

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

RABBIT SPRINGS FIRE

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

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Rabbit Springs
Fire Number	G1RP
District/Field Office	Twin Falls/Burley
Admin Number	LLIDT02000
State	Idaho
County	Twin Falls
Ignition Date/Cause	7/10/2012/Lightning
Date Contained	7/11/2012
Jurisdiction	<i>Acres</i>
BLM	1,390
State	85
Private	0
Other	0
Total Acres	1,475
Total Costs	\$176,000
Costs to LF20000ES (2822)	\$151,000
Costs to LF32000BR (2881)	\$25,000

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 Rabbit Springs Fire started as a lightning strike in the Point Ranch Allotment approximately three miles north of Jackpot, Nevada. The fire burned a total of 1,475 acres in Twin Falls County, Idaho. Of those 1,475 acres that burned, 1,390 acres burned on BLM administered lands. A portion of the fire burned parallel to Highway 93 and caused traffic to be shut down temporarily. In addition to Highway 93 being adjacent to the fire, there is a major power transmission line to the west, and two smaller power lines that are found within the burned area. There is also a power sub-station on the south end of the fire. There are multiple two-tracked roads running through the fire and an old railroad grade that trails through the middle of the fire. With the multiple utilities and man-made structures, crested wheatgrass was used to re-seed after construction and traces can be found within the burned area, at the power lines, along the railroad grade and within the two-track roads. From site observation and past GIS data, there appears to be no recent fire history within the area that burned and surrounding areas.

The fire burned primarily in a black sagebrush site. The area burned by the Rabbit Springs Fire is a high priority for stabilization and rehabilitation because of the Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*). The burned area was mapped as Sage-grouse Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) in 2012. The PPH comprises areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value to maintain sustainable Greater Sage-grouse populations. To best minimize habitat loss in PPH, the Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043 states that ES and BAR treatments are to be utilized to; 1). Maintain and enhance unburned intact sagebrush habitat when at risk from adjacent threats; 2). Stabilize soils; 3). Re-establish hydrologic function; 4). Maintain and enhance biological integrity; 5). Promote plant resiliency; 6). Limit expansion or dominance or invasive species; and 7). Re-establish native species.

LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY

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

Emergency Stabilization

S2 Drill Seeding

S5 Noxious Weeds

S12 Closures (Livestock)

Burned Area Rehabilitation

R5 Noxious Weeds

R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

The applicable Land Use Plan for the ES and BAR project area is the Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (MFP) September 16, 1982. The Twin Falls MFP was amended in 2008 by the Fire, Fuels and Related Vegetation Management Direction Plan Amendment (FMDA). The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatment analyzed in the Burley/Shoshone Field Office Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment (#ID-077-2004-008).

Drill Seeding/S2: Objectives and management actions from the FMDA state (page 17) that Objective 1 is to make progress towards desired future conditions (DFC) in low-elevation, perennial grass and invasive annual grass areas. Strategically place treatments on a landscape scale to reduce the likelihood of fire spreading into important sagebrush steppe habitat. In addition, management actions for Objective 2 states that following a wildland fire the use of chemical, mechanical, and seeding treatments will be used to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive annual vegetation and noxious weeds in order to maintain, protect and enhance Sage-grouse habitat. Therefore, the planning for drill seeding treatments and activities that meet these objectives are in conformance with the MFP as amended by the FMDA.

Noxious Weeds/S5/R5: Management actions for Objective 1 states (page 17) that to achieve DFC chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments will be used. Also, management actions for objective 2 states that following wildland fire, wildland fire use and prescribed fire treatments, use of chemical, mechanical, and seeding treatments with appropriate plant material to attempt to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive, annual vegetation, and noxious weeds. Therefore, the planning for weed treatments and activities that meet these objectives are in conformance with the MFP as amended by the FMDA.

Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard/R7: Existing pasture and allotment fences will be repaired to ensure that livestock remain within their area of authorized use and off the burned areas until resource objectives are met. The FMDA states on page 31 that all treatment areas would be rested from livestock grazing until project-specific monitoring identified in site-specific project plans and/or NEPA documents show that resource objectives have been met. Resumption of grazing would be determined on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, fence treatments that ensure livestock will remain in authorized areas of use are in conformance with the MFP as amended by the FMDA.

Closures (livestock)/S12/R12: The management restrictions, conservation measures and guidelines for livestock grazing on page 31 states that all burned areas would be rested from livestock grazing until project/site-specific monitoring identified in site-specific project plans and/or resource objectives have been met. The resumption of grazing would be determined on case-by-case basis. Therefore, closing the burned area under the rehabilitation plan to grazing would ensure that the area recovers and is in conformance with the MFP as amended by the FMDA.

