

Ecological site R079XY132KS Subirrigated

Last updated: 9/21/2018
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General information

Approved. An approved ecological site description has undergone quality control and quality assurance review. It contains a working state and transition model, enough information to identify the ecological site, and full documentation for all ecosystem states contained in the state and transition model.

MLRA notes

Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): 079X–Great Bend Sand Plains

MLRA 79 is contained entirely in Kansas. It makes up about 7,405 square miles (19,185 square kilometers). Great Bend, Hutchinson, and Wichita are in this MLRA. U.S. Highways 50, 54, and 56 cross the area. The western part of McConnell Air Force Base and the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge are in this area. Following are the various kinds of land use in this MLRA: Cropland-private, 67 percent; Grassland-private, 23 percent; Federal, 1 percent; Forest-private, 1percent; Urban development-private, 5 percent; Water-private, 1percent; Other-private, 2 percent. Nearly all of this area is in farms or ranches. Most of the area is used as cropland. Cash-grain farming is the principal enterprise. Hard winter wheat is the major crop, but grain sorghum and alfalfa also are grown. The grassland in the area consists of sandy soils and steeply sloping areas. It supports native grasses grazed by beef cattle. The major soil resource concerns are the hazards of wind and water erosion, maintenance of the content of organic matter in the soils, and soil moisture management. The major management concerns on grassland are plant health and vigor, and control of noxious and invasive weeds. Conservation practices on cropland generally include high-residue crops in the cropping system; systems of crop residue management, such as no-till and strip-till systems; conservation crop rotations; wind stripcropping; and nutrient and pest management. Conservation practices on rangeland generally include brush management, prescribed burning, control of noxious weeds, pest management, watering facilities, and proper grazing use.

Classification relationships

Major land resource area (MLRA): 079-Great Bend Sand Plains

Ecological site concept

The Subirrigated ecological site is characterized by somewhat poorly drained soils that have a seasonal or perennial high water table greater than 2 feet and less than 6 feet from the surface. This site is located on floodplains and interdunes. The Subirrigated site occurs on level to nearly level eolian and alluvial lands, usually adjacent to major streams.

Associated sites

R079XY103KS	<p>Choppy Sands</p> <p>The Choppy Sands ecological site sits adjacent to and in conjunction with the Subirrigated site. The Choppy Sands site is characterized by soils with >70% sand throughout the profile. This site has >15% slopes, short, steep, hummocky landform with no lamellae in the profile.</p>
R079XY113KS	<p>Loamy Floodplain</p> <p>The Loamy Floodplain site occurs adjacent to and in conjunction with the Subirrigated ecological site. This site occurs on floodplains. The water table is generally >6 feet from the surface. This site is well drained.</p>

R079XY123KS	<p>Sand Floodplain</p> <p>The Sand Floodplain ecological site occurs adjacent to and in conjunction with the Subirrigated site. This site occurs on floodplains. Soils that characterize this site do not have a seasonal or perennial high water table (<6 feet from the surface) and have >70% sand in the surface.</p>
R079XY133KS	<p>Wet Subirrigated</p> <p>The Wet Subirrigated ecological site sits adjacent to and in conjunction with the Subirrigated site. This site occurs on floodplains and interdunes. This site is characteristic of poorly drained soils that have a seasonal or perennial high water table <2 feet from the surface.</p>

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	<p>(1) <i>Andropogon gerardii</i></p> <p>(2) <i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i></p>

Physiographic features

Most of this area is in the Plains Border Section of the Great Plains Province of the Interior Plains. The eastern third is in the Osage Plains Section of the Central Lowland Province of the Interior Plains. The undulating to rolling plains in this area generally have narrow valleys, but broad flood plains and terraces are along the Arkansas River and its larger tributaries. The elevation ranges from 1,650 to 2,600 feet (505 to 795 meters), increasing from east to west.

The extent of the major Hydrologic Unit Areas (identified by four-digit numbers) that make up this MLRA is as follows: Middle Arkansas (1103), 82 percent, and Arkansas-Keystone (1106), 18 percent. The Arkansas River bisects the northern part of this MLRA, and the Ninnescah River crosses the southern part. In this MLRA, Rattlesnake Creek flows north and the Little Arkansas River flows south into the Arkansas River.

The Subirrigated ecological site consists of deep to very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils. These soils formed in alluvium of eolian deposits over alluvium. This site occurs on nearly level dunes and interdunes on paleoterraces in river valleys. Runoff is low to negligible, and permeability is rapid to moderately slow.

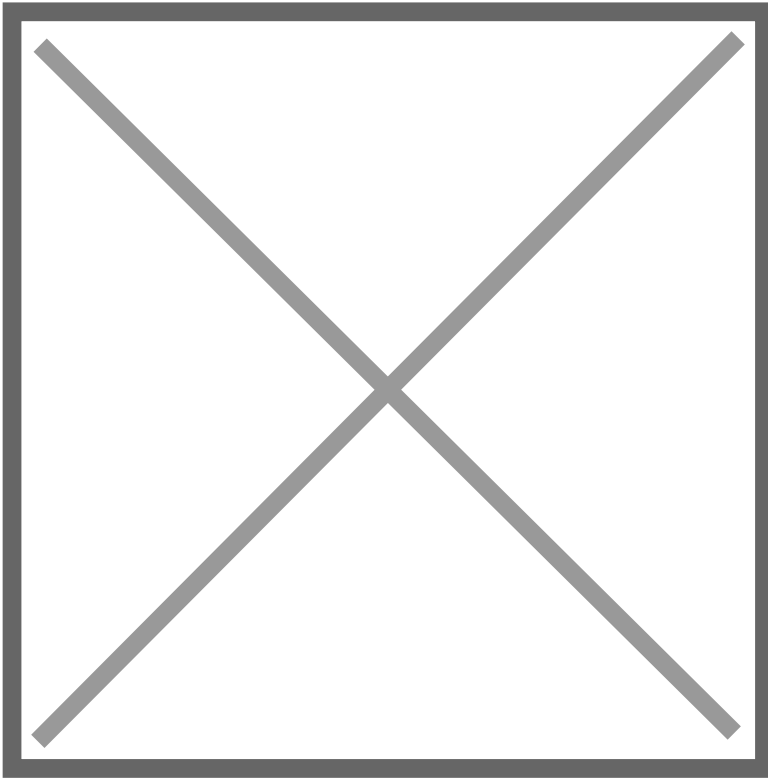


Figure 1.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) River valley > Flood plain (2) River valley > Interdune
Runoff class	Negligible to low
Flooding duration	Brief (2 to 7 days)
Flooding frequency	None to frequent
Ponding frequency	None
Elevation	500 – 790 m
Slope	0 %
Water table depth	60 – 180 cm
Aspect	Aspect is not a significant factor

Climatic features

The average annual precipitation in MLRA 79 is 25 to 33 inches (635 to 840 millimeters). Most of the rainfall occurs as high-intensity, convective thunderstorms during the growing season. The maximum precipitation occurs from the middle of spring to early in autumn. The annual snowfall ranges from about 14 inches (35 centimeters) in the southern part of the area to 20 inches (50 centimeters) in the northern part. The average annual temperature is 55 to 57 degrees F (13 to 14 degrees C). The freeze-free period averages 197 days, increasing in length from northwest to southeast.

Precipitation is usually evenly distributed throughout the year, with the exception of November through February as the driest months and May and June as the wettest months. Summer precipitation occurs during intense summer thunderstorms.

The following data originated from weather stations chosen across the geographical extent of the ecological site, and will likely vary from the data for the entire MLRA. The climate data derives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) National Water and Climate Center. The dataset is from 1981-2010.

