Vegetation Monitoring at Four Northwest Florida Water Management District Mitigation Sites Fall 2016

Ann F. Johnson Gary E. Schultz Frank Price

December 2016

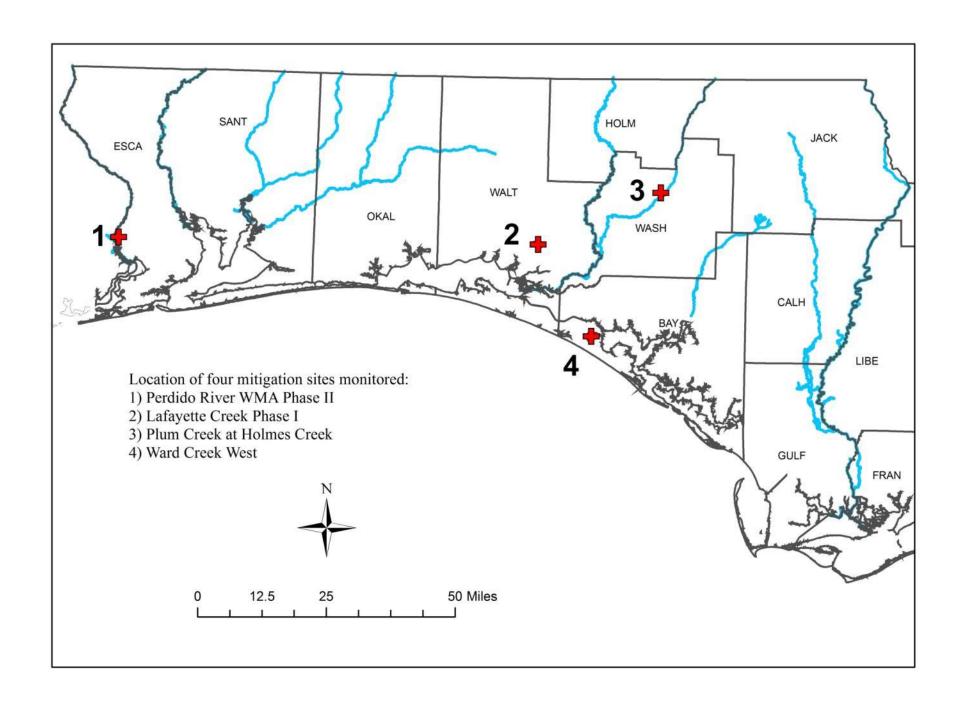
Florida Natural Area Inventory 1018 Thomasville Road, Suite 200-C Tallahassee, FL 32303 Dan Hipes, Director

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This document contains separate qualitative and quantitative vegetation monitoring reports for four mitigation sites managed by the Northwest Florida Water Management District:

- 1) Perdido River Water Management Area Phase II in Escambia County
- 2) Lafayette Creek Phase I in Walton County
- 3) Plum Creek at Holmes Creek in Washington County
- 4) Ward Creek West in Bay County.

Except for the genus *Dichanthelium*, taxonomy follows Wunderlin, R. P., B.F. Hanen, A.R. Franck, and F.B. Essig. 2016. Atlas of Florida Plants (htpp://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/), Institute for Systematic Botany, University of South Florida, Tampa. *Dichanthelium* follows the 2012 treatment by Freckman and Lelong in the Flora of North America (http://herbarium.usu.edu/treatments/Dichanthelium.htm#Dichanthelium).



Ward Creek West Mitigation Site

Qualitative and Quantitative Monitoring

December 2016

Ward Creek West Mitigation Site Qualitative and Quantitative Monitoring December 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Ward Creek West Mitigation Site consists of 724 acres in Bay County managed by the Northwest Florida Water Management District. It is located 0.5 mile west of SR 79 and 2.5 miles north of the junction of SR 79 and US 98. The Ward Creek West Mitigation Project aims to restore hydric pine flatwoods (HPF) and hydric pine savanna (HPS) which had been converted to slash pine plantation, as well as to convert portions of the mixed forested wetlands to cypress (CY; Figure WC-1). Quantitative and qualitative monitoring was used to document the current plant species composition and vegetation structure of these targeted communities. The site vegetation was previously monitored by FNAI biologists during the fall from 2012 through 2015.

