USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Ecological site F122XY009KY
Well Drained Terraces

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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.

MLRA notes

Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): 122X–Highland Rim and Pennyroyal

MLRA 122 is in Tennessee (47 percent), Kentucky (43 percent), Indiana (7 percent), and Alabama (3 percent). It makes up about 21,530 square miles (55,790 square kilometers). Bloomington, Indiana, is in the small part of this area that extends into southern Indiana.

SOILS:
Many of the soils in this MLRA are Udalfs. The moderately deep to very deep, well drained, clayey soils formed in limestone residuum. They are dominantly in rolling to steep areas of the “Outer Basin” (Mimosa, Braxton, Gladdice, and Hampshire series) and the undulating to hilly areas of the “Inner Basin” (Talbott and Bradyville series). The most agriculturally productive soils are the very deep, well drained, clayey or loamy soils that formed in alluvium and/or loess over alluvium or limestone residuum in nearly level to undulating areas (Armour, Cumberland, Harpeth, Lomond, and Maury series). The less extensive soils generally are moderately well drained to somewhat poorly drained and formed in loamy or clayey alluvium and/or residuum (Byler, Capshaw, Colbert, and Tupelo series). This MLRA has a significant acreage of Mollisols. Shallow or moderately deep, well drained, clayey Udolls (Ashwood and Barfield series) formed in limestone residuum dominantly in rolling to steep areas. Very shallow, well drained, clayey Rendolls (Gladeville series) formed in limestone residuum dominantly in undulating to rolling areas of the “Inner Basin.” Very deep, well drained or moderately well drained Udolls (Arrington, Egam, Lynnville, and Staser series) and somewhat poorly drained or poorly drained Aquolls (Agee, Godwin, and Lanton series) formed in loamy or clayey alluvium derived from limestone on flood plains. Most of the remaining soils on flood plains are moderately well drained or well drained Udepts (Lindell and Ocana series). Udults are of small extent in this area. Most are very deep, well drained, and loamy and formed in gravelly colluvium or colluvium and the underlying residuum on steep hillsides (Dellrose soils). Rock outcrops are common on uplands.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:
This area supports mixed oak forest vegetation. White oak, black oak, northern red oak, and some scarlet oak are the dominant tree species. Shagbark hickory, bitternut hickory, pignut hickory, and mockernut hickory also occur. Oak, blackgum, flowering dogwood, sassafras, Virginia pine, pitch pine, and shortleaf pine grow mostly on ridgetops.

(Excerpt from United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2006. Land Resource Regions and Major Land Resource Areas of the United States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 296.)

Classification relationships

Scientific Name: South-Central Interior Large Floodplain
Unique Identifier: CES202.705

Possible NatureServe Associations:

American Beech - Oak species - Red Maple - Black Walnut Forest
Common Name: Beech - Mixed Hardwood Floodplain Forest
Unique Identifier: CEGL005014

Ecological site concept

The communities described in this provisional document reflect plant communities that are likely to be found on these soils and have not been field verified. This PES describes hypotheses based on available data and has not been developed utilizing ecological field monitoring, and does not encompass the entire complexity or diversity of these sites. Field studies would be required for detailed conservation planning or to develop a comprehensive and science-based restoration plan.

Forests on these sites are composed of a variety of hardwoods. Only two tree species can be selected for entry into the database as dominants; however, multiple tree species may be dominant on these sites and it will vary depending on aspect, soil depth, seed sources, management, and disturbance history.

State 1, Phase 1.1: Forestland.
Plant species dominant:
white oak (*Quercus alba*) - American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) / flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) / licorice bedstraw (*Galium circaezans*) - dog-toothed violet (*Erythronium americanum*)

State 2, Phase 2.1: Pastureland.
Plant species dominant:
Schedonorus arundinaceus (tall fescue. Species present are dependent upon seeding and management.

Pasture plant species are dependent on seeding, weed control, concurrent land uses, on-going levels of disturbance, and landowner goals. Individual site and soil characteristics, along with management activities, will influence production levels.

State: 3. Phase 3.1: Transitional (Abandoned Field) Plant species dominant: maple (Acer spp.) – tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) / berries (Rubus spp.)/ fescue (*Schedonorus arundinaceus*)

State 4, Phase 4.1: Abandoned Cropland
Plant species dominant: henbit deadnettle (*Lamium amplexicaule*) – mouse-eared chickweed (Cerastium L.)