COST SUMMARY TABLES

Emergency Stabilization (LF20000ES):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
S1	Planning (Project Mgmt)	WM's	1		\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
S2	Ground Seeding	Acres	1,390	\$71.22	\$79,000	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$99,000
S5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	1,390	\$2.88	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,000
S13	Monitoring	Acres	1,390	\$4.32	\$0	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$18,000
TOTAL COSTS					\$79,000	\$40,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$151,000

Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF32000BR):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
R1	Planning (Project Mgmt)	WM's	1		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000
R5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	1,390	\$2.88	\$0	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000
R7	Fence Repair	Miles	2.5	\$4,400.00	\$11,000	\$0	\$0	\$11,000
TOTAL COSTS					\$13,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$25,000

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. N/A

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.

Fire Intensity and Vegetation

The majority of the fire was characterized by moderate to high fire intensity because of the erratic high winds and the above average low fuel moistures. Vegetation in the fire area was primarily black sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, Sandberg Bluegrass and Bottlebrush Squirreltail. Also, the fire burned in topography classified as nearly level to rolling. The higher intensity burn areas removed most of the plant cover and have exposed soils to accelerated soil erosion. This area is a major concern due to wind erosion, the expansion of cheatgrass, and noxious weeds.

Closures (Livestock)

A portion of the Point Ranch Allotment was affected by the fire. Appropriate rest will be applied to the burned portions of the allotment from livestock under the ES plan. This will allow newly seeded species to become established. Closures on the seeded area would be implemented by the Range program to ensure that objectives are met for the resumption of livestock grazing.

Treatment/Activity: S12 Closures (Livestock)

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The burned area of the allotment affected by the Rabbit Springs Fire would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES treatments objectives have been met or it is determined to be a failure.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The purpose of this treatment is to rest the burned area from livestock grazing to provide the opportunity for existing vegetation resources to stabilize the burn area and seeding efforts to establish. Establishment of a perennial plant community would reduce the expansion of annual vegetation and stabilize soil resources.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *No cost under ES is associated with closures. It is a reasonable method for attaining vegetation objectives, as compared to implementation of other aspects of the ES plan.*

ES Issue 3 - Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species. Seeding or planting to prevent permanent impairment of designated Critical Habitat for Federal and State listed, proposed or candidate threatened and endangered species.

Wildlife Habitat

The burn negatively affected PPH Sage-grouse (Candidate Species) habitat. Sage-grouse are dependent on sagebrush steppe communities for their year round habitat needs. Productive Sage-grouse nesting habitat should have 15-25% sagebrush canopy cover with a structurally diverse perennial herbaceous understory. Winter habitat must have abundant sagebrush, the Sage-grouse's only winter food, exposed under all possible snow depths. Due to the wildfire, current conditions are not optimum for Sage-grouse forage, nesting security cover, or winter habitat. A major concern in this area is the invasion of cheatgrass. Cheatgrass poses a significant threat to Sage-grouse and their habitat. The competitive influence exerted by invasive annuals (cheatgrass) enables them to dominate vast areas for many years (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee , 2006). Because of the low precipitation zone 8"-12", and the presence of cheatgrass in the area, the burned area is not expected to recover naturally without a seeding effort.

Ecological Site(s):

Very Shallow Stony 8-12" Black Sagebrush/Thurber's Needlegrass

Loamy 8-12" Wyoming Big Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass

Soil-vegetation correlation information indicates that approximately 60% of the burn area is located primarily on a Shallow Stony 8-12" Black Sagebrush/Thurber's Needlegrass ecological site. The other 40% is comprised of a Loamy 8-12" Wyoming Big Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass ecological site. The potential natural plant communities on these sites would be comprised of a Black and Wyoming Big Sagebrush overstory with principal understory plants dominated by Thurber's Needlegrass and bluebunch wheatgrass. The majority of the burned area is capable of deep rooted grass species. This is demonstrated by the unburned areas adjacent to the Rabbit Springs Fire with the presence of Bottlebrush Squirreltail and some Bluebunch Wheatgrass, and the major power transmission lines and the right-of-way area adjacent to the highway which consists of a seeded crested wheatgrass stand. These examples validate that the area is capable of sustaining the proposed grass seed species. Sagebrush and forbs were considered in the seed mix, but because of the size of the fire it is anticipated there will be a viable seed source from the surrounding unburned area. Also, forbs were not included in the seed mix because the ID team believes most forbs will occur naturally within the burned area. Past monitoring results indicate that few forbs were found within the site initially due to the potential of the range site. A Twin Falls District Instruction Memorandum was used in the process of developing the proposed seed mix.