METHODS

The quantitative monitoring utilized 300-foot-long permanent transect lines previously marked during the 2012 survey. In 2013, metal T-posts were placed at each end of the transects to provide permanent reference points. Two transects were located in both the hydric pine flatwoods and hydric pine savanna areas (Figure WC-1). Data recorded consisted of the visually estimated percent cover of each plant species found in fifteen separate 1-meter square quadrats. Tree trunks in quadrats were noted in comments but not recorded as cover; canopy over 2 m in height was also not recorded as cover in quadrats. The quadrats were located to the left side of the transect line 20 feet apart, starting at the 0 point and ending at 280 feet. The qualitative monitoring consisted of recording the species and vegetation structure observed along meandering pedestrian transects through each of the two target communities plus the cypress area. The field surveys were performed by FNAI botanist Ann Johnson on October 24-26, 2016.



Figure WC-1. Location of permanent transects at Ward Creek West Mitigation Site. CY=Cypress, UP=Upland Pine, HPF=Hydric Pine Flatwoods, HPS=Hydric Pine Savanna, GS=Gum Swamp.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 138 plant species were recorded during 2016 monitoring session in the target communities at Ward Creek West (Table WC-1).

Table WC-1. Plant species observed in the target communities at Ward Creek West Mitigation Site on October 24-26, 2016.

Scientific Name	Common Name	cypress	hydric pine flatwoods	hydric pine savanna	Grand Total
Acer rubrum	red maple	Х	Х		2
Agalinis fasciculata	beach false foxglove		Х		1
Andropogon arctatus	pinewoods bluestem		Х		1
Andropogon glomeratus	bushy bluestem		Х		1
Andropogon glomeratus var. glaucopsis	purple bluestem		Х	Х	2
Andropogon gyrans var. stenophyllus	Elliott's bluestem			Х	1
Andropogon virginicus	broomsedge bluestem		Х	Х	2
Andropogon virginicus var. glaucus	chalky bluestem		Х	Х	2
Anthaenantia rufa	purple silkyscale		Х		1
Aristida spiciformis	bottlebrush threeawn		Х		1
Aristida stricta var. beyrichiana	wiregrass		Х	Х	2
Balduina angustifolia	coastalplain honeycomb-head		Х		1
Bartonia virginica	yellow screwstem			Х	1
Bidens mitis	smallfruit beggarticks		Х		1
Bigelowia nudata	pineland rayless goldenrod				1
Calamovilfa curtissii	Curtiss' sandgrass			Х	1
Carex striata	Walter's sedge		Х		1
Carphephorus odoratissimus	vanillaleaf		Х		1
Centella asiatica	spadeleaf		Х		1
Chamaecrista fasciculata	partridge pea		Х		1
Chrysopsis lanuginosa	Lynn Haven goldenaster		Х	Х	2
Clethra alnifolia	sweet pepperbush	Х	Х		2
Cliftonia monophylla	black titi	Х	Х	Х	3
Coreopsis floridana	Florida tickseed		Х		1
Ctenium aromaticum	toothache grass			Х	1
Cyrilla racemiflora	titi	Х	Х	Х	3
Dichanthelium aciculare	needleleaf witchgrass		Х		1
Dichanthelium acuminatum var. longiligulatum	tapered witchgrass			Х	1
Dichanthelium commutatum	variable witchgrass		Х		1
Dichanthelium ensifolium	cypress witchgrass		Х		1
Dichanthelium portoricense	hemlock witchgrass		Х		1

