

Ecological site F126XY005OH

Poorly Drained Floodplain

Accessed: 05/01/2024

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): 126X–Central Allegheny Plateau

This site contains poorly and very poorly drained on alluvial land deposited during the Quaternary period. ecosite is found in alluvial plain, and river valleys within hills, mountains, plateau, in MLRA 126

Classification relationships

This site crosswalks to Landfire biophysical setting (BpS) Central Interior and Appalachian Floodplain Systems.

NatureServe (2007) describes this as an aggregated system including the following standard ecological systems (for MLRA 127):

- Central Appalachian River Floodplain (CES202.608)

Component Associations (all not applicable to MLRA 127)

Association Unique ID Association Name

CEGL002014 *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus* spp. - *Celtis occidentalis* Forest

CEGL002086 *Betula nigra* - *Platanus occidentalis* Forest

CEGL002191 *Cephalanthus occidentalis* / *Carex* spp. - *Lemna* spp. Southern Shrubland

CEGL002586 *Acer saccharinum* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus americana* Forest

CEGL003896 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Betula nigra* - *Salix* (*caroliniana*, *nigra*) Woodland

CEGL004073 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Acer negundo* - *Juglans nigra* / *Asimina triloba* / *Mertensia virginica* Forest

CEGL004103 *Carex torta* Herbaceous Vegetation

CEGL004286 *Justicia americana* Herbaceous Vegetation

CEGL005014 *Fagus grandifolia* - *Quercus* spp. - *Acer rubrum* - *Juglans nigra* Forest

CEGL005033 *Acer negundo* Ruderal Floodplain Forest

CEGL005082 *Alnus serrulata* Swamp Shrubland

CEGL005449 *Calamagrostis canadensis* North-Central Wet Meadow

CEGL006001 *Acer saccharinum* - *Ulmus americana* / *Onoclea sensibilis* Forest

CEGL006036 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* Forest

CEGL006042 *Acer saccharinum* - *Ulmus americana* / *Physocarpus opulifolius* Forest

CEGL006069 *Cephalanthus occidentalis* - *Decodon verticillatus* Shrubland

CEGL006114 *Acer saccharum* - *Fraxinus* spp. - *Tilia americana* / *Matteuccia struthiopteris* - *Ageratina altissima* Forest

CEGL006147 *Acer saccharinum* - (*Populus deltoides*) / *Matteuccia struthiopteris* - *Laportea canadensis* Forest

CEGL006176 *Acer saccharinum* / *Onoclea sensibilis* - *Boehmeria cylindrica* Forest

CEGL006184 *Betula nigra* - *Platanus occidentalis* / *Impatiens capensis* Forest

CEGL006185 *Quercus palustris* - *Acer rubrum* / *Carex grayi* - *Geum canadense* Forest

CEGL006217 *Acer saccharinum* - *Acer negundo* / *Ageratina altissima* - *Laportea canadensis* - (*Elymus virginicus*) Forest

CEGL006218 *Quercus bicolor* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - (*Platanus occidentalis*) / *Chasmanthium latifolium* - *Dichanthelium clandestinum* - *Zizia aurea* Woodland

CEGL006244 *Peltandra virginica* - *Polygonum amphibium* var. *emersum* - *Carex stricta* - *Impatiens capensis*

