

Ecological site R024XY031OR DROUGHTY SHALLOW SLOPES 6-10 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

R024XY015OR	DESERT LOAM 6-10 PZ Desert Loam 6-10 PZ
R024XY016OR	LOAMY 8-10 PZ Loamy 8-10 PZ
R024XY017OR	SHALLOW LOAM 8-10 PZ Shallow Loam 8-10 PZ
R024XY020OR	SHRUBBY LOAM 8-10 PZ Shrubby Loam 8-10 PZ
R024XY030OR	LOAMY SLOPES 6-10 PZ Shallow Loamy Slopes 6-10 PZ
R024XY032OR	ARID SOUTH SLOPES 6-10 PZ South Slopes 6-10PZ
R024XY033OR	ARID NORTH SLOPES 6-10 PZ North Slopes 6-10 PZ

Similar sites

R024XY032OR	ARID SOUTH SLOPES 6-10 PZ Shallow Loamy Slopes 6-10 PZ (deeper, lower soluble salts, higher production)
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R024XY0300R	LOAMY SLOPES 6-10 PZ South Slopes 6-10 PZ (lower soluble salts)
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Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	(1) <i>Atriplex confertifolia</i> (2) <i>Picrothamnus desertorum</i>
Herbaceous	(1) <i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i> (2) <i>Elymus elymoides</i>

Physiographic features

This site occurs on south facing sideslopes of basin hills and low mountains. Slopes range from 30-70%. Elevation varies from 4400-5500 feet.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Hill (2) Mountain
Elevation	1,340 – 1,680 m
Slope	30 – 70 %
Aspect	S

Climatic features

The annual precipitation ranges from 6 to 10 inches, most of which occurs during the months of December through March. The mean annual air temperature is 48 degrees F. Temperature extremes range from 100 to -31 degrees F. The period of optimum plant growth is from the first of April through early June.

Table 3 Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	0 days
Freeze-free period (average)	0 days
Precipitation total (average)	250 mm

Influencing water features

Soil features

The soils of this site are very shallow over a strongly cemented duripan or bedrock. Typically the surface is a very cobbly clay loam over a cobbly clay loam subsoil. They are sodium affected. Permeability is moderate to moderately slow. The available water holding capacity (AWC) is about .5 to 3 inches for the profile. The potential for erosion is high. See Appendix II for soils on which this site occurs.

Representative Soil for this Site-

Skedaddle very cobbly clay loam, 30-70% slopes

Skedaddle (shallow): Loamy-skeletal, mixed, natric, mesic, Lithic Xeric Torriorthents

Table 4. Representative soil features

Surface texture	(1) Clay loam
Family particle size	(1) Clayey
Permeability class	Moderate to moderately slow

Ecological dynamics

Range in Characteristics-

The depth to a restrictive layer and aspect influences the composition and production of the site. Production will increase with greater soil depth. Indian ricegrass will increase on coarser soils and warmer slopes. Squirreltail will increase on older surfaces with heavy erosion pavement.

Response to Disturbance-

If the condition of the site deteriorates as a result of overgrazing, Indian ricegrass will decrease in the stand. With further deterioration, bud sagebrush will decrease followed by shadscale and squirreltail. Bare ground will increase, erosion accelerates and site productivity decreases. The invasion of annuals and reestablishment of perennials is limited to eroded surfaces and in areas of dense cobbles and heavy erosion pavement.

State and transition model

Additional community tables

Table 5. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Perennial, Deep-rooted, Dominant			67-135	
	Indian ricegrass	ACHY	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	45-90	–
	squirreltail	ELEL5	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	22-67	–
5	Perennial, Others (PPGG), ALL			22-67	
	desert needlegrass	ACSP12	<i>Achnatherum speciosum</i>	6-17	–
	Thurber's needlegrass	ACTH7	<i>Achnatherum thurberianum</i>	6-17	–
	Webber needlegrass	ACWE3	<i>Achnatherum webberi</i>	6-17	–
	Sandberg bluegrass	POSE	<i>Poa secunda</i>	6-17	–
Forb					
9	Perennial, Other (PPFF), ALL			4-36	
	milkvetch	ASTRA	<i>Astragalus</i>	0-4	–
	Indian paintbrush	CASTI2	<i>Castilleja</i>	0-4	–
	skeletonweed	CHAET	<i>Chaetadelpa</i>	0-4	–

	Douglas' dustymaiden	CHDO	<i>Chaenactis douglasii</i>	0-4	-
	tapertip hawksbeard	CRAC2	<i>Crepis acuminata</i>	0-4	-
	buckwheat	ERIOG	<i>Eriogonum</i>	0-4	-
	pricklyphlox	LEPTO2	<i>Leptodactylon</i>	0-4	-
	phlox	PHLOX	<i>Phlox</i>	0-4	-
	scarlet globemallow	SPCO	<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	0-4	-
Shrub/Vine					
11	Perennial, Evergreen, Dominant			179-314	
	shadscale saltbush	ATCO	<i>Atriplex confertifolia</i>	135-224	-
	bud sagebrush	PIDE4	<i>Picrothamnus desertorum</i>	45-90	-
12	Perennial, Evergreen, Sub-Dominant			22-67	
	spiny hopsage	GRSP	<i>Grayia spinosa</i>	22-67	-
15	Perennial, Other(SSSS), ALL			9-27	
	yellow rabbitbrush	CHVI8	<i>Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus</i>	2-6	-
	rubber rabbitbrush	ERNA10	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	2-6	-
	winterfat	KRLA2	<i>Krascheninnikovia lanata</i>	2-6	-
	littleleaf horsebrush	TEGL	<i>Tetradymia glabrata</i>	2-6	-
	shortspine horsebrush	TESP2	<i>Tetradymia spinosa</i>	2-6	-

Animal community

Wildlife- This site is commonly used by mule deer, California bighorn sheep, rodents, upland birds and various predators. This site is important wintering area for many species of wildlife. Livestock grazing- This site has limited suitability to use by cattle, sheep and horses in the late spring and fall under a planned grazing system. The key species are Indian ricegrass and bud sagebrush. Indian ricegrass can be severely damaged if heavily grazed during periods of flowering and grass seed formation before root reserves have accumulated and soil moisture is low. Bud sagebrush and shadscale can be severely damaged if heavily grazed in the late winter and early spring during periods of "bark slippage". Care should be taken to avoid plant crown damage and soil compaction when soils are wet. The shallow soils on the steep slopes of this site are very susceptible to movement and compaction from hoof action.

Hydrological functions

watershed- The soils of this site have high runoff potential because of low intake rates, very shallow depths and steep slopes. The hydrologic cover condition is fair when the ecological condition is high.

Other information

This site has virtually no potential for range seedig because it is steep, droughty and stony. In areas where dense cobbles and heavy erosion pavement exists, the potential for natural seeding reestablishment is low.

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.

Author(s)/participant(s)	
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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:
