

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

PLAN TEMPLATE 2010

SUNK FIRE (HQR3)

BLM Boise District Office

IDAHO STATE OFFICE

FIRE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fire Name	Sunk
Fire Number	HQR3
District/Field Office	Boise District Office
Admin Number	LLIDB00000
State	IDAHO
County(s)	OWYHEE
Ignition Date/Cause	07/16/2013 Lightning
Date Contained	07/19/2013
Jurisdiction	<i>Acres</i>
BLM	2121
Total Acres	2121
Total Costs	\$450,000
Costs to LF20000ES (2822)	\$407,000
Costs to LF32000BR (2881)	\$43,000

Status of Plan Submission (check one box below)

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

PART 1 - PLAN SUMMARY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON FIRE.

The Sunk fire started as a lightning strike on July 16, 2013. The fire spread to the west rapidly due to erratic winds and inaccessible terrain. The fire burned a total of 2,121 acres in Owyhee County approximately 5 miles southwest of Murphy Idaho. All of the acres burned in this fire were lands managed by the BLM. The fire burned portions of pastures 5 and 6 in the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch grazing allotment and 38 acres within the Silver City grazing allotment. The elevation throughout the fire varied between 3,800 to 4,500 feet. Most of the burned area's topography is characterized by buttes with rocky ridgelines, steep slopes, and draws.

Within the burned area there are four main ecological sites delineated in the digital soil survey data (SSURGO, 2008). Approximately 1,165 acres (55%) are represented by the Loamy 8-12 or Loamy 10-13 ecological sites with Wyoming big sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass-Thurber's needlegrass, 377 acres (18%) are represented by the Sandy Loam 8-12 ecological site with Wyoming big sagebrush/indian ricegrass – needle and thread, and 377 acres (18%) are represented by the Claypan 12-16 ecological site with low sagebrush/Idaho fescue, and 202 acres (10%) are represented by the shallow claypan 11-13 low sagebrush/bluebunch wheatgrass ecological site and/or rock outcrop.

The fire burned through a mixture of mid to late seral sagebrush steppe as well as through a half mile section of riparian vegetation on Rabbit Creek. The preburn vegetation consisted of an understory of Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), with an overstory of Wyoming big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* spp. *wyomingensis*), low sagebrush (*Artemisia arbuscula*), mountain big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* spp. *vaseyana*) with cheatgrass occurring in less than 26% of the area. The fire burned quickly but was intense enough to remove sagebrush trunks and branches (skeletons) across much of the acreage. Perennial herbaceous vegetation is expected to recover naturally. It burned most intensely in the confined canyon where Rabbit Creek runs. Approximately half of the current burned acreage had previously burned in fires dating back to 1958 and 1959 however there is no record or evidence of past seeding efforts.

The burned area is a high priority for stabilization and rehabilitation because all acreage is categorized as Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH) for the Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) (Makela and Major 2012). There are six leks within five miles of the fires' perimeter. The burned area provided sage grouse breeding, nesting, brood rearing, and potential winter habitat prior to the fire. Preliminary Priority Habitat comprises areas that have been identified as having the highest conservation value towards maintaining sustainable sage-grouse populations. To best minimize habitat loss in PPH, the BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2012-043 states that Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation (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 of invasive species; and 7) re-establish native species. Other wildlife making use of this area include big horn sheep, mule deer in the winter months, pronghorn in the spring, summer, and fall, golden eagles, sage sparrow, western toad, Mojave black-collared lizard, loggerhead shrike, kit fox, western burrowing owl, and the long-billed curlew.

The fire burned a portion (1%) of the Owyhee Front Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA). Bulldozer suppression line intersects OHV trails in several locations within and immediately adjacent to the fire making the dozer line more readily accessible to motorized traffic. Ten trails will require barrier fences and OHV signs where they intersect suppression bulldozer lines to prevent OHV rider use on the bulldozer lines. These lines are on steep and/or rocky terrain, often include drop-offs, and are hazardous to ride on. Closure signs and barrier fences on the bulldozer lines will help to protect both human life and safety as well as the soil and vegetation resources.

The fire burned approximately 4% of the Black Mountain Wild Horse Herd Management Area. Six wild horses were caught in the burn and after subsequent evaluation by a veterinarian, were euthanized per WO IM-2009-041 direction.

LAND USE PLAN CONSISTENCY

S3 - Aerial Seeding ES Issue 3

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Fire (FIRE-2, pp. 26) directs management to "...apply rehabilitation seed mixtures to meet watershed, wildlife, and riparian objectives ..." and for Special Status Species (SPSS1, pp. 20-21) directs management to "...identify, protect, and enhance key sage grouse habitats and populations...". Therefore, aerial seeding sagebrush following wildland fire adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

S5 - Noxious Weeds ES Issue 5

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Vegetation (VEGE 1, pp. 12-13) directs management to "...apply approved noxious weed control methods (including burning, mechanical, manual, biological, and chemical control methods as identified in the Vegetation Management EIS)...". Therefore, the treatment of noxious weeds adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

S7 - Fence/Gate/Cattleguard ES Issue 2

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Soils and Vegetation (SOILS 1, pp. 9-10 and VEGE1, pp. 12-13) directs management to "...provide a minimum of two growing seasons rest from livestock grazing and other watershed disturbing activities following fires..." and for Recreation (RECT5, pp. 39-40) directs management to "...provide for the

evaluation, expansion, or modification of existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems to further public opportunities to safely enjoy recreational settings, consistent with other management objectives...”. Therefore, the building of 4 miles of temporary fence around Rabbit Creek to protect it from livestock and OHV use, the construction of temporary barrier fence in 10 locations with signs to close fire suppression bulldozer lines and prevent creation of unauthorized OHV trails, the repair of 1 mile of existing fence to exclude Tandem Spring from livestock grazing, and 4 mile of existing fence repair to close the burned area from authorized grazing use occurring in adjacent pastures and grazing allotments adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

S11 - Facilities ES Issue 1

The Sunk Fire occurred within the Murphy Subregion Travel Management area, which is a highly used OHV area receiving well over 50,000 visitors annually, and contains over 850 miles of designated routes. The Murphy Subregion Travel Management Plan was completed in 2009, as directed by the 1999 Owyhee RMP, and is currently undergoing implementation. The replacement of the signs within the travel management area that were lost due to the fire would be in conformance with BLM Manual H-8342, "Travel and Transportation Handbook". Signage is an important component of travel management planning. Signing of travel and transportation networks is necessary for adequate management of the public lands. Directional and informational signs, and placement of these signs, are critical for the safety and enjoyment of the lands, for compliance of rules and regulations, and protection of natural and cultural resources.