Scientific Name	Common Name	cypress	hydric pine flatwoods	hydric pine savanna	Grand Total
Dichanthelium scabriusculum	woolly witchgrass		Х		1
Dichanthelium sp.	witchgrass		Х	Х	2
Dichanthelium strigosum	roughhair witchgrass		Х		1
Drosera capillaris	pink sundew		Х	Х	2
Eriocaulon decangulare	tenangle pipewort		Х	Х	2
Eupatorium capillifolium	dogfennel		Х		1
Eupatorium leucolepis	justiceweed			Х	1
Eupatorium mohrii	Mohr's thoroughwort		Х	Х	2
Euthamia caroliniana	slender flattop goldenrod		Х	Х	2
Fuirena breviseta	saltmarsh umbrellasedge		Х		1
Fuirena scirpoidea	southern umbrellasedge		Х		1
Gaylussacia dumosa	dwarf huckleberry		Х		1
Gaylussacia frondosa var. tomentosa	blue huckleberry		Х		1
Helianthus angustifolius	narrowleaf sunflower			Х	1
Hypericum brachyphyllum	coastalplain St. John's wort		Х	Х	2
Hypericum cistifolium	roundpod St. John's wort		Х	Х	2
Hypericum fasciculatum	peelbark St. John's wort		Х	Х	2
Hypericum microsepalum	flatwoods St. John's wort		Х	Х	2
Hypericum tetrapetalum	fourpetal St. John's wort		Х	Х	2
Ilex cassine var. myrtifolia	myrtle-leaved holly		Х		1
Ilex coriacea	large gallberry	Х	Х	Х	3
Ilex glabra	gallberry		Х	Х	2
Ilex vomitoria	yaupon		Х	Х	2
Juncus scirpoides	needlepod rush		Х	Х	2
Juncus trigonocarpus	redpod rush		Х		1
Kalmia hirsuta	hairy wicky		Х	Х	2
Lachnanthes caroliana	Carolina redroot		Х	Х	2
Lachnocaulon anceps	whitehead bogbutton		Х	Х	2
Liatris spicata	dense gayfeather		Х		1
Lobelia brevifolia	shortleaf lobelia			Х	1
Lophiola aurea	golden crest		Х	Х	2
Ludwigia suffruticosa	shrubby primrosewillow		Х		1
Lycopodiella alopecuroides	foxtail club-moss			Х	1
Lycopodiella caroliniana	slender club-moss			Х	1
Lyonia ferruginea	rusty staggerbush		Х		1
Lyonia fruticosa	coastalplain staggerbush			Х	1
Lyonia lucida	fetterbush	Х	Х	Х	3

Scientific Name	Common Name	cypress	hydric pine flatwoods	hydric pine savanna	Grand Total
Magnolia virginiana	sweetbay	Х	Х		2
Myrica caroliniensis	evergreen bayberry	Х	Х		2
Nyssa ogeche	ogeechee tupelo	Х			1
Nyssa sylvatica var. biflora	swamp tupelo	Х			1
Nyssa ursina	bog tupelo		Х	Х	2
Oldenlandia uniflora	clustered mille graines			Х	1
Onoclea sensibilis	sensitive fern		Х		1
Osmunda cinnamomea	cinnamon fern		Х		1
Oxypolis filiformis	water cowbane		Х		1
Panicum hians	gaping panicum		Х		1
Panicum longifolium	panicum		Х		1
Panicum verrucosum	warty panicgrass		Х	Х	2
Panicum virgatum	switchgrass			Х	1
Photinia pyrifolia	red chokeberry		Х		1
Pinus elliottii	slash pine	Х	Х	Х	3
Pinus serotina	pond pine		Х		1
Pityopsis graminifolia	narrowleaf silkgrass		Х		1
Pluchea foetida	stinking camphorweed			Х	1
Polygala brevifolia	littleleaf milkwort			Х	1
Polygala lutea	orange milkwort		Х		1
Polygonella gracilis	tall jointweed		Х		1
Proserpinaca pectinata	combleaf mermaidweed		Х		1
Pteridium aquilinum	bracken fern		Х	Х	2
Pterocaulon pycnostachyum	blackroot		Х		1
Quercus minima	dwarf live oak		Х		1
Rhexia alifanus	savannah meadowbeauty		Х		1
Rhexia mariana	pale meadowbeauty		Х		1
Rhexia petiolata	fringed meadowbeauty	1	Х	Х	2
Rhexia virginica	handsome harry		Х	Х	2
Rhus copallinum	winged sumac		Х		1
Rhynchospora cephalantha	bunched beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora chalarocephala	loosehead beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora chapmanii	Chapman's beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora compressa	flatfruit beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora corniculata	shortbristle horned beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora fascicularis	fascicled beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora gracilenta	slender beaksedge	1		Х	1