State 5, Phase 5.1: Cropland.
Plant species dominants: dependent upon seeding and management.
Most common crops are corn and soybeans.

Restoration of states 2-5 to the reference community would require long-term, intensive management inputs.

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	(1) *Quercus* (2) *Fagus grandifolia*
Shrub	(1) *Cornus florida*
Herbaceous	(1) *Galium circaezans* (2) *Erythronium americanum*

Physiographic features

These sites are located on terraces. Soils are very deep and well drained.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Terrace (2) Lake plain
Flooding duration	Extremely brief (0.1 to 4 hours) to brief (2 to 7 days)
Flooding frequency	None to occasional
Ponding frequency	None
Elevation	104–305 m
Slope	0–30%
Water table depth	152–203 cm

Climatic features

Climate
The average annual precipitation in this area is 43 to 63
inches (1,090 to 1,600 millimeters), increasing to the south. The maximum precipitation occurs in winter and early in spring, and the minimum occurs in fall. Most of the rainfall occurs as high-intensity, convective thunderstorms. Snowfall may occur in winter. The average annual temperature is 52 to 60 degrees F (11 to 16 degrees C), increasing to the south. The freeze-free period averages 210 days and ranges from 185 to 235 days. The longer freeze-free periods occur in the more southerly parts of the area.

(Excerpt from United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2006. Land Resource Regions and Major Land Resource Areas of the United States, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin. U.S. Department of Agriculture Handbook 296.)

Table 3. Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	175 days
Freeze-free period (average)	197 days
Precipitation total (average)	1,372 mm

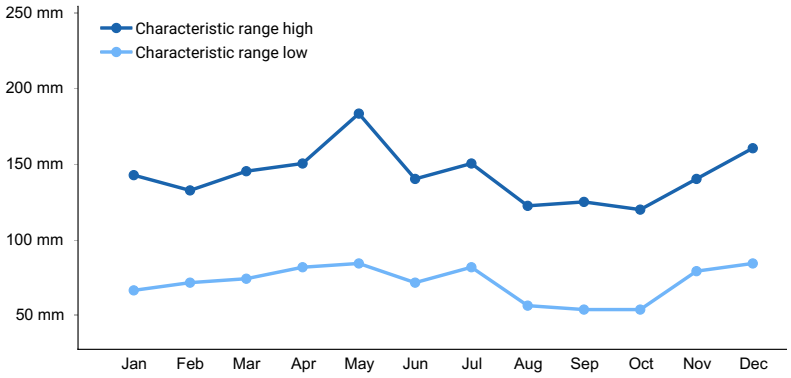

Figure 1. Monthly precipitation range

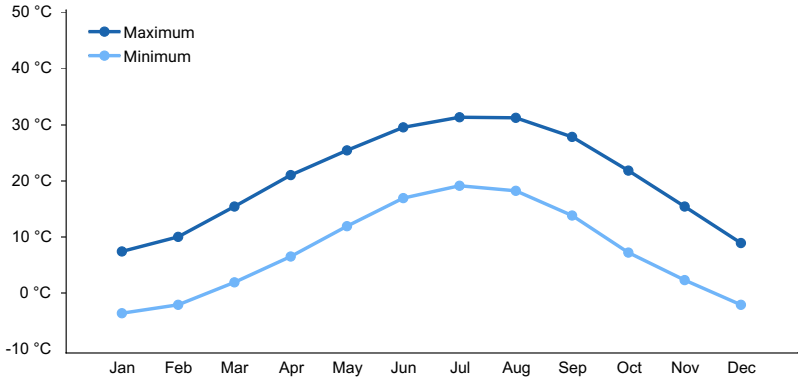

Figure 2. Monthly average minimum and maximum temperature

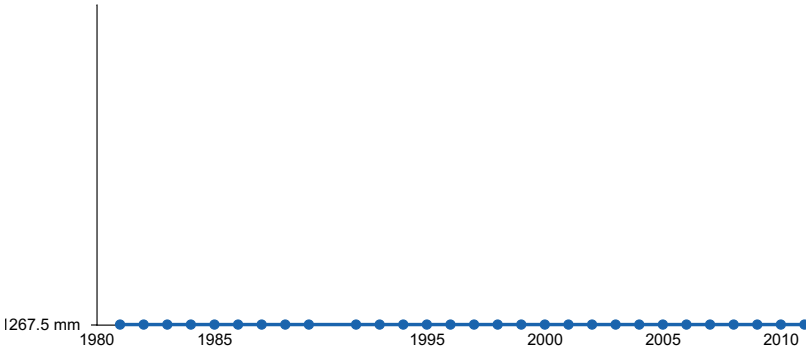

Figure 3. Annual precipitation pattern

Climate stations used

- (1) CLARKSVILLE WWTP [USC00401790], Clarksville, TN
- (2) GREENSBURG [USC00153430], Greensburg, KY
- (3) COOKEVILLE [USC00402009], Cookeville, TN
- (4) SALEM [USC00127755], Salem, IN
- (5) WAYNESBORO [USC00409502], Waynesboro, TN

Influencing water features

Some of these sites, depending on topography, may be flooded occasionally for brief periods.