S12 - Closures (area, OHV, livestock) ES Issue 2

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Soils (SOIL 1 pp. 9-10) directs management to "...provide a minimum of two growing seasons rest from livestock grazing and other watershed disturbing activities following fires...", and for Fire (FIRE 2, pp. 25-28) directs management to "...decrease soil erosion and sediment yield, restore forage values, and restore upland habitat values and riparian values using fire rehabilitation procedures following a wildfire...”. Therefore, the closure of pasture 6 (Moores Creek) of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment from livestock grazing for two growing seasons and the closure of bulldozer lines that intersect OHV trails within the Owyhee OHV SRMA adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

S13 - Monitoring ES Issue 3

S13/R13: Monitoring

The proposed treatments listed in this plan are in conformance with the Owyhee RMP and associated Record of Decision dated December 30, 1999. In the Monitoring and Assessment Appendix (MONT-1, pp. 75-80) of the RMP it states "...the effects of implementation will be monitored and evaluated on a periodic basis over the life of the plan. Monitoring will be conducted to determine where problems exist with management activities, to evaluate management objectives as to whether or not they are being achieved, to assess the progress toward meeting the standards for rangeland health, and to recommend future actions...”.

Therefore monitoring activities to determine if proposed treatments, repairs, and closures are accomplishing ESR objectives adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

R5 - Noxious Weeds BAR Issue 2

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Vegetation (VEGE 1, pp. 12-13) directs management to "...apply approved noxious weed control methods (including burning, mechanical, manual, biological, and chemical control methods as identified in the Vegetation Management EIS)...". Therefore, the treatment of noxious weeds adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

R7 - Fence/Gate/Cattleguard BAR Issue 4

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Soils and Vegetation (SOILS 1, pp. 9-10 and VEGE1, pp. 12-13) directs management to "...provide a minimum of two growing seasons rest from livestock grazing and other watershed disturbing activities following fires..." and for Recreation (RECT5, 39-40) directs management to "...provide for the evaluation, expansion, or modification of existing motorized and non-motorized trail systems to further public opportunities to safely enjoy recreational settings, consistent with other management objectives...". Therefore, the repair of one mile of existing fence to exclude Tandum Spring from livestock and wild horse grazing adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

R11 - Facilities BAR Issue 4

Management actions outlined in the Owyhee RMP for Fire (FIRE 2, pp. 25-28) directs management to "...decrease soil erosion and sediment yield, restore forage values, and restore upland habitat values and riparian values using fire rehabilitation procedures following a wildfire...". Therefore, the replacement of signs on OHV trails damaged or destroyed by the fire within the Owyhee Front OHV SRMA adheres to this direction and is in conformance with the RMP.

The Sunk Fire occurred within the Murphy Subregion Travel Management area, which is a highly used OHV area receiving well over 50,000 visitors annually, and contains over 850 miles of designated routes. The Murphy Subregion Travel Management Plan was completed in 2009, as directed by the 1999 Owyhee RMP, and is currently undergoing implementation. The replacement of the signs within the travel management area that were lost due to the fire would be in conformance with BLM Manual H-8342, "Travel and Transportation Handbook". Signage is an important component of travel management planning. Signing of travel and transportation networks is necessary for adequate management of the public lands. Directional and informational signs, and placement of these signs, are critical for the safety and enjoyment of the lands, for compliance of rules and regulations, and protection of natural and cultural resources.

COST SUMMARY TABLES

Emergency Stabilization (LF20000ES)

Action/ Spec #	ES Issue #	Planned Action	Unit (Acres, WMs, Number)	# Units	Unit Cost (If Appl.)	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Totals by Spec.
S1		Planning (Project Management)	WM'S	2	\$22,500.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00
S2										
S3	3	Aerial Seeding	Acres	2,121	\$67.42	\$69,000.00	\$74,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$143,000.00
S4										
S5	5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	2,121	\$5.19	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00
S6										
S7	2	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	9	\$14,000.00	\$0.00	\$112,000.00	\$0.00	\$14,000.00	\$126,000.00
S8										
S9										
S10										
S11	1	Facilities	#	60	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
S12										
S13	3	Monitoring	Acres	2,121	\$35.83	\$0.00	\$35,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$76,000.00
S14										
TOTAL COSTS (LF20000ES)						\$69,000	\$253,000	\$37,000	\$48,000	\$407,000
OTHER FUND CODE TOTALS:										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										

Burned Area Rehabilitation (LF32000BR)

Action/ Spec #	BAR Issue #	Planned Action	Unit (Acres, WMs, Number)	# Units	Unit Cost (If Appl.)	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Totals by Spec.
R1										
R2										
R3										
R4										
R5	2	Noxious Weeds	Acres	2,121	\$9.43	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$20,000.00
R6										
R7	4	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	1	\$17,000.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00
R8										
R9										
R10										
R11	4	Facilities	#	30	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
R12										
R13										
R14										
TOTAL COSTS (LF32000BR)						\$0	\$23,000	\$11,000	\$9,000	\$43,000
OTHER FUND CODE TOTALS:										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										
TOTAL COSTS (???)										

PART 2 - POST-FIRE RECOVERY ISSUES

EMERGENCY STABILIZATION ISSUES

1 - Human Life and Safety

During the suppression of the fire, bulldozer line was constructed and these lines intersected existing designated OHV trails in 10 locations. The potential for OHV riders to enter and ride on bulldozer suppression line, even though these lines have been rehabilitated, is high. Many of these suppression lines are in steep and/or rocky terrain making them unsafe to ride on. The use of barrier fence and closure signs would help to mitigate this human life and safety issue and prevent the development of new unauthorized trails. **Because this issue was caused directly by fire suppression activities, the labor and costs associated with barrier fence and closure signs will be paid for with wildland fire suppression funds.**

2 - Soil/Water Stabilization

The burned area contains steep slopes and cliffs that drain into Rabbit Creek, Briar Creek, and Moores Creek. Soils associated with roads and trails are at high risk of erosion from both wind and water. Digital Soil Survey Data (SSURGO, 2008) shows the soils in the burned area as a mix of moderate and high potential for erosion following fires. The fire consumed much of the above ground biomass, leaving the area vulnerable and with an increased risk of erosion from wind, water, and disturbance from off-road recreational enthusiasts. The loss of soil surface material would reduce the potential for seeding treatments to be successful in establishing a healthy and diverse perennial plant community. The successful establishment of perennial native shrubs will provide soil nutrients and stabilization.

