

Ecological site R021XY212OR
SHALLOW LOAM
14-18 PZ

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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.

Associated sites

R021XY308OR	SOUTH SLOPES 14-18 PZ
R021XY312OR	NORTH SLOPES 14-18 PZ
R021XY314OR	DRY MEADOW 14-30 PZ

Similar sites

R021XY410OR	DEEP LOAMY 16-20 PZ Deeper soil, thicker surface.
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Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	Not specified

Physiographic features

This site occurs in mountainous sideslopes, rolling plateaus and colluvial slopes.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Mountain slope (2) Plateau
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Elevation	1,220 – 1,830 m
Slope	0 – 30 %
Aspect	Aspect is not a significant factor

Climatic features

The annual precipitation ranges from 14 to 18 inches, most of which occurs in the form of snow during the months of October through May. The soil temperature regime is mesic with the mean annual air temperature of 47 degrees F. Temperature extremes range from 90 to -30 degrees F. The frost free period ranges from 70 to 140 days. The optimum period for plant growth is from mid-April through late June.

Table 3 Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	140 days
Freeze-free period (average)	0 days
Precipitation total (average)	460 mm

Influencing water features

Soil features

The soils of this site range from shallow to moderately deep over bedrock or a restrictive layer and well drained. The subsoil is loamy to clayey and may contain up to 35 percent coarse fragments. Depth to bedrock or an indurated pan is about 20 inches. Permeability is moderate to moderately slow. The available water holding capacity is about 4 to 6 inches. The potential for erosion is slight to moderately severe.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Family particle size	(1) Loamy
Drainage class	Well drained
Permeability class	Moderately slow to moderate
Soil depth	50 – 100 cm
Available water capacity (0-101.6cm)	10.16 – 15.24 cm

Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	40 %
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Ecological dynamics

If the condition of the site deteriorates as a result of overgrazing, Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass decrease in the stand to be replaced by needlegrass and Sandberg bluegrass. If deterioration continues, shrubs such as big sagebrush and rabbitbrush will dominant the stand. In the absence of periodic fire, western juniper will invade the site.

This site is typically dominated by Idaho fescue, at the upper end of the precipitation range and bluebunch wheatgrass increases in proportion on the drier end of the range or where gravels increase in the soil.

State and transition model

Additional community tables

Table 5. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (t)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Dominant deep rooted perennial grasses			404-656	
	Idaho fescue	FEID	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	303-504	–
	bluebunch wheatgrass	PSSP6	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>	101-151	–
2	Sub-dominant deep rooted perennial grasses			40-101	
	Thurber's needlegrass	ACTH7	<i>Achnatherum thurberianum</i>	20-50	–
	basin wildrye	LECI4	<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	20-50	–
4	Sub-dominant shallow rooted perennial grasses			30-61	
	Sandberg bluegrass	POSE	<i>Poa secunda</i>	30-61	–
5	Other perennial grasses			20-50	
	western needlegrass	ACOC3	<i>Achnatherum occidentale</i>	0-6	–
	prairie Junegrass	KOMA	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	0-6	–
Forb					
7	Dominant perennial forbs			40-81	
	milkvetch	ASTRA	<i>Astragalus</i>	10-20	–
	desertparsley	LOMAT	<i>Lomatium</i>	10-20	–
	lupine	LUPIN	<i>Lupinus</i>	10-20	–
	phlox	PHLOX	<i>Phlox</i>	10-20	–
9	Other perennial forbs			10-50	
	tapertip hawksbeard	CRAC2	<i>Crepis acuminata</i>	0-6	–
	fleabane	ERIGE2	<i>Erigeron</i>	0-6	–
	buckwheat	ERIOG	<i>Eriogonum</i>	0-6	–
	flax	LINUM	<i>Linum</i>	0-6	–
	woolly plantain	PLPA2	<i>Plantago patagonica</i>	0-6	–
Shrub/Vine					
12	Sub-dominant evergreen shrubs			20-50	
	mountain big sagebrush	ARTRV	<i>Artemisia tridentata ssp. vaseyana</i>	20-50	–
13	Dominant deciduous (or 1/2 shrubs) shrubs			101-151	
	antelope bitterbrush	PUTR2	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	101-151	–

15	Other shrubs			10-50	
	Saskatoon serviceberry	AMAL2	Amelanchier alnifolia	0-6	–
	Klamath plum	PRSU2	Prunus subcordata	0-6	–
	chokecherry	PRVI	Prunus virginiana	0-6	–
	wax currant	RICE	Ribes cereum	0-6	–
	rose	ROSA5	Rosa	0-6	–
	mountain snowberry	SYOR2	Symphoricarpos oreophilus	0-6	–
	horsebrush	TETRA3	Tetradymia	0-6	–
Tree					
16	Dominant evergreen trees			20-50	
	western juniper	JUOC	Juniperus occidentalis	20-50	–

Animal community

This site provides forage for deer, sage grouse and pronghorn antelope and cover for various bird species.

Hydrological functions

The soils are in hydrologic groups C and D.

Recreational uses

This site provides opportunity for observing and hunting mule deer, pronghorn antelope and various game birds.

Other products

This site is suited to livestock grazing in late spring, summer and fall under a planned grazing system.

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.

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Date	08/22/2012
Approved by	

Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. Number and extent of rills: None, slight to moderately severe sheet & rill erosion hazard

2. Presence of water flow patterns: None

3. Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes: None to few (shallow rooted grasses)

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

6. Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas: None, slight wind erosion hazard

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

8. Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values): Moderately resistant to erosion: aggregate stability = 4-5

9. Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness): Shallow to moderately deep, well drained loams (sometimes gravelly or stony on the surface): Low OM (1-2%)

10. Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff: High amount of plant cover (70-90%), rock fragments, and moderate slopes (0-30%) effectively limit rainfall impact and overland flow; infiltration is moderate to moderately slow

11. Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site): None
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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: Idaho fescue > Bluebunch wheatgrass = Antelope bitterbrush > dominant grasses > dominant forbs > Mountain big sagebrush
= other grasses > other forbs = other shrubs

Sub-dominant:

Other:

Additional:

13. Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):
Normal decadence and mortality expected
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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):
Favorable: 1200, Normal: 900, Unfavorable: 600 lbs/acre/year at high RSI (HCPC)
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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: Perennial brush species will increase with deterioration of plant community. Western Juniper readily invades the site. Cheatgrass and Medusahead invade sites that have lost deep rooted perennial grass functional groups.
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17. Perennial plant reproductive capability: All species should be capable of reproducing annually
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