

## Ecological site R025XY005NV WET MEADOW

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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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| Date  | 12/07/2009                            |
| Approved by                                 | Kendra Moseley                        |
| Approval date                               |                                       |
| Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on | Annual Production                     |

### Indicators

- 1. Number and extent of rills:** Rills are none.  

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- 2. Presence of water flow patterns:** Water flow patterns are none.  

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- 3. Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** Pedestals are none.  

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- 4. Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** Bare Ground  $\pm$  5-15%.  

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

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- 6. Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** None  

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- 7. Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Fine litter (foliage of grasses and annual & perennial forbs) only expected to move during periods of flooding by adjacent streams. Persistent litter (large

woody material) will remain in place except during flooding events.

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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):** Soil stability values will range from 4 to 6. (To be field tested.)
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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** Soil surface structure is subangular blocky, medium platy, or granular. Soil surface colors are dark and the soils have thick mollic epipedons. Organic matter can range from 2 to 3 percent for much of the upper 20 inches. (OM values derived from lab characterization data.)
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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** Deep-rooted perennial grasses and/or rhizomatous grass-like (i.e. rush) slow runoff 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):** Compacted layers are none. Subangular blocky or massive subsurface layers are not to be interpreted as compaction.
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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: Deep-rooted, cool season, perennial grasses and grass-like plants > rhizomatous grasses

Sub-dominant: deep-rooted, cool season, perennial forbs = fibrous, shallow-rooted, cool season, annual and perennial forbs > tall shrubs

Other:

Additional:

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13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** Little to no decadence present.
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14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth ( in):** Between plant interspaces ( $\pm$  10-15%) and litter depth is  $>\frac{1}{4}$  inch.
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15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** For normal or average growing season (through June)  $\pm$  1700 lbs/ac.
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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: Increasers include rubber rabbitbrush. Invaders include thistle, knapweeds, tall whitetop (perennial pepperweed), and salt cedar.

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17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** All functional groups should reproduce in most years.
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