

## Midwest Dry-Mesic Prairie

**Site Characteristics:** Stands occur on upper slopes and hillcrests with moderate to steep slopes with a dry mesic regime. Rarely, this community can be found on level plains, especially in the southern parts of its range. The aspect is most often southern or western, but others are possible. Soils are shallow (40-100 cm), well-drained to excessively well-drained, and clay loam, sandy loam, or loamy sand. The sites typically occur over loess, glacial outwash, or glacial till.

**Vegetation Characteristics:** The dominant vegetation of this community is mid and tall grasses (1-2 m tall) with a diverse mixture of forbs. Total plant cover is moderate to dense. The most abundant species are Little Bluestem, Indian Grass, and Porcupine Grass. Other common herbaceous species include Big Bluestem, Sideoats Grama, Pale Purple Coneflower, Prairie Cinquefoil, and Prairie Dropseed. Lead Plant is a common subshrub species. Woody species occur but are not common in high-quality examples of this community.

**Range:**

**Conservation Status:** G2 – Imperiled

**Management Considerations:** Threats to this community include fire suppression, livestock grazing, and damage by feral hogs and vehicles. Fire presumably played an important ecological role in maintaining natural stands of this vegetation in the presettlement landscape. Current high-quality sites tend to be small patches restricted to upper slopes and hillcrests. This community has probably been substantially reduced by conversion to agriculture, or degraded by grazing and fire suppression. This community is invaded by woody species in the prolonged absence of fires (Red Cedar and Red Maple).



### Iowa NRCS Plant Community Description

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**MIDWEST DRY GRAVEL PRAIRIE**

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STRATA	FUNCTIONAL GROUP	IA CofC	SEEDS/LB	STATE STATUS
<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i>	Common ragweed	Herbaceous Layer	A-FORB	0	113,682.00	
<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	Western ragweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2	67,429.00	
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Lead plant	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB, LEGUME	8	256,000.00	
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big bluestem	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	160,000.00	
<i>Andropogon hallii</i>	Sand bluestem	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	7	96,640.00	SC
<i>Aristida purpurea longiseta</i>	Few-flowered aristata	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	10		
<i>Artemisia campestris caudata</i>	Western sagewort	Herbaceous Layer	B-FORB	4	4,000,000.00	
<i>Artemisia frigida</i>	Prairie sagewort	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB	4	4,536,000.00	SC
<i>Asclepias lanuginosa</i>	Woolly milkweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	9		T
<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	Whorled milkweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	0	176,000.00	
<i>Asclepias viridiflora</i>	Green milkweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	6	57,600.00	
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	Side-oats grama	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	6	96,000.00	
<i>Bouteloua dactyloides</i>	Buffalo grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	7		SC
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	Blue grama	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	8	640,000.00	
<i>Bouteloua hirsuta</i>	Hairy grama	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	7	1,120,000.00	
<i>Brickellia eupatorioides</i>	False boneset	Herbaceous Layer	SUB-SHRUB	5	512,000.00	
<i>Calamovilfa longifolia</i>	Prairie sandreed	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	7	274,000.00	
<i>Carex duriuscula</i>	Needleleaf sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	10		
<i>Carex inops</i>	Sun Sedge	Herbaceous Layer	P-SEDGE, COOL SEASON	6		
<i>Castilleja sessiliflora</i>	Downy painted cup	Herbaceous Layer	SUB-SHRUB, HEMIPARASITE	10	3,200,000.00	
<i>Cirsium hillii</i>	Hill's thistle	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	8		SC
<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	Prairie coreopsis	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	7	160,000.00	
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple prairie clover	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB, LEGUME	8	288,000.00	
<i>Echinacea angustifolia</i>	Purple coneflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	8	112,000.00	
<i>Erigeron strigosus</i>	Daisy fleabane	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2	250,000.00	
<i>Gaura coccinea</i>	Scarlet gaura	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	7	22,400.00	
<i>Geum triflorum</i>	Prairie smoke	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	8	432,000.00	

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<i>Hedeoma hispidum</i>	Rough pennyroyal	Herbaceous Layer	A-FORB	2		
<i>Hesperostipa comata</i>	Needle-and-thread	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	7	256,000.00	SC
<i>Hesperostipa spartea</i>	Porcupine grass	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	6	10,880.00	
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	June grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	7	3,200,000.00	
<i>Liatris cylindracea</i>	Blazing star	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10	224,000.00	
<i>Liatris punctata</i>	Dotted blazing star	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	8	112,000.00	
<i>Lithospermum incisum</i>	Fringed puccoon	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	5	96,509.00	
<i>Lygodesmia juncea</i>	Skeletonweed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	7		
<i>Minuartia michauxii</i>	Rock sandwort	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10	3,840,000.00	SC
<i>Muhlenbergia cuspidata</i>	Plains muhly	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	10	2,880,000.00	
<i>Oligoneuron album</i>	Stiff aster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	9	1,024,000.00	
<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	Western wheatgrass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, COOL SEASON	2	115,008.00	
<i>Physalis heterophylla</i>	Ground cherry	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	2		
<i>Pulsatilla patens multifida</i>	Pasque flower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	8	288,000.00	
<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	Long-headed coneflower	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	4	320,000.00	
<i>Rosa spp.</i>	Wildrose	Shrub Layer	SUB-SHRUB			
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	Little bluestem	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	5	240,000.00	
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	4	192,000.00	
<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	Scarlet mallow	Herbaceous Layer	SUB-SHRUB	9	500,000.00	T
<i>Sporobolus clandestinus</i>	Rough rush grass	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	3	480,000.00	SC
<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	Sand dropseed	Herbaceous Layer	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	3	5,600,080.00	
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	Prairie dropseed	Herbaceous Layer, Dominant	P-GRASS, WARM SEASON	9	256,000.00	
<i>Symphoricarpos occidentalis</i>	Wolfberry, buckbrush	Shrub Layer	SHRUB	0	75,033.00	
<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>	Heath aster, frost weed	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	3	3,200,000.00	
<i>Symphotrichum oblongifolium</i>	Aromatic aster	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	10	816,000.00	
<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary vervain	Herbaceous Layer	P-FORB	1	448,000.00	
<i>Yucca glauca</i>	Soapweed	Herbaceous Layer	SUB-SHRUB	10	28,800.00	

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