

## TEXAS-LOUISIANA COASTAL PRAIRIE

**Nature Serve ID:** CES203.550

**Geology:** This system is generally coincident with the distribution of the Pleistocene Beaumont and Lissie Formations.

**Landform:** Usually on level to gently rolling landscapes, with slopes generally less than 5%. Microtopography plays an important role in local variation in the system, with ridges, swales, mounds, depressions, mima (or pimple) mounds, and gilgai leading to a mosaic of drier and wetter plant communities.

**Soils:** Non-saline Vertisols, Alfisols, and (less extensively) Mollisols. Vertisols are often characterized by gilgai, resulting from shrink-swell attributes of the montmorillonitic clays of which they are composed. The Alfisols have a loamy surface with clayey subsoils.

**Description:** This mid- to tallgrass prairie occupies Pleistocene surfaces of the Texas and Louisiana coast, on non-saline soils of level to gently rolling topography. It is dominated by graminoid species, such as *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indiangrass), *Paspalum plicatulum* (brownseed paspalum), *Panicum virgatum* (switchgrass), *Andropogon gerardii* (big bluestem), *Sporobolus compositus* (tall dropseed), *Paspalum setaceum* (thin paspalum), *Fimbristylis puberula* (hairy fimbry), *Dichanthelium oligosanthes* (fewflower panicgrass), *Rhynchospora* spp. (beaksedges), *Paspalum floridanum* (Florida paspalum), *Muhlenbergia capillaris* (Gulf muhly), *Tridens strictus* (longspike tridens), *Bouteloua curtipendula* (sideoats grama), *Andropogon glomeratus* (bushy bluestem), and *Tripsacum dactyloides* (eastern gamagrass). *Axonopus* spp. (carpetgrasses), *Sporobolus indicus* (rat-tail smutgrass), *Andropogon virginicus* (broomsedge bluestem), *Bothriochloa laguroides* ssp. *torreyana* (silver bluestem), and *Nassella leucotricha* (Texas wintergrass) may be particularly noticeable on over-grazed sites. Non-native graminoids that may be conspicuous to dominant components include *Cynodon dactylon* (bermudagrass), *Cyperus entrerianus* (deep-rooted sedge), *Bothriochloa ischaemum* var. *songarica* (King Ranch bluestem), *Dichanthium* spp. (old world bluestems), *Lolium perenne* (Italian ryegrass), *Schedonorus phoenix* (tall fescue), *Paspalum notatum* (bahiagrass), and *Paspalum dilatatum* (dallisgrass). Forbs that may often be encountered include *Liatis* spp. (gayfeathers), *Sabatia campestris* (meadow pink), *Ambrosia psilostachya* (western ragweed), *Euphorbia bicolor* (snow-on-the-prairie), *Solidago* spp. (goldenrods), *Rudbeckia hirta* (blackeyed Susan), *Ruellia humilis* (low wild petunia), *Asclepias viridis* (green milkweed), *Chamaecrista fasciculata* (partridge pea), *Helianthus angustifolius* (narrowleaf sunflower), *Euthamia* spp. (goldentops), *Ratibida columnifera* (Mexican hat), *Symphotrichum ericoides* (heath aster), *Silphium laciniatum* (compassplant), *Baptisia* spp. (wild indigos), *Iva angustifolia* (narrowleaf sumpweed), *Eryngium yuccifolium* (button snakeroot), *Boltonia diffusa* (smallhead doll's daisy), and *Neptunia lutea* (yellow neptunia). Woody species may invade this typically herbaceous vegetation, including *Rosa bracteata* (Macartney rose), *Acacia farnesiana* (huisache), *Triadica sebifera* (Chinese tallow), *Baccharis halimifolia* (baccharis), *Celtis laevigata* (sugar hackberry), and *Prosopis glandulosa* (honey mesquite).

