

# Ecological site R107XB006MO

## Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairie

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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.

### MLRA notes

Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): 107X—Iowa and Missouri Deep Loess Hills

The Iowa and Missouri Deep Loess Hills includes the Missouri Alluvial Plain, Loess Hills, Southern Iowa Drift Plain, and Central Dissected Till Plains landform regions (Prior 1991; Nigh and Schroeder 2002). It spans four states (Iowa, 53 percent; Missouri, 32 percent; Nebraska, 12 percent; and Kansas 3 percent), encompassing over 14,000 square miles (Figure 1). The elevation ranges from approximately 1,565 feet ASL on the highest ridges to about 600 feet ASL along the Missouri River near Glasgow in central Missouri. Local relief varies from 10 to 20 feet in the major river floodplains, to 50 to 100 feet in the dissected uplands, to 200 to 300 feet in the loess bluffs along the Missouri River. Loess deposits cover most of the area, with deposits reaching a thickness of 65 to 200 feet in the Loess Hills and grading to about 20 feet in the eastern extent of the region. Pre-Illinoian till, deposited more than 500,000 years ago, lies beneath the loess and has experienced extensive erosion and dissection. Pennsylvanian and Cretaceous bedrock – comprised of shale, mudstones, and sandstones – lie beneath the glacial material (USDA-NRCS 2006). The vegetation in the MLRA has undergone drastic changes over time. Spruce forests dominated the landscape 30,000 to 21,500 years ago. As the last glacial maximum peaked 21,500 to 16,000 years ago, they were replaced with open tundras and parklands. The end of the Pleistocene Epoch saw a warming climate that initially prompted the return of spruce forests, but as the warming continued, spruce trees were replaced by deciduous trees (Baker et al. 1990). Not until approximately 9,000 years ago did the vegetation transition to prairies as climatic conditions continued to warm and subsequently dry. Between 4,000 and 3,000 years ago, oak savannas began intermingling within the prairie landscape. This prairie-oak savanna ecosystem formed the dominant landscapes until the arrival of European settlers (Baker et al. 1992).

### Classification relationships

Major Land Resource Area (MLRA): Iowa and Missouri Deep Loess Hills (107B) (USDA-NRCS 2006) USFS Subregions: Central Dissected Till Plains Section (251C), Loess Hills (251Cb) Subsection; Nebraska Rolling Hills Section (251H), Pawnee City-Seneca Rolling Hill (251Hd) (Cleland et al. 2007) U.S. EPA Level IV Ecoregion: Steeply Rolling Loess Prairies (47e), Nebraska/Kansas Loess Hills (47h), Western Loess Hills (47m) (USEPA 2013) Biophysical Setting (LANDFIRE 2009): Central Tallgrass Prairie (4214210) Ecological Systems (National Vegetation Classification System, Nature Serve 2015): Central Tallgrass Prairie (CES205.683) Eilers and Roosa (1994): Loess Hills Iowa Department of Natural Resources: Loess Hills Prairie Missouri Natural Heritage Program (Nelson 2010): Dry Loess/Glacial Till Prairie Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (Steinauer and Rolfmeier 2010): Northern Loess/Shale Bluff Prairie Plant Associations (National Vegetation Classification System, Nature Serve 2015): *Schizachyrium scoparium* – *Bouteloua curtipendula* – *Bouteloua hirsuta* – (*Yucca glauca*) Herbaceous Vegetation (CEGL002035) Rosburg (1994): Dry Mid-Grass Community White (1983): Gravel Hill

### Ecological site concept

Calcareous Loess Exposed Prairies are mapped in complex with Calcareous Loess Protected Backslope Savannas and are located within the green areas on the map (Figure 1). They occur on south- and west-facing shoulders with slopes greater than fifteen percent. Soils are Entisols that are well-drained and very deep to bedrock. These sites are developed from loess with a significant component of carbonates at or near the surface, resulting in an alkaline (increased pH) environment. These fine-silty, fertile soils have high soil uniformity resulting in increased nutrient-holding capacity, increased organic matter retention, and good soil aeration that allows deep penetration by plant roots, which generally results in high plant productivity (Catt 2001). These sites reside downslope from and adjacent to other calcareous loess ecological sites. The historic pre-European settlement vegetation on this site was dominated by tall- and midgrass prairie species adapted to dry habitats. The site is a relatively even mixture of tall and midgrass species where the tallgrass species represent the greatest relative biomass and the midgrasses support the highest relative frequency. Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium* (Michx.) Nash) and sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula* (Michx.) Torr.) represent the dominant midgrass species, big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii* Vitman) is the dominant tallgrass species, and prairie sandreed (*Calamovilfa longifolia* (Hook.) Scribn.) is a diagnostic component (Rosburg 1994; Nelson 2010). Forb species typical of an undisturbed habitat associated with

