



United States
Department of
Agriculture



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Natural
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Conservation
Service

A product of the National
Cooperative Soil Survey,
a joint effort of the United
States Department of
Agriculture and other
Federal agencies, State
agencies including the
Agricultural Experiment
Stations, and local
participants

Custom Soil Resource Report for **Lea County, New Mexico**



August 16, 2010

Preface

Soil surveys contain information that affects land use planning in survey areas. They highlight soil limitations that affect various land uses and provide information about the properties of the soils in the survey areas. Soil surveys are designed for many different users, including farmers, ranchers, foresters, agronomists, urban planners, community officials, engineers, developers, builders, and home buyers. Also, conservationists, teachers, students, and specialists in recreation, waste disposal, and pollution control can use the surveys to help them understand, protect, or enhance the environment.

Various land use regulations of Federal, State, and local governments may impose special restrictions on land use or land treatment. Soil surveys identify soil properties that are used in making various land use or land treatment decisions. The information is intended to help the land users identify and reduce the effects of soil limitations on various land uses. The landowner or user is responsible for identifying and complying with existing laws and regulations.

Although soil survey information can be used for general farm, local, and wider area planning, onsite investigation is needed to supplement this information in some cases. Examples include soil quality assessments (<http://soils.usda.gov/sqi/>) and certain conservation and engineering applications. For more detailed information, contact your local USDA Service Center (<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?agency=nrcs>) or your NRCS State Soil Scientist (http://soils.usda.gov/contact/state_offices/).

Great differences in soil properties can occur within short distances. Some soils are seasonally wet or subject to flooding. Some are too unstable to be used as a foundation for buildings or roads. Clayey or wet soils are poorly suited to use as septic tank absorption fields. A high water table makes a soil poorly suited to basements or underground installations.

The National Cooperative Soil Survey is a joint effort of the United States Department of Agriculture and other Federal agencies, State agencies including the Agricultural Experiment Stations, and local agencies. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has leadership for the Federal part of the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Information about soils is updated periodically. Updated information is available through the NRCS Soil Data Mart Web site or the NRCS Web Soil Survey. The Soil Data Mart is the data storage site for the official soil survey information.

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How Soil Surveys Are Made

Soil surveys are made to provide information about the soils and miscellaneous areas in a specific area. They include a description of the soils and miscellaneous areas and their location on the landscape and tables that show soil properties and limitations affecting various uses. Soil scientists observed the steepness, length, and shape of the slopes; the general pattern of drainage; the kinds of crops and native plants; and the kinds of bedrock. They observed and described many soil profiles. A soil profile is the sequence of natural layers, or horizons, in a soil. The profile extends from the surface down into the unconsolidated material in which the soil formed or from the surface down to bedrock. The unconsolidated material is devoid of roots and other living organisms and has not been changed by other biological activity.

Currently, soils are mapped according to the boundaries of major land resource areas (MLRAs). MLRAs are geographically associated land resource units that share common characteristics related to physiography, geology, climate, water resources, soils, biological resources, and land uses (USDA, 2006). Soil survey areas typically consist of parts of one or more MLRA.

The soils and miscellaneous areas in a survey area occur in an orderly pattern that is related to the geology, landforms, relief, climate, and natural vegetation of the area. Each kind of soil and miscellaneous area is associated with a particular kind of landform or with a segment of the landform. By observing the soils and miscellaneous areas in the survey area and relating their position to specific segments of the landform, a soil scientist develops a concept, or model, of how they were formed. Thus, during mapping, this model enables the soil scientist to predict with a considerable degree of accuracy the kind of soil or miscellaneous area at a specific location on the landscape.

Commonly, individual soils on the landscape merge into one another as their characteristics gradually change. To construct an accurate soil map, however, soil scientists must determine the boundaries between the soils. They can observe only a limited number of soil profiles. Nevertheless, these observations, supplemented by an understanding of the soil-vegetation-landscape relationship, are sufficient to verify predictions of the kinds of soil in an area and to determine the boundaries.

Soil scientists recorded the characteristics of the soil profiles that they studied. They noted soil color, texture, size and shape of soil aggregates, kind and amount of rock fragments, distribution of plant roots, reaction, and other features that enable them to identify soils. After describing the soils in the survey area and determining their properties, the soil scientists assigned the soils to taxonomic classes (units). Taxonomic classes are concepts. Each taxonomic class has a set of soil characteristics with precisely defined limits. The classes are used as a basis for comparison to classify soils systematically. Soil taxonomy, the system of taxonomic classification used in the United States, is based mainly on the kind and character of soil properties and the arrangement of horizons within the profile. After the soil scientists classified and named the soils in the survey area, they compared the

individual soils with similar soils in the same taxonomic class in other areas so that they could confirm data and assemble additional data based on experience and research.

The objective of soil mapping is not to delineate pure map unit components; the objective is to separate the landscape into landforms or landform segments that have similar use and management requirements. Each map unit is defined by a unique combination of soil components and/or miscellaneous areas in predictable proportions. Some components may be highly contrasting to the other components of the map unit. The presence of minor components in a map unit in no way diminishes the usefulness or accuracy of the data. The delineation of such landforms and landform segments on the map provides sufficient information for the development of resource plans. If intensive use of small areas is planned, onsite investigation is needed to define and locate the soils and miscellaneous areas.

Soil scientists make many field observations in the process of producing a soil map. The frequency of observation is dependent upon several factors, including scale of mapping, intensity of mapping, design of map units, complexity of the landscape, and experience of the soil scientist. Observations are made to test and refine the soil-landscape model and predictions and to verify the classification of the soils at specific locations. Once the soil-landscape model is refined, a significantly smaller number of measurements of individual soil properties are made and recorded. These measurements may include field measurements, such as those for color, depth to bedrock, and texture, and laboratory measurements, such as those for content of sand, silt, clay, salt, and other components. Properties of each soil typically vary from one point to another across the landscape.

Observations for map unit components are aggregated to develop ranges of characteristics for the components. The aggregated values are presented. Direct measurements do not exist for every property presented for every map unit component. Values for some properties are estimated from combinations of other properties.

While a soil survey is in progress, samples of some of the soils in the area generally are collected for laboratory analyses and for engineering tests. Soil scientists interpret the data from these analyses and tests as well as the field-observed characteristics and the soil properties to determine the expected behavior of the soils under different uses. Interpretations for all of the soils are field tested through observation of the soils in different uses and under different levels of management. Some interpretations are modified to fit local conditions, and some new interpretations are developed to meet local needs. Data are assembled from other sources, such as research information, production records, and field experience of specialists. For example, data on crop yields under defined levels of management are assembled from farm records and from field or plot experiments on the same kinds of soil.

