Entering Field Data

Contents

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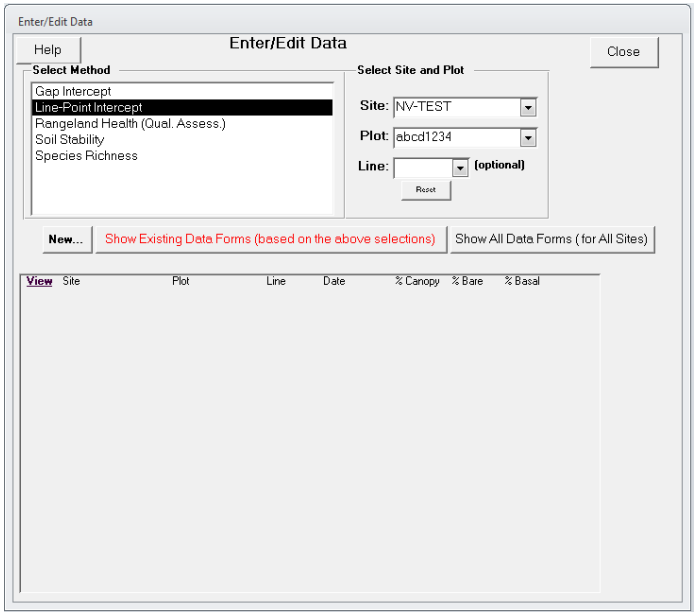
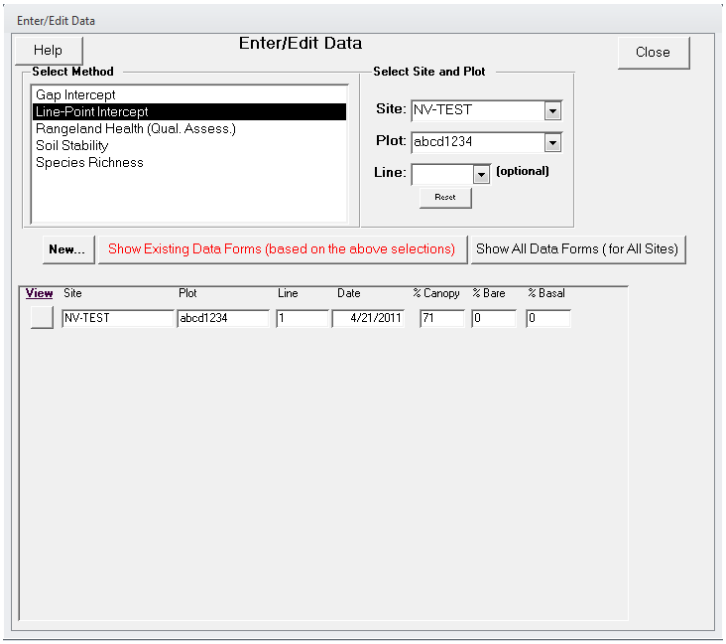
The process for entering data for any of the methods starts the same way: by selecting a plot and specifying the method for entering the data.

1. Click the **Enter/Edit Data** button to open the Enter/Edit Data page



2. Select the **site** and **plot** you want to enter data for and select the **method** being used to collect the data. If you had a site and plot selected before clicking **Enter/Edit Data** it will already be selected here. The list at the bottom of the page will be blank if there are no data already collected for the method you selected. Once data have been collected at a plot, summaries of the data will be displayed.