this ecological site include tall false foxglove (*Agalinis aspera* (Douglas ex Benth.) Britton), lotus milkvetch (*Astragalus lotiflorus* Hook.), aromatic aster (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium* (Nutt.) G.L. Nesom), and western silver aster (*Symphyotrichum sericeum* (Vent.) G.L. Nesom) (Drobney et al. 2001). Leadplant (*Amorpha canescens* Pursh) and prairie rose (*Rosa arkansana* Porter) are common shrubs that can be found lightly scattered throughout the prairie. Fire was the primary disturbance factor that maintained this site, while drought and native, large mammal grazing were secondary factors (LANDFIRE 2009; Nelson 2010). Relative to other calcareous loess prairie communities in the MLRA, the south- and west-facing slopes of Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies are generally warmer and drier due to the greater exposure to solar radiation and increased evapotranspiration, resulting in a plant community dominated by xerophytic species. The steeper slopes also allow for increased runoff, thus limiting the amount of infiltration within the ecological site. Herbaceous production and forb diversity are less on this ecological site compared to that of prairies found on calcareous till sites. Lastly, unlike similar loess prairie ecological sites with a higher clay content, this ecological site has a lower soil moisture and higher coefficient of wetness as evidenced by the presence of mostly obligate upland species (Drobney et al. 2001).

Associated sites

|             |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R107XB003MO | <b>Deep Loess Exposed Backslope Savanna</b><br><br>Calcareous loess soils on slopes greater than fifteen percent on north and east slopes, including Dow and Ida |
| R107XB012MO | <b>Calcareous Loess Upland Prairie</b><br><br>Calcareous loess soils on slopes less than fifteen percent, including Dow and Ida                                  |

Similar sites

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| R107XB027IA | <b>Calcareous Till Upland Prairie</b><br><br>Calcareous Till Upland Prairies are similar in landscape position but parent material is glacial till                                                                |
| R107XB007MO | <b>Loess Upland Prairie</b><br><br>Loess Upland Prairies are similar in supporting a prairie plant community but parent material contains no carbonates and a higher clay content                                 |
| R107XB012MO | <b>Calcareous Loess Upland Prairie</b><br><br>Calcareous Loess Upland Prairies are similar in composition but frequency and production of tallgrasses are greater in this ecological site; occurs only on summits |
| R107XB002MO | <b>Deep Loess Upland Prairie</b><br><br>Deep Loess Upland Prairies are similar in supporting a prairie plant community but parent material contains no carbonates and a higher clay content                       |

Table 1. Dominant plant species

|            |                                                                         |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tree       | Not specified                                                           |
| Shrub      | Not specified                                                           |
| Herbaceous | (1) <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i><br>(2) <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> |

Physiographic features

Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies occur on upland backslopes with slopes greater than fifteen percent on dissected till plains (Figure 2). This ecological site is unique to the Loess Hills landform situated on elevations ranging from 1,100 to 1,500 feet ASL. This site does not experience flooding but rather generates runoff to adjacent, downslope ecological sites.

Figure 1. Figure 1. Location of Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairie ecological site within MLRA 107B.

Figure 2. Figure 2. Representative block diagram of Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairie and associated ecological sites.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Hillslope profile   | (1) Backslope  |
| Slope shape across  | (1) Convex     |
| Slope shape up-down | (1) Convex     |
| Landforms           | (1) Loess hill |
| Flooding frequency  | None           |
| Ponding frequency   | None           |
| Elevation           | 340 – 460 m    |
| Slope               | 20 – 90 %      |
| Water table depth   | 200 cm         |
| Aspect              | W, NW, S, SW   |

Climatic features

The Iowa and Missouri Deep Loess Hills fall into two Köppen-Geiger climate classifications (Peel et al. 2007): hot humid continental climate (Dfa) dominates the majority of the MLRA with small portions in the south falling into the humid subtropical climate (Cfa). In winter, dry, cold air masses periodically shift south from Canada. As these air masses collide with humid air, snowfall and rainfall will result. In summer, moist, warm air masses from the Gulf of Mexico migrate north, producing significant frontal or convective rains (Decker 2017). Occasionally, high pressure will stagnate over the region, creating extended droughty periods. These periods of drought have historically occurred on 22-year cycles (Stockton and Meko 1983).