Scientific Name	Common Name	cypress	hydric pine flatwoods	hydric pine savanna	Grand Total
Rhynchospora microcephala	bunched beaksedge			Х	1
Rhynchospora plumosa	plumed beaksedge		Х	Х	2
Rhynchospora sp.	beaksedge			Х	1
Rubus cuneifolius	sand blackberry		Х		1
Sabatia brevifolia	shortleaf rosegentian		Х	Х	2
Saccharum giganteum	sugarcane plumegrass		Х	Х	2
Sarracenia flava	yellow pitcherplant			Х	1
Sarracenia psittacina	parrot pitcherplant			Х	1
Sarracenia rubra	sweet pitcherplant			Х	1
Scleria reticularis	netted nutrush			Х	1
Serenoa repens	saw palmetto	Х	Х		2
Smilax auriculata	earleaf greenbrier		Х		1
Smilax glauca	cat greenbrier		Х		1
Smilax laurifolia	laurel greenbrier	Х	Х	Х	3
Solidago fistulosa	pinebarren goldenrod		Х	Х	2
Sphagnum sp.	sphagnum moss	Х	Х	Х	3
Sporobolus floridanus	Florida dropseed			Х	1
Stillingia aquatica	water toothleaf		Х		1
Syngonanthus flavidulus	yellow hatpins			Х	1
Taxodium ascendens	pond cypress	Х			1
unknown graminoid	unknown graminoid		Х	Х	2
Vaccinium corymbosum	highbush blueberry		Х		1
Vaccinium darrowii	Darrow's blueberry		Х		1
Vaccinium myrsinites	shiny blueberry		Х		1
Vitis rotundifolia	muscadine	Х	Х	Х	3
Woodwardia virginica	Virginia chain fern		Х		1
Xyris ambigua	coastalplain yellow-eyed grass		Х	Х	2
Xyris brevifolia	shortleaf yellow-eyed grass		Х	Х	2
Xyris caroliniana	Carolina yellow-eyed grass		Х		1
Xyris elliottii	Elliott's yellow-eyed grass		Х	Х	2
Xyris fimbriata	fringed yellow-eyed grass		Х	Х	2
Xyris flabelliformis	savannah yellow-eyed grass			Х	1
Xyris stricta	pineland yellow-eyed grass		Х	Х	2
Total number of species: 138		16	110	76	202

Hydric Pine Flatwoods

Qualitative sampling. The hydric pine flatwoods areas had been disturbed in the past few years by the silviculture action of thinning of the mature planted slash pines. The soil was currently moist to dry, but old machinery ruts were evident. The open canopy of mature slash pines covered a variously dense shrub layer. The area near the western Transect 1 had been bedded years ago when the pines were planted. This area had a moderately dense shrub stratum and an herbaceous layer composed primarily of purple bluestem. The eastern section had more saw palmetto and gallberry and a diverse herbaceous cover with scattered wiregrass and beaksedges. The total number of species observed in this community was 110 (Table WC-1).

Quantitative sampling. The western Transect 1 (Table WC-2, Figure WC-2) had a total of 19 species with 50% bare ground. Purple bluestem contributed the most cover, followed by woody species (large gallberry and black titi, rusty staggerbush, and slash pine seedlings). The eastern Transect 2 (Table WC-3, Figure WC-3) had a total of 42 species with 45% bare ground. The vegetation was more diverse than in Transect 1. Shrubby species contributed most of the cover, primarily dwarf live oak and saw palmetto, with lesser amounts of gallberry and large gallberry. Purple bluestem made up most of the sparse herbaceous cover, with lesser amounts of shortleaf yellow-eyed grass and fascicled beaksedge.