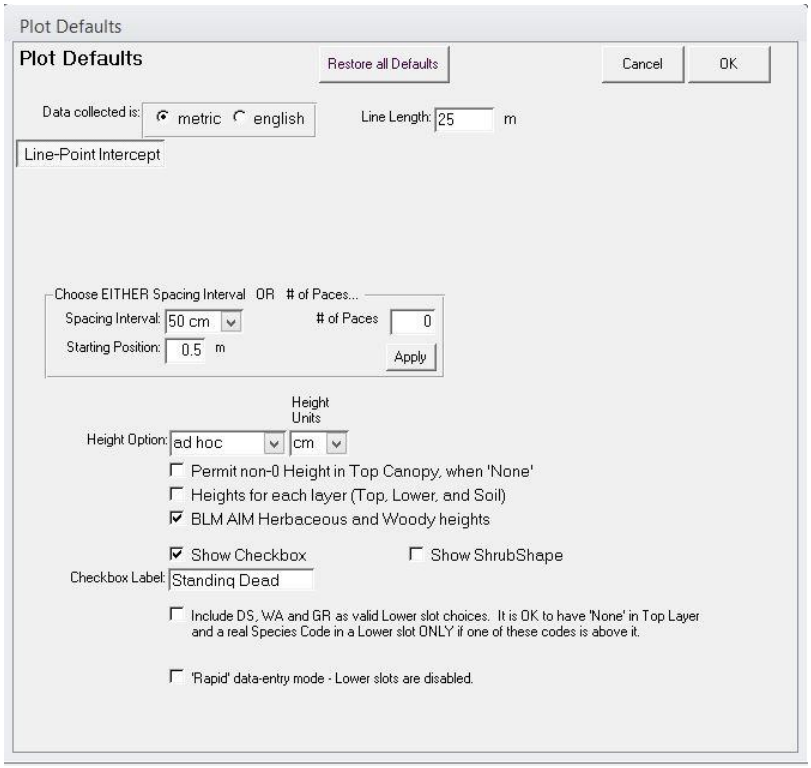
3. Click the **New** button to start collecting data for the selected method.

The following sections describe data entry for each method separately.

Line-point Intercept with Height

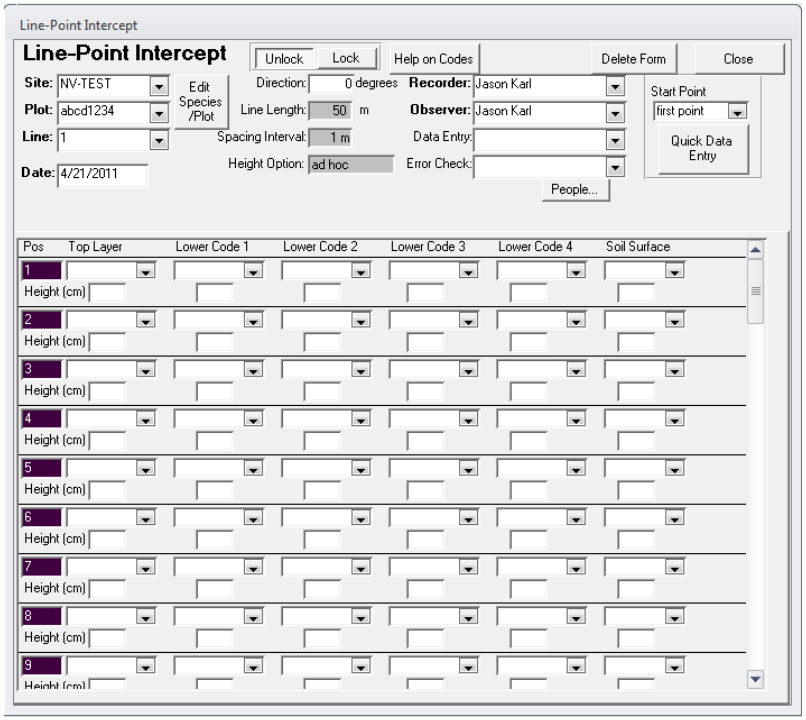
After selecting Line-Point Intercept method and clicking **New** in the **Enter/Edit Data** window, you must first specify the plot-default values for line-point intercept and then start entering the data.

1. Verify the correct values for the line-point intercept attributes (e.g., metric or English units, line length, point spacing interval).



