FNAI 2010 NATURAL COMMUNITY SHORT DESCRIPTIONS

HARDWOOD FORESTED UPLANDS – mesic or xeric forest dominated mainly by hardwood trees.

Slope Forest (G2?/S1) – steep slope on bluff or in sheltered ravine within the Apalachicola drainage; sand/clay substrate; mesic-hydric; central Panhandle; rare or no fire; closed canopy of mainly deciduous species; American beech, Florida maple, white oak, Ashe's magnolia, southern magnolia, spruce pine, Shumard's oak.

Upland Hardwood Forest (G5/S3) – upland with sand/clay and/or calcareous substrate; mesic; Panhandle to central peninsula; rare or no fire; closed deciduous or mixed deciduous/evergreen canopy; American beech, southern magnolia, hackberry, swamp chestnut oak, white oak, horse sugar, flowering dogwood, and mixed hardwoods.

DRY UPLAND HARDWOOD FOREST – on dry slopes or along upper slopes with sand/clay substrate; mesic; temperate; rare fire; closed canopy; laurel oak and/or live oak and/or pignut hickory, southern magnolia, shortleaf pine, loblolly pine, and/or mixed hardwoods.

Mesic Hammock (G3/S3?) – flatland with sand/organic soil; mesic; primarily central peninsula; occasional or rare fire; closed evergreen canopy; live oak, cabbage palm, southern magnolia, pignut hickory, saw palmetto.

PRAIRIE MESIC HAMMOCK – Isolated stands within a matrix of pyrogenic vegetation; occasional fire; live oak, cabbage palm, saw palmetto.

Rockland Hammock (G2/S2) – flatland with limestone substrate; mesic; southern peninsula and Keys; rare or no fire; closed canopy of evergreen mixed tropical hardwoods; gumbo limbo, pigeon plum, stoppers.

THORN SCRUB – along ecotones or within openings in rockland hammock; low-statured; dominated by spiny species; saffron plum, blackbead, hog plum, buttonwood, plus other common rockland hammock species.

Xeric Hammock (G3/S3) – upland with deep sand substrate; xeric; primarily eastern Panhandle to central peninsula; rare or no fire; closed canopy of evergreen hardwoods; sand live oak, saw palmetto.

HIGH PINE AND SCRUB – hills with mesic or xeric woodlands or shrublands; canopy, if present, open and consisting of pine or a mixture of pine and deciduous hardwoods.

Upland Mixed Woodland (G2/S2) – upland with loamy soils; mesic-xeric; central Panhandle to extreme northern central peninsula; occasional fire (variable but as little as two up to 20 year interval); open to partially closed canopy over an open understory of mixed herbs and scattered shrubs; mixture of southern red oak, mockernut hickory, and longleaf or shortleaf pine with other mixed hardwoods; wiregrass infrequent.

Upland Pine (G3/S2) – upland with sand/clay substrate; mesic-xeric; Panhandle to extreme northern central peninsula; frequent fire (1-3 years); savanna of widely spaced pines over primarily herbaceous understory; longleaf pine and/or loblolly pine and/or shortleaf pine, southern red oak, wiregrass.

Sandhill (G3/S2) – upland with deep sand substrate; xeric; Panhandle to central peninsula; frequent fire (1-3 years); savanna of widely spaced longleaf pine and/or turkey oak with wiregrass understory.

Scrub (G2/S2) – upland with deep sand substrate; xeric; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys, mainly coastal in Panhandle; occasional or rare fire (usually 5-20 years); open or dense shrubs with or without pine canopy; sand pine and/or scrub oaks and/or Florida rosemary.

ROSEMARY SCRUB – on the driest ridge crests, particularly at the southern end of the Lake Wales Ridge and on Panhandle barrier islands; occasional or rare fire (10-40 years); dominated by Florida rosemary with large areas of bare sand visible between the shrubs.

SAND PINE SCRUB – on ridges throughout the state; rare fire (20-80 years); canopy of sand pine and an understory of the three shrubby oaks, or less commonly, Florida rosemary.