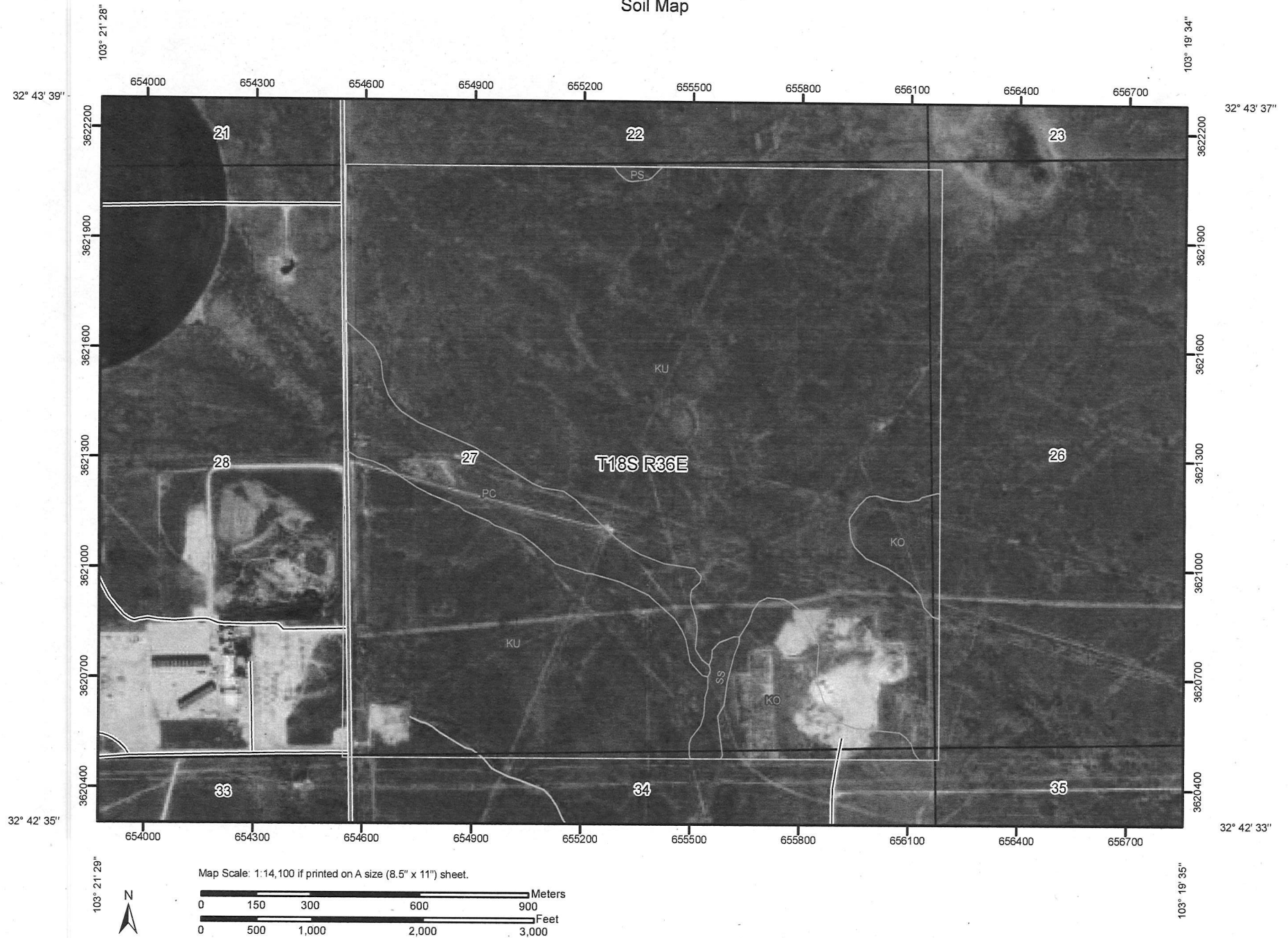
Predictions about soil behavior are based not only on soil properties but also on such variables as climate and biological activity. Soil conditions are predictable over long periods of time, but they are not predictable from year to year. For example, soil scientists can predict with a fairly high degree of accuracy that a given soil will have a high water table within certain depths in most years, but they cannot predict that a high water table will always be at a specific level in the soil on a specific date.

After soil scientists located and identified the significant natural bodies of soil in the survey area, they drew the boundaries of these bodies on aerial photographs and identified each as a specific map unit. Aerial photographs show trees, buildings, fields, roads, and rivers, all of which help in locating boundaries accurately.

Soil Map

The soil map section includes the soil map for the defined area of interest, a list of soil map units on the map and extent of each map unit, and cartographic symbols displayed on the map. Also presented are various metadata about data used to produce the map, and a description of each soil map unit.

