

Ecological site R102AY004SD Wet Meadow

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General information

Provisional. A provisional ecological site description has undergone quality control and quality assurance review. It contains a working state and transition model and enough information to identify the ecological site.

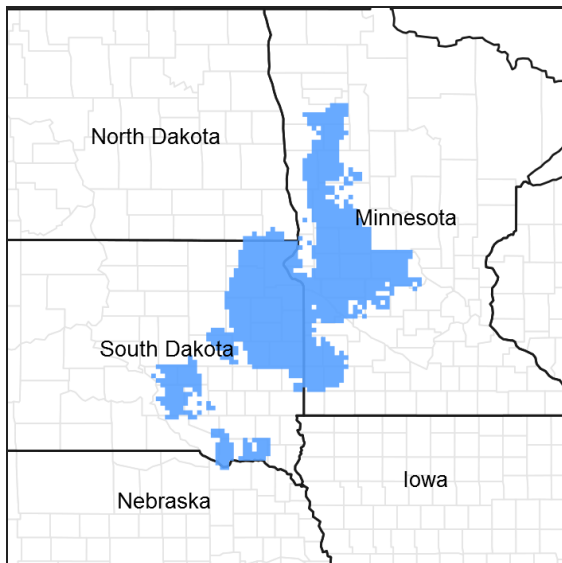


Figure 1. Mapped extent

Areas shown in blue indicate the maximum mapped extent of this ecological site. Other ecological sites likely occur within the highlighted areas. It is also possible for this ecological site to occur outside of highlighted areas if detailed soil survey has not been completed or recently updated.

Classification relationships

Level IV Ecoregions of the Conterminous United States: 46e – Tewaukon Dead Ice Moraine, 46k – Prairie Coteau, 46l – Prairie Coteau Escarpment, 46m – Big Sioux Basin, 46o – Minnesota River Prairie, 47b – Des Moines Lobe, 48d – Lake Agassiz Plain, 51j – Alexandria Moraines and Detroit Lakes Outwash Plain.

Similar sites

R102AY001SD	Shallow Marsh (R102AY001SD) – Shallow Marsh [less prairie cordgrass; higher production]
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Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	(1) <i>Carex pellita</i> (2) <i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> ssp. <i>inexpansa</i>

Physiographic features

This site occurs on nearly level to concave depressions on uplands.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Pothole (2) Swale
Ponding duration	Brief (2 to 7 days) to long (7 to 30 days)
Ponding frequency	Occasional to frequent
Elevation	305–610 m
Slope	0–1%
Ponding depth	0–30 cm
Water table depth	23–76 cm
Aspect	Aspect is not a significant factor

Climatic features

MLRA 102A is considered to have a continental climate – cold winters and relatively hot summers, low to moderate humidity, light rainfall, and much sunshine. Extremes in temperature may also abound. The climate is the result of this MLRA's location near the geographic center of North America. There are few natural barriers on the Northern Great Plains and air masses move freely across the plains and account for rapid changes in temperature.

Annual precipitation typically ranges from 21 to 27 inches per year. The average annual temperature is about 43°F. January is the coldest month with average temperatures ranging from about 5°F (Mahnomen 1 W, Minnesota (MN)), to about 14°F (Tracy, MN). July is the warmest month with temperatures averaging from about 69°F (Mahnomen 1 W, MN), to about 73°F (Tracy, MN). The range of normal average monthly temperatures between the coldest and warmest months is about 62°F. This large annual range attests to the continental nature of this area's climate. Hourly winds are estimated to average about 11 miles per hour (mph) annually, ranging from about 13 mph during the spring to about 10 mph during the summer. Daytime winds are generally stronger than nighttime and occasional strong storms may bring brief periods of high winds with gusts to more than 50 mph.

Growth of cool-season plants begins in early to mid-March, slowing or ceasing in late June. Warm-season plants begin growth about mid-May and continue to early or mid-September. Greenup of cool-season plants may occur in September and October when adequate soil moisture is present.

Table 3. Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	152 days
Freeze-free period (average)	174 days
Precipitation total (average)	686 mm

Influencing water features

Soil features

These are very deep, poorly drained, medium to fine textured soils. Permeability is slow to very slow and available water capacity is high. Salinity and sodicity are typically none to slight. Water tables on this site range from about 9 to 30 inches and ponding occurs occasionally to frequently. The site normally receives additional water from surface runoff and/or underground seepage. This site occurs in potholes, swales, and closed depressions. Slope ranges from zero to one percent. This site should show no evidence of rills, wind scoured areas, or pedestalled plants. The soil surface is stable and intact. Subsurface soil layers are nonrestrictive to water movement and root penetration. Ponded water conditions and slow permeability strongly influences the soil-water-plant relationship.

