

Ecological site F144AY044VT

Semi-Rich Well Drained Outwash

Last updated: 10/04/2024
Accessed: 08/16/2026

General information

Provisional. A provisional ecological site description has undergone quality control and quality assurance review. It contains a working state and transition model and enough information to identify the ecological site.

MLRA notes

Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): 144A—New England and Eastern New York Upland, Southern Part

MLRA 144A: New England and Eastern New York Upland, Southern Part. The eastern half of the eastern part of this MLRA is in the Seaboard Lowland Section of the New England Province of the Appalachian Highlands. The western half of the eastern part and the southeastern half of the western part are in the New England Upland Section of the same province and division. The northwestern half of the western part is in the Hudson Valley Section of the Valley and Ridge Province of the Appalachian Highlands. This MLRA is a very scenic area of rolling to hilly uplands that are broken by many gently sloping to level valleys that terminate in coastal lowlands. Elevation ranges from sea level to 1,000 feet (0 to 305 meters) in much of the area, but it is 2,000 feet (610 meters) on some hills. Relief is mostly about 6 to 65 feet (2 to 20 meters) in the valleys and about 80 to 330 feet (25 to 100 meters) in the uplands. This area has been glaciated and consists almost entirely of till hills, drumlins, and bedrock-controlled uplands with a mantle of till. It is dissected by narrow glacio-fluvial valleys. The southernmost boundary of the area marks the farthest southward extent of Wisconsinian glaciation on the eastern seaboard. The river valleys and coastal plains are filled with glacial lake sediments, marine sediments, and glacial outwash. The bedrock in the eastern half of the area consists primarily of igneous and metamorphic rocks of early Paleozoic age. Granite is the most common igneous rock, and gneiss, schist, and slate are the most common metamorphic rocks. In the parts of the MLRA in eastern and southeastern New York, Devonian- to Pennsylvanian-age sandstone, shale, and limestone are dominant. Carbonate rocks, primarily dolomite and limestone, are the dominant kinds of bedrock in the part of this MLRA in northwestern Connecticut.

Classification relationships

USDA-NRCS (USDA 2006): Land Resource Region (LRR): N—East and Central Farming and Forest Region Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): 144A— New England and Eastern New York Upland, Southern Part. USDA-FS (Cleland et al. 2007) Province: 221 - Eastern Broadleaf Province Section: 221A - Lower New England Subsection: 221Aa – Boston Basin 221Ac – Narragansett-Bristol Lowland and Islands 221Ad – Southern New England Coastal Lowland 221Ae – Hudson Highlands 221Ag - Southeast New England Coastal Hills and Plains 221Ah - Worcester-Monadnock Plateau 221Ai – Gulf of Maine Coastal Plain 221Ak - Gulf of Maine Coastal Lowland Section: 221B – Hudson Valley Subsection: 221Ba – Hudson Limestone Valley 221Bb - Miami – Taconic Foothills 221Bc – Hudson Glacial Lake Plains

Ecological site concept

This site consists of well drained soils formed in loamy mantled stratified drift and glacial outwash. The soils are moderately deep to stratified sand and gravel and are very deep to bedrock. They are nearly level to very steep soils on outwash plains, terraces, kames, eskers, and moraines. . Semi-rich refers to the higher to circumneutral pH values. Representative soils are Copake. The representative plant communities are not well-described. The plant community-types are expected to be similar to Semi-Rich Dry Outwash ecological sites, except with a more diverse understory. Typified by a sugar maple- oak forest type to more of an oak-hickory forest type.

Associated sites

F144AY025MA	Semi-Rich Moist Outwash
-------------	-------------------------

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	(1) <i>Acer saccharinum</i> (2) <i>Quercus rubra</i>
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	(1) <i>Hepatica nobilis</i> var. <i>obtusa</i>

Physiographic features

This site consists of a range of landforms occurring in outwash plains and valleys, in variably sloping terrain, and is rarely subject to flooding.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Outwash plain > Delta (2) Valley > Outwash plain (3) Terrace (4) Kame (5) Ridge
Runoff class	Very low to low
Flooding frequency	None to rare
Ponding frequency	None
Elevation	0 – 410 m
Slope	0 – 50 %
Water table depth	140 – 180 cm
Aspect	Aspect is not a significant factor

Climatic features

The Koppen-Geiger climate classification of the area in which this MLRA occurs varies between Dfb (Warm-summer humid continental) in the North, and Dfa (Hot-summer humid continental) in the southern portion of the MLRA. Precipitation is usually uniformly distributed throughout the year. Near the coast, however, it is slightly lower in summer. Precipitation is slightly higher in spring and fall in inland areas. Rainfall occurs as high-intensity, convective thunderstorms during the summer. During the winter, most of the precipitation occurs as moderate-intensity storms (northeasters) that produce large amounts of rain or snow. The freeze-free period increases in length to the south.