Custom Soil Resource Report Soil Map



Custom Soil Resource Report

MAP LEGEND






















Area of Interest (AOI)




Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils




Soil Map Units

Special Point Features




-  Blowout
-  Borrow Pit
-  Clay Spot
-  Closed Depression
-  Gravel Pit
-  Gravelly Spot
-  Landfill
-  Lava Flow
-  Marsh or swamp
-  Mine or Quarry
-  Miscellaneous Water
-  Perennial Water
-  Rock Outcrop
-  Saline Spot
-  Sandy Spot
-  Severely Eroded Spot
-  Sinkhole
-  Slide or Slip
-  Sodic Spot
-  Spoil Area
-  Stony Spot

-  Very Stony Spot
-  Wet Spot
-  Other

Special Line Features

-  Gully
-  Short Steep Slope
-  Other

Political Features

-  Cities
-  PLSS Township and Range
-  PLSS Section

Water Features

-  Oceans
-  Streams and Canals

Transportation

-  Rails
-  Interstate Highways
-  US Routes
-  Major Roads
-  Local Roads

MAP INFORMATION

Map Scale: 1:14,100 if printed on A size (8.5" x 11") sheet.

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
Coordinate System: UTM Zone 13N NAD83

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Lea County, New Mexico
Survey Area Data: Version 9, Dec 9, 2008

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 11/1/1997

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Map Unit Legend

Lea County, New Mexico (NM025)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
KO	Kimbrough gravelly loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	43.7	6.7%
KU	Kimbrough-Lea complex	561.7	85.7%
PC	Portales loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	44.5	6.8%
PS	Portales-Stegall loams	0.9	0.1%
SS	Stegall and slaughter soils	5.0	0.8%
Totals for Area of Interest		655.8	100.0%

Map Unit Descriptions

The map units delineated on the detailed soil maps in a soil survey represent the soils or miscellaneous areas in the survey area. The map unit descriptions, along with the maps, can be used to determine the composition and properties of a unit.

A map unit delineation on a soil map represents an area dominated by one or more major kinds of soil or miscellaneous areas. A map unit is identified and named according to the taxonomic classification of the dominant soils. Within a taxonomic class there are precisely defined limits for the properties of the soils. On the landscape, however, the soils are natural phenomena, and they have the characteristic variability of all natural phenomena. Thus, the range of some observed properties may extend beyond the limits defined for a taxonomic class. Areas of soils of a single taxonomic class rarely, if ever, can be mapped without including areas of other taxonomic classes. Consequently, every map unit is made up of the soils or miscellaneous areas for which it is named and some minor components that belong to taxonomic classes other than those of the major soils.

Most minor soils have properties similar to those of the dominant soil or soils in the map unit, and thus they do not affect use and management. These are called noncontrasting, or similar, components. They may or may not be mentioned in a particular map unit description. Other minor components, however, have properties and behavioral characteristics divergent enough to affect use or to require different management. These are called contrasting, or dissimilar, components. They generally are in small areas and could not be mapped separately because of the scale used. Some small areas of strongly contrasting soils or miscellaneous areas are identified by a special symbol on the maps. If included in the database for a given area, the contrasting minor components are identified in the map unit descriptions along with some characteristics of each. A few areas of minor components may not have been observed, and consequently they are not mentioned in the descriptions, especially where the pattern was so complex that it was impractical to make enough observations to identify all the soils and miscellaneous areas on the landscape.

The presence of minor components in a map unit in no way diminishes the usefulness or accuracy of the data. The objective of mapping is not to delineate pure taxonomic classes but rather to separate the landscape into landforms or landform segments that

have similar use and management requirements. The delineation of such segments on the map provides sufficient information for the development of resource plans. If intensive use of small areas is planned, however, onsite investigation is needed to define and locate the soils and miscellaneous areas.

An identifying symbol precedes the map unit name in the map unit descriptions. Each description includes general facts about the unit and gives important soil properties and qualities.

Soils that have profiles that are almost alike make up a *soil series*. Except for differences in texture of the surface layer, all the soils of a series have major horizons that are similar in composition, thickness, and arrangement.

Soils of one series can differ in texture of the surface layer, slope, stoniness, salinity, degree of erosion, and other characteristics that affect their use. On the basis of such differences, a soil series is divided into *soil phases*. Most of the areas shown on the detailed soil maps are phases of soil series. The name of a soil phase commonly indicates a feature that affects use or management. For example, Alpha silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, is a phase of the Alpha series.

Some map units are made up of two or more major soils or miscellaneous areas. These map units are complexes, associations, or undifferentiated groups.

