

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

*LITTLE BIRCH CREEK FIRE*

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

**FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

<b>Fire Name</b>	Little Birch Creek
<b>Fire Number</b>	G1RE
<b>District/Field Office</b>	Twin Falls/Burley
<b>Admin Number</b>	LLIDT02000
<b>State</b>	Idaho
<b>County(s)</b>	Cassia
<b>Ignition Date/Cause</b>	7/10/2012/Lightning
<b>Date Contained</b>	7/11/2012
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<i>Acres</i>
<b>BLM</b>	349
<b>State</b>	0
<b>Private</b>	577
<b>Other</b>	0
<b>Total Acres</b>	926
<b>Total Costs</b>	\$178,000
<b>Costs to LF2200000</b>	\$31,000
<b>Costs to LF3200000</b>	\$6,000
<b>Costs to LF3100000</b>	\$141,000

**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 Little Birch fire started as a lightning strike. The fire burned a total of 926 acres in Cassia County approximately four miles south east of Oakley, ID. Of those acres, 349 acres occurred on lands managed by the BLM. The fire affected two grazing allotments, the Mathews Goose Creek and the Birch Creek allotments. The elevation ranges from 5,110 to 5,780 feet. In general, the burned area's topography would be characterized as rolling hills dissected with some drainages and ridges.

The fire burned within mixed vegetation from late seral sagebrush steppe communities to phase 3 juniper. The juniper is encroaching both in the rocky outcropping very shallow stony loam soil where it is relatively scarce to dense stands of juniper in the deeper loamy soils. The burned area is in preliminary priority habitat for sage grouse and is also mule deer habitat. The juniper encroached portions of the burned area were planned for juniper removal treatments this fall under the Burley landscape project to improve habitat for sage grouse. Most of the burn is not treatable by a rangeland drilling because of the burned standing and juniper skeletons. The fire intensity was high because of the high density juniper cover. The majority of the burn area is highly vulnerable to the expansion of cheatgrass and noxious weeds because of the high severity of the fire.

The area burned by the Little Birch Creek 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 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). Reestablish hydrologic function; 4). Maintain and enhance biological integrity; 5). Promote plant resiliency; 6). Limit expansion or dominance of invasive species; and 7). Re-establish native species.

### **LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY**

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

#### **Emergency Stabilization**

S3 Aerial Seeding

S5 Noxious Weeds

S12 Closures (Livestock)

#### **Burned Area Rehabilitation**

R5 Noxious Weeds

The applicable land use plan for the Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) project area is the Cassia Resource Management Plan (RMP) 1985. The

RMP 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).

**Aerial Seeding/S3:** Objective two of the FMDA’s objective and management actions is to maintain, protect, and expand sage-grouse source habitats. Following wildland fire, use seeding treatments with appropriate plant materials to attempt to stabilize sites and prevent dominance of invasive, annual vegetation, and noxious weeds. Therefore aerial seeding meets this objective and is in conformance with the RMP as amended by the FMDA.

**Noxious Weeds/S5/R5:** Management actions for objective one, state that to achieve DFC the use of chemical, mechanical and seeding treatments will be used. Therefore, the planning for weed treatments and activities that meet these objectives are in conformance with the RMP as amended by the FMDA.

**Closures (livestock)/S12:** The management restrictions, conservation measures, and guidelines for livestock grazing on page 31of the FMDA states that all burn 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, resting the burned area under the rehabilitation plan from grazing would ensure that the area recovers and is in conformance with the RMP 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	<b>Planning (Project Mangt)</b>	WM's	1		\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000
S3	<b>Aerial Seeding</b>	Acres	300	\$53.33	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$16,000
S5	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>	Acres	349	\$8.60	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,000
S12	<b>Closures</b>	No.	1	\$0.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
S13	<b>Monitoring</b>	Acres	349	\$17.19	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>					\$16,000	\$7,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$31,000

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
<b>TOTAL COSTS (LF310000)</b>					\$141,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$141,000

**Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF32000BR):**

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Cost
R5	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>	Acres	349	\$8.60	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>					\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000

**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. Vegetation in the fire area was primarily Juniper and bluebunch wheatgrass. Areas with a dense overstory of juniper vegetation had slightly higher fire intensities. Also, the fire burned in topography classified as rolling hills with a drainage located in the middle of the area. These higher intensity

burn areas removed most of the plant cover and have exposed soils to accelerated soil erosion. These areas are a major concern due to wind erosion, the expansion of cheatgrass, and noxious weeds.

