Ecological site R011XA006ID
Saline Upland 7-12 PZ SAVE4/LECI4

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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 rarely 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 and clay loam. Rills may also occur in the vicinity of the water flow patterns where run-on occurs from adjacent uplands.

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** water-flow patterns rarely occur on this site. When they occur they are short and disrupted by cool season grasses and tall shrubs and are not extensive. Water flow patterns can be expected to occur where run-on from adjacent sites is present.

3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** both are rare on this site.

4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** data is not available. On sites in mid-seral status bare ground may range from 45-55 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:** are usually not present. Immediately following wildfire some soil movement may occur on silty textured soils.

7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** fine litter in the interspaces may move up to 2 feet following a significant run-off event. Coarse litter generally does not move.

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 but needs to be tested.

9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** structure ranges from moderate thin to moderate medium platy. Soil organic matter (SOM) is 0.5 to 2 percent. The A or A1 horizon is typically 3 to 4 inches thick.

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.

11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** not present.

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: tall shrubs

    Other: perennial forbs

    Additional: basin big sagebrush, black greasewood, and basin wildrye will become decadent in the absence of fire and ungulate grazing. Grass and forb mortality will occur as tall shrubs increase.

13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** additional litter cover data is needed but is expected to be 20-25 percent to a depth of 0.1 inches. Under mature shrubs litter is >0.5 inches deep and is 90-100 percent ground cover.

14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** additional litter cover data is needed but is expected to be 20-25 percent to a depth of 0.1 inches. Under mature shrubs litter is >0.5 inches deep and is 90-100 percent ground cover.

15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** is 850 pounds per acre (944 kilograms per hectare) in a year with normal temperatures and precipitation. Perennial grasses produce 55-65 percent of the total production, forbs 2-5 percent, and shrubs 30-40 percent.

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, Vulpia sp., annual mustards, halogeton, Russian thistle, and annual Kochia.

17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** all functional groups have the potential to reproduce in favorable years.