A *complex* consists of two or more soils or miscellaneous areas in such an intricate pattern or in such small areas that they cannot be shown separately on the maps. The pattern and proportion of the soils or miscellaneous areas are somewhat similar in all areas. Alpha-Beta complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes, is an example.

An *association* is made up of two or more geographically associated soils or miscellaneous areas that are shown as one unit on the maps. Because of present or anticipated uses of the map units in the survey area, it was not considered practical or necessary to map the soils or miscellaneous areas separately. The pattern and relative proportion of the soils or miscellaneous areas are somewhat similar. Alpha-Beta association, 0 to 2 percent slopes, is an example.

An *undifferentiated group* is made up of two or more soils or miscellaneous areas that could be mapped individually but are mapped as one unit because similar interpretations can be made for use and management. The pattern and proportion of the soils or miscellaneous areas in a mapped area are not uniform. An area can be made up of only one of the major soils or miscellaneous areas, or it can be made up of all of them. Alpha and Beta soils, 0 to 2 percent slopes, is an example.

Some surveys include *miscellaneous areas*. Such areas have little or no soil material and support little or no vegetation. Rock outcrop is an example.

Lea County, New Mexico

KO—Kimbrough gravelly loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes

Map Unit Setting

Elevation: 3,600 to 4,200 feet

Mean annual precipitation: 12 to 15 inches

Mean annual air temperature: 58 to 60 degrees F

Frost-free period: 195 to 205 days

Map Unit Composition

Kimbrough and similar soils: 85 percent

Description of Kimbrough

Setting

Landform: Plains

Landform position (three-dimensional): Rise

Down-slope shape: Linear

Across-slope shape: Linear

Parent material: Calcareous alluvium and/or calcareous eolian deposits derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent

Depth to restrictive feature: 4 to 20 inches to petrocalcic

Drainage class: Well drained

Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Very low to moderately low (0.00 to 0.06 in/hr)

Depth to water table: More than 80 inches

Frequency of flooding: None

Frequency of ponding: None

Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 25 percent

Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent

Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: Very low (about 0.8 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability (nonirrigated): 7e

Ecological site: Very Shallow 16-21" PZ (R077CY037TX)

Typical profile

0 to 6 inches: Gravelly loam

6 to 16 inches: Cemented material

KU—Kimbrough-Lea complex

Map Unit Setting

Elevation: 3,600 to 4,200 feet

Mean annual precipitation: 12 to 15 inches

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Mean annual air temperature: 58 to 60 degrees F

Frost-free period: 195 to 205 days

Map Unit Composition

Kimbrough and similar soils: 50 percent

Lea and similar soils: 30 percent

Description of Kimbrough

Setting

Landform: Plains

Landform position (three-dimensional): Rise

Down-slope shape: Linear

Across-slope shape: Linear

Parent material: Calcareous alluvium and/or calcareous eolian deposits derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent

Depth to restrictive feature: 4 to 20 inches to petrocalcic

Drainage class: Well drained

Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Very low to moderately low (0.00 to 0.06 in/hr)

Depth to water table: More than 80 inches

Frequency of flooding: None

Frequency of ponding: None

Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 20 percent

Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent

Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: Very low (about 0.8 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability (nonirrigated): 7s

Ecological site: Very Shallow 16-21" PZ (R077CY037TX)

Typical profile

0 to 6 inches: Gravelly loam

6 to 16 inches: Cemented material

Description of Lea

Setting

Landform: Plains

Landform position (three-dimensional): Rise

Down-slope shape: Linear

Across-slope shape: Linear

Parent material: Loamy alluvium derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent

Depth to restrictive feature: 20 to 40 inches to petrocalcic

Drainage class: Well drained

Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Very low to moderately low (0.00 to 0.06 in/hr)

Depth to water table: More than 80 inches

Frequency of flooding: None

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Frequency of ponding: None
Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 35 percent
Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent
Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)
Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0
Available water capacity: Low (about 4.6 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 4e
Land capability (nonirrigated): 4s
Ecological site: Limy Upland 16-21" PZ (R077CY028TX)

