

Wetland Types

Type 1

Seasonally Flooded Basin or Flat

**A**

Fresh (Wet) Meadow

About: Soils are usually dry or well drained but may be intermittently inundated or saturated during the growing season. In forested landscapes, these may blend almost imperceptibly into the surrounding upland forest during dry periods.

Vegetation: Plants include tag alder, shrub willows, small sedges, Canada bluejoint grass, and some forbs such as smooth goldenrod. In forested areas sapling trees of ash, red maple, and more typical mature upland species such as quaking aspen may become established.

Soils: Slight concave areas in swales or toe slope and foot slope positions. Soils are reddish or brown with mottles (redoximorphic features) in the upper 12 inches. Examples are Ellsbury soils and Canosia series soils.

**B**

Floodplain Forest

About: Usually found along streams or rivers, floodplain forest soils are somewhat well drained during the growing season but are flooded in the spring or after heavy rains. Flooding frequencies vary from frequent (1 out of 2 years) to occasional (2 to 5 years out of 10 years).

Vegetation: Balsam poplar, black ash, and green ash are common. In some areas silver maple, red maple, and bur oak predominate. Because these sites are not permanently saturated, some typical upland trees may be present. Herbaceous vegetation includes ostrich fern, lake sedge and similar large sedges, northern bluebells, hedge nettle, and skullcap.

Soils: Fluviaquents and Udifluvents with sandier textures but may include strata of silts and clay. Organic matter may be present between the layers of mineral soils or on the surface.

**C**

Seasonally Flooded Basin

About: Dry during much of the growing season and generally less than an acre in size, these look like part of the forest. Water is usually gone by mid-summer but the basins may re-fill after heavy rains. Flooding frequencies are similar to floodplain forests.

Vegetation: Populated by black and green ash, red maple, elm, balsam poplar, and/or quaking aspen trees. Some tag alder and shrub willows may be present. Herbaceous plants include sensitive fern, wild iris, and Canada bluejoint grass. Seasonally flooded basins with temporary open water may also contain cow parsnip, bur-reed, and water crowfoot.

Soils: Fluviaquents and Udifluvents with sandier textures but may include strata of silts and clay.

Type 2

Inland Fresh Meadow

**A**

Fresh (Wet) Meadow

About: Soil is usually without standing water for most of the growing season but is waterlogged within at least a few inches of the surface. Meadows may fill shallow basins, sloughs, or farmland sags, or they may border shallow marshes on the landward side.

Vegetation: Broad-leaved sedges such as lake sedge and beaked sedge, wool-grass, Canada bluejoint grass. Disturbed sites may have redtop grass and canary grass as abundant or dominant species. Forbs are not usually conspicuous in these sedge-dominated wetlands but can include swamp aster, beggar's ticks (*Bidens*), and bugleweed.

Soils: Formed in depressional areas or adjacent to marshland. Soils will have mottles (redoximorphic features) in the upper 12 inches and may have a dominance of grayish colors. Examples are Bergland, Giese, and Spooner series.

**B**

Sedge Meadow

About: The soil is saturated throughout the growing season and usually has some standing water. Vegetation is dominated by sedges.

Vegetation: The dominant plants are large sedges (tussock, lake, beaked, retrorse). Wool-grass and other similar *Scirpus* species are common as is Canada bluejoint grass. Forbs include giant goldenrod, panicled aster, flat-top white aster, swamp aster, joe-pye-weed, bugleweed, and wild mint. Shrub willows (such as meadow, Bebb's, and pussy willows) and alders may be present along the edges or on high spots.

Soils: Formed in depressional areas or adjacent to marshland. Soils will have mottles (redoximorphic features) in the upper 12 inches and may have a dominance of grayish colors. Examples are Bergland, Giese, and Spooner series. Organic surface layers may be present in some cases. Examples of these are Blackhoof, Baden series.

Type 3

Shallow Marsh



About: Saturated soils covered with about 6 inches of water throughout the growing season.

Vegetation: Herbaceous emergent aquatics and some floating aquatics including broad-leaf cattail, giant and green bur-reed, pink smartweed, arrowhead, and duckweed. Small bladderwort (*Utricularia minor*) and some species of pondweed (*Potamogeton*) may be found in the deepest parts of the marsh.

Soils: Mineral soils with gleyed colors of bluish, greenish, or grayish. Organic soils if present may have a hydrogen sulfate odor. Examples are Seelyville, Cathro, Markey, and Blackhoof series.

Type 4

Deep Marsh



About: Saturated soils covered with 6 inches to 3 feet of water throughout the growing season.

Vegetation: Herbaceous emergent, floating, and submerged aquatics including broad-leaf cattail, giant bur-reed, soft-stem and hardstem bulrushes, river bulrush, wild rice, arrowhead, coontail, water milfoil, common bladderwort (*Utricularia macrorhiza*), and various species of pondweed (*Potamogeton*).

Soils: Mineral soils with gleyed colors of bluish, greenish, or grayish. Organic soils if present may have a hydrogen sulfate odor. Examples are Seelyville, Cathro, Markey, and Blackhoof series.

Type 5 Open Water



About: Shallow open water between 6 and 10 feet deep fringed by emergent, floating, and submergent vegetation.

Vegetation: Herbaceous emergent, floating, and submerged aquatics including broad-leaf cattail, giant bur-reed, soft-stem and hardstem bulrushes, river bulrush, water lilies, wild rice, arrowhead, coontail, water milfoil, common bladderwort (*Utricularia macrorhiza*), and various species of pondweed (*Potamogeton*).

