

172Xy109AK - Mountain Slopes, Shallow
Spruce/shrub birch woodland

Part A: Description of Site

1.c. Landscape Narrative: This site occurs on bedrock cored mountain slopes and summits below about 2900 feet (884 m) elevation. Most areas have been smeared with a thin mantle of loamy till and lacustrine deposits. Slopes range from about 8 to 35 percent.

In the Gulkana River area, this site is of minor occurrence in a few scattered locations above the Middle Fork and upper Main Stem. It is probably extensive at middle elevations throughout the Copper River basin.

MLRA (USDA 1981): 172X - Copper River Plateau

Ecological Unit (Nowacki and Brock 1995): 135A - Copper River Basin Section

1.d.(3). Associated Water Features Narrative: (BLM)

2.j. Climate Narrative: The subarctic continental climate of this site is characterized by long cold winters and short warm summers. Mean January temperature is -2 °F; mean July temperature is 54 °F. Mean annual precipitation ranges from 18 to 21 inches. Annual snowfall ranges from 54 to 102 inches. The frost-free season is about 60 to 80 days (28 °F base temperature). The growing season varies greatly from year to year and frosts can occur during any summer month.

3.s. Soils Narrative: The moderately well developed soils on this site have a mantle of silty eolian material 1 to 4 inches (2 to 10 cm) thick over very gravelly and very cobbly loamy till and loamy lacustrine material. Bedrock is at depths of 10 to 20 inches in most places. The soils are well drained.

4.e. Vegetation Narrative: Spruce/shrub birch scrub is the correlated PNC on this site. At the elevation of this site, *Picea glauca* is the usually the only spruce found. Seral Low shrub birch scrub is present in many places.

5.b. Wildlife Narrative: (BLM)

6. Community Dynamics (Fire, etc.): Wildfire, which is common in the boreal forest zone of the Copper River basin, periodically impacts this site. Most stands have common to abundant charred snags and woody debris; scattered trees and clumps of trees are common also. Following wildfire, the vegetation on this site would be expected to go through a relatively short-lived herb stage codominated by herbs and shrub sprouts. This would be followed by a Low shrub birch scrub stage with occasional to common spruce regeneration. Most areas of this site in the Gulkana River area currently support Low shrub birch scrub. Woodland development likely is a long-term process at the elevation and on the soils of this site. Seed trees in many burned stands were rare and tree seedlings nearly impossible to find.

7. List of Commonly Associated Sites (number and names):

a. Upland:

172Xy106AK - Glaciolacustrine Uplands

172Xy203AK - Upper Mountain Slopes, Shallow

172Xy801AK - Loamy Backslopes

b. Riparian or Wetland:

8. *List of Competing Sites (number and names):*

172Xy106AK - Glaciolacustrine Uplands: lacustrine terraces and till plains generally below 2700 feet (823 m) elevation; deep soils; Spruce/shrub birch woodland vegetative potential, however, in many areas seral Low shrub birch scrub is found.

172Xy203AK - Upper Mountain Slopes, Shallow: higher elevation mountain slopes; similar soils; Low shrub birch scrub vegetative potential.

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Part B: Interpretations for Use and Management of the Site

1.a. *Plant Community Characteristics*: see attached summary table and diagram for stand characteristics for the PNC.

1.k. *Applicable Field Offices*: BLM, Glennallen District Office

Ecological Site: 172Xy109AK - Mountain Slopes, Shallow
 Cover type: Spruce/shrub birch woodland

Seral status: PNC

Number of stands: 6

Source of data: Gulkana River Area

Key: Con = % constancy; Avg = average % canopy cover;

