

## **WESTERN GREAT PLAINS SALINE DEPRESSION WETLAND**

**Nature Serve ID:** CES303.669

**Geology:** Sometimes associated with the Tahoka Formation or the Ogallala Formation, but may occur over other substrates including Quaternary alluvium.

**Landform:** Somewhat circular basins, or sometimes forming linear bands adjacent to drainages.

**Soils:** High Lime, Salty Bottomland, and Wet Saline Ecological Sites.

**Description:** Saline lakes and salty bottomlands often with salt encrusted surfaces and sometimes sparsely vegetated. Some of these lakes were thought to form from wind deflation and/or dissolution of subsurface strata and some have associated springs, with evaporation causing concentration of salts at the surface. Dominant species of the sites are often halophytic, or at least salt tolerant, including *Sporobolus airoides* (alkali sacaton), *Distichlis spicata* (saltgrass), *Hordeum jubatum* (foxtail barley), *Sporobolus pyramidatus* (whorled dropseed), *Schoenoplectus* spp. (bulrushes), *Suaeda suffrutescens* (desert seepweed), *Allenrolfea occidentalis* (pickle-weed), *Salsola tragus* (prickly Russian thistle), and *Bassia scoparia* (kochia). Woody species including *Atriplex canescens* (four-wing saltbush) and *Prosopis glandulosa* (honey mesquite) may also be present and sometimes develop significant cover. During periods of high rainfall and as one moves further from the salt encrusted surfaces into surrounding habitats, species composition becomes less dominated by halophytes with species such as *Bothriochloa laguroides* ssp. *torreyana* (silver bluestem), *Sporobolus cryptandrus* (sand dropseed), *Aristida purpurea* (purple threeawn), and *Ziziphus obtusifolia* (lotebush). *Tamarix* spp. (saltcedar) may be present to dominant.