Access Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>) for specific local soils information.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Surface texture	(1) Silt loam (2) Silty clay loam
Family particle size	(1) Clayey
Drainage class	Poorly drained
Permeability class	Slow to very slow
Soil depth	203 cm
Surface fragment cover <=3"	0–2%
Surface fragment cover >3"	0–2%
Available water capacity (0-101.6cm)	17.78–20.32 cm
Calcium carbonate equivalent (0-101.6cm)	0–5%
Electrical conductivity (0-101.6cm)	0–2 mmhos/cm
Sodium adsorption ratio (0-101.6cm)	0–2
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (0-101.6cm)	5.6–7.8
Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	0–8%
Subsurface fragment volume >3" (Depth not specified)	0–2%

Ecological dynamics

The site developed under Northern Great Plains climatic conditions and included natural influence of large herding herbivores and occasional fire. Under adverse impacts, a relatively rapid decline in vegetative vigor and composition can occur. Under favorable conditions, the site has the potential to resemble the Reference State. Interpretations for this site are based primarily on the Sedge/Prairie Cordgrass/Northern Reedgrass Plant Community Phase (1.1). This community phase and the Reference State has been determined by study of rangeland relic areas, areas protected from excessive disturbance, and areas under rotational grazing regimes. Trends in plant community dynamics ranging from heavily grazed to lightly grazed areas, seasonal use pastures, and historical accounts also have been considered. Community phases, community pathways, states, transitions, thresholds, and restoration pathways have been determined through similar studies and experience.

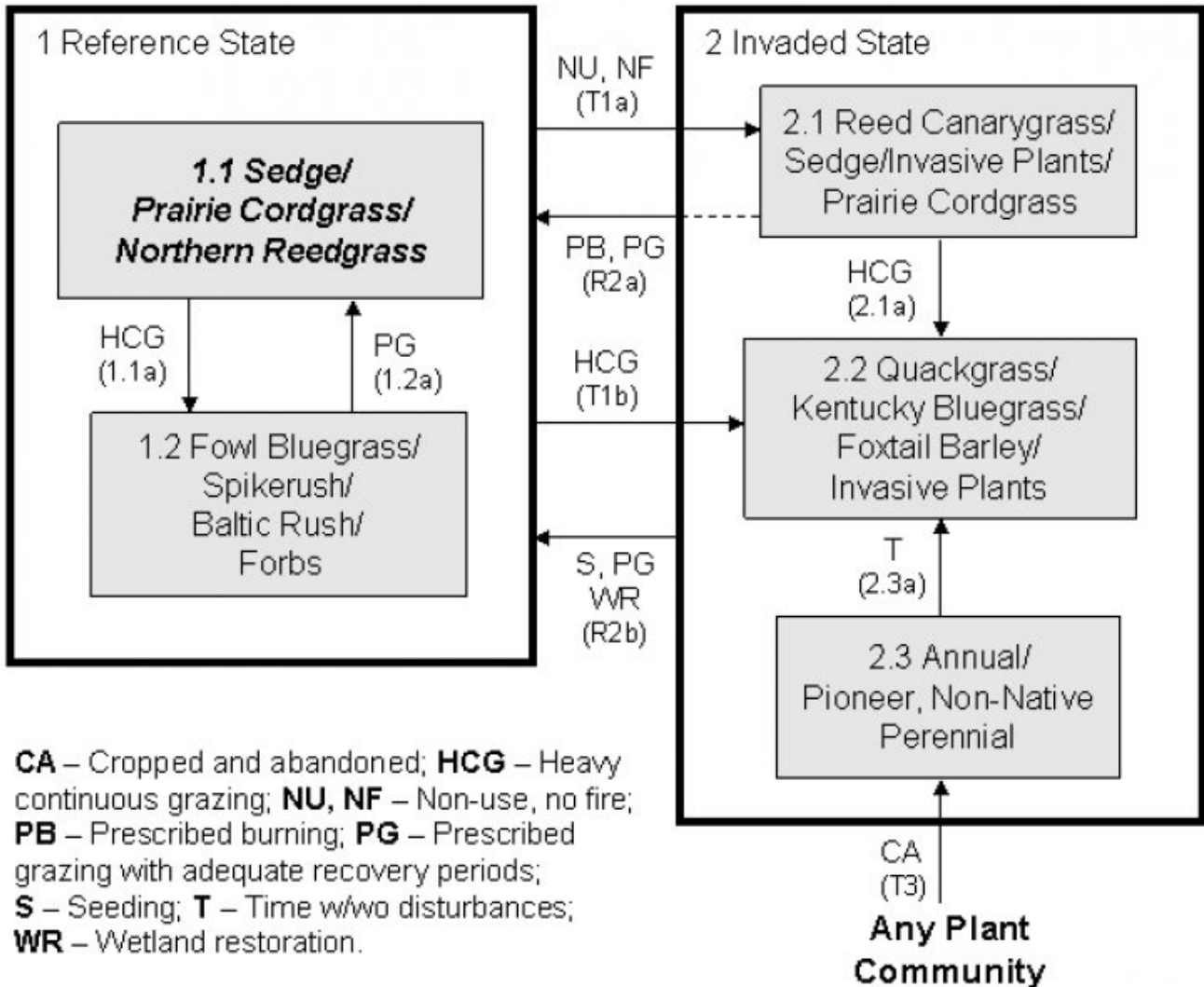
This ecological site (ES) has been grazed by domestic livestock since introduced into the area. The introduction of domestic livestock and the use of fencing and reliable water sources have changed the disturbance regime of this site. Heavy continuous grazing without adequate recovery periods following each grazing occurrence causes this site to depart from the Reference State. Species such as fowl bluegrass, spikerush, and Baltic rush will initially increase. Prairie cordgrass and northern reedgrass will decrease in frequency and production. Continued heavy grazing eventually causes quackgrass, foxtail barley, Kentucky bluegrass, Spikerush, and unpalatable forbs such as curly dock to increase and dominate.