Table 3 Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (characteristic range)	150-170 days
Freeze-free period (characteristic range)	190-200 days
Precipitation total (characteristic range)	710-810 mm
Frost-free period (actual range)	150-180 days
Freeze-free period (actual range)	180-200 days
Precipitation total (actual range)	690-810 mm
Frost-free period (average)	160 days
Freeze-free period (average)	190 days
Precipitation total (average)	760 mm

- (1) PRATT [USC00146549], Pratt, KS
- (2) HUDSON [USC00143847], Hudson, KS
- (3) HUTCHINSON [USC00143929], Hutchinson, KS
- (4) HUTCHINSON 10 SW [USC00143930], Hutchinson, KS
- (5) STERLING [USC00147796], Sterling, KS
- (6) WICHITA [USW00003928], Wichita, KS
- (7) KINGMAN [USC00144313], Kingman, KS
- (8) KINSLEY 2E [USC00144333], Kinsley, KS
- (9) NORWICH [USC00145870], Norwich, KS

Influencing water features

Influencing water features on this ecological site include a seasonal or perennial water table that occurs between 2 and 6 feet from the surface. This water table influences the kinds and amounts of vegetation, and the management of the site, making it distinctive from other ecological sites.

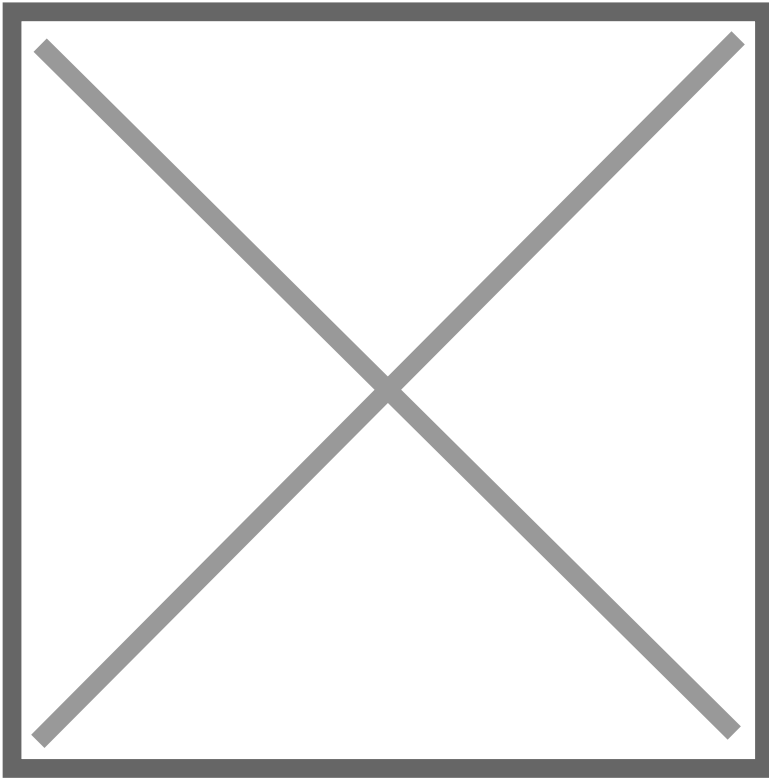


Figure 8.

Soil features

Soils on this site are characterized as deep and loamy with a seasonal or perennial water table that occurs between 2 and 6 feet from the surface. These soils occur on interdunes or flood plains, and formed in alluvium or in eolian deposits over alluvium. Surface soils and subsoils will range from sands to clay loams. Permeability ranges from rapid to moderately slow. In some local areas, they are moderately sodic.

The major soils common to this site include Dillwyn, Imano, Platte, Solvay, Waldeck, Willowbrook, and Zenda.