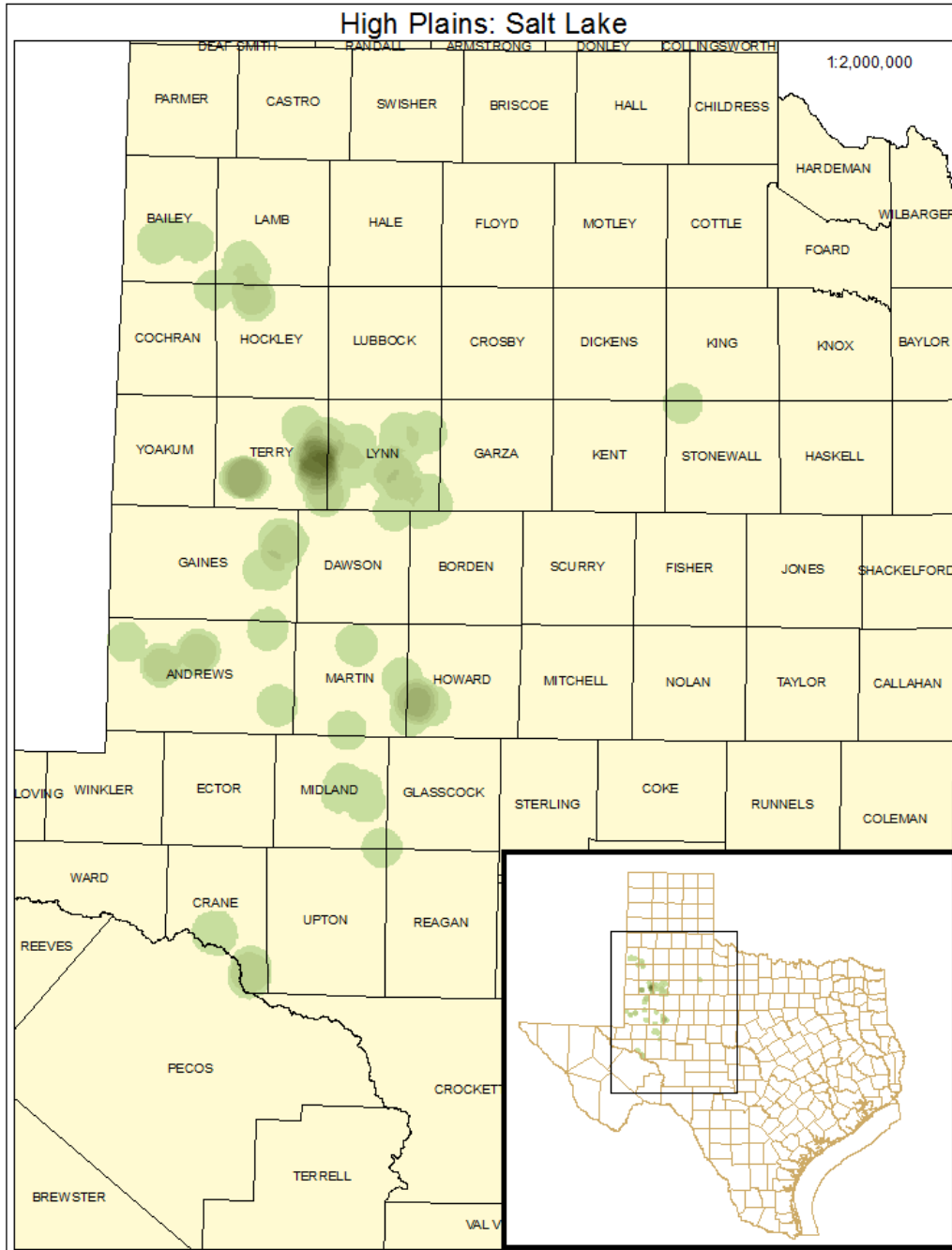
**ECOLOGICAL MAPPING SYSTEMS:**

**HIGH PLAINS: SALT LAKE**

**Mapping System ID:** 3900

**EMS Description:** Margins and center of salt lakes, either sparsely vegetated or open water.

**Distribution Map:**



**Example:**



**Public Land Occurrence:**

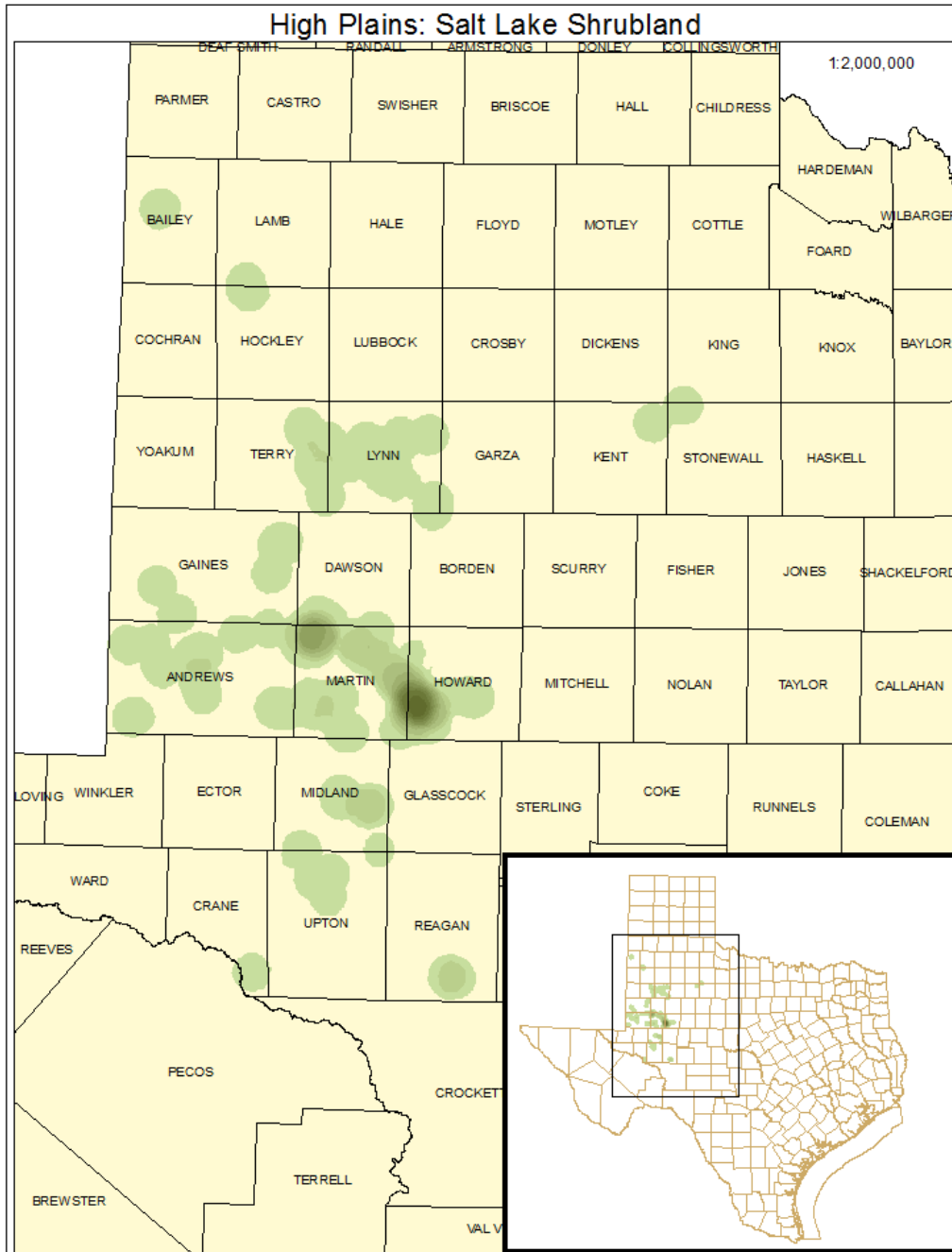
*None.*

## HIGH PLAINS: SALT LAKE SHRUBLAND

Mapping System ID: 3906

**EMS Description:** Shrublands surrounding salt lakes, often dominated by *Atriplex canescens* (four-wing