PINE FLATWOODS AND DRY PRAIRIE – mesic or hydric pine woodland or mesic shrubland on flat sandy or limestone subtrates, may have a hard pan that impedes drainage.

Wet Flatwoods (G4/S4) – flatland with sand substrate; seasonally inundated; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys; frequent fire (2-4 years for grassy wet flatwoods, 5-10 years for shrubby wet flatwoods); closed to open pine canopy with grassy or shrubby understory; slash pine, pond pine, large gallberry, fetterbush, sweetbay, cabbage palm, wiregrass, toothache grass.

CUTTHROAT GRASS FLATWOODS – on and near the Lake Wales Ridge; frequent fire (2-4 years); widely scattered pines over cutthroat grass and/or other hydrophytic herbs.

CABBAGE PALM FLATWOODS – on shelly sand or where limestone is near the surface; central to southern peninsula; pine canopy over cabbage palm understory.

Mesic Flatwoods (G4/S4) – flatland with sand substrate; mesic; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys; frequent fire (2-4 years); open pine canopy with a layer of low shrubs and herbs; longleaf pine and/or slash pine, saw palmetto, gallberry, dwarf live oak, wiregrass.

Scrubby Flatwoods (G2/S2?) – flatland with sand substrate; xeric-mesic; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys; occasional fire (5-15 years); widely scattered pine canopy over saw palmetto and scrub oaks; longleaf pine, sand live oak, myrtle oak, Chapman's oak, saw palmetto, wiregrass.

Pine Rockland (G1/S1) – flatland with exposed limestone substrate; mesic-xeric; southern peninsula and Keys; frequent to occasional fire (3-7 years); open pine canopy with mixed shrubs and herbs in understory; South Florida slash pine, palms, mixed tropical and temperate shrubs, grasses, and herbs.

Dry Prairie (G2/S2) – flatland with sand soils over an organic or clay hardpan; mesic-xeric; central peninsula; annual or frequent fire (1-2 years); treeless with a low cover of shrubs and herbs; wiregrass, dwarf live oak, stunted saw palmetto, bottlebrush threeawn, broomsedge bluestem.

COASTAL UPLANDS – mesic or xeric communities restricted to barrier islands and near shore; woody or herbaceous vegetation; other communities may also occur in coastal environments.

Beach Dune (G3/S2) – active coastal dune with sand substrate; xeric; statewide; rare or no fire; marine influence; open herbaceous vegetation with no canopy; sea oats, railroad vine, bitter panicum, and/or mixed salt-spray tolerant grasses and herbs.

Coastal Berm (G3/S2) – old bar or storm debris with sand/shell substrate; xeric-mesic; southern peninsula and Keys; rare or no fire; marine influence; variable vegetation structure; mixed tropical herbs, shrubs, and trees.

Coastal Grassland (G3/S2) – coastal flatland behind dunes with stable sand substrate; mesic-hydric; statewide excluding Keys; occasional fire; marine influence; herbaceous vegetation with no canopy; salt-tolerant grasses and herbs; sea oats, bitter panicum, camphorweed, hairawn muhly, Gulf bluestem.

Coastal Strand (G3/S2) – stabilized coastal dune with sand substrate; xeric; peninsula; rare fire; marine influence; primarily dense shrubs; saw palmetto in temperate coastal strand or seagrape and/or saw palmetto in tropical coastal strand.

Maritime Hammock (G3/S2) – stabilized coastal dune with sand substrate; xeric-mesic; statewide but rare in Panhandle and Keys; rare or no fire; marine influence; evergreen closed canopy; live oak, cabbage palm, red bay, red cedar in temperate maritime hammock; gumbo limbo, seagrape, and white or Spanish stopper in tropical maritime hammock.

Shell Mound (G2/S2) – small hill of shells deposited by native Americans; mesic-xeric; statewide; rare or no fire; marine influence; closed canopy of mixed hardwoods; soapberry, snowberry, white stopper.

SINKHOLES AND OUTCROP COMMUNITIES – small extent communities in karst features or on exposed limestone.

Upland Glade (G1/S1) – upland with thin clay soils over limestone outcrops; hydric-xeric; central Panhandle only; sparse mixed grasses and herbs with occasional stunted trees and shrubs that are concentrated around the edge; black bogrush, poverty dropseed, diamondflowers, hairawn muhly, Boykin's polygala, red cedar.

Sinkhole (G2/S2) – karst feature with steep walls; mesic-hydric; statewide; variable vegetation structure.

Limestone Outcrop (G2/S2) – exposed limestone; mesic-hydric; statewide; often with mosses, liverworts, and a diversity of rare ferns.

Keys Cactus Barren (G1/S1) – small openings on flatland with exposed limestone; xeric; restricted to Keys; marine influence; open, herbaceous vegetation with some cacti, agave, and stunted trees; three-spined pricklypear, erect pricklypear, barbed wire cactus, Yucatan fly mallow, Florida Keys indigo, skyblue clustervine, dwarf bindweed.

FRESHWATER NON-FORESTED WETLANDS – herbaceous or shrubby palustrine communities in floodplains or depressions; canopy trees, if present, very sparse and often stunted.

PRAIRIES AND BOGS – short hydroperiod; dominated by grasses, sedges, and/or titi.

Seepage Slope (G2/S2) – on or at base of slope with loamy sand substrate; maintained by downslope seepage, usually saturated but rarely inundated; Panhandle and northern peninsula; frequent fire (1-3 years); dense herbaceous community; wiregrass, wiry beaksedges, flattened pipewort, toothache grass, pitcherplants.

Wet Prairie (G2/S2) – flatland with sand or clayey sand substrate; usually saturated but only occasionally inundated; statewide excluding extreme southern peninsula; frequent fire (2-3 years); treeless, dense herbaceous community with few shrubs; wiregrass, blue maidencane, cutthroat grass, wiry beaksedges, flattened pipewort, toothache grass, pitcherplants, coastalplain yellow-eyed grass.

CUTTHROAT SEEP – eastern and western edges of the Lake Wales Ridge in central Florida; dominated by the endemic cutthroat grass.

CALCAREOUS WET PRAIRIE – in central and south-central peninsula on calcareous soils; Gulf hairawn muhly typically dominant with other calcium-loving species.

PITCHERPLANT PRAIRIE – in the Panhandle on wetter soils; dense stands of tall pitcherplants.

Marl Prairie (G3/S3) – flatland with marl over limestone substrate; seasonally inundated (<4 months); southern peninsula; frequent to occasional fire (2-10 years depending on density of herbs); purple muhly, sawgrass (stunted), spreading beaksedge, black bogrush, Florida little bluestem, and/or mixed grasses, sometimes with dwarf cypress.

Shrub Bog (G4/S3) – wetland on organic soil over sand; soil often saturated and mucky, occasionally shallowly inundated; Panhandle to north peninsula; occasional fire (10-20 years); dense stand of shrubs, trees absent or sparse, sphagnum moss common; titi, black titi, fetterbush, large gallberry, laurel greenbrier, pond pine or slash pine.

MARSHES – long hydroperiod; dominated by grasses, sedges, broadleaf emergents, floating aquatics, or shrubs.

Depression Marsh (G4/S4) – small, isolated, often rounded depression in sand substrate with peat accumulating toward center; surrounded by fire-maintained community; seasonally inundated; still water; statewide excluding Keys; frequent or occasional fire; largely herbaceous; maidencane, sawgrass, pickerelweed, longleaf threeawn, sand cordgrass, peelbark St. John's wort.

Basin Marsh (G4/S3) – basin with peat or sand substrate; seasonally inundated; statewide excluding Keys; occasional fire; largely herbaceous; maidencane, sawgrass, bulltongue arrowhead, pickerelweed, Baker's cordgrass, white water lily, coastalplain willow.

LAKE BOTTOM – marshes on former lake bottoms of "disappearing" lakes in northern Florida, areas that alternate between lake and marsh when the sinkholes draining them are plugged or re-opened; well-known examples are Lake Miccosukee and Paynes Prairie.

Coastal Interdunal Swale (G3/S2) – linear wetlands between dunes on sandy barrier islands; inundated by local rainfall events; Panhandle to central peninsula; herbaceous or shrubby; sawgrass, hairawn muhly, broomsedge, seashore paspalum, Baker's cordgrass, saltmeadow cordgrass, wax myrtle, coastalplain willow.

Floodplain Marsh (G3/S3) – floodplain with organic/sand/alluvial substrate; seasonally inundated; Panhandle to central peninsula; frequent or occasional fire (ca. 3 years, much less frequent in freshwater tidal marshes); treeless herbaceous community with few shrubs; sawgrass, maidencane, sand cordgrass, and/or mixed emergents.

FRESHWATER TIDAL MARSH – river mouth wetland on organic/alluvial substrates; receives pulses of freshwater in response to tides; sawgrass, giant cutgrass.

Slough Marsh (G3?/S3?)– broad, shallow channel with sand/peat substrate; seasonally inundated; intermittently flowing water; central to southern peninsula; frequent or occasional fire (3-10 years); sawgrass, maidencane, pickerelweed, and/or mixed emergents.

Glades Marsh (G3/S3) – broad, shallow channel with peat/marl substrate directly overlying limestone; seasonally inundated; stagnant or slow flowing water; Everglades basin, Big Cypress region, and Keys; frequent to occasional fire (3-10 years); sawgrass, spikerush, maidencane, beaksedges, mixed emergents.

KEYS FRESHWATER MARSH – limestone depression; restricted to Florida Keys; may be saline during dry season; sawgrass.

Slough (G3/S3) – broad, shallow channel with peat; inundated except during droughts; flowing water; statewide excluding Keys; rare fire; sparsely canopied or with emergent or floating plants; alligator flag, American white waterlily.

POND APPLE SLOUGH – canopied sloughs dominated by pond apple or Carolina ash, often with abundant epiphytes.

FRESHWATER FORESTED WETLANDS – floodplains or depressions dominated by hydrophytic trees

CYPRESS/TUPELO – dominated entirely by cypress or tupelo, or these species important in the canopy; long hydroperiod.

Dome Swamp (G4/S4) – small or large and shallow isolated depression in sand/marl/limestone substrate with peat accumulating toward center; occurring within a fire-maintained community; seasonally inundated; still water; statewide excluding Keys; occasional or rare fire; forested, canopy often tallest in center; pond cypress, swamp tupelo.

GUM POND – underlain by a clay lens; generally occurs in upland pine; mainly Panhandle; longer hydroperiod and lower fire frequency than cypress-dominated dome swamps; dominated by swamp tupelo.

STRINGER SWAMP – narrow linear swamps; occur within a pyrogenic community along intermittent streams that only flow during heavy rainfall; Panhandle; dominated by pond cypress.

Basin Swamp (G4/S3) – typically large basin wetland with peat substrate; seasonally inundated; still water or with water output; Panhandle to central peninsula; occasional or rare fire; forest of cypress/tupelo/mixed hardwoods; pond cypress, swamp tupelo.

Strand Swamp (G2/S2) – broad, shallow channel with peat over mineral substrate; situated in limestone troughs; seasonally inundated; slow flowing water; vicinity of Lake Okeechobee and southward; occasional or rare fire; closed canopy of cypress and mixed hardwoods; cypress, pond apple, strangler fig, willow, abundant epiphytes.

Floodplain Swamp (G4/S4) – along or near rivers and streams with organic/alluvial substrate; usually inundated; Panhandle to central peninsula; rare or no fire; closed canopy dominated by cypress, tupelo, and/or black gum.

FRESHWATER TIDAL SWAMP – floodplain swamp a river mouth where occasional saltwater intrusion significantly affects vegetation composition; receives pulses of freshwater in response to tides; cypress absent or infrequent; closed/open canopy of swamp tupelo, pumpkin ash, sweetbay.

HARDWOOD – dominated by a mix of hydrophytic hardwood trees; cypress or tupelo may be occasional or infrequent in the canopy; short hydroperiod.

Baygall (G4/S4) – slope or depression wetland with peat substrate; usually saturated and occasionally inundated; statewide excluding Keys; rare or no fire; closed canopy of evergreen trees; loblolly bay, sweetbay, swamp bay, titi, fetterbush.

BAY SWAMP – large or small peat filled depression; mainly eastern Panhandle to central peninsula; forested; dominated by bay species.

SOUTH FLORIDA BAYHEAD – on tree islands in glades marsh on peat substrate; south of Lake Okeechobee in central and southern peninsula; open or closed canopy; swamp bay, sweetbay, dahoon, coastalplain willow, and/or coco plum.

Hydric Hammock (G4/S4) – lowland with sand/clay/organic soil over limestone or with high shell content; mesic-hydric; primarily eastern Panhandle and central peninsula; occasional to rare fire; diamond-leaved oak, live oak, cabbage palm, red cedar, and mixed hardwoods.

COASTAL HYDRIC HAMMOCK – occurring adjacent to coastal marshes; central Panhandle to central peninsula; species composition limited by occasional salt water intrusion; cabbage palm, red cedar, and live oak.

PRAIRIE HYDRIC HAMMOCK – isolated stands of hydric hammock within a pyrogenic community, usually floodplain marsh; shelly sand soils; central and southern peninsula; occasional fire; cabbage palm, live oak, red cedar.

Bottomland Forest (G4/S3) – flatland with sand/clay/organic substrate; usually connected or adjacent to a riverine community; occasionally inundated; Panhandle to central peninsula; rare or no fire; closed canopy of mixed hardwoods; deciduous or mixed deciduous/evergreen; tuliptree, sweetbay, water oak, sweetgum, diamond-leaved oak, red maple, loblolly pine, spruce pine, Atlantic white cedar.

Alluvial Forest (G4/S3) – floodplain with alluvial substrate of sand, silt, clay or organic soil; inundated yearly during growing season; influenced by disturbance from ongoing floodplain processes (deposition of point bars, creation of "ridge and swale" topography); Panhandle to central peninsula; rare or no fire; closed canopy of mainly deciduous trees; water hickory, overcup oak, diamond-leaved oak, green ash, American elm, water locust, river birch.

MARINE and ESTUARINE VEGETATED WETLANDS – intertidal or supratidal zone dominated by herbaceous or woody halophytic vascular plants; salinity >0.5 ppt.

Salt Marsh (G5/S4) – estuarine wetland on muck/sand/or limestone substrate; inundated with saltwater by daily tides; statewide; occasional or rare fire; treeless, dense herb layer with few shrubs; saltmarsh cordgrass, needle rush, saltgrass, saltwort, perennial glasswort, seaside oxeye.

SALT FLAT – salt marsh with much exposed bare soil on slightly higher areas within marsh; high salinity and dry conditions; sparse and stunted cover of succulents and/or shoregrass.

Mangrove Swamp (G5/S4) – estuarine wetland on muck/sand/or limestone substrate; inundated with saltwater by daily tides; central peninsula and Keys; no fire; dominated by mangrove and mangrove associate species; red mangrove, black mangrove, white mangrove, buttonwood.

BUTTONWOOD FOREST – upper tidal area dominated by buttonwood; often transitional to rockland hammock.

Keys Tidal Rock Barren (G3/S3?) – flatland with exposed limestone in supratidal zone; restricted to Keys; no fire; open, mainly herbaceous vegetation of upper salt marsh species and stunted shrubs and trees; buttonwood, christmasberry, perennial glasswort, saltwort, seashore dropseed, shoregrass.

PONDS and LAKES (LACUSTRINE) – non-flowing wetlands of natural depressions lacking persistent emergent vegetation except around the perimeter

Clastic Upland Lake (G3/S2) – generally irregular basin in clay uplands; predominantly with inflows, frequently without surface outflow; clay or organic substrate; Panhandle to northern central peninsula; colored, acidic, soft water with low mineral content (sodium, chloride, sulfate); oligo-mesotrophic to eutrophic.

Coastal Dune Lake (G2/S1) – basin or lagoon influenced by recent coastal processes; predominantly sand substrate with some organic matter; Panhandle; salinity variable among and within lakes, and subject to saltwater intrusion and storm surges; slightly acidic, hard water with high mineral content (sodium, chloride).

Coastal Rockland Lake (G2/S1) – shallow basin influenced by recent coastal processes; predominantly barren oolitic or Miami limestone substrate; southern peninsula and Keys; salinity variable among and within lakes, and subject to saltwater intrusion, storm surges and evaporation (because of shallowness); slightly alkaline, hard water with high mineral content (sodium, chloride).

Flatwoods/Prairie Lake (G4/S3) – generally shallow basin in flatlands with high water table; frequently with a broad littoral zone; still water or flow-through; sand or peat substrate; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys; variable water chemistry, colored to clear, acidic to slightly alkaline, soft to moderately hard water with moderate mineral content (sodium, chloride, sulfate); oligo-mesotrophic to eutrophic.

Marsh Lake (G4/S4) – generally shallow, open water area within wide expanses of freshwater marsh; still water or flow-through; peat, sand or clay substrate; statewide except Keys; variable water chemistry, but characteristically highly colored, acidic, soft water with moderate mineral content (sodium, chloride, sulfate); oligo-mesotrophic to eutrophic.

River Floodplain Lake (G4/S2) – meander scar, backwater, or larger flow-through body within major river floodplains; sand, alluvial or organic substrate; statewide except extreme southern peninsula and Keys; colored, alkaline or slightly acidic, hard or moderately hard water with high mineral content (sulfate, sodium, chloride, calcium, magnesium); mesotrophic to eutrophic.

Sandhill Upland Lake (G3/S2) – generally rounded solution depression in deep sandy uplands; panhandle to southern peninsula; predominantly without surface inflows/outflows; typically sand substrate with organic accumulations toward middle; clear, acidic moderately soft water with varying mineral content; ultra-oligotrophic to mesotrophic.

Sinkhole Lake (G3/S3) – typically deep, funnel-shaped depression in limestone base; statewide; predominantly without surface inflows/outflows, but frequently with connection to the aquifer; clear, alkaline, hard water with high mineral content (calcium, bicarbonate, magnesium).

Swamp Lake (G4/S3) – generally shallow, open water area within basin swamps; still water or flow-through; peat, sand or clay substrate; statewide except Keys; variable water chemistry, but characteristically highly colored, acidic, soft water with moderate mineral content (sodium, chloride, sulfate); oligo-mesotrophic to eutrophic.

RIVERS and STREAMS (RIVERINE) – natural, flowing waters from their source to the downstream limits of tidal influence and bounded by channel banks

Alluvial Stream (G4/S2) – lower perennial or intermittent/seasonal watercourse characterized by turbid water with suspended silt, clay, sand and small gravel; Panhandle; generally with a distinct, sediment-derived (alluvial) floodplain and a sandy, elevated natural levee just inland from the bank.

Blackwater Stream (G4/S3) – perennial or intermittent/seasonal watercourse characterized by tea-colored water with a high content of particulate and dissolved organic matter derived from drainage through swamps and marshes; statewide except Keys; generally lacking an alluvial floodplain.

Seepage Stream (G3/S2) – upper perennial or intermittent/seasonal watercourse with clear to lightly colored water derived from shallow groundwater seepage; panhandle to southern peninsula.

Spring-run Stream (G2/S2) – perennial watercourse with deep aquifer headwaters and clear water, circumneutral pH and, frequently, a solid limestone bottom; panhandle to central peninsula.

SUBTERRANEAN – twilight, middle, and deep zones of natural chambers overlain by the earth's crust and characterized by climatic stability and assemblages of trogloxenic, troglophilic, and troglobitic organisms.

Aquatic Cave (G3/S3) – cave permanently or periodically submerged; often supporting troglobitic crustaceans and salamanders; includes high energy systems which receive large quantities of organic detritus and low energy systems; statewide.

Terrestrial Cave (G3/S2) – cave lacking standing water; often supporting bats, such as *Myotis* spp., and other terrestrial vertebrates and invertebrates; includes interstitial areas above standing water such as fissures in the ceiling of caves; statewide.

MARINE and ESTUARINE – subtidal, intertidal, and supratidal zones of the sea, landward to the point at which seawater becomes significantly diluted with freshwater inflow from the land. (The distinction between the Marine and Estuarine Natural Communities is often subtle, and the natural communities types found under these two community categories have the same descriptions. For these reasons they have been grouped together.)

MINERAL BASED

Consolidated Substrate (G3/S3) – expansive subtidal, intertidal, and supratidal area composed primarily of nonliving compacted or coherent and relatively hard, naturally formed mass of mineral matter (e.g., coquina limerock and relic reefs); statewide; octocorals, sponges, stony corals, nondrift macrophytic algae, blue-green mat-forming algae, and seagrasses sparse, if present.

Unconsolidated Substrate (G5/S5) – expansive subtidal, intertidal, and supratidal area composed primarily of loose mineral matter (e.g., coralgal, gravel, marl, mud, sand and shell); statewide; octocorals, sponges, stony corals, nondrift macrophytic algae, blue-green mat-forming algae and seagrasses sparse, if present.

FAUNAL BASED

Coral Reef (G2/S1) – expansive subtidal area with elevational gradient or relief and occupied primarily by living sessile organisms of the Class Hydrozoa (e.g., fire corals and hydrocorals), Class Anthozoa, abd Subclass Zoantharia (e.g., stony corals and black corals); southern peninsula and Keys; includes deepwater bank reefs, fringing barrier reefs, outer bank reefs and patch reefs, some of which may contain distinct zones of assorted macrophytes, octocorals, & sponges.

Mollusk Reef (G3/S3) – substantial subtidal or intertidal area with relief from concentrations of sessile organisms of the Phylum Mollusca, Class Bivalvia (e.g., mollusks, oysters, & worm shells); statewide; octocorals, sponges, stony corals, macrophytic algae and seagrasses sparse, if present.

Octocoral Bed (G2/S1) – expansive subtidal area occupied primarily by living sessile organisms of the Class Anthozoa, Subclass Octocorallia (e.g., soft corals, horny corals, sea fans, sea whips, and sea pens); likely statewide; sponges, stony corals, nondrift macrophytic algae and seagrasses spares, if present.

Sponge Bed (G2/S2) – expansive subtidal area occupied primarily by living sessile organisms of the Phylum Porifera (e.g., sheepswool sponge, Florida loggerhead sponge and branching candle sponge); statewide; octocorals, stony corals, nondrift macrophytic algae and seagrasses sparse, if present.

Worm Reef (G1/S1) – substantial subtidal or intertidal area with relief from concentrations of sessile, tubicolous organisms of the Phylum Annelida, Class Polychaeta (e.g., chaetopterids and sabellarids); southern peninsula (east coast only); octocorals, sponges, stony corals, macrophytic algae and seagrasses sparse, if present.

FLORAL BASED (mainly subtidal)

Algal Bed (G3/S2) – expansive subtidal, intertidal, or supratidal area, occupied primarily by attached thallophytic or mat-forming prokaryotic algae (e.g, halimeda, blue-green algae); statewide; octocorals, sponges, stony corals and seagrasses sparse, if present.

Seagrass Bed (G3/S2) – expansive subtidal or intertidal area, occupied primarily by rooted vascular macrophytes, (e.g., shoal grass, halophila, widgeon grass, manatee grass and turtle grass); statewide; may include various epiphytes and epifauna; octocorals, sponges, stony corals, and attached macrophytic algae sparse, if present.

COMPOSITE SUBSTRATE

Composite Substrate (G3/S3) – expansive subtidal, intertidal, or supratidal area, occupied primarily by natural community elements from more than one natural community category (e.g., grass bed and algal bed species; octocoral and algal bed species); statewide; includes both patchy and evenly distributed occurrences.