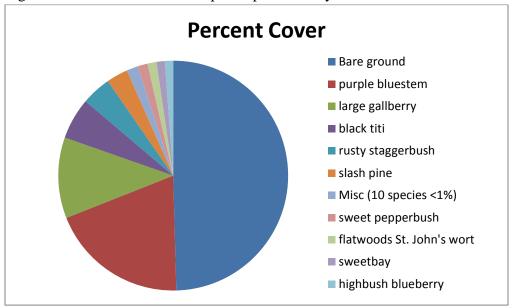


Figure WC-2. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Flatwoods Transect 1.

Table WC-2. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Flatwoods Transect 1 when sampled on October 25, 2016.

		Average percent cover per
Scientific name	Common name	quadrat
Andropogon glomeratus var. glaucopsis	purple bluestem	19.43
Ilex coriacea	large gallberry	11.37
Cliftonia monophylla	black titi	5.83
Lyonia ferruginea	rusty staggerbush	4.17
Pinus elliottii	slash pine	3.03
Clethra alnifolia	sweet pepperbush	1.40
Hypericum microsepalum	flatwoods St. John's wort	1.27
Magnolia virginiana	sweetbay	1.17
Vaccinium corymbosum	highbush blueberry	1.17
Serenoa repens	saw palmetto	0.53
Smilax laurifolia	laurel greenbrier	0.37
Vitis rotundifolia	muscadine	0.20
Rhynchospora chapmanii	Chapman's beaksedge	0.13
Polygala lutea	orange milkwort	0.10
Rhexia petiolata	fringed meadowbeauty	0.10
Rhynchospora fascicularis	fascicled beaksedge	0.07
Rhynchospora cephalantha	bunched beaksedge	0.03
Rhynchospora chalarocephala	loosehead beaksedge	0.03
Xyris ambigua	coastalplain yellow-eyed	0.03
	Bare ground	49.57

Figure WC-3. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Flatwoods Transect 2.

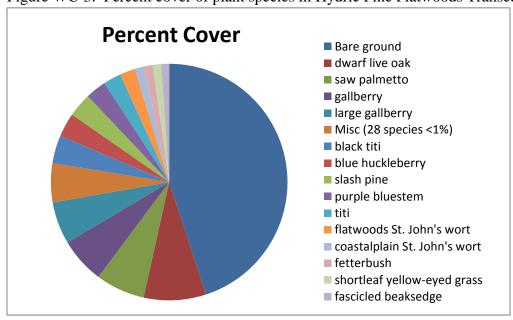


Table WC-3. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Flatwoods Transect 2 when sampled on October 26, 2016.