saltbush) or *Tamarix* spp. (saltcedar). *Prosopis glandulosa* (honey mesquite) is also commonly encountered.

**Distribution Map:**



**Example:**

*Not available at this time.*

**Public Land Occurrence:**

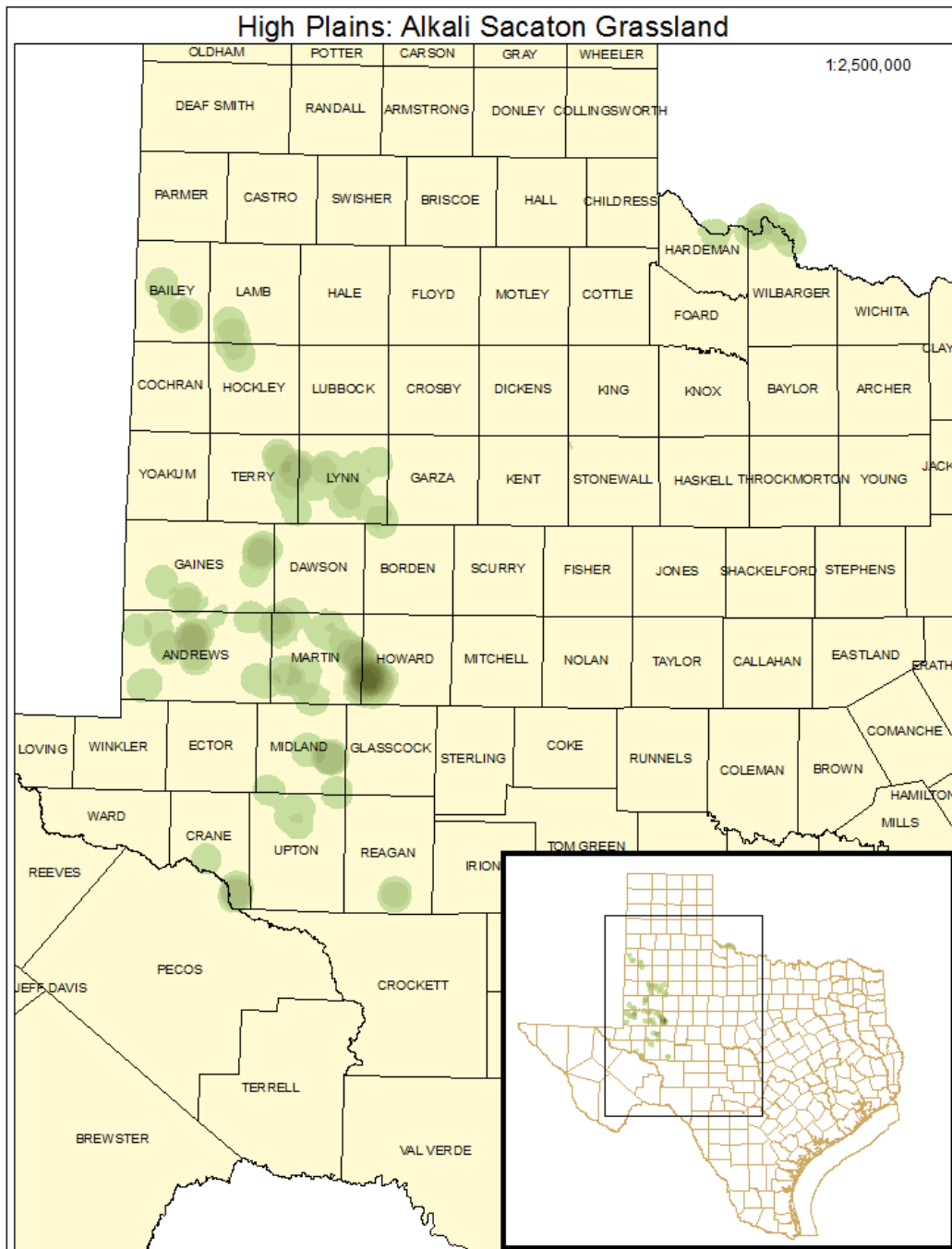
*None.*

## HIGH PLAINS: ALKALI SACATON GRASSLAND

Mapping System ID: 3907

EMS Description: Grasslands surrounding salt lakes typically dominated by *Sporobolus airoides* (alkali sacaton), but with other species as mentioned in system description.