#### Closures (Livestock)

Portions of the Matthews Goose Creek and Birch Creek Allotments were affected by the fire. Appropriate rest will be applied to the burned portions of the allotments 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 both areas meet objectives for the resumption of livestock grazing.

#### Treatment/Activity: S12 Closures (Livestock)

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The burned portions of the allotments affected by the Little Birch Creek Fire would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES treatment objectives have been met or it is determined to be a failure.*

B. How does the treatment relate to damages or changes caused by the fire? *The fire burned most of the existing vegetation within the burn perimeter so the remnant vegetation and soil surface are highly susceptible to further damage if livestock were allowed to continue grazing within the burn area. The purpose of this treatment is to rest the burn area from livestock grazing to provide the opportunity for existing vegetation resources and seeding efforts to stabilize the burn area. Establishment of a perennial plant community would reduce or inhibit 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 Little Birch fire negatively affected preliminary priority sage-grouse habitat (Candidate Species) habitat and mule deer winter range where it burned intact sagebrush steppe habitat. Sage grouse and mule deer are dependent on sagebrush plant 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 above all possible snow depths. Due to the wildfire, current conditions are not optimum for sage grouse forage, nesting security cover, or winter habitat. However, the burn could improve sage-grouse habitat by clearing Utah juniper off the loamy Wyoming big sagebrush ecological sites and clearing juniper around the creeks where sage grouse are known to inhabit during the summer (suggesting late brood rearing habitat). Sage-grouse are known to avoid juniper year round. Historically, there was a sage-

grouse lek to the east of the fire which was encroached by juniper. This lek has since become inactive. The certainty of the potential benefit of the fire to sage grouse depends on the ability of the site to recover. Although the clearing of the juniper by the fire may help sage grouse, the site is susceptible to invasive plant and noxious weed invasion and is not expected to recover enough naturally to provide adequate perennial cover for sage grouse. A major concern in this area is the invasion of cheatgrass. Cheatgrass poses a significant threat to sage grouse and sage grouse habitat. Transect data collected before the fire show that cheatgrass cover was approximately 12% in the portion of the burn which was sparsely encroached by Utah juniper. Although the higher density juniper encroached sites had less cheatgrass, there was little understory beneath the juniper before the fire. After the fire, these sites are expected to be nearly void of any perennial vegetation because of the pre-burn condition and the severity of the fire. The competitive influence exerted by invasive annuals (cheatgrass) enables them to dominate vast areas for many years (Idaho Sage-grouse Advisory Committee 2006). Therefore, it is imperative to treat the site for the improvement of sage-grouse habitat.

Ecological Site(s):

*Shallow Stony Loam 8-12" Black-low Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass*

*Silt Loam 12-16" Wyoming big sagebrush/ Bluebunch Wheatgrass*

*Cobbly Loam 12-16" Wyoming big sagebrush/ Bluebunch Wheatgrass*

*Loamy 12-16" Wyoming big sagebrush/ Bluebunch Wheatgrass*

Soil-vegetation correlation information indicates that 50% of the burn area is located primarily in the Mackey rock outcropping soil complex which is primarily (60%) Shallow Stony Loam 8-12" Black Sagebrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass ecological site (based on observation). The other 50% is comprised primarily of Cobbly Loam, Silt Loam or Loam 12-16" Wyoming Sagebrush/Bluebunch wheatgrass ecological sites. The potential natural plant communities on these sites would be comprised of a Black-low Sagebrush or Wyoming Sagebrush overstory with principal understory plants dominated by Bluebunch wheatgrass. The majority of the burned area is capable of deep rooted grass species with the exception of the rocky outcroppings. This is demonstrated by data and photos collected for Rangeland Health Assessments. These data 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 small size of the fire it is anticipated there will be a viable seed source from the surrounding unburned area and in small islands of unburned vegetation within the fire perimeter. The Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development Instruction Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003 was used in process of developing the proposed seed mix.

