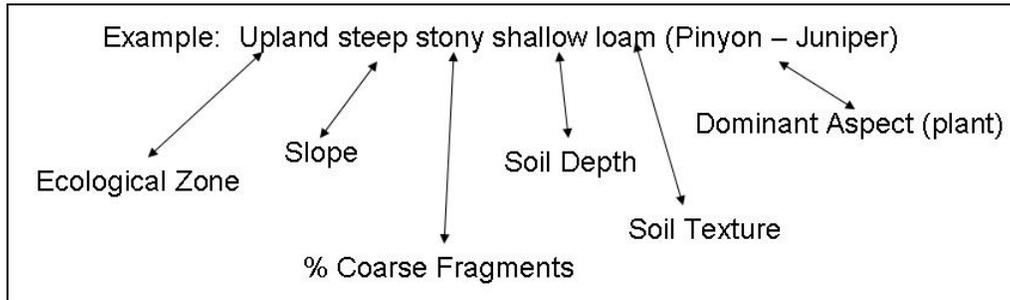


Utah Ecological Site Naming Conventions



There are six possible modifiers to give to an ecological site when naming them. These modifiers name aspects which influence the kind and amount of plants present in the historical climax community. The factors to determine slope, surface fragments, soil depth, soil texture and dominant aspect stay the same throughout the state. In order to determine the ecological zone MLRA specific factors must be evaluated.

Ecological Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical - desert, semidesert, upland, mountain, and high mountain. • Run in sites – alkali flat, alkali bottom, wet meadows, ect.. • Refer to the Utah MLRAs documents 		
Slope descriptions	Percent slope	Modifier	Notes
	0-50	none	Determination of slope class is also dependent on the plant community and soil. Steep is rarely used.
	30-50	steep	
	50 or greater	very steep	
%coarse fragments	% of Fragments	Modifier	
In top 24 inches	0-35	none	This modifier is based on water holding capacity. If there are other features such as soil texture that are the dominant influence on water holding capacity, then this modifier is not used.
	35-50	Gravelly	
	50-65	Stony	
Soil depth*	Depth	Modifier	
	6-14 in.	Very Shallow	
	10-20 in.	Shallow	
	20 in or greater	None	
Soil texture*	Texture	Modifier	
	Many, refer to the soil descriptions	Chose the most encompassing texture of the associated soils that influences the plant community	
Dominant aspect	This identifies the most visual and least dynamic species occurring on the site. The species named here are not necessarily the dominant species by production.		

* These values come directly from the soil or soil map unit descriptions

The values presented in this table should serve as a guide. The unique combination of all the attributes at a site will influence how and when the modifiers are used.

Factors in Determining Ecological Zone by MLRA

Amount of precipitation (and/or the available moisture) is often the primary attribute in determining ecological zone. Ecological zones include desert, semidesert, upland, mountain, high mountain and run in sites. The run in sites are unique because they receive more moisture than adjacent areas.

Generalized Precipitation for Ecological Zones in Utah			
Ecological Zone	Desert	Semidesert	Upland
Precipitation	0-6 inches	6-12 inches	12-16 inches

Specific tables for MLRAs in Utah can be found in the Utah MLRAs document found on the NRCS Utah web site.

Definitions of Run-in Sites

The first word in the site name indicates the climate except for run-in or water table sites which receive extra moisture for plant growth either as overland run-in or from a beneficial water table within reach of plant roots. These sites are:

1. Alkali bottom - with a water table below 20 inches but within reach of roots but with considerable salt and alkali causing salt tolerant plants such as alkali sacaton and greasewood to be present.
2. Alkali Fan -
3. Alkali Flat -
4. Salt meadow - water table above 20 inches with considerable salt and alkali. Dominant plant is saltgrass.
5. Semi-wet meadows - water table below 20 inches but within reach of roots.
6. Semiwet streambottoms - along streambottoms but with water table below 20 inches.
7. Semiwet Saline Streambank –
8. Semiwet Fresh Streambank -
9. Wet meadows - water table above 20 inches.
10. Wet streambottoms- along streambottoms with water table above 20 inches.
11. Sandy Bottom - with a water table below 20 inches but within reach of roots
12. Loamy Bottom - with a water table below 20 inches but within reach of roots