Typical profile

0 to 10 inches: Loam
10 to 26 inches: Loam
26 to 36 inches: Cemented material

PC—Portales loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes

Map Unit Setting

Elevation: 3,600 to 4,000 feet
Mean annual precipitation: 12 to 16 inches
Mean annual air temperature: 58 to 60 degrees F
Frost-free period: 190 to 205 days

Map Unit Composition

Portales and similar soils: 85 percent

Description of Portales

Setting

Landform: Playa rims, plains
Landform position (two-dimensional): Backslope
Landform position (three-dimensional): Side slope, talf
Down-slope shape: Linear
Across-slope shape: Linear
Parent material: Calcareous alluvium and/or calcareous eolian deposits derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent
Depth to restrictive feature: More than 80 inches
Drainage class: Well drained
Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Moderately high to high (0.60 to 2.00 in/hr)
Depth to water table: More than 80 inches
Frequency of flooding: None
Frequency of ponding: None
Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 50 percent
Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent
Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

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Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: High (about 11.3 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 3e

Land capability (nonirrigated): 4e

Ecological site: Limy Upland 16-21" PZ (R077CY028TX)

Typical profile

0 to 8 inches: Loam

8 to 60 inches: Clay loam

PS—Portales-Stegall loams

Map Unit Setting

Elevation: 3,600 to 4,400 feet

Mean annual precipitation: 12 to 16 inches

Mean annual air temperature: 58 to 60 degrees F

Frost-free period: 190 to 205 days

Map Unit Composition

Portales and similar soils: 45 percent

Stegall and similar soils: 40 percent

Description of Portales

Setting

Landform: Plains

Landform position (three-dimensional): Dip

Down-slope shape: Linear

Across-slope shape: Linear

Parent material: Calcareous alluvium and/or calcareous eolian deposits derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent

Depth to restrictive feature: More than 80 inches

Drainage class: Well drained

Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Moderately high to high (0.60 to 2.00 in/hr)

Depth to water table: More than 80 inches

Frequency of flooding: None

Frequency of ponding: None

Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 50 percent

Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent

Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: High (about 11.3 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 3e

Land capability (nonirrigated): 4e

Ecological site: LIMY UPLAND 12-17" PZ (R077DY042TX)

Typical profile

0 to 8 inches: Loam

8 to 80 inches: Clay loam

Description of Stegall

Setting

Landform: Plains

Landform position (three-dimensional): Dip

Down-slope shape: Linear

Across-slope shape: Linear

Parent material: Alluvium derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 3 percent

Depth to restrictive feature: 20 to 40 inches to petrocalcic

Drainage class: Well drained

*Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Low to moderately high
(0.01 to 0.60 in/hr)*

Depth to water table: More than 80 inches

Frequency of flooding: None

Frequency of ponding: None

Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 90 percent

Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent

Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: Low (about 4.8 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 4e

Land capability (nonirrigated): 4e

Ecological site: LIMY UPLAND 12-17" PZ (R077DY042TX)

Typical profile

0 to 9 inches: Loam

9 to 28 inches: Clay loam

28 to 38 inches: Cemented material

38 to 60 inches: Variable

SS—Stegall and slaughter soils

Map Unit Setting

Elevation: 3,600 to 4,400 feet

Mean annual precipitation: 12 to 16 inches

Mean annual air temperature: 58 to 60 degrees F

Frost-free period: 190 to 205 days

Map Unit Composition

Stegall and similar soils: 40 percent

Slaughter and similar soils: 35 percent

Description of Stegall

Setting

Landform: Plains
Landform position (three-dimensional): Talf
Down-slope shape: Linear
Across-slope shape: Linear
Parent material: Alluvium derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 1 percent
Depth to restrictive feature: 20 to 40 inches to petrocalcic
Drainage class: Well drained
Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Low to moderately high
(0.01 to 0.60 in/hr)
Depth to water table: More than 80 inches
Frequency of flooding: None
Frequency of ponding: None
Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 90 percent
Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent
Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)
Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0
Available water capacity: Low (about 4.8 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 4e
Land capability (nonirrigated): 4e
Ecological site: Limy Upland 16-21" PZ (R077CY028TX)

