

## RICHARDSON 14-37-1H – RANGELAND DESCRIPTION

Below is a description of the reference vegetation. The sites were surveyed on 2/6. Though snow cover was present, it did not prohibit evaluation of the sites.

The reference vegetation is characteristic of the shortgrass prairie of the west-central Great Plains. Reference areas are currently used as grazing areas for livestock, and are generally overgrazed in condition with a mix of native and exotic plant species. Several areas are void of vegetative cover as a result of overgrazing. Plant species consist of fringed sage (*Artemisia frigida*), blue gramma (*Bouteloua gracilis*), needle and thread (*Hesperostipa comata*), western wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), scarlett gloemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*), prairie junegrass (*Koeleria marrantha*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), common pepperweed (*Lepidium densiflorum*), crested wheatgrass (*Agropyron cristatum*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum jubatum*), Smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*). The eastern portion of the reference area contains a large irrigation canal, which was dry at the time of the survey, as well as numerous box elder (*Acer negundo*) trees. Plowed agricultural fields consisting of corn and other crops dominate the surrounding landscape beyond the reference areas.