

**BLM IDAHO POST-FIRE RECOVERY PLAN  
EMERGENCY STABILIZATION AND BURNED AREA REHABILITATION  
2012 PLAN TEMPLATE**

**BALANCED ROAD FIRE**

**BLM/TWIN FALLS DISTRICT/JARBIDGE FIELD OFFICE  
IDAHO STATE OFFICE**

**FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

<b>Fire Name</b>	Balanced Road
<b>Fire Number</b>	GWL8
<b>District/Field Office</b>	Twin Falls/Jarbridge
<b>Admin Number</b>	LLIDT01000
<b>State</b>	Idaho
<b>County(s)</b>	Twin Falls, Owyhee
<b>Ignition Date/Cause</b>	6-03-2012 / Human
<b>Date Contained</b>	6-04-2012
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<i>Acres</i>
<b>BLM</b>	6,241
<b>State</b>	0
<b>Private</b>	184
<b>Total Acres</b>	6,425
<b>Total Costs</b>	\$339,000
<b>Costs to LF2200000</b>	\$136,000
<b>Costs to LF3200000</b>	\$47,000
<b>Other Funding Costs</b>	\$156,000

**Status of Plan Submission** (check one box below)

X	Initial Submission of Complete Plan
	Updating or Revising the Initial Submission
	Amendment

## **PART 1 - PLAN SUMMARY**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE FIRE**

The Balanced Road Fire started on June 3, 2012, at approximately 1350 hours. Fire cause was human with the start occurring on private land. The fire burned 6,241 acres of public land administered by the BLM and 184 acres of private land. The entire fire area, with the exception of the area north of the Balanced Rock Road, has burned one or more times in the last 40 years. More recently, the 2005 Clover Fire and 2007 Murphy Complex fires burned all of the currently burned area south of the Balanced Rock Road. The 2010 Long Butte Fire burned the southern half of the currently burned area. The fire was contained at 1600 on June 4 and controlled at 2000.

The fire burned in portions of the Devil Creek Balanced Rock and East Juniper Draw Allotments.

<b>Allotment</b>	<b>Pasture</b>	<b>Acres Burned</b>	<b>% of Pasture</b>
Devil Creek Balanced Rock	Balanced Rock	66	2
	Bull Horn	351	18
	North End Field	2,116	56
	North Kerbs Field	1,975	88
	School Bus	1,028	52
East Juniper Draw	East Juniper Draw	282	8
	Home Plate	9	<1
	Straw Stack	306	25

Digital soil survey data (SSURGO, 2008) indicate that most of the BLM portion of the burned area occurs on the Loamy 8-12 Wyoming Big Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass-Thurbers Needlegrass ecological site. As a result of past fire history and post-fire rehabilitation, pre-burn vegetation consisted primarily of mixed native/non-native and crested wheatgrass seedings. Cheatgrass is common throughout the burned area and dominant in relatively small areas along roads and on steep slopes. Wyoming big sagebrush and rabbitbrush occurred as scattered plants. The fire burned quickly from northeast to southwest and removed grass crowns, but left some singed standing vegetation, basal grass clumps, and scattered shrub skeletons.

### **LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY**

The following treatments are proposed under this Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) plan.

#### **Emergency Stabilization**

S2 Ground Seeding

S3 Aerial Seeding

S5 Weed Control

S12 Closure (Livestock)

## **Burned Area Rehabilitation**

R4 Seedling Planting

R5 Weed Control

R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

R12 Closure (Livestock)

The applicable land use plan for the ES&BAR project area is the Jarbidge Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Record of Decision (ROD) dated March 23, 1987. The burned area south of the Balanced Rock Road is located in Multiple Use Area (MUA)-12 (West Devil). The burned area containing the wildlife tracts north of the Balanced Rock Road is located in MUA-7 (Saylor Creek East). Objectives for the West Devil and Saylor Creek East MUAs include:

- Improve lands in poor ecological condition (pp. II-31 and II-47).
- Maintain existing vegetative improvements (pp. II-31 and II-47).
- Manage big game habitat to support mule deer and antelope (pp. II-31 and II-48).
- Maintain existing upland game nesting and cover habitats (p. II-31).
- Improve sage-grouse habitat (p. II-48).

Management guidelines contained in the RMP are identified for affected resources under each treatment discussed below.

The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050), the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA (#ID100-2005-EA-265) for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office, the Twin Falls District Wildlife Tracts Habitat Enhancement EA (#ID-210-2008-EA-248), and the Jarbidge Field Office Shrub Planting EA (#ID-201-2008-EA-359).

Treatments are consistent with existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass. On August 26, 2009, Idaho BLM signed a Conservation Agreement (CA) with the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service). In this CA, BLM agreed to develop and implement activities that provide for the conservation and recovery of slickspot peppergrass. On September 16, 2009, BLM initiated consultation with the Service on existing land use plans. On November 30, 2009, the Service issued a Biological Opinion (LUP BO) which further recommended implementation of conservation measures contained within the CA, which was attached as an appendix to the BO.

In addition, programmatic conference reports were prepared in 2006 by the Boise District Office for Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment (144-2006-IC-0918) and Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (14420-2006-IC-0975) programmatic actions. These programmatic actions were developed to include all field offices in the Boise District, which, at that point in time, included the Jarbidge Field Office. These Conference Reports were confirmed December 15, 2009 (14420-2010-TA-0103). BLM also consulted with the Service regarding programmatic shrub planting activities and received a letter of concurrence on January 27, 2012. The concurrence memorandum for Programmatic Shrub Planting – Jarbidge Field Office – Elmore, Owyhee, and Twin Falls Counties, Idaho and Elko County, Nevada (01EIFW00-2012-I-

0084) stated that planting shrubs utilizing hand planting methods and design features included below is not likely to adversely affect slickspot peppergrass (Concurrence Memorandum, p. 5). In addition, the concurrence memorandum states that shrub plantings would have long-term beneficial effects for slickspot peppergrass and its habitat by accelerating native shrub reestablishment and decreasing habitat fragmentation (Concurrence Memorandum, p. 6).

The burned area is largely uninventoried for slickspot peppergrass, but has undergone past seeding treatments. Since it is unknown if slickspots or slickspot peppergrass are located in the burned area, project design features that address conservation measures contained in the LUP BO, Conference Reports, and letter of concurrence for programmatic shrub planting are included to: 1) allow rest from grazing to promote vegetation recovery, 2) reduce the potential for introduction and spread of noxious weeds, and 3) restore sagebrush cover within the burned area. Specific programmatic conservation measures addressed in this plan are:

- 1) Implement Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) activities to consider slickspot peppergrass habitat rehabilitation (LUP BO p. 84-85).
  - a. As needed, protect disturbed and recovering areas using temporary closures or other measures. BLM will continue to rest areas from land use activities to meet ES&R objectives, defined through the ES&R plans (LUP BO p. 84, ES&R Conference Report p. 2).
  - b. BLM will initiate and complete ES&R efforts for slickspot peppergrass, such as planting shrubs and forbs, within slickspot peppergrass habitat.
- 2) Although non-chemical methods will be the preferred approach in occupied habitat, when appropriate, projects involving the application of pesticides (including herbicides, fungicides, and other related chemicals) in slickspot peppergrass habitat and potential habitat that may affect the species will be analyzed at the project level and designed such that pesticide applications will support conservation and minimize risks of exposure (LUP BO p. 70-71).
  - a. Apply appropriate spatial and temporal buffers to avoid species' exposure to harmful chemicals.
  - b. Implement appropriate revegetation and weed control measures to reduce risks of nonnative invasive plant infestations following ground/soil disturbing actions in slickspot peppergrass habitat.