The fire also burned through riparian vegetation in a half mile portion of Rabbit Creek with high fire intensity. Rabbit Creek drainage is directly upstream from the town of Murphy, Idaho. A large one hundred year rain event could potentially move mud and debris down the drainage toward the urban area. Although most riparian vegetation should re-sprout following wildfire there are portions that are expected to recover more slowly. A fence enclosure will be necessary to remove livestock and wildhorse use from this area for an extended period of time to ensure full recovery of riparian vegetation and to stabilize the drainage area. The period of rest needed is expected to be moderately long (5-7 years). By excluding grazing from the burned and riparian area with a fence enclosure, authorized grazing use can continue to be made in the unburned portion of pasture #5 South Rabbit of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment (only 9% of this pasture burned).

Because fence construction will occur more than 5 miles away from the nearest sage-grouse lek, lekking grouse will not be impacted. The impacts to nesting sage-grouse from short-term disturbances caused by fence construction would be outweighed by the long-term benefits to local populations provided by improvements to sagebrush habitat within the burn perimeter.

The impacts to golden eagles (nest identified 0.5 miles from burned area) from short-term disturbances caused by fence construction would be outweighed by the long-term benefits to local populations provided by improvements to riparian and sagebrush habitat within the burn perimeter. Every attempt will be made to complete fence construction prior to the 2/1 to 7/31 no disturbance timeframe.

Two grazing allotments were affected by the fire. Because over half of the pasture burned, Pasture #6 (Moores Creek) of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment will be temporarily closed to grazing. Rest will allow recovery of pre-burn native grasses and forbs and help newly seeded sagebrush to establish. Closure in this pasture would be implemented by the Range Program to ensure that the area meets objectives during the closure period. The burned portion of Pasture #5 (South Rabbit) of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment will be closed by the construction of temporary fence enclosure. The rest of the pasture (4,176 BLM acres) did not burn and will not need to be closed. The Silver City Allotment pasture #8 (Moore) and #10 (Point of Rocks) will not require a livestock closure because burned acreage was minimal (38 acres) and was less than 1% of the burn. The repair of existing burned allotment/pasture fences will allow for continued authorized grazing use in pasture #5 of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment, and pasture #8 and #10 in the Silver City Allotment.

3 - Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species

Greater Sage-grouse

Greater sage-grouse (a Candidate species for ESA listing) inhabits the general area during the spring, summer and fall seasons. The Sunk Fire negatively impacted Greater sage-grouse habitat. The landscape within the burned area was known to provide breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and potential winter habitat for sage-grouse prior to the fire. There are no known sage-grouse leks within the burned area, however, there are 6 leks within five miles of the fire perimeter: 4 occupied, and 2 undetermined, (IDFG 2012).

A total of 2,121 acres (the entire burned area) of preliminary priority habitat (PPH) for sage-grouse burned in the Sunk Fire. The majority of this acreage supported mature sagebrush and was intact habitat prior to the fire. The loss of this cover and food source will have adverse impacts to the local Greater sage-grouse for several years to come. Pockets of cheatgrass and noxious weeds are known to exist in various locations across the burned area. The seeding of both Wyoming and low sagebrush across the entire burned area will aid in a faster recovery of vegetation structure necessary for sage-grouse as well as other sagebrush obligate wildlife species and will help to prevent the spread and domination of cheatgrass and noxious weeds. Similar seedings have proven successful from past ESR treatments in the Boise District and are documented in monitoring reports: Chubby Spain 2007; South Trail 2010; Turn 2010; Blair 2005

4 - Critical Heritage Resources

N/A

5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds

Noxious Weeds

Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*), spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), and saltcedar (*Tamarix sp.*) are the primary weeds of concern with high potential to increase within the burned area and surrounding rangeland. These weeds were documented during the fire reconnaissance and in field visits prior to the fire. The current infestation is small enough that if treated within the next three years will have a high likelihood of success. Without a noxious weed control effort, spotted knapweed and whitetop could significantly increase negatively affecting key sage-grouse habitat, big horn sheep and pronghorn antelope seasonal range. If an emergency treatment is not implemented the economic impact to natural resources and the local economy could be significant. All 2,121 acres of the burned public land will be inventoried and treated as needed for noxious weeds in FY14. The objective of this treatment is to identify and control the expected known infestation of noxious weed increase and new infestations using spot herbicide spraying and biological control. This will be proposed under the BAR to suppress the expansion of these weeds. Weed control would be conducted the first year under ES.

BURNED AREA RECOVERY ISSUES

1 - Lands Unlikely to Recover Naturally

The Sunk Fire also negatively impacted a variety of special status and other wildlife and plant species, particularly sagebrush obligate species. Special status wildlife species that likely inhabited BLM managed land within the fire perimeter during all or part of their life cycles prior to the burn include the following: golden eagle, sage sparrow, western toad, Mojave black-collared lizard, loggerhead shrike, kit fox, western burrowing owl, and the long-billed curlew. Habitat for special status plant species occurring on BLM managed lands in the vicinity of the burned area include the following: annual brittlebrush, white-margined wax plant, rigid threadbush, Malheur cryptantha, and stiff milkvetch. Rehabilitation efforts to re-establish shrub communities within the burned area will be crucial to providing suitable habitat for all of the special status species listed above in the near future.

Big Game

Big Horn Sheep

A total of 2,121 acres of big horn sheep habitat administered by BLM were negatively

impacted by the Sunk Fire. The loss of intact sagebrush steppe communities will have negative impacts to big horn sheep in the area, especially in the winter. The successful restoration of burned seasonal habitats will aid in the viability of big horn sheep in the region.

Pronghorn

Pronghorn antelope inhabit the Sunk Fire and surrounding areas; these areas provide breeding and rearing grounds in the spring, summer, and fall seasons. A total of 2,121 acres of seasonal pronghorn antelope habitat administered by BLM were negatively impacted by the Sunk Fire. The loss of mature sagebrush will have negative impacts to pronghorn in the area. The successful restoration of burned seasonal habitats will be important for the viability of pronghorn antelope in the region.

Wild Horses

The Sunk Fire burned approximately 4% of the Black Mountain Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA). This HMA is 50,611 acres in size and has been supporting approximately 70 head of wild horses in 2013. Six wild horses were caught in the burn, and after subsequent evaluation by a veterinarian, all six were euthanized per direction in WO IM-2009-041.