Soil features

These soils are well drained, very deep, and located on terraces.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Parent material	(1) Alluvium–limestone (2) Lacustrine deposits–shale
Surface texture	(1) Loam (2) Silty clay loam (3) Sandy loam
Drainage class	Well drained
Permeability class	Slow to moderate
Soil depth	203 cm
Surface fragment cover <=3"	0%
Surface fragment cover >3"	0%

Available water capacity (0-101.6cm)	15.24–30.48 cm
Calcium carbonate equivalent (0-101.6cm)	0%
Electrical conductivity (0-101.6cm)	0 mmhos/cm
Sodium adsorption ratio (0-101.6cm)	0
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (0-101.6cm)	5–7
Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	0–12%
Subsurface fragment volume >3" (Depth not specified)	0–3%

Ecological dynamics

MLRA 122, Well Drained Terraces

The natural vegetation of these sites will vary in relationship to the setting, patterns of drainage, disturbances, and previous vegetation communities. Individual sites deserve a detailed understanding before conservation and restoration practices are implemented. The provisional ecological site communities described in this document reflect plant communities that can be found on these soils but do not encompass the entire complexity or diversity of these sites. Field verification is required to develop a full ecological site description which can be utilized for conservation planning uses.

Forest Vegetation as listed in Official Series Descriptions (OSD):
Allegheny: Hardwoods interspersed with conifers.
Ashton: Native vegetation is mostly oaks, maples, elms, sycamore, poplars, black gum, shagbark hickory, ash, and beech.
Canmer: Native vegetation is mostly mixed hardwoods.
Elk: Native forest has oaks, elms, walnut, hickory, and ash as the dominant species.
Elkinsville: Native vegetation is mixed hardwood forest.
Nolichucky: A small acreage is in forests of oak, hickory, elm, maple, and dogwood.
Whitley: Forests are mixed hardwood, chiefly of oaks, hickories, dogwood, yellow poplar, elm, hop hornbeam, beech, and in places hemlock, Virginia, shortleaf and white pine.

Only two tree species can be selected for entry into the database as dominants; however, multiple tree species may be dominant on these sites and it will vary depending on aspect, soil depth, seed sources, management, and disturbance history.

State 1, Phase 1.1: Forestland.
Plant species dominant:
white oak (*Quercus alba*) - American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) / flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) / licorice bedstraw (*Galium circaezans*) - dog-toothed violet (*Erythronium americanum*)

State 2, Phase 2.1: Pastureland.
Plant species dominant:
Schedonorus arundinaceus (tall fescue. Species present are dependent upon seeding and management.

Pasture plant species are dependent on seeding, weed control, concurrent land uses, on-going levels of disturbance, and landowner goals. Individual site and soil characteristics, along with management activities, will influence production levels.

Many species of grass, both warm and cool season, are available and suitable for these sites. Common forage species include tall fescue, orchard grass, Kentucky bluegrass, Johnson grass, timothy, and various species of

clover.

Management of pasture sites should follow conservation planning standards and protocols which include watershed protection, soil health, and adequate forage species.

Transitioning this state to a reference condition would require long-term timber stand improvement practices to control non-native vegetation and manage for desired hardwood species.

State: 3. Phase 3.1: Transitional (Abandoned Field)
Plant species dominant:
maple (Acer spp.) – tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) / berries (Rubus spp.)
/ fescue (*Schedonorus arundinaceus*)

This phase is best described as an old field habitat with a mixture of native and introduced grasses and a variety of native and non-native herbs, forbs, seedlings, and saplings. Tree species regeneration on these sites will depend on the severity and duration of disturbance, soil characteristics, adjacent plant communities and seed sources, post-disturbance management inputs, presence or absence of continued site disturbances (grazing), slope, and aspect.

Transitioning this state to a reference condition would require timber stand improvement practices to control non-native vegetation and manage for desired hardwood species.