With no current records showing any past fire history and with site visits and observations, it is clear that this area has been void of fire for approximately 80 – 100 years. Due to the fire severity the surrounding disturbance sites, roads and infrastructure corridors, the presence of cheatgrass makes the burned area susceptible to invasive and noxious weeds. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Ecological Site Description for the burned area, cheatgrass can be a troublesome invader on this site after fire, preventing the recovery of perennial grass and shrub re-establishment and increasing the fire frequency (R025XY040ID). Re-vegetation with desirable, competitive species would provide effective competition against

annual vegetation and noxious weeds in the long term and provide a greater chance for native species to recover.

The following is a list of common pre-burn vegetation. The list was developed using field surveys of unburned islands of vegetation and range management trend monitoring plot data.

Common Pre-burn Vegetation in order of dominance:

- Black Sagebrush, *Artemisia nova*
- Sandberg bluegrass, *Poa secunda*
- Wyoming Big Sagebrush, *Artemisia tridentata ssp. Wyomingensis*
- Bottlebrush Squirreltail, *Elymus elymoides*
- Crested Wheatgrass, *Agropyron cristatum*
- Low sagebrush, *Artemisia arbuscula*
- Bluebunch Wheatgrass, *Pseudoroegneria spicata*
- Thurber’s Needlegrass, *Achnatherum thurberianum*
- Indian Ricegrass, *Achnatherum hymenoides*
- Cheatgrass, *Bromus tectorum*
- Prickly pear cactus, *Opuntia polyacantha*
- Saltlover, *Halogeton glomeratus*

Treatment/Activity: S2 Drill Seeding

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The entire burned area was identified to be drill seeded with a mixture of native and introduced perennial grass species. The seed will be applied by a rangeland drill pulled by a rubber-tired tractor in the burn area. The rangeland drill will aid in the proper planting depth for the seed. This is proposed to be accomplished in late FY12 or early FY13. Appropriate cultural resource inventories/surveys will be completed prior to implementing these specific projects.*

Rabbit Springs Drill Seed Mix 1,390 Acres	
Species and Variety	Seed Rate Lbs/Acres
Grass	
1. Anatone Bluebunch Wheatgrass	2.00
2. Vavilov II Siberian Wheatgrass	2.00
3. Fish Creek Bottlebrush Squirreltail	0.50
4. Secar Snake River Wheatgrass	3.00
5. Sandberg Bluegrass	0.50

B. How does the treatment relate to damages or changes caused by the fire? *This treatment will aid in the establishment of a desirable perennial grass community that closely matches the structure, species composition, and diversity of the potential native plant community to help achieve a healthy functioning rangeland. Accelerating the rate of re-establishment of native grasses and reducing the risk of cheatgrass establishment is important to maintaining the value of the area as Sage-grouse breeding and winter habitat.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *The treatment and activities are reasonable for the type of issues found on the site. Contracting costs for rangeland drill application are typical for the Burley Field Office area. The cost of seed can vary from year to year dependent on availability.*

ES Issue 4 - Critical Heritage Resources. N/A

ES Issue 5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds. Drill seeding will be conducted to help prevent the establishment of invasive plants. Such actions will be specified in the ES 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 invasive plants and noxious weeds within the burned area. When there is an existing approved management plan that addresses invasive species, ES treatments may be used to stabilize the invasive species.

Noxious Weeds

All 1,390 acres of the burned public land will be inventoried and treated as needed for noxious weeds in FY2013. The objective of this treatment is to identify and control the expected noxious weed increase using spot herbicide application on the burned area. Noxious weeds could increase due to the removal of existing plant cover by the wildfire.

Treatment Activity: S5 Noxious Weeds

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Various knapweed species are the primary noxious weeds found adjacent to the burned area. Noxious weed inventory and control within the burned area would be done in the first year following the fire to directly treat the expected weeds. Areas where weeds have been treated in the past will be inventoried first. The weeds will be treated with the BLM approved chemicals.*

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 of the burn area. Knapweed is found adjacent to the burned area. It is expected to increase due to the removal of existing plant cover by the wildfire which has opened up bare ground for the weeds to invade. Treatments would be conducted for the first year under ES.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Weed treatments in this Field Office typically run about \$2.88 per acre. Field work would be combined with other weed treatments in the area 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. N/A

BAR Issue 2 - Weed Treatments. 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.

Noxious Weeds

All 1,390 acres of the burned public land will be inventoried and treated as needed for noxious weeds in FY2014 -2015. The objective of this treatment is to identify and control the expected noxious weed increase using spot herbicide application on the burned area. Noxious weeds could increase due to the removal of existing plant cover by the wildfire.