Construction of enclosure fence around Rabbit Creek and repair of existing fence allotment and pasture boundary fences will allow the burned area to be rested from both livestock and wild horses protecting both seeding efforts and natural vegetation recovery. The posting of "WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA BOUNDARY PLEASE KEEP GATE CLOSED" signs will aid in reminding OHV riders to keep gates closed in order to prevent movement of livestock and horses into the closed recovery area. However, due to the high OHV use in this area, gates are often left open after OHV use. This allows movement of livestock and wildhorses into the burned area. The installation of 5 cattle guards, 4 on the HMA boundary and 1 interior will be installed to ensure restricted movement of livestock and wild horses.

Treatments associated with this issue include S3 Aerial Seeding, S5/R5 Noxious Weeds, S7/R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard, and R11 Facilities. Please see descriptions of the treatments proposed under the ES Issue 2 (Soil/Water Stabilization), ES Issue 3 (Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species), ES Issue 2 and BAR Issue 2 (Noxious Weeds), and BAR Issue 4 (Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities) sections of this plan.

2 - Weed Treatments

Whitetop (*Cardaria draba*), spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), and saltcedar (*Tamarix sp.*) are the primary weeds of concern with high potential to increase within the burned area and surrounding rangeland. These weeds were documented during the fire reconnaissance and in field visits prior to the fire. The current infestation is small enough that if treated within the next three years will have a high likelihood of success. Without a noxious weed control effort, spotted knapweed and whitetop could significantly increase negatively affecting key sage-grouse habitat, big horn sheep and pronghorn antelope seasonal range, and livestock forage capabilities. If an emergency treatment is not implemented the economic impact to natural resources and the

local economy could be significant. All 2,121 acres of the burned public land will be re-inventoried and treated as needed for noxious weeds in FY15-16. The objective of this treatment is to identify and control the expected noxious weed increase using spot herbicide spraying and biological control. Weed control would be conducted the second and third year under BAR.

3 - Tree Planting

N/A

4 - Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities

Livestock Management Fences

Tandem Springs exclosure, BLM range improvement project #300947 was impacted by the Sunk Fire. Approximately 1 mile of fence repair/reconstruction is needed to keep both livestock and wild horses out of the spring and surrounding riparian vegetation. Where possible, materials will be used from previous fences that were salvaged or material that was left over from previous projects.

Facilities

Approximately 30 route and closure signs within the Murphy Subregion Travel Management Area were consumed by the wildfire. These signs are necessary to keep OHV recreationalists on designated roads and trails and are critical for the safety and enjoyment of the lands, for compliance of rules and regulations, and the protection of natural and cultural resources.

PART 3 - DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENTS

Issue 1 - Human Life and Safety

S11 Facilities

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Approximately 40 signs (20 of each sign) with U channel posts are needed to accompany the temporary OHV fence barrier segments constructed to restrict OHV travel into the burned area. Accompanying sign language will be one each of: 1) “Area behind this sign is being treated after wildfire disturbance to stabilize area and restore wildlife habitat” and 2) “Wildfire Rehabilitation Area Closed to Off-Highway Vehicle Use.” Signs and fence would be installed as soon as possible to prevent OHV travel into the area. Additional signs are included in this purchase to provide inventory to Field Office recreation specialist to have stock in-hand to replace original signs as damage and vandalism occurs. **Because this potential issue was caused directly by fire suppression activities, the labor and costs associated with barrier fence and closure signs will be paid for with wildland fire suppression funds.**

Approximately 20 signs with language stating “WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT AREA BOUNDARY PLEASE KEEP GATED CLOSED” would be installed at all affected gate openings on the HMA boundary. The intent of the signage is to encourage OHV and other users in the area it to prevent users from leaving gates open and to close the gates and prevent wild horse and livestock use in the burned area during the closure period. Additional signs would be ordered to have stock in-hand to replace original signs as damage and vandalism occurs.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

Due to the OHV activity in the area and the new protective fence segments that will be constructed, signage is necessary to assist with communication with the public of the need to assist with the recovery of the burned area. With the amount of shrub removal adjacent to designated OHV trails, the potential for unauthorized OHV travel has significantly increased. Informational signing on-site in an effort to educate and inform the public should help to reduce off-road travel.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

Sign cost is minimal, with this form of communication directly reaching target audience 24/7. The information and education signs will inform and educate the users that are being directly impacted during short-term recovery period. Without proper signage in the area, the potential for OHV users to travel on unauthorized and non-designated trails, leave unsigned gates open and cause damage to new barrier fences is significant. Any of these actions taken by users would result in adding to the potential of unrestricted livestock and wild horse movement into closed pastures. This could not only damage the re-seeding efforts but also result in long-term damage to the recovering native vegetation and other natural resources located in the area. **The labor and costs associated with barrier fence and closure signs will be paid for with wildland fire suppression funds.**

Issue 2 - Soil/Water Stabilization

S7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Approximately 10 segments, totaling about 1.0 mile of temporary barrier fence (3-strand barbless wire) would be constructed to prevent OHV movement into the area from established and designated OHV trail system routes. The labor and costs associated with barrier fence will be paid for with wildland fire suppression funds. A 4.0 mile temporary exclosure fence (3-strand barbed wire, antelope specifications) would be constructed around the perimeter of the burned riparian area in the Rabbit Creek drainage. Four miles of pasture boundary fence (3-strand barbed wire, antelope specifications) would be repaired to protect the treatment area from wild horse and livestock access and grazing use. The fire damaged area is in a high OHV recreational use area and livestock and wild horse movement will be managed with fences. Because of high use of this area by OHV's, 5 cattleguards are necessary to maintain fence effectiveness, reliance on users to keep gates closed for restriction of livestock and wild horse movement is not fail-safe.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

The wildfire burned through the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch and Silver City Allotments, affecting structural improvements that are necessary for grazing system management. In the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch Allotment, both boundary and interior pasture fences damaged by the wildfire will need to be repaired to implement the rest period on pasture #6. These fences also allow authorized grazing to occur in the unburned portion of pasture #5 of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch allotment during the burned area rest since only 9% of this pasture burned. After the rest period the fences are needed to resume the livestock grazing rotation.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

Fence repair (\$6,500/mile), new fence construction (\$10,000/mile), and cattle guard installation (\$5,000 per cattleguard), all completed to BLM specifications and are feasible measures used to rest wildfire damaged areas during the vegetation recovery period. Damaged wood posts would be replaced with steel pipe, increasing the life expectancy of the fence and making it more resistant to damage from future wildfires.

