

**DRAFT**  
Subject to Field Testing

December, 1997

## FORAGE SUITABILITY GROUP - WESTERN OREGON

Somewhat Poorly Drained < 15% Slopes

**Number:** G005XY008OR

**MLRA:** A5 Siskiyou - Trinity Area

**Climate:** Average annual precipitation - Ranges 18.0 to 60 inches. Precipitation is low in summer but evenly distributed throughout the rest of the year. Average annual temperature - 7 to 13 degrees Centigrade. Average freeze-free-period - 160 to 235 days for Douglas County, 100 to 180 days for Jackson County, and 140 to 170 days for Josephine County.

**Vegetation:** The native vegetation is generally grasses, shrubs, and forbs. Some sites will contain trees and shrubs. Generally the following tree species occur: Oregon white oak, ponderosa pine, Pacific madrone, and Oregon ash. The following plant may be found: wedgeleaf ceanothus, sedges, clover, timothy, Redtop, Kentucky bluegrass, and other annual and perennial grasses. Once cultivated for pasture or hay, the areas that have low level or no management, tend to show an increase in sedges, rushes, and hydrophytic grasses.

### **Soil Suitability Group Description:**

**Soil Description:** These somewhat poorly drained soils are generally moderately deep to very deep, but they can be shallow. They are generally formed in mixed alluvium and colluvium, derived from granitic, metamorphic and ultramafic rock. Textures are predominantly loams, gravelly clay loam, sandy loam, fine sandy loam, and clay. Rooting depth is highly variable due to seasonal high water table in winter and spring and varies from 6 to 36 inches. In summer irrigation is needed for maximum production of most crops.

**Landscape Position:** Highly variable - found on terraces, drainageways, alluvial fans, high flood plains, toe slopes, foot slopes, and on stream terraces.

**Depth to Seasonal Water Table:** Varies from 0 inches to 3.0 feet during winter and early spring

**Available Water Holding Capacity:** 1.0 to 11 inches

**pH Range:** 4.5 - 7.8

**Frequency and Duration of Flooding:** Flooding occurs very rarely on a few soils in this group.

**Frost heave Potential:** Mainly none but can be moderate on some soils in this group.

**Degree of Stoniness:** Fragments > 3 inches vary from 0 to 25%

**Trafficability Parameters:** Sticky and plastic when wet which restricts trafficability

**Typical Soils:** See attached List

**Adapted Forage Species List:**

**Grazing Use:**

Tall Fescue	Festuca arundinacea
Annual Ryegrass	Lolium multiflorum
Perennial Ryegrass	Lolium perenne
Alsike Clover	Trifolium hybridum
White Clover	Trifolium repens
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Lotus corniculatus

**Machine Harvest:**

Tall Fescue	Festuca Arundinacea
Timothy	Phleum pratense
Alsike Clover	Trifolium repens
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Lotus corniculatus
White Clover	Trifolium repens

**Suggested Seeding Season:** Spring or Fall

**Production Estimates: Based on Animal Unit Months, and high level of management**

Grazing Use:

**Not irrigated** - 2 to 9

**Irrigated** - 6 to 16

**Machine Harvest:**

**Not Irrigated** - 2.5 to 3.5 tons/acre/year

**Irrigated** - 3.5 to 6 tons/acre/year

**Growth Curve: Pasture & Hayland - High Level Management**

Growth Curve Number: **05VXHN**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	5	10	15	20	30	15	5	0	0

Growth Curve Number: **05VXHI**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	10	15	20	30	15	10	0	0

## **Management:**

Limitations: Wetness generally limits the suitability of these soils for deep rooted crops. Most crops on these soils are adversely affected by excess moisture. Excessive tillage can result in the formation of a tillage pan. Grazing and machine use should be restricted when soils are saturated. Grazing while wet results in compaction of surface layer, poor tilth, and excessive runoff. Steepness of slope decreases livestock movement and affect machine movement.

Vegetation Management: Move livestock by plant height. Move livestock onto a field when forage is at least 6 to 8 inches tall. Discontinue grazing when the average height of the pasture is down to 2 to 4 inches. Avoid grazing when soil is wet and before pasture stand is fully established. Remaining stubble height is the most important of these two measurements.

Season of use: To avoid damage to plants and compaction of wet soils in the winter months caused by animals, any livestock on pasture should be removed when the soils are saturated, which generally occurs for long periods between November and March.

## **Facilitating Practices:**

**Cross-fencing:** Cross fencing will help achieve higher forage yields and more uniform grazing use through more intensive management.

**Water Developments:** Water is critical to livestock gains and general health. Generally, the best source of water in a field is a trough with water piped from a well or a spring. If piped water is not available, allow only restricted access to rivers or streams. If livestock only have a small access area for watering, the amount of manure and sediment in the water will be minimized. Additionally, bank erosion problems will be minimized, and streamside vegetation will be protected, which will keep the water cooler.

**Minerals:** Salt should be provided in the field for livestock. The salt block or box should be up off the ground and under cover so it will not dissolve by rain or dew. Salt should be placed away from watering areas to reduce livestock concentration areas and encourage more uniform grazing.

**Clipping and Dragging:** Clip and drag pasture that have slopes less than 20% as often as required to encourage uniform grazing and pasture vigor. Clipping and dragging is best done after each grazing period and a minimum of twice annually.

**Fertilization:** Take soil samples to determine nutrient levels. An application of nitrogen in the spring is generally necessary for forage production, but tests have show that two applications one in fall and one in winter will optimize forage production. Fertilization will increase both the production and the nutritive value of the forage for livestock, but too much fertilizer can build up toxic level of certain minerals (such as nitrate and potassium) in forages.

**Weed Control:** Weed control can be accomplished mechanically, chemically, biologically, or with a combination of these methods. The recommendations for chemicals can change, so it is always best to contact the local county extension office.

**Hayland Management:** For maximum production and quality of forage, the grass should be cut just as the head emerges. The stubble height should be no lower than 2 to 3 inches. The best time to apply manure is just after harvest, because the nutrients can reach the soil more efficiently if excess foliage isn't in the way.

**Reseeding:** Reseeding should always be the last option. It is expensive, and takes a pasture out of production for most of a year. Additionally, the need to reseed is usually a symptom of a need to change livestock management practices. If management problems or a change in stocking rate or season of use are not addressed first, newly seeded pastures will soon look like the ones they replaced. Species selection is very important. If the species is not adapted to the site, the best seedbed preparation in the world will not make the seeding successful. Generally, a mix of one grass species and one legume is recommended. This cuts down on patch grazing of grasses caused by palpalability differences. If multiple species are desired, make sure that the species of grass all have approximately the same growth schedule. It is very important to keep the animals off of a new seeding until well established. Otherwise, the new seedlings probably will be damaged or killed, and the time money invested in the seeding will be wasted.