Following the state and transition diagram are narratives for each of the described states and community phases. These may not represent every possibility but they are the most prevalent and repeatable states/community phases. The plant composition tables shown below have been developed from the best available knowledge at the time of this revision. As more data is collected, some of these community phases and/or states may be revised or removed, and new ones may be added. The main purpose for including the descriptions here is to capture the current knowledge and experience at the time of this revision.

The following is a diagram that illustrates the common plant community phases that can occur on the site and the transition and community pathways between them. The ecological processes will be discussed in more detail in the

plant community descriptions following the diagram.

State and transition model



State 1 Reference

This state represents the natural range of variability that dominates the dynamics of this ES. This state is typically codominated by cool-season and warm-season grasses. Pre-European settlement, the primary disturbance mechanisms for this site in the reference condition included periodic fire and grazing by large herding ungulates. Timing of fires and grazing coupled with weather events dictated the dynamics that occurred within the natural range of variability. Today the primary disturbance is from a lack of fire and concentrated livestock grazing. Grasses that are desirable for livestock and wildlife can decline and a corresponding increase in less desirable grasses will occur.

Community 1.1 Sedge/Prairie Cordgrass/Northern Reedgrass Plant Community Phase

This community evolved with grazing by large herbivores, occasional prairie fires, and relatively frequent ponding events and can be found on areas that are properly managed with grazing and/or prescribed burning, and sometimes on areas receiving occasional short periods of rest. The potential vegetation is about 50 percent grass-like species, 35 percent grasses, and 15 percent forbs by air-dry weight. Prairie cordgrass is the dominant tall warm-

season grass occupying this plant community. Northern reedgrass is the dominant tall cool-season species. A variety of sedges and rushes occur throughout this community, as well as, switchgrass and fowl bluegrass. Key forbs include Rydberg's sunflower, Canada goldenrod, Indian hemp, and cinquefoil. This plant community phase is diverse, stable, and productive, and is well adapted to the Northern Great Plains. The high water table supplies much of the moisture for plant growth. Community dynamics, nutrient cycle, water cycle, and energy flow are functioning properly. Plant litter is properly distributed with very little movement offsite and natural plant mortality is very low. The diversity in plant species allows for the variability of both the fluctuations of water table and reoccurring ponding. This is a sustainable plant community in terms of soil stability, watershed function, and biologic integrity.

Table 5. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Kg/Hectare)	Representative Value (Kg/Hectare)	High (Kg/Hectare)
Grass/Grasslike	4242	4960	5531
Forb	241	560	1009
Shrub/Vine	–	84	185
Total	4483	5604	6725

Figure 5. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). SD0208, Rolling Till Prairie, lowland cool-season/warm-season codominant.. Cool-season, warm-season codominant, lowland..

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	4	11	19	23	20	12	6	5	0	0

Community 1.2

Fowl Bluegrass/Spikerush/Baltic Rush/Forbs Plant Community Phase

This community develops with periods of heavy continuous grazing with lack of adequate recovery periods during the growing season following periods of below normal precipitation. Lack of litter and reduced plant heights result in higher soil temperatures and reduced water infiltration rates. Recognition of this plant community will enable the land user to implement key management decisions before a significant ecological threshold is crossed. Prairie cordgrass has been reduced in this plant community but still persists. Fowl bluegrass, spikerush, other grass-likes, and forbs are the dominant species. Spikerush and Baltic rush, as well as, other grass-likes have increased. Northern reedgrass has been significantly reduced. Switchgrass may be removed at this stage. Reed canarygrass may begin to increase significantly. Forb species would include asters, goldenrod and cinquefoil, as well as, a possible invasion of Canada thistle. Plant production and frequency have been reduced. The water cycle, nutrient cycle, and energy flow are slightly reduced but continue to function adequately.

Table 6. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Kg/Hectare)	Representative Value (Kg/Hectare)	High (Kg/Hectare)
Grass/Grasslike	3166	4102	4977
Forb	196	336	532
Shrub/Vine	–	45	95
Total	3362	4483	5604

Figure 7. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). SD0207, Rolling Till Prairie, cool-season dominant, warm-season subdominant.. Cool-season dominant, warm-season subdominant, lowland..

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	5	13	20	25	18	11	5	3	0	0

Pathway 1.1a

Community 1.1 to 1.2

Heavy continuous grazing which includes herbivory at moderate to heavy levels at the same time of year each year without adequate recovery periods, or during periods of below normal precipitation when grazing frequency and intensity increases on these sites due to limited forage availability on adjacent upland sites will shift this community to the 1.2 Fowl Bluegrass/Spikerush/Baltic Rush/Forbs Plant Community Phase.

Pathway 1.2a

Community 1.2 to 1.1

Prescribed grazing (alternating season of use and providing adequate recovery periods) or periodic light to moderate grazing possibly including periodic rest will convert this plant community to the 1.1 Sedge/Prairie Cordgrass/Northern Reedgrass Plant Community Phase. This pathway could also occur with a return to more normal precipitation levels and frequencies.

Conservation practices

Prescribed Grazing

State 2 Invaded

This state is characterized by the dominance of invasive and/or nonnative species as a result of disturbance regimes outside the normal variability. Loss or reduction of native cool- and warm-season grasses and the forb component have negatively impacted energy flow and nutrient cycling. Infiltration is reduced and native plant mortality is increased. As the disturbance level increases, native plant density decreases even more, giving way to annual species and invasive perennial species, as well as, an increase in bare ground.