The soil temperature regime of MLRA 107B is classified as mesic, where the mean annual soil temperature is between 46 and 59°F (USDA-NRCS 2006). Temperature and precipitation occur along a north-south gradient, where temperature and precipitation increase the further south one travels. The average freeze-free period of this ecological site is about 175 days, while the frost-free period is about 154 days (Table 2). The majority of the precipitation occurs as rainfall in the form of convective thunderstorms during the growing season. Average annual precipitation is 28 inches, which includes rainfall plus the water equivalent from snowfall (Table 3). The average annual low and high temperatures are 38 and 61°F, respectively.

Climate data and analyses are derived from 30-year average gathered from six National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather stations contained within the range of this ecological site (Table 4).

**Table 3 Representative climatic features**

|                                            |              |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Frost-free period (characteristic range)   | 130-150 days |
| Freeze-free period (characteristic range)  | 160-180 days |
| Precipitation total (characteristic range) | 790-860 mm   |
| Frost-free period (actual range)           | 130-150 days |
| Freeze-free period (actual range)          | 160-180 days |
| Precipitation total (actual range)         | 710-860 mm   |
| Frost-free period (average)                | 140 days     |
| Freeze-free period (average)               | 170 days     |
| Precipitation total (average)              | 810 mm       |

- (1) TARKIO [USW00014945], Tarkio, MO
- (2) SIDNEY [USC00137669], Sidney, IA
- (3) GLENWOOD 3SW [USC00133290], Glenwood, IA
- (4) LOGAN [USC00134894], Logan, IA
- (5) ONAWA 3NW [USC00136243], Onawa, IA
- (6) SIOUX CITY GATEWAY AP [USW00014943], Sioux City, IA

### **Influencing water features**

Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies are not influenced by wetland or riparian water features. Precipitation is the main source of water for this ecological site. Infiltration is moderate (Hydrologic Group B), and surface runoff is high. Precipitation infiltrates the soil surface and percolates downward through the horizons unimpeded by any restrictive layer. The Dakota bedrock aquifer in the northern region of this ecological site is typically deep and confined, leaving it generally unaffected by recharge. However, there are surficial aquifers in the Pennsylvanian strata in the southern extent of the ecological site that are shallow and allow some recharge (Prior et al. 2003). Surface runoff contributes some water to downslope ecological sites. Evapotranspiration rates occur on a latitudinal gradient, with the northern end of the ecological site receiving a greater number of days with sun and high winds resulting in a higher average evapotranspiration rate compared to the southern end (Visher 1954).

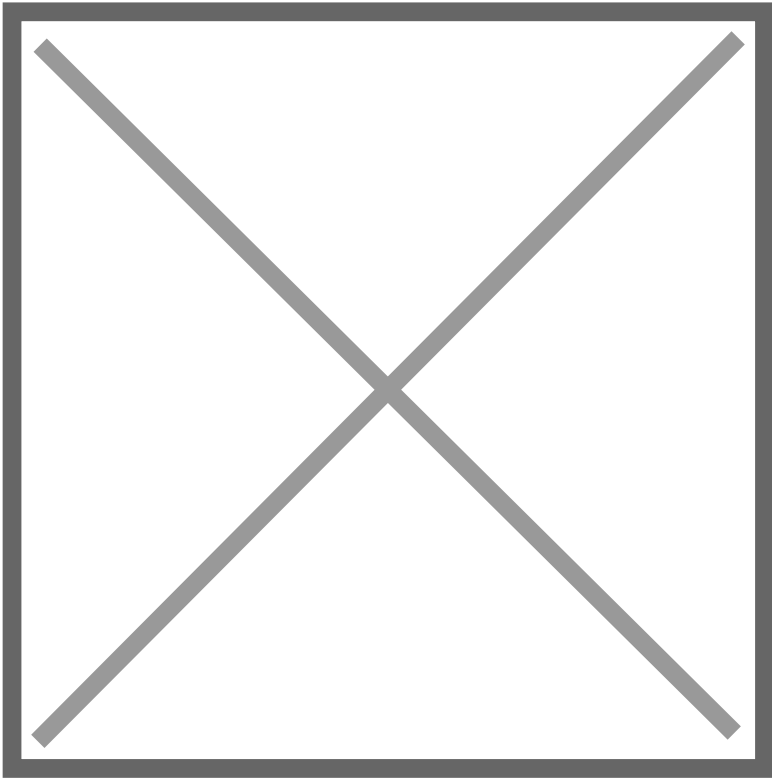


Figure 9. Figure 5. Hydrologic cycling in Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairie ecological site.

Soil features

Soils of Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies are in the Entisol order, further classified as Typic Udorthents. They were formed under prairie vegetation but have not developed dark surface horizons due to naturally high surface runoff rates, higher erosion rates, and dry environmental conditions. The soil series associated with this site includes Dow, Hamburg, and Ida. The parent material is calcareous loess, and the soils are well-drained and very deep with no coarse fragments. Soil pH classes are neutral to moderately alkaline. No rooting restrictions are noted for the soils of this ecological site. Average clay content is low limiting compaction susceptibility, but erosion from wind and water can be very high.

Figure 10. Ida series (from Young, 1994)

Figure 11. Figure 6. Profile sketches of soil series associated with Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairie.

Table 4. Representative soil features

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Parent material      | (1) Calcareous loess |
| Surface texture      | (1) Silt loam        |
| Family particle size | (1) Fine-silty       |
| Drainage class       | Well drained         |
| Permeability class   | Slow to moderate     |
| Soil depth           | 200 cm               |

|                                             |                  |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Available water capacity<br>(0-101.6cm)     | 20.32 – 22.86 cm |
| Calcium carbonate equivalent<br>(0-101.6cm) | 0 – 30 %         |
| Electrical conductivity<br>(0-101.6cm)      | Not specified    |
| Sodium adsorption ratio<br>(0-101.6cm)      | Not specified    |
| Soil reaction (1:1 water)<br>(0-101.6cm)    | 6.6 – 8.2        |

## Ecological dynamics

Prairie ecosystems are regarded as the most endangered ecosystem in North America where an estimated four percent of the tallgrass prairie habitat remains (Steinauer and Collins 1996). The Loess Hills region of MLRA 107B was once dominated by tall- and midgrass prairies, extending across more than 90 percent of the area (Rosburg 1994; Farnsworth 2009). However, by the early twenty-first century much of the land had been converted to agriculture, leaving an estimated 20 percent of the region to be classified as “grassland” and another three percent classified as “remnant prairie” (Farnsworth 2009).

Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies form a vegetative continuum throughout the Loess Hills, where soil moisture serves as the primary influence on community composition (White 1983; White and Glenn-Lewin 1984). This ecological site occurs on steep south- and west-facing shoulder slopes in the Loess Hills. Species characteristic of this ecological site are sun-loving, fire- and drought-adapted plants.

Fire is the most important ecosystem driver for maintaining this ecological site (Vogl 1974; Anderson 1990; Eilers and Roosa 1994). Fire intensity typically consisted of periodic, low-intensity surface fires (Stambaugh et al. 2006; LANDFIRE 2009). Ignition sources included summertime lightning strikes from convective storms and bimodal, human ignitions during the spring and fall seasons. Native Americans regularly set fires to improve sight lines for hunting, driving large game, improving grazing and browsing habitat, agricultural and village clearing, and enhancing vital ethnobotanical plants (Day 1953; Barrett 1980; White 1994). Fire frequency has been estimated to occur on average every 6.6 years in the Loess Hills region (Stambaugh et al. 2006). This continuous disturbance provided critical conditions for perpetuating the prairie ecosystem.

Grazing by native ungulates is often cited as an important disturbance regime of Great Plains grasslands, with bison (*Bison bison*), prairie elk (*Cervus elaphus*), and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) serving as the dominant herbivores of the area. However, plant community succession in the Loess Hills does not necessarily follow this hypothesis. The steep and rugged topography of the Loess Hills has been considered an impediment to grazing by large ungulates such as bison. Any role bison played in the area was most likely relegated to the northwestern extent where the terrain is milder (Dinsmore 1994). Elk and deer are believed to have had some role in keeping woody vegetation at bay in the prairies of the Loess Hills (Farnsworth 2009; LANDFIRE 2009).

Drought has also played a part in shaping the prairie ecosystems in the Loess Hills. The periodic episodes of reduced soil moisture have favored the proliferation of plant species tolerant of such conditions. In addition, drought can also slow the growth of plants and result in dieback of certain species. When coupled with fire, periods of drought can also greatly delay the recovery of woody vegetation, substantially altering the extent of shrubs and trees (Pyne et al. 1996).