Herbaceous Vegetation

- CEGL006251 *Alnus serrulata* - *Physocarpus opulifolius* Shrubland
- CEGL006255 *Liriodendron tulipifera* - *Platanus occidentalis* - *Betula lenta* / *Lindera benzoin* / *Circaea lutetiana* ssp. *canadensis* Forest
- CEGL006283 *Andropogon gerardii* - *Panicum virgatum* - *Baptisia australis* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006305 *Salix sericea* Shrubland
- CEGL006314 *Liriodendron tulipifera* - *Fraxinus* spp. / *Lindera benzoin* - *Viburnum prunifolium* / *Podophyllum peltatum* Forest
- CEGL006386 *Quercus bicolor* - *Acer rubrum* / *Carpinus caroliniana* Forest
- CEGL006405 *Tilia americana* - *Acer saccharum* - *Acer nigrum* / *Laportea canadensis* Forest
- CEGL006445 *Carya cordiformis* - *Prunus serotina* / *Ageratina altissima* Forest
- CEGL006447 *Carex trichocarpa* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006459 *Acer saccharum* - *Fraxinus americana* / *Carpinus caroliniana* / *Podophyllum peltatum* Forest
- CEGL006463 *Salix nigra* - *Betula nigra* / *Schoenoplectus pungens* Wooded Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006466 *Platanus occidentalis* / *Aesculus flava* Forest
- CEGL006473 *Acer saccharum* - *Liriodendron tulipifera* / *Galium concinnum* - *Carex laxiculmis* Forest
- CEGL006476 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Acer saccharinum* - *Betula nigra* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* / *Boehmeria cylindrica* - *Carex emoryi* Woodland
- CEGL006478 *Fraxinus americana* / *Andropogon gerardii* - *Sorghastrum nutans* - *Schizachyrium scoparium* - *Pycnanthemum tenuifolium* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006480 *Verbesina alternifolia* - *Elymus riparius* - *Solidago gigantea* - (*Teucrium canadense*) Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006481 *Eupatorium serotinum* - *Polygonum* (*lapathifolium*, *punctatum*, *pensylvanicum*) Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006483 *Eragrostis hypnoides* - *Ludwigia palustris* - *Lindernia dubia* - *Cyperus squarrosus* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006484 *Carpinus caroliniana* - *Ilex decidua* Shrubland
- CEGL006491 (*Hypericum prolificum*, *Leucothoe racemosa*) / *Schizachyrium scoparium* - *Solidago simplex* var. *racemosa* - *Ionactis linariifolius* Sparse Vegetation
- CEGL006495 *Quercus rubra* - *Quercus shumardii* / *Cercis canadensis* Temporarily Flooded Forest
- CEGL006497 *Quercus palustris* - *Quercus bicolor* / *Carex tribuloides* - *Carex radiata* - (*Carex squarrosa*) Forest
- CEGL006518 *Prunus pumila* / *Andropogon gerardii* - *Sorghastrum nutans* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006536 *Carex torta* - *Apocynum cannabinum* - *Cyperus* spp. Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL006546 *Alnus incana* - *Viburnum recognitum* / *Calamagrostis canadensis* Shrubland
- CEGL006548 *Acer* (*rubrum*, *saccharinum*) - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus americana* / *Boehmeria cylindrica* Forest
- CEGL006575 *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - (*Juglans nigra*, *Platanus occidentalis*) Forest
- CEGL006595 *Spiraea alba* Shrubland
- CEGL007696 *Peltandra virginica* - *Saururus cernuus* - *Boehmeria cylindrica* / *Climacium americanum* Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL007879 *Juglans nigra* / *Verbesina alternifolia* Ruderal Forest
- CEGL008405 *Liriodendron tulipifera* - *Pinus strobus* - (*Tsuga canadensis*) / *Carpinus caroliniana* / *Amphicarpaea bracteata* Forest
- CEGL008449 *Pinus virginiana* - *Juniperus virginiana* var. *virginiana* - *Quercus stellata* / *Amelanchier stolonifera* / *Danthonia spicata* / *Leucobryum glaucum* Woodland

• North-Central Interior Floodplain (CES202.694)

Component Associations (all not applicable to MLRA 127)

Association Unique ID Association Name

- CEGL002018 *Populus deltoides* - *Salix nigra* - *Acer saccharinum* Forest
- CEGL002026 *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* - *Typha* spp. - (*Sparganium* spp., *Juncus* spp.) Herbaceous Vegetation
- CEGL002086 *Betula nigra* - *Platanus occidentalis* Forest
- CEGL002087 *Carya illinoensis* - *Celtis laevigata* Forest
- CEGL002099 *Quercus michauxii* - *Quercus shumardii* - *Liquidambar styraciflua* / *Arundinaria gigantea* Forest
- CEGL002101 *Quercus palustris* - (*Quercus stellata*) - *Quercus pagoda* / *Isoetes* spp. Forest
- CEGL002102 *Quercus phellos* - (*Quercus lyrata*) / *Carex* spp. - *Leersia* spp. Forest

