

Ecological site R043BY012ID Mountain Poorly Drained Bottom ARCAV3-DAFRF/FEID

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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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Approved by	Scott Woodall
Approval date	
Composition (Indicators 10 and 12) based on	Annual Production

Indicators

- Number and extent of rills:** rills are rare on this site.
- Presence of water flow patterns:** water-flow patterns are rare on this site. When they occur, they are short and disrupted by cool season grasses and shrubs and are not extensive.
- Number and height of erosional pedestals or terracettes:** both are rare on the site. In areas where flow patterns and/or rills are present, a few pedestals may be expected.
- Bare ground from Ecological Site Description or other studies (rock, litter, lichen, moss, plant canopy are not bare ground):** data is not available.
- Number of gullies and erosion associated with gullies:** none.
- Extent of wind scoured, blowouts and/or depositional areas:** these are not present. Immediately following wildfire

some soil movement may occur on lighter textured soils.

7. **Amount of litter movement (describe size and distance expected to travel):** fine litter in the interspaces may move up to 2 feet following a significant run-off event. Coarse litter generally does not move.
8. **Soil surface (top few mm) resistance to erosion (stability values are averages - most sites will show a range of values):** values should range from 4 to 6 but needs to be tested.
9. **Soil surface structure and SOM content (include type of structure and A-horizon color and thickness):** The A or A1 horizon is typically 3 to 5 inches thick and very dark grayish brown moist. Structure ranges from weak fine to medium platy. Soil organic matter (SOM) ranges from 1 to 2 percent.
10. **Effect of community phase composition (relative proportion of different functional groups) and spatial distribution on infiltration and runoff:** perennial bunchgrass and sedges slow run-off and increase infiltration.
11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):** is not present.
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: cool season deep-rooted perennial bunchgrasses/grass-like

Sub-dominant: medium shrubs

Other: forbs

Additional:

13. **Amount of plant mortality and decadence (include which functional groups are expected to show mortality or decadence):** mountain silver sagebrush and Idaho fescue can become decadent in the absence of normal fire frequency and ungulate grazing. This is evident by dead centers in the crowns or dead branches.
14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):** additional litter cover data is needed but is expected to be 10-20 percent to a depth of 0.1 inches. Under mature shrubs litter is >0.5 inches deep and is 90-100 percent ground cover.
15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):** is 2400 pounds per acre (2688 kilograms per hectare) in a year with normal temperatures and precipitation. Perennial grasses and grass-like species produce 55-65 percent of the total production, forbs 10-20 percent and shrubs 20-30 percent.

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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: includes sixweeks fescue, bulbous bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, rush skeletonweed, musk and scotch thistle, diffuse and spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, dalmation toadflax, and yellow star thistle.
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17. **Perennial plant reproductive capability:** all functional groups have the potential to reproduce in most years.
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