Finding Ecological Site Information – Why is this so hard?!?

Ecological site information (commonly contained in an ecological site description, or ESD), is very useful for interpreting monitoring data and for knowing what to expect from the land. However, getting to the ESD you need is not always a straightforward process. The good news is that over time it should get easier. The steps below will give you a couple of routes or options for finding ecological site information.

Option 1. Ecological Site Information from the EDIT web tool

The EDIT tool was created to replace the old NRCS Ecological Site Information System (ESIS) which was decommissioned. EDIT has a cleaner interface that can be easier to find ESDs once you get to know it. The problem with EDIT right now is that it does not have many of the provisional ESDs (which are the majority of them for Idaho). This should change over time, but for now you can use EDIT to find the ecological site name/number and then use the Field Office Technical Guide (instructions below) to get the provisional ESD reports.

 Navigate to <u>https://edit.jornada.nmsu.edu/</u> in a web browser. Scroll down and click on the link that says "Select Catalog" for the Ecological Site Descriptions.



Ecological Site Descriptions

Ecological sites are the basic component of a land-type classification system that describes ecological potential and ecosystem dynamics of land areas. All land/land use types are identified within the ecological site system, including rangeland, pasture, and forest land. An

SELECT CATALOG

 You must first choose a MLRA either by name/number or by the map interface. Click on the "MLRA map" link from the menu bar at the left of the page.

Ecological site descriptions HOME / ESD CATALOG Overview General information Ecological sites are the basic component of a lan Next steps describes ecological potential and ecosystem dyr use types are identified within the ecological site MLRA list and forest land. An ecological site is defined as a distinctive kind of MLRA map characteristics that differ from other kinds of land kind and amount of vegetation and its ability to re MLRA photos actions and natural disturbances. Lands are class and biotic factors. Physical factors include soils, o Briefcase physiographic features. Biotic factors include plan

3. Zoom in and pan to the area you want from the MLRA map and click the map to highlight that MLRA. *Selecting the MLRA from the map is a two-step process!* First, click the MLRA name in the popup bubble, and then click the MLRA name again from the "Quick View" window. This will select and open a webpage for the MLRA.

Major Land Resource Area map



nity compositions, annual hiomass produ

4. From the MLRA page, you can either choose to find ecological sites by the map (click the "Ecological site map" link), or if you want to see the complete list of what ESDs are in EDIT for that MLRA, click the "Ecological site list" link. For now, click the "Ecological site map" link.



5. Soil map units from the SSURGO soil surveys are displayed once you zoom in far enough. Pan/Zoom to an area of interest, and click on a soil map unit polygon to select it. This will open a popup bubble that shows you the ecological sites expected in that soil map unit. The percentage value is the expected percent of the soil map unit polygon occupied by that ecological site.



 Make note of the ecological site number (e.g., R025XY048ID) and the ecological site name (e.g., Shallow Claypan 11-13 – Provisional). Click on the ecological site name to open the ESD for that ecological site.



7. From the online ESD report in EDIT, you can choose "Print options" from the menu on the left to print or download (via PDF) the report.



8. If you receive the following message when clicking on the ecological site name, close this window, make note of the ecological site name/number and see the option below for finding

the ESDs from the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.

QUICK VIEW	X
No information is available	
<pre> Previous </pre>	Next 📏

Option 2. Ecological Site Descriptions via the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide

The Field Office Technical Guide is the NRCS' online repository for technical documents. While it is all accessed through the same website now, it's important to remember that there are different sets of documents for each state. The instructions below will guide you through finding and downloading the ESDs for Idaho. Note that the ESDs available on the Field Office Technical Guide are oftentimes provisional or draft ESDs and may change frequently. It is recommended that you check in with NRCS or an Extension professional if you have a question about an ESD.

1. From a web browser, navigate to https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/. Select "Idaho" from the dropdown menu and click "Submit."

STIELD OFFICE TECHNICAL GUIDE
Welcome to NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)
Select a state for documents.
State:
Idaho 🔻 SUBMIT

 The Technical Guide for Idaho will open to a "Document Tree" that shows you something similar to a table of contents. The ESDs are located in Section II (click the Section II link to expand). Do not click the "Approved Ecological Site Descriptions" link. That will take you to the now defunct ESIS website. Instead, click the "DRAFT ESDs" link on the menu to the left.