Soils: Mineral soils with gleyed colors of bluish, greenish, or grayish. Organic soils if present may have a hydrogen sulfate odor. Examples are Seelyville, Cathro, Markey, and Blackhoof series.

Type 6 Shrub Swamps



A Shrub-Carr

About: Willow and other deciduous woody shrubs forming thickets on saturated to seasonally flooded soils.

Vegetation: Meadow willow is most common but Bebb's willow, tea-leaf willow, and pussy willow are also frequent. Other species include red osier dogwood, meadowsweet, highbush cranberry, tag alder, and currants. Herbaceous species include Canada bluejoint grass, joe-pye-weed, smooth goldenrod, sensitive fern, wild mint, bedstraw, and sedges. Canary grass and redtop grass are present in disturbed sites.

Soils: Very poorly drained mineral soils with grayish colors or red soils with mottles (redoximorphic features). Organic soils may also be present with a thickness of 2 to 51 inches. Examples are Giese, Baden, Cathro, and Markey series.



B Alder Thicket

About: Deciduous woody shrub community dominated by tag alder.

Vegetation: Tag alder with winterberry holly, highbush cranberry, shrubby willows, manna grass, sensitive fern, wild mint, and bugleweed. Some sites may have scattered tamarack, white cedar, and black ash trees and saplings. Canary grass and redtop grass are present in disturbed sites.

Soils: Very poorly drained mineral soils with grayish colors or red soils with mottles (redoximorphic features). Organic soils may also be present with a thickness of 2 to 51 inches. Examples are Giese, Baden, Cathro, and Markey series.

Type 7 Wooded Swamps



A Hardwood Swamp

About: Forested swamps dominated by lowland hardwoods in basins and troughs. Vegetation is lush and species diversity is high. Groundwater interaction or water flow through is evident. There may be a layer of gravel, cobbles and boulders under the soil.

Vegetation: Dominated by black ash but often with red maple, yellow birch, and elm. Conifers such as white cedar, tamarack, and black spruce may be present. Shrubs include tea-leaf willow, tag alder, and winterberry holly. Herbaceous species are cinnamon fern, oak-leaf fern, woodland horsetail, wild iris, turtlehead, marsh marigold, swamp saxifrage, golden saxifrage, Canada bluejoint grass, Carex crinita, and swamp aster. Peat mosses are scarce or absent and instead large leafy mosses (such as Mnium, Climacium, and Thuidium) are common.

Soils: Very poorly drained soils, organic layer with a thickness of 8 to greater than 51 inches, muck or mucky peat. Examples are Baden, Cathro, and Dora series.



B Coniferous Swamp

About: Forested swamps dominated by lowland conifers in basins and troughs. Vegetation is lush and species diversity is high. Groundwater interaction or water flow through is evident. There may be a layer of gravel, cobbles and boulders under the soil.

Vegetation: Usually a mix of white cedar, tamarack, and black spruce. Black ash, red maple, yellow birch, and balsam fir are occasionally found. Shrubs include tea-leaf willow, tag alder, and winterberry holly. Labrador tea can occur, also. Herbaceous species are cinnamon fern, woodland horsetail, oak-leaf fern, wild iris, turtlehead, marsh marigold, Canada bluejoint grass, bristly sedge, and swamp aster. Peat mosses are often present but do not include true acidic bog species.

Soils: Very poorly drained soils, organic layer with a thickness of 8 to greater than 51 inches, pH ranges from calcareous to medium acid. Examples are Mooselake, Lupton, and Tacoosh series.

Type 8 Bogs



A Open Bog

About: Open bogs are composed of living Sphagnum mosses over saturated fibric acidic peat. Vegetation is limited to a few species of sedges, black spruce, tamarack, and woody shrubs in the plant family known as Ericaceae that includes such familiar plants as rhododendron and blueberry.

Vegetation: Sphagnum moss is often the most abundant plant in terms of biomass. Other plant species include low woody shrubs with Labrador tea, leather-leaf, bog laurel, and bog rosemary being the most conspicuous. Small cranberry is common. Stunted shrub-like plants of tamarack and black spruce are usually present. A few sedges and their relatives are unique to acidic open bogs and include Carex pauciflora and cotton-grass (*Eriophorum spissum*). Another typical bog sedge is Carex oligosperma (few-seeded sedge).

Soils: Fibric acidic peats saturated to the surface during the growing season. The organic layer is 16 inches to greater than 51 inches. Examples are Greenwood, Loxley, and Merwin.



B Coniferous Bog

About: Coniferous bogs are similar to open bogs but have a canopy of mature tamarack and black spruce. Sphagnum moss may be common or it may be co-dominant with feather moss (*Pleurozium*). When coniferous bogs form on extensive raised mounds of moss, the upper layers are essentially cutoff from subsurface water and may appear dry.

Vegetation: Sphagnum moss and feather moss are conspicuous. The extent of canopy closure will determine the abundance of vascular plants. Small cranberry, snowberry, and small fine-leaved sedges such as *Carex disperma* are common in the dim light of coniferous bogs. Labrador tea and bristly clubmoss are often present, too.

Soils: Fibric acidic peats with woody fragments saturated to the surface during the growing season. The organic layer is 16 inches to greater than 51 inches. Examples are Greenwood, Loxley, and Merwin.