Without repair and/or construction of fences, livestock, wild horse, and OHV movement in the affected areas would be unchecked leaving potential for immediate and long-term damage to the areas. The effects to the area would be increased off-road travel by OHV's resulting in unauthorized trails, damage to the Spring and Rabbit Creek drainages from livestock and wild horse use and reduced probability of seeding success from the aerial seeding in critical sage-grouse PPH area.

S12 Closures (area, OHV, livestock)

A. Treatment/Activity Description

The Moores Creek #6 pasture and the fenced portion of South Rabbit #5 pasture of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch allotment and will be rested from livestock grazing and wild horse use for 2 growing seasons and potentially longer if closure objectives have not been met at that time. OHV use would be limited to designated roads and trails.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

The fire burned most of the existing vegetation within the burn perimeter leaving the remnant vegetation and soil surface highly susceptible to further damage by livestock, wild horses, or OHV's. The purpose of this treatment is to rest the burn area, allowing the existing perennial grass/forb vegetation to recover and aerial shrub seeding treatment to establish and stabilize the burned area. Re-establishment of sagebrush and recovery of the herbaceous perennial plant community would reduce or inhibit the expansion of annual vegetation and assist in the stabilization soil resources.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

No costs under ES are associated with the livestock closures. Implementation of a closure is a reasonable method for attaining vegetation objectives in comparison to implementation of other aspects of the ES plan.

Issue 3 - Habitat for Federal/State Listed, Proposed, or Candidate Species

S3 Aerial Seeding

A. Treatment/Activity Description

All of the burned BLM land is identified to be aerial seeded with native shrub species. This treatment will occur in early FY14 as funding allows. Optimum timing for sagebrush seeding would be prior to the first snow fall in approximately early December, however if funding is not available to complete this treatment in this timeframe the seeding will occur as soon as possible but prior to March 1, 2014. Appropriate wildlife and cultural resource inventories/surveys will be complete prior to implementing these specific projects.

Sunk Fire Aerial Seed Mix
2,121 Acres

Species and Variety	Seed Rate Lbs/Acres	Seeding Rate PLS
Shrub Mix		
1. Low sagebrush	1.00	0.16 PLS minimum
5. Wyoming big sagebrush	1.00	0.16 PLS minimum

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

The fire intensity removed nearly 100% of the shrub cover and consumed all shrub skeletons. The area is left with little to no above ground structural component. Because almost all of the sagebrush cover was consumed, natural regeneration is not possible as sagebrush seed does not persist in the soil. The presence of unburned sagebrush islands as a seed source for natural regeneration are very few and in some parts of the burned area do not exist at all."

This treatment will aid in the re-establishment of the pre-fire shrub community that matches the structural component and species composition that existed before the wildfire event. Accelerating the rate of re-establishment of native shrubs is important in maintaining the value of the area as sage-grouse priority potential habitat, mule deer, antelope and California bighorn sheep habitat.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

The treatment and activities are reasonable for the type of issues identified for this site. Estimated aerial application contracting cost and seed purchase are typical for the Boise District Office area. Seed cost varies from year to year and this expense is far less than the value of degraded sage-grouse habitat. Left untreated this area would have low probability of returning to a shrub dominated community in a reasonable time frame which would leave

the area vulnerable to infestation by noxious and other undesirable weed species. Ultimately, this site could be removed from PPH if untreated.

S13 Monitoring

A. Treatment/Activity Description

See Monitoring Section

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

See Monitoring Section

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

See Monitoring Section

Issue 5 - Invasive Plants and Weeds

S5 Noxious Weeds

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Noxious weeds that have already been identified by the weed program as being present within the fire perimeter are whitetop (*Cardaria draba*) and spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*). These species will be monitored for spread and treated to prevent further expansion within the burned area. Inventories for other noxious weeds will occur throughout the burned area, with emphasis being on corridors such as roads, trails, riparian areas, fences, range improvements, and other disturbed areas. Other noxious weeds species identified within a five mile radius of the fire perimeter that may adversely impact the burned area are Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*), Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), and saltcedar (*Tamarix* sp.). If these or other noxious weed species are found, they will be inventoried, GPS'ed, treated, monitored and retreated as necessary; infestations may also be treated with biological control agents if warranted. Treated infestations will be monitored over a three year period documenting treatment effectiveness and expansion. Noxious weeds populations still persisting within the burned fire perimeter after the three year period will be transitioned to the District Noxious weed program for future inventorying and treatments. All actions would be in accordance with the Boise District Noxious Weed EA, Environmental Assessment #ID100-2005-EA-265.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

Whitetop and spotted knapweed infestations are present in the area and are expected to expand due to the removal of existing plant cover as a result of the wildfire. The opportunistic nature of noxious weeds will allow them to take advantage of reduced competition from native plants. Inventory and treatment immediately after the wildfire event will aid in preventing expansion of existing and reducing new infestation of noxious weeds in the area. Control of noxious weeds is imperative to creating a diverse mixture of plant species that will provide suitable conditions for quality habitat for sage-grouse and other wildlife species in the future.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

If the affected area is not inventoried and treated it would be reasonable to expect that a portion of existing weeds would become permanent occupants on site, degrading the overall ecological health of the site. Weed treatments immediately after a wildfire that prevent existing populations from expanding and prevent spot infestations from becoming established is more cost effective than a later treatment of a larger infestation. If weed populations are left unchecked to expand and invade, any attempts at future treatments would be more costly and have a reduced chance for effectiveness. Furthermore, field work would be combined with other weed treatments in the area for cost efficiency.

Issue 2 - Weed Treatments

R5 Noxious Weeds

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Noxious weeds that have already been identified by the weed program as being present within the fire perimeter are whitetop (*Cardaria draba*) and spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*). These species will be monitored for spread and treated to prevent further expansion within the burned area. Inventories for other noxious weeds will occur throughout the burned area, with emphasis being on corridors such as roads, trails, riparian areas, fences, range improvements, and other disturbed areas. Other noxious weeds species identified within a five mile radius of the fire perimeter that may adversely impact the burned area are Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*), Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*), and saltcedar (*Tamarix* sp.). If these or other noxious weed species are found, they will be inventoried, GPS'ed, treated, monitored and retreated as necessary; infestations may also be treated with biological control agents if warranted. Treated infestations will be monitored over a three year period documenting treatment effectiveness and expansion. Noxious weeds populations still persisting within the burned fire perimeter after the three year period will be transitioned to the District Noxious weed program for future inventorying and treatments. All actions would be in accordance with the Boise District Noxious Weed EA, Environmental Assessment #ID100-2005-EA-265.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

Whitetop and spotted knapweed infestations are present in the area and are expected to expand due to the removal of existing plant cover as a result of the wildfire. The opportunistic nature of noxious weeds will allow them to take advantage of reduced competition from native plants. Inventory and treatment immediately after the wildfire event will aid in preventing expansion of existing and reducing new infestation of noxious weeds in the area. Control of noxious weeds is imperative to creating a diverse mixture of plant species that will provide suitable conditions for quality habitat for sage-grouse and other wildlife species in the future.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

If the affected area is not inventoried and treated it would be reasonable to expect that a portion of existing weeds would become permanent occupants on site, degrading the overall ecological health of the site. Weed treatments immediately after a wildfire that prevent existing populations from expanding and prevent spot infestations from becoming established is more cost effective than a later treatment of a larger infestation. If weed populations are left unchecked to expand and invade, any attempts at future treatments would be more costly and have a reduced chance for effectiveness. Furthermore, field work would be combined with other weed treatments in the area for cost efficiency.