Table 3 Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (characteristic range)	130-140 days
Freeze-free period (characteristic range)	150-190 days
Precipitation total (characteristic range)	1,090-1,220 mm
Frost-free period (actual range)	120-160 days
Freeze-free period (actual range)	150-200 days
Precipitation total (actual range)	1,040-1,250 mm
Frost-free period (average)	140 days
Freeze-free period (average)	170 days
Precipitation total (average)	1,170 mm

- (1) RUTLAND [USC00436995], Rutland, VT
- (2) GLOVERSVILLE [USC00303319], Gloversville, NY
- (3) BELVIDERE BRG [USC00280734], Bangor, NJ
- (4) GROTON NEW LONDON AP [USW00014707], Groton, CT
- (5) PLYMOUTH MUNI AP [USW00054769], Carver, MA
- (6) DURHAM 2 SSW [USW00054795], Durham, NH
- (7) ORANGE MUNI AP [USW00054756], Orange, MA

Influencing water features

NONE

Wetland description

NONE

Soil features

This site consists of moderately to very deep, well drained soils formed in wind and water deposited parent materials derived from limestone, dolomite, and schist. Representative soil is Copake.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Parent material	(1) Eolian deposits – limestone and dolomite (2) Glaciofluvial deposits – schist
-----------------	---

Surface texture	(1) Channery silt loam (2) Fine sandy loam (3) Gravelly loam (4) Gravelly silt loam
Family particle size	(1) Coarse-loamy over sandy or sandy-skeletal
Drainage class	Well drained
Permeability class	Moderately slow
Depth to restrictive layer	70 – 180 cm
Surface fragment cover ≤3"	Not specified
Surface fragment cover >3"	Not specified
Available water capacity (Depth not specified)	10.16 – 12.7 cm
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (Depth not specified)	4.5 – 8.4
Subsurface fragment volume ≤3" (Depth not specified)	20 – 40 %
Subsurface fragment volume >3" (Depth not specified)	10 %

Ecological dynamics

[Caveat: The vegetation information contained in this section and is only provisional, based on concepts, not yet validated with field work.*]

The vegetation groupings described in this section are based on the terrestrial ecological system classification and vegetation associations developed by NatureServe (Comer 2003). Terrestrial ecological SYSTEMS are specifically defined as a group of plant community-types called ASSOCIATIONS that tend to [co-]occur within landscapes with similar ecological processes, substrates, and/or environmental gradients. Any given system will typically manifest itself in a landscape at intermediate geographic scales of tens-to-thousands of hectares and will persist for 50 or more years. A vegetation association is a plant community that is much more specific to a given soil, geology, landform, climate, hydrology, and disturbance history. It is the basic unit for vegetation classification and recognized by the US National Vegetation Classification (US FDGC 2008). Each association will be named by the diagnostic and often dominant

species that occupy the different height strata (tree, sapling, shrub, and herb). Within the NatureServe Explorer database (NatureServe, 2015), ecological systems are numbered by a Community Ecological System Code (CES) and individual vegetation associations are assigned an identification number called a Community Element Global Code (CEGL).

Additional and more localized vegetation information is provided by the State Natural Heritage Programs of Connecticut (Metzler and Barrett 2001), Massachusetts (Swain and Kearsley 2001), New Hampshire (Sperduto and Nichols, 2011), New York (Edinger et al., 2014), and Rhode Island (Enser and Lungren, 2006).

The Semi Rich Dry Outwash ecological site is characteristic of Appalachian (Hemlock)-Northern Hardwood Forest system (CES202.593) and the Central Appalachian Dry Oak-Pine Forest system (CES202.591). The vegetation of this ecosite is not well described. The reference community is typified by a Sugar Maple-Oak forest type but can range to more Oak-Hickory forest type. Given its semi-rich nature it has much in common with the semi-rich and mesic till sites. Invasive species include European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa*), Japnese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Morrow's shrubby honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*), tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*). This forest occurs in uneven-aged stands with canopy gaps formed by storm extremes ranging from windthrows to downbursts to ice-storms. Fires are typically suppressed. Logging is a widespread management activity.

State and transition model

Additional community tables

Table 5. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 6. Community 1.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 7. Community 1.3 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 8. Community 2.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 9. Community 2.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 10. Community 3.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 11. Community 3.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Table 12. Community 3.3 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
-------	-------------	--------	-----------------	----------------------	------------------

Inventory data references

Future work is needed, as described in a future project plan, to validate the information presented in this provisional ecological site description. Future work includes field sampling, data collection and analysis by qualified vegetation ecologists and soil scientists. As warranted, annual reviews of the project plan can be conducted by the Ecological Site Technical Team. A final field review, peer review, quality control, and quality assurance reviews of the ESD are necessary to approve a final document.

