

USDA-SCS
Section II-E
Area _____

83D

COASTAL RIDGE
RANGE SITE DESCRIPTION
PE 31-44

Land Resource Area Rio Grande Plain - 83D

Location _____

Date 1/1/72

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION: This site occurs adjacent to the coast on strongly sloping "clayey" dune areas. Slopes range from 1 to 15 percent.
2. SOILS:
 - a. The soils are deep, with calcareous clay loam surfaces and clayey subsoils overlying old buried clay loam surface layers. Permeability is slow, surface runoff is rapid and the soils are well drained. The soil is moderately salty with soil salinity increasing with depth. Water holding capacity is medium. Salt is deposited on plants and soil from the gulf winds. This limits growth and partly effects species composition.
 - b. Soil taxonomic unit which characterize this site:

Point Isabel clay loam
 - c. Specific site location:
3. CLIMAX VEGETATION:
 - a. The climax plant community is grassland, with open stand of shrubs. This site will support a mixture of tall, mid, and short grasses such as big sacaton, fourflower trichloris, and buffalograss. Scattered throughout the open grassland are woody shrubs, yucca, and prickly-pear.

RELATIVE PERCENTAGE

<u>Grasses</u>	<u>85%</u>	<u>Woody</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>Forbs</u>	<u>5%</u>
Fourflower trichloris	20	Fiddlewood		Annual forbs	
Big sacaton	35	Desert yaupon	5	Sensitivebriar	
Arizona cottontop		Spiny hackberry		Dalea sp	
Lovegrass tridens	5	Yucca		Orange zexmenia	5
Plains bristlegrass		Pricklypear		Bushsunflower	
Hooded windmillgrass	10	Condalia sp		Croton	
Pink pappusgrass	5	Twisted acacia			
Fall witchgrass		Allthorn goat-			
Sand dropseed	5	bush	5		
Buffalograss	5	Leatherstem			
Red grama		Coyotillo			
Threeawn	T	Texasebony			
		Ceniza			

- b. As retrogression occurs, condalias, spiny hackberry, ceniza, coyotillo, leatherstem and pricklypear, form a dense chaparral type landscape. Some common invaders on the site are: red grama, whorled dropseed, gummy lovegrass and Acacia sp.

Size and percentage of woody shrubs and grasses are curtailed by the salty air and exposure to windborne sand from tidal flat areas when they are dry. Yuccas and ebony are very scattered throughout the site.

- c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 3000 pounds per acre in low production years to 5500 pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation in high production years.

4. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE: The vegetative plant community of this site provides a habitat for deer, quail and dove. Several of the shrubs, forbs and grasses which grow on the site provide good cover, browse, mast and seed for game birds and animals.

5. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

<u>a. Condition Class</u>	<u>Climax Vegetation</u>	<u>Ac/AU/Yearlong</u>
Excellent	76 - 100	9 - 14
Good	51 - 75	12 - 17
Fair	26 - 50	14 - 19
Poor	0 - 25	18+

RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES 1/

a. For Cattle

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Big sacaton	Windmillgrass	Annual forbs
Fourflower trichloris	Buffalograss	Condalia sp.
Plains bristlegrass	Pink pappusgrass	Cactus
Lovegrass tridens	Perennial threeawn	Texasebony
Arizona cottontop	Spiny hackberry	
Bushsunflower	Orange zexmenia	
Dalea	Desert yaupon	
Fiddlewood		

b. For Deer

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Fiddlewood	Ebony	Other grasses
Desert yaupon	Yucca	Condalia sp.
Bushsunflower	Lovegrass tridens	Leatherstem
Dalea sp.	Orange zexmenia	
Plains bristlegrass	Cactus	
Most annual forbs	Spiny hackberry	

c. For Quail and Dove

<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
Plains bristlegrass seeds	Sand dropseed	Other grasses
Bushsunflower seeds	Big sacaton seed	Condalia seed
Orange zexmenia seeds	Yaupon fruit	Cactus fruit
Most annual forbs	Leatherstem seed	Yucca
Fiddlewood seed		
Croton seed		

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.

legends: no definitions for range etc 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.

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

For squirrel, peccary 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.