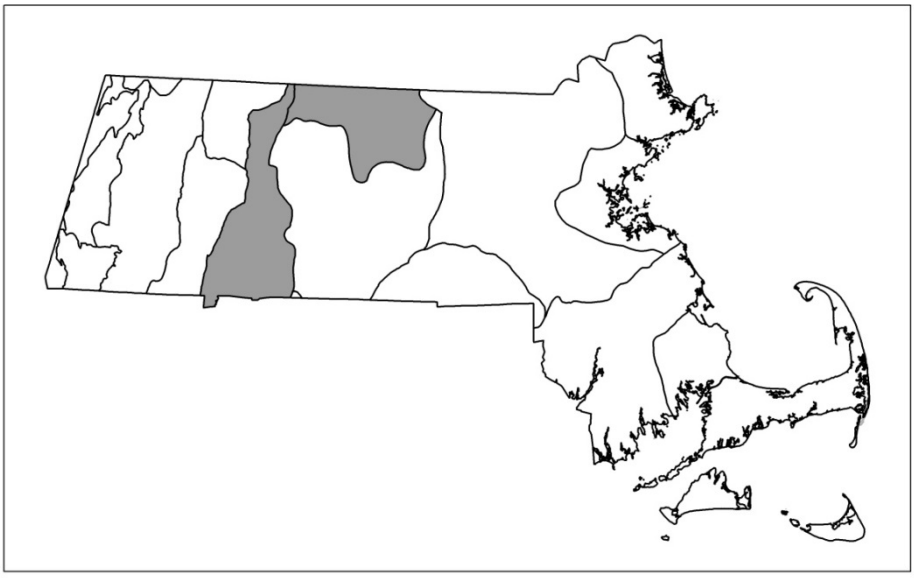
Acidic Pondshore/Lakeshore Community

Community Code: CP2A0B1100

State Rank: S4



Concept: The broadly defined vegetation of acidic pondshores found statewide. The vegetation is often shrubby around lakes and ponds that have little natural fluctuation of water levels.

Environmental Setting: The Acidic Pondshore/Lakeshore Community is broadly defined to cover most of the pondshores in the state that are not explicitly excluded, such as calcareous pondshores and coastal plain pondshores. Many occurrences are narrow (often <1m wide) and are submerged or saturated for a significant part of the year or continuously in wet years. In ponds or lakes that have little natural fluctuation in water levels, the shores are often shrub-dominated. Shallow ponds with gradual slopes may have broader shores with emergents along the shore or, if there is regular disturbance such as water level changes or ice scour, the vegetation may be sparse.

Vegetation Description: The vegetation is highly variable among Acidic Pondshores/ Lakeshore Community occurrences, with hydrology and topography of the basin and geographic location in the state strongly influencing the plants that are present. Shore vegetation may include shrubs such as mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), maleberry (*Lyonia ligustrina*), mountain holly (*Ilex mucronata*), arrow-wood (*Viburnum dentatum*), and leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), with rhodora (*Rhododendron canadense*), steeple-bush (*Spiraea tomentosa*), and American filbert (*Corylus americana*). Herbaceous vegetation on the shoreline is diverse and commonly includes spotted Joe-pye-weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*), tussock-sedge (*Carex stricta*), northern water-horehound (*Lycopus uniflorus*), and royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*). Emergent aquatic species grow adjacent to the shoreline and can merge into it. Gradual

shores may have more beach-like conditions with herbaceous species such as golden pert (*Gratiola aurea*).

Differentiating Occurrences: Coastal Plain Pondshores and Coastal Plain Pondshores - Inland Variant have been separated out, as those communities that develop in groundwater-flooded depressions in inland outwash sand plains and have shorelines that are seasonally exposed, but submerged or saturated for a significant part of the year or continuously in wet years. The seasonal development of herbaceous vegetation in zones as water levels go down are distinctive for the Coastal Plain Pondshore - Inland Variant. Shorelines of Acidic Pondshores/Lakeshores tend to be dominated by trees or shrubs to the water edge and have limited annual fluctuation. In sites with less linear communities, the community type tends to be designated as Shrub Swamp.

Associated Fauna: The shrubs, sedges, bulrushes, and grasses of Inland Acidic Pondshore/Lakeshores provide a food resource for waterfowl and other marsh birds.

Public Access: Long Pond, Tully Lake Reservation (US Army Corps of Engineers), Royalston.

Threats: More information is needed to assess the threats to Acidic Pondshore/Lakeshore Communities. Probable threats include trampling from ORVs, alteration of normal water-level fluctuations, and shoreline development. Invasives include purple loosestrife and phragmites.

Management Needs: More information is needed to assess the management needs of Acidic Pondshore/Lakeshore Communities.

USNVC/NatureServe: In System: CES201.586 Laurentian-Acadian Lakeshore Beach and related to Eroding Clay Bank Sparse Vegetation [CEGL002584]; and Igneous - Metamorphic Cobble - Gravel Inland Lake Shore Sparse Vegetation [CEGL002303].