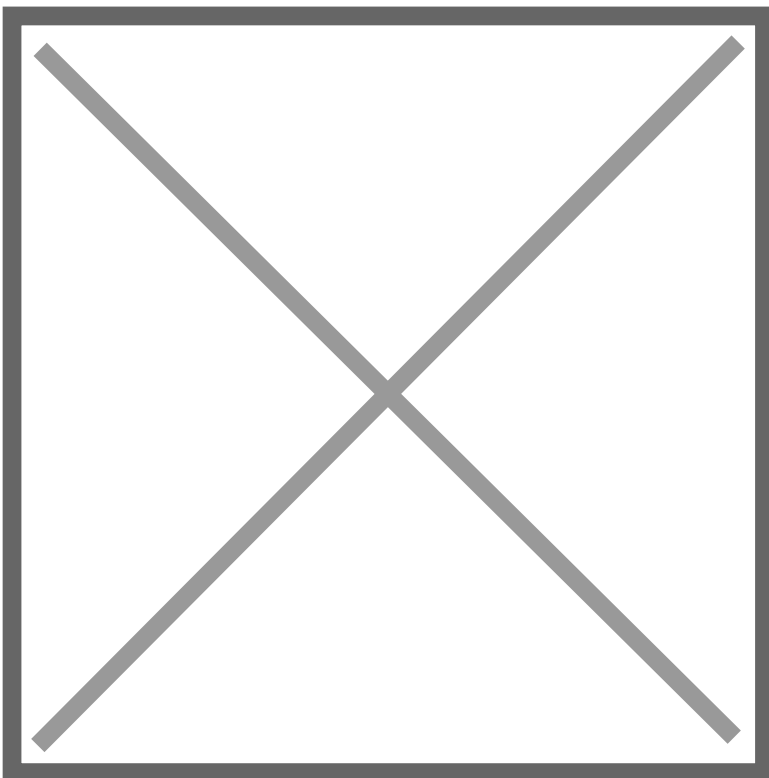


Figure 9.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Parent material	(1) Alluvium (2) Eolian deposits
Surface texture	(1) Clay loam (2) Fine sandy loam (3) Loamy fine sand
Family particle size	(1) Loamy
Drainage class	Somewhat poorly drained
Permeability class	Moderately slow
Soil depth	200 cm
Available water capacity (0-101.6cm)	9.4 – 27.43 cm
Calcium carbonate equivalent (0-101.6cm)	0 – 20 %
Electrical conductivity (0-101.6cm)	Not specified
Sodium adsorption ratio (0-101.6cm)	0 – 10
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (0-101.6cm)	5.6 – 8.4
Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	0 – 10 %

Ecological dynamics

This is a dynamic plant community due to the complex interaction of many ecological processes. The vegetation evolved on soils with high water tables, under a diverse and fluctuating climate, while grazed by herds of large herbivores and subjected periodically to intense

wildfires.

The deep alluvial or eolian soils representative of this site generally occur on broad, nearly level floodplains usually adjacent to rivers or streams. The site may also occur along narrow drainways, on areas containing perennial seeps or springs, or on interdunes. The major influence for plant adaptation and growth is the presence of a permanent water table that generally varies to a depth of two to four feet. Occasional flooding may occur in some locations from stream overflow. The plants that evolved and dominated the original plant community were adapted to these soil conditions and benefited from the dependable source of moisture. The available water capacity of this site is high. The Subirrigated ecological site can be very productive.

The plant community developed with occasional fires as an important element of the ecological processes. Historically fires were usually started by lightning during spring and early summer months when thunderstorms were most prevalent. It is also recognized that early Native Americans often used fire to attract herds of migratory herbivores, especially bison. These intentional fires probably occurred more frequently, even on an annual basis. Because all of the dominant tallgrasses were rhizomatous and soil conditions were usually moist, these plants could survive the ravages of even intense wildfires. This gave them a competitive advantage in the plant community. In contrast, most trees and shrubs were suppressed by fire and occurred only sparsely on protected areas, generally along stream banks.

Grazing history had a major impact on the dynamics of the site. The vegetative community developed under a grazing regime that consisted primarily of periodic grazing by large herds of bison. As the herds moved through an area, grazing was probably intense but of short duration. As they moved on to other areas, the vegetation was afforded a period of recovery. Other grazing and feeding animals such as deer, rabbits, insects, and numerous burrowing rodents had secondary influences on plant community development.

Variations in climate had only minimal impact upon the development of the plant community due to the ever-present water table. The deeper-rooted major grasses would continue to benefit from the water table even during periods of extended drought. Occasional flooding that resulted from intense thunderstorms was usually brief in duration and the resulting inundation only temporarily affected major plants. Several of the tallgrasses, especially eastern gamagrass, prairie cordgrass, and common reedgrass had extensive rhizomes, which enabled them to endure and recover from occasional siltation deposited during flood events.

Typically, growth of warm-season grasses on this site begins during the period of April 25 to May 10 and continues until mid-September. As a general rule, 75 percent of total production is completed by mid-July. This varies only slightly from year to year. Cool-season grasses, sedges, and rushes generally have two primary growth periods, one in the fall (September and October) and again in the spring (April, May, and June).

As utilization of the area for production of domestic livestock replaced that of roaming bison herds, the ecological dynamics of the site were altered. In many areas the plant community changed from its original composition. Fencing enabled continuous grazing that in many areas led to overgrazing and accelerated changes in the vegetation. Alterations in the plant community were usually in proportion to when grazing occurred as well as its intensity. The taller grasses and forbs palatable to bison were equally relished and selected by cattle and other domestic livestock. When repeatedly overgrazed, these grasses were weakened and gradually diminished in the plant community. They were replaced by the increase and spread of less palatable midgrasses and forbs. Where the history of overgrazing by domestic livestock was more intense, even the plants that initially increased were often replaced by even less desirable, and usually lower-producing plants.

The occurrence of wildfires and the impact that fire played in maintaining the plant community was diminished with the advent of roads and cultivated fields. Use of prescribed fire as a management tool, often not an option in modern communities, also diminished. The absence of fire has contributed to a gradual increase of shrub and tree species in many areas. In some locations shrubs and trees have spread to the point they have become a major influence in the plant community.

Some areas of the site that were formerly "broken out" and farmed for many years have since been returned to the production of native plant communities. Portions of these areas were reseeded and established to a prescribed mixture of plants. Other areas were allowed to reestablish naturally without the benefit of seeding, and are in various stages of plant succession.

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	Grasses Dominant 63%			2802-4237	
	big bluestem	ANGE	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	1121-2018	–
	eastern gamagrass	TRDA3	<i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	560-1681	–
	switchgrass	PAVI2	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	504-1009	–
	Indiangrass	SONU2	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	336-673	–

