

Ecological site R041XC302AZ Clayey Swale 12-16" p.z.

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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	03/04/2005
Approved by	Byron Lambeth
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** None present on this site.
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2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** None present due to high shrink/swell soils.
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3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** No pedestals due to high shrink/swell soils.
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4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen,**

moss, plant canopy are not bare ground): 5-10%

5. Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies: None present on this site.

6. Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas: None present on this site.

7. Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel): All litter size classes stay in place.

8. Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values): Expect values of 4-6 across site.

9. Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness): fine subangular blocky to massive; Color is 10YR5/2 Dry, 10YR2/2 Moist; thickness to 5 inches.

10. Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff: Cover estimated as follows: Canopy 80%, Basal 35%, Litter 15%; 95% of canopy cover is perennial midgrasses, 3% is short grasses, and 2 % is grass like and forbs. Short grass species cover occupy scattered patches throughout site.

11. Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site): None present 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: perennial grass

Sub-dominant: perennial forbs = shrubs & trees = annual forbs & grasses

Other:

Additional:

13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** Approximately 50% of basal cover of midgrass species lost in recent prolonged drought
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14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):**
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15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** 800 lbs/acre unfavorable precipitation; 2,000 lbs/acre normal precipitation; 2,500 lbs/acre favorable precipitation.
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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:** mesquite, bermuda grass, Johnson grass.
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17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** Not affected even following several years of prolonged drought period for region.
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