Typical profile

0 to 9 inches: Loam
9 to 28 inches: Clay loam
28 to 38 inches: Cemented material
38 to 60 inches: Variable

Description of Slaughter

Setting

Landform: Plains
Landform position (three-dimensional): Talf
Down-slope shape: Linear
Across-slope shape: Linear
Parent material: Calcareous alluvium and/or calcareous eolian deposits derived from sedimentary rock

Properties and qualities

Slope: 0 to 1 percent
Depth to restrictive feature: More than 80 inches; More than 80 inches
Drainage class: Well drained
Capacity of the most limiting layer to transmit water (Ksat): Low to moderately high
(0.01 to 0.60 in/hr)
Depth to water table: More than 80 inches
Frequency of flooding: None
Frequency of ponding: None
Calcium carbonate, maximum content: 90 percent
Gypsum, maximum content: 1 percent

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Maximum salinity: Nonsaline (0.0 to 2.0 mmhos/cm)

Sodium adsorption ratio, maximum: 2.0

Available water capacity: Very low (about 2.4 inches)

Interpretive groups

Land capability classification (irrigated): 6s

Land capability (nonirrigated): 6s

Ecological site: Limy Upland 16-21" PZ (R077CY028TX)

Typical profile

0 to 2 inches: Loam

2 to 15 inches: Clay

15 to 25 inches: Cemented material

25 to 60 inches: Variable

Soil Information for All Uses

Soil Reports

The Soil Reports section includes various formatted tabular and narrative reports (tables) containing data for each selected soil map unit and each component of each unit. No aggregation of data has occurred as is done in reports in the Soil Properties and Qualities and Suitabilities and Limitations sections.

The reports contain soil interpretive information as well as basic soil properties and qualities. A description of each report (table) is included.

Land Classifications

This folder contains a collection of tabular reports that present a variety of soil groupings. The reports (tables) include all selected map units and components for each map unit. Land classifications are specified land use and management groupings that are assigned to soil areas because combinations of soil have similar behavior for specified practices. Most are based on soil properties and other factors that directly influence the specific use of the soil. Example classifications include ecological site classification, farmland classification, irrigated and nonirrigated land capability classification, and hydric rating.

Prime and other Important Farmlands

This table lists the map units in the survey area that are considered important farmlands. Important farmlands consist of prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide or local importance. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use.

In an effort to identify the extent and location of important farmlands, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with other interested Federal, State, and local government organizations, has inventoried land that can be used for the production of the Nation's food supply.

Prime farmland is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland.

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Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For some of the soils identified in the table as prime farmland, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures.

A recent trend in land use in some areas has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

Unique farmland is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, and other fruits and vegetables. It has the special combination of soil quality, growing season, moisture supply, temperature, humidity, air drainage, elevation, and aspect needed for the soil to economically produce sustainable high yields of these crops when properly managed. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Nearness to markets is an additional consideration. Unique farmland is not based on national criteria. It commonly is in areas where there is a special microclimate, such as the wine country in California.

In some areas, land that does not meet the criteria for prime or unique farmland is considered to be *farmland of statewide importance* for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The criteria for defining and delineating farmland of statewide importance are determined by the appropriate State agencies. Generally, this land includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some areas may produce as high a yield as prime farmland if conditions are favorable. Farmland of statewide importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by State law.

In some areas that are not identified as having national or statewide importance, land is considered to be *farmland of local importance* for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. This farmland is identified by the appropriate local agencies. Farmland of local importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by local ordinance.

Report—Prime and other Important Farmlands

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Prime and other Important Farmlands– Lea County, New Mexico		
Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Farmland Classification
KO	Kimbrough gravelly loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Not prime farmland
KU	Kimbrough-Lea complex	Not prime farmland
PC	Portales loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
PS	Portales-Stegall loams	Farmland of statewide importance
SS	Stegall and slaughter soils	Farmland of statewide importance

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