Min = minimum % canopy cover; Max = maximum %

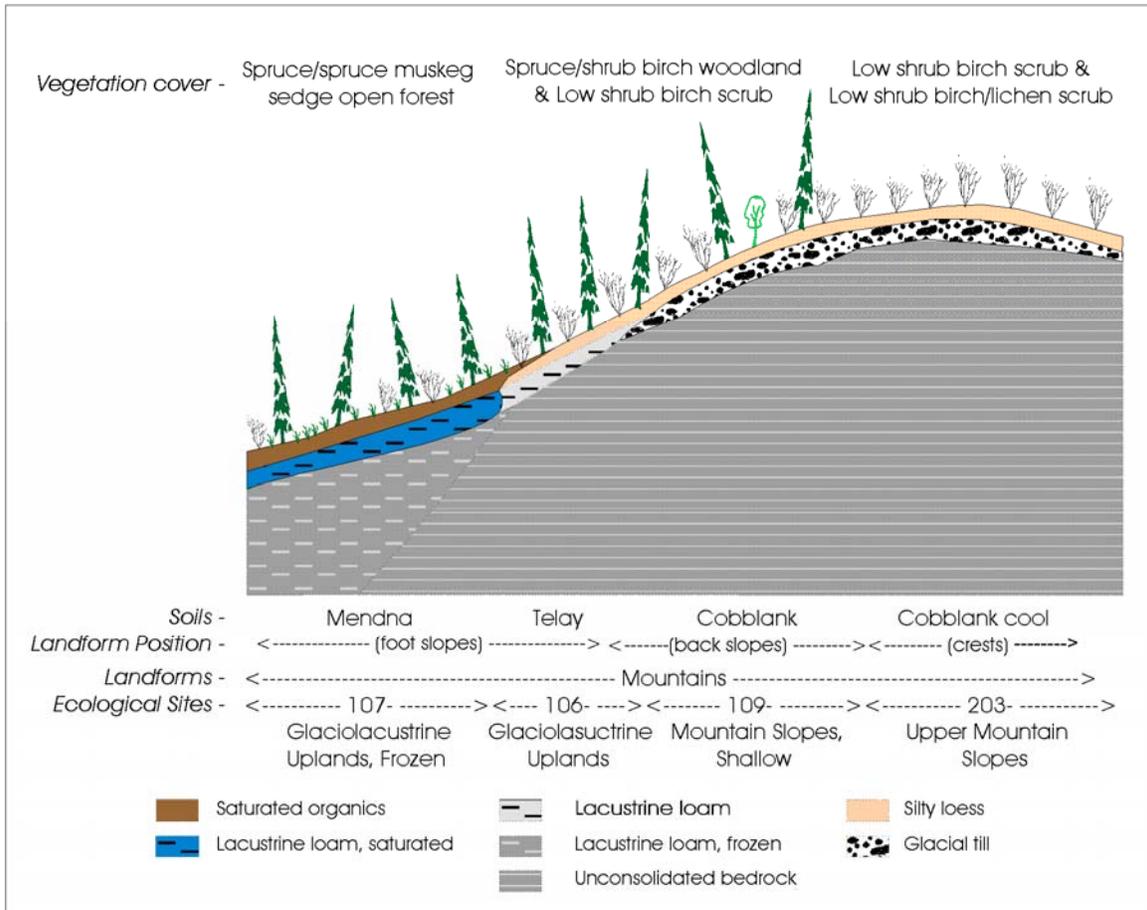
canopy cover; Imp = importance value

Note: Avg, Min, and Max based only on stands in which a
 taxon occurred; Imp = sq root of (Con * Avg)

: Only taxa with >10% constancy included.

Common_name	Stratum	Con	Avg	Min	Max	Imp
white spruce	T1	17	10	10	10	13
paper birch	T2	17	3	3	3	7
white spruce	T2	83	11	10	15	30
quaking aspen	T3	17	1	1	1	3
white spruce	T3	17	3	3	3	7
Beauverd spiraea	SS	17	1	1	1	3
Labrador-tea	SS	100	24	5	55	49
Scouler willow	SS	33	3	1	5	10
black crowberry	SS	83	3	1	5	16
bog blueberry	SS	100	33	15	45	58
currant	SS	17	1	1	1	3
feltleaf willow	SS	33	5	5	5	13
grayleaf willow	SS	33	10	5	15	18
green alder	SS	17	1	1	1	3
lowbush cranberry	SS	100	6	1	10	23
prickly rose	SS	50	1	1	1	5
red bearberry	SS	17	3	3	3	7
shrub birch	SS	100	43	20	65	65
shrubby cinquefoil	SS	17	10	10	10	13
willow	SS	100	8	1	15	28
American twinflower	F	17	1	1	1	3
Canadian bunchberry	F	67	1	1	2	10
Unknown forb	F	33	1	1	1	4
clubmoss	F	17	1	1	1	3
common fireweed	F	33	1	1	1	4
horsetail	F	33	1	1	1	4
ragwort	F	17	1	1	1	3
tall Jacob`s-ladder	F	17	1	1	1	3
tall bluebells	F	50	1	1	1	5
bluejoint reedgrass	G	17	1	1	1	3
polar grass	G	67	1	1	1	6
rough fescue	G	17	1	1	1	4
Moss layer	M	100	26	15	35	51
Lichen layer	L	100	6	1	30	24
Bare soil	B	33	1	1	1	4
Litter and mulch	B	100	14	1	50	37
Rock fragments	B	33	1	1	2	6
Surface water	B	17	1	1	1	3
Woody litter (>1" dia.)	B	17	15	15	15	16

Salix spp. includes: SAMO2 SAPL2



Representative cross section of mountains slopes above the upper Main Stem.