Treatment Activity: R5 Noxious Weeds

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Various knapweed species are the primary noxious weeds found adjacent to the burn area. Noxious weed inventory and control within the burned area would be done in the first year following the fire to directly treat the expected weeds. Areas where weeds have been treated in the past will be inventoried first. The weeds will be treated with the BLM approved chemicals. Any noxious weeds discovered will be re-inventoried and re-treated in FY14 and FY15 through funding of the plan.*

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 of the burned area. Knapweed is found adjacent to the burned area. It is expected to increase due to the removal of existing plant cover by the wildfire which has opened up bare ground for the weeds to invade. Treatments would be conducted for the second and third year under BAR.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *Weed treatments in this Field Office typically run about \$2.88 per acre. Field work would be combined with other weed treatments in the area for cost efficiency.*

BAR Issue 3 - Tree Planting. N/A

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.]

Livestock Management Fences

Approximately two and a half miles of permanent fence will be repaired and/or replaced to ensure that livestock are kept off the burned area and help protect entrance onto the Highway 93 right-of-way. This will ensure that objectives are met and allow livestock to graze the portion of the allotment that was not burned.

Treatment Activity: R7 Livestock Management Fences

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The objective of this treatment is to repair and/or replace approximately two and a half miles of fence destroyed by the fire. The fence would be repaired and/or replaced to help protect the seeding treatment. The repair and/or replacement of fence will also keep cows off of the highway right-of-way. Damaged wire would be repaired and the fence would be constructed to BLM fence standards.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damages or changes caused by the fire? *The Rabbit Springs Fire occurred on a portion of the Point Ranch Allotment, all in a single pasture. 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, gates, and cattle guards to the greatest extent possible and is a repair of fire damaged facilities (fence) as described in BAR Issue 4. Damaged wood stretch points and corners would be replaced with 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
S1	<i>Planning (Plan Prep/Project Mangt)</i>						
	National Office ESR Support	WM's		5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Project Management Field Office	WM's		5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Total		0	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
S2	<i>Ground Seeding (drill)</i>						
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		2,000			2,000
	Equipment Mobilization	Total		4,000			4,000
	Contract	Total	14,000				14,000
	Contract Administration	WM's		3,000			3,000
	Vale Drill Use Rate & FOR	Total		8,000			8,000
	Seed	Total	40,000				40,000
	Seed Mixing	WM's		2,000			2,000
	Seed Testing	Total		1,000			1,000
	Cultural Clearances	Total	25,000				25,000
	Total		79,000	20,000	0	0	99,000
S5	<i>Noxious Weeds</i>						
	Labor	Acres		3,000			3,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500			500
	Supplies/Materials	Total		500			500
	Total		0	4,000	0	0	4,000
S13	<i>Monitoring</i>						
	Labor	WM's		5,500	5,500	5,500	16,500
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500	500	500	1,500
	Total		0	6,000	6,000	6,000	18,000
	EMERGENCY STABILIZATION TOTALS		\$79,000	\$40,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$151,000

Rehabilitation		Units	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Costs
R1	Planning (Plan Prep/Project Mangt)					
	Project Management Field Office	WM's	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Total		2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
R5	Noxious Weeds					
	Labor	WM's		3,000	3,000	6,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500	500	1,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		500	500	1,000
	Total		0	4,000	4,000	8,000
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard					
	Fence Material	Total	5,000			5,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	1,000			1,000
	Contract	Total	5,000			5,000
	Total		11,000	0	0	11,000
	BURNED AREA REHABILITATION TOTALS		\$13,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$25,000

PART 4 – SEED LISTS

DRILL SEED

Species	% PLS	Seeds/ lb. (bulk)	Total Seeds/ Acre (bulk)	PLS Seeds/ac.	PLS Seeds/sq. ft.	Drill Seeding (acres)	Lbs/Acre	Total Pounds	Cost per lb	Total Costs
Anatone Bluebunch WG	76%	140,000	280,000	212,800	4.89	1,390	2	2,800	3.50	9,800.00
Vavilov II Siberian WG	80%	220,000	440,000	352,000	8.08	1,390	2	2,800	3.00	8,400.00
Fish Creek Bottlebrush Squirreltail	72%	220,000	110,000	79,200	1.82	1,390	0.5	700	14.00	9,800.00
Secar Snakeriver WG	76%	170,000	510,000	387,600	8.90	1,390	3	4,200	2.40	10,080.00
Sandberg Bluegrass	72%	950,000	475,000	342,000	7.85	1,390	0.5	700	2.70	1,890.00
TOTALS					31.53		8.00	11,200		39,970.00

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 adapted to the ecological sites within the proposed treatment areas. These species have been extensively utilized in similar ecological sites within the Burley Field Office.*

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

Yes No Rationale: *The native seed proposed for the estimated 1,390 acres in the treatment area is generally available in the required quantities. Drill seeding would not occur until the fall of FY2013 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 within the Burley Field Office.*

5. Will the existing or proposed land management practices (e.g. wildlife populations, recreation use, livestock, etc.) maintain the seeded native plants in the seed mixture when the burned area is re-opened?

Yes No Rationale: *The area will be rested from livestock grazing until resource objectives listed in this ES and BAR plan are met. This will help the new herbaceous seeding treatments become established. Prior to the resumption of livestock grazing the treatment areas will have to meet minimum criteria (see monitoring plan) before livestock grazing may resume.*

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 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. late seral communities). 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 2005 Shoshone and Burley Field Office Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan. The proposed use of non-native plants is not located within a Wilderness Study Area.*

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 remnant native grasses and forbs. The proposed non-native plants can effectively compete with cheatgrass which is expected to dominate the site following the fire. Establishing a competitive perennial plant species with a mixture of native and non-native species will 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 Burley Field Office area for over 40 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)

Non-native Plants	Native Plants
“Vavilov” II Siberian Wheatgrass <i>Agropyron fragile</i>	“Secar” Snake River Wheatgrass <i>Elymus wawawaiensis</i>
	“Anatone” Bluebunch Wheatgrass <i>Psuedoroegneria spicata</i>
	Sandberg Bluegrass <i>Poa sandbergii</i>
	“Fish Creek” Bottlebrush Squirreltail <i>Elymus elymoides</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 Seeding	Acres	1,390	\$99,000	80
S5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	1,390	\$4,000	90
S12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	\$0	100
TOTAL COSTS:				\$103,000	

Action/Spec. #	Planned BAR Action (LF32000BR)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	1,390	\$8,000	90
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	2.5	\$11,000	100
R12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	\$0	100
TOTAL COSTS:				\$19,000	

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 drill seeding of perennial grass will help with the establishment and recruitment of future grass and shrub cover. The noxious weed treatments will help protect adjacent private, State and BLM lands against further expansion of noxious weeds.*

No Action Yes No Rationale for answer: *Wildlife i.e. Sage-grouse habitat on adjacent unburned land would be compromised with the expansion of noxious weeds. The*

burned area will have a high chance of invasion of cheatgrass and noxious weeds due to the bare soil.

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 observation 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 the period of seeding establishment and/or on-site vegetation recovery would increase the probability of success.*

No Action Yes No Rationale for answer: *The burned area has a high potential for expansion of noxious weeds. There is high potential for adjacent unburned areas becoming dominated by invasive and noxious weeds.*

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: *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			
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 Drill Seeding*

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of the seeding treatments is to establish a perennial dominated plant community within 3 years. The results are based on site potential.*

The drill seed treatment would be considered successful if:

1) the seeded grass species reach densities of 3 plants per square meter for grasses.

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 treated area would include field observations, photo plots, and cover transects utilizing the line-point intercept and density plot methods. Plots would be randomly established through the treated area. Effectiveness monitoring of the drill seeding will be completed for a period of three growing seasons.*

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

1) Treatment Objectives: *Various knapweed species are the primary weeds of concern in the burned area. It is expected that these weeds would expand their range as a result of the fire. Since this weed species is 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 in 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, weeds 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: R7 Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of this treatment is to repair and replace approximately two and a half mile of existing fence. This will help to ensure the establishment and protection of the new seeding of the burned area with no disturbances and help maintain grazing allotment integrity. The fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards.*

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: *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 and completion will be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Repair and replacement of fence will be completed within the first year of the fire.*

Treatment/Activity: S12 Closures (Livestock grazing)

1) Treatment Objectives: *Exclusion of livestock is critical for the recovery of burned vegetation or establishment and protection of new seeding. The seed treatment area would be closed to livestock grazing for a minimum period of two growing seasons 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 ground seeding and 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 burned area to livestock would be the responsibility of an interdisciplinary team. Implementation is monitored through rangeland management administration.*

3) Describe how effectiveness will be monitored, how it will be measured, and within what time period: *The ground seed treatment area would be considered recovered and available for grazing when:*

- *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,*
- *Desirable herbaceous perennial plants are producing seed, and*
- *Desirable perennial vegetation have developed extensive root and shoot systems to provide for soil stabilization and are sustainable under livestock grazing.*

PART 8 - MAPS

1. Fire Perimeter and Unburned Islands of Vegetation over 40 acres
2. Colored Land Status Map
3. Burned Management Fences/Other Structures (guzzlers, signs, etc.)
4. Seeding or Seedling Treatment Areas
5. Vegetation Communities
6. Threatened and Endangered Species Areas
7. Invasive Species

PART 9 – REVIEW, APPROVALS, and PREPARERS

TEAM MEMBERS

Position	Team Member (Agency/Office)	Initial and Date
Team Leader	Dustin Smith	DS 7/23/2012
Operations	Scott Uhrig	SU 7/24/2012
Resource Advisor	Jason Theodozio	JT 7/24/2012
Cultural Resources/Archaeologist	Suzann Henrikson	LSH 7/23/2012
Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	Scott Sayer	SS 7/23/2012
Wildlife Biologist	Jeremy Bisson	JRB 7/23/2012

PLAN APPROVAL

/s/ Scott Sayer for Michael C Courtney

7/24/2012

FIELD 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.

Works Cited

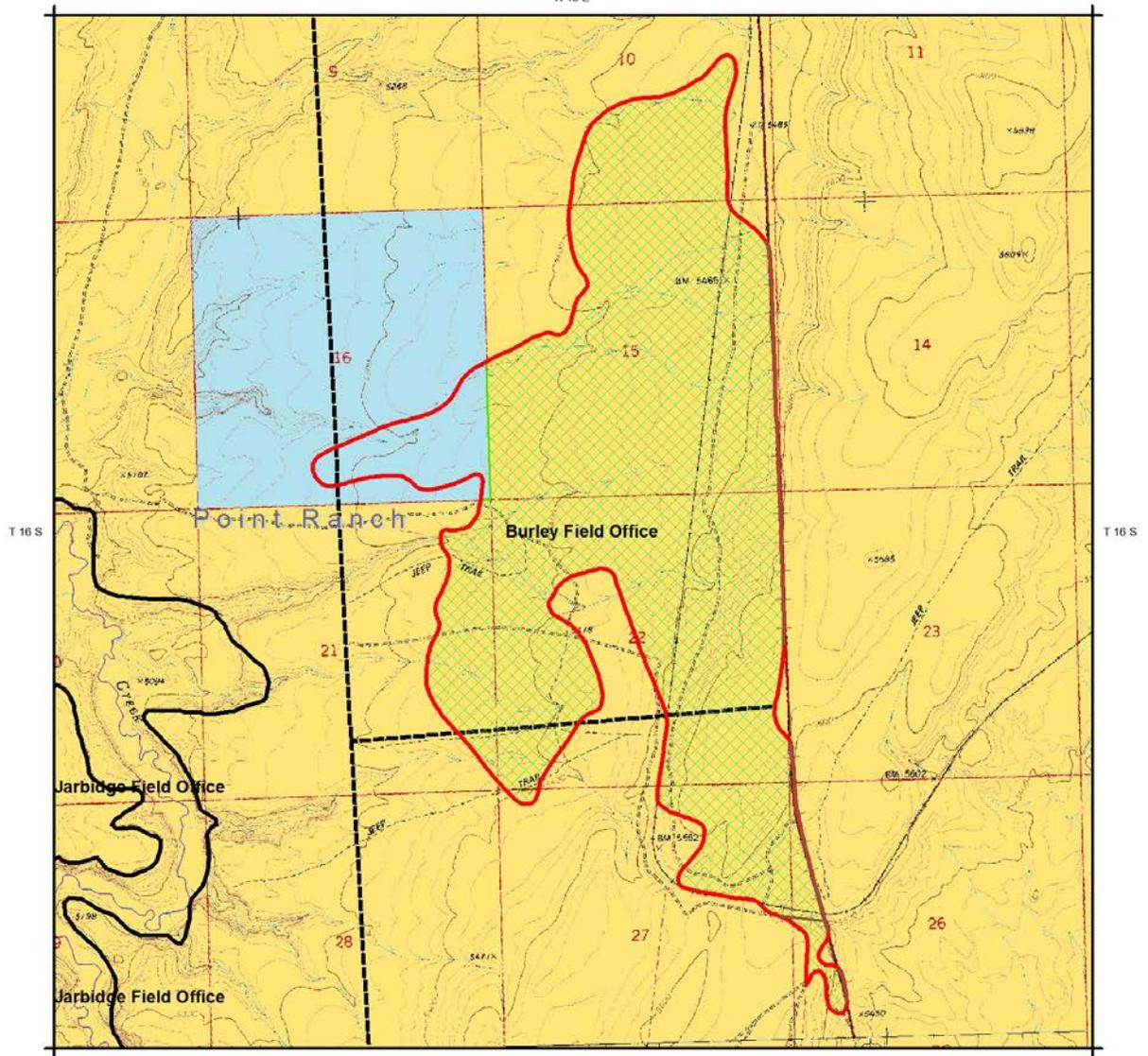
Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Management Policies and Procedures Instruction Memorandum
No. 2012-043

Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee . (2006). *Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-
grouse in Idaho.*

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Ecological
Site Description, Site ID: R025XY040ID

Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development Instruction
Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003

G1RP RABBIT SPRINGS



- Burned Fence
- ▭ Rabbit Springs
- ▨ Rabbit Springs Drill Seeding Area
- ▭ BLM Offices
- ▭ Range Allotment
- ▭ ID State Boundary
- Power transmission line
- R 15 E
- Power station
- Gas, oil underground pipeline
- County Boundary
- ▭ Bureau of Land Management
- ▭ Private; other
- ▭ State



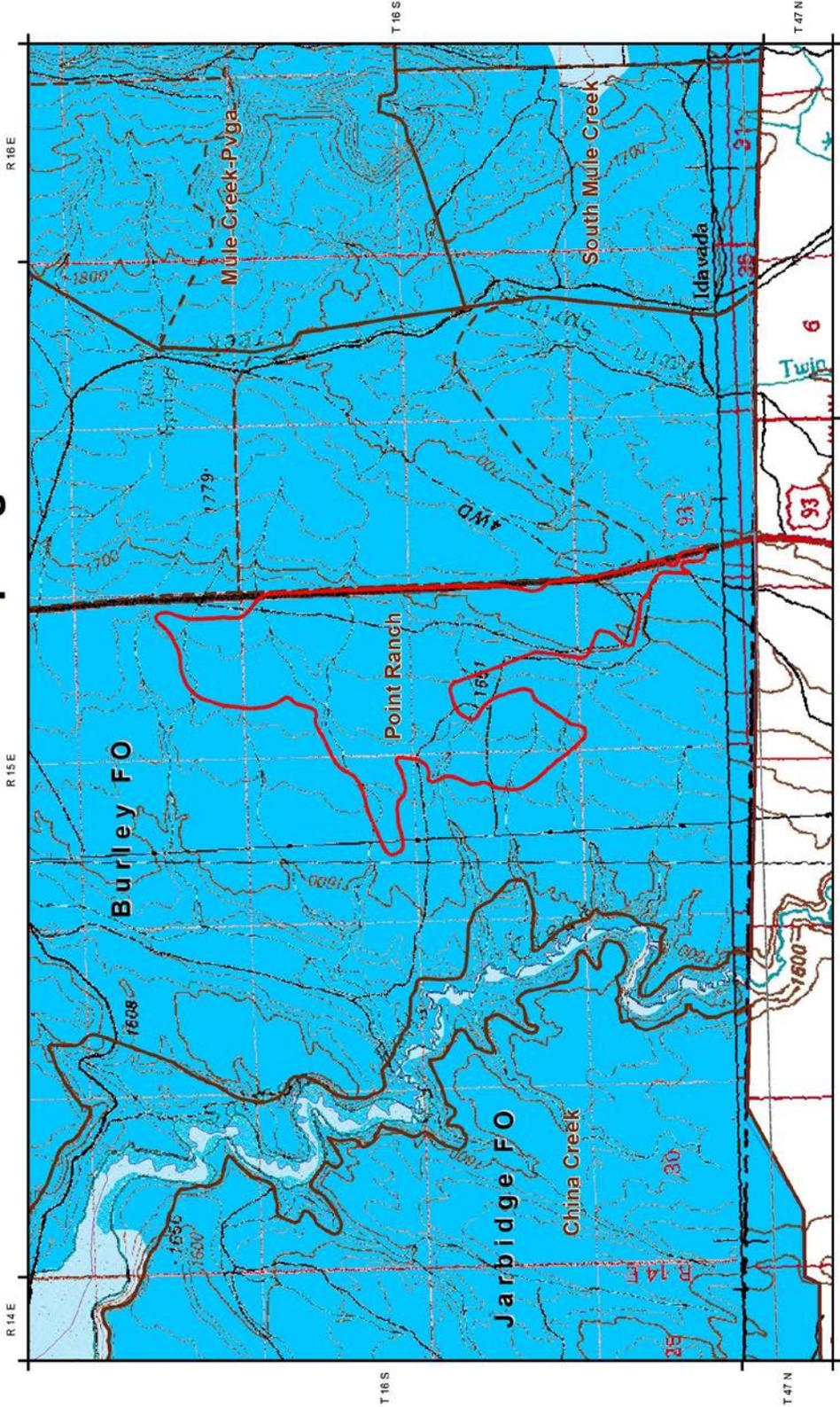
No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.

US Depart. of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Twin Falls District, Idaho

Map Created on: July 18, 2012
Data Displayed in NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_11N Projection
R:\loc\fuel\ESR\2012\1.tite Birch Creek\Map\Map\Map.mxd
Author: davisnsmith

G1RP - Rabbit Springs

Date: 7/18/2012
R 16 E



Scale: 1:50,000
0 0.5 Miles

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.

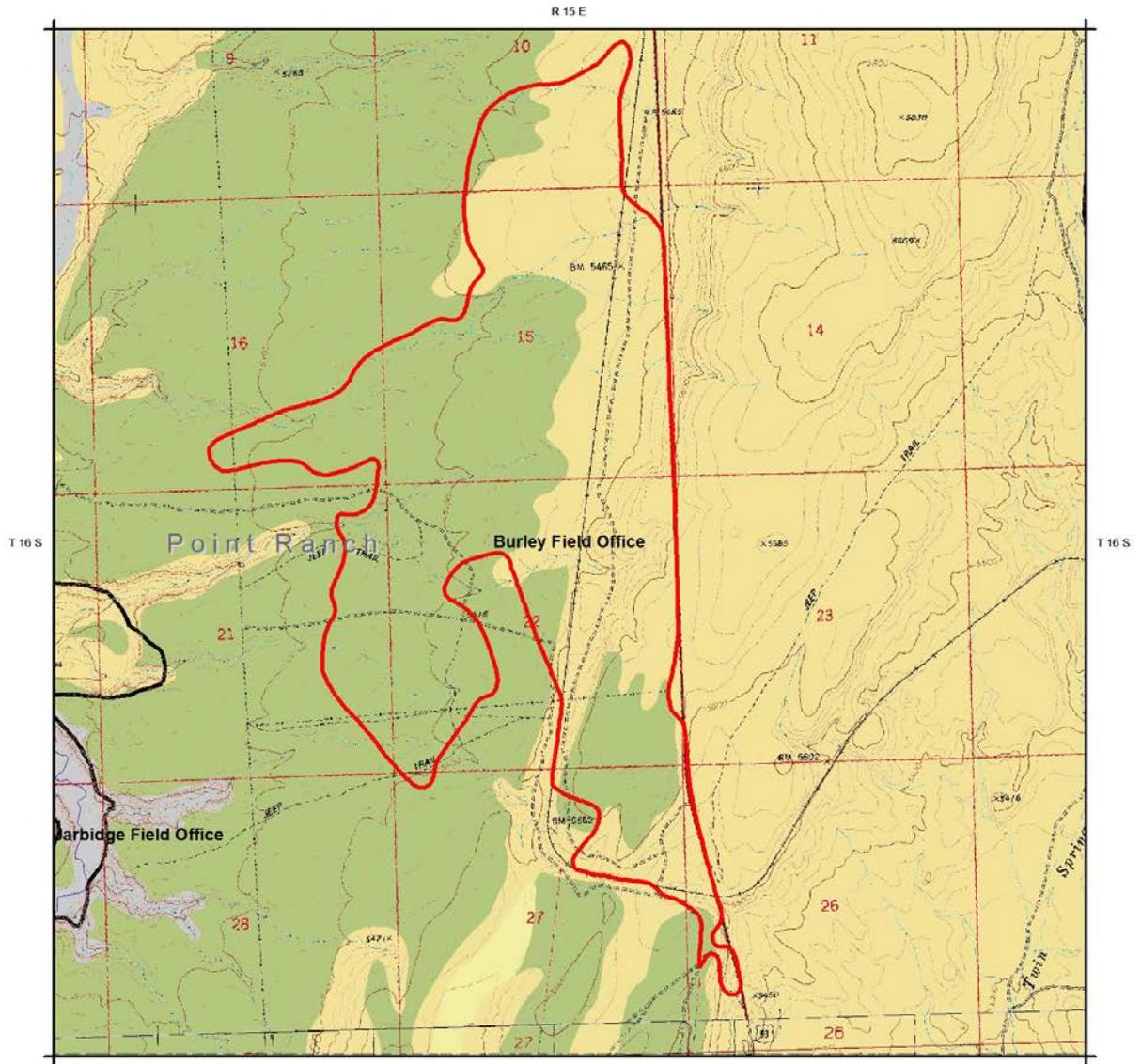
1,475 Total Acres
BLM 1,390 Acres
State 85 Acres

- Fire Perimeter
- Idaho Sagegrouse 2012 PPH
- Idaho Sagegrouse 2012 PCH
- BLM Offices
- National Monument
- State Boundary
- Range Allotment
- Pasture
- Wilderness
- WSA
- ACEC

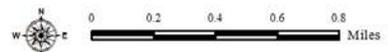
US Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Tampa Field District, Idaho

Path: R:\PROJECTS\BLSR\RabbitSprings_2012\Map\G1RP1_FIG_RabbitSprings_BLT_0718.mxd

G1RP - RABBIT SPRINGS VEGETATION COMMUNITIES



- Rabbit Springs
- BLM Offices
- ARNO4/ACTH7
- ARTRW8/PSSPS
- Range Allotment



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.

US Depart. of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Twin Falls District, Idaho

Map Created on: July 23, 2012
Data Displayed in NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_11N_Projection
R:\loc\fuel\ESR\2012\Rabbit Springs\Maps\Rabbit Springs_Map.mxd
Author: davisnsmith