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

SID CROSSING FIRE

BLM/TWIN FALLS DISTRICT/SHOSHONE FIELD OFFICE
IDAHO STATE OFFICE

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Sid Crossing
Fire Number	G3S5
District/Field Office	Twin Falls/Shoshone
Admin Number	LLIDT03000
State	Idaho
County(s)	Lincoln
Ignition Date/Cause	7-26-2012/Lightning
Date Contained	7-28-2012

Jurisdiction	**Acres**
BLM	20,165
State	619
Private	0
Other	0

Total Acres	20,784
Total Costs	$153,000
Costs to LF20000ES	$0
Costs to LF32000BR	$153,000

Status of Plan Submission (check one box below)

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

PART 1 - PLAN SUMMARY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE FIRE

The Sid Crossing fire started as a lighting strike in the Wildhorse grazing allotment southwest of Richfield, Idaho. The fire burned a total of 20,784 acres in Lincoln County. Of those acres that burned 20,165 were on BLM administered land, and 619 acres on Idaho State land. The west end of the fire burned through four pastures of the Dietrich Butte allotment; the Lone Rock, North Rocks, Elk Rock, and South Rocks pastures. The majority of the fire burned within the Wildhorse sheep and cattle allotment to the east.

The fire burned in low-elevation basin big and Wyoming big sagebrush habitat. The mix of vegetation communities in the burn area provided winter habitat for mule deer and pronghorn. Greater sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) burned a total of 7,002 acres. The PPH habitat burned with low severity and with large unburned islands. The PPH area had been treated under the 16,000 acre Owinza fuels treatment project in 2004. The project was successful in converting a formerly cheatgrass dominated plant community to a perennial dominated plant community.

The majority of the burn area has been seeded in past rehabilitation efforts or fuels treatments and should recover without a seeding effort. The untreated or poor condition areas are vulnerable to the expansion of cheatgrass and noxious weeds. The poor condition areas are extremely rugged and not conducive to drill seeding. Noxious weeds in these rugged areas pose a serious threat across the burn area and adjacent unburned habitat.

LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY

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

Emergency Stabilization
S 12 Livestock Closure
Burned Area Rehabilitation
R5 Weed Control
R7 Fence, Gate, Cattleguard
R11 Facilities

The applicable land use plan for the ES and BAR project area is the 1985 Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The Monument RMP states that lands administered by the BLM in this area will be managed in order to:

1) Maintain or improve wildlife habitat for crucial mule deer winter range;
2) Improve poor or fair condition rangeland;
3) Maintain, improve, protect, and restore watershed conditions; and
4) Control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands and eradicate them where possible and economically feasible.

The proposed treatments in this ES and BAR plan conform to the Monument RMP. The 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.

The project is also in conformance with the analysis of Alternative E, the selected alternative, in the 2008 Final Fire, Fuels and Related Vegetation Management Direction Plan Amendment (FMDA) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Final FMDA/EIS amends all Land Use Plans for the Shoshone Field Office except the Craters Management Plan, to provide direction and guidance for fire/fuels and related vegetation management.

The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the Shoshone and Burley Field Office Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment #ID-077-2004-008.

COST SUMMARY TABLES

Emergency Stabilization (LF20000ES):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Unit Cost (If Applicable)	FY13	FY14	FY15	Totals by Spec.
S1	**Planning (Project Mgmt)**	**WM's**	NA		$0	$0	$0	$0
S12	**Closures (area, OHV, livestock)**	**#**	1		$0	$0	$0	$0
	TOTAL COSTS (LF20000ES)				**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF32000BR):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Unit Cost (If Applicable)	FY13	FY14	FY15	Totals by Spec.
R1	**Planning (Project Mgmt)**	**WM's**	3		$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$9,000
R5	**Noxious Weeds**	**Acres**	20,165	$1.19	$24,000	$24,000	$24,000	$72,000
R7	**Fence/Gate/Cattleguard**	**Miles**	16	$4,000	$64,000	$0	$0	$64,000
R11	**Facilities**	**#**	1	$8,000	$8,000	$0	$0	$8,000
	TOTAL COSTS (LF32000BR)				**$99,000**	**$27,000**	**$27,000**	**$153,000**

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.

Livestock Closure

The Sid Crossing burn area would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that natural recovery objectives have been met. Rest would provide the opportunity for existing vegetation resources to stabilize the burn area.

Treatment/Activity:S12 Livestock Closure

A. Treatment Activity Description. The Sid Crossing burn area would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES 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 existing vegetation resources to stabilize the burn area. Recovery of the existing plant community would stabilize soil resources and slow the expansion of invasive annual vegetation and noxious weeds.
C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? No costs under ES are associated with the livestock closures.

ES Issue 3 - Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species. Not applicable.

ES Issue 4 - Critical Heritage Resources. Not applicable.

