

***Carex magellanica* Lamarck ssp. *irrigua* (Wahlenberg)
Hiitonen
boreal bog sedge
Cyperaceae (Sedge Family)**

Status: State Sensitive

Rank: G5T5S2S3

General Description: Adapted from FNA (2002): This perennial, rhizomatous sedge is 4 to 31½ in. (10 to 80 cm) high. The leaf blades are 1/32 to 1/8 in. (1 to 4 mm) wide. The leaf blade margins are roughened and rolled downward. The inflorescences have bracts that equal or exceed the inflorescences. The lateral spikes, at least the ones near the point of attachment, usually have 1 to 3 staminate flowers at the base, are ¼ to ¾ in. (6 to 22 mm) long, 1/8 to ¼ in. (4 to 8 mm) wide, and contain 5 to 20 perigynia (female flowers). The terminal spikes occasionally have both staminate and pistillate flowers in the same spike, with the pistillate flowers arranged below the staminate flowers. The pistillate scales are lanceolate, longer and narrower than the perigynia, with an acute tip that is often awned to 3 mm. The staminate scales are oblanceolate to obovate with a rounded to pointed tip. The perigynium is 1/8 in. (2.5 to 3.6 mm) long and 1/16 to 1/8 in. (1.8 to 2.5 mm) wide with a rounded tip. The beak of the perigynium is absent or up to 0.2 mm.

Identification Tips: *Carex magellanica* ssp. *irrigua* is most closely related to *Carex limosa*. These two species can be distinguished by the nature of their culms, pistillate scales, and leaf blade margins. Most of the culms of *C. magellanica* ssp. *irrigua* have dead leaf remains at the base, its pistillate scales are 1/32 to 1/16 in. (1.2 to 2 mm) wide and narrower than the perigynia, and its leaf blade margins are rolled downward. Most of the culms of *C. limosa* lack dead leaf remains at their base, its pistillate scales are 1/16 to 1/8 in. (2 to 3.8 mm) wide and wider than the perigynia, and its leaf blade margins are rolled or turned in over the upper surface. A technical key is needed to distinguish the taxa.

Phenology: In Washington *C. magellanica* ssp. *irrigua* has been identified from June to September.

Range: This taxon is found throughout Canada, Eurasia, Greenland, Alaska, and the northern U.S. In Washington, *C. magellanica* ssp. *irrigua* has been seen in Pend Oreille, Okanogan, Whatcom, Skagit, Chelan, and Stevens counties.

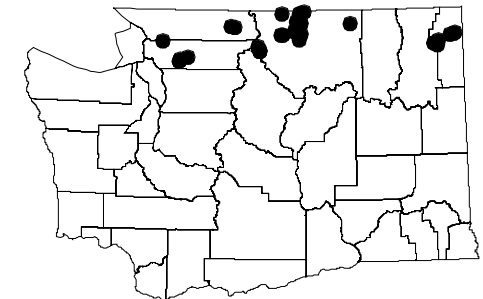
Habitat: In Washington, this taxon has been found in fens, bogs, shady wet meadows, shrub wetlands, and marshes, often growing

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Known distribution
of *Carex magellanica*
ssp. *irrigua*
in Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

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Dana Visalli



Dana Visalli

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in peat soil, at 1640 to 7000 ft (500 to 2134 m) elevation. Associated species include sphagnum, sedges (*Carex* spp.), tall cottongrass (*Eriophorum polystachion*), woodrush (*Luzula* sp.), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), rose spirea (*Spiraea douglasii*), Sitka alder (*Alnus sinuata*), prickly currant (*Ribes lacustre*), thinleaf huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*), strawberryleaf raspberry (*Rubus pedatus*), largeleaf avens (*Geum macrophyllum*), purple marshlocks (*Potentilla palustris*), elephanthead lousewort (*Pedicularis groenlandica*), western Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), roundleaf sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), pioneer violet (*Viola glabella*), willows (*Salix* spp.), and rushes (*Juncus* spp.).

Ecology: This taxon, which is rhizomatous and grows in loose clumps, prefers wet areas at mid to high elevations.

State Status Comments: This taxon is known from less than 40 occurrences in Washington and most sites occur on National Forest land.

Inventory Needs: Marshes, bogs, fens, wet meadows and swampy areas in Pend Oreille, Okanogan, Whatcom, Skagit, Chelan, and Stevens counties should be systematically surveyed for additional populations.

Threats and Management Concerns: Any activity that alters the hydrology of sites could affect the species.

Comments: Hitchcock *et al.* (1969) refers to *Carex magellanica* ssp. *irrigua* as *Carex paupercula*.

References:

Flora of North America Editorial Committee eds. 2002. *Flora of North America North of Mexico* Volume 23: *Magnoliophyta*:

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, J.W. Thompson. 1969. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest Part 1: Vascular Cryptogams, Gymnosperms, and Monocotyledons*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. 914 pp.