	prairie cordgrass	SPPE	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	336-673	-
2	Grasses Minor 10%			112-673	
	sideoats grama	BOCU	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	0-50	-
	Scribner's rosette grass	DIOLS	<i>Dichanthelium oligosanthes var. scribnerianum</i>	0-50	-
	Canada wildrye	ELCA4	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	11-50	-
	Virginia wildrye	ELVI3	<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	11-50	-
	vine mesquite	PAOB	<i>Panicum obtusum</i>	0-50	-
	western wheatgrass	PASM	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	22-50	-
	Texas bluegrass	POAR	<i>Poa arachnifera</i>	6-50	-
	little bluestem	SCSC	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	22-50	-
	marsh bristlegrass	SEPA10	<i>Setaria parviflora</i>	11-50	-
	alkali sacaton	SPAI	<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	0-50	-
	composite dropseed	SPCOC2	<i>Sporobolus compositus var. compositus</i>	11-50	-
3	Grasses Minor 5%			0-336	
	sedge	CAREX	<i>Carex</i>	0-67	-
	flatsedge	CYPER	<i>Cyperus</i>	0-67	-
	scouringrush horsetail	EQHY	<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>	0-67	-
	mountain rush	JUARL	<i>Juncus arcticus ssp. littoralis</i>	0-67	-
	chairmaker's bulrush	SCAM6	<i>Schoenoplectus americanus</i>	0-67	-
4	Grasses Trace 2%			0-135	
	buffalograss	BODA2	<i>Bouteloua dactyloides</i>	0-34	-
	blue grama	BOGR2	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	0-34	-
	saltgrass	DISP	<i>Distichlis spicata</i>	0-34	-
	marsh muhly	MURA	<i>Muhlenbergia racemosa</i>	0-34	-
Forb					
5	Forb Sub-dominant 15%			336-1009	
	Illinois bundleflower	DEIL	<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	56-135	-
	American licorice	GLLE3	<i>Glycyrrhiza lepidota</i>	56-135	-
	Maximilian sunflower	HEMA2	<i>Helianthus maximiliani</i>	56-135	-
	wholeleaf rosinweed	SIIN2	<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	56-135	-
	Canada goldenrod	SOCA6	<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	11-45	-
	pitcher sage	SAAZG	<i>Salvia azurea var. grandiflora</i>	11-45	-
	hoary verbena	VEST	<i>Verbena stricta</i>	11-45	-
	sessileleaf ticktrefoil	DESE	<i>Desmodium sessilifolium</i>	11-45	-
	blue wild indigo	BAAUM	<i>Baptisia australis var. minor</i>	11-45	-
	nineanther prairie clover	DAEN	<i>Dalea enneandra</i>	11-45	-
	white sagebrush	ARLU	<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	11-45	-
	whorled milkweed	ASVE	<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	0-11	-
	Cuman ragweed	AMPS	<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	0-11	-
	Indianhemp	APCA	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	0-11	-
	showy prairie gentian	EUEXR	<i>Eustoma exaltatum ssp. russellianum</i>	0-11	-
	stenosiphon	STENO2	<i>Stenosiphon</i>	0-11	-
	white heath aster	SYER	<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>	0-11	-
	prairie spiderwort	TROC	<i>Tradescantia occidentalis</i>	0-11	-
	Baldwin's ironweed	VEBA	<i>Vernonia baldwinii</i>	0-11	-
	grooved flax	LISU4	<i>Linum sulcatum</i>	0-11	-

	swamp smartweed	POHY2	<i>Polygonum hydropiperoides</i>	0-11	-
Shrub/Vine					
6	Shrub Minor 5%			56-336	
	false indigo bush	AMFR	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	11-56	-
	willow baccharis	BASA	<i>Baccharis salicina</i>	11-56	-
	common buttonbush	CEOC2	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	11-56	-
	eastern cottonwood	PODE3	<i>Populus deltoides</i>	11-56	-
	peachleaf willow	SAAM2	<i>Salix amygdaloides</i>	11-56	-
	black willow	SANI	<i>Salix nigra</i>	11-56	-

Table 6. Community 1.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
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Table 7. Community 1.3 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
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Table 8. Community 2.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
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Table 9. Community 3.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
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Table 10. Community 3.2 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production ()	Foliar Cover (%)
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Animal community

The great plant diversity associated with the subirrigated site, wetland inclusions, and the fact that it frequently occurs in riparian areas makes this site excellent wildlife habitat. It is characterized by scattered willow and cottonwood trees and occasional mottes of low brush, which create a preferred habitat for white-tailed deer, wild turkey, bobwhite quail, pheasant, fox squirrel, and eastern cottontail. Furbearers such as mink, raccoon, skunk, and opossum are common, as are predators such as the bobcat, coyote, and red fox. When in good to excellent condition, the site is especially valuable as winter cover for many of these same species. A variety of birds are common to the site and include scissortailed flycatchers, eastern and western kingbirds, brown thrasher, mourning dove, and redwinged blackbird. Hawks and owls commonly use this habitat and bald eagles are occasional visitors. Waterfowl are commonly seen during their spring and fall migrations. Some animals are important because of their threatened and endangered status and require special consideration. Please check the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) website at <http://ksoutdoors.com/> for the most current listing for your county.

