

Ecological site R010XB033OR **JD Shallow North 12-16 PZ**

Accessed: 05/11/2025

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

R010XB027OR	JD Clayey 12-16 PZ JD Clayey 12-16" PZ
R010XB030OR	JD Loamy 12-16 PZ JD Loamy 12-16" PZ
R010XB031OR	JD Shallow 12-16 PZ JD Shallow 12-16" PZ
R010XB032OR	JD Very Shallow 12-16 PZ JD Very Shallow 12-16" PZ
R010XB045OR	JD Clayey South 12-16 PZ JD Clayey South 12-16" PZ
R010XB070OR	JD North 12-16 PZ JD North 12-16" PZ

Similar sites

R010XB070OR	JD North 12-16 PZ JD North 12-16" PZ
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Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	Not specified

Physiographic features

This site occurs on north facing aspects of uplands, tablelands, and upper canyon side slopes. Slopes range from 15 to 70 percent with slopes of 30 to 60 percent being most typical. Elevation varies from 2100 to 4000 feet.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Canyon (2) Hill
Elevation	2,100–4,000 ft
Slope	15–70%
Water table depth	60 in
Aspect	N

Climatic features

The annual precipitation ranges from 12 to 16 inches. The precipitation occurs as rain and snow during the months of November through March. Localized, occasionally severe, convection storms occur during the summer. The mean annual air temperature is approximately 50 degrees F. Extreme temperatures range from 100 degrees F to -10 degrees F. Soil temperature regimes are mesic to near frigid. The frost-free period ranges from 90 to 150 days. The period of optimum plant growth is from April through June.

Table 3. Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	150 days
Freeze-free period (average)	0 days
Precipitation total (average)	16 in

Influencing water features

Soil features

The soils of this site are formed in colluvium and loess over basalt and tuffaceous bedrock. They are shallow. Typically the surface layer is a very stony loam over a very stony clay loam subsoil. Depth to bedrock is 10 to 20 inches. Soil permeability is moderate. The available water holding capacity (AWC) is 2 to 4 inches. The erosion potential is severe.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Surface texture	(1) Stony loam
Family particle size	(1) Clayey
Drainage class	Well drained
Permeability class	Moderate
Soil depth	10–20 in
Available water capacity (0-40in)	2–4 in

Ecological dynamics

Range in Characteristics:

Variability in plant composition and production is dependent on aspect, bedrock conditions, and soil depth. Idaho fescue increases on due north exposures. Juniper and shrubs increase with bedrock fracturing. Production increases with soil depth.

Response to Disturbance:

If the condition of the site deteriorates as a result of overgrazing, Idaho fescue decreases while bluebunch wheatgrass, Sandberg bluegrass, western juniper, and shrubs increase. Cheatgrass, annual brome, medusa-head, and other annuals invade. In the absence of fire, western juniper strongly increases and areas of bareground appear between the juniper. Soil erosion accelerates and inherent site productivity decreases.

State and transition model



GENERAL MODEL FOR COOL-SEASON BUNCHGRASS RANGELANDS

State 1

Historic Climax Plant Community

Community 1.1

Historic Climax Plant Community

The potential native plant community is dominated by Idaho fescue. Bluebunch wheatgrass is common. Juniper occurs sporadically. Shrubs are minor. The potential vegetative composition is approximately 90 percent grass, 5 percent forbs, and 5 percent shrubs. Approximate ground cover is 50-60 percent (basal and crown).

Table 5. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Lb/Acre)	Representative Value (Lb/Acre)	High (Lb/Acre)
Grass/Grasslike	496	668	840
Shrub/Vine	24	52	80
Forb	16	48	80
Tree	16	20	24
Total	552	788	1024

Additional community tables

Table 6. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Lb/Acre)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1	Perennial, deep-rooted, dominant			320–480	
	Idaho fescue	FEID	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	320–480	–
	bluebunch wheatgrass	PSSP6	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>	160–320	–
5	Other perennial grasses, all			16–40	
	Thurber's needlegrass	ACTH7	<i>Achnatherum thurberianum</i>	0–20	–
	Sandberg bluegrass	POSE	<i>Poa secunda</i>	0–20	–
Forb					
9	Other perennial forbs, all			16–80	
	common yarrow	ACMI2	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	0–7	–
	agosotis	AGOSE	<i>Agoseris</i>	0–7	–
	onion	ALLIU	<i>Allium</i>	0–7	–
	pussytoes	ANTEN	<i>Antennaria</i>	0–7	–
	milkvetch	ASTRA	<i>Astragalus</i>	0–7	–
	arrowleaf balsamroot	BASA3	<i>Balsamorhiza sagittata</i>	0–7	–
	blepharipappus	BLEPH2	<i>Blepharipappus</i>	0–7	–
	fleabane	ERIGE2	<i>Erigeron</i>	0–7	–
	buckwheat	ERIOG	<i>Eriogonum</i>	0–7	–
	desertparsley	LOMAT	<i>Lomatium</i>	0–7	–
	phlox	PHLOX	<i>Phlox</i>	0–7	–
Shrub/Vine					
11	Perennial, evergreen, dominant			16–64	
	basin big sagebrush	ARTRT	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>tridentata</i>	16–64	–
15	Other perennial shrubs, all			8–16	
	rubber rabbitbrush	ERNA10	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	0–8	–
	broom snakeweed	GUSA2	<i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i>	0–8	–
Tree					
16	Perennial, evergreen, dominant			16–24	
	western juniper	JUOC	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i>	16–24	–

Animal community

Livestock Grazing:

This site is suited to spring, summer, and fall use by cattle, sheep, and horses under a planned grazing system. The key species is Idaho fescue. Idaho fescue can be damaged if heavily grazed during periods of flowering and seed formation when root reserves and soil moisture is low. Use in the spring should be postponed until the soils are firm enough to prevent trampling damage, soil compaction, and soil mass movement.

Native Wildlife Associated with the Potential Climax Community:

Mule deer
elk
upland birds

When the ecological condition is high, this site provides food and cover for deer, elk, other mammals, and upland birds. It is an important wintering area for deer and elk.

Threatened and Endangered Animals:

Listed endangered species (1993), which may occur on this site include the peregrine falcon. Listed threatened species is the bald eagle.

Hydrological functions

The soils of this site have low water holding capacities providing little late season water for plant growth. The hydrologic cover condition is fair when the ecological condition is high.

Other information

When in poor condition this site has low potential for range seeding because it is shallow, stony, and usually steep. Technology for seeding on steep slopes is currently not available.

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)	Jeff Repp and Bruce Frannsen
Contact for lead author	State Rangeland Management Specialist for NRCS - Oregon
Date	08/06/2012
Approved by	Bob Gillaspay
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

1. **Number and extent of rills:** None to some on steeper slopes, significant sheet & rill erosion hazard

2. **Presence of water flow patterns:** None to some on steeper slopes

3. **Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** None

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
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6. **Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** None, moderate wind erosion hazard
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7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** Fine - limited movement
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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):** Moderately resistant to eroaion: aggregate stability = 3-5
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9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** Shallow, well drained cobbly silt loams: moderate OM (1-3%)
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10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** Significant ground cover (70-80%) and moderate to very steep slopes (12-70%) moderately to slightly limit rainfall impact and overland flow
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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):** 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 > Basin big sagebrush > forbs > other grasses > Western Juniper
- 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: 800, 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: 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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