Community 2.1

Reed Canarygrass/Sedge/Invasive Plants/Prairie Cordgrass Plant Community Phase

This plant community phase develops with a long-term lack of grazing and/or fire. Eventually litter levels become high enough to reduce native grass vigor, diversity, and density. Years of accumulated litter will tend to make this community wetter. Sedge, Baltic rush, Spikerush, and bulrush will increase. Hydrophytic forbs will also increase. Reed canarygrass often will increase to the point of dominance, while prairie cordgrass will diminish significantly. Other invasive plants such as creeping meadow foxtail may become prevalent if a seed source is present or nearby. Nutrient cycling will be greatly diminished and the energy flow will shift significantly and be reduced as well due to the increase in plant litter. Infiltration will be reduced somewhat compared to the Reference State. This plant community is somewhat resistant to change. The combination of both grazing and fire is most effective in moving this plant community towards the Reference State.

Table 7. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Kg/Hectare)	Representative Value (Kg/Hectare)	High (Kg/Hectare)
Grass/Grasslike	2729	3688	4584
Forb	73	235	460
Total	2802	3923	5044

Figure 9. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). SD0206, Rolling Till Prairie, lowland cool-season dominant.. Cool-season dominant, lowland..

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	6	15	20	26	17	9	4	3	0	0

Community 2.2

Quackgrass/Kentucky Bluegrass/Foxtail Barley/Invasive Plants Plant Community Phase

This plant community phase occurs after prolonged heavy disturbance such as described above in the community pathway (i.e., heavy grazing pressure without adequate recovery). The prolonged nature of this disturbance will tend to increase soil temperatures and evaporation, causing this site to become drier than normal. This allows the increase/invasion of typically less hydrophytic vegetation such as quackgrass and Kentucky bluegrass. Occasionally the soils on this site exhibit higher salinity/sodicity and these characteristics may become amplified with this shift in vegetation. A significant amount of production and diversity has been lost when compared to the Reference State. Loss or reduction of native cool- and warm-season grasses, and the native forb component have negatively impacted energy flow and nutrient cycling. It will take an extended period of time to restore this plant community back to the Reference State with improved management. Renovation is typically not practical but may be the only means to significantly restore the ecological processes on this site.

Table 8. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Kg/Hectare)	Representative Value (Kg/Hectare)	High (Kg/Hectare)
Grass/Grasslike	1670	2522	3312
Forb	123	280	499
Total	1793	2802	3811

Figure 11. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). SD0206, Rolling Till Prairie, lowland cool-season dominant.. Cool-season dominant, lowland..

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	6	15	20	26	17	9	4	3	0	0

Community 2.3

Annual/Pioneer, Non-native Perennial Plant Community Phase

This plant community develops under severe disturbance, typically abandonment after cropping. The dominant vegetation includes pioneer annual or perennial grasses, forbs, invaders, and early successional biennial and perennial species. Grasses may include inland saltgrass, foxtail barley, barnyardgrass, quackgrass, fowl bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, Baltic rush, and sedges. The dominant forbs include curlycup gumweed, Canada thistle, and other early successional species. The community is susceptible to invasion of nonnative species due to severe soil disturbances and relatively high percent of bare ground. This plant community is resistant to change, as long as soil disturbance or severe vegetation defoliation persists, thus holding back secondary plant succession. Significant economic inputs, management, and time would be required to move this plant community toward a higher successional stage. Secondary succession is highly variable, depending upon availability and diversity of a viable reproductive source of higher successional species. This plant community may be renovated to improve the production capability but management changes would be needed to maintain the new plant community. The total annual production ranges from 500 to 1,500 lbs./ac. (air-dry weight) depending upon growing conditions. No growth curve has been assigned to this plant community phase due to the highly variable nature of the plant community.

Pathway 2.1a

Community 2.1 to 2.2

Heavy continuous grazing which includes herbivory at moderate to heavy levels at the same time of year each year without adequate recovery periods, or during periods of below normal precipitation when grazing frequency and intensity increases on these sites due to limited forage availability on adjacent upland sites will shift this community to the 2.2 Quackgrass/Kentucky Bluegrass/Foxtail Barley/Invasive Plants Plant Community Phase.

Pathway 2.3a

Community 2.3 to 2.2

This community pathway occurs with the passage of time as successional processes take place and perennial plants gradually begin to establish on the site again. This pathway will lead to the 2.2 Quackgrass/Kentucky

Transition T1a
State 1 to 2

Non-use and no fire for extended periods of time (typically for 10 or more years) will cause litter levels to become high enough to reduce native grass vigor, diversity, and density, and will likely lead this state over a threshold resulting in the 2.1 Reed Canarygrass/Sedge/Invasive Plants/Prairie Cordgrass Plant Community Phase within the Invaded State (State 2).

Transition T1b
State 1 to 2

Heavy continuous grazing (stocking levels well above carrying capacity for extended portions of the growing season, and often at the same time of year each year) will eventually cause a shift over a threshold leading to the 2.2 Quackgrass/Kentucky Bluegrass/Foxtail Barley/Invasive Plants Plant Community Phase within the Invaded State (State 2). Grazing repeatedly in the early growing season can expedite this shift by causing mechanical disturbance due to trampling.

Transition T3
State 1 to 2

Cropping followed by abandonment may lead this plant community phase over a threshold to the Invaded State (State 2) and more specifically to the 2.3 Annual/Pioneer, Non-native Perennial Plant Community Phase.

Transition T3
State 1 to 2

Cropping followed by abandonment may lead this plant community phase over a threshold to the Invaded State (State 2) and more specifically to the 2.3 Annual/Pioneer, Non-native Perennial Plant Community Phase.

Restoration pathway R2a
State 2 to 1

Prescribed grazing (moderate stocking levels coupled with adequate recovery periods, or other grazing systems such as high-density, low-frequency intended to treat specific species dominance, or periodic light to moderate stocking levels possibly including periodic rest) coupled with prescribed burning may lead this plant community phase over a threshold to the Reference State (State 1). Pest management (i.e., herbicide) may also be needed to suppress cool-season invasive grasses. This will likely take a long period of time and recovery may not be attainable. Success depends on whether native reproductive propagules remain intact on the site.

Conservation practices

Prescribed Burning
Prescribed Grazing

Restoration pathway R2b
State 2 to 1

Seeding followed by prescribed grazing may lead this plant community phase over a threshold to the Reference State (State 1). Wetland restoration techniques may also be effective but will likely be costly and the results may not be satisfactory.

Additional community tables

Table 9. Community 1.1 plant community composition

					Annual Production	Foliar
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Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	(Kg/Hectare)	Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Grass-likes			1121–2802	
	woolly sedge	CAPE42	<i>Carex pellita</i>	280–2242	–
	wheat sedge	CAAT2	<i>Carex atherodes</i>	280–1401	–
	Sartwell's sedge	CASA8	<i>Carex sartwellii</i>	112–841	–
	fox sedge	CAVU2	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	56–280	–
	Bicknell's sedge	CABI3	<i>Carex bicknellii</i>	56–280	–
	shortbeak sedge	CABR10	<i>Carex brevior</i>	0–280	–
	Grass-like (not a true grass)	2GL	<i>Grass-like (not a true grass)</i>	56–280	–
	water sedge	CAAQ	<i>Carex aquatilis</i>	0–280	–
	spikerush	ELEOC	<i>Eleocharis</i>	56–168	–
	rush	JUNCU	<i>Juncus</i>	56–168	–
	green bulrush	SCAT2	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	0–56	–
	bulrush	SCHOE6	<i>Schoenoplectus</i>	0–56	–
2	Cool-season Grasses			560–1961	
	northern reedgrass	CASTI3	<i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> ssp. <i>inexpansa</i>	280–1681	–
	reed canarygrass	PHAR3	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	56–280	–
	fowl bluegrass	POPA2	<i>Poa palustris</i>	56–280	–
	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	2GRAM	<i>Graminoid (grass or grass-like)</i>	56–280	–
	American sloughgrass	BESY	<i>Beckmannia syzigachne</i>	56–280	–
	prairie wedgescale	SPOB	<i>Sphenopholis obtusata</i>	0–168	–
3	Warm-season Grasses			112–560	
	prairie cordgrass	SPPE	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	56–280	–
	switchgrass	PAVI2	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	0–168	–
	spiked muhly	MUGL3	<i>Muhlenbergia glomerata</i>	56–168	–
	Mexican muhly	MUME2	<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	0–112	–
	mat muhly	MURI	<i>Muhlenbergia richardsonis</i>	0–56	–
Forb					
4	Forbs			280–841	
	Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)	2FORB	<i>Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)</i>	56–224	–
	Indianhemp	APCA	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	56–168	–
	Flodman's thistle	CIFL	<i>Cirsium flodmanii</i>	0–168	–
	Illinois bundleflower	DEIL	<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	56–112	–
	swamp milkweed	ASIN	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	56–112	–
	Canadian anemone	ANCA8	<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	56–112	–
	mint	MENTH	<i>Mentha</i>	56–112	–
	swamp smartweed	POHY2	<i>Polygonum hydropiperoides</i>	56–112	–
	Pennsylvania smartweed	POPE2	<i>Polygonum pennsylvanicum</i>	56–112	–
	cinquefoil	POTEN	<i>Potentilla</i>	56–112	–
	Macoun's buttercup	RAMA2	<i>Ranunculus macounii</i>	56–112	–
	western dock	RUAQ	<i>Rumex aquaticus</i>	0–112	–
	blackeyed Susan	RUHI2	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	56–112	–

	American licorice	GLLE3	<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	56–112	–
	Rydberg's sunflower	HENUR	<i>Helianthus nuttallii</i> ssp. <i>rydbergii</i>	56–112	–
	blazing star	LIATR	<i>Liatris</i>	0–112	–
	giant goldenrod	SOGI	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	56–112	–
	goldenrod	SOLID	<i>Solidago</i>	56–112	–
	white panicle aster	SYLA6	<i>Symphotrichum lanceolatum</i>	56–112	–
	New England aster	SYNO2	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	56–112	–
	Canada germander	TECA3	<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	0–56	–
	broadleaf cattail	TYLA	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	0–56	–
	northern bog violet	VINE	<i>Viola nephrophylla</i>	0–56	–
	wood lily	LIPH	<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i>	0–56	–
	American water horehound	LYAM	<i>Lycopus americanus</i>	0–56	–
	golden dock	RUMA4	<i>Rumex maritimus</i>	0–56	–
	blue-eyed grass	SISYR	<i>Sisyrinchium</i>	0–56	–
	white doll's daisy	BOAS	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	0–56	–
	smooth horsetail	EQLA	<i>Equisetum laevigatum</i>	0–56	–
	Virginia strawberry	FRVI	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	0–56	–
Shrub/Vine					
5	Shrubs			0–168	
	willow	SALIX	<i>Salix</i>	0–168	–
	Shrub (>.5m)	2SHRUB	<i>Shrub (>.5m)</i>	0–112	–