Grazing Interpretations Calculating Safe Stocking Rates: Proper stocking rates should be incorporated into a grazing management strategy that protects the resource, maintains or improves rangeland health, and is consistent with management objectives. In addition to usable forage, safe stocking rates should consider ecological condition, trend of the site, past grazing use history, season of use, stock density, kind and class of livestock, forage digestibility, forage nutritional value, variation of harvest efficiency based on preference of plant species, and/or grazing system, and site grazeability factors (such as steep slopes, site inaccessibility, or distance to drinking water). Often the current plant community does not entirely match any particular Community Phase as described in this ESD. Because of this, a resource inventory is necessary to document plant composition and production. Proper interpretation of inventory data will permit the establishment of a safe initial stocking rate. No two years have exactly the same weather conditions. For this reason, year-to-year and season-to-season fluctuations in forage production are to be expected on grazing lands. Livestock producers must make timely adjustments in the numbers of animals or in the length of grazing periods to avoid overuse of forage plants when production is unfavorable, and to make advantageous adjustments when forage supplies are above average. Initial stocking rates should be improved through the use of vegetation monitoring and actual use records that include number and type of livestock, the timing and duration of grazing, and utilization levels. Actual use records over time will assist in making stocking rate adjustments based on the variability factors. Average annual production must be measured or estimated to properly assess useable forage production and stocking rates.

Hydrological functions

The Subirrigated site has a high water table which normally varies from 2 to 4 feet below the soil surface. Runoff potential for this site is negligible to low. Following are the estimated withdrawals of freshwater by use in MLRA 79: Public supply—surface water, 6.8%; ground water, 4.0%; Livestock—surface water, 0.4%; ground water, 1.2%; Irrigation—surface water, 0.7%; ground water, 80.6%; Other—surface

water, 2.0%; ground water, 4.3%. The total withdrawals average 740 million gallons per day (2,800 million liters per day). About 90 percent is from ground water sources, and 10 percent is from surface water sources. The source of water for crops and pasture is the moderate, somewhat erratic precipitation. In the northern part of the area, the Arkansas River is a potential source of irrigation water, but it currently is little used for this purpose. The Ninnescah River is another potential source of surface water in the area. Deep sand in the High Plains (also called Ogallala) aquifer yields an abundance of good-quality ground water. This aquifer provides water primarily for irrigation, but also for domestic supply and livestock in rural areas, and for industry and public supply in Wichita and in other towns or cities in the MLRA. The ground water in this aquifer has the lowest levels of total dissolved solids of any aquifer in Kansas, 340 parts per million (milligrams per liter).

Recreational uses

This site is very desirable for outdoor recreational pursuits because of its plant and wildlife diversity. Big game, white-tail deer and wild turkey are abundant and commonly hunted along with a wide variety of small game such as pheasant, quail, rabbits, squirrels, and raccoons. In addition, there are ample opportunities for bird watching, hiking, outdoor/wildlife photography, and a variety of other outdoor activities. A wide variety of plants bloom throughout the growing season and provide much aesthetic appeal to the landscape. Recreation can be a high value use, but the excessive wetness due to the prevalent high water table is a significant site consideration.

Wood products

Eastern cottonwood has been commercially harvested in some locations within the Subirrigated ecological sites.

Other products

The presence of abundant soil moisture makes this site especially vulnerable to several invasive woody plant species such as Russian olive, multiflora rose, and saltcedar on more saline soils. An extra effort should be made to eradicate any known plantings of these three species near subirrigated sites. These species have been recognized as invasive and are no longer recommended for woody plantings. Extra care should also be taken in the planning and design of any woody plantings adjacent to or near this site. Only those woody species native to the area should be considered for plantings.

Other information

Site Development and Testing Plan This site went through the approval process.

Inventory data references

Information presented here has been derived from NRCS clipping data, numerous ocular estimates and other inventory data. Field observations from experienced range trained personnel were used extensively to develop this ecological site description. NRCS contracted the development of MLRA 79 ESDs in 2005. Extensive review and improvements were made to those foundational ESDs in 2017-2018 which provided an approved product. Range Condition Guides and Technical Range Site Descriptions for Kansas, Subirrigated, USDA, Soil Conservation Service, March, 1967. Range Site Description for Kansas, Subirrigated, USDA-Soil Conservation Service, September, 1985. Ecological Site Description for Kansas, Subirrigated(R079XY032KS) located in Ecological Site Information System (ESIS), 2007.

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Contributors

Chris Tecklenburg

Approval

David Kraft, 9/21/2018

Acknowledgments

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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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Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** None.

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** There is little, if any, evidence of soil deposition or erosion. Water generally flows evenly over the entire landscape.

3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** There is no evidence of pedestaled plants or terracettes on the site.

4. **Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** Less than 5% bare ground is found on this site. Cover can be defined as live plants, litter, rocks, moss, lichens, etc.

5. **Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** None

6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** There is no evidence of wind erosion creating bare areas or denuding vegetation.

7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Plant litter is distributed evenly throughout the site. During major flooding events, this site slows water flow and captures litter and sediment.

8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):**
Plant canopy is large enough to intercept the majority of raindrops. A soil fragment will not “melt” or lose its structure when immersed in water for 30 seconds. There is no evidence of pedestaled plants or terracettes. Soil stability scores will range from 5-6.
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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** From Waldeck series description: Ap--0 to 15 inches; dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) fine sandy loam, very dark brown (10YR 2/2) moist; weak granular structure; soft, very friable; slight effervescence; moderately alkaline; gradual smooth boundary. (10 to 20 inches thick) AC--15 to 24 inches; grayish brown (10YR 5/2) fine sandy loam, dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) moist; few faint brown mottles in lower 2 inches; weak medium granular structure; slightly hard, very friable; slight effervescence; moderately alkaline; gradual smooth boundary. (0 to 15 inches thick)
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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** There is no negative effect on water infiltration and/or runoff due to plant composition or distribution. Plant composition and distribution are adequate to prevent any rill formation and/or pedestalling. Interspatial distribution is consistent with expectation for the site.
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11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** There is no evidence of compacted soil layers due to cultural practices. Soil structure is conducive to water movement and root penetration.
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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: Grasses dominant 63%: big bluestem 1000-1800, eastern gamagrass 500-1500, Indiangrass 300-600, prairie cordgrass 300-600, switchgrass 450-900.
- Sub-dominant: A variety of forbs make up 15% of the plant community.
- Other: Other grasses Minor component 10%, 100-600 lbs. Grasses Minor 5% sedges and rushes, 0-300 Grasses Trace 2%, 120 lbs.
- Additional: Shrubs Minor 5%, 50-300.
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13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):**
The majority of plants are alive and vigorous. Some mortality and decadence is expected for the site. This in part is due to drought, unexpected wildfire or a combination of the two events. This would be expected for both dominant and sub-dominant groups.
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14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** Plant litter is distributed evenly throughout the site. There is no restriction to plant regeneration due to depth of litter. When prescribed burning is practiced there will be little litter the first half of the growing season.
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15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):**
5,000-7,000 lbs/acre. Representative value is 6,000 lbs/forage/acre. Below normal precipitation during the growing season expect 5,000

lbs/forage/acre and above normal precipitation during the growing season expect 7,000 lbs/forage/acre. If utilization has occurred, estimate the annual production removed or expected and include this amount when making the total site production estimate.

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: None.
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17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** The number and distribution of tillers or rhizomes is assessed relative to the expected production of the perennial warm-season midgrasses and shortgrasses.
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