BLM IDAHO POST-FIRE RECOVERY PLAN
EMERGENCY STABILIZATION AND BURNED AREA REHABILITATION
2011 PLAN TEMPLATE

BROWNS GULCH FIRE

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

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Browns Gulch Fire
Fire Number	HQ5G
District/Field Office	Twin Falls/Jarbidge
Admin Number	LLIDT01000
State	Idaho
County(s)	Owyhee
Ignition Date/Cause	07-16-2013/Lightning
Date Contained	07/17/2013

Jurisdiction	**Acres**
BLM	4,125
Private	811

Total Acres	4,936
Total Costs	$82,000
Costs to LF2200000	$40,000
Costs to LF3200000	$42,000
Costs to LF3100000	
Costs to Other Funding	

Status of Plan Submission (check one box below)

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

PART 1 - PLAN SUMMARY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE FIRE

The Browns Gulch Fire ignited on July 16, 2013, at about 1815 hours. Fire cause was lightning. The fire was contained on July 17 and controlled on July 18. The fire burned 4,125 acres of public land administered by the BLM. The fire burned a portion of the protective corridor for the Oregon National Historic Trail, a unit of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), and the Sand Point Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The ACEC was designated to protect invertebrate fossils found on the bench along the Snake River.

The fire burned portions of the following allotments and pastures:

Allotment	Pasture	BLM Acres Burned	BLM Acres in Pasture	% of BLM Acres in Pasture Burned	AUMs Potentially Affected by Fire
Lower Saylor Creek	Lewis	7	504	1	1
	North	1,350	3,501	39	115
	Riparian	330	1,810	18	28
	South	2,048	4,801	43	175
W Saylor Creek	Windmill	387	5,846	7	35

Digital soil survey data (SSURGO 2008) indicate that most of the burned area occurs on the Sandy loam 8-12 Wyoming Big Sagebrush/Indian Ricegrass ecological site with some areas of Sand 8-12 Basin Big Sagebrush/Indian Ricegrass. Pre-fire vegetation consisted primarily of older crested wheatgrass seedings, large areas dominated by cheatgrass, and small inclusions of native grasses. The bench above the Snake River within the Sand Point ACEC and adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail contained a greasewood stand with native grasses and cheatgrass in the understory. Historically, Wyoming big sagebrush also occurred on portions of the bench and adjacent hill slopes; Basin big sagebrush likely occurred in drainage areas.

LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY

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

Emergency Stabilization

S2 Ground Seeding
S5 Weed Control
S12 Closure (Livestock)
S13 Monitoring

Burned Area Rehabilitation

R5 Weed Control
R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard
R12 Closure (Livestock)

The applicable land use plan for the ES&BAR project area is the Jarbidge Resource Management Plan (RMP) and associated Record of Decision (ROD) dated March 23, 1987. The burned area is located in the Saylor Creek West Multiple Use Area (MUA-6).

Applicable resource management objectives for the affected MUA (p. II-28):

- Improve lands in poor ecological condition.
- Maintain existing ecological improvements.
- Manage big game habitat to support mule deer. Maintain present levels of upland game nesting and cover habitat.
- Protect and manage the Sand Point Paleontologic Area.

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

The treatments outlined in this plan are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050) and the Noxious and Invasive Weed Treatment EA (Noxious Weed EA, #ID100-2005-EA-265) for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office.

Land Use Plan and Policy Consistency for Proposed Treatments

Ground Seeding/S2: The proposed ground seeding treatment addresses the RMP objectives to improve lands in poor ecological condition and protect and manage the Sand Point ACEC. In addition, the proposed treatment addresses the following RMP Resource Management Guidelines:

- Terrestrial Wildlife (pp. II-83 – II-84)
    - Manage all wildlife habitat within the resource area to provide a diversity of vegetation and habitats.
- Fire Management (p. II-89): Seedings will include appropriate seed mixtures to replace wildlife habitat that is burned.

Proposed ground seeding would stabilize the area immediately adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail and within the Sand Point ACEC, consistent with guidance in the 1984 Oregon Trail Management Plan and 1988 Sand Point Natural History Management Plan.

Noxious Weeds/S5/R5: The proposed noxious weed treatments address the RMP objectives cited above to improve lands in poor ecological condition. Weed control treatments would enhance seeding success by reducing the potential for noxious weed competition with newly seeded plants. They also address RMP Resource Management Guidelines to control the spread of noxious weeds on public lands where possible, where economically feasible, and to the extent that funds are prioritized for that purpose (p. II-94). Therefore, the proposed noxious weed treatments are in conformance to the Jarbidge RMP. Proposed noxious weed treatments are also consistent with the treatments analyzed in the NFRP and Noxious Weed EA.

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

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

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

COST SUMMARY TABLES

Emergency Stabilization (LF2200000):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Total Cost
S1	**Planning (Project Mangt)**	WM's	1			$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$6,000
S2	**Ground Seeding**	Acres	110	$209.09	$18,000	$5,000	$0	$0	$23,000
S5	**Noxious Weeds**	Acres	4,125	$1.21		$5,000	$0	$0	$5,000
S12	**Closures**	No.	1	$0.00		$0	$0	$0	$0
S13	**Monitoring**	Acres	4,125	$1.45		$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$6,000
TOTAL COSTS					$18,000	$14,000	$4,000	$4,000	$40,000

Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF3200000):

Action/ Spec. #	Planned Action	Unit	# Units	Unit Cost	FY14	FY15	FY16	Total Cost
R1	**Planning (Project Mangt)**	WM's	1		$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$6,000
R5	**Noxious Weeds**	Acres	4,125	$1.21	$0	$5,000	$5,000	$10,000
R7	**Fence Repair**	Miles	3.5	$7,428.57	$26,000	$0	$0	$26,000
TOTAL COSTS					$28,000	$7,000	$7,000	$42,000

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 burned area is vulnerable to soil loss and spread of noxious weeds and invasive plants due to vegetation removal. Proposed livestock closure would address this issue by reducing impacts associated with livestock use, including trampling of bare soil, removal of resprouting and newly seeded vegetation, and weed spread. This would allow for seeding establishment and natural recovery to occur. Immediate and continued closure until ES&BAR objectives are met is critical to treatment success and stabilization of the burned area.

Treatment/Activity: *S12/R12 Livestock Closure*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The Browns Gulch burned area would be rested from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES&BAR objectives have been met. Rest would be accomplished through pasture closure or placement of water and supplements to keep livestock*

out of the burned area. Post-fire grazing agreements would be issued closing the burned area to livestock grazing.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The purpose of this treatment is to provide the opportunity for the ground seeding treatment to become established. Establishment of a perennial plant community adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail and within the Sand Point ACEC would inhibit expansion of noxious weeds and invasive plants and stabilize soils in the burned area.*

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective*? No costs under ES are associated with livestock closures.*

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

ES Issue 4 - Critical Heritage Resources.
The proposed broadcast seed area is adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail, an NLCS unit, and within its protective corridor. Seeding treatment is necessary to avoid this area being dominated by noxious weeds and invasive plants if left untreated. This would be inconsistent with maintaining the visual corridor for the Oregon National Historic Trail and could result in conditions such as erosion and weed encroachment that would degrade the trail ruts.

Plant materials and methods are based on analysis contained in the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050), species specific information contained in technical references (USDA 2004), and the Twin Falls District Instruction Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003 for Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development.

Treatment/Activity: *S2 Ground Seeding*
A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Approximately 110 acres would be broadcast seeded with a native/non-native grass mix and harrowed to cover seed. Seeding would occur in fall 2013. Cultural resource sites would be avoided during seeding operations.*

Browns Gulch Fire
Broadcast Grass Seed Mix
110 acres

Species and Variety	Seed Rate in Lbs/Acre (PLS)
Grasses	
'Nezpar' Indian Ricegrass*	4.00
'Vavilov II' Siberian Wheatgrass	2.00
'Bozoisky' Russian Wildrye	2.00
'Trailhead' Basin Wildrye*	3.00

*** Native Cultivar**

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *The proposed broadcast seed area is adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail and within its protective corridor. This proposed broadcast seed area is likely to be dominated by noxious weeds and*

invasive plants if left untreated. This would be inconsistent with maintaining the visual corridor for the Oregon National Historic Trail and could result in conditions such as erosion and weed encroachment that would degrade the trail ruts.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective? *The proposed ground seeding area is only about 3% of the burned BLM acreage and is proposed solely to meet management direction for the Oregon National Historic Trail and Sand Point ACEC. The proposed broadcast/harrow ground seeding treatment is consistent with the management plans for these areas by eliminating the appearance of seeding rows. The proposed seed mix contains plant materials that have been effective in past treatments in similar locations in the Jarbidge Field Office, including the 2010 Windmill, Saylor Creek, and Long Butte fires. 'Bozoisky' Russian wildrye was recommended by the Idaho State Office ES&BAR lead for persistence under dry conditions, sandy soils, and invasive plant competition. Although this cultivar has not been used to any great extent in the Twin Falls District, it has been commonly and successfully used in the Boise District in similar harsh sites. All proposed taxa are expected to be successful and available at a reasonable cost while meeting resource objectives.*

ES Issue 5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds.
Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, diffuse knapweed, and rush skeletonweed are noxious weeds that have potential for introduction and spread in the burned area. These weeds, in addition to cheatgras, have a greater potential for spread in the burned area due to vegetation removal. This would result in degradation burned area, particularly the Oregon National Historic Trail, and its protective corridor. Immediate and continued treatment is critical to reducing the potential for this to occur.

Treatment/Activity: *S5 Noxious Weeds*

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

Per the Decision Record for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office Noxious and Invasive Weed Treament EA, the following design feature would apply to the burned area within the Sand Point ACEC:

Off-road travel would be confined annually to one trip to and from each weed site to avoid creating new roads and trails and limit the potential for spreading weed seeds.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire? *Disturbance associated with the fire and fire suppression, including use of heavy equipment to create dozer*

lines, increases the potential for invasion and spread of noxious weeds due to vegetation removal and soil surface disturbance.

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

BURNED AREA REHABILITATION ISSUES AND TREATMENTS

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

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

BAR Issue 1 - Lands Unlikely to Recover Naturally. *N/A*

BAR Issue 2 - Weed Treatments.
Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, diffuse knapweed, and rush skeletonweed are noxious weeds that have potential for introduction and spread in the burned area. These weeds, in addition to cheatgras, have a greater potential for spread in the burned area due to vegetation removal. This would result in degradation burned area, particularly the Oregon National Historic Trail, and its protective corridor. Immediate and continued treatment is critical to reducing the potential for this to occur.

Treatment/Activity: *R5 Noxious Weeds*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, diffuse knapweed, and rush skeletonweed are noxious weeds that have potential for introduction and spread in the burned area. Noxious weed inventory and spot herbicide treatment would occur the second and third years following the fire within the burned area under BAR. Noxious weeds would be treated with the BLM-approved chemicals in accordance with the Noxious Weed EA and the Record of Decision for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007 (Vegetation Treatment EIS). Appendix B of the Record of Decision includes a list of standard operating procedures that would be used for vegetation treatments using herbicides.*

Per the Decision Record for the Boise District and Jarbidge Field Office Noxious and Invasive Weed Treament EA, the following design feature would apply to the burned area within the Sand Point ACEC:

Off-road travel would be confined annually to one trip to and from each weed site to avoid creating new roads and trails and limit the potential for spreading weed seeds.

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

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

BAR Issue 3 - Tree Planting. *N/A*

BAR Issue 4 - Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities
Approximately 3.5 miles of livestock management fence was damaged due to high fire intensities. Repair or replacement of this fence is critical for both immediate closure and proper livestock management after grazing is resumed.