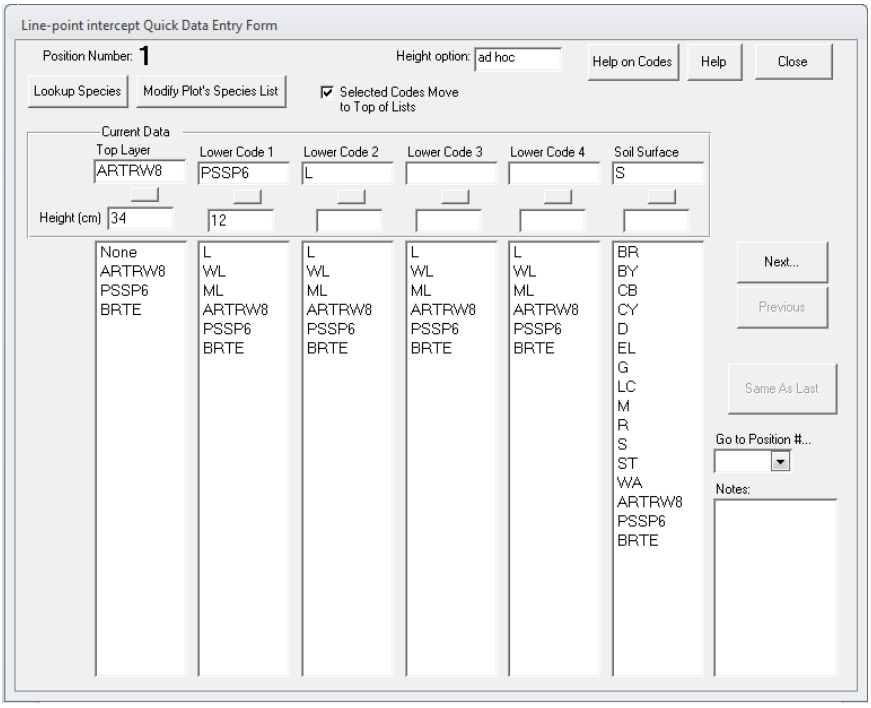
2. Set the **Height Option** to "ad hoc" and check the box for "**BLM AIM Herbaceous and Woody heights**". This will allow you to enter height information at whatever interval is appropriate for your sampling. If you are entering Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring project data, you can instead set the **Height Option** to "every 5th".

3. Click **OK** to proceed to the data entry screen.



4. Specify the **Line, Recorder, and Observer**. The data entry controls on this form will be locked until these three attributes are filled in.
5. You can enter LPI data directly in this screen by using the drop-down boxes that correspond to the point along the transect (Pos) and the canopy layer (e.g., Top, Lower Code 1, Soil Surface). Refer to the Monitoring Manual (Herrick et al. 2009) for details on how data should be collected and recorded. Heights for each canopy layer may be recorded as well. While this default form is convenient for viewing and quickly verifying LPI data, it is cumbersome for actually entering the data. The **Quick Data Entry** form works much better for entering LPI data in the field.
6. Click on the **Quick Data Entry** button to open the quick data editor. The quick data editor is organized very differently from

the standard LPI form. The page displayed on the Quick Data Editor corresponds to a single point along the transect. The point (position) number is displayed at the top-left of the page.



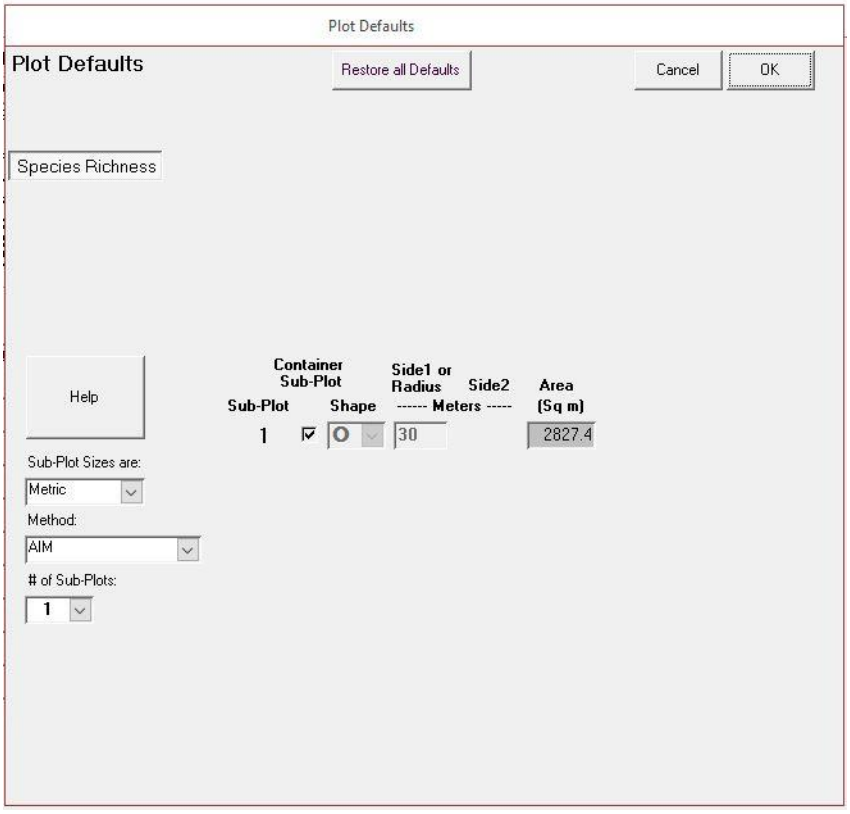
7. Click on plant species' codes to add them to the current point's data record. At a minimum, a **Top Layer** and **Soil Surface** must be specified. If plant canopies are encountered, a top canopy must be specified and then additional canopy layers in the order hit, from one to four.
8. Click **Next** to go to the next LPI point on the transect. Use the **Next, Previous,** and **Go to position #** controls to navigate to different points along the transect.
9. Record the height of the different canopy layers as specified in the AIM protocol.
10. Click on the **Modify Plot's Species List** button if you encounter a species that is not in the plant list. You can modify the plot species list and add new species encountered.