Document Tree Document Sea	irch Rec	ently (Changed							
Keyboard navigation instructions Section I	•		Ecological	Site D)escr	iptions	6			
Section II	•		Document Title	Туре	Pub Date	Subject	Keywords	Abstract	Size (kB)	Action
Archive Materials - Section II Climatic Data Cultural Resources Information Ecological Site Descriptions DRAFT ESDs Essential Fish Habitat Forage Suitability Groups Idaho List of Wild and Scenic Riv	• • •		Approved Ecological Site Descriptions	Θ	2008- 3-13	-	-	The Ecological Site Information System (ESIS) is the repository for the data associated with the collection of forestland and rangeland plot data and the development of ecological site descriptions. ESIS is organized into two applications and associated databases.	_	ī
Natural Areas Scenic Beauty			Ecological Site Descriptions Introduction	w	2003- 3-12	-	-	-	37	()

3. From the Draft ESDs page, select the MLRA you want to download all of the draft ESDs for the ecological sites in that MLRA. The MLRAs will download as a .ZIP file that you will need to uncompress (i.e., unzip) on your computer.

Keyboard navigation instructions Section I	•	DRAFT ESDs												
Section II	•	Documents (10)	Туре	Pub	Subject	Keywords	Abstract	Size	Actions					
Agronomy				Date				(KD)						
Archive Materials - Section II	•	Draft ESDs - MLRA 10		2014- 7-7	-	-		2390	í					
Climatic Data		Droft CODe		2014										
Cultural Resources Information	•	MLRA 11		2014- 7-7			-	1669	(i)					
Ecological Site Descriptions		Draft ESDs -		2014-				1114	0					
DRAFT ESDs		MLRA 12		7-7	-	-	-	1114	0					
Essential Fish Habitat		Draft ESDs - MLRA 13		2014- 7-7	-	-	-	1556	i					
Forage Suitability Groups		Draft ESDs -	_	2014-										
Idaho List of Wild and Scenic Rivers		MLRA 25	à	7-7	-	-	-	1207	(i)					
Natural Areas		Draft ESDs -	A	2014-	-	-	_	603	Ġ					
Scenic Beauty		MLRA 28A	-	7-7					0					
Snow Survey Program/Climatic Data		Draft ESDs - MLRA 43B		2014- 7-7	-	-	-	797	(j)					
Soils Information	•	Draft ESDs -		2014-										
State Training Library	•	MLRA 47	Â	7-7	-	-	-	356	(j)					
Threatened and Endangered Species		Draft ESDs - MLRA 8		2014- 7-7		-	-	316	(i)					
Water Quality														
Windbreak Suitability Groups		Draft ESDs - MLRA 9		2014- 7-7	-	-	-	735	í					
Paction III	_													

4. The downloaded MLRA folder will contain a Word document for each ESD. Using the name of the ecological site from EDIT (See option 1 above), locate and open the desired ESD.

🔜 📝 🔜 🗢 MLRA 10A									- 0	×
File Home Share Vi	ew									^ ()
Pin to Quick Copy Paste Paste	by path te shortcut	Move Copy to Copy	New folder	New item 🕶 Basy access 🕶	Properties	₩ Open ▼	Select all Select none			
Clipboard		Organize		New	C)pen	Select			
\leftarrow \rightarrow \checkmark \uparrow \square \rightarrow This PC \rightarrow	Download	ds > MLRA_10 > MLRA 10 > MLR	RA 10A					v Ö	Search M.	<i>p</i>
	^	Name		Date modifie	d l	Type ^				
🖈 Quick access				2 /22 /2222 0 2					_	
E. Desktop	Bouldery 11-13 IUA-32.doc		2/29/2008 9:24 AM Micro			United States Department of				
Downloads	*	Bouldery Loam 12-10 IUA-31.do	oc	2/29/2008 9:2		Missa	Agriculture			
Documents		Cinder 12-10 10A-44.00C	2/23/2009 12:0		Micro	Natural Resources Conservation				
Pictures	Pictures Cinder Verth 12:16:104			2/23/2009 12.	05 PM	Micro		Service		
🔨 Google Drive	Cinder North 12-16 10A-45.do			2/23/2009 12:	:05 PM Micro					
Articles	<u>_</u>	Cindery North 12-16 10A-47.do	c	2/23/2009 12:	2:05 PM Micro		Ecological Site Description		l I	
Andes	<i>.</i>	Cindery South 12-16 10A-48.do	c	2/23/2009 12:	05 PM	Micro				
manuscripts	7	Clayey 12-16 10A-1-RPCP.doc		2/23/2007 12:	00 PM	Micro				
leaching	*	Clayey 12-16 10A-2.doc		2/29/2008 9:2	6 AM	Micro	Site Tunes De	angoland		
DeepSleep-LessTested_30W	/H_	💼 Clayey North 16-20 10AY-11-RP	CP.doc	2/21/2007 4:2	21/2007 4:27 PM Micro		Site Type: Rangeland			
DeepSleep-LessTested_30W	DeepSleep-LessTested_30WH_			2/29/2008 9:2	27 AM Micro		Site Name: CLAYEY 12-16" ARARL/FEID			
GPS_Collars		💼 Dry meadow 10A-28-RPCP.doc		2/21/2007 4:3	0 PM	Micro				
📙 sketch_mar06a		💼 Gravelly Loam 12-16 10A-49.do	c	2/23/2009 12:	05 PM	Micro	Site ID: R010	AY001ID		
OpeDrive - University of Idah		💼 Loamy 11-13 10AY-26-RPCP.do	c	2/22/2007 4:1	2 PM	Micro	Maior Land R	esource Area: B10AY		
- OneDrive - University of Idan	0	Loamy 11-13 10AY-33.doc		2/29/2008 9:3	MA 0	Micro	major Eana R	Major Lana Resource Area. DIDAT		
Attachments		💼 Loamy 12-6 10AY-3.doc		2/29/2008 9:3	1 AM	Micro	Physiogra	phic Features		