Treatment Activity: *R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard*

A. Treatment/Activity Description. *The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace approximately 3.5 miles of livestock management fence damaged or destroyed by the fire. Damaged wood corners and braces would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be replaced. The management fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards for wildlife.*

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

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

PART 3 – DETAILED TREATMENT COST TABLE

Emergency Stabilization		Units	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Total Costs
S1	***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
S2	***Ground Seeding (broadcast/harrow)***						
	Labor	WM's		4,000			4,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		1,000			1,000
	Seed	Total	14,500				14,500
	Seed mixing		500				500
cultural	Clearances	Total	3,000				3,000
	Total		18,000	5,000	0	0	23,000
S5	***Noxious Weeds***						
	Labor	Acres		3,000			3,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total		1,000			1,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		1,000			1,000
	Total			5,000	0	0	5,000
S13	***Monitoring***						
	Labor	WM's		2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Total			2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	EMERGENCY STABILIZATION TOTALS		$18,000	$14,000	$4,000	$4,000	$40,000

Rehabilitation		Units	FY14	FY15	FY16	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		1,000	1,000	2,000
	Supplies/Materials	Total		1,000	1,000	2,000
	Total		0	5,000	5,000	10,000
R7	***Fence/Gate/Cattle Guard***					
	Fence Material	Total	7,000			7,000
	Travel/Vehicles	Total	2,000			2,000
	Contract	Total	14,000			14,000
	Contract Administration	WM's	3,000			3,000
	Total		26,000	0	0	26,000
	BURNED AREA REHABILITATION TOTALS		$28,000	$7,000	$7,000	$42,000

PART 4 – SEED LISTS

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
Nezpar Indian Ricegrass	0.76	205,000	820,000	623,200	14.31	110	4.0	450	10.00	4,500.00
Vavilov II Siberian WG	0.80	220,000	440,000	352,000	8.08	110	2.0	250	5.00	1,250.00
Bozoisky Russian Wildrye	0.76	175,000	350,000	266,000	6.11	110	2.0	250	10.50	2,625.00
Trailhead Basin Wildrye	0.76	150,000	450,000	342,000	7.85	110	3.0	350	17.00	5,950.00
TOTALS					**36.35**		**11.0**	**1,300**		**14,325.00**

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 Rationale: *The proposed native species are all adapted to the ecological site within the proposed seeding areas. Selection of all native plant materials is based on analysis contained in the Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan (NFRP) and Environmental Assessment (EA, #ID-090-2004-050), species specific information contained in technical references (USDA 2004), and the Twin Falls District Instruction Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003 for Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development. The native taxa were selected from the low-elevation zone (8-10" average annual precipitation) species lists contained in the Twin Falls District IM. These lists were developed utilizing field experience within the Twin Falls District management area. All of these species have been successfully utilized in similar ecological sites within the Jarbidge Field Office area, including areas of the 2010 Windmill, Saylor Creek, and Long Butte fires.*

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

Yes Rationale: *The proposed native seed is generally available in the required quantities. The broadcast seeding treatment would not occur until fall/winter 2013/2014, which should allow seed quantities to increase following this year's harvest.*

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 Rationale: *The native seed proposed for use has been increasingly utilized in recent years for stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration projects. The demand has resulted in increased production and decreased price. The proposed broadcast/harrow seed area is relatively small (~110 acres, or 3% of the BLM burned area), is adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail and within its protective corridor. The seeding treatment will avoid the appearance of drill rows and has been designed for consistency with the 1984 Oregon Trail Management Plan and the 1988 Sand Point Natural History Management Plan.*

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 Rationale: *Based on past treatment monitoring and observations, the native taxa proposed for seeding have established and persisted in native/non-native seed mixes in similar ecological sites in the Jarbidge 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 Rationale: *The proposed seeding area will receive rest from livestock grazing until monitoring shows that ES&BAR objectives have been met. The current livestock management system should maintain the plant community over the long term. This would be consistent with meeting Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health.*

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

General note: *The likelihood of introducing a non-native plant species into a plant community without altering the present competitive interaction among remnant native and non-native species is remote. The proposed seeding of non-native species in this project may result in long-term disruption of ecological processes within the plant community on treated areas. However, the proposed treatment areas have already been disrupted by non-native invasive plants and noxious weeds. 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 previously altered. 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 Rationale: *The use of proposed non-native plants is in conformance with resource management objectives, goals, and guidelines contained in the 1987 Jarbidge RMP. It is also consistent with the NFRP and Oregon National Historic Trail and Sand Point ACEC management plans. Siberian wheatgrass and Russian wildrye were*

proposed to be utilized in a mix with native taxa to stabilize the area adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail against dominance by noxious weeds and invasive plants.

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?

<u>Yes</u> Rationale: *The proposed treatment area has burned in the past and did not recover naturally. The natural successional processes and interspecific competition which normally occur in this area have been altered by the introduction of invasive annual grasses and noxious weeds. The proposed non-native plants can effectively compete with these species. Establishing a competitive perennial plant community with a mixture of native and non-native species would promote a greater degree of resiliency within the plant community and restore more natural processes, as well as the visual corridor for the Oregon National Historic Trail.*

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

<u>Yes</u> Rationale: *Siberian wheatgrass has been used in the Jarbidge Field Office for at least 20 years. Russian wildrye has been used in similar locations in the Boise District for at least 20 years as well. The plants have been used in ecological sites similar to those which were burned in the Browns Gulch Fire. Incidental establishment of the proposed species may occur outside of the treatment area by seasonal movement of various wildlife or domestic 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.*

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

Native	Non-native
'Nezpar' Indian Ricegrass *Achnatherum hymenoides*	'Vavilov' Siberian Wheatgrass *Agropyron fragile*
'Trailhead' Basin Wildrye *Leymus cinereus*	'Bozoisky' Russian Wildrye *Psathrostachys juncea*

PART 6. – COST-RISK ANALYSIS

A. Probability of Treatments Successfully Meeting Objectives

Action/ Spec. #	Planned ES Action (LF2200000)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
S2	Ground Seeding	Acres	110	$23,000	75
S5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	4,125	$5,000	90
S12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	#	1	0	100
			TOTAL COSTS:	$28,000	

Action/ Spec. #	Planned BAR Action (LF3200000)	Unit (acres, WMs, number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R5	Noxious Weeds	**Acres**	4,125	$10,000	90
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	**Miles**	3.5	$26,000	100
R12	Closures (OHV, livestock, area)	**#**	1	0	100
			TOTAL COSTS:	$36,000	

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* Rationale for answer: *The ground seeding treatment would establish a perennial plant community which would reduce the potential for spread and dominance of noxious weeds and invasive plants in the seeded area. Probability of success could be limited by below-normal precipitation during the seeding establishment period; however, all species used in the seed mix are well-adapted to low moisture conditions. Noxious weed treatments would further protect the burned area and adjacent BLM-managed lands against expansion of noxious weeds.*

No Action *No* Rationale for answer: *The Oregon National Historic Trail and its protective corridor would be dominated by invasive plants and noxious weeds if treatment did not occur. Noxious weed treatments would decrease the potential for spread to adjacent burned and unburned public and private lands.*

Alternative(s) *N/A*

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

Proposed Action *Yes* Rationale for answer: *The area proposed for ground seeding is only about 3% of the total burned BLM acreage. Monitoring and observations of treatments similar or identical to those proposed indicate that probability of success is relatively high. Normal climatic conditions and exclusion of livestock to allow for seeding establishment would increase the probability of success. The proposed ground seeding treatment area is small, but important for its protection of cultural and adjacent paleontological resources. Noxious weed treatment would enhance seeding establishment as well as natural recovery of the entire burned area.*

No Action *No* Rationale for answer: *Lack of ground seeding treatment would guarantee dominance of the burned area adjacent to the Oregon National Historic Trail by invasive plants and noxious weeds, and could result in degradation of the trail ruts. There is high potential for noxious weed spread throughout the entire burned area and onto adjacent unburned public and private lands.*

Alternative(s) *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|,
Alternative(s) |__|,
No Action |__|

Comments: *The proposed action is the approach most likely to reduce the potential for degradation of the Oregon National Historic Trail, Sand Point ACEC, and surrounding public lands within the burned area.*

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

Treatment/Activity: *S2 Ground Seeding*

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of the ground seeding treatment is to establish a perennial-dominated plant community within 3 years. The following grass density objectives are based on ecological site potential.*

The ground seeding treatments would be considered successful if:

- *The seeded grasses reach densities of 3 plants per square meter.*

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 areas would include field observations, photo plots, cover transects utilizing the line-point intercept, and density plots. Plots would be randomly established in the treated area. Effectiveness monitoring of the ground seeding treatments would be done for a period of three growing seasons.*

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

1) Treatment Objectives: *Scotch thistle, Canada thistle, diffuse knapweed, and rush skeletonweed are noxious weeds that have potential for introduction and spread in the burned area. It is expected that these weeds could expand their range as a result of the fire. Since these weeds are not uniformly distributed across the burn area a quantifiable objective cannot be determined until the first year inventory occurs.*

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

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

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

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

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

1) Treatment Objectives: *The objective of this treatment is to repair or replace about 3.5 miles of livestock management fence damaged or destroyed by the fire. Damaged wood corners and braces would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be repaired. All fences would be constructed according to BLM fence standards for wildlife.*

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

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

Treatment/Activity: *S12/R12 Livestock Closure*

1) Treatment Objectives: *Exclusion of livestock is critical for seeding establishment. The burned area would be closed to promote establishment of seeded species until monitoring results, documented in writing, show that ES&BAR objectives have been met, as specified in the BLM ES&BAR Handbook (H-1732-1) and consistent with the 2005 Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabiliation Plan (#ID-090-2004-050). Rest would be accomplished through pasture closure or placement of water and supplements to*

keep livestock out of the burned area. Post-fire grazing agreements would be issued closing the burned area to livestock grazing.

2) Describe how implementation will be monitored: *Resumption of livestock grazing would ultimately depend on monitoring and meeting of natural recovery objectives. The monitoring for grazing availability and recommendations for opening the 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 seeding 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 crusts) is within 10% of what would be expected for early seral stages of the ecological sites found within the treated areas,*
- *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.*

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. The amount of bare mineral soil (lacking cover of plants, litter, or biological soil crust) is within 10% of what would be expected for early seral stages of the ecological sites found within the burned area. Recommended study methods include line-point intercept or step point cover methods and photo points.*
- *Desirable herbaceous perennial plants are producing seed.*

A qualitative visual assessment of the following would also be considered for seeded and natural recovery areas:

  - *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*

An evaluation of collected monitoring data will be completed documenting that grazing reintroduction would not cause a downward trend in vegetation recovery.

References

Lambert, S. (2005). *Guidebook to the seeds of native and non-native grasses, forbs and shrubs of the Great Basin.* Idaho BLM Technical Bulletin 2005-04. Bureau of Land Management, Idaho State Office, Boise, Idaho.

Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. (2008). *Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database for portions of Elmore, Owyhee, and Twin Falls counties, Idah*o. Available online at http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov. Accessed July 25, 2012.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. (2004). *Restoring western ranges and wildlands* (General Technical Report RMRS-GTR-136). Fort Collins, CO: Rocky Mountain Research Station.

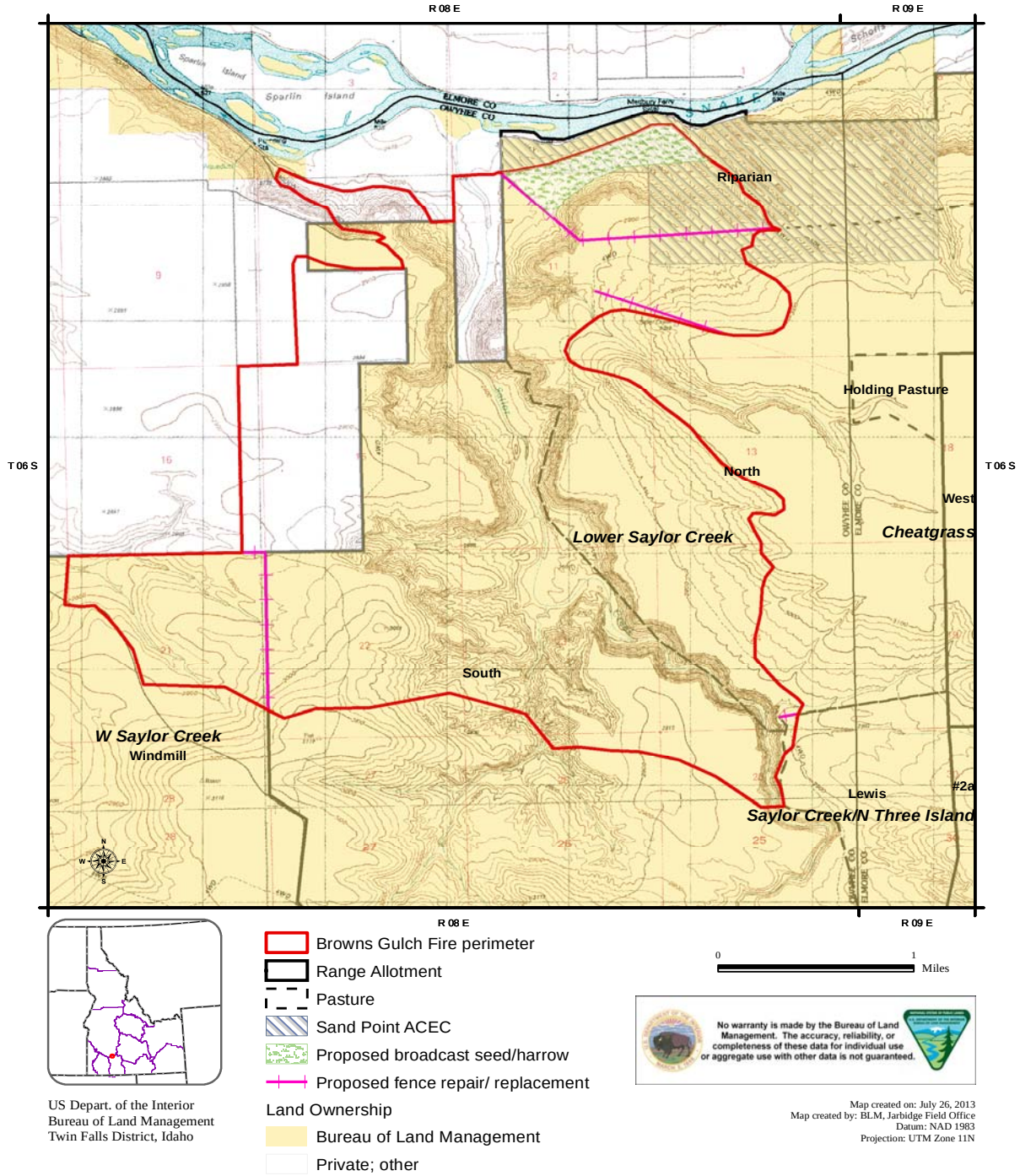
U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management. (2005). *Boise District Office and Jarbidge Field Office Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan and Environmental Assessment.* Twin Falls, ID: Twin Falls District Office.

U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management. (2008). *Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Seed Mixture Development Instruction Memorandum No. ID200-2008-003.* Twin Falls, ID: Twin Falls District Office.

PART 8 – MAPS

1. Fire Perimeter, Colored Land Status Map, and Proposed Treatments

Map 1. Browns Gulch Fire (HQ5G) - Land Status and Proposed Treatments



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

- Browns Gulch Fire perimeter
- Range Allotment
- Pasture
- Sand Point ACEC
- Proposed broadcast seed/harrow
- Proposed fence repair/ replacement

Land Ownership

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private; other

0 1 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.

Map created on: July 26, 2013
Map created by: BLM, Jarbidge Field Office
Datum: NAD 1983
Projection: UTM Zone 11N

PART 9 – REVIEW, APPROVALS, and PREPARERS

TEAM MEMBERS

Position	Team Member (Agency/Office)	Initial and Date
Team Leader/Fire Ecologist	Julie Hilty (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	JH 7/25/2013
Operations	Scott Uhrig (BLM, Twin Falls DO)	SU 7/29/2013
NEPA Compliance & Planning	Krystle Pehrson (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	KAP 07/29/2013
Cultural Resources/Archeologist	Jeff Ross (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	JR 7/29/2013
Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	Dan Strickler (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	DS 7/29/2013
Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	Krystle Pehrson (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	KAP 07/29/2013
Fisheries Biologist	Darek Elverud (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	DE 7/30/2013
Wildlife Biologist	Michael Haney (BLM, Jarbidge FO)	MH 7/29/2013

PLAN APPROVAL

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

8/28/13

Brian W. Davis — DATE
Jarbidge Field Manager

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.