CEGL002103 *Salix nigra* Forest
CEGL002191 *Cephalanthus occidentalis* / *Carex* spp. - *Lemna* spp. Southern Shrubland
CEGL002314 River Mudflats Sparse Vegetation
CEGL002386 *Nuphar advena* - *Nymphaea odorata* Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL002410 *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Celtis* spp. - *Quercus* spp. - *Platanus occidentalis* Bottomland Forest
CEGL002417 *Quercus stellata* - *Quercus marilandica* - *Quercus falcata* / *Schizachyrium scoparium* Sand Woodland
CEGL002420 *Taxodium distichum* / *Lemna minor* Forest
CEGL002427 *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus americana* - *Celtis laevigata* / *Ilex decidua* Forest
CEGL002430 *Polygonum* spp. - Mixed Forbs Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL002431 *Acer saccharinum* - *Celtis laevigata* - *Carya illinoensis* Forest
CEGL002586 *Acer saccharinum* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus americana* Forest
CEGL003725 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Betula nigra* / *Cornus amomum* / (*Andropogon gerardii*, *Chasmanthium latifolium*) Woodland
CEGL003836 *Arundinaria gigantea* ssp. *gigantea* Shrubland
CEGL003895 *Alnus serrulata* - *Xanthorhiza simplicissima* Shrubland
CEGL003910 (*Diospyros virginiana*, *Platanus occidentalis*) / *Eupatorium serotinum* - *Diodia virginiana* Ruderal Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL004049 River Valley Impoundment Mudflat Sparse Vegetation
CEGL004103 *Carex torta* Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL004286 *Justicia americana* Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL004420 *Acer rubrum* var. *trilobum* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* / *Carex crinita* - *Peltandra virginica* Forest
CEGL004544 *Quercus macrocarpa* - *Quercus shumardii* - *Carya cordiformis* / *Chasmanthium latifolium* Forest
CEGL004618 *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Ulmus crassifolia* - *Celtis laevigata* Forest
CEGL004691 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Liriodendron tulipifera* - *Betula (alleghaniensis, lenta)* / *Alnus serrulata* - *Leucothoe fontanesiana* Forest
CEGL004979 *Quercus nigra* - *Quercus (alba, phellos)* Forest
CEGL005014 *Fagus grandifolia* - *Quercus* spp. - *Acer rubrum* - *Juglans nigra* Forest
CEGL005033 *Acer negundo* Ruderal Floodplain Forest
CEGL005035 *Acer saccharum* - *Carya cordiformis* / *Asimina triloba* Floodplain Forest
CEGL005057 *Quercus stellata* / (*Danthonia spicata*, *Croton willdenowii*) Woodland
CEGL005451 *Lemna* spp. Eastern North American Aquatic Vegetation
CEGL006458 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* / *Carpinus caroliniana* / *Verbesina alternifolia* Forest
CEGL006462 *Quercus (rubra, velutina, alba)* / *Carpinus caroliniana* - (*Halesia tetraptera*) / *Maianthemum racemosum* Forest
CEGL006466 *Platanus occidentalis* / *Aesculus flava* Forest
CEGL006480 *Verbesina alternifolia* - *Elymus riparius* - *Solidago gigantea* - (*Teucrium canadense*) Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL006620 *Tsuga canadensis* - *Quercus rubra* - (*Platanus occidentalis*, *Betula nigra*) / *Rhododendron maximum* / *Anemone quinquefolia* Forest
CEGL007064 *Salix caroliniana* Temporarily Flooded Ozark Shrubland
CEGL007334 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Acer saccharinum* - *Juglans nigra* - *Ulmus rubra* Forest
CEGL007339 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* - *Quercus imbricaria* Forest
CEGL007399 *Quercus palustris* - (*Fraxinus nigra*) / *Lindera benzoin* / *Carex bromoides* Forest
CEGL007410 *Salix nigra* Large River Floodplain Forest
CEGL007702 *Liquidambar styraciflua* - *Quercus michauxii* - *Carya laciniosa* / *Fagus grandifolia* - (*Aesculus flava*) Forest
CEGL007810 *Acer saccharinum* - *Betula nigra* / *Cephalanthus occidentalis* Forest
CEGL007879 *Juglans nigra* / *Verbesina alternifolia* Ruderal Forest
CEGL007880 *Liquidambar styraciflua* - *Liriodendron tulipifera* - (*Platanus occidentalis*) / *Carpinus caroliniana* - *Halesia tetraptera* / *Amphicarpaea bracteata* Forest
CEGL007999 *Platanus occidentalis* - *Betula nigra* - *Celtis laevigata* - *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* / *Arundinaria gigantea* Temporarily Flooded Forest
CEGL008404 *Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis* Seepage Scour Herbaceous Vegetation
CEGL008495 *Hypericum densiflorum* - *Alnus serrulata* / *Tripsacum dactyloides* Shrubland
CEGL008562 *Salix interior* Temporarily Flooded Shrubland