Table 10. Community 1.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Kg/Hectare)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Grass-likes			1569–2018	
	spikerush	ELEOC	<i>Eleocharis</i>	448–897	–
	green bulrush	SCAT2	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	45–538	–
	bulrush	SCHOE6	<i>Schoenoplectus</i>	45–538	–
	rush	JUNCU	<i>Juncus</i>	224–448	–
	wheat sedge	CAAT2	<i>Carex atherodes</i>	90–448	–
	Grass-like (not a true grass)	2GL	<i>Grass-like (not a true grass)</i>	45–314	–
	woolly sedge	CAPE42	<i>Carex pellita</i>	90–224	–
	Sartwell's sedge	CASA8	<i>Carex sartwellii</i>	45–224	–
	fox sedge	CAVU2	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	0–179	–
	shortbeak sedge	CABR10	<i>Carex brevior</i>	0–179	–
	water sedge	CAAQ	<i>Carex aquatilis</i>	0–135	–
	Bicknell's sedge	CABI3	<i>Carex bicknellii</i>	0–45	–
2	Cool-season Grasses			224–1121	
	fowl bluegrass	POPA2	<i>Poa palustris</i>	224–1121	–
	reed canarygrass	PHAR3	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	90–448	–
	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	2GRAM	<i>Graminoid (grass or grass-like)</i>	0–224	–

	northern reedgrass	CAS113	<i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> ssp. <i>inexpansa</i>	0-224	-
	American mannagrass	GLGR	<i>Glyceria grandis</i>	0-179	-
	foxtail barley	HOJU	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	0-179	-
3	Warm-season Grasses			90-673	
	prairie cordgrass	SPPE	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	224-673	-
	spiked muhly	MUGL3	<i>Muhlenbergia glomerata</i>	0-224	-
	mat muhly	MURI	<i>Muhlenbergia richardsonis</i>	90-224	-
	switchgrass	PAVI2	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	0-90	-
4	Non-Native Grasses			224-673	
	creeping meadow foxtail	ALAR	<i>Alopecurus arundinaceus</i>	0-448	-
	quackgrass	ELRE4	<i>Elymus repens</i>	0-448	-
	Kentucky bluegrass	POPR	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	90-448	-
Forb					
5	Forbs			224-448	
	giant goldenrod	SOGI	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	0-135	-
	goldenrod	SOLID	<i>Solidago</i>	45-135	-
	white panicle aster	SYLA6	<i>Symphotrichum lanceolatum</i>	45-135	-
	Forb, native	2FN	<i>Forb, native</i>	45-135	-
	American licorice	GLLE3	<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	0-135	-
	Flodman's thistle	CIFL	<i>Cirsium flodmanii</i>	45-135	-
	cinquefoil	POTEN	<i>Potentilla</i>	45-135	-
	Forb, introduced	2FI	<i>Forb, introduced</i>	0-90	-
	Pennsylvania smartweed	POPE2	<i>Polygonum pensylvanicum</i>	45-90	-
	mint	MENTH	<i>Mentha</i>	0-90	-
	Indianhemp	APCA	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	0-90	-
	swamp milkweed	ASIN	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	0-90	-
	New England aster	SYNO2	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	45-90	-
	broadleaf cattail	TYLA	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	0-90	-
	western dock	RUAQ	<i>Rumex aquaticus</i>	0-90	-
	blackeyed Susan	RUHI2	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	0-45	-
	golden dock	RUMA4	<i>Rumex maritimus</i>	0-45	-
	blue-eyed grass	SISYR	<i>Sisyrinchium</i>	0-45	-
	Canadian anemone	ANCA8	<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	0-45	-
	Rydberg's sunflower	HENUR	<i>Helianthus nuttallii</i> ssp. <i>rydbergii</i>	0-45	-
	blazing star	LIATR	<i>Liatris</i>	0-45	-
	wood lily	LIPH	<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i>	0-45	-
	swamp smartweed	POHY2	<i>Polygonum hydropiperoides</i>	0-45	-
	Illinois bundleflower	DEIL	<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	0-45	-
	smooth horsetail	EQLA	<i>Equisetum laevigatum</i>	0-45	-
	Macoun's buttercup	RAMA2	<i>Ranunculus macounii</i>	0-45	-
Shrub/Vine					
6	Shrubs			0-90	
	Shrub (>.5m)	2SHRUB	<i>Shrub (>.5m)</i>	0-90	-