The proposed treatments address conservation measures identified in the 2006 Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho, which recommended seeding or planting the appropriate species and subspecies of sagebrush as part of restoration or burned area rehabilitation treatments (pp. 4-19 through 4-20), re-establishing sagebrush in seeded perennial grasslands (pp. 4-85 through 4-87), and noxious weed control in burned areas (p. 4-20). Treatments are also consistent with current Bureau policy (Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043) for enhancement and restoration of sage-grouse habitat, specifically:

- In Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation plans, prioritize re-vegetation projects to (1) maintain and enhance unburned intact sagebrush habitat when at risk from adjacent threats; (2) stabilize soils; (3) reestablish hydrologic function; (4) maintain and enhance biological integrity; (5) promote plant resiliency; (6) limit expansion or dominance of invasive species; and (7) reestablish native species.

## Land Use Plan Consistency for Proposed Treatments

**Ground Seeding/S2:** The proposed ground seeding treatment addresses the RMP objectives to improve lands in poor ecological condition and manage and improve wildlife habitat cited above. In addition, the proposed treatment addresses the following RMP Resource Management Guidelines:

- Terrestrial Wildlife (pp. II-83 – II-84)
  - Manage all ecological sites on mule deer, pronghorn, elk, bighorn sheep and sage-grouse habitat currently in fair or poor ecological condition, for good ecological condition.
  - Manage all wildlife habitat within the resource area to provide a diversity of vegetation and habitats.
  - Seed mixtures for range improvement projects and fire rehabilitation projects will include a mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs that benefit sage-grouse.
- Fire Management (p. II-89): Seedings will include appropriate seed mixtures to replace wildlife habitat that is burned.

Proposed ground seeding would treat burned wildlife tracts to restore perennial understory vegetation and prevent cheatgrass encroachment. Seeded species would be native cultivars similar to on-site natives and non-native cultivars to assist in restoring plant community structure and diversity while effectively competing with invasive plants.

**Aerial Seeding/S3:** The proposed aerial seeding treatment would address RMP Resource Management Guidelines listed above for the ground seeding treatment. Aerial seeding sagebrush over the burned area would re-establish shrub cover important for sage-grouse and other sagebrush steppe-obligate wildlife, slickspot peppergrass, big game, and upland game birds. The proposed treatment is in conformance with the Jarbidge RMP and consistent with existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass and BLM sage-grouse conservation policy.

**Shrub Planting/R4:** The proposed shrub planting treatment would address RMP Resource Management Guidelines listed above for seeding treatments and would supplement aerial seeding treatments in localized areas. This proposed treatment is in conformance with the Jarbidge RMP, and consistent with existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass and BLM sage-grouse conservation policy.

**Noxious Weeds/S5/R5:** The proposed noxious weed treatments address the RMP objectives cited above to improve lands in poor ecological condition and maintain existing vegetative improvements. They also address RMP Resource Management Guidelines to control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands where possible, where economically feasible, and to the extent that funds are prioritized for that purpose (p. II-94). Weed control treatments would improve recovery of existing seedings by reducing noxious weed competition. Therefore, the proposed noxious weed treatments are in conformance to the Jarbidge RMP. Treatments are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the NFRP and Boise District and Jarbidge Field Offices Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA #ID-100-2005-EA-265 (Noxious Weed EA). In addition, design features are included consistent with existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass. These include training of weed treatment staff for slickspot and slickspot peppergrass detection and implementation of treatment buffers should occupied slickspots be found.

**Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard /R7:** Existing pasture and allotment fences would be repaired or replaced to ensure that livestock remain within their area of authorized use and off the burned area until resource objectives are met. The NFRP states that gates, cattleguards, fences, and other control features would be repaired and/or constructed as needed to protect treatments during the recovery period or the seeding establishment period (NFRP, p. 17). The BLM ES&BAR Handbook allows for repair or reconstruction of existing BLM-approved fences to protect new seedings and natural recovery areas (H-1742-1, p. 31). Therefore, the proposed treatment is consistent with the NFRP and current BLM policy.

**Closures (Livestock)/S12/R12:** The Jarbidge RMP (II-89) states under the Fire Management Section that, “all grazing licenses issued that include areas recently burned and/or seeded will include a statement concerning the amount of rest needed in the seedings or burned area. Normally two years of rest will be necessary to protect these areas. This rested area may include remnant stands of desirable species that survived the fire.” The NFRP states that livestock grazing would be deferred for at least two growing seasons, or until resource objectives are met, through the closure of pastures, resting whole allotments, or construction or reconstruction of protective fences as needed (NFRP, pp. 17, 19). The BLM ES&BAR Handbook (H-1732-1) states that livestock are to be excluded from burned areas until monitoring results, documented in writing, show ES&BAR objectives have been met (H-1742-1, p. 35). Closing the burned area would improve the potential natural recovery of existing seedings by eliminating livestock use of recovering plants. Livestock use would be resumed when ES&BAR objectives are met. Therefore, the proposed treatment conforms to the Jarbidge RMP, NFRP, and current BLM policy.

The ES&BAR team developed objectives and treatments which respond to the identified issues and concerns. The BLM would evaluate this plan based on the success or failure in meeting these objectives.

**COST SUMMARY TABLES**

**Emergency Stabilization (LF2200000):**

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
S1	<b>Planning (Project Mangt)</b>	WM's	6	\$5,000.00	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
S3	<b>Aerial Seeding</b>	Acres	6,241	\$13.30	\$81,000	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$83,000
S5	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>	Acres	6,241	\$1.76	\$0	\$11,000	\$0	\$0	\$11,000
S13	<b>Monitoring</b>	Acres	6,241	\$1.92	\$0	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$12,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS (LF2200000)</b>					\$81,000	\$27,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$136,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS (LF31010WU)</b>					\$7,000	\$28,000	\$0	\$0	\$35,000

**Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF3200000):**

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
R1	<b>Planning (Project Mangt)</b>	WM's	1		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$9,000
R5	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>	Acres	6,241	\$1.76	\$0	\$11,000	\$11,000	\$22,000
R7	<b>Fence Repair</b>	Miles	10.0	\$1,600.00	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$16,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>					\$19,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$47,000
<b>OTHER FUNDING TOTAL COSTS</b>					\$0	\$0	\$121,000	\$121,000

## **PART 2 – POST-FIRE RECOVERY ISSUES AND TREATMENTS**

Issues relate to resource problems caused by the wildfire and include both the immediate wildfire effects as well as effects predicted to occur as a result of the wildfire. Determining the appropriate funding code must be based on the scope of the issue, purpose of the treatment, and the availability of funds.

### **EMERGENCY STABILIZATION ISSUES AND TREATMENTS**

Emergency Stabilization Objectives: “determine the need for and to prescribe and implement emergency treatments to minimize threats to life or property or to stabilize and prevent unacceptable degradation to natural and cultural resources resulting from the effects of a fire.” 620DM3.4

Emergency Stabilization Priorities: 1). Human Life and Safety, and 2). Property and unique biological (designated Critical Habitat for Federal and State listed, proposed or candidate threatened and endangered species) and significant heritage sites. 620DM3.7

**ES Issue 1 - Human Life and Safety.** Not Applicable.

**ES Issue 2 - Soil/Water Stabilization.** The scope of this issue includes: Placing structures to slow soil and water movement, stabilizing soil to prevent loss or degradation or productivity, increasing road drainage frequency and/or capacity to handle additional post-fire runoff, installing protective fences or barriers to protect treated or recovering areas.