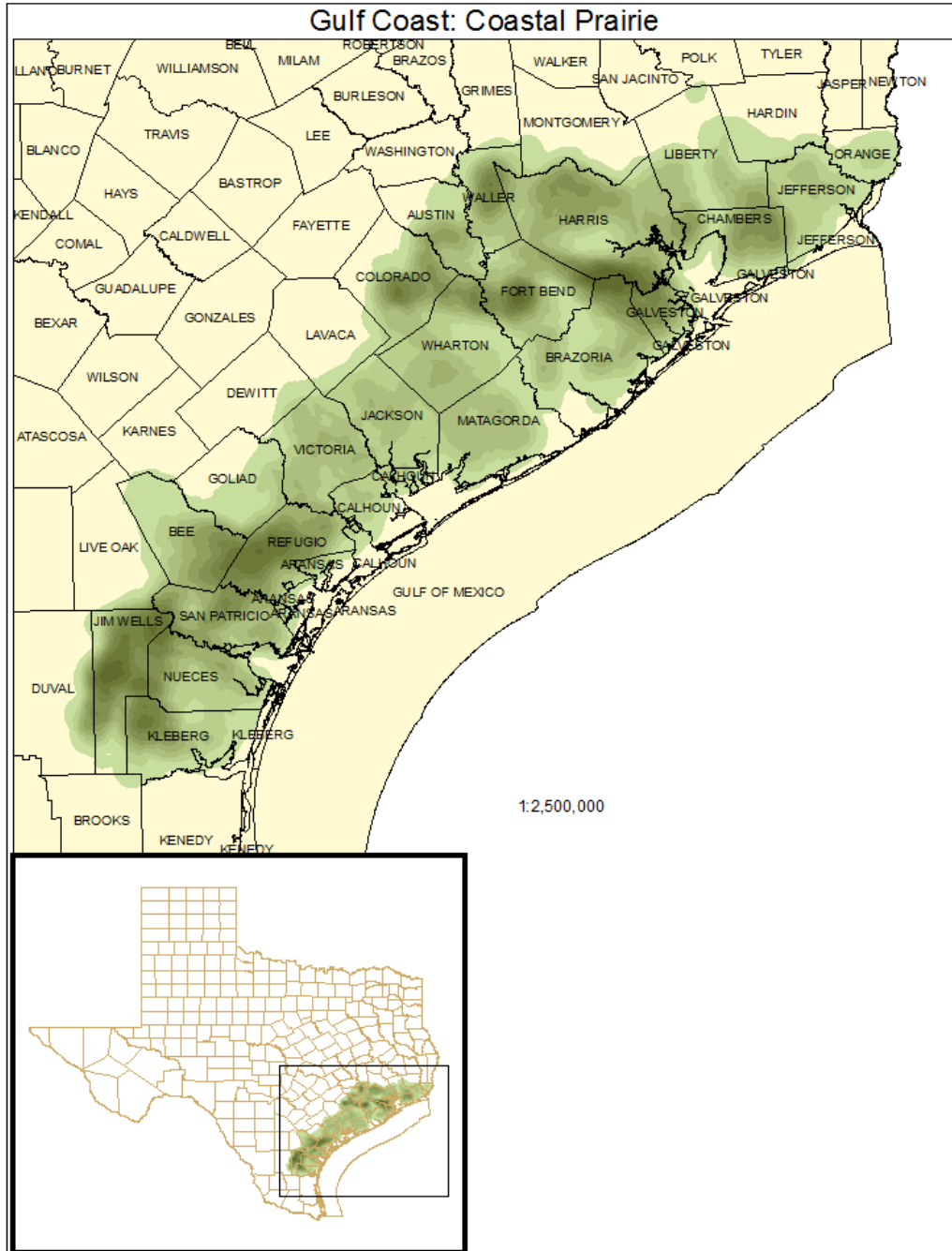
**ECOLOGICAL MAPPING SYSTEMS:**

**GULF COAST: COASTAL PRAIRIE**

**Mapping System ID:** 5207

**EMS Description:** As described for system.

**Distribution Map:**



**Example:****Public Land Occurrence:**

Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Aransas National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Armand Bayou Nature Center

Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Brazos Bend State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

D. R. Wintermann Wildlife Management Area: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Lake Corpus Christi State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Lake Texana: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service

Sheldon Lake State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Welder Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service