Option 3. Finding Ecological Site Names/Numbers via Web Soil Survey

Web Soil Survey used to contain easy-to-access information on ecological sites and link out directly to the NRCS Ecological Site Information System for accessing the ESD reports. That information is no longer available via Web Soil Survey, and instead, only links to EDIT are provided (so you might as well just use EDIT in the first place!).

 From a web browser, navigate to the Web Soil Survey web site – <u>https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov</u>. Click on the green circle to "Start WSS".



2. Under "Quick Navigation" you have several options to search by. Here you can start you search by navigating to the "State and County" or, use the "Latitude and Longitude" data you collected in the field.



3. Once you are at the location where you collected data, zoom out so your map covers ~6,000-10,000 acres around your site. Use the area of interest tool (AOI) to outline the area. It's difficult to estimate the acres, however, if you select an area >10,000 acres you will get an error so you can judge from there.

Area of Interest (AOI)	Soil Soil Data Do Map Explorer Soi	wnlo ils D	oad Data		Shoppi Cart (Fr	ing ree)								
														2
Search	8	G	Ar	ea of I	nteres	t Intera	active	Мар						0
Area of Interest	8	egen			7				100	AOI				
	Open All Close All	E	Vi	e <mark>w</mark> Exte	nt Con	ntiguous (U.S.				Scale (not to scale)	¥	13	!
AOI Properties	Slow AOX (2)			S. Toplar	(T	K	A State	K	L.	No.	MAN !!	"And	125	-
		2	1					-				ARX S	5	274
AOI Information	2 (3)			XT	137		1	N	te)	\succ	- Brox	hois	8n	
Name			5			S X	234	\mathcal{A}	US,	18	Statt /	1511	7X	25
Map Unit Symbols	 Use Soil Survey Area Map Unit Symbols Use National Map Unit Symbols 		1					(Z)	Ż		XXXX			E
Area (acres)	59,745		1	- ARRING BY	6/4	92	1-2		16	wyh		1/14		S.
Soil Data Available fr	om Web Soil Survey (2) 🛞		3		\mathbf{X}	1 Sta	181	14		4	I AND	XAL.	173	1 IS
Owyhee County Area	, Idaho (ID675)			rt			14	Sch	\$27	1	AS IN	1/2/1	111	X
Data Availability	Tabular and Spatial, complete		2	5 6	44		12	20	X		141111	LAT,	CAN	
Tabular Data	Version 14, Sep 16, 2019		ST	LA			SX L	14	11	A.	AN SOL	KAR)	1/2	
Spatial Data	Version 4, Sep 16, 2019			RE					XE	in A	CRACK	1/4	A	1 ×
	Clear AOI			~ S	15		1 /				\sim		(A)	1st
Import AOI	8		-	m i	C. Vinster	REAS	20.000 #	0/2		36	1 1 1	1.4	11	12X
Export AOI	3	1 4		Section dates		-		7.5			Section of the section of the		*	17

4. Click on the "Soil Map" tab near top of page, this provides the Map Unit Symbols and Map Unit Names.

Area of (A	Interest NOI) M	oil Soil ap Exp	Data lorer	Down Soils	nlo Da	ad Shopping ata Cart (Free)	
						Printable Version	Add to Shopping Cart
Search				8 G	4	Soil Map	8
Map Uni	t Legend			8	egene	🔍 🔍 🐑 💼 💭 🚺 🖉 🐚 Scale (not to scale) 🔻	
				2	2		
Owybo	yhee County Ar	ea, Idaho (II	575) @	Î		$(\land \land \lor \land $	~~~
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI			S PALAS C.	
7	Arbidge- Hunnton silt loams, 1 to 8 percent slopes	19,249.7	32.2%				
8	Arbidge- Laped- Slickspots complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	372.4	0.6%				
9	Arbidge- Owsel- Gariper	6,440.6	10.8%			10	

5. Click on a soil map unit name. In the "Map Unit Description" box that opens, scroll down to find the ecological site name and number under the heading of "Interpretive Groups".



6. Use the ecological site name/number to look up the ESD from the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (See Option 2 above).