

Ecological site R013XY030ID North Slope Loamy 16-22 PZ

Last updated: 9/23/2020
Accessed: 04/17/2024

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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| Date | 05/15/2008 |
| Approved by | Kendra Moseley |
| Approval date | |
| Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on | Annual Production |

Indicators

- Number and extent of rills:** rills rarely occur on this site. If rills are present they are likely to occur on the steeper slopes and immediately following wildfire. Rills are most likely to occur on soils with surface textures of silt loam.
- Presence of water flow patterns:** water flow patterns do occur on the site. They occur as short and disrupted flows. They are disrupted by cool season grasses and tall shrubs and are not extensive.
- Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** both are rare on this site. Where flow patterns and/or rills are present, a few pedestals may be expected. Terracettes can occur as deposits behind large bunchgrasses and shrubs. They are not extensive.
- 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 15-25 percent.
- Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** none.

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6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** 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 3 feet 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 but needs to be tested.
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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** structure typically includes weak and moderate very fine and fine granular to weak fine subangular blocky. Soil organic matter (SOM) ranges from 1 to 4 percent. Surface color is generally very dark brown. The surface horizon is typically 9 to 26 inches thick.
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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** structure typically includes weak fine granular. Soil organic matter (SOM) ranges from _____percent. The surface horizon is typically _____inches thick.
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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):** 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: tall shrubs
- Other: perennial forbs
- Additional: shallow rooted bunchgrasses
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13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** mountain big sagebrush and serviceberry will become decadent in the absence of fire and ungulate grazing. Grass and forb mortality will occur as tall shrubs increase.
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14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** fine litter in the interspaces may move up to 3 feet following a significant run-off event. Coarse litter generally does not move.
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15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** is 2000 pounds per acre (2240 kilograms per hectare) in a year with normal temperatures and precipitation. Perennial grasses produce 40-50 percent of the total production, forbs 10-20 percent and shrubs 35-45 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, Kentucky bluegrass, whitetop, rush skeletonweed, leafy spurge, musk, Canadian and 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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