Ecological site concept

From NatureServe (2007): This system encompasses floodplains of medium to large rivers in Atlantic drainages from southern New England to Virginia. This system can include a complex of wetland and upland vegetation on deep alluvial deposits and scoured vegetation on depositional bars and on bedrock where rivers cut through resistant geology. This complex includes floodplain forests in which *Acer saccharinum*, *Populus deltoides*, and *Platanus occidentalis* are characteristic, as well as herbaceous sloughs, shrub wetlands, riverside prairies and woodlands. Microtopography and soil texture determine how long the various habitats are inundated. Depositional and erosional features may both be present depending on the particular floodplain.

From Landfire <http://www.landfire.gov/index.php>:

This systems group encompasses large-river floodplains over much of the eastern US (NatureServe 2007), but differs from the Coastal Plain model in several ways. First it is floristically different in that it lacks cypress and tupelo except in its lowest elevation where it transitions to the Coastal Plain. Permanent standing water is lacking except in the areas closest to sea level where oxbow lakes may exist. Hydroperiods are shorter and fluvial features such as river terraces, oxbows, alluvial flats, point bars, streamside levees and other fine-scale alluvial floodplain features are abundant. NatureServe (2007) notes some will include herbaceous sloughs and shrub wetlands, particularly in abandoned channels

The substrate is primarily alluvium. The generally fertile soils are usually sandy to loamy but include local clayey and gravelly areas (NatureServe 2007).

Synonyms for this BpS and its variations include eastern riverfront forest, bottomland hardwood forest, and alluvial forest. Fire and beaver activity create a mosaic whose elements include canebrake, beaver ponds, and grass-sedge meadows in abandoned beaver clearings, as well as the swamps and bottomland hardwood forests that make up more than 95% of the cover that exists today.

Standard Ecological Systems noted by NatureServe (2007) that make up this aggregated system include:

- Central Appalachian River Floodplain (CES202.608)
- North-Central Interior Floodplain (CES202.694)
- South-Central Interior Large Floodplain (CES202.705)
- Southern Piedmont Large Floodplain Forest (CES202.324)

Issues or Problems:

Federal reservoirs have had a serious and negative effect, along with agriculture that has converted much floodplain acreage to drained agricultural land. In the remaining less altered floodplains, flood duration varies according to the river's gradient (NatureServe 2007).

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	(1) <i>Platanus occidentalis</i>
Shrub	(1) <i>Acer negundo</i>
Herbaceous	(1) <i>Carex</i>

Physiographic features

Climatic features

Influencing water features

Soil features

Ecological dynamics

Ecological Dynamics: Information contained in this section was adapted from several sources. The information presented is representative of very complex vegetation communities. Key indicator plants, animals and ecological processes are described to help inform land management decisions. Plant communities will differ across the MLRA because of the naturally occurring variability in weather, soils, and aspect. The reference plant community is not necessarily the management goal. The species lists are representative and are not botanical descriptions of all species occurring, or potentially occurring, on this site. They are not intended to cover every situation or the full range of conditions, species, and responses for the site.

State Correlation: This site will be correlated in: OH,PA,WV

From Landfire <http://www.landfire.gov/index.php>:

Most of the system is forest vegetation. The canopy is usually dominated by a mix of characteristic alluvial and bottomland species (depending on the region) such as sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), river birch (*Betula nigra*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). NatureServe (2007) also notes characteristic trees include silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), willows, especially black willow (*Salix nigra*) in the wettest areas, American elm (*Ulmus Americana*), swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), cherrybark oak (*Quercus pagoda*), and (at least in the Midwest) Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) in more well-drained areas. The particular mix of tree species will vary across the geographic range of this systems group, with some trees absent over parts of the range. Successional areas are often dominated by sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), or tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*).

The driest and most fire sheltered sites support species such as pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*), shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), and other fire sensitive species.

Subcanopy species included American holly (*Ilex opaca*), deciduous holly (*Ilex decidua* and *Ilex ambigua*), red mulberry (*Morus rubra*), ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*) and hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*). Shrubs such as spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*), common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), roughleaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*), and pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*); sedges (*Carex* spp.); and grasses including eastern bottlebrush grass (*Elymus hystrix*), Canada wildrye (*Elymus Canadensis*), and Indian woodoats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*), and false nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*) may be present.

