

Ecological site R042BE063NM Gyp Upland, Cool Desert Grassland

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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.

Figure 1. Mapped extent

Areas shown in blue indicate the maximum mapped extent of this ecological site. Other ecological sites likely occur within the highlighted areas. It is also possible for this ecological site to occur outside of highlighted areas if detailed soil survey has not been completed or recently updated.

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	Not specified

Physiographic features

This site usually occurs on alluvial fans, basins, valley floors, adjacent terraces or bajadas. They formed in loamy, calcareous, and gypsiferous sediments. Slopes range from 1 to 15 percent, but average 6 to 7 percent. Elevations range from 4,500 to 5,500 feet above sea level.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Plain (2) Basin floor (3) Hill
Flooding frequency	None
Ponding frequency	None
Elevation	4,500–5,500 ft
Slope	1–12%
Ponding depth	76 in
Water table depth	76 in
Aspect	Aspect is not a significant factor

Climatic features

This site has an arid climate with distinct seasonal temperature variations and large annual and diurnal temperature changes characteristic of a continental climate.

Precipitation averages 8 to 10 inches annually. Deviations of 4 inches or more from the average are quite common. Fifty percent of the precipitation is received from July to November, which is the predominant growing season of native plants. Summer precipitation is characterized by high-intensity, short-duration rainstorms. Winter precipitation averages less than one-half inch per month, usually in the form of rain. There are occasional snowstorms of short duration.

Temperatures vary from a mean monthly average of 77 F in July to 34 F in January, with a maximum of 104 F and

a minimum of -10 F. The average last killing frost in spring is April 15, and the average first killing frost in fall is October 28. Frost-free season averages 185 days. Temperatures are conducive to native grass and forb growth from March through November.

Spring winds of 15 to 40 miles per hour are common from February to June. These winds increase transpiration rates of native plants and rapidly dry the surface soil. Small soil particles are often displaced by the wind near the soil surface. This results in structural damage to native plants, especially young seedlings.

Climate data was obtained from http://www.wrcc.sage.dri.edu/summary/climsmnm.html using 50% probability for freeze-free and frost-free seasons using 28.5 degrees F and 32.5 degrees F, respectively.

Table 3. Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	165 days
Freeze-free period (average)	213 days
Precipitation total (average)	10 in

Influencing water features

This site is not influenced by water from a wetland or stream.

Soil features

The soils are deep and well drained. Surface texture are loamy very fine sand, loamy sand, sandy loam or loam. The underlying material is a dense layers of soft or cemented gypsum material and gypsiferous earth at depths less than 8 inches may occur. The gypsum amounts range from 50 to 70 percent with 7 to 30 percent carbonates. These soils are droughty.

Areas of gypsum materials commonly outcrop to the surface as inclusions of raw gypsumland, which are void of vegetation and not part of the ecological site. In the lower part of the profile the semi indurated gypsum and caliche.

Minimum and maximum values listed below represent the characteristic soi for this site.

Characteristic soils:

Yesum

Campana

Saido

Table 4. Representative soil features

Surface texture	(1) Gypsiferous loam(2) Gypsiferous fine sandy loam(3) Gypsiferous loamy sand
Family particle size	(1) Loamy
Drainage class	Well drained to excessively drained
Permeability class	Moderately slow to moderately rapid
Soil depth	10–60 in
Surface fragment cover <=3"	0–5%
Surface fragment cover >3"	0%
Available water capacity (0-40in)	0–4 in

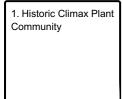
Calcium carbonate equivalent (0-40in)	15–30%		
Electrical conductivity (0-40in)	4–8 mmhos/cm		
Sodium adsorption ratio (0-40in)	2–4		
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (0-40in)	7.4–8.4		
Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	2–20%		
Subsurface fragment volume >3" (Depth not specified)	0%		

Ecological dynamics

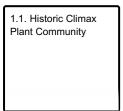
The plant, soil, air, water relationship is poor. The site has a droughty appearance because of the soils inability to support a dense stand of vegetation. If unprotected by plant cover or organic residue, the soil becomes easily wind blown and water eroded.

State and transition model

Ecosystem states



State 1 submodel, plant communities



State 1 Historic Climax Plant Community

Community 1.1 Historic Climax Plant Community

This is a mixed grassland-shrub site with occasional scrub one-seed juniper trees scattered throughout the site. Forbs such as coldenia and cryptantha comprise an important part of the site. Other grasses that could appear on this site include: threeawn spp., needle-and-thread, New Mexico feathergrass, ring muhly, mat muhly, sandhill muhly, burrograss, fluffgrass, and Tridens spp. Other woody plants include: cliff fendlerbrush, cactus spp., rabbitbrush, broom dalea, sand sagebrush, and wolfberry. Other forbs include: threadleaf groundsel, globemallow, trailing four o'clock, bladderpod, and pricklyleaf dogweed.