Issue 4 - Repair/Replace Fire Damage to Minor Facilities

R7 Fence/Gate/Cattleguard

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Approximately 1.0 mile of the Tandem Spring enclosure fence that was burned in the fire and would be removed and reconstructed (4-strand barbed wire, antelope specifications).

All fences will be constructed to BLM fence standards and adhere to applicable wildlife specifications.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

The fence replacement is needed to protect the spring from both livestock and wild horse use in the future.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

Fence Repair (\$6,500/mile) are inexpensive means to rest a wildfire damaged area during the recovery period. Repairing existing fences to the greatest extent possible to protect the spring is very cost effective. Damaged wood stretch points and corners would be replaced with galvanized steel pipe thus increasing the longevity of the structures and resistance of future wildfire damages. If fences were not repaired or constructed livestock and wild horse movement in the area would be left unchecked and could cause immediate damage to the spring.

R11 Facilities

A. Treatment/Activity Description

Approximately 30 OHV route designations and closure replacement signs (stickers and survivor posts) are needed to replace fire damaged signs within the designated Owyhee Front SRMA OHV area. Replacement signs would be installed as soon as possible to prevent

OHV movement into the burned area. Additional signs would be ordered to have stock on-hand to replace original signs as damage and vandalism occurs.

B. How does the treatment relate to damage or changes caused by the fire?

These signs would replace existing trail marker signs that were damaged or destroyed by the fire. With the amount of shrub removal adjacent to designated OHV trails, the potential for unauthorized OHV travel has significantly increased. Informational signing on-site in an effort to educate and inform the public should help to reduce off-road travel.

C. Why is the treatment/activity reasonable, within policy, and cost effective?

Sign cost is minimal, with this form of communication directly reaching target audience 24/7. The information and education signs will inform and educate the users that are being directly impacted during short-term recovery period. Without proper signage in the area, the potential for OHV users to travel on unauthorized and non-designated trails, leave unsigned gates open and cause damage to new barrier fences is significant. Any of these actions taken by users would result in adding to the potential of unrestricted livestock and wild horse movement into closed pastures. This could not only damage the re-seeding efforts but also result in long-term damage to the recovering native vegetation and other natural resources located in the area.

PART 4 - DETAILED TREATMENT COST TABLE

Action / Spec #	Action Description	Unit Type	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Total Cost
S1	Planning (Project Management)								
1	PLANNING	WM'S	45	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00
S3	Aerial Seeding ES Issue 3								
1	AERIAL SEEDING	Acres	143	\$1,000.00	\$69,000.00	\$74,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$143,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$69,000.00	\$74,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$143,000.00
S5	Noxious Weeds ES Issue 5								
1	NOXIOUS WEEDS	Acres	11	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00
S7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard ES Issue 2								
1	FENCING	Acres	126	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$112,000.00	\$0.00	\$14,000.00	\$126,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$112,000.00	\$0.00	\$14,000.00	\$126,000.00
S11	Facilities ES Issue 1								
1	FACILITIES	Each	6	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
S13	Monitoring ES Issue 3								
1	MONITORING	WM'S	76	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$35,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$76,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$35,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$76,000.00
ES	Grand Total			\$6,000.00	\$69,000.00	\$253,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$48,000.00	\$407,000.00
Action / Spec #	Action Description	Unit Type	# Units	Unit Cost	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Total Cost
R5	Noxious Weeds BAR Issue 2								
1	NOXIOUS WEEDS	WM'S	20	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$20,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$20,000.00
R7	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard BAR Issue 4								
1	FENCE	Miles	17	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,000.00
R11	Facilities BAR Issue 4								
1	FACILITIES	Each	6	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
	Total			\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
BAR	Grand Total			\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$23,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$43,000.00
Project	Grand Total			\$9,000.00	\$69,000.00	\$276,000.00	\$48,000.00	\$57,000.00	\$450,000.00

PART 5 - SEED LISTS

DRILL SEED

AERIAL SEED

Low Sagebrush

Species	Scientific Name	% PLS	PLS Seeds / sq. ft.	PLS Seeds / ac.	Seeds / lb (bulk)	Total Seeds / Acre (Bulk)	Aerial Seedings (Acre)	Lbs / Acre	Total Lbs.	Cost / Lb	Total Cost
Low Sagebrush	Artemisia arbuscula	16.0%	3.57	155,509	972,000	971,933	1,300.0	0.2	208.0	\$ 30.00	\$39,000.00
TOTALS:			3.57	155,509	972,000	971,933		0.2		\$ 30.00	\$39,000.00

Wyoming Big Sagebrush

Species	Scientific Name	% PLS	PLS Seeds / sq. ft.	PLS Seeds / ac.	Seeds / lb (bulk)	Total Seeds / Acre (Bulk)	Aerial Seedings (Acre)	Lbs / Acre	Total Lbs.	Cost / Lb	Total Cost
Wyoming Big Sagebrush, Wyoming	Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis	16.0%	9.18	399,881	2,500,000	2,499,255	1,200.0	0.2	192.0	\$ 24.00	\$28,800.00
TOTALS:			9.18	399,881	2,500,000	2,499,255		0.2		\$ 24.00	\$28,800.00

SEEDLINGS

Seedling Species	Scientific Name	Acres of Seedlings planted.	# of Seedlings per Acre	Total # of Seedlings	Cost / Seedling	Total Cost
TOTALS:		0.0	0	0		\$ 0.00

PART 6 - 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 Owyhee Field Office. Similar seedings have proven successful from past ESR treatments in the Boise District and are documented in monitoring reports: Chubby Spain 2007; South Trail 2010; Turn 2010; Blair 2005.