Today, Calcareous Loess Exposed Backslope Prairies are limited in their extent, having been reduced as a result of eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana* L.) encroachment from long-term fire suppression or having been converted to cool-season grassland. Areas where slopes are less than twenty percent may have been converted to cropland, but these comprise a small portion of the landscape. The remnants that do exist show evidence of indirect anthropogenic influence as some non-native species (i.e., Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa*

pratensis L.)) are present in the species composition. A return to the historic plant community is likely not possible, but long-term restoration efforts can help to restore some natural diversity and ecological functioning.

e cool-season grasses (3).

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 (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 6. Community 1.2 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 7. Community 2.1 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 8. Community 2.2 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 9. Community 3.1 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 10. Community 4.1 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Table 11. Community 4.2 plant community composition

| Group | Common Name | Symbol | Scientific Name | Annual Production () | Foliar Cover (%) |
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|
|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|

Animal community

Wildlife\* Game species that utilize this ecological site include: Northern Bobwhite will utilize this ecological site for food (seeds, insects) and cover needs (escape, nesting and roosting cover). Cottontail rabbits will utilize this ecological site for food (seeds, soft mast) and cover needs. Turkey will utilize this ecological site for food (seeds, green browse, soft mast, insects) and nesting and brood-rearing cover. Turkey poults feed heavily on insects provided by this site type. Bird species associated with this ecological site's reference state condition: Breeding birds as related to vegetation structure (related to time since fire, grazing, haying, and mowing): Vegetation Height Short ( 0.5 meter, low litter levels, bare ground visible): Grasshopper Sparrow, Horned Lark, Northern Bobwhite Medium Vegetation Height (0.5 – 1 meter, moderate litter levels, some bare ground visible): Eastern Meadowlark, Dickcissel, Field Sparrow, Northern Bobwhite, Bobolink, Eastern Kingbird Brushy – Mix of grasses, forbs, native shrubs (e.g., Rhus copallina, Prunus americana, Rubus spp., Rosa carolina) and small trees (e.g., Cornus drummondii): Bell's Vireo, Yellow-Breasted Chat, Loggerhead Shrike, Brown Thrasher, Common Yellowthroat Amphibian and reptile species associated with this ecological site's reference state condition: Ornate Box Turtle (Terrapene ornata ornata), Western Slender Glass Lizard (Ophisaurus attenuatus attenuatus), Great Plains Skink (Eumeces obsoletus), Northern Prairie Skink (E. septentrionalis septentrionalis), Prairie Kingsnake (Lampropeltis calligaster calligaster), and Bullsnake (Pituophis catenifer sayi). Small mammals associated with this ecological site's reference state condition: Prairie Vole (Microtus ochrogaster), Meadow Jumping Mouse (Zapus hudsonius), Plains Pocket Gopher (Geomys bursarius), Franklin's Ground Squirrel (Spermophilus franklinii), and Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel (Spermophilus tridecemlineatus). Invertebrates: Many native insect species are likely associated with this ecological site, especially native bees, ants, beetles, butterflies and moths, and crickets, grasshoppers and katydids. However information on these groups is often lacking enough resolution to assign them to individual ecological sites. Insect species known to be associated with this ecological site's reference state condition include: Prairie Meadow Katydid (Conocephalus saltans), Packard's Grasshopper (Melanoplus packardii), Mermiria Grasshopper (Mermiria picta), Black-margined Shield-back Katydid (Pediocetes nigromarginata), Ottoe Skipper butterfly (Hesperia ottoe) and two native bees (Tetraloniella albata, Diadasia enavata). \*This section prepared by Mike Leahy, Natural Areas Coordinator, Missouri Department of Conservation, 2013

Other information

**Forestry Management:** This ecological site is not recommended for traditional timber management activity. Historically this site was dominated by a ground cover of native prairie grasses and forbs. Some scattered open grown trees may have also been present. May be suitable for non-traditional forestry uses such as windbreaks, environmental plantings, alley cropping (a method of planting, in which rows of trees or shrubs are interspersed with rows of crops) or woody bio-fuels.

## Inventory data references

Tier 3 Sampling Plot(s) used to develop the reference state, community phase 1.1: State County Ownership Legal Description Easting Northing Iowa Plymouth Broken Kettle Grasslands, The Nature Conservancy T91N R48W S19 700218 4729022

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## Approval

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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                     | 10/29/2026    |
| Approved by              |               |

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

## Indicators

**1. Number and extent of rills:**

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**2. Presence of water flow patterns:**

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**3. Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:**

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**4. Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):**

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**5. Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:**

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**6. Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:**

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

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

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**9. Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):**

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**10. Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:**

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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):**

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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:**

**Sub-dominant:**

**Other:**

**Additional:**

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**13. Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):**

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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):**

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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:**

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**17. Perennial plant reproductive capability:**

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