

SALTY
DESERT SHRUB
RANGE SITE DESCRIPTION

Land Resource Area Trans-Pecos

Location _____

Date January 1, 1972

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION: This site occupies nearly level areas in immediate vicinity of closed salt basins. Elevations range from 3500 to 4500 feet.

2. SOILS:

a. Soils of this site are moderately to strongly saline loams and clay loams, underlain by gypsiferous soil material at 2 to 20 inches. These soils are moderately permeable and have fair plant-soil-moisture relationships. Some areas have a high water table which may influence plant growth.

b. A soil taxonomic unit which characterizes this site is:
Prewitt clay loam

c. Specific site location:

3. CLIMAX VEGETATION:

a. The climax plant community is dominated by alkali sacaton in association with other occasional mid and short grasses, salt tolerant shrubs and halophytic forbs. Species composition and annual production vary with degree of salinity and depth to water tables. Where salinity is extremely high the site may be barren or have only occasional halophytes present.

RELATIVE PERCENTAGES

<u>Grasses</u>	75%	<u>Woody</u>	18%	<u>Forbs</u>	7%
Alkali sacaton	60	Fourwing saltbush	16	Pepperweed	4
Perennial threeawn	5	Iodine-bush	2	Pickleweed	
Cane bluestem		Wolfberry		Dock	
Two-flower trichloris		Allthorn		Perennial bitterweed	
Big sacaton	5			Annuals	3
Burrograss	5				
Sand dropseed					
Sand muhly					

b. As retrogression occurs, alkali sacaton initially increases, then decreases sharply. Burrograss, threeawns, pickleweed, bitterweed, goldenrod, and salt tolerant annuals increase or invade. Severe site deterioration results in decrease of fourwing saltbush and pronounced reduction in vegetative cover and abundance of bare ground. Saltcedar (introduced) will sometimes invade the site, especially where high water tables exist. Under less severe salinity mesquite also invades.

c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 350 pounds per acre in poor years to 1050 pounds per acre of air-dry herbage in good years.

4. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE: This site is inhabited by dove and quail. Several of the woody plants, forbs, and grasses which grow on this site provide good cover, browse, mast, and seeds for game birds and animals.

5. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

<u>Condition Class</u>	<u>Climax Vegetation</u>	<u>Ac/AU/Yr.L.</u>	<u>AU/Sec/Yr.L.</u>
Excellent	76-100	49-58	11-13
Good	51-75	64-80	8-10
Fair	26-50	80-128	5-8
Poor	0-25	128+	

RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES

a. Cattle

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Cane bluestem	Perennial threeawns	Pickleweed
Two-flower trichloris	Sand muhly	Perennial
Alkali sacaton	Sand dropseed	bitterweed
Big sacaton	Burrograss	Annual halophytes
	Fourwing saltbush	All thorn
		Wolfberry

b. Dove and Quail

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Seed of:	Seed of:	Seed of:
Some annual perennial forbs	Alkali sacaton Big sacaton	Cane bluestem Twoflower trichloris
Mast of most woody plants		Burrograss

1/ Definitions of terms and an explanation of interpretations is given on a separate page which is attached or submitted with each group of range site descriptions.