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 2,121 acres in the treatment area is generally available in the required quantities. Aerial seeding would not occur until the winter of FY14 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 Owyhee Field Office. Similar seedings have proven successful from past ESR treatments in the Boise District and are documented in monitoring reports: Chubby Spain 2007; South Trail 2010; Turn 2010; Blair 2005.

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 for two growing seasons or until resource objectives listed in this ES and BAR plan are met. This will help the new shrubs to 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. Wild horses will be kept off of pasture #6 of the Rabbit Creek/Peters Gulch allotment (1,697 acres) with existing and repaired existing fence for two years or until resource objectives listed in this ES and BAR plan are met.

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

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:

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:

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

Yes No Rationale:

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

Non-native Plants	Native Plants
	Low Sagebrush (<i>Artemisia arbuscula</i>)
	Wyoming Big Sagebrush, Wyoming (<i>Artemisia tridentata wyomingensis</i>)

PART 7 - COST-RISK ANALYSIS

A. Probability of Treatments Successfully Meeting Objectives

Action/Spec #	ES Issue #	Planned ES Action (LF20000ES)	Unit (acres, WMs, Number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
S3	3	Aerial Seeding	Acres	2121	\$143,000.00	80%
S5	5	Noxious Weeds	Acres	2121	\$11,000.00	90%
S7	2	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	9	\$126,000.00	100%
S11	1	Facilities	#	60	\$6,000.00	100%
S13	3	Monitoring	Acres	2121	\$76,000.00	100%
					\$362,000.00	

Action/Spec #	BAR Issue #	Planned BAR Action (LF32000BR)	Unit (acres, WMs, Number)	# Units	Total Cost	% Probability of Success
R5	2	Noxious Weeds	Acres	2121	\$20,000.00	90%
R7	4	Fence/Gate/Cattleguard	Miles	1	\$17,000.00	100%
R11	4	Facilities	#	30	\$6,000.00	100%
					\$43,000.00	

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 shrubs will help aid in the establishment and recruitment of future shrub cover, and will have a positive effect on the forbs and grasses in the area. The noxious weed treatments will help protect adjacent private and BLM lands against further expansion of noxious weeds. The temporary protection fence and existing fence repair will help to ensure that no disturbance from livestock and wild horses occurs in the newly seeded area.

No Action Yes No Rationale for Answer:

Without shrub cover the area will become unsuitable for PPH habitat, will be slow in shrub recovery and will have a high likely hood for invasive annual grass expansion due to the amount of untreated bare soil. Known and introduced noxious weed species will quickly expand and dominate parts of the area. Wildlife habitat on adjacent unburned land would be compromised and left at-risk with the expansion of invasive annuals and noxious weeds on the burned area.

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:

The last burn in the area was in 1958. This was a mature and stable ecosystem that with existing native shrubs and grasses kept cheatgrass introduction to a minimum. With the shrubs removed there is ample open area to establish aerially seeded shrubs, however this also gives introduced annual grasses a chance for expansion. The quick and successful establishment of shrubs will help keep the annual grass movement at a minimum. The open areas once occupied by shrubs are fertile ground without competition. When sagebrush seed that is a close ecotype and of high PLS is applied in the right seeding treatment window there is a good chance for seeding success. With successful establishment of seeded shrubs they will in turn help aid in the establishment and recruitment of future shrub cover sustaining the area. Exclusion of livestock in the area will also assist with seedling establishment.

Suitable sites aerially seeded with sagebrush on average exhibit a 70% success rate across the Boise District, particularly in areas receiving 10 or more inches of average annual precipitation (e.g., Loamy 10-12, Loamy 10-13, Loamy 12-16 ecological sites). Success is defined as meeting ESR Plan objectives for seedling survivorship; typically an average of 1 (or >1) seedling per 10m² after third year in suitable locations across seeding area. Specific examples include:

2010 South Trail Fire:

13.0 and 6.0 average Wyoming big sagebrush/10m²

- Loamy 8-12 and Sandy Loam 8-12

2010 Hot Tea Fire:

1.1 average mountain big sagebrush/10m² and 5.3 average low sagebrush/10m² (in areas not burned by 2012 Stout Fire)

- Loamy 12-16, Loamy 8-12, Sandy Loam 8-12

Weed control efforts in this area and for similar noxious weed species and in similar soils and precipitation has proved to be successful. The objective is to contain known infestations from mass spread and to detect new invaders. Known sites are already identified which will aid in the successful monitoring of spread and treatment. Although the number of OHV trails and two track roads in the area will pose a threat, the OHV routes are identified, riders are kept to existing roads and trails, and these are easily traveled by noxious weed personnel to inventory the area. There is a high likelihood for early detection and rapid response for new noxious weed invasion.

No Action Yes No Rationale for Answer:

The burned area has a high potential for expansion of invasive annuals and noxious weeds and there is a probability that over time these species could move into adjacent unburned areas.

Alternative(s) Yes No Rationale for Answer:

N/A

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

Proposed Action

Alternative(s)

No Action

Comments:

None

C. Risk of Resource Value Loss or Damage

No Action - Treatments not Implemented

Resource Value	N/A	None	Low	Med	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

Resource Value	N/A	None	Low	Med	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 8 - MONITORING PLAN

S3 - Aerial Seeding - ES Issue 3

Identify the objective of the treatment:

The goal of the treatment is to promote recovery of ecosystem health, restore sagebrush structure and function, reduce the expansion of invasive grasses and noxious weeds, and prevent erosion in susceptible areas from high fire severity.

The aerial seeding treatment would be considered successful when the following objectives are met:

- a. Aerially seeded sagebrush species attain a density of 1 per 10m² in suitable areas.
- b. Sagebrush is found to be common in qualitative surveys (site assessments).

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Aerial seeding treatment implementation will be monitored during contract administration to ensure contract specifications are met. A Contract Officer Representative (COR) will be at the landing site with the contractor, and a Project Inspector (PI) will be on-site to measure seed distribution. Any changes from the planned implementation would be noted in the project file "as built" discussion.

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

The site will be monitored by District ESR staff annually for three consecutive years following fire containment. An evaluation of monitoring data and qualitative assessments by ESR monitoring staff and Field Office staff will be completed annually.

- a. Aerially seeded shrub density will be collected utilizing a 10 m² plot (1.73 meter radius circle) in areas considered suitable for shrub establishment.
- b. Photo plots and qualitative site assessments will also be conducted to inform seeding success.
- c. Data collection will occur between April and July of each year.
- d. An ESR Monitoring Report which includes results, conclusions, and recommendations will be submitted by September of each year for three years; the final report will be submitted the third year after fire containment.

