

APACHERIAN-CHIHUAHUAN SEMI-DESERT GRASSLAND AND STEPPE

Nature Serve ID: CES302.735

Geology: Occurs on various substrates, typically not occupying fine alluvium, but may occur on alluvial outwash slopes. This system may occur on igneous, limestone, and sandstone.

Landform: At lower elevations on mountain slopes and continuing onto lower bajadas.

Soils: Typically on rocky soils derived from limestone, igneous, and sandstone substrates.

Parent Description: This grassland system sometimes occurs in association with Chihuahuan Mixed Desert and Thornscrub and may have shrubs of that system present. The herbaceous layer may be dense, but typically much bare ground or rock is visible. Graminoids dominate the layer with species such as *Bouteloua eriopoda* (black grama), *Bouteloua curtipendula* (sideoats grama), *Muhlenbergia setifolia* (curlyleaf muhly), *Bouteloua ramosa* (chino grama), *Muhlenbergia porteri* (bush muhly), *Bouteloua barbata* (sixweeks grama), *Dasyochloa pulchella* (fluffgrass), *Digitaria californica* (Arizona cottontop), and *Aristida* spp. (threeawns). On some slopes, species such as *Dasyilirion leiophyllum* (smooth sotol), *Nolina texana* (Texas sacahuista), *Opuntia engelmannii* (Engelmann pricklypear), *Agave lechuguilla* (lechuguilla), *Yucca torreyi* (Torrey's yucca) and/or *Fouquieria splendens* (ocotillo) may be conspicuous, though scattered elements. *Nolina* spp. (sacahuista) and *Dasyilirion* spp. (sotol) may dominate some sites, especially on limestone slopes. If significant areas dominated by shrubs are encountered, these sites are likely mapped as Chihuahuan Mixed Desert and Thornscrub, Chihuahuan Succulent Desert Scrub, or Chihuahuan Creosotebush Desert Scrub depending on composition. Shrub species that may be encountered in these grasslands include *Larrea tridentata* (creosotebush), *Parthenium incanum* (mariola), *Viguiera stenoloba* (skeleton-leaf golden eye), *Acacia constricta* (whitethorn acacia), *Mimosa aculeaticarpa* var. *biuncifera* (catclaw mimosa), *Condalia ericoides* (javelina bush), and many others.

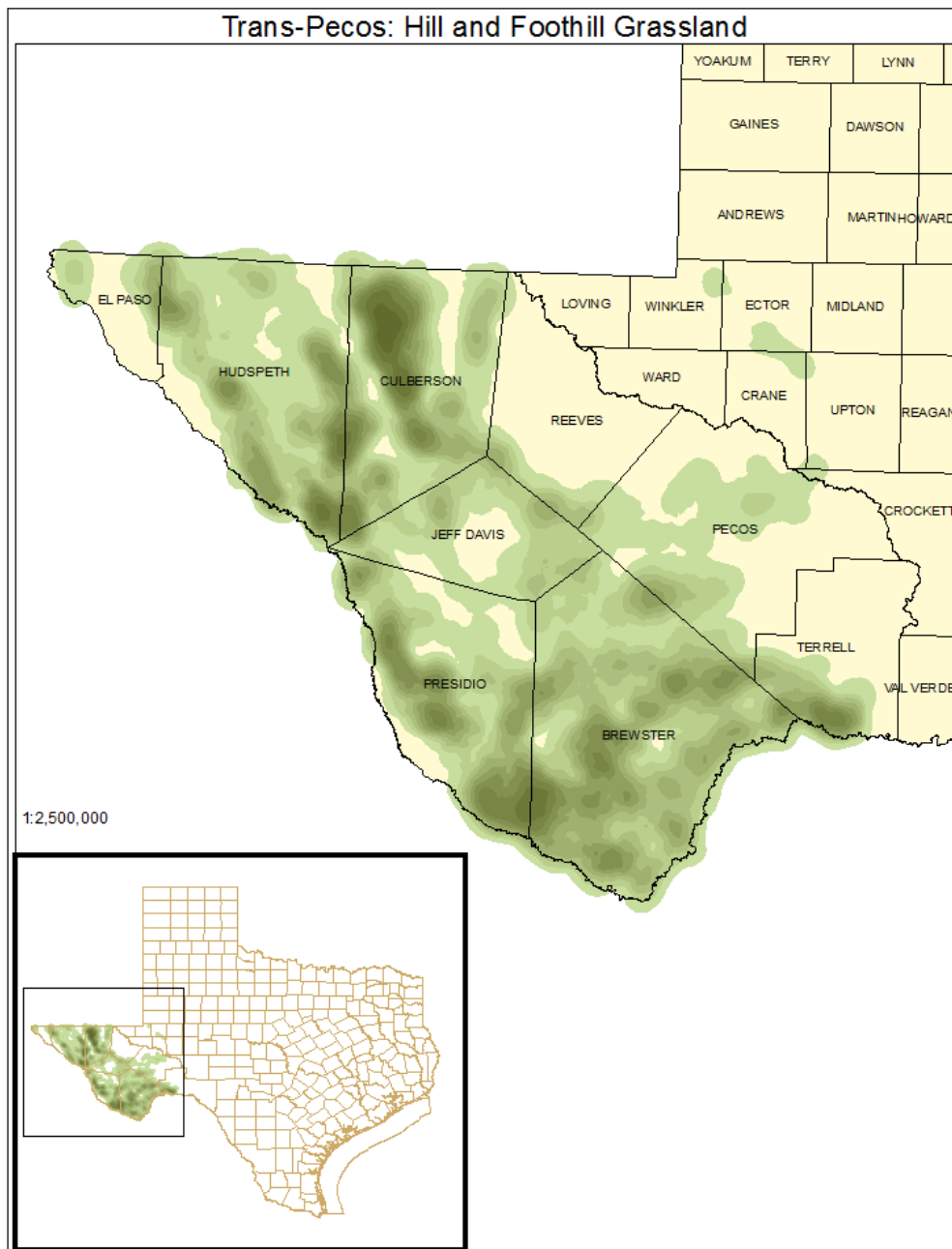
ECOLOGICAL MAPPING SYSTEMS:

TRANS-PECOS: HILL AND FOOTHILL GRASSLAND

Mapping System ID: 10207

EMS Description: Grasslands as described for system. *Dasyilirion leiophyllum* (smooth sotol) and/or *Nolina texana* (Texas sacahuista) may be present but occur as widely scattered individuals.

Distribution Map:



Example:



Public Land Occurrence:

Balmorhea State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Big Bend National Park: US National Park Service

Big Bend Ranch State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Black Gap Wildlife Management Area: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Davis Mountains State Park: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area: Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Fort Davis National Historic Site: US National Park Service

Guadalupe Mountains National Park: US National Park Service