USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Ecological site R226XY050AK
Beach Dunes and Ridges (St. George Island)

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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.

Table 1. Dominant plant species

Tree	Not specified
Shrub	Not specified
Herbaceous	Not specified

Physiographic features

This site is characterized by sand dunes and sandy/gravely beach ridges that run parallel to the coasts of the Bering Sea.

Table 2. Representative physiographic features

Landforms	(1) Beach (2) Dune (3) Ridge
Elevation	0–120 ft
Slope	0–100%

Climatic features

Table 3. Representative climatic features

Frost-free period (average)	120 days
Freeze-free period (average)	100 days
Precipitation total (average)	24 in

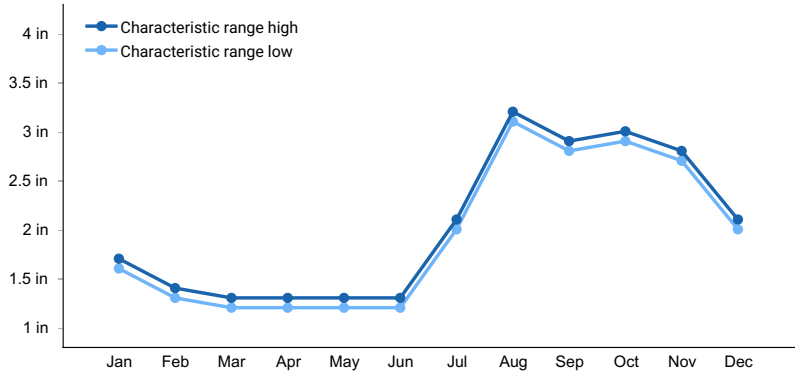

Figure 1. Monthly precipitation range

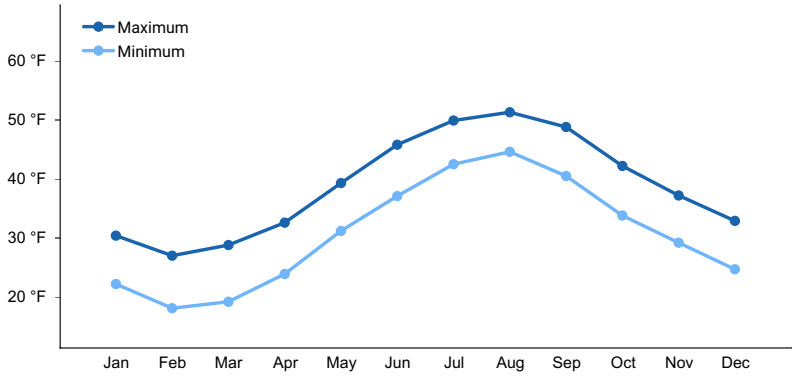

Figure 2. Monthly average minimum and maximum temperature

Influencing water features

Soil features

Soils are very deep and well drained. Soils are coarse textured and soil pH is slightly acid. Runoff is very low and permeability is very rapid.

Table 4. Representative soil features

Surface texture	(1) Peaty sand
Family particle size	(1) Sandy
Drainage class	Well drained
Permeability class	Rapid to very rapid
Soil depth	60–79 in
Surface fragment cover <=3"	0%
Surface fragment cover >3"	0%
Available water capacity (0-40in)	2.9–3.1 in
Calcium carbonate equivalent (0-40in)	0%
Electrical conductivity (0-40in)	0 mmhos/cm
Sodium adsorption ratio (0-40in)	0
Soil reaction (1:1 water) (0-40in)	6.1–6.5
Subsurface fragment volume <=3" (Depth not specified)	0%
Subsurface fragment volume >3" (Depth not specified)	0%

Ecological dynamics

State and transition model

Ecosystem states

1. Elymus mollis/ Conioselinum chinense var. pacificum

State 1 submodel, plant communities

1.1. Elymus mollis/ Conioselinum chinense var. pacificum

State 1
Elymus mollis/ Conioselinum chinense var. pacificum

Community 1.1
Elymus mollis/ Conioselinum chinense var. pacificum

Sedges and grasses make up 45% and forbs 55% of the composition. Total annual vascular herbage production is 3980 pounds/acre.

Additional community tables

Table 5. Community 1.1 plant community composition

Group	Common Name	Symbol	Scientific Name	Annual Production (Lb/Acre)	Foliar Cover (%)
Grass/Grasslike					
1				1500–2000	
	American dunegrass	LEMOM2	*Leymus mollis ssp. mollis*	1150–2000	–
	sedge	CAREX	*Carex*	475–500	–
	red fescue	FERU2	*Festuca rubra*	85–95	–
	bluegrass	POA	*Poa*	40–50	–
Forb					
1				2000–2500	
	Pacific hemlockparsley	COGM	*Conioselinum gmelinii*	1100–1130	–
	seacoast angelica	ANLU	*Angelica lucida*	525–550	–
	Nootka lupine	LUNO	*Lupinus nootkatensis*	475–500	–
	Tilesius' wormwood	ARTI	*Artemisia tilesii*	30–40	–
	whorled lousewort	PEVE	*Pedicularis verticillata*	2–8	–
	larkspurleaf monkshood	ACDE2	*Aconitum delphiniifolium*	0–5	–
	boreal yarrow	ACMIB	*Achillea millefolium var. borealis*	0–5	–
	boreal draba	DRBO	*Draba borealis*	0–5	–
	North Pacific draba	DRHY	*Draba hyperborea*	0–5	–
	field horsetail	EQAR	*Equisetum arvense*	0–5	–

Animal community

This site has very little grazing value for reindeer. Winter forage is low quality and lyme grass is not selected by

reindeer and seldom utilized. The site is frequently used for cover from storm winds during winter and for an insect relief area during summer where reindeer take advantage of offshore breezes. This site is generally available for use as a resting area and is one of the more snow free sites in the area.

Recreational uses

Because of the rolling terrain and sandy soils, this site is sometimes used by four wheeler enthusiasts. This site's vegetation does not hold up well to four wheeler traffic, however, and when the soil is exposed the area is succeptible to wind erosion and blow outs.

Wood products

Not applicable

Other products

The lyme grass produced on this site is tall and stout. It has the potential to be used for weaving baskets or other products.

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)	
Contact for lead author	
Date	
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):**

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

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

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

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

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

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

11. **Presence and thickness of compaction layer (usually none; describe soil profile features which may be mistaken for compaction on this site):**

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:

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

14. **Average percent litter cover (%) and depth (in):**

15. **Expected annual annual-production (this is TOTAL above-ground annual-production, not just forage annual-production):**

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:**