Treatment/Activity: *S12/R12 Livestock Closure*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The Balanced Road Fire burned area would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES &BAR objectives have been met.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The purpose of this treatment is to rest the burn area from livestock grazing to provide the opportunity for recovery of on-site vegetation. Recovery and maintenance of resilient, competitive perennial plant communities would inhibit the expansion of annual invasive vegetation and noxious weeds and stabilize soil resources.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *There are no costs associated with the livestock closure.*

### **ES Issue 3 - Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species.**

The burned area contains 887 acres of potential habitat for slickspot peppergrass (*Lepidium papilliferum*), which was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2009. Potential habitat was broadly identified in 2003 using soil type, potential native plant community, and elevation parameters (BLM GIS data). BLM rated potential habitat using updated soils data, potential native plant community, current vegetation, and fire history data in 2012. Of the potential habitat within the burned area, 1 acre is rated as having low potential for supporting slickspot peppergrass, 9 acres are rated as having high potential, and 877 acres are rated as having medium potential (BLM GIS data, 2012). The 9 acres of high potential habitat

occurs on the eastern edge of wildlife tract BG-41 adjacent to private land. The remainder of the medium and low potential habitat occurs south of the Balanced Rock Road. The area rated as high potential habitat was inventoried for slickspots and slickspot peppergrass on June 7, 2012, since the area is proposed below for ground-disturbing treatment. The area occurs on an east-facing 5-10% slope; some small terraces with high gravel cover were observed, but no slickspots were present.

Most of the burned area is located in Greater Sage-Grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat (Version 2, April 2012); a small portion of the northern burned area is located in Preliminary General Habitat (Version 2, April 2012). The entire area is classified as R1 restoration habitat. R1 habitat is defined as areas dominated by perennial grass but lacking a shrub overstory.

The closest occupied sage-grouse lek is about 3 miles south of the burned area. Two additional leks of undetermined status are also within about 3 miles to the south. Sage-grouse are dependent on diverse sagebrush steppe plant communities for their year round needs. Productive sage-grouse nesting habitat should have 15-25% sagebrush canopy cover with a structurally diverse perennial herbaceous understory. Recent fire frequency has reduced success in efforts to restore sagebrush cover in the general area. Habitat conditions are not expected to recover naturally without seeding.

Treatment/Activity: *S3 Aerial Seeding*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Wyoming big sagebrush would be aerially seeded over approximately 6,241 acres during fall/winter 2012/2013 (FY2013).*

Balanced Road Sagebrush Aerial Seed Mix	
FY 13-6,241Acres	
Species and Variety	Seed Rate Lbs/Acre
<b>Shrubs</b>	
1. Wyoming Big Sagebrush	1.00 (bulk)

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The fire removed sagebrush that established as a result of ES&BAR treatments. The objective of the aerial seed treatment is to reestablish sagebrush cover in an area where natural recruitment is not possible due to extensive past fire. Accelerating the rate of sagebrush establishment is critical to restoration of slickspot peppergrass and sage-grouse habitat, as well as habitat for big game and a number of BLM sensitive sagebrush obligate wildlife species.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Contracting costs for aerial application are typical for the Jarbidge Field Office area. Sagebrush seed costs can vary from year to year dependent on availability, but generally average about \$10/acre.*

**ES Issue 4 - Critical Heritage Resources.** N/A

**ES Issue 5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds.** The scope of this issue includes: Seeding to prevent establishment of invasive plants, and direct treatment of invasive plants. Such actions will be specified in the emergency stabilization plan only when immediate action is required and when standard treatments are used that have been validated by monitoring data from previous projects, or when there is documented research establishing the effectiveness of such actions. Using integrated pest management techniques to minimize the establishment of non-native invasive species within the burned area. When there is an existing approved management plan that addresses non-native invasive species, emergency stabilization treatments may be used to stabilize the invasive species.

The only previously unseeded area in the burned area is contained within two Cooperative Wildlife Management Areas (“wildlife tracts”): BG-41 (40 acres) and BG-42 (80 acres). These areas had Wyoming big sagebrush cover with an understory of cheatgrass and remnant native grasses, including Thurbers needlegrass and bottlebrush squirreltail. The potential natural plant community would be comprised of a Wyoming big sagebrush overstory with bluebunch wheatgrass and Thurbers needlegrass dominating the understory. Cheatgrass would likely dominate the wildlife tracts without treatment. Re-vegetation with desirable, competitive species would provide effective competition against annual vegetation and noxious weeds in the long term.

Treatment/Activity: *S2 Ground Seeding*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. **Funding for this treatment would be provided by the BLM Fuels program.** Approximately 120 acres contained within wildlife tracts BG-41 and BG-42 would be drill seeded with a mix of grasses, forbs, and four-wing saltbush to prevent the establishment of invasive species and reestablish wildlife habitat. The drill seeding would be implemented in fall 2012.

Seed would be applied at the rates shown in the following table.

<b>Balanced Road Drill Seed Mix for Cooperative Wildlife Management Tracts 120 Acres</b>	
<b>Species and Variety</b>	<b>Seed Rate Lbs/Acre</b>
<b>Grasses</b>	
1. 'Secar' Snake River Wheatgrass*	3.00
2. 'Vavilov' II Siberian Wheatgrass	2.00
3. 'Trailhead' Great Basin Wildrye*	1.00
4. 'Reliable' Sandberg's Bluegrass*	0.30
5. 'Rattlesnake' Bottlebrush Squirreltail*	0.30
<b>Forbs</b>	
1. 'Ladak' Alfalfa	1.00
2. Munroe Globemallow ♦	0.10
3. 'Eski' Sainfoin	1.00
<b>Shrubs</b>	
1. Fourwing Saltbush ♦	1.00
<b>* Native Cultivar / ♦ Wildland Collected</b>	

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The objective of this treatment is to re-establish a desirable herbaceous perennial plant community that more closely matches the structural and species composition and diversity of the native plant community to help achieve a healthy, functioning rangeland. Establishment of a perennial plant community would inhibit the expansion of annual vegetation and noxious weeds.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *The ground seeding costs can vary year to year (approximately \$50-75/acre) but are typical for projects of this type.*

Ground-Applied Herbicide Spray

**Funding for this treatment would be provided by the BLM Fuels program.** The wildlife tracts will be monitored for germination for cheatgrass or other invasive plants prior to drill seeding. If necessary, the herbicide *Glyphosate* would be ground-applied at a rate of 8-16 ounces/acre of active ingredient on 120 acres to control invasive non-native annual vegetation prior to drill seeding. The NEPA analysis for ground application of *Glyphosate* was completed in the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA (#ID100-2005-EA-265) for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office and the Twin Falls District Wildlife Tracts Habitat Enhancement EA (#ID-210-2008-EA-248).

Treatment/Activity: *S5 Noxious Weeds*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Rush skeletonweed and diffuse knapweed have been documented in and adjacent to the burned area. Other noxious weeds, including Scotch thistle, field bindweed, and Russian knapweed, have potential for establishment in the burned area. Noxious weed inventory and spot herbicide treatment would occur the first year following the fire within the burned area under ES. Noxious weeds would be treated with the BLM-approved chemicals in accordance with the Noxious Weed EA and the Record of Decision for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007 (Vegetation Treatment EIS). Appendix B of the Record of Decision includes a list of standard operating procedures that would be used for vegetation treatments using herbicides.*

**Design features for weed treatments:**

*Slickspot peppergrass potential habitat*

- Weed treatment staff will be trained to identify slickspots and slickspot peppergrass.
- Should slickspots containing slickspot peppergrass (aka, occupied slickspots) be located within the burned area, weed treatment staff will notify the Jarbidge Field Office Botanist to map the population area.
- Within an element occurrence, herbicide application will use only hand sprayers. A 10-foot no-herbicide treatment buffer will be established around occupied slickspots. Within the buffer zone, weeds will be treated using hand-pulling or cutting and bagging.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *Disturbance associated with the fire and fire suppression, including use of heavy equipment to create dozer lines, increases the potential for invasion and spread of noxious weeds due to vegetation removal and soil surface disturbance.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Inventory and treatment of new noxious weed populations is more cost-effective than waiting until the population has had opportunity to establish and spread. Field work would be combined with other noxious weed treatments for cost efficiency.*

**BURNED AREA REHABILITATION ISSUES AND TREATMENTS**

Burned Area Rehabilitation Objectives. 1) To evaluate actual and potential long-term post-fire impacts to critical cultural and natural resources and identify those areas unlikely to recover naturally from severe wildland fire damage; 2) To develop and implement cost-effective plans to emulate historical or pre-fire ecosystem structure, function, diversity, and dynamics consistent with approved land management plans, or if that is infeasible, then to restore or establish a healthy, stable ecosystem in which native species are well represented; and 3) To repair or replace minor facilities damaged by wildland fire. 620DM3.4

Burned Area Rehabilitation Priorities. 1) To repair or improve lands damaged directly by a wildland fire; and 2) To rehabilitate or establish healthy, stable ecosystems in the burned area. 620DM3.8

**BAR Issue 1 - Lands Unlikely to Recover Naturally.** The scope of this issue includes: Repair or improve lands unlikely to recover naturally from wildland fire damage by emulating historical or pre-fire ecosystem structure, function, diversity, and dynamics consistent with existing land management plans.

*Slickspot Peppergrass and Wildlife Habitat*

The fire removed remnant sagebrush stands and plants that resulted from past ES&BAR efforts. The burned area contains potential habitat for slickspot peppergrass and is classified as sage-grouse R1 Restoration habitat. Habitat conditions are not expected to recover naturally without seeding and supplemental planting.

Treatment Activity: *R4 Seedling Planting*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. **Funding for this treatment would be from non-ESR sources.** *The objective of the seedling planting treatment is to supplement aerial sagebrush seeding if monitoring indicates that plant recruitment from seed is not adequate for re-establishment of shrub patches. Up to 50,000 containerized or bare-root Wyoming big sagebrush seedlings could be hand planted within the burned area in early spring or late fall. If needed, plants would be contract grown using seed collected from a local source.*

**Design Features for Shrub Planting:**

*Shrub seedlings would be planted in patches of about 200-500 plants throughout the burned area. Patches would generally be oriented in a north-south arrangement to facilitate natural dispersal of seed by wind. Shrub seedlings would be spaced no closer than 3 feet from each other, and placed at least 3 feet from existing, live mature or seedling shrubs. Shrubs could be placed less than 3 feet from dead sagebrush for sun and wind protection and to access soil nutrients and mycorrhizal fungi that are associated with areas under sagebrush canopies.*

*Vehicles would be restricted to existing roads. Planting would not occur within 0.25 mile of livestock water or supplement locations, within 50 feet any two-track road or fence line, or during saturated soil conditions. Planting would not occur within 300 feet of main graveled roads to reduce potential accumulation of fuels along main travel routes. Planting would not occur in slickspot microsites. Under agreement between the Bureau and the State Historic Preservation Officer, cultural resource inventory is not required for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for hand planting projects. However, the Jarbidge Field Office Archeologist would be notified immediately should artifacts be found during implementation of the planting project. Fuels program specialists would be on-site the first day of planting to provide guidance to the contractor regarding planting restrictions.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *Remnant sagebrush patches and sagebrush established following past ES&BAR seedings were destroyed in the fire. Sagebrush recovery can take decades to return to a pre-burn level. The proposed plantings would re-establish shrub patches and provide additional seed sources in the burn area to speed*

*recovery of habitat for slickspot peppergrass, sage-grouse, big-game, and BLM sagebrush obligate sensitive species.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Monitoring of sagebrush plantings in the Jarbidge Field Office following recent fires has determined that these projects are effective in re-establishing scattered shrub patches to assist in natural recruitment and spread. Planting shrubs in patches in locations selected to maximize potential for dispersal reduces the number of seedlings required to cover the burn area. Shrub planting is an accepted conservation measure in existing consultations for slickspot peppergrass and policy regarding management of sage-grouse habitat.*

**BAR Issue 2 - Weed Treatments.** The scope of this issue includes: Chemical, manual, and mechanical removal of invasive species, and planting of native and non-native species, restore or establish a healthy, stable ecosystem even if this ecosystem cannot fully emulate historical or pre-fire conditions.

Treatment/Activity: *R5 Noxious Weeds*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Rush skeletonweed and diffuse knapweed have been documented in and adjacent to the burned area. Other noxious weeds, including Scotch thistle, field bindweed, and Russian knapweed, have potential for establishment in the burned area. Noxious weed inventory and spot herbicide treatment would occur the first year following the fire within the burned area under ES. Noxious weeds would be treated with the BLM-approved chemicals in accordance with the Noxious Weed EA and the Record of Decision for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007(Vegetation Treatment EIS). Appendix B of the Record of Decision includes a list of standard operating procedures that would be used for vegetation treatments using herbicides.*

#### **Design features for weed treatments:**

*Slickspot peppergrass potential habitat*

- Weed treatment staff will be trained to identify slickspots and slickspot peppergrass.
- Should slickspots containing slickspot peppergrass (aka, occupied slickspots) be located within the burned area, weed treatment staff will notify the Jarbidge Field Office Botanist to map the population area.
- Within an element occurrence, herbicide application will use only hand sprayers. A 10-foot no-herbicide treatment buffer will be established around occupied slickspots. Within the buffer zone, weeds will be treated using hand-pulling or cutting and bagging.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *Disturbance associated with the fire and fire suppression, including use of heavy equipment to create dozer lines, increases the potential for invasion and spread of noxious weeds due to vegetation removal and soil surface disturbance. Potential for invasion and spread of noxious weeds remains high in years immediately following fire during vegetation recovery.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Inventory and treatment of new noxious weed populations is more cost-effective than waiting until the population has had opportunity to establish and spread. Field work would be combined with other noxious weed treatments for cost efficiency.*

**BAR Issue 3 - Tree Planting.** Not Applicable.

**BAR Issue 4 - Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities.** The scope of this issue includes: Repair or replace fire damage to minor operating facilities (e.g., campgrounds, interpretive signs and exhibits, shade shelters, fences, wildlife guzzlers, etc.) [Rehabilitation may not include the planning or replacement of major infrastructure, such as visitor centers, residential structures, administration offices, work centers and similar facilities. Rehabilitation does not include the construction of new facilities that did not exist before the fire, except for temporary and minor facilities necessary to implement burned area rehabilitation efforts.]

Treatment Activity: *R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace approximately 10 miles of interior livestock management fence and permanent protection fence for wildlife tracts damaged or destroyed by the fire. Damaged wood corners and braces would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be repaired. The management fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards for wildlife.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The wildfire damaged fences associated with the livestock management of the affected allotments. Reconstruction and repair of management fences damaged by the fire would maintain the future integrity of the existing livestock grazing system. Repair of damaged management fences would also help to manage vegetation recovery.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *This treatment is reasonable and cost effective because it would utilize existing fences and gates to the greatest extent possible, while allowing unburned areas to be available to grazing. Damaged wood stretch points and corners would be replaced with galvanized steel pipe thus increasing the longevity of the structures and resistance to future wildfire damages.*

**PART 3 – DETAILED TREATMENT COST TABLE**

Emergency Stabilization		Units	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Costs
<b>S1</b>	<b>Planning (Plan Prep/Project Mangt)</b>						
	National Administrative Support Fee	WM's		5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Project Management Field Office	WM's		5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
<b>S3</b>	<b>Aerial Seeding</b>						
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500			500
	Contract	Total	31,000				31,000
	Contract Administration	WM's		1,500			1,500
	Seed	Total	50,000				50,000
	<b>Total</b>		81,000	2,000	0	0	83,000
<b>S5</b>	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>						
	Labor	Acres		8,000			8,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		1,000			1,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		2,000			2,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	11,000	0	0	11,000
<b>S13</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>						
	Labor	WM's		3,500	3,500	3,500	10,500
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500	500	500	1,500
	<b>Total</b>		0	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
	<b>EMERGENCY STABILIZATION TOTALS</b>		\$81,000	\$27,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$136,000

	<b>Herbicide Spraying</b>						
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	500				500
	Equipment Mobilization	Total	2,000				2,000
	Contract	Total	4,000				4,000
	Chemical	WM's	500				500
	<b>FUELS FUNDED</b>		\$7,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,000

	<b>Ground Seeding (drill)</b>						
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		1,000			1,000
	Equipment Mobilization	Total		3,000			3,000
	Contract	Total		5,000			5,000
	Contract Administration	WM's		2,000			2,000
	Vale Drill Use Rate & FOR	Total		1,000			1,000
	Seed	Total		10,000			10,000
	Seed Mixing	WM's		3,000			3,000
	Cultural Clearance	Total		3,000			3,000
	<b>FUELS FUNDED</b>		\$0	\$28,000	\$0	\$0	\$28,000

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Rehabilitation		Units	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Costs
<b>R1</b>	<b><i>Planning (Plan Prep/Project Mangt)</i></b>					
	Project Management Field Office	WM's	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
	<b>Total</b>		3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
<b>R5</b>	<b><i>Noxious Weeds</i></b>					
	Labor	WM's		8,000	8,000	16,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		1,000	1,000	2,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		2,000	2,000	4,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	11,000	11,000	22,000
<b>R7</b>	<b><i>Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard</i></b>					
	Fence Material	Total	5,000			5,000
	Labor	WM's				0
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	1,000			1,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total				0
	Contract	Total	10,000			10,000
	Contract Administration	WM's				0
	<b>Total</b>		16,000	0	0	16,000
	<b>BURNED AREA REHABILITATION TOTALS</b>		\$19,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$47,000

	<b><i>Seedling Planting (Shrub/Tree)</i></b>					
	Seedling Cost	Total			50,000	50,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total			2,000	2,000
	Contract	Total			63,000	63,000
	Contract Administration	WM's			6,000	6,000
	<b>OTHER FUNDED TOTALS</b>		\$0	\$0	\$121,000	\$121,000

**PART 4 – SEED LISTS**

**DRILL SEED – WILDLIFE TRACTS**

<b>Species</b>	<b>% PLS</b>	<b>Seeds/lb. (bulk)</b>	<b>Total Seeds/Acre (bulk)</b>	<b>PLS Seeds/ac.</b>	<b>PLS Seeds/sq. ft.</b>	<b>Drill Seeding (acres)</b>	<b>Lbs/Acre</b>	<b>Total Pounds</b>	<b>Cost per lb</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>
Secar SnakeRiver WG	76%	170,000	510,000	387,600	8.90	120	3	400	3.00	1,200.00
Vavilov II Siberian WG	80%	220,000	440,000	352,000	8.08	120	2	250	3.00	750.00
Trailhead Basin Wildrye	76%	150,000	150,000	114,000	2.62	120	1	150	9.00	1,350.00
Sandbergs Bluegrass	72%	950,000	285,000	205,200	4.71	120	0.3	50	3.00	150.00
Bottlebrush Squirreltail	72%	192,000	57,600	41,472	0.95	120	0.3	50	25.00	1,250.00
Ladak Alfalfa	80%	230,000	230,000	184,000	4.22	120	1	150	3.50	525.00
Munroe Globemallow	90%	500,000	50,000	45,000	1.03	120	0.1	50	55.00	2,750.00
Eski Sainfoin	80%	28,000	28,000	22,400	0.51	120	1	150	1.30	195.00
Fourwing Saltbrush	31%	55,000	55,000	17,050	0.39	120	1	150	7.00	1,050.00
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>31.42</b>		<b>9.70</b>	<b>1,400</b>		<b>9,220.00</b>

**AERIAL SAGEBRUSH**

<b>Seed Name</b>	<b>% PLS</b>	<b>Seeds/lb. (bulk)</b>	<b>Total Seeds/Acre (bulk)</b>	<b>PLS Seeds/ac.</b>	<b>PLS Seeds/sq. ft.</b>	<b>Aerial Seeding (acres)</b>	<b>Lbs/Acre</b>	<b>Total Pounds</b>	<b>Cost per/lb</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>
Wyoming Sage	11.2%	2,500,000	2,500,000	280,000	6.43	6,241	1	6,240	8.00	49,920.00
			0	0	0.00					0.00
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>2,500,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>6.43</b>		<b>1.00</b>	<b>6,240</b>		<b>49,920.00</b>

## **PART 5 - NATIVE/NON-NATIVE PLANT WORKSHEET**

### **A. Proposed Native Plants in Seed Mixtures (Both ES & BAR Treatments)**

1. Are the native plants proposed for seeding adapted to the ecological sites in the burned area?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The proposed native species are all adapted to the ecological sites within the proposed seeding area. All of these species have been utilized in similar ecological sites within the Jarbidge Field Office management area.*

2. Is seed or seedlings of native plants available in sufficient quantity for the proposed project?

Yes  No

Rationale: *Native seed proposed for use is generally available in the required quantities. Seeding would not occur until the fall of 2012 which should allow seed quantities to be more available.*

3. Is the cost and/or quality of the native seed reasonable given the project size and approved field unit management and Plan objectives?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The native seed proposed for use has been increasingly utilized in recent years for stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration. The demand has resulted in increased production and decreased price.*

4. Will the native plants establish and survive given the environmental conditions and the current or future competition from other species in the seed mix or from exotic plants?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The native taxa proposed for seeding have exhibited the ability to establish and persist in similar ecological sites in the Jarbidge Field Office management area.*

5. Will the existing or proposed land management (e.g. wildlife populations, recreation use, livestock, etc.) after the seeding establishment period maintains the seeded native plants in the seed mixture?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The areas proposed for drill seeding are not allocated for livestock use. The remainder of the burned area would be rested from livestock grazing until resource objectives listed in this ES&BAR plan are met. This would allow for natural recovery of previously seeded areas. All treatment areas would have to meet minimum criteria (see monitoring plan) before livestock grazing may resume.*

***Use of native species for rehabilitation projects is required if all the answers to this portion of the worksheet are yes (assuming that the native plant species are available).***

## B. Proposed Non-native Plants in Seed Mixture (Both ES & BAR Treatments)

**General Note:** The likelihood of introducing a non-native plant species into a plant community without altering the present competitive interaction among remnant native and non-native species is remote. The proposed seeding of non-native species in this project may result in long-term disruption of ecological processes within the plant community on treated areas. However, the treatment area has already been disrupted by non-native species and the proportion of non-native to native species is low. The inclusion of non-native species is to enhance the probability of re-establishment of a perennial plant community in an environment where normal plant successional processes have been altered by invasion of exotic annual grasses and forbs, along with noxious weeds, and difficult site conditions (i.e. clay soils). Establishing a stable, diverse, multi-layered perennial plant community utilizing both native and non-native cultivars is expected to restore resource values that might not recover naturally, considering the pre-fire plant community and site conditions.

1. Is the use of non-native plants necessary to meet objectives, e.g., consistent with applicable approved field unit management plans?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The use of the proposed non-native plant species is in conformance with the goals and objectives outlined in the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment (#ID-090-2004-050).*

2. Will non-native plants meet the objective(s) for which they are planted without unacceptably diminishing diversity and disrupting ecological processes (nutrient cycling, water infiltration, energy flow, etc.) in the plant community?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The proposed treatment area supported a sagebrush community with an herbaceous understory of exotic annual grasses, noxious weeds, and remnant native grasses and forbs. The natural successional processes and interspecific competition which normally occur within a native plant community have been altered by the introduction and establishment of exotic annual grasses and noxious weeds such as cheatgrass, rush skeletonweed, diffuse knapweed, Scotch thistle, and Russian knapweed. The proposed non-native plants can effectively compete with these species. Establishing a competitive perennial plant community with a mixture of native and non-native species would promote a greater degree of resiliency within the plant community and restore more natural successional processes.*

3. Will non-native plants stay on the site they are seeded and not significantly displace or interbreed with native plants?

Yes  No

Rationale: *The proposed introduced plant species have been used in seedings in the Twin Falls District area for over 20 years. The seedings have occurred in range sites similar to those which were burned. Incidental establishment of the proposed species may occur outside of the treatment area by the seasonal movement of various animals, but this occurrence is not*

common nor has it been observed to result in the long-term displacement and dominance of native plant species or communities.

A "no" response requires additional analysis in the environmental assessment or selection of an alternate species in the seed mixture.

**C. Proposed Seed Species – Natives & Non-Natives (Both ES & BAR Treatments)**

<i>Native</i>	<i>Non-native</i>
‘Secar’ Snake River wheatgrass <i>Elymus wawaensis</i>	‘Vavilov II’ Siberian wheatgrass <i>Agropyron sibericum</i>
‘Trailhead’ Basin wildrye <i>Leymus cinereus</i>	‘Ladak’ alfalfa <i>Medicago sativa</i>
‘Reliable’ Sandberg bluegrass <i>Poa secunda</i>	‘Eski’ sainfoin <i>Onobrychis viciaefolia</i>
‘Rattlesnake’ Bottlebrush Squirreltail <i>Elymus elymoides</i>	
Munroe globemallow <i>Sphaeralcea munroana</i>	
Wyoming Big Sagebrush <i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>wyomingensis</i>	
Fourwing saltbush <i>Atriplex canescens</i>	

**PART 6. – COST-RISK ANALYSIS**

**A. Probability of Treatments Successfully Meeting Objectives**

Action/ Spec. #	Planned ES Action (LF20000ES)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
S2	Ground Spraying & Seeding (non-ESR funds)	Acres	120	\$35,000	80
S3	Aerial Seeding	Acres	6,241	\$83,000	70
S5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	6,241	\$11,000	100
S12	Closures (livestock grazing)	Acres	6,241	\$0	100
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>				\$129,000	

Action/ Spec. #	Planned BAR Action (LF32000BR)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R4	Seedling Planting (non-ESR funds)		50,000	\$121,000	70
R5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	6,241	\$22,000	100
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	10	\$16,000	100
R12	Closures (livestock grazing)	Acres	6,241	\$0	100
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>				\$159,000	

**B. Cost Risk Summary**

1. Are the risks to natural resources and private property **acceptable** as a result of the fire if the following actions are taken?

**Proposed Action** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *The ground seeding would establish a perennial plant community which would effectively compete against invasive annual non-native vegetation. Noxious weed treatments would reduce potential for expansion of noxious weeds in and adjacent to the burned area.*

**No Action** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *Failure to seed the wildlife tracts would result in these areas being dominated by invasive annual non-native vegetation and thus, not functioning as wildlife habitat under cooperative management with Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Failure to treat noxious weeds and rest the burned area would compromise vegetation recovery and reduce wildlife values and soil stability.*

**Alternative(s)** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *N/A*

2. Is the probability of success of the proposed action, alternatives or no action acceptable given their costs?

**Proposed Action** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *Monitoring and observations of weed treatments in similar locations indicate that success would be high. Normal climatic conditions and exclusion of livestock grazing would increase potential for vegetation recovery.*

**No Action** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *The burned area and surrounding lands have high potential for expansion of noxious weeds. This potential would increase without treatment and recovery of on-site vegetation.*

**Alternative(s)** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *N/A*

3. Which approach will most cost-effectively and successfully attain the objectives and therefore is recommended for implementation from a Cost/Risk Analysis standpoint?

**Proposed Action** ,  
**Alternative(s)** ,  
**No Action**

Comments:

**C. Risk of Resource Value Loss or Damage**

**No Action - Treatments Not Implemented (check one)**

Resource Value	NA	None	Low	Medium	High
Unacceptable Loss of Topsoil				X	
Weed Invasion					X
Unacceptable Loss of Vegetation Diversity					X
Unacceptable Loss of Vegetation Structure					X
Unacceptable Disruption of Ecological Processes					X
Off-site Sediment Damage to Private Property			X		
Off-site Threats to Human Life		X			
Other-Loss of Access Road Due to Plugged Culverts	X				

**Proposed Action - Treatments Successfully Implemented (check one)**

Resource Value	NA	None	Low	Medium	High
Unacceptable Loss of Topsoil			X		
Weed Invasion			X		
Unacceptable Loss of Vegetation Diversity			X		
Unacceptable Loss of Vegetation Structure			X		
Unacceptable Disruption of Ecological Processes			X		
Off-site Sediment Damage to Private Property		X			
Off-site Threats to Human Life		X			
Other-Loss of Access Road Due to Plugged Culverts	X				

**PART 7 – MONITORING PLAN**

Monitoring and evaluation of ES and BAR treatments would be implemented to ensure that treatments are properly implemented, effective, and maintained. Monitoring methods may be qualitative or quantitative, and would be commensurate with the level of treatment complexity and extent. Monitoring and evaluation information would provide adaptive management feedback to improve ES and BAR treatment performance. Monitoring would be the responsibility of the BLM interdisciplinary team. An annual monitoring summary report would be submitted documenting treatment effectiveness.

Treatment/Activity: S2 Ground Seeding and S3 Aerial Seeding

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of the drill seeding treatment is to establish a perennial dominated plant community on the wildlife tracts within 3 years. The objective of the aerial seeding treatment is to re-establish sagebrush plants within the entire burned area. The following density objectives are based on ecological site potential.*

*The drill seed treatment would be considered successful if the seeded species reach the following densities:*

- 1) 3 plants per square meter for grasses.*
- 2) 0.5 plants per square meter for forbs.*
- 3) 0.1 plants per square meter for four-wing saltbush.*

*The aerial seed treatment of sagebrush (S3) would be considered effective if:*

- 1) Sagebrush seedlings average 0.1 seedlings per square meter across all density plots; or*
- 2) In qualitative surveys they are found to be common.*
- 2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: Implementation is monitored through contract administration. Any changes from the planned implementation would be noted in the project file "as built" discussion.*
- 3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period: The methods used to monitor the drill and aerial seeding treatment areas would include field observations, photo plots, cover transects utilizing the line-point intercept method (drill seeding only), and density plot methods. Plots would be randomly established through the treated area. Effectiveness monitoring of the ground and aerial seeding would be done for a period of three growing seasons.*

*Treatment/Activity: R4 Seedling Planting*

*1) Treatment Objectives: The objective of the seedling planting treatment is to re-establish sagebrush cover within the burned area. The seedling planting treatment would be considered successful if the planted sagebrush seedlings have survival rates of:*

- 1) 40% or greater – fully successful*
- 2) 20-40% -- partially successful*
- 3) <20% -- poor survival or a failure.*

*2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: Implementation is monitored through contract administration. Any changes from the planned implementation would be noted in the project file "as built" discussion.*

*3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period: The methods used to monitor the plantings would include field observations, photo plots, and belt transects. Belt transects would record presence/absence and survival. Transects would be randomly established through the treated area. Monitoring would occur following treatment implementation, if treatment is necessary.*

*Treatment/Activity: S5/R5 Noxious Weed Treatments*

*1) Treatment Objectives: Rush skeletonweed, diffuse knapweed, Scotch thistle, Russian knapweed, and field bindweed are the primary noxious weeds of concern in the burned area. It is expected that these weeds would expand their range as a result of the fire. Since these weeds are not uniformly distributed across the burn area a quantifiable objective cannot be determined until the first year inventory occurs.*

*The objective for the first growing season is to conduct an inventory of the burned area. Any noxious weeds detected during the inventory would be treated.*

*The objective for the second and third years is to decrease the acreage of noxious weeds needing treatment as compared to the first year.*

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: *Locations of noxious weed populations (by species), treatment type, and the amount of herbicide used would be documented using GPS and GIS.*

3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period: *Size and location of noxious weed populations and needed treatments would be compared between years 1, 2, and 3 to determine treatment effectiveness. If noxious weed populations remain in the burned area beyond the third year, responsibility would be transferred to the Twin Falls District Noxious Weed Program for ongoing inventory, treatment, and monitoring using funding sources other than ES&BAR.*

Treatment/Activity: *R7 Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard*

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace about 10 miles of interior livestock management fence and permanent protection fence for the wildlife tracts damaged or destroyed by the fire. Damaged wood corners and braces would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be repaired. The fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards for wildlife.*

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: *Implementation is monitored through contract administration. Any changes from the planned implementation would be noted in the project file “as built” discussion.*

3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period. *Repair and replacement of damaged fence would be monitored through contract administration. Repairs would be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Repairs would be completed within the first year of the fire.*

Treatment/Activity: *S12/R12 Livestock Closure*

1) Treatment Objectives: *Exclusion of livestock is critical for the recovery of burned vegetation. The burned area would be closed to promote recovery of existing seedings, consistent with the NFRP. The wildlife tracts are not allocated for livestock grazing.*

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: *Resumption of livestock grazing would ultimately depend on monitoring and meeting of natural recovery objectives. The monitoring for grazing availability and recommendations for opening the burn area to livestock would be the responsibility of an interdisciplinary team. Implementation is monitored through rangeland management administration. Post-fire grazing agreements would be issued closing the burn area to livestock grazing.*

3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period:

*Natural recovery areas would be considered recovered and available for grazing when:*

- 1) *Recovered herbaceous vegetation is providing sufficient ground cover to protect the site from accelerated erosion and expansion/conversion to annual grasses and noxious weeds. The amount of bare mineral soil (lacking cover of plants, litter, or biological soil crust) is within 10% of what would be expected for early seral stages of the ecological sites found within the burned area. Recommended study methods include line-point intercept or step point cover methods and photo points.*
- 2) *A qualitative visual assessment of the following would also be considered:*
  - *Plant vigor (perennial plants)*
  - *Precipitation information during the non-growing (winter) and growing (spring through early summer) seasons*
  - *Competition with invasive annual plants and noxious weed species*
  - *Seed production*
- 3) *An evaluation of collected monitoring data is completed documenting that reintroducing grazing to the area would not cause a downward trend in vegetation recovery.*

## **PART 8 - MAPS**

1. Fire Perimeter, Land Status, and Grazing Allotments
2. Treatments: Ground Seeding, Aerial Seeding, and Fence Repair

**PART 9 – REVIEW, APPROVALS, and PREPARERS**

**TEAM MEMBERS**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Team Member (Agency/Office)</b>	<b>Initial and Date</b>
Team Leader	Julie Hilty (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	JH 6/7/2012
Operations	Scott Uhrig (BLM, Twin Falls DO)	SU 6/13/2012
NEPA Compliance & Planning	Barbara Bassler (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	BB 6/8/2012
Botanist	Tom Stewart (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	TS 6/11/2012
Cultural Resources/Archeologist	Jeff Ross (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	JR 6/11/2012
Rangeland Management Specialist	Dan Strickler (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	DS 6/8/2012
Rangeland Management Specialist	Melissa Rutledge (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	MR 6/11/2012
Wildlife Biologist	Jim Klott (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	JK 6/11/2012
Resource Advisor(s) on Fire	Melissa Rutledge (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	MR 6/11/2012

**PLAN APPROVAL**

*“The Agency Administrator is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating emergency stabilization and rehabilitation plans, treatments, and activities.” 620 DM 3.5C*

/s/ Brian Davis

6/14/2012

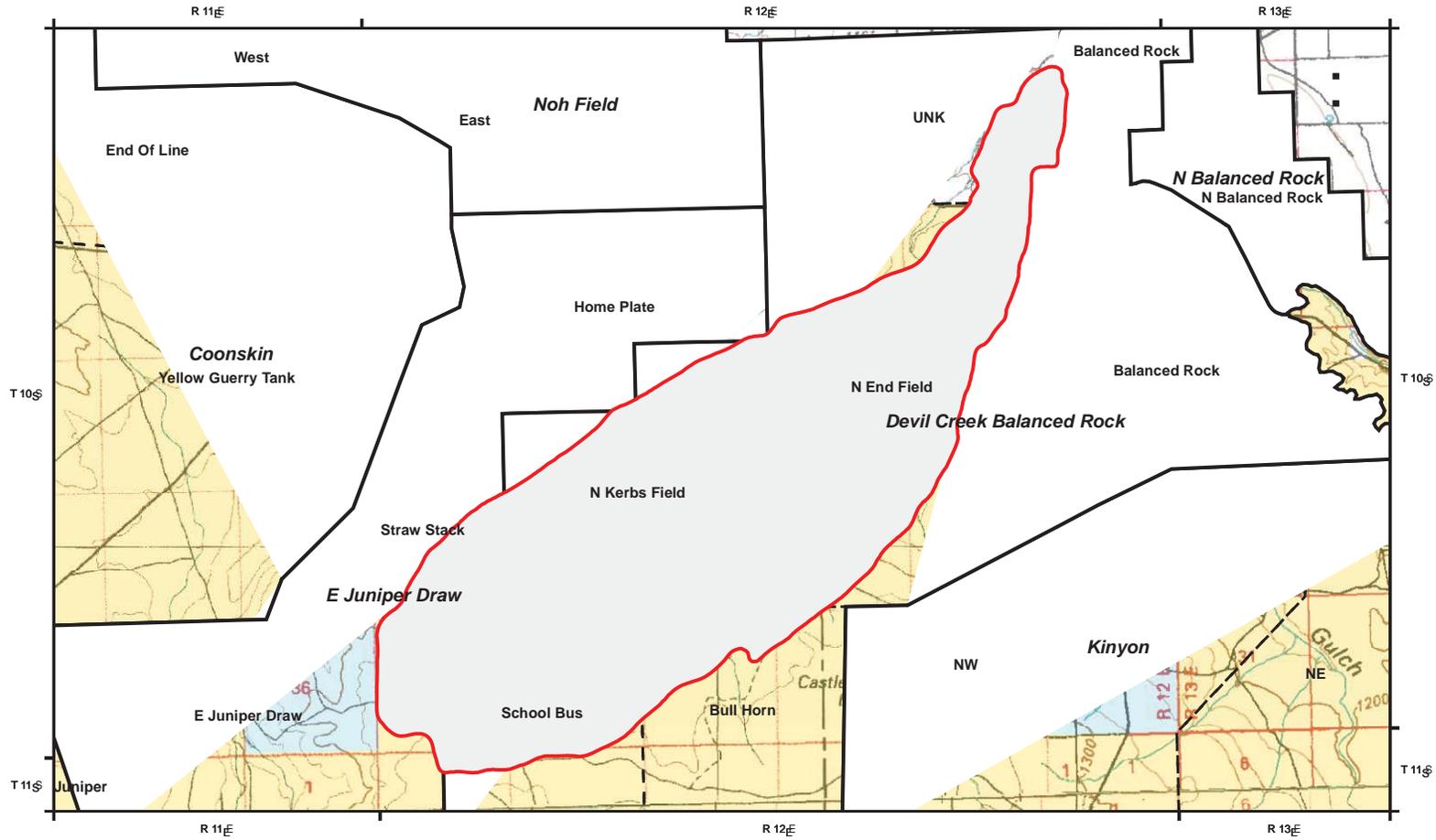
Brian Davis  
FIELD OFFICE MANAGER

DATE

**FUNDING APPROVAL**

*The funding of ES treatments is approved through the appropriate administrative approval level in coordination with the National Office Budget Shop. As funding is available, ES funding requested within a plan that totals below \$100,000 may be approved by the State Director, while ES funding of \$100,000 and above must be approved by the WO. If the ES funding cap is reached, all ES funding will be approved through the National Office in coordination with State ES&R Coordinators to determine highest priority projects. Funding of all BAR treatments is accomplished through a scoring process and is dependent on accurate entries into NFPORS. All funding is approved and allocated on a year-by-year basis.*

# GWL8 - Balanced Road Fire




 No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.
 

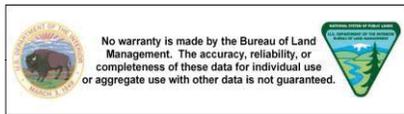
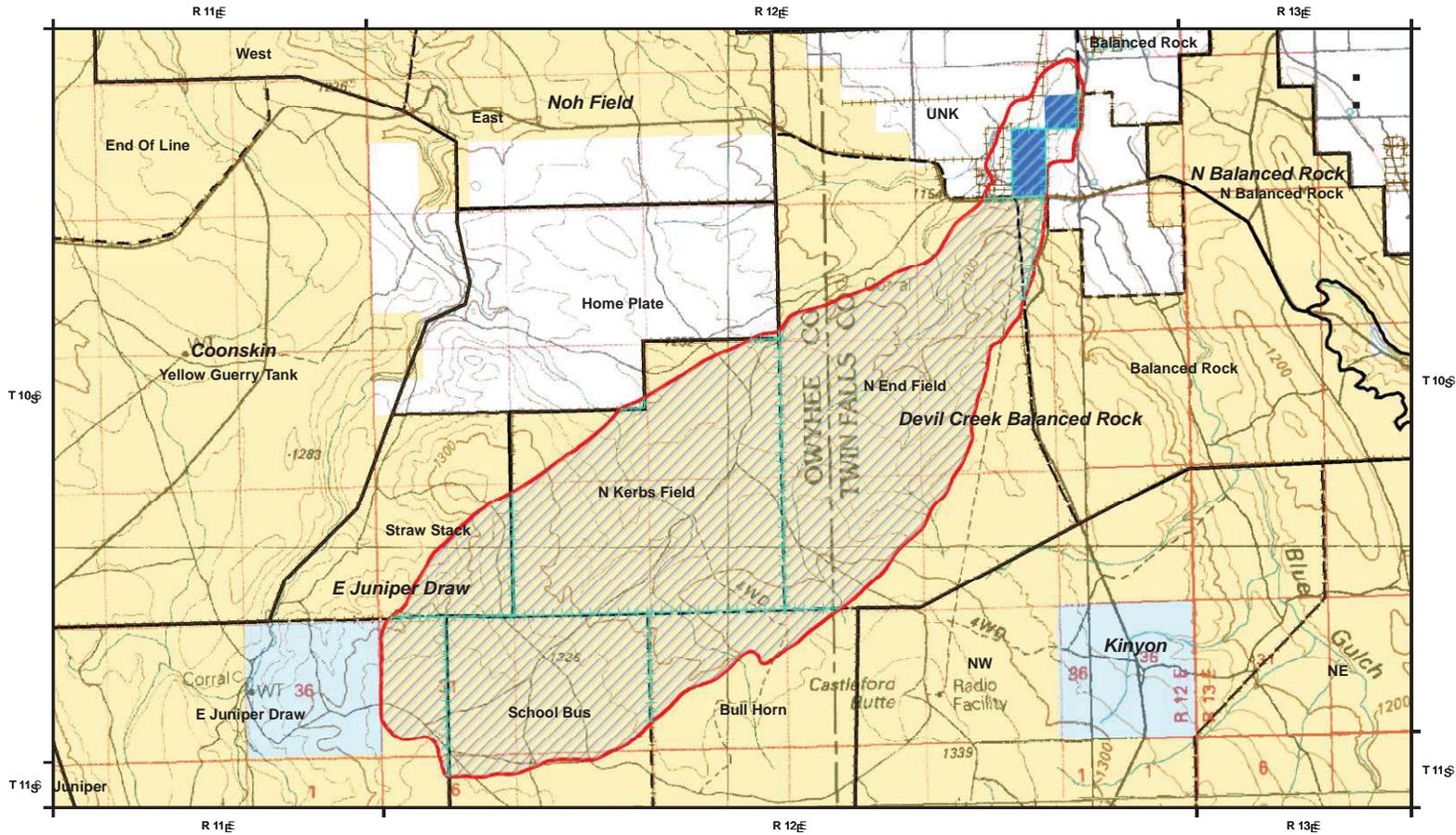
Acres Burned:  
 BLM 6,241  
 Private 184  
 Total 6,425

-  Balanced Road Fire Perimeter
-  Range Allotment
- Land Status**
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  Private; other
-  State
-  Pasture



Map Created: Jarbidge Field Office  
Date: June 7, 2012

## GWL8 - Balanced Road Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&BAR) Treatments



### Proposed ES&BAR Treatments

- BLM Fences - Repairs Needed
- Aerial Seed Sagebrush (6,241 Acres)
- Wildlife Tract Drill Seeding (120 acres)



Map Created: Jarbidge Field Office  
Date: June 7, 2012