Other references

REFERENCES

Cleland, D.T., J.A. Freeouf, J.E. Keys, G.J. Nowacki, C.A. Carpenter, and W.H.McNab. 2007. Ecological Subregions: Sections and Subsections for the conterminous United States. [Map. presentation scale 1:3,500,000, colored; A.M. Sloan, cartographer] Gen. Tech. Report WO-76D. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Washington, DC. (<https://www.fs.fed.us/research/publications/misc/73326-wo-gtr-76d-cleland2007.pdf>)

Comer, P., D. Faber-Langendoen, R. Evans, S. Gawler, C. Josse, G. Kittel, S. Menard, M. Pyne, M. Reid, K. Schulz, K., Snow, and J.Teague. 2003. Ecological Systems of the United States: A Working Classification of U.S. Terrestrial Systems. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia.

Edinger, G.J., Evans, D.J., Gebauer, S., Howard, T.G., Hunt, D.M., and A.M. Olivero, A.M. (eds.). 2014. Ecological Communities of New York State, Second Edition: A revised and expanded edition of Carol Reschke's Ecological Communities of New York State. New York Natural Heritage Program, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany, NY.

Enser, R., Gregg, D., Sparks, C., August, P., Jordan, P., Coit, J., Raithel, C., Tefft, B., Payton, B., Brown, C. and LaBash, C., 2011. Rhode Island ecological communities classification. Rhode Island Natural History Survey, Kingston, RI.

Enser, R. and Lundgren, J.A., 2006. Natural communities of Rhode Island. Rhode Island Natural History Survey, Kingston (RI).

FGDC [Federal Geographic Data Committee]. 2008. National Vegetation Classification Standard, Version 2. Federal Geographic Data Committee, Vegetation Subcommittee, Washington DC..

Gawler, S.C. and Cutko, A., 2010. Natural landscapes of Maine: a guide to natural communities and ecosystems. Maine Natural Areas Program, Department of Conservation.

Metzler, K.J. and Barrett, J.P., 2006. The Vegetation of Connecticut, a Preliminary Classification. Department of Environmental Protection, State Geological and Natural History Survey of Connecticut.

NatureServe 2015. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <http://explorer.natureserve.org>. (Accessed: December 2015).

PRISM Climate Group, Oregon State University. Available <http://prism.oregonstate.edu>, (created February 26, 2013).

Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. 2006. Land Resource Regions and Major Land Resource Areas of the United States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. Agricultural Handbook 296. (https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs142p2_051845.pdf).

Sperduto, D.D., & Nichols, W.F. 2011. Natural Communities of New Hampshire, Second Ed. NH Natural Heritage Bureau, Concord, NH. Publ. UNH Cooperative Extension.

Swain, P.C. and Kearsley, J.B., 2001. Classification of the natural communities of Massachusetts. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Thompson, E.H. and Sorenson, E.R., 2000. Wetland, woodland, wildland. Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy. Publ. University Press of New England.

USNVC [United States National Vegetation Classification]. 2017 (Date accessed). United States National Vegetation Classification Database V2.01. Federal Geographic Data Committee, Vegetation Subcommittee, Washington DC.

Contributors

Nels Barrett, Ph.D. (vegetation)

Approval

Greg Schmidt, 10/04/2024

Acknowledgments

Michael Margo and tech team provided earlier drafts. Josh Hibit made compliance updates w/ 2021 Checklist V.2

Rangeland health reference sheet

Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health is a qualitative assessment protocol used to determine ecosystem condition based on benchmark characteristics described in the Reference Sheet. A suite of 17 (or more) indicators are typically considered in an

assessment. The ecological site(s) representative of an assessment location must be known prior to applying the protocol and must be verified based on soils and climate. Current plant community cannot be used to identify the ecological site.

Author(s)/participant(s)	
Contact for lead author	
Date	08/16/2026
Approved by	
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. Number and extent of rills:

2. Presence of water flow patterns:

3. Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:

4. Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):

5. Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:

6. Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:

7. Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):

8. Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):

9. Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):

10. Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:

11. Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):

12. Functional/Structural Groups (list in order of descending dominance by above-ground annual-production or live foliar cover using symbols: >>, >, = to indicate much greater than, greater than, and equal to):

Dominant:

Sub-dominant:

Other:

Additional:

13. Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):

14. Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):

15. Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):

16. Potential invasive (including noxious) species (native and non-native). List species which BOTH characterize degraded states and have the potential to become a dominant or co-dominant species on the ecological site if their future establishment and growth is not actively controlled by management interventions. Species that become dominant for only one to several years (e.g., short-term response to drought or wildfire) are not invasive plants. Note that unlike other indicators, we are describing what is NOT expected in the reference state for the ecological site:

17. Perennial plant reproductive capability:
