

Ecological site R008XY003ID North Slope Loamy 12-16 PZ

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Rangeland health reference sheet

Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health is a qualitative assessment protocol used to determine ecosystem condition based on benchmark characteristics described in the Reference Sheet. A suite of 17 (or more) indicators are typically considered in an assessment. The ecological site(s) representative of an assessment location must be known prior to applying the protocol and must be verified based on soils and climate. Current plant community cannot be used to identify the ecological site.

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Approved by	Kendra Moseley
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** Rills can occur on this site. If rills are present they are likely to occur immediately following wildfire. Rills are most likely to occur on soils with surface textures of silt loam.

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** Water-flow patterns do not occur on this site.

3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** None.

4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** May range from 0-10 percent.

5. **Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** Gullies do not occur on this site.

6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** Blowouts and depositional areas are usually not present. Immediately following wildfire some soil movement may occur on lighter textured soils.

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7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Fine litter in the interspaces may move up to one foot following a significant run-off event. Coarse litter generally does not move.
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8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):** Values should range from 4 to 6 .
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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** The A or A1 horizon is typically dark grayish brown and 0 -10 inches thick. Structure ranges from weak coarse subangular blocky to strong fine granular. Soil organic matter ranges fro 4 to 6 percent.
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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** Bunchgrasses, especially deep-rooted perennials, slow run-off and increase infiltration.
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11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** Is not present.
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12. **Functional/Structural Groups (list in order of descending dominance by above-ground annual-production or live foliar cover using symbols: >>, >, = to indicate much greater than, greater than, and equal to):**
- Dominant: cool season deep-rooted perennial bunchgrasses
- Sub-dominant: perennial forbs
- Other: shallow-rooted perennial grasses
- Additional: shrubs
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13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** Little decadence is expected to occur on this site, however litter can build up in the crowns of Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass.
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14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** Additional litter cover data is needed but is expected to be 15-30 percent to a depth of 0.1 inches.
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15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** Is 1200 pounds per acre (1333 kilograms per hectare) in a year with normal temperatures and precipitation. Perennial grasses produce 80-85 percent of the total production, forbs 10-20 percent, and shrubs 0-5 percent.
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16. **Potential invasive (including noxious) species (native and non-native).** List species which **BOTH** characterize degraded states and have the potential to become a dominant or co-dominant species on the ecological site if their future establishment and growth is not actively controlled by management interventions. Species that become dominant for only one to several years (e.g., short-term response to drought or wildfire) are not invasive plants. Note that unlike other indicators, we are describing what is **NOT** expected in the reference state for the ecological site: Includes cheatgrass, bulbous bluegrass, Japanese brome, ventenata, Kentucky bluegrass, curlycup gumweed, St. Johnswort, broom snakeweed, rush skeletonweed, musk thistle, yellow star-thistle, scotch thistle, and diffuse and spotted knapweed.
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17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** All functional groups have the potential to reproduce in most years.
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