

c. The average growing season of warm season plants is about 290 days. The last killing frost occurs about February 20 and the first frost about December 5. Temperatures average from 51° to 54° F in January and from 83° to 86° F in July. Warm season plants normally make about 60 to 70% of their growth between March 15 to June 15 and most of the remainder in September, October and early November.

4. CLIMAX VEGETATION:

a. The climax vegetation on this site is an open prairie. This site is dominated by mid grasses such as gulf cordgrass and seacoast bluestem.

Percentage of Total Plant Community (air-dry weight)

Grasses	95%	Woody	T	Forbs	5%
Gulf cordgrass	30	Mesquite		Snoutbean	
Seacoast bluestem	15	Tasajillo		Partridgepea	
Bushy bluestem				Gulf croton	
Broomsedge bluestem	10			Gaillardia spp.	
Switchgrass	10			Sensativebriar	
				Annual forbs	
Alkali sacaton	5				
Purple dropseed	5				
Hardwick paspalum					
Brownseed paspalum	5				
Florida paspalum					
Nealley sprangletop					
Tropic sprangletop	5				
Dominican sprangletop					
Hooded windmillgrass					
Fringed signalgrass	5				
Stingrass					
Red lovegrass					
Gummy lovegrass					
Mediterranean lovegrass	5				
Tumble lovegrass					

- b. As retrogression occurs, gulf cordgrass, purple dropseed, brownseed paspalum, hardwick paspalum, and hooded windmillgrass are likely increasers. In a deteriorated condition, gulf cordgrass may increase to 90 percent along with invaders such as fringed signalgrass, stinkgrass, red lovegrass, and gummy lovegrass.
- c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 2000 pounds per acre in poor years to 5000 pounds per acre air dry weight in good years.

- 5. WILDLIFE ADAPTED TO THE SITE: This site is inhibited by dove and quail with scattered population of deer.
- 6. ESTHETIC AND RELATED VALUES: Seacoast, bushy, and broomsedge bluestem combine their reddish brown colors with the bright green of gulf cordgrass to create a beautiful sea of waving colors as the gentle gulf breeze rolls across the open prairie. The rusty red and yellow colors of Gaillardia add another colorful dimension to the rolling sea of grass. *Dove perched in the scattered trees can be seen outlined against the bright orange of the setting sun.
- 7. HYDROLOGIC CHARACTERISTICS: Soils in this site are grouped into hydrologic group B. They have a low runoff and erosion potential. When hydrologic characteristics of the vegetative cover is good, the hydrologic curve number is about 60. Refer to SCS National Engineering Handbook, section 4, to determine runoff quantities from these curves. When the hydrologic characteristic of the vegetation condition is less than good, field investigations are needed to determine hydrologic curve numbers.

8. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

a. <u>Condition Class</u>	<u>Percent Climax Vegetation</u>	<u>Ac/Au/Yearlong</u>
Excellent	76 - 100	11 - 15
Good	51 - 75	14 - 19
Fair	26 - 50	18 - 24
Poor	0 - 25	23+

b. Introduced Species

<u>Percent Ground Cover</u>	<u>Ac/Au/Yearlong</u>
100 - 76	10 - 14
75 - 51	13 - 18
50 - 26	17 - 22
25 - 0	21+

RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES 1/

a. Cattle

<u>Primary 2/</u>	<u>Secondary 3/</u>	<u>Low Value 4/</u>
Seacoast bluestem	Gulf cordgrass	Most other grasses
Broomsedge bluestem	Bushy bluestem	Gulf croton
Switchgrass	Purple dropseed	Gaillardia spp.
Alkali sacaton	Hardwick paspalum	Annual forbs
	Brownseed paspalum	
	Hooded windmillgrass	

b. Dove and Quail 5/

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Croton	Sensitivebiac	Mesquite
Partridgepea	Snoutbean	Tasajillo
Paspalum spp.		Most grasses
Panicum spp.		

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.

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- 1/ This rating system provides general guidance as to animal preference for plant species. It also indicates competition between kinds of animals for the various plants. Grazing preference changes from time to time and place to place depending upon the animal, plant palatability and nutritive value, stage of growth and season of use, relative abundance, and associated plants. Grazing preference does not necessarily reflect the place of a plant in the range ecosystem.
- 2/ These species generally decrease under prolonged heavy grazing.
- 3/ These plants usually increase initially, then decrease under prolonged heavy use.
- 4/ These plants continue to increase with heavy grazing use.
- 5/ For these wildlife species the terms primary, secondary and low value indicate animal preference only. They do not indicate plant response to feeding pressure; nor do they have any ecological significance.

APPROVED:

Huck Kerne
State Range Conservationist

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Date