As of this writing, associations considered provisional (nonstandard) are not served on NatureServe Explorer. A "Provisional" classification unit is a candidate for acceptance in the International Ecological Classification Standard, but has not yet been comprehensively reviewed. This provisional association is a synonym for a community type in the Natural Communities of Virginia and the description is provided for users of that classification.

Data source NatureServe. 2017. International Ecological Classification Standard: Terrestrial Ecological Classifications. NatureServe Central Databases. Arlington, VA. U.S.A. Data current as of 25 April 2017.

2.B.2.Nc. Eastern North American Grassland & Shrubland (D024)

M508. Central Interior Calcareous Scrub & Grassland

G174. South-Central Patch Prairie

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2. Shrub & Herb Vegetation
2.B. Temperate & Boreal Grassland & Shrubland
2.B.2. Temperate Grassland & Shrubland
2.B.2.Nc. Eastern North American Grassland & Shrubland
M508. Central Interior Calcareous Scrub & Grassland
G174. South-Central Patch Prairie

CEGL006039. *Andropogon gerardii - Sorghastrum nutans - Pycnanthemum virginianum* Grassland

OVERVIEW

Database Code: CEGL006039
Scientific Name: *Andropogon gerardii - Sorghastrum nutans - Pycnanthemum virginianum* Grassland
Common Name (Translated Scientific Name): Big Bluestem - Indiangrass - Virginia Mountainmint Grassland
Colloquial Name: Central Appalachian Mesic / Wet-Mesic Prairie
Hierarchy Level: Association
Placement in Hierarchy: 2.B.2.Nc.3.a. Southeastern Mesic Patch Prairie (A3889)
Type Concept Sentence:
Type Concept: This community type is a mesic to wet-mesic prairie of the Ridge and Valley province in western Virginia, with an outlying occurrence on the Southern Blue Ridge in Virginia. Vegetation is characterized by *Andropogon gerardii*, *Sorghastrum nutans*, *Pycnanthemum virginianum*, *Cirsium muticum*, and a host of low-cover associates.
Classification Comments: This association is a candidate for removal.

Because of its rarity, data from stands of this type are limited. More detailed information is needed to fully circumscribe this type.

Similar NVC Types:

- CEGL004677 *Andropogon gerardii - (Sorghastrum nutans)* Kentucky Grassland

Diagnostic Characteristics:
Rationale for Nominal Species or Physiognomic Features [optional]:

VEGETATION

Physiognomy and Structure:
Floristics: This vegetation type is a tall warm-season grassland dominated by *Andropogon gerardii* and *Sorghastrum nutans*, with *Pycnanthemum virginianum* as a constant, low-cover forb associate. Other typical associates include *Cirsium muticum*, *Symphyotrichum praealtum var. angustior (= Aster praealtus var. angustior)*, *Liatris spicata*, *Carex buxbaumii*, *Schoenoplectus pungens (= Scirpus pungens)*, *Carex tetanica*, *Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*, *Eupatorium maculatum var. maculatum*, *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae (= Aster novae-angliae)*, and *Agalinis purpurea*. In the Southern Blue Ridge outlier, *Veronicastrum virginicum*, *Melanthium virginicum*, *Carex buxbaumii*, *Saxifraga pensylvanica*, and *Castilleja coccinea* are associated.

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Description: This type is reported to occur on black, seasonally wet soils. Its environment is interpreted as mesic to wet-mesic, and is placed in upland not wetland. Habitats for this community occur on broad, elevated floodplain terraces of large streams and small rivers in mountain valleys. Alluvium is derived mostly from carbonate materials (limestone or dolomite) and calcareous shales. Soil samples collected from two plots had a mean pH of 7.7, with very high calcium levels and total base saturation. Soils are generally well-drained, but some sites may be occasionally flooded, have seasonally perched water tables, or have small, distinct inclusions of saturated soil and seepage.

DISCUSSION

Animals [optional]:
Mapping Issues [optional]:

DISTRIBUTION

Geographic Range: This community is only known from Virginia, but a similar type may also occur in Kentucky.
Nations [incomplete except for CA and US]: US
States/Provinces: VA
USFS Ecoregions (2005) [optional]: M221C:C?, M221Db:CCC
Omernik Ecoregions [optional]:

CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Confidence Level:
Confidence Level Comments [optional]:

CITATIONS

Synonymy:
- = Appalachian Mesic Tall-Grass Prairie (Fleming et al. 2004)

Full Citation:

- *Eastern Ecology Working Group of NatureServe. No date. International Ecological Classification Standard: International Vegetation Classification. Terrestrial Vegetation. NatureServe, Boston, MA.
- Fleming, G. P., P. P. Coulling, D. P. Walton, K. M. McCoy, and M. R. Parrish. 2001. The natural communities of Virginia: Classification of ecological community groups. First approximation. Natural Heritage Technical Report 01-1. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, VA. 76 pp.
- Fleming, G. P., P. P. Coulling, K. D. Patterson, and K. M. McCoy. 2004. The natural communities of Virginia: Classification of ecological community groups. Second approximation. Natural Heritage Technical Report 04-01. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, VA. [http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dnh/ncintro.htm]
- Fleming, G. P., and K. D. Patterson. 2011a. Natural communities of Virginia: Ecological groups and community types. Natural Heritage Technical Report 11-07. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond. 34 pp.
- Fleming, G. P., and P. P. Coulling. 2001. Ecological communities of the George Washington and Jefferson national forests, Virginia. Preliminary classification and description of vegetation types. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, VA. 317 pp.
- Fleming, Gary P. Personal communication. Ecologist, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, VA.

Primary Concept Source: G. Fleming
Author of Description: G. Fleming
Acknowledgments:
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