

USDA, SCS
Section II-E
Technical Guide
Area 27

CLAYEY BOTTOMLAND
RANGE SITE DESCRIPTION
FE 19-44

Land Resource Area RIO GRANDE PLAIN

Location _____

Date 1/1/72

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION: This site occurs on nearly level low terraces of old floodplains above overflow and on slightly depressed to nearly level areas in active floodplains that receive overflow about twice in every five years. Surfaces are plane or concave with slopes of 1 percent or less.

2. SOILS:
 - a. The soils are deep, calcareous or neutral clayey soils throughout. The soils crack when dry and have a high shrink-swell potential. The soils are moderately well drained or somewhat poorly drained, runoff is slow or ponded and permeability is slow or very slow. Water holding capacity is high but available water for plant use is medium. Because these are aluvial soils the natural fertility is high. This is a high producing site.

 - b. Some soil taxonomic units which characterize this site are:
 - Aransas clay
 - Grulla clay
 - Harlingen clay
 - Kaufman clay

 - c. Specific site location:

3. CLIMAX VEGETATION:
 - a. The climax vegetation of this site is a savannah oak,elm, hackberry, cottonwood, anaqua,pecan and other large trees provide about 25 per cent canopy. The overstory is usually denser immediately adjacent to streams. Underbrush includes greenbriar, grapes, and berryvines. The plant community varies due to variations in overflow, overstory and drainage.

RELATIVE PERCENTAGE

<u>Grasses</u>	85%	<u>Woody</u>	10%	<u>Forbs</u>	5%
southwestern bristlegrass	25	oak sp.	10	Engleman daisy	5
Virginia wildrye		elm sp.		sensitive briar	
rustyseed paspalum		pecan		snoutbean	
big cenchrus		vines		yellow neptunia	
little bluestem	35	spiny aster		western indigo	
switchgrass		hackberry		lespedezas	
giant sacaton		woody vines		annual forbs	
four flower trichloris	20			blood ragweed	
Indiangrass					
vine mesquite					
buffalograss					
white tridens	5				
low panicums					
low paspalums					
knotroot bristlegrass					

b. As retrogression occurs, trees and shrubs often increase to form a dense canopy. As this happens, the shade sensitive prairie grasses decrease and the shade tolerant grasses become more prominent. Bermudagrass and Buffalograss tend to increase in closely grazed open areas. In a deteriorated condition many of the following invaders may be seen growing on the site: bushy bluestem, ragweed, bitter sneezeweed, fogfruit, prairie coneflower, snow-on-the-prairie, sump weed, annual grasses and forbs and spiny aster in wet places.

c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 4500 pounds per acre in poor years to 8000 pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation in good years.

4. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE: This site is used by deer, squirrels, turkey, quail and dove, and javelina.

5. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

a.

<u>Condition Class</u>	<u>Climax Vegetation</u>	<u>Ac/AU/4L</u>
Excellent	76-100	7-10
Good	51-75	9-13
Fair	26-50	12-16
Poor	0-25	15+

RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES

a. Cattle

Primary

Virginia wildrye
big bluestem
Indiangrass
little bluestem
switchgrass
four flower trichloris

Secondary

rusty seed paspalum
vine mesquite
buffalo grass
southwestern bristlegrass
low panicums
low paspalums
sedges

Low Value

bushy bluestem
annual grasses
annual forbs
prairie cone-
flower
woody plants

b. Deer

Primary

bundleflower
hairy ruellia
most annual forbs
hairy tubetongue
sedges
snoutbean
Engleman daisy
greenbriar
hackberry

Secondary

low paspalums
low panicums
maximillian sunflower
elm
spiny aster
Texas wintergrass

Low Value

most grasses
baccharis
prairie cone-
flower

c. Quail & dove

Primary

croton seed
ragweed seed
sunflower seed
panicums sp. seed
paspalum sp. seed

Secondary

tender grasses &
forbs (quail)
sumpweed

Low Value

fuzzy seeded
grasses & forbs
non-mast producing
woody plants

d. Turkey

Primary

Tender grasses
hackberry (fruit)
oak mast
pecans

Secondary

mats from other
woody plants

Low Value

most other
grasses

Legend and Definitions for Range Site Descriptions.

1/ This rating system provides general guidance as to animal preference for plant species. It also indicates possible competition between kinds of animals for the various plants. Grazing preference changes from time to time and place to place depending upon the animals, upon plant palatability and nutritive value, stage of growth and season of use, relative abundance, and associated plants. Grazing preference does not necessarily reflect a plant's ecological place in the climax plant community.

The following definitions apply to cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and antelope grazing.

Primary: These species generally decrease when the climax plant community is subjected to continuous heavy grazing pressure by the animals listed.

Secondary: These plants usually increase initially, then decrease when the site is subjected to continuous heavy grazing use by the animals listed.

Low Value: These plants continue to increase or invade with heavy continuous grazing use of the site.

For squirrel, peceary and birds the terms primary, secondary, and low value indicate species preference only. They do not indicate plant response to feeding pressure, nor do they have any ecological significance.