Distribution Map:



**Example:**



**Public Land Occurrence:**

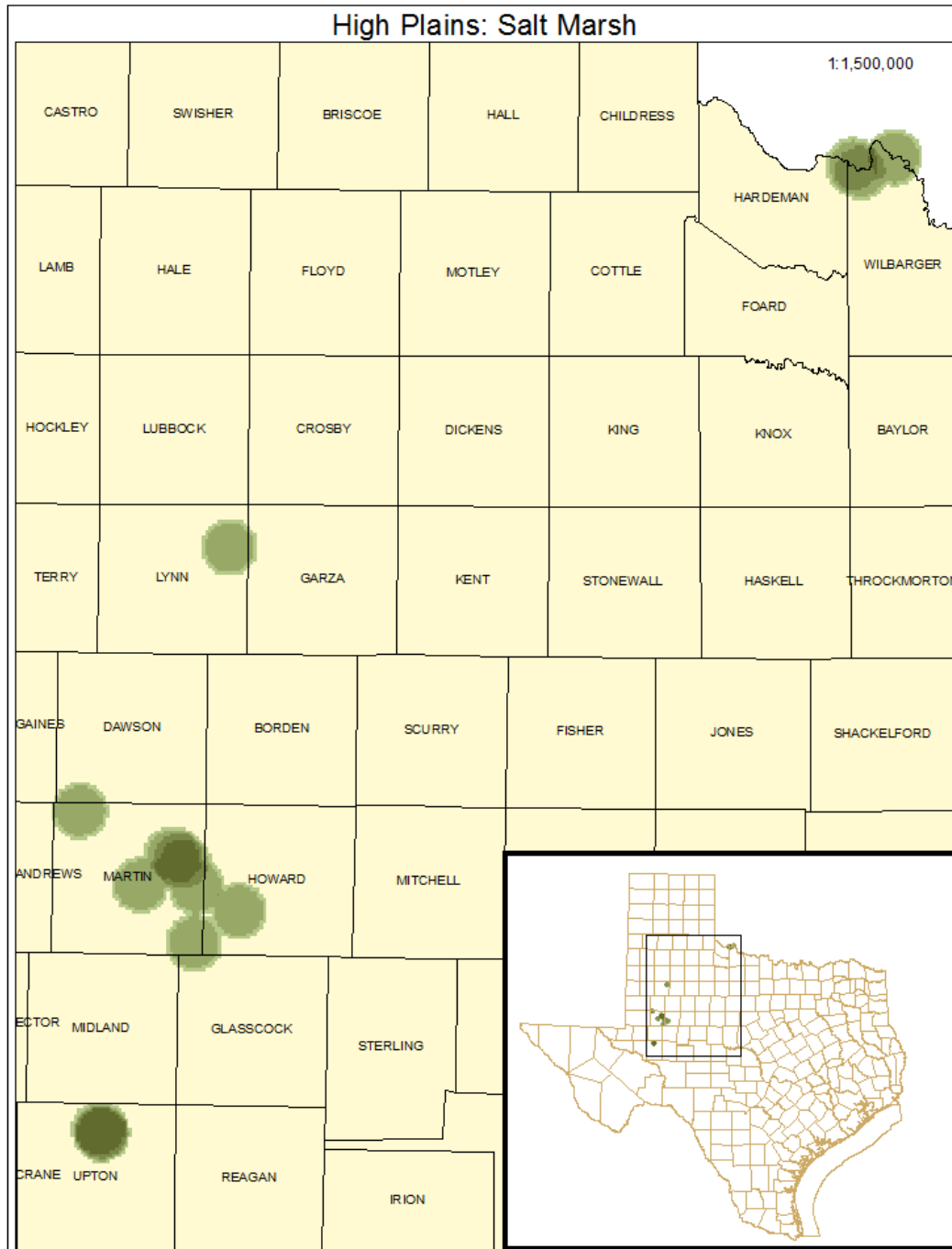
*None.*

## HIGH PLAINS: SALT MARSH

Mapping System ID: 3908

**EMS Description:** The wettest vegetated portion of the salt lake where marsh has developed with species such as *Schoenoplectus* spp. (bulrushes) abundant.

**Distribution Map:**





**Example:**

*Not available at this time.*

**Public Land Occurrence:**

*None.*