

Major Land Resource Area 239X Northern Bering Sea Islands

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Ecological site keys

MLRA 239 Life Zone Key - Alpine vs. Arctic Lowlands

I. All landforms with elevation above 500 feet. Common indicator plants include (Dryas octopetala ssp. octopetala, Diapensia lapponica var. obovata, Anthoxanthum monticola ssp. alpinum, Oxytropis nigrescens, Alectoria ochroleuca, and Flavocetraria nivalis)

II. All landforms at elevation below 500 feet.

Alpine Life Zone - MLRA Key

I. Dry, very gravelly soils ... R239XY070AK – Alpine Dwarf Scrub Gravelly Slopes

II. Dry, siltier soils then above, soils prone to solifluction that causes a mosaic of vegetation ... R239XY043AK – Alpine Dwarf Scrub Silty Slopes

Arctic Lowlands Life Zone - MLRA Key

I. The ecological site occurs on shore complexes and is influenced by periodic tidal flooding.

A. Dry soils on sandy dunes

B. Not as above. Wet soils not on dunes

1 Proximal to shore, flooding often occurs daily, landforms include tidal flats and estuaries, soils without permafrost ...

R239XY053AK – Arctic Sedge Loamy Tidal Marsh

2 Distal to shore, flooding does not occur daily, landforms include backshores and margins of lagoons, soils with permafrost ...

R239XY051AK – Arctic Shrub Loamy Frozen Tidal Marsh

II. The ecological site does not occur on shore complexes and is not influenced by periodic tidal flooding.

A. The ecological site is associated with drainageways and/or flood plains

1 Larger flood plains, with point bars and exposed gravels. Soils do not have permafrost ... R239XY020AK – Arctic Scrub Gravelly Flood Plains

2 Smaller flood plains and/or drainageways that lack point bars and exposed gravels. Soils have permafrost.

i. Slow-moving drainageways. Soils capped with greater than 20 inches of organic material. ... R239XY054AK – Arctic Sedge Peat Frozen Drainageways

ii. Commonly headwater tributaries of larger flood plains. Soils have less than 20 inches of organic material. ... R239XY034AK – Arctic Scrub Loamy Frozen Drainageways

B. Not as above, the ecological site occurs on slopes and depressions of coastal plains, hills, and mountains

1 Depressions on Plains

i. Associated with large depressions like lake margins, shallow lakes, and blown out lakes ... R239XY057AK – Arctic Sedge Peat Depressions

ii. Associated with thermokarst depressions. This is an alternate state, proceed to next portion of key, II.B.2

2 Slopes of plains, hills, and mountains. Slopes range from nearly level to steep.

i. Drier soils than below that do not have permafrost. ... R239XY058AK – Arctic Grass Loamy Slopes

ii. Wet soils with permafrost

a. Soils pond frequently and are very poorly drained. Commonly associated with peat mounds, palsas, and thermokarst pits. ... R239XY052AK – Arctic Sedge Loamy Frozen Slopes

b. Soils do not pond frequently and are poorly drained

1) Occurs at higher elevation and higher hillslope profile positions like backslopes with drier soils compared to the below ecological site ... R239XY063AK – Arctic Dwarf Scrub Loamy Frozen Slopes

2) Occurs at lower elevation and lower hillslope profile positions like toeslopes with wetter soils compared to the above ecological site ... R239XY032AK – Arctic Scrub Silty Frozen Slopes Wet