Ecological site R021XY503OR
EPHEMERAL LAKEBED 10-20 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	Bob Gillaspy
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** None, slight sheet & rill erosion hazard

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** None

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):** 10-50% depending on flooding/ponding/duration/depth

5. **Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** None

6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** None, moderate wind erosion hazard (may erode if soils are dry and plant cover is removed)

7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Fine - limited movement

8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):** Moderately resistant to erosion: aggregate stability = 3-5

9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** Seasonally flooded, deep or very deep, poorly drained clays, loams, or silty clay loams: Low OM (1-2%)

10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** Areas of the site with established stands of Spikerush, rush, and/or sedges and gentle slopes (1-2%) effectively limit rainfall impact and overland flow; infiltration is very slow

11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** None

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: Spikerush > sedge > other grasses > forbs

    Sub-dominant:

    Other:

    Additional:

13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** Normal decadence and mortality expected

14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):**

15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** Favorable: 1500, Normal: 1200, Unfavorable: 900 lbs/acre/year at high RSI (HCPC)

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:** Site is prone to compaction when soils are wet. Changes to plant community are related to changes in soil wetness. Cheatgrass and Medusahead invade sites that have lost deep rooted perennial grass functional groups.

17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** All species should be capable of reproducing annually