Table 11. Community 2.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Kg/Hectare)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Grass-likes			785–1569	
	wheat sedge	CAAT2	<i>Carex atherodes</i>	78–392	–
	spikerush	ELEOC	<i>Eleocharis</i>	78–392	–
	woolly sedge	CAPE42	<i>Carex pellita</i>	78–392	–
	Sartwell's sedge	CASA8	<i>Carex sartwellii</i>	78–392	–
	Grass-like (not a true grass)	2GL	<i>Grass-like (not a true grass)</i>	39–196	–
	shortbeak sedge	CABR10	<i>Carex brevior</i>	39–196	–
	rush	JUNCU	<i>Juncus</i>	39–196	–
	green bulrush	SCAT2	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	0–196	–
	bulrush	SCHOE6	<i>Schoenoplectus</i>	0–196	–
	fox sedge	CAVU2	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	0–157	–
	Bicknell's sedge	CABI3	<i>Carex bicknellii</i>	0–39	–
2	Cool-season Grasses			588–1373	
	reed canarygrass	PHAR3	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	588–1177	–
	fowl bluegrass	POPA2	<i>Poa palustris</i>	78–588	–
	foxtail barley	HOJU	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	0–235	–
	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	2GRAM	<i>Graminoid (grass or grass-like)</i>	0–196	–
	northern reedgrass	CASTI3	<i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> ssp. <i>inexpansa</i>	39–196	–
	American mannagrass	GLGR	<i>Glyceria grandis</i>	0–118	–
3	Warm-season Grasses			78–392	
	prairie cordgrass	SPPE	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	78–392	–
	mat muhly	MURI	<i>Muhlenbergia richardsonis</i>	0–157	–
4	Non-Native Grasses			392–1373	
	quackgrass	ELRE4	<i>Elymus repens</i>	0–1177	–
	creeping meadow foxtail	ALAR	<i>Alopecurus arundinaceus</i>	0–981	–
	Kentucky bluegrass	POPR	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	78–588	–
Forb					
5	Forbs			78–392	
	Pennsylvania smartweed	POPE2	<i>Polygonum pensylvanicum</i>	0–78	–
	cinquefoil	POTEN	<i>Potentilla</i>	0–78	–
	giant goldenrod	SOGI	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	0–78	–
	goldenrod	SOLID	<i>Solidago</i>	0–78	–
	Forb, introduced	2FI	<i>Forb, introduced</i>	0–78	–
	Forb, native	2FN	<i>Forb, native</i>	0–78	–
	Indianhemp	APCA	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	0–78	–
	Flodman's thistle	CIFL	<i>Cirsium flodmanii</i>	0–78	–
	American licorice	GLLE3	<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	0–78	–

	MINI	MENTH	<i>Merina</i>	U-39	-
	smooth horsetail	EQLA	<i>Equisetum laevigatum</i>	0-39	-
	swamp milkweed	ASIN	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	0-39	-
	white panicle aster	SYLA6	<i>Symphotrichum lanceolatum</i>	0-39	-
	New England aster	SYNO2	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	0-39	-
	broadleaf cattail	TYLA	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	0-39	-
	western dock	RUAQ	<i>Rumex aquaticus</i>	0-39	-

Table 12. Community 2.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Kg/Hectare)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Grass-likes			701–981	
	spikerush	ELEOC	<i>Eleocharis</i>	140–701	–
	rush	JUNCU	<i>Juncus</i>	280–560	–
	shortbeak sedge	CABR10	<i>Carex brevior</i>	28–140	–
	fox sedge	CAVU2	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	0–84	–
	woolly sedge	CAPE42	<i>Carex pellita</i>	0–56	–
	Sartwell's sedge	CASA8	<i>Carex sartwellii</i>	0–56	–
	Grass-like (not a true grass)	2GL	<i>Grass-like (not a true grass)</i>	0–56	–
	green bulrush	SCAT2	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	0–56	–
	bulrush	SCHOE6	<i>Schoenoplectus</i>	0–56	–
2	Cool-season Grasses			140–560	
	foxtail barley	HOJU	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	140–420	–
	reed canarygrass	PHAR3	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	0–280	–
	fowl bluegrass	POPA2	<i>Poa palustris</i>	0–140	–
	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	2GRAM	<i>Graminoid (grass or grass-like)</i>	0–140	–
3	Warm-season Grasses			28–140	
	mat muhly	MURI	<i>Muhlenbergia richardsonis</i>	28–140	–
	prairie cordgrass	SPPE	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	0–140	–
4	Non-Native Grasses			420–1261	
	creeping meadow foxtail	ALAR	<i>Alopecurus arundinaceus</i>	0–981	–
	quackgrass	ELRE4	<i>Elymus repens</i>	140–981	–
	Kentucky bluegrass	POPR	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	140–701	–
Forb					
5	Forbs			140–420	
	Forb, introduced	2FI	<i>Forb, introduced</i>	28–224	–
	Forb, native	2FN	<i>Forb, native</i>	28–112	–
	Pennsylvania smartweed	POPE2	<i>Polygonum pennsylvanicum</i>	28–112	–
	goldenrod	SOLID	<i>Solidago</i>	28–112	–
	white panicle aster	SYLA6	<i>Symphotrichum lanceolatum</i>	28–84	–
	New England aster	SYNO2	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	28–84	–
	Indianhemp	APCA	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	0–84	–
	Flodman's thistle	CIFL	<i>Cirsium flodmanii</i>	28–84	–
	giant goldenrod	SOGI	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>	0–84	–
	cinquefoil	POTEN	<i>Potentilla</i>	0–56	–
	western dock	RUAQ	<i>Rumex aquaticus</i>	0–28	–
	smooth horsetail	EQLA	<i>Equisetum laevigatum</i>	0–28	–
	American licorice	GLLE3	<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	0–28	–

