

Soils

Threats



Loss of Native Grasses

Native bunchgrasses have deep root structures that stabilize soils and control erosion. Increased shrub and tree abundance has inhibited the protective grass understory, particularly at drier, lower, less productive sites.



Invasive species

Invasive species displace native plants and generally provide less total cover, soil stability, and soil protection.



Unauthorized Roads

User created or officially closed roads that are still being used cause soil erosion and concentrate water, altering run-off timing and increasing sedimentation.



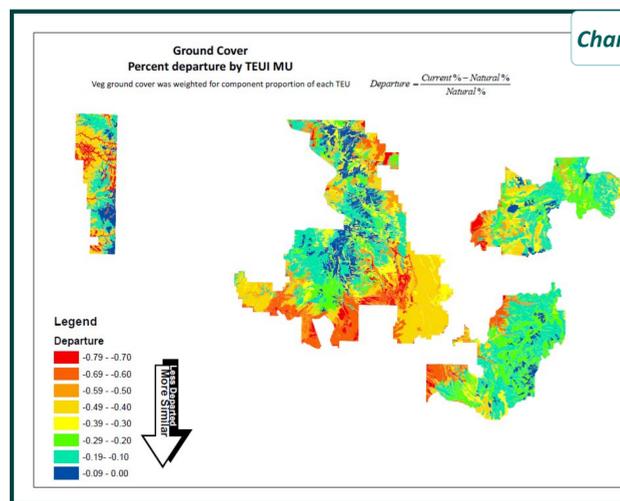
Stream Partnership Improvement

Stream improvement projects decrease sedimentation and erosion and enhance riparian vegetation along streambanks.



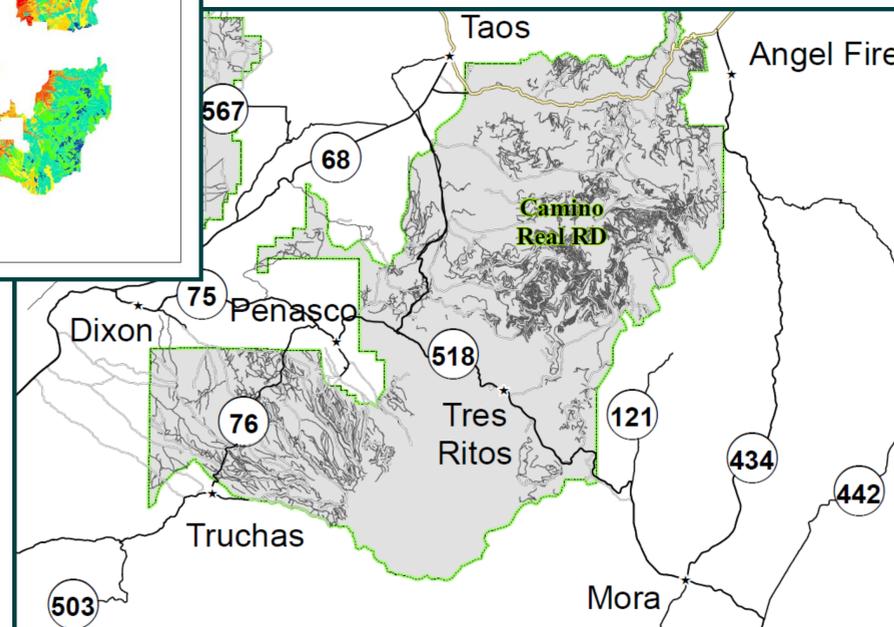
Erosion

Unstable soils erode more easily and can lead to headcutting and stream incision. Sediment that ends up in streams harms fish habitat.



Change in Ground Cover

Vegetative ground cover has decreased as a result of human activity, particularly at lower elevations.



Roads

Open Forest Service roads are maintained to minimize how they effect water flow and contribute to erosion. There are many closed and legacy (created before the Forest Service managed the land) roads that effect soil condition, particularly when they are still being driven illegally.



Downed Woody Debris

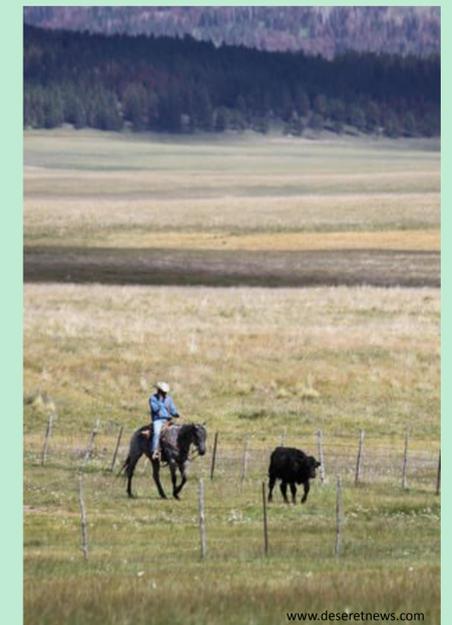
Woody debris slows runoff and protects soils.

Desired Conditions



Wildlife, Fish, and Plants

Species need productive and stable soils for nutrients, food, and shelter.



Productive Soils

Productive soils support healthy vegetation, and provide adequate forage for wildlife and livestock. They prevent erosion, retain more moisture, and provide clean water.

Management Considerations

Potential Solutions

- 1) There is a need for promoting the maintenance and restoration of soil condition and function (hydrology, stability, nutrient cycling), particularly in lower elevation systems.
- 2) There is a need to reduce the amount of exposed soil by restoring and maintaining sufficient vegetative cover including downed woody material.
- 3) There is a need for restoring and maintaining grass productivity, particularly native bunchgrass species.