ES Issue 5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds. Not applicable.

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. Not Applicable.

BAR Issue 2 - Weed Treatments.

Noxious Weeds

Diffuse knapweed and rush skeletonweed are the primary noxious weeds of concern with high potential to increase within the burned area and surrounding rangeland. Russian knapweed and scotch thistle are prevalent in patchy, scattered occurrences, as well. These weeds were documented during the fire reconnaissance surveys. The current state of the infestation is treatable if done within the next three growing seasons. Without a noxious weed control effort, rush skeletonweed and diffuse knapweed will significantly increase negatively affecting deer and antelope winter range habitat and livestock forage capabilities. If an emergency treatment is not implemented the economic impact to natural resources and the local economy will be significant. The costs to suppress noxious weeds after a significant expansion has occurred increases exponentially. Spot herbicide spraying and biological control would be proposed under rehabilitation to suppress the expansion of these weeds.

Treatment Activity: R5 Noxious Weeds

A. *Treatment/Activity Description.* Noxious weed inventory and control within the burned area would be done for three years following the fire to directly treat the expected weeds. All actions would be in accordance with the Shoshone District Noxious Weed Management Plan, Environmental Assessment #ID050-EA-92031. Diffuse knapweed and rush skeletonweed are the primary noxious weeds targeted.
B. *How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?* The objective of this treatment is to identify and control the expected noxious weed increase using spot herbicide application on the burned area. In addition, biological control agents for knapweed would be utilized in areas not easily accessible to spraying equipment (rocky outcrops). Knapweed and rush skeletonweed infestations are present in the burn area and are expected to increase due to the removal of existing plant cover by the wildfire. Noxious weed control would be conducted for three years under BAR.

C. *Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?* Weed treatments in this Field Office typically run about $3.21 per acre. Field work would be combined with other weed treatments in the area for cost efficiency.

BAR Issue 3 - Tree Planting. Not applicable.

BAR Issue 4 - Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities.

Livestock Management Fences

Approximately 16 miles of interior pasture fence was damaged or destroyed by the fire. Damaged wire, corners and braces would be repaired or replaced. The repairs would be needed to maintain the integrity of the grazing systems and keep adjacent livestock grazing from entering the burn area during the rest period.

R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

A. *Treatment/Activity Description.* The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace approximately 16 miles of interior livestock management fence damaged 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.
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?* Fence repair contracts typically run $5,000 per mile. This cost is typically lower than construction of new fence. Damaged wood stretch points and corners would be replaced with galvanized steel pipe thus increasing the longevity of the structures and would be resistant to future wildfire damages.

Facilities

The South Rocks well house, electrical system and exclosure were destroyed in the fire. Repairs would be needed to maintain the water source and integrity of the livestock grazing system within the South Rocks pasture of the Dietrich Butte allotment.

R11 Well Facility

A. Treatment/Activity Description. The objective of this treatment is to replace the South Rocks well house, electrical system, and exclosure. The damaged wood corners and braces on the exclosure would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be replaced. The exclosure fence would be constructed to BLM fence standards.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? The wildfire completely destroyed the South Rocks well facility (Project # 5684). The well facility is associated with the livestock management of the affected grazing allotment. Reconstruction and repair of the facility would maintain the future integrity of the existing livestock grazing system.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? New construction of well facilities is expensive. The cost to replace the above ground well facility will be considerably less than a new project. The water provided by the facility is also critical to the future management of livestock grazing in the affected allotment. The damaged wood stretch points and corners on the exclosure would be replaced with galvanized steel pipe thus increasing the longevity of the structures and would be resistant to future wildfire damages.

PART 3 – DETAILED TREATMENT COST TABLE

Sid Crossing G3S5		Units	**FY13**	**FY14**	**FY15**	**Total Costs**
R1	***Planning (Plan Prep/Project Mgmt)***					
	Project Management Field Office	WM's	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
	Total		3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
R5	***Noxious Weeds***					
	Labor	WM's	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
	Contract	Total	12,000	12,000	12,000	36,000
	Total		24,000	24,000	24,000	72,000
R7	***Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard***					
	Fence Material	Total	20,000			20,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	4,000			4,000
	Contract	Total	40,000			40,000
	Total		64,000	0	0	64,000
R11	***Facilities/Improvements***					
	Labor	WM's	3,000			3,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total	5,000			5,000
	Total		8,000	0	0	8,000
	BURNED AREA REHABILITATION TOTALS		99,000	27,000	27,000	153,000

PART 4 – SEED LISTS

Not applicable.

PART 5 - NATIVE/NON-NATIVE PLANT WORKSHEET

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

Not Applicable.

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

Not Applicable.

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

Not Applicable.