S5 - Noxious Weeds - ES Issue 5

Identify the objective of the treatment:

Two species of noxious weeds have been identified and recorded within the burned area and four more are found within a five mile radius. It is expected that these weeds will expand their range as a result of the fire. Since these weed species are not uniformly distributed across the burn area, a quantifiable objective cannot be determined.

The objective for the first growing season is to conduct an inventory of the burned area. Noxious weeds detected during the inventory would be treated when possible. Any expansion of known populations of noxious weeds would be treated to contain their spread. The objective for the second and third years is to decrease the size and abundance of noxious weed infestations within the burned area as compared to the first year.

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Inventory and treatment data will be recorded in the NISIMS database, in Pesticide Application Records, and using GPS/GIS. This data will include information on species, location and size of infestation, chemicals applied, amount of chemicals applied, weather, phenology, etc.

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

Size and abundance of noxious weed infestations as well as any needed treatments would be compared between years one, two, and three to determine treatment effectiveness. If noxious weed populations remain in the burned area beyond the third year, responsibility would be transferred to the Boise District Noxious Weed Program for ongoing inventory, treatment and monitoring using funding sources other than ESR.

S7 - Fence/Gate/Cattleguard - ES Issue 2

Identify the objective of the treatment:

The objective of this treatment is to: 1) construct approximately one mile of barrier fence to protect burned areas from OHV off trail/overland travel; 2) repair or replace approximately 4 miles of existing boundary and interior livestock management fence for treatment protection and; 3) to build approximately 4 miles of temporary protection fence. This will help to prevent livestock and wildhorse grazing, restrict OHV movement to designated trails and ensure natural recovery of the burned area with very limited disturbance. Fence construction/reconstruction would also maintain grazing integrity on affected allotments.

The fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards.

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.

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

Repair and replacement of damaged fences and the construction of temporary protection fence will be monitored through contract administration. Repairs and completion will be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Construction of temporary protection fence will be completed within the first year of the fire. Repairs not needed for protection will be completed within the second or third year of the fire.

S11 - Facilities - ES Issue 1

Identify the objective of the treatment:

To sign bulldozer suppression lines as closed on the OHV barrier fences and ask the public to please close gates/ Wild Horse Herd Management Area utilizing signs.

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Sign placement will be implemented by operations and field office resource staff to ensure proper placement and distances are adhered to. During normal field visits field office staff will ensure sign installation is functioning appropriately.

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

Sign placement will be implemented by operations and field office resource staff to ensure proper placement and distances are adhered to. During normal field visits field office staff will ensure sign installation is functioning appropriately.

S12 - Closures (area, OHV, livestock) - ES Issue 2

Identify the objective of the treatment:

Exclusion of livestock is critical for the recovery of burned vegetation and will help with sagebrush seeding establishment. The burned area would be closed to livestock grazing for a minimum period of two growing seasons or until objectives are met to promote recovery of burned vegetation and to facilitate the establishment of seeded species 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 Rehabilitation Plan (#ID-090-2004-050). Livestock closure areas would be considered adequately recovered and available for grazing when the following grazing resumption objectives are met:

a. Foliar cover of perennial grasses, excluding Sandberg's bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), shall meet or exceed 10%.

b. Greater than 95% of canopy gaps are less than 50cm.

c. In addition to the above objectives, a qualitative assessment of the following will also occur before grazing resumption would occur:

- Perennial plant vigor
- Desirable perennial plant seed production
- Precipitation information during the non-growing (winter) and growing (spring through early summer) seasons.
- Erosion potential

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Site would be monitored by Field Office and Operations personnel during the regularly scheduled grazing season to ensure the closure (allotment or pasture closures, protective fences, water sources, and/or mineral/salt placement) is functioning to keep livestock where authorized .

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

Vegetation recovery will be monitored by District ESR monitoring staff annually for three consecutive years following fire containment. Recommendations for opening the burned area to livestock will be made by an ESR/Field Office interdisciplinary team based on monitoring results.

a. Monitoring methods include line-point intercept, gap intercept, photo plots, and qualitative site assessments.

b. Data collection will occur between April and July of each year.

c. An ESR Monitoring Report which includes results, conclusions, and recommendations will be submitted by September of each year for three years, to the Washington Office; the final report will be submitted on the third year after fire containment.

S13 - Monitoring - ES Issue 3

Identify the objective of the treatment:

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

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

R5 - Noxious Weeds - BAR Issue 2

Identify the objective of the treatment:

Two species of noxious weeds have been identified and recorded within the burned area and four more are found within a five mile radius. It is expected that these weeds will expand their range as a result of the fire. Since these weed species are not uniformly distributed across the burn area, a quantifiable objective cannot be determined.

The objective for the first growing season is to conduct an inventory of the burned area. Noxious weeds detected during the inventory would be treated when possible. Any expansion of known populations of noxious weeds would be treated to contain their spread. The objective for the second and third years is to decrease the size and abundance of noxious weed infestations within the burned area as compared to the first year.

Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Inventory and treatment data will be recorded in the NISIMS database, in Pesticide Application Records, and using GPS/GIS. This data will include information on species, location and size of infestation, chemicals applied, amount of chemicals applied, weather, phenology, etc.

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

Size and abundance of noxious weed infestations as well as and needed treatments would be compared between years one, two and three to determine treatment effectiveness. If noxious weed populations remain in the burned area beyond the third year, responsibility would be transferred to the Boise District Noxious Weed Program for ongoing inventory, treatment and monitoring using funding sources other than ESR.

R7 - Fence/Gate/Cattleguard - BAR Issue 4

Identify the objective of the treatment:

The objective of this treatment is to: 1) construct approximately one mile of barrier fence to protect burned areas from OHV off trail/overland travel; 2) repair or replace approximately 4 miles of existing boundary and interior livestock management fence for treatment protection and; 3) to build approximately 4 miles of temporary protection fence. This will help to

prevent livestock and wildhorse grazing, restrict OHV movement to designated trails and ensure natural recovery of the burned area with very limited disturbance. Fence construction/reconstruction would also maintain grazing integrity on affected allotments. The fences would be constructed to BLM fence standards.

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.

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

Repair and replacement of damaged fences and the construction of temporary protection fence will be monitored through contract administration. Repairs and completion will be documented in a project file “as built” and filed in the project file. Construction of temporary protection fence will be completed within the first year of the fire. Repairs not needed for protection will be completed within the second or third year of the fire.

R11 - Facilities - BAR Issue 4

Identify the objective of the treatment:

To replace damaged signs that identifies the Owyhee Front OHV route.

