

Ecological site group DX035X03CESG02

Defiance Plateau - Saline

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Key Characteristics

- Defiance Plateau
- Soils not sodic
- Soils saline

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.

Physiography

These sites occurs on uplands with slopes of 0 to 15 percent. Landforms include fan terraces and summits associated with cuerdas, mesas and structural benches. It occurs on Dakota sandstone and Mancos shale formations on the Colorado Plateau.

Climate

Winter summer moisture ratios range from 70:30 to 60:40. Late spring is usually the driest period, and early fall moisture can be sporadic. Summer rains fall from June through September; moisture originates in the Gulf of Mexico and creates convective, usually brief, intense thunderstorms. Cool season moisture from October through May tends to be frontal; it originates in the Pacific and the Gulf of California and falls in widespread storms with longer duration and lower intensity. Precipitation generally comes as snow from December through February. Accumulations above 12 inches are not common but can occur. Snow usually lasts for 3-4 days, but can persist much longer. Summer daytime temperatures are commonly 95 - 100 F and on occasion exceed 105 F. Winter air temperatures can regularly go below 10 F and have been recorded below - 20 F.

Soil features

Soils are deep with very fine sandy loam to sandy loam surfaces. Subsoil textures range from fine sandy loam to sandy clay loam. Water erosion hazard is moderate; wind erosion hazard is severe. Soils are slightly to moderately saline.

Vegetation dynamics

Please see associated ecological sites under subclasses to view state and transition models.

These sites have a plant community made up primarily of mid and short grasses with a relatively small percentage of forbs and shrubs. In the reference plant community there is a predominance of grasses with shrubs, half shrubs. Grasses are abundant and include Indian ricegrass, galleta and alkali sacaton. Shadscale is the major shrub. Plant species most likely to invade or increase on this site when it deteriorates are broom snakeweed, rabbit brush, pricklypear cactus and annuals. Shadscale is the major shrub. Introduced annuals are present in the plant community at levels that begin to affect the biotic integrity of the native plant community.

Major Land Resource Area

MLRA 035X

Colorado Plateau

Subclasses

- R035XB203AZ–Clay Loam Upland 6-10" p.z. Saline
- R035XC326AZ–Sandy Loam Upland 10-14" p.z. Saline

Stage

Provisional

State and transition model

Citations