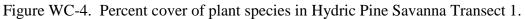
Scientific name	Common name	Average percent cover per quadrat
Quercus minima	dwarf live oak	8.50
Serenoa repens	saw palmetto	6.73
llex glabra	gallberry	6.27
llex coriacea	large gallberry	5.77
Cliftonia monophylla	black titi	3.83
Gaylussacia frondosa var. tomentosa	blue huckleberry	3.27
Pinus elliottii	slash pine	3.27
Andropogon glomeratus var. glaucopsis	purple bluestem	2.83
Cyrilla racemiflora	titi	2.43
Hypericum microsepalum	flatwoods St. John's wort	2.10
Hypericum brachyphyllum	coastalplain St. John's wort	1.27
Lyonia lucida	fetterbush	1.20
Xyris brevifolia	shortleaf yellow-eyed grass	1.17
Rhynchospora fascicularis	fascicled beaksedge	1.07
Sphagnum sp.	sphagnum moss	0.63
Panicum hians	gaping panicum	0.50
Panicum verrucosum	warty panicgrass	0.50
Rhynchospora cephalantha	bunched beaksedge	0.50
Xyris ambigua	coastalplain yellow-eyed grass	0.50
Rhynchospora plumosa	plumed beaksedge	0.40
Dichanthelium ensifolium	cypress witchgrass	0.33
Vaccinium myrsinites	shiny blueberry	0.33
Carphephorus odoratissimus	vanillaleaf	0.20
Lachnocaulon anceps	whitehead bogbutton	0.20
unknown graminoid	unknown graminoid	0.17
Vaccinium corymbosum	highbush blueberry	0.13
Vitis rotundifolia	muscadine	0.13
Andropogon virginicus	broomsedge bluestem	0.10
Hypericum tetrapetalum	fourpetal St. John's wort	0.10
Rhynchospora chalarocephala	loosehead beaksedge	0.10
Smilax laurifolia	laurel greenbrier	0.10
Dichanthelium portoricense	hemlock witchgrass	0.07
Aristida stricta var. beyrichiana	wiregrass	0.03
Dichanthelium sp.	witchgrass	0.03
Dichanthelium strigosum	roughhair witchgrass	0.03
Gaylussacia dumosa	dwarf huckleberry	0.03
Lachnanthes caroliana	Carolina redroot	0.03
Photinia pyrifolia	red chokeberry	0.03
Rhynchospora chapmanii	Chapman's beaksedge	0.03

		Average percent cover per
Scientific name	Common name	quadrat
Smilax auriculata	earleaf greenbrier	0.03
Vaccinium darrowii	Darrow's blueberry	0.03
Xyris caroliniana	Carolina yellow-eyed grass	0.03
	Bare ground	44.97

Hydric Pine Savanna

Qualitative sampling. The hydric pine savanna restoration area was highly disturbed by past silviculture operations. The pines have been harvested and the vegetative cover currently consists of a dense, tall stand of purple bluestem with scattered clumps of wiregrass intermixed. Widely scattered young slash pine and pond cypress and shrub clumps of fetterbush, titi and black titi occur throughout. The soil was dry at the time of sampling except in a few lower pockets with standing water. A total of four large clumps of Curtiss' sandgrass (*Calamovilfa curtissii*), listed as threatened by the state, were found in this community at two different sites. The total number of plant species observed in this community was 76 (Table WC-1).

Quantitative sampling. Transect 1 (Table WC-4, Figure WC-4) had a total of 36 species and 20% bare ground. Groundcover was heavily dominated by purple bluestem, followed by the shrubs, peelbark St. John's wort, fetterbush, and black titi. Other herbs contributed small amounts of cover in the wetter portions including Elliott's yelloweyed grass, Carolina redroot, and fascicled beaksedge. Transect 2 (Table WC-5, Figure WC-5) had a total of 28 species and 31% bare ground. The vegetation was dominated by purple bluestem followed by shrubby species, primarily black titi, peelbark St. Johns wort, and fetterbush. The next most abundant herbaceous species, comprising less than two percent of the cover, were wiregrass, tenangle pipewort, and plumed beaksedge.



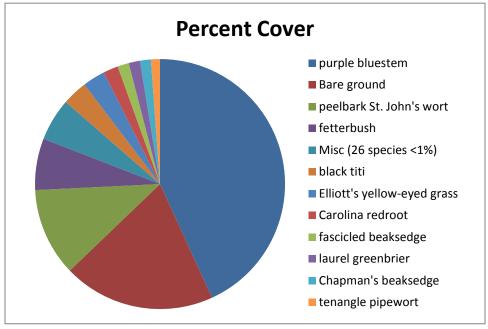
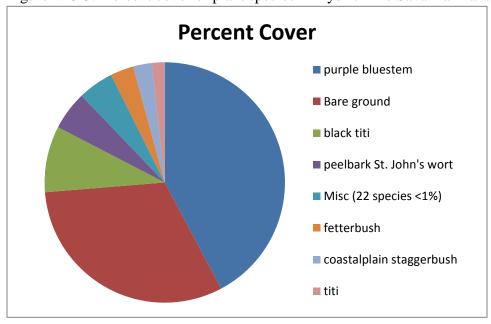


Table WC-4. Percent cover of species in Hydric Pine Savanna Transect 1 when sampled on October 24, 2016.