Juniper was present within a majority of the burned area. This encroaching shrub caused a loss of important native shrubs and perennial grass species found prior to the fire. The encroached areas have been void of the native perennial grass and shrub species and because of this it has made these areas highly susceptible to cheatgrass and noxious weeds. Portions of the burned area are located on a south, southwest facing slope and adjacent to sites where cheatgrass was common.

Data collected prior to the fire show cheatgrass cover was as high as 12% in some areas. 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. This list is for vegetation determined to be in the burn areas not previously treated.

Common Pre-burn Vegetation in order of dominance:

- Wyoming Big Sagebrush, *Artemisia tridentata ssp. Wyomingensis*
- Utah Juniper, *Juniperus osteosperma*
- Bluebunch Wheatgrass, *Pseudoroegneria spicata*
- Black Sagebrush, *Artemisia nova*
- Sandberg bluegrass, *Poa secunda*
- Cheatgrass, *Bromus tectorum*
- Indian Ricegrass, *Achnatherum hymenoides*
- Phlox, *Phlox hoodii*

Treatment/Activity: S3 Aerial Seeding

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The entire BLM portion of the burned area was identified to be aerial seeded with a mixture of native and native like perennial grass species. The seed will be applied aurally followed by a masticator to cover the seed in the burn area. The masticator will aid in the soil to seed contact. The majority of the burn area is not accessible by a rangeland drill due to the amount of dead standing juniper skeletons. The application of the masticator as a jointly planned fuels treatment will cover the seed both by driving over it and pushing the seed into the soil, and by creating a mulch which will also aid in protection from erosion. This is proposed to be accomplished in late FY12 or early FY13. Appropriate cultural resource inventories/surveys will be complete prior to implementing these specific projects.*

<b>Little Birch Creek Aerial Seed Mix</b>	
<b>300 Acres</b>	
<b>Species and Variety</b>	<b>Seed Rate Lbs/Acres</b>
<b>Grass</b>	
1. Anatone Bluebunch Wheatgrass	5.00
2. Secar Snake River Wheatgrass	3.00
3. Sherman Big Bluegrass	0.30

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 more closely matches the structural, species composition, and diversity of the native plant community to help achieve a healthy functioning rangeland. Accelerating the rate of re-establishment of native grasses is important to maintaining the value of the area as sage grouse breeding and mule deer wintering 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 aerial 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.** 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.

Noxious Weeds

All 349 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. *Canada thistle is the primary noxious weed that is found adjacent to the burn area. Hounds tongue also was discovered along North Carson Creek. 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. It is expected that noxious weeds will 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 \$8.60 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 349 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. *Canada thistle is the primary noxious weed that is found adjacent to the burn area. Hounds tongue also was discovered along North Carson Creek. 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. It is expected that noxious weeds will 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 \$8.60 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.** N/A

**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>						
	Project Management Field Office	WM's		2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
<b>S3</b>	<b>Aerial Seeding</b>						
	Contract	Total	6,000				6,000
	Seed	Total	10,000				10,000
	<b>Total</b>		16,000	0	0	0	16,000
<b>S5</b>	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>						
	Labor	Acres		2,000			2,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500			500
	Supplies/Materials	Total		500			500
	<b>Total</b>		0	3,000	0	0	3,000
<b>S13</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>						
	Labor	WM's		2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	<b>EMERGENCY STABILIZATION TOTALS</b>		\$16,000	\$7,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$31,000

	<b>Ground Mastication</b>						
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	600				600
	Contract	Total	135,000				135,000
	Cultural Clearance	Total	5,400				5,400
	<b>FUELS FUNDED</b>		\$141,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$141,000

Rehabilitation		Units	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total Costs
<b>R5</b>	<b>Noxious Weeds</b>					
	Labor	WM's		2,000	2,000	4,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		500	500	1,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		500	500	1,000
	<b>Total</b>		0	3,000	3,000	6,000
	<b>BURNED AREA REHABILITATION TOTALS</b>		\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000

**PART 4 – SEED LISTS**

**AERIAL SEED**

Species	% PLS	Seeds/lb. (bulk)	Total Seeds/Acre (bulk)	PLS Seeds/ac.	PLS Seeds/sq. ft.	Aerial Seeding (acres)	Lbs/Acre	Total Pounds	Cost per lb	Total Costs
Anatone Bluebunch WG	76%	140,000	700,000	532,000	12.21	300	5	1,500	4.50	6,750.00
Secar Snakeriver WG	76%	170,000	510,000	387,600	8.90	300	3	900	3.00	2,700.00
Sherman Big Bluegrass	63%	917,000	275,100	173,313	3.98	300	0.3	100	4.50	450.00
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>25.09</b>		<b>8.30</b>	<b>2,500</b>		<b>9,900.00</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 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 300 acres in the treatment area is generally available in the required quantities. Aerial seeding would not occur until the winter and spring 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 areas 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)**

No non-native plants are being proposed in any treatment.

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

Non-native Plants	Native Plants
	“Anatone” Bluebunch Wheatgrass <i>Psuedoroegneria spicata</i>
	“Secar” Snake River Wheatgrass <i>Elymus wawawaiensis</i>
	‘Sherman’ big bluegrass <i>Poa ampla</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
S3	Aerial Seeding	Acres	300	\$16,000	100
S5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	349	\$3,000	80
S12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	\$0	100
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>				\$19,000	

Action/Spec. #	Planned BAR Action (LF32000BR)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	349	\$6,000	80
R12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	\$0	100
<b>TOTAL COSTS:</b>				\$6,000	

**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 aerial 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 and BLM lands against further expansion of noxious weeds.*

**No Action** Yes  No  Rationale for answer: *Wildlife 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 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: *S3 Aerial 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 aerial 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 ground and aerial seeding will be done for a period of three growing seasons.*

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

*1) Treatment Objectives: Canada thistle is the primary weed of concern in the burn area. It is expected that this weed would expand its 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: S12 Closures (Livestock grazing)**

*1) Treatment Objectives: Exclusion of livestock is critical for the recovery of burned vegetation or establishment and protection of new seedlings. The seed treatment area would be rested from 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 burn 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. Mastication Areas
4. Seeding Treatment Areas
5. Vegetation Communities

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

**TEAM MEMBERS**

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

**PLAN APPROVAL**

/s/ Scott Sayer for Michael Courtney

July, 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.*

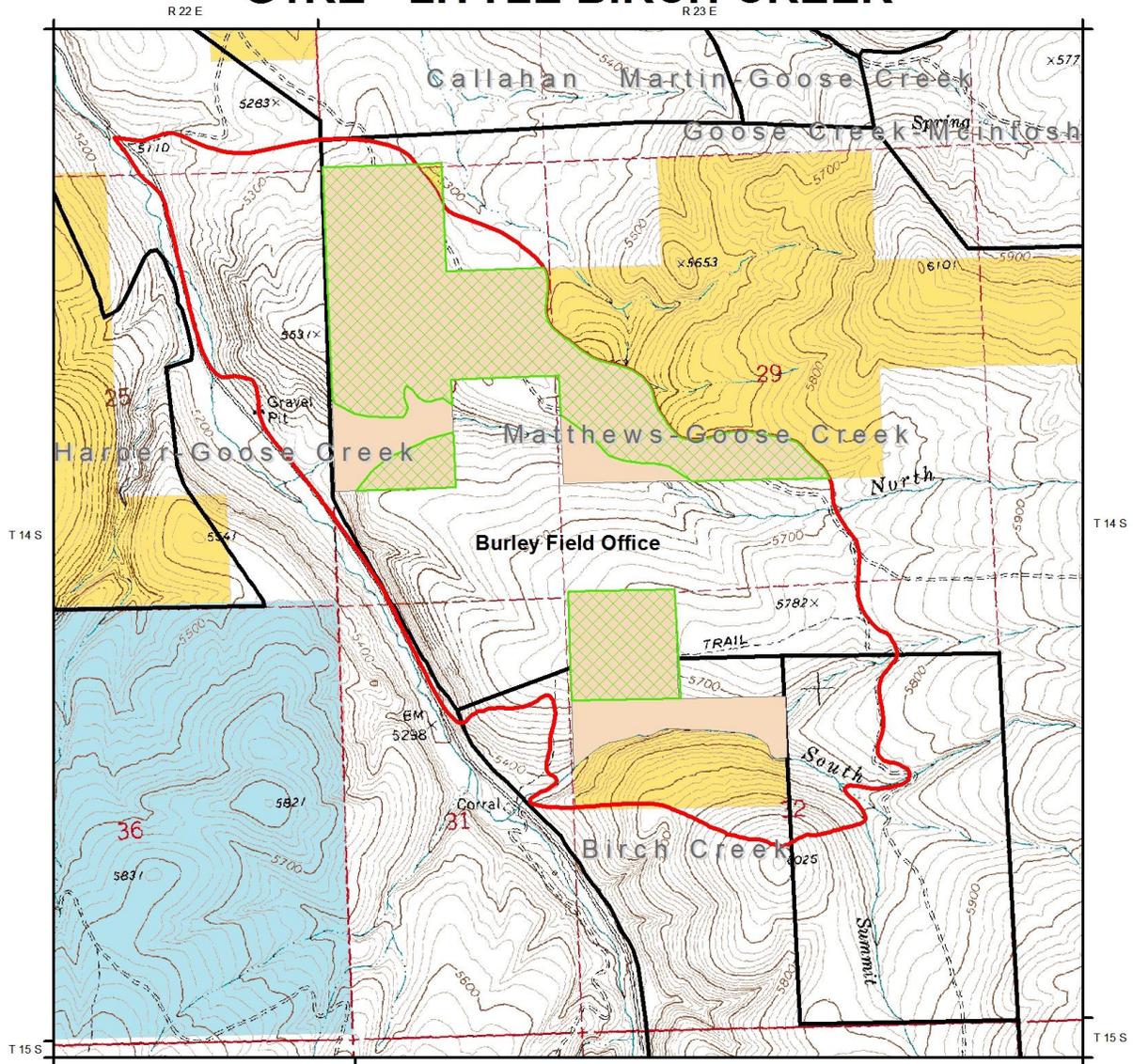
## Works Cited

Greater Sage-Grouse Interim Mangement Policies and Procedures Insturction Memorandum No. 2012-043

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

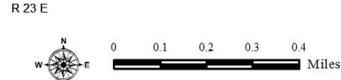
Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development Instruction Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003

# G1RE - LITTLE BIRCH CREEK



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

- |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| BLM Offices                     | Department of Energy        |
| Mastication Areas               | National Grasslands         |
| Aerial Seeding Area             | Forest Service              |
| Little Birch Creek Fire         | Fish and Wildlife Service   |
| Range Allotment                 | National Park Service       |
| Pasture                         | Native American Reservation |
| Bureau of Land Management       | Private; other              |
| Bureau of Reclamation           | State                       |
| Military, Department of Defense | State Fish and Game         |
| Bankhead-Jones Land Use         | Historical Open Water       |

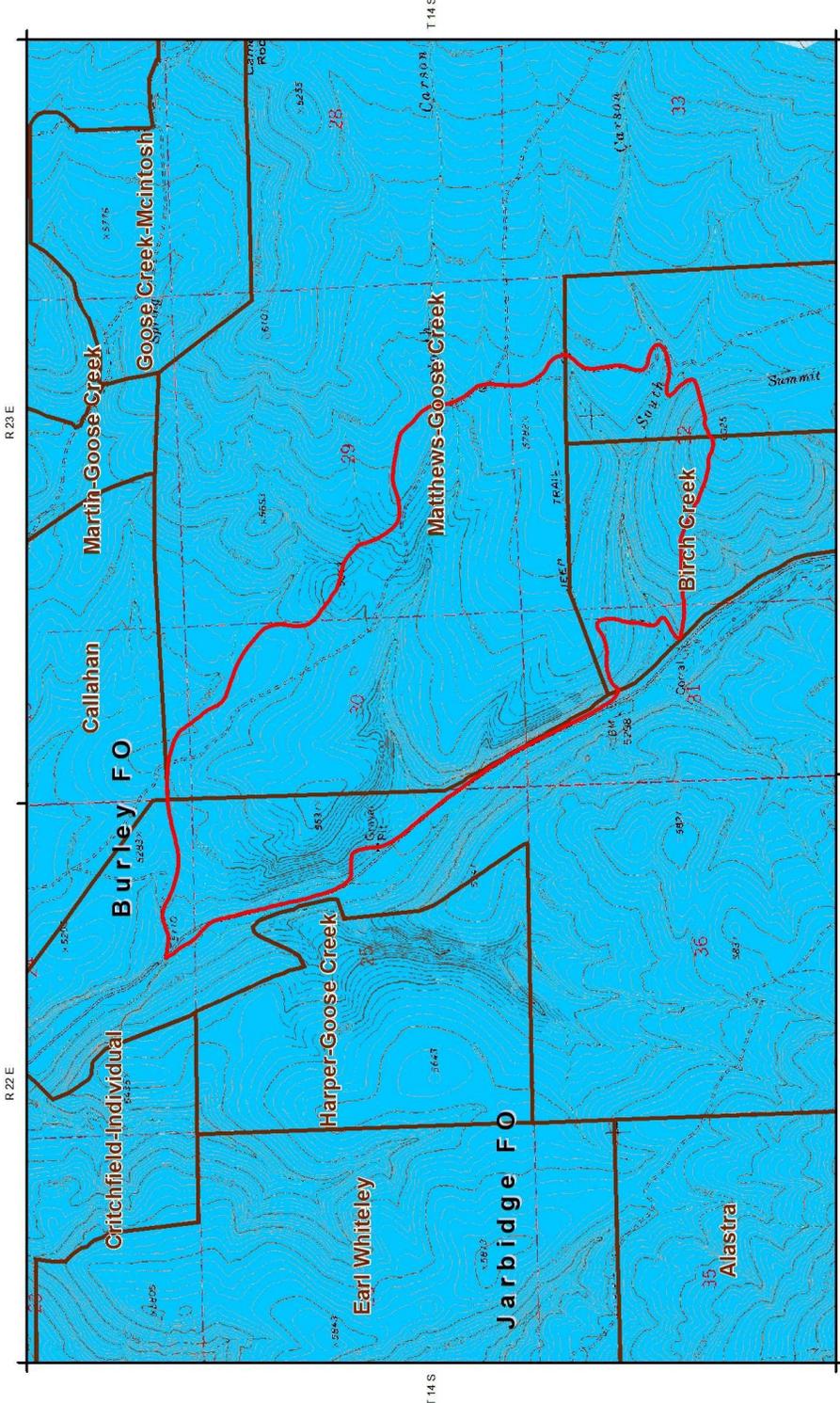


No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed.

Map Created on: July 24, 2012  
Data Displayed in NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_11N Projection  
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Author: dustin.smith

# G1RE - Little Birch Creek

Date: 7/24/2012



**Legend**

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

**Scale**

0 0.5 1 Miles

1:25,000

**Summary**

926 Total Acres

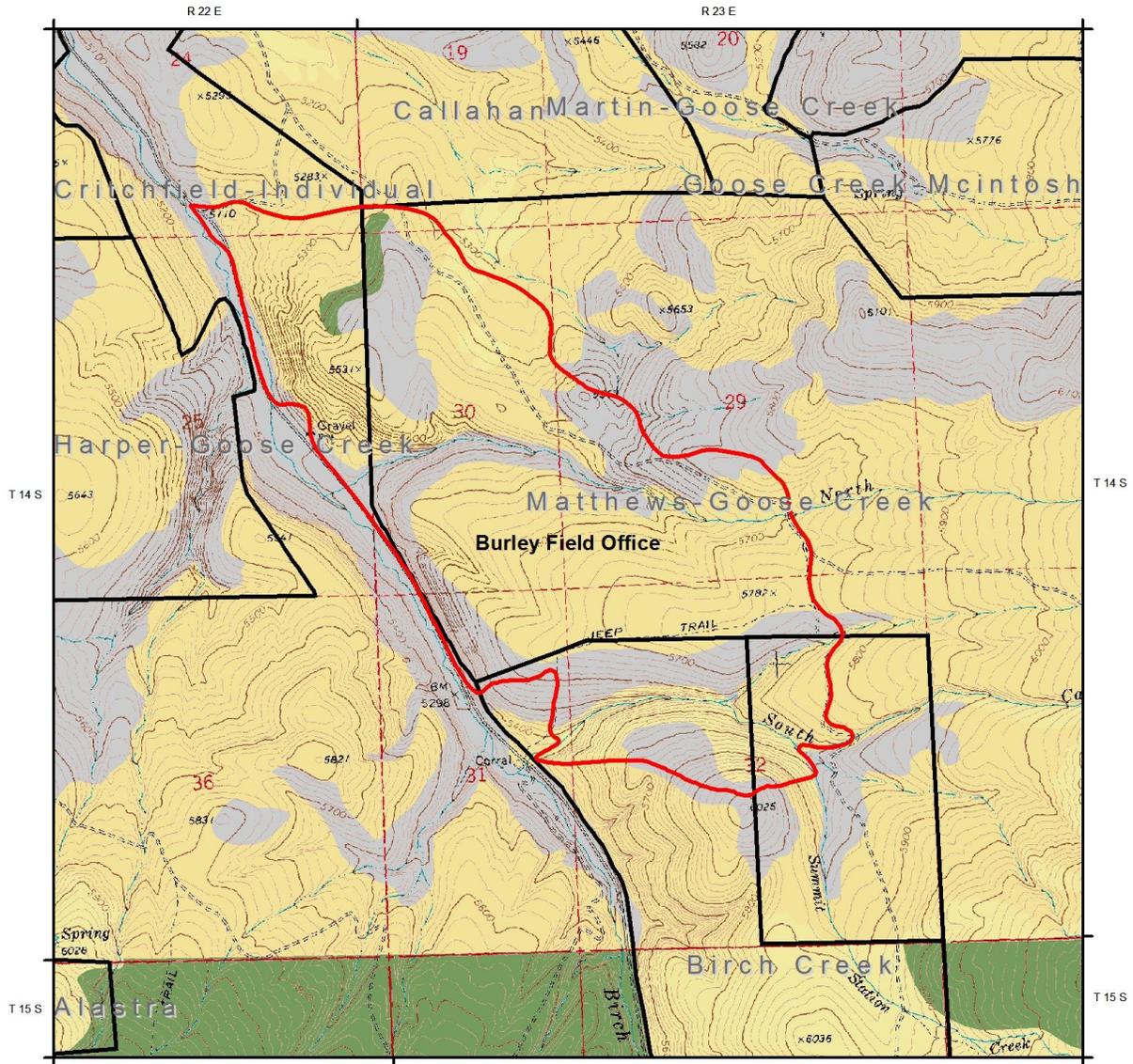
BLM 349 Acres

Private 577 Acres

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

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# G1RE - LITTLE BIRCH CREEK VEGETATION COMMUNITIES



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

- BLM Offices
- Little Birch Creek Fire
- Range Allotment
- Pasture
- No Data
- ARAR8/FEID
- ARTRT/PSSPS
- ARTRW8/PSSPS



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Map Created on: July 24, 2012  
Data Displayed in NAD\_1983\_UTM\_Zone\_11N Projection  
R:\loc\fuel\ESR\2012\Little Birch Creek\Maps\Little Birch Creek.mxd  
Author: dustynsmith