

Salt Road Fen

Proposed UNA-194 Documentation

Old site code: none

Location: Town of Groton

USGS Quad.: Groton 7.5'

Tax Parcel numbers: 502889-20.-1-20.4, 502889-20.-1-19.1, 502889-20.-1-19.2, 502889-20.-1-40.4, 502889-20.-1-40.32, 502889-20.-1-40.31, 502889-20.-1-40.2, 502889-20.-1-36.24, 502889-20.-1-37.1

Lat., Long.: 76°19'18.239"W 42°35'54.916"N

Reasons for Selection

- Quality example of plant community
- Diverse flora
- Rare or scarce community types
- Rare or scarce plant species
- Wetlands
- Scenic/Aesthetic value

Special Land Use Information

Special land-use designations and features

The New York Natural Heritage Program has determined that this site may contain rare plants, rare animals, and/or significant ecological communities.

- Ag District: Tompkins County Ag District TOMP 001
- Water Resources:
- Wetland area within the site
- National Wetlands Inventory: 10.82 acres of Freshwater Emergent Wetland are found on this site.
- Stream within the site.

Site and Vegetation Description

The upper Fall Creek valley is topographically and geologically very complex and contains a great many small rich fens with highly significant biodiversity. This site encompasses a few of them. These open and shrubby sloping rich fens are located in a relatively flat upland at about 1400 to 1450 feet elevation. The site is remarkable for botanical reasons; the high number of species (including many rare and scarce ones), the number of typical or characteristic rich fen species, and the large population of the globally rare globeflower (*Trollius laxus*). The open rich-fen meadow is largely dominated by sedges, mosses and dwarf shrubs. It is characterized by diffuse groundwater discharge, and there are apparent seeps that coalesce into small streams. The open fen meadow is bordered by successional aspen forest with a lot of dense shrubs, such as gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*) and various shadbush species (*Amelanchier* spp.). The site is quite heterogeneous – there are higher acidic hummocks with *Sphagnum* mosses, and some parts of the site are much wetter than others. Some areas are dominated by swamp buckthorn (*Rhamnus alnifolia*). Plant cover is quite low in stature, and moss cover beneath the taller plants is nearly continuous throughout. Characteristic species include: sedges (*Carex flava*, *Carex prairiea*, *Carex atlantica*), cottongrass (*Eriophorum viridi-carinatum*), starry solomon's-seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), and water avens (*Geum rivale*).

Conservation of the Site

- Adjacent Land Use: Residential, pasture, agricultural fields, inactive agriculture.
- Sensitivity of Site to Visitors: Site is considered relatively fragile to disturbance by visitors.

- Evidence of Disturbance and Threats to Site: The area has been grazed in the past, but still has most or all of the characteristic fen species and remains in remarkably good condition. Main threats to site are trampling from visitors, increasing deer grazing pressure, and nutrients from agriculture and septic systems entering the site in the groundwater. Beavers are also a threat.
- Special Conservation Needs: Much of the site is in protective ownership and management. Part of the site is a Cornell Natural Area. The best areas are buffered. Beaver and deer are an ongoing concern and should be monitored.

Physical Characteristics of the Site

- Size: 74.04 ac.
- Elevation: about 1360 – 1470 feet.
- Aspect: N, W, E; nearly flat.
- Topographic Features: Mid-to-upper slope in a relatively flat upland setting.
- Geological Features: Kame-moraine surficial deposits. Groundwater discharge. Calcareous till and morainal material.
- Slope %: Flat, 3 – 15%.
- Topographic Position: Upper slope, mid-slope.

Soils Present on the Site

Code	Name	Hydric rating	Erodibility
BgC	Bath and Valois gravelly silt loam, 5 – 15 % slopes	Not hydric	Highly erodible
BgD	Bath and Valois gravelly silt loam, 15 – 25 % slopes	Not hydric	Highly erodible
EbB	Erie channery silt loam, 3 – 8% slopes	Potential hydric inclusions	Potentially highly erodible
EbC	Erie channery silt loam, 8 – 15% slopes	Potential hydric inclusions	Highly erodible
EcA	Ellery, Chippewa and Alden soils, 0 – 8% slopes	Hydric	Potentially highly erodible
ErA	Erie-Ellery channery silt loams, 0 – 3% slopes	Hydric	Non-Highly Erodible
HrD	Howard-Valois gravelly loams, 15 – 25 % slopes	Not hydric	Highly erodible
LaC	Langford channery silt loam, 8 – 15% slopes	Not hydric	Highly erodible
Ws	Wayland and Sloan silt loams	Hydric	Non-Highly Erodible

Biological Characteristics of the Site

General Cover Types

- Wetland forest
- Wet meadow
- Wetland shrub thicket
- Upland shrub thicket
- Old fields, meadows
- Upland forest

Ecological Communities

Rarity: Global, State, and/or Locally rare community types are found on the site.

Ecological Community Types Present on the Site:

- Rich shrub fen

- Rich sloping fen
- Rich graminoid fen
- Shrub swamp
- Successional old field
- Successional shrubland
- Successional northern hardwoods
- Wetland headwater stream

Plant Species

Rarity: Global, State and/or Locally rare plant species are found at the site.

Legal Status: At least one state-designated Endangered, Threatened, and/or Rare plant species is found at the site

Significant plant species found at the site

<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	black chokeberry	Rosaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Symphotrichum boreale</i> (<i>Aster borealis</i>)	northern bog aster	Asteraceae	L2	rare	NYS:T
<i>Carex sterilis</i>	sedge	Cyperaceae	L2	rare	
<i>Cypripedium reginae</i>	showy lady'slipper	Orchidaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Lilium canadense</i>	Canada lily	Liliaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i> (<i>Smilacina stellata</i>)	starry solomon's-seal	Ruscaceae	L4		
<i>Muhlenbergia glomerata</i>	satin-grass, fen timothy	Poaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Platanthera aquilonis</i> (<i>Platanthera hyperborea</i>)	northern green bog-orchid	Orchidaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Platanthera dilatata</i>	northern white bog-orchid	Orchidaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Dasiphora floribunda</i> (<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>)	shrubby cinquefoil	Rosaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Rhamnus alnifolia</i>	swamp buckthorn	Rhamnaceae	L4		
<i>Ribes hirtellum</i>	swamp gooseberry	Grossulariaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>	early ladies-tresses	Orchidaceae	L3	scarce	
<i>Trollius laxus</i>	American globeflower	Ranunculaceae	L3	scarce	NYS:T

Site map



Town of Groton

UNA-194 Salt Rd Fen

Tompkins County Environmental Management County
Inventory of Unique Natural Areas in Tompkins County

Map updated: September 2012

UNA boundaries were delineated by field biologists based on a review of air photographs, digital GIS basemap data (roads, building footprints, 20-foot contours and streams) and field visits. UNA boundaries are approximate and should be used for general planning purposes only. As a practical matter the County does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of the information portrayed. The end user of this map agrees to accept the data "as is" with full knowledge that errors and omissions may exist, and to hold harmless the County for any damages that may result from an inappropriate use of this map.

- 20 Foot Contour
- Building Footprint
- ⊞ Municipal Boundary
- Unique Natural Area UNA-194

