

SALTY BOTTOMLAND

RANGE SITE DESCRIPTION

Desert Grassland - PE 10-19

Land Resource Area: Trans-Pecos

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION: This site occupies level floodplains adjacent to the Pecos River. Slopes are usually less than 1 percent.
2. SOILS:
 - a. The soils are deep, reddish brown to dark grayish brown, calcareous clayey soils containing gypsum and other salts throughout. Permeability is slow to very slow.
 - b. Some soil taxonomic units which characterize this site are:

Pecos Association
Patrole-Toyah
Toyah-Soils
 - c. Specific site location:

Jerry Cowden Ranch. 15 miles - south Crane
Horsehead Crossing Area
3. CLIMATE:- See Field Office Climatic Description
4. CLIMAX VEGETATION:
 - a. The climax plant community is a complex of vegetative types as the salinity of the soil and water table are variable. Where salinity is slight, the primary grass is sacaton in association with mid-grasses such as sideoats grama, cane bluestem, and two-flower trichloris. Four-wing saltbush is found in favorable locations. Alkali sacaton occupies areas with a higher salinity level.

Grasses make up 85% to 90% of the total yield of the site.

Relative Percentage

<u>Grasses</u>	<u>90%</u>	<u>Woody</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>Forbs</u>	<u>T%</u>
Big Sacaton	10	Four-wing saltbush	10	Halophytes	
Two-flower trichloris	10				
Sideoats grama	15				
Cane Bluestem	5				
Tobosagrass	5				
Alkali sacaton	35				
Perennial threeawn	5				
Inland saltgrass	5				
Plains bristlegrass	T				

- b. As the site declines, Big sacaton gives way to alkali sacaton; saltcedar increases rapidly; and rayless goldenrod invades along with some shrubby mesquite. In extreme droughty conditions, or extended periods of overuse, or in areas where salinity is very high, the surface will crust and only bare ground and extremely salt tolerant plants (Halophytes) are found.
- c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 500 pounds per acre in low rainfall years to 700 pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation in normal rainfall years.

5. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE:

Guail and dove are plentiful on this site as the tall sacaton and alkali sacaton grasses provide both food and cover. Ducks are abundant on the adjacent Pecos River. Some deer may migrate up along the river and be found grazing on the alkali sacaton grass.

6. AESTHETIC AND RELATIVE VALUES: This site has very little aesthetic value. The terrain is flat and vegetation is made up of mid-grasses with woody plants such as salt cedar.

7. HYDROLOGIC CHARACTERISTICS:

Surface runoff and internal drainage are medium and permeability is moderate. Available water capacity is high. Most areas are subject to flooding during and following high intensity rains.

8. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

a. Condition Class	Percentage Climax Vegetation	AU/SEC	AC/AU/YR
Excellent	76-100	25-30	21-25
Good	51- 75	14-26	24-45
Fair	26- 50	7-15	42-91
Poor	0- 25	5- 8	80-125

b. Seeded Areas

Not normally seeded

9. RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES:a. Cattle

PRIMARY*	SECONDARY*	LOW VALUE*
Plains bristlegrass	Sacaton	Saltcedar
Sideoats grama	Perennial threeawn	Mesquite
Alkali sacaton		Inland saltgrass
Sacaton		Croton
Cane bluestem		
Two-flower trichloris		

b. Sheep, deer, and goats

Plains bristlegrass	Sacaton	Inland saltgrass
Alkali sacaton	Two-flower trichloris	Saltcedar
Cane bluestem	Perennial threeawn	Mesquite
Sideoats grama		Croton
Four-wing saltbush		

c. Quail and Dove

PRIMARY**	SECONDARY**	LOW VALUE**
Plains bristlegrass	Two-flower trichloris	Perennial threeawn
Alkali sacaton	Sacaton	Mesquite
Sideoats grama	Cane bluestem	Inland saltgrass
Croton	Four-wing saltbush	

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