	Aver	age percent cover per
Scientific name	Common name	quadrat
Andropogon glomeratus var. glaucopsis	purple bluestem	43.17
Hypericum fasciculatum	peelbark St. John's wort	11.40
Lyonia lucida	fetterbush	6.67
Cliftonia monophylla	black titi	3.27
Xyris elliottii	Elliott's yellow-eyed grass	2.90
Lachnanthes caroliana	Carolina redroot	1.93
Rhynchospora fascicularis	fascicled beaksedge	1.47
Smilax laurifolia	laurel greenbrier	1.47
Rhynchospora chapmanii	Chapman's beaksedge	1.40
Eriocaulon decangulare	tenangle pipewort	1.17
Cyrilla racemiflora	titi	0.67
Pinus elliottii	slash pine	0.63
Andropogon virginicus	broomsedge bluestem	0.50
Ilex coriacea	large gallberry	0.50
Xyris brevifolia	shortleaf yellow-eyed grass	0.40
unknown graminoid	unknown graminoid	0.37
Aristida stricta var. beyrichiana	wiregrass	0.33
Euthamia caroliniana	slender flattop goldenrod	0.23
Hypericum brachyphyllum	coastalplain St. John's wort	0.23
Ilex glabra	gallberry	0.23
Andropogon virginicus var. glaucus	chalky bluestem	0.20

Figure WC-5. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Savanna Transect 2.

Bare ground



19.67

Table WC-5. Percent cover of plant species in Hydric Pine Savanna Transect 2 when sampled on October 25, 2016.

Scientific name	Common name	Average percent cover per quadrat
Andropogon glomeratus var. glaucopsis	purple bluestem	42.23
Cliftonia monophylla	black titi	8.90
Hypericum fasciculatum	peelbark St. John's wort	5.23
Lyonia lucida	fetterbush	3.13
Lyonia fruticosa	coastalplain staggerbush	2.50
Cyrilla racemiflora	titi	1.73
Smilax laurifolia	laurel greenbrier	0.63
Aristida stricta var. beyrichiana	wiregrass	0.50
Eriocaulon decangulare	tenangle pipewort	0.50
Rhynchospora plumosa	plumed beaksedge	0.50
Andropogon virginicus	broomsedge bluestem	0.33
Hypericum brachyphyllum	coastalplain St. John's wort	0.33
Lachnanthes caroliana	Carolina redroot	0.27
Pinus elliottii	slash pine	0.27
Rhynchospora chalarocephala	loosehead beaksedge	0.27
Ilex vomitoria	yaupon	0.23
Kalmia hirsuta	hairy wicky	0.23
Euthamia caroliniana	slender flattop goldenrod	0.13
Xyris ambigua	coastalplain yellow-eyed grass	0.13
Dichanthelium sp.	witchgrass	0.10
Xyris elliottii	Elliott's yellow-eyed grass	0.10
Lycopodiella alopecuroides	foxtail club-moss	0.07
Lachnocaulon anceps	whitehead bogbutton	0.03
Pluchea foetida	stinking camphorweed	0.03
Pteridium aquilinum	bracken fern	0.03
Rhexia petiolata	fringed meadowbeauty	0.03
Sabatia brevifolia	shortleaf rosegentian	0.03
Xyris flabelliformis	savannah yellow-eyed grass	0.03
	Bare ground	31.47

Cypress

Qualitative sampling. The cypress areas occurred along drainage channels with a dense evergreen canopy on the edges composed of black titi and big gallberry and a canopy of taller deciduous species, mainly Ogeechee tupelo and pond cypress in the center. The sparse shrub layer under the canopy consisted of widely scattered fetterbush, titi, and evergreen bayberry. Herbs were very infrequent. At the time of 2016 sampling, the ground was dry. Total number of species observed in this community was 16 (Table WC-1).