State 4, Phase 4.1: Abandoned Cropland
Plant species dominant: henbit deadnettle (*Lamium amplexicaule*) – mouse-eared chickweed (Cerastium L.)

Abandonment of cropland would result in many weed species taking over the site. Initially, annual weeds would be predominate followed by grasses, shrubs and pioneers trees.

State 5, Phase 5.1: Cropland.
Plant species dominants: dependent upon seeding and management.
Most common crops are corn and soybeans.

Restoration of states 2-5 to the reference community would require long-term, intensive management inputs.

State and transition model

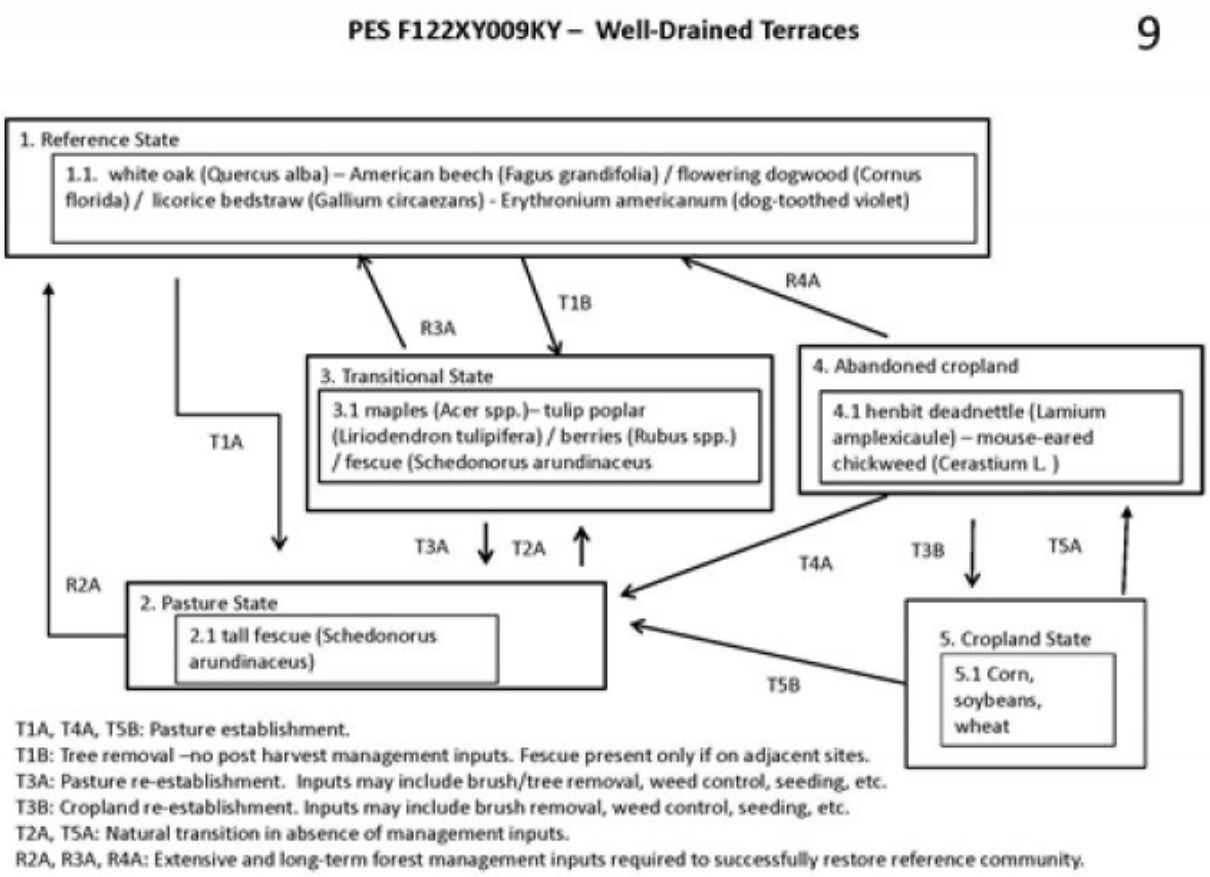

Figure 5. Group9

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)	
Contact for lead author	
Date	
Approved by	
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:**

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

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3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:**

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4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):**

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5. **Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:**

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6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:**

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

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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):**

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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):**

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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:**

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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):**

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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:

    Sub-dominant:

    Other:

    Additional:

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

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):**

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:**

17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:**