Table 13. Community 2.3 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Kg/Hectare)	Foliar Cover (%)
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Animal community

Animal Community – Grazing Interpretations

The following table lists annual, suggested initial stocking rates with average growing conditions. These are conservative estimates that should be used only as guidelines in the initial stages of conservation planning. Often, the current plant composition does not entirely match any particular plant community (as described in this ES description). Because of this, a resource inventory is necessary to document plant composition and production. More accurate carrying capacity estimates should eventually be calculated using the following stocking rate information along with animal preference data and actual stocking records, particularly when grazers other than cattle are involved. With consultation of the land manager, more intensive grazing management may result in improved harvest efficiencies and increased carrying capacity.

Prairie Cordgrass/Sedge/Northern Reedgrass (1.1)

Average Annual Production (lbs./acre, air-dry) :5000

Stocking Rate* (AUM/acre): 1.37

Fowl Bluegrass/Spikerush/Baltic Rush/Forbs (1.2)

Average Annual Production (lbs./acre, air-dry) :4000

Stocking Rate* (AUM/acre): 1.10

Reed Canarygrass/Sedge/Invasive Plants/Prairie Cordgrass (2.1)

Average Annual Production (lbs./acre, air-dry) :3500

Stocking Rate* (AUM/acre): 0.96

Quackgrass/Kentucky Bluegrass/Foxtail Barley/Invasive Plants (2.2)

Average Annual Production (lbs./acre, air-dry) :2500

Stocking Rate* (AUM/acre): 0.69

Annual/Pioneer, Non-Native Perennial (2.3)

Average Annual Production (lbs./acre, air-dry) :1200

Stocking Rate* (AUM/acre): 0.33

*Based on 912 lbs./acre (air-dry weight) per Animal Unit Month (AUM), and on 25 percent harvest efficiency (refer to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Range and Pasture Handbook).

Grazing by domestic livestock is one of the major income-producing industries in the area. Rangeland in this area may provide yearlong forage. During the dormant period, the forage for livestock will likely be lacking protein to meet livestock requirements and added protein will allow ruminants to better utilize the energy stored in grazed plant materials. A forage quality test (either directly or through fecal sampling) should be used to determine the level of supplementation needed.

Hydrological functions

Water is the principal factor limiting forage production on this site. This site is dominated by soils in hydrologic groups C and D. Infiltration is typically slow to very slow and runoff potential for this site is negligible due to the concave shape of the landform this site occupies.

Recreational uses

This site provides hunting, hiking, photography, bird watching, and other opportunities. The wide varieties of plants that bloom from spring until fall have an esthetic value that appeals to visitors.

Wood products

No appreciable wood products are typically present on this site.

Other products

Seed harvest of native plant species can provide additional income on this site.

Inventory data references

Information presented here has been derived from NRCS clipping data and other inventory data. Field observations from range-trained personnel were also used. Those involved in developing this site include: Stan Boltz, Range Management Specialist, NRCS; and Bruce Kunze, Soil Scientist, NRCS.

There are 2 SCS-RANGE-417's collected in 2006 from Kingsbury and Roberts Counties, South Dakota.

Other references

High Plains Regional Climate Center, University of Nebraska, 830728 Chase Hall, Lincoln, NE 68583-0728.
(<http://www.hprcc.unl.edu/>)

USDA, NRCS. National Water and Climate Center, 101 SW Main, Suite 1600, Portland, OR 97204-3224.
(<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>)

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USDA, NRCS. National Soil Information System, Information Technology Center, 2150 Centre Avenue, Building A, Fort Collins, CO 80526. (<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/nasis/>)

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Contributors

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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.

Author(s)/participant(s)	David Schmidt, Tim Nordquist, Stan Boltz
Contact for lead author	
Date	12/04/2007
Approved by	Stan Boltz
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** Rills should not be present.
-

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** Barely observable.

-
3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** Essentially, non-existent.
-
4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** Bare ground less than 5% and less than 2 inches in diameter.
-
5. **Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** Active gullies should not be present.
-
6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** None.
-
7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Little to no plant litter movement. Plant litter remains in place and is not moved by erosional forces.
-
8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):** Stability class 6. Typically high root content, and organic matter. Soil surface is very resistant to erosion.
-
9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** Use soil series description for depth and color of A-horizon.
-
10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** Healthy, deep rooted native grasses enhance infiltration and reduce runoff.
-
11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** No compaction layer should be evident.
-
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: Mid & tall cool-season grass-like >> tall warm-season rhizomatous grass
- Sub-dominant: > tall cool-season rhizomatous grass > mid cool-season rhizomatous grass > forb
- Other:
- Additional:
-
13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** Very little to no evidence of decadence or mortality.

-
14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** 85-90%, roughly 1-2 inches. Litter cover is in contact with soil surface.
-
15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** 4000 – 5200 lbs./acre air-dry weight, average 4,600 lbs./acre air-dry weight
-
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:** Refer to State and Local Noxious Weed List, also reed canarygrass.
-
17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** All species are capable of reproducing.
-