Because of the particular mix and diversity of tree species will vary across the geographic range of this systems group, the list of BpS dominant and indicator species is only a rudimentary list.

State and transition model

State and Transition Diagram

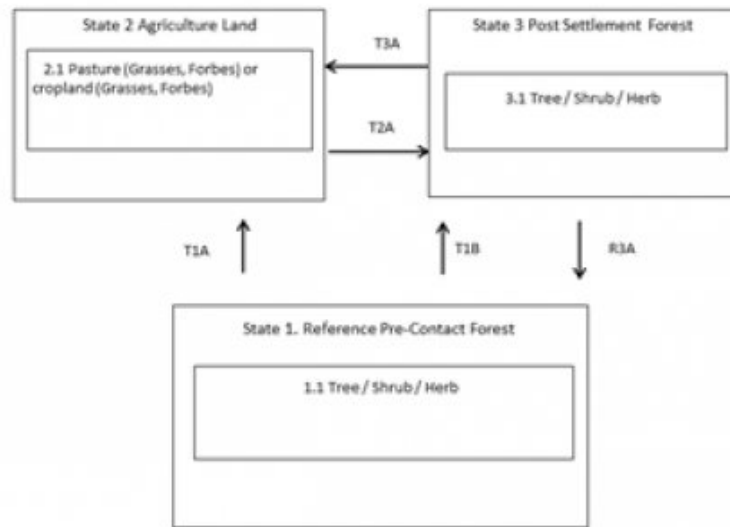


Figure 1. State and Transition

Legend

- T1A, T3A Clearcutting to convert to agricultural land.
- T1B Logging and fire suppression.
- T2A Agriculture abandonment and regrowth of forest
- R3A Eliminate undesirable species with herbicides, cutting or prescribed fire

Figure 2. Legend

State 1 Reference Pre-Contact Forest

The reference state can be represented by several communities within Central Appalachian River Floodplain (CES202.608) (Natureserve, 2007). Forest overstory canopies are sycamore dominated and generally closed canopy.

Community 1.1

Tree/Shrub/Herb

Sycamore and River Birch Forest best captures the nature of this vegetation state. The dominate overstory canopy consist of Sycamore and river birch with minor canopy coverage of red maple. The shrub layer contains box elder, hornbeam and poison ivy. The herb layer will contain flowering forbes, ferns,grasses and sedges.

State 2

Post Settlemet Forest

This forest vegetation community is the result poor logging techniques (high grading).

Community 2.1

Tree/Shrub/Herb

Sycamore and River Birch Forest best captures the nature of this vegetation state. The dominate overstory canopy consist of Sycamore and river birch with minor canopy coverage of red maple. The shrub layer contains box elder, hornbeam and poison ivy. The herb layer will contain flowering forbes, ferns,grasses and sedges.

State 3

Agricultural Land

Land managed for agricultural production of crops and livestock.

Community 3.1

Pasture (Grasses, Forbes) or Cropland (Grasses, Forbes)

This community phase may contain a wide variety of plants depending on the level of management. In pasture circumstances that are managed tall fescue, bluegrass and white clover will dominate the vegetation canopy. Without management such as prescribed grazing, nutrient management and weed control, less desirable forage species and weeds will invade.

Transition T1A

State 1 to 2

The site is logged and managed for agricultural land.

Transition T1B

State 1 to 3

The site is logged and high graded, lees desirable species dominate succession.

Restoration pathway R3A

State 2 to 1

Remove undesirable species using herbicides, cutting or prescribed fire. Plant desired species if absent from the site.

Transition T3A

State 2 to 2

The site is logged and managed for agricultural land.

Transition T2A

State 3 to 3

The site agricultural management is abandoned and forest regrowth occurs through natural succession or tree planting.

Additional community tables

Other references

Landfire <http://www.landfire.gov/index.php>

NatureServe. 2007. International Ecological Classification Standard: Terrestrial Ecological Classifications. NatureServe Central Databases. Arlington, VA, U.S.A. Data current as of 15 April 2007.

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:**

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

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

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

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

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

-
8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):**
-
9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):**
-
10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:**
-
11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):**
-
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:
-
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:**