11. Click on **Help on Codes** for explanations of what the standard LPI codes (e.g., L, BR, S, R) are.
12. Click on the **square button** below each canopy layer data box to clear the data entry for that canopy layer.
13. Click **Close** when you have recorded data for all points along the transect. This will return you to the standard LPI form.
14. Click **Close** when you are done entering the LPI data for that transect to return to the Enter/Edit Data page.
15. Repeat these steps for the additional transects.

Plot-level Species Richness

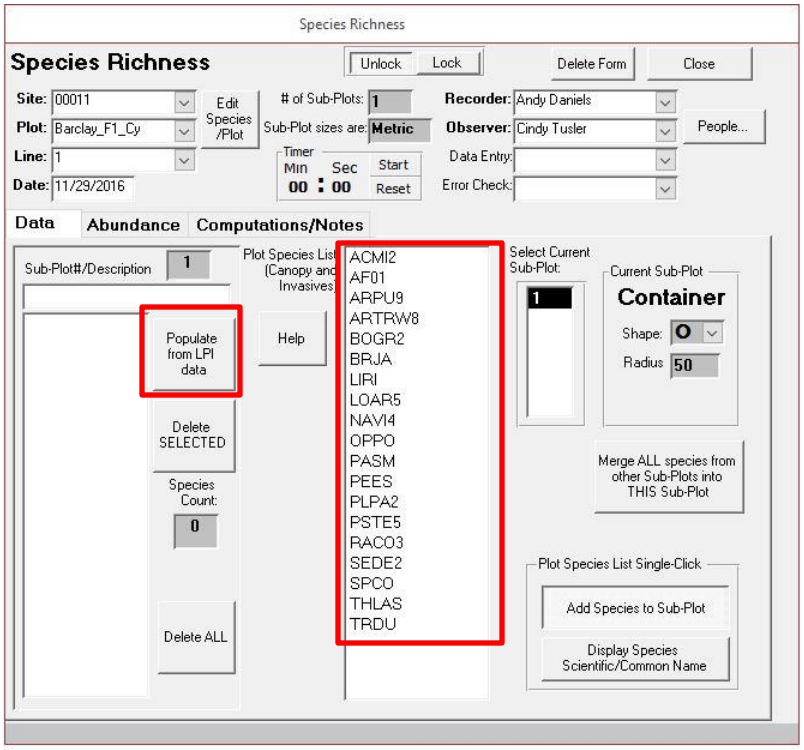
The total list of species occurring on a plot is one of the core indicators of the AIM strategy. This is accomplished by a plot-level inventory after the LPI data have been collected.

1. Select the Species Richness method and the appropriate site and plot in the Enter/Edit Data page.
2. Click **New** to create a species richness record for the plot. This will open the richness Plot Defaults page.
3. Choose "AIM" from the **Method** drop-down list and set the **# of Sub-Plots** to "1". Check the box under Container Sub-Plot, change the shape to circular, and set the radius of the plot according to your plot dimensions. These settings follow the AIM protocol recommendations.



4. Click **OK** to open the Richness data page.

5. Enter the **Recorder, Observer, and Line**. The data entry fields on the form will be locked until these are filled in. In the case of the AIM protocol, richness is estimated at the plot level, and not for individual transects. In this case, just choose line (transect) 1 for recording the richness data, but actually count species over the entire plot.

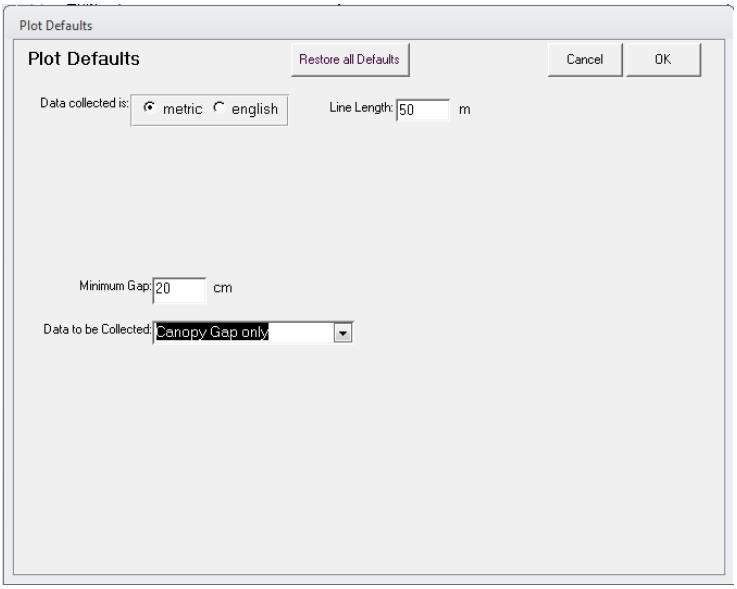


6. Click on species in the plot species list (center column) that you observe in the plot. The plant codes for these species will be recorded in the plot richness field at the left. You can also add species that you observed in LPI by clicking on the “Populate from LPI data” button.
7. Click **Close** when you are done recording species that occur in the plot.

Canopy Gap Intercept

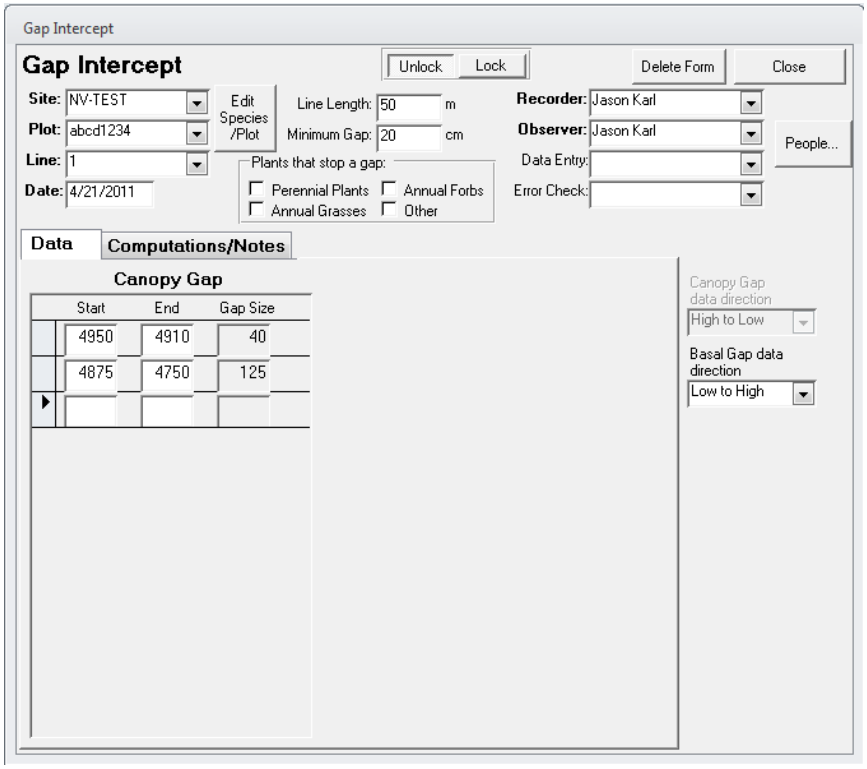
Canopy Gap Intercept is also a core method of the AIM strategy. This method is implemented on the same transects as LPI and can be done quickly following LPI by reading the transect backwards (i.e., LPI starts from 0 and reads along increasing distances, gap intercepts starts at the maximum distance away from the origin and reads back down the tape toward the plot center).

1. Select the Gap Intercept method and the appropriate site and plot in the **Enter/Edit Data** window.
2. Click **New** to create a gap intercept record for the plot. This will open the gap intercept Plot Defaults page.



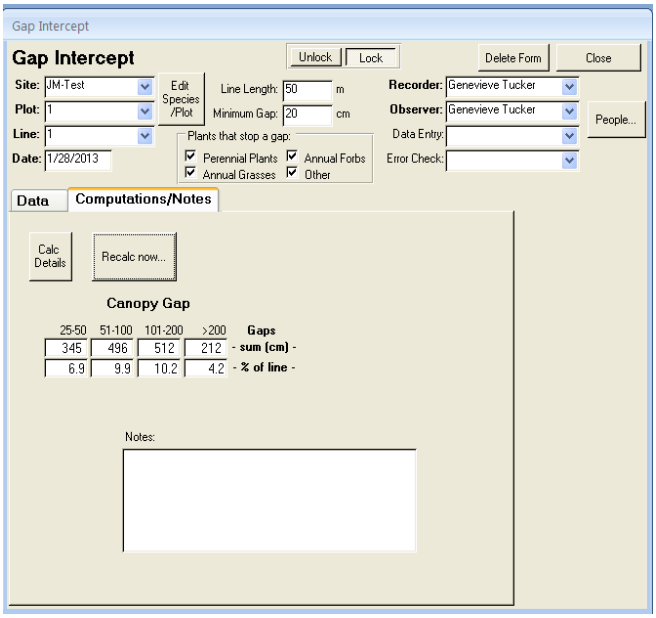
3. Set the **Data to be Collected** drop-down box to “Canopy Gap only.”

4. Click **OK** to go to the gap intercept data collection page.



5. Enter the **transect number, observer, and recorder** to unlock the gap intercept form.
6. Select perennial plants, annual grasses, and annual forbs for **Plants that stop a gap**
7. Check the **Canopy Gap data direction** settings. If reading the transect backwards after reading LPI, set this to "High to Low." This must be done before entering data or DIMA will flag your start and stop values as invalid
8. Record the start and stop locations (i.e., distance from the origin of the transect) of canopy gaps in the form. Every time you enter values for a canopy gap a new row is added to the form.
9. NOTE THAT THE CANOPY GAP FORM RECORDS GAPS IN **CENTIMETERS OR INCHES**.

10. Click **Computations/Notes** to check the data.

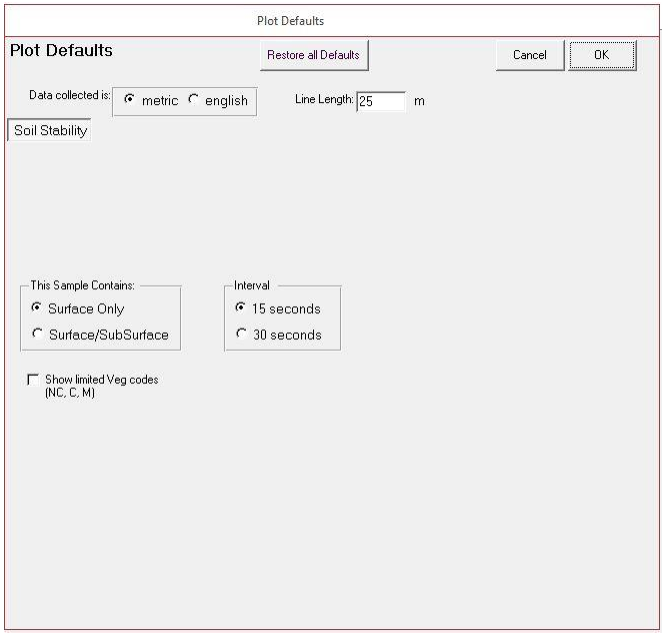


11. Click **Close** to save your data and return to the Enter/Edit Data page when you have finished recording canopy gaps for the transect.

Soil Stability

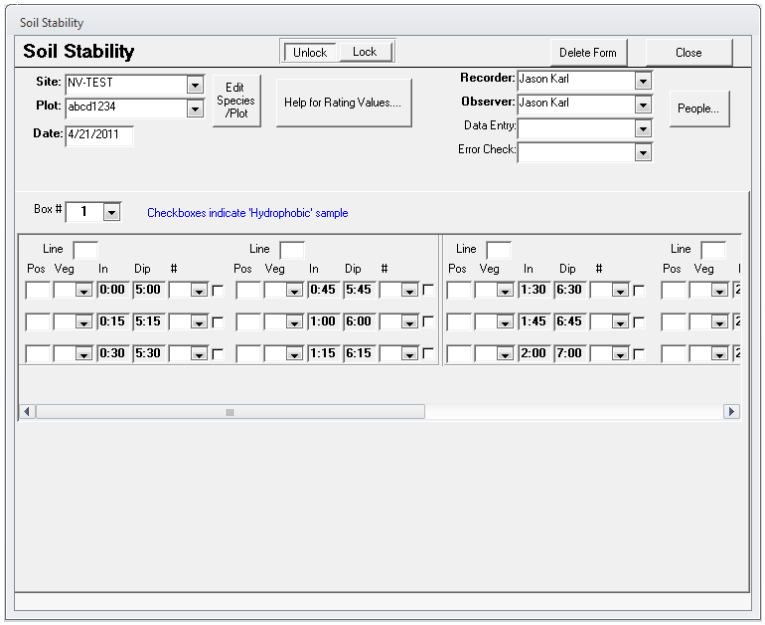
The soil stability test is a contingent method for the AIM strategy and is only measured when there is reason to believe that erosion is a factor at the plot. This is assumed to be true for land within the contiguous 48 states. Refer to the Monitoring Manual (Herrick et al. 2009) for detailed instructions on implementing this method.

1. Select the Soil Stability method and the appropriate site and plot in the **Enter/Edit Data** window.
2. Click **New** to create a soil stability record for the plot. This will open the soil stability Plot Defaults page.



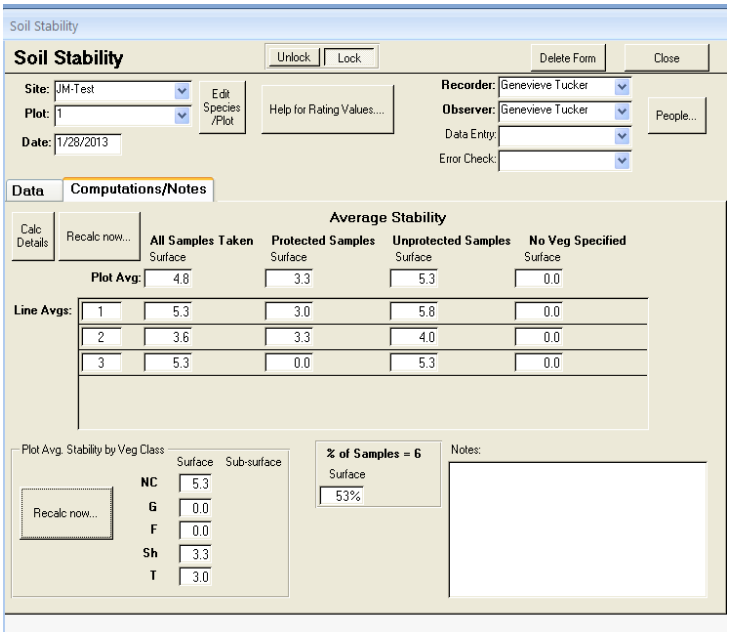
3. Verify that the settings are for “Surface Only” with an interval of 15 seconds.

4. Click **OK** to proceed to the data collection page.



5. Specify the **Recorder and Observer** to unlock the form.
6. Prepare soil samples and record the position of each sample in the test kit and the type of vegetation from each sample. The data form provides the times at which samples should be submersed in water and dipped.
7. Begin the soil sampling and record the stability values for each sample in the **#** column drop-down boxes.

8. Click **Computations/Notes** to check the data.

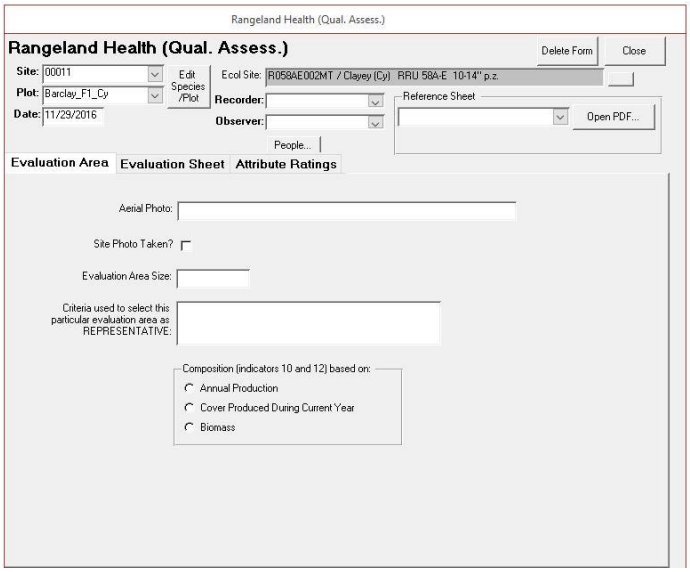


9. Click **Close** when you are finished to return to the **Enter/Edit Data** window.

Rangeland Health Indicators

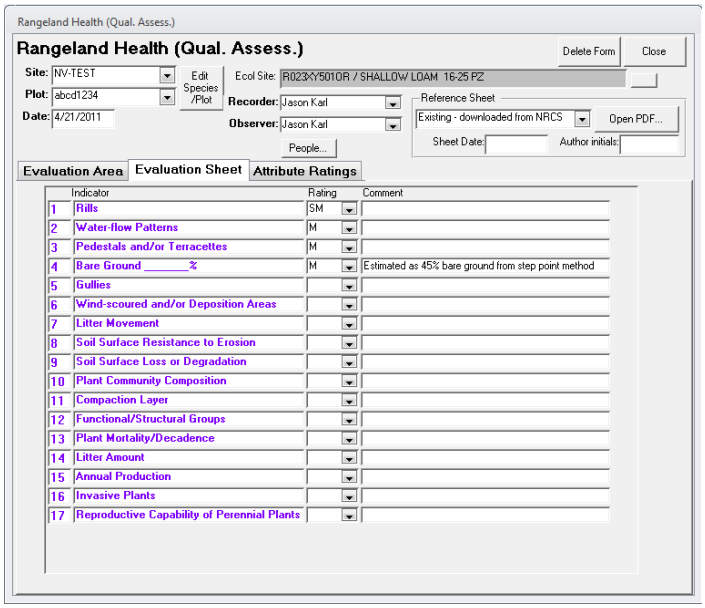
The 17 indicators described in Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (Pellant et al. 2005) are a qualitative assessment technique. While they are not officially part of the AIM strategy core methods (but do consider some of the AIM strategy indicators in a qualitative sense), it is common for the Rangeland Health Indicators to be assessed at sites where the AIM Strategy quantitative monitoring is also taking place. The following steps illustrate how to record the rangeland health indicators in DIMA.

1. Select the **Rangeland Health (Qual. Assess.)** method and the appropriate site and plot in the **Enter/Edit Data** window.
2. Click **New** to create a Rangeland Health evaluation for the plot. This will open the Rangeland Health page.

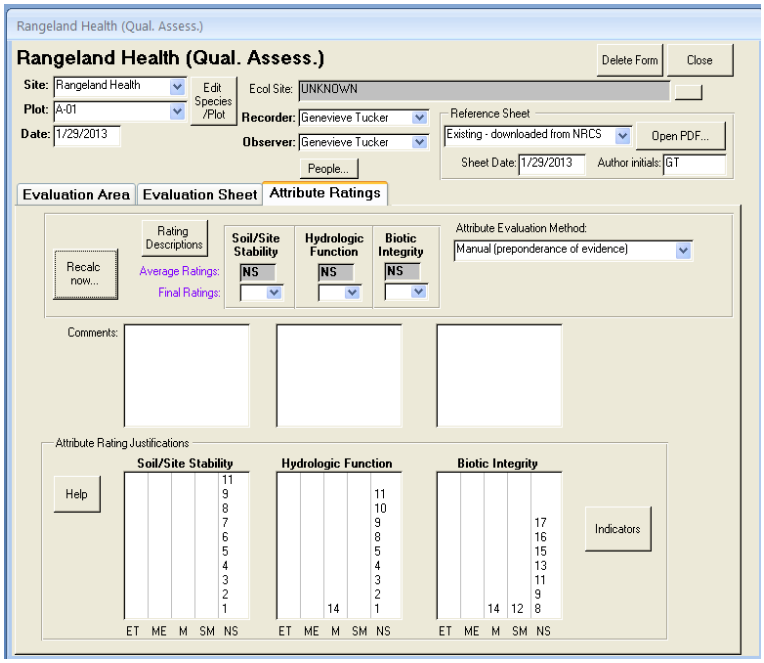


3. Enter in pertinent information on the **Evaluation Area** tab. The Ecological Site for the plot should have already been defined when you created the plot. If it was not, close this form and go back to the plot form and define the ecological site for the plot.

4. Click on the **Evaluation Sheet** tab.



5. Fill in the ratings for the 17 indicators using the drop-down boxes. Provide adequate comments to document your rationale for the ratings you chose.
6. Click on the **Attribute Ratings** and click **Recalc Now** tab when you are finished to see the overall site ratings. Note that the recalculation will have errors if one of the indicators is left blank.



7. Assign final ratings and include comments for *each one* justifying the conclusions.
8. Click **Close** when finished to return to the Enter/Edit Data page.

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