Table 5. Annual production by plant type

Plant Type	Low (Lb/Acre)	Representative Value (Lb/Acre)	
Grass/Grasslike	280	455	630
Forb	80	130	180
Shrub/Vine	40	65	90
Total	400	650	900

Table 6. Ground cover

Tree foliar cover	0%			
Shrub/vine/liana foliar cover	0%			
Grass/grasslike foliar cover	16%			
Forb foliar cover	0%			
Non-vascular plants				
Biological crusts				
Litter				
Surface fragments >0.25" and <=3"				
Surface fragments >3"	0%			
Bedrock	0%			
Water	0%			
Bare ground	62%			

Figure 5. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). NM2321, R042XA063NM-Gyp Upland-Warm Season Plant-HCPC. SD-1 HCPC Warm Season Plant Community.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	3	5	10	10	25	30	12	5	0	0

Figure 6. Plant community growth curve (percent production by month). NM2322, R042XA063NM-Gyp Upland-Cool Season Plant HCPC. SD-1 Loamy HCPC Cool Season Plant Community.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	5	20	15	5	5	5	5	10	15	15	0

Additional community tables

Table 7. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name Symbol Scientific Name		Annual Production (Lb/Acre)	Foliar Cover (%)	
Grass	/Grasslike				
1	Warm Season			163–228	
	alkali sacaton SPAI Sporobolus airoides		Sporobolus airoides	163–228	_
2	Warm Season			65–130	
	black grama	BOER4	Bouteloua eriopoda	65–130	_
	bush muhly	MUPO2	Muhlenbergia porteri	65–130	_
3	Warm Season	-		33–65	
	gypsum grama	BOBR	Bouteloua breviseta	33–65	_
	blue grama	BOGR2	Bouteloua gracilis	33–65	_
4	Warm Season	-		33–65	
	James' galleta	PLJA	Pleuraphis jamesii	33–65	_
5	Warm Season			20–46	
	spike dropseed	SPCO4	Sporobolus contractus	20–46	_
	sand dropseed	SPCR	Sporobolus cryptandrus	20–46	_
	gyp dropseed	SPNE	Sporobolus nealleyi	20–46	_
6	Warm Season			20–46	
	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	2GRAM	Graminoid (grass or grass-like)	20–46	_
Shrub	/Vine				
7	Shrub			20–46	
	fourwing saltbush	ATCA2	Atriplex canescens	20–46	_
8	Shrub			7–20	
	mormon tea	EPVI	Ephedra viridis	7–20	_
9	Shrub			7–20	
	winterfat	KRLA2	Krascheninnikovia lanata	7–20	_
10	Shrub			7–20	
	Bigelow sage	ARBI3	Artemisia bigelovii	7–20	_
	curved sicklegrass	PAIN	Parapholis incurva	7–20	_
11	Shrub			7–33	
	yucca	YUCCA	Yucca	7–33	_
12	Shrub			7–33	
	Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)	2FORB	Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)	7–33	_
Forb					
13	Forb			33–65	
	cryptantha	CRYPT	Cryptantha	33–65	_
	buckwheat	ERIOG	Eriogonum	33–65	_
	dwarf mentzelia	MEPU3	Mentzelia pumila	33–65	_
	woody crinklemat	TICAC	Tiquilia canescens var. canescens	33–65	_
	hairy crinklemat	TIHI	Tiquilia hispidissima	33–65	_
14	Forb	1	1	33–65	
	Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)	2FORB	Forb (herbaceous, not grass nor grass-like)	33–65	_

Animal community

This ecological site provides habitats which support a resident animal community that is characterized by coyote, black-tailed jackrabbit, desert cottontail, white-tailed antelope squirrel, Botta's pocket gopher, banner-tailed kangaroo rat, southern plains woodrat, burrowing owl, scaled quail, meadowlark, and brown towhee. These sites may be utilized by wintering flocks of chipping, rufous-crowned, and black-chinned sparrows. Note: No animal community narrative exists within old range site decription.

Hydrological functions

The runoff curve numbers are determined by field investigations using hydraulic cover conditions and hydrologic soil groups.

Hydrologic Interpretations Soil Series Hydrologic Group Yesum b Campana b Saido b

Recreational uses

This site has limited potential for recreational use.

Wood products

This site has no potential for wood products.

Other products

This site is well suited for year-long grazing use by cattle, sheep, horses, antelope, deer, and burros.

Other information

Guide to Suggested Initial Stocking Rate Acres per Animal Unit Month

Similarity Index-----Ac/AUM 100 - 76-------3.2 - 4.2 75 - 51-------4.1 - 6.4 50 - 26------6.3 - 12.7 25 - 0------12.7 +

Other references

Other References:

Data collection for this site was done in conjunction with the progressive soil surveys within the Southern Desertic Basins, Plains and Mountains, Major Land Resource Area 42, of New Mexico. This site has been mapped and correlated with soils in the following soil surveys. Valencia, Socorro and Bernalillo.

Characteristic Soils Are:

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.

Auth	or(s)/participant(s)							
Conf	tact for lead author							
Date	3							
Appr	roved by							
Appr	roval date							
Com	position (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production						
	cators lumber and extent of rills:							
2. P	resence of water flow patterns:							
3. N	3. Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:							
	Bare ground from Ecological Site Descr pare ground):	iption or other stud	dies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not					
5. N	lumber of gullies and erosion associate	ed with gullies:						
6. E	extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/o	r depositional area	s:					
7. A	Amount of litter movement (describe siz	ze and distance exp	nected to travel):					

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

values):

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

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

e; describe soil profile features which may be
dominance by above-ground annual-production or live
functional groups are expected to show mortality or
e-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-
d non-native). List species which BOTH characterize inant or co-dominant species on the ecological site if crolled by management interventions. Species that rt-term response to drought or wildfire) are not describing what is NOT expected in the reference state