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
S12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	$0	100
			TOTAL COSTS:	$0	

Action/ Spec. #	Planned BAR Action (LF32000BR)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R5	Noxious Weeds	**Acres**	20,165	$72,000	80
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	**Miles**	16	$64,000	100
R11	Facilities	**#**	1	$8,000	100
			TOTAL COSTS:	$144,000	

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 |_X_| No |__| Rationale for answer: The proposed livestock grazing closure would allow the plant community to recover and stabilize the burn area. The noxious

weed treatments would protect the burn area and adjacent BLM lands against further expansion of noxious weeds.
No Action: Yes |__| No |_X_| Rationale for answer: Wildlife habitat on adjacent unburned lands would be compromised with the expansion of noxious weeds.
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 |_X_| No |__| Rationale for answer: Monitoring and observations of recent weed control efforts in similar soils and precipitation zones indicate that success would be high. Normal climatic conditions and the exclusion of livestock grazing for on-site vegetation recovery would increase the probability of success.
No Action: Yes |__| No |_X_| Rationale for answer: The burned area has a high potential for expansion of noxious weeds. There is also high potential for invasion of noxious weeds into adjacent unburned areas.
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: |_X_|,
No Action: |__|
Alternative(s): |__|,
Comments: None

C. Risk of Resource Value Loss or Damage

No Action - Treatments Not Implemented (check one)

Resource Value	N/A	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	N/A	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			

Resource Value	N/A	None	Low	Medium	High
Other-loss of Access Road Due to Plugged Culverts	X				

PART 7 – MONITORING PLAN

Monitoring and evaluation of ESR 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 ESR 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: R5 Noxious Weed Treatments

1) Treatment Objectives:

Diffuse knapweed and rush skeleton weed are the primary weeds of concern in the burn area. It is expected that these weeds would expand their range as a result of the fire. Since these weed species 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 burn area and treat any noxious weeds discovered on the burn area.

The objective for the second and third years is to decrease the acreage needing treatment as determined by the first year inventory.

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored:

During the first growing season treatment, a detailed map of location, weed species sprayed, and the amount of herbicide utilized would be documented. The second and third year objective would be measured by the number and size of locations sprayed and the amount of herbicide utilized.

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

At the end of three years of treatment, the herbicide spray data would be summarized. If further treatment is required beyond the third year then the responsibility for treatment would be forwarded to the Twin Falls District normal weed spraying program.

Treatment/Activity: S12 Livestock Closure

1) Treatment Objectives:

Exclusion of livestock is critical for the recovery of burned vegetation or establishment and protection of new seedings. The burn area would be closed to livestock grazing to promote recovery of burned vegetation and to facilitate the establishment of seeded species as specified in

the 2005 Shoshone and Burley Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan (#ID-077-2004-008).

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Resumption of livestock grazing would ultimately depend on monitoring and meeting of ES plan natural recovery objectives. Recovery of the treated area would be monitored for availability to grazing on a yearly basis. 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. A grazing decision 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:

- 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 the site. Recommended study methods include step point cover methods and photo points.

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

An evaluation of collected monitoring data is completed documenting that reintroducing grazing to the area would not cause a downward trend in vegetation recovery.

Treatment Activity: R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

1) Treatment Objectives:
The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace approximately 16 miles of interior livestock management fence damaged 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.

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 fences will be monitored through contract administration.

Repairs will be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Repairs will be completed within the first year of the fire.

Treatment Activity: R11 Facilities

1) Treatment Objectives:

The objective of this treatment is to replace the South Rocks well facility. Damaged wood corners and braces of the exclosure would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be repaired. The exclosure would be constructed to BLM fence standards.

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 the well facility will be monitored through contract administration. Repairs will be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Repairs will be completed within the first year of the fire.

PART 8 - MAPS

1. Fire Perimeter
2. Colored Land Status Map
3. Burned Management Fences/Other Structures (guzzlers, signs, etc.)

PART 9 – REVIEW, APPROVALS, and PREPARERS

TEAM MEMBERS

Position	Team Member (Agency/Office)	Initial and Date
Team Leader	Joe Russell (BLM, Shoshone FO)	JR 8/14/2012
Operations	Scott Uhrig (BLM, Twin Falls DO)	SU 8/14/2012
NEPA Compliance & Planning	Lisa Cresswell (BLM, Shoshone FO)	LC 8/15/2012
Botanist	Danelle Nance (BLM, Shoshone FO)	DN 8/14/2012
Cultural Resources/Archeologist	Lisa Cresswell (BLM, Shoshone FO)	LC 8/15/2012
Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	Dan Patten (BLM, Shoshone Field FO)	DP 8/14/2012
Wildlife Biologist	Gary Wright (BLM, Shoshone FO)	GW 8/14/2012
GIS Specialist	Cassie Mavencamp (BLM, Shoshone FO)	CM 8/14/2012
Resource Advisor(s) on Fire	Dan Patten (BLM, Shoshone FO)	DP 8/14/2012

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/ Jim Tharp 8/15/2012

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.