluegrass herbaceous vegetation is very common. Many stands were visited in preparing the vegetation map.

Kentucky bluegrass is an early, cool-season grass. At Wind Cave NP, stands were found that were dominated by Kentucky bluegrass early in the season, with big bluestem becoming dominant later in the summer.

REFERENCES
Sawyer, J.O. and T. Keeler-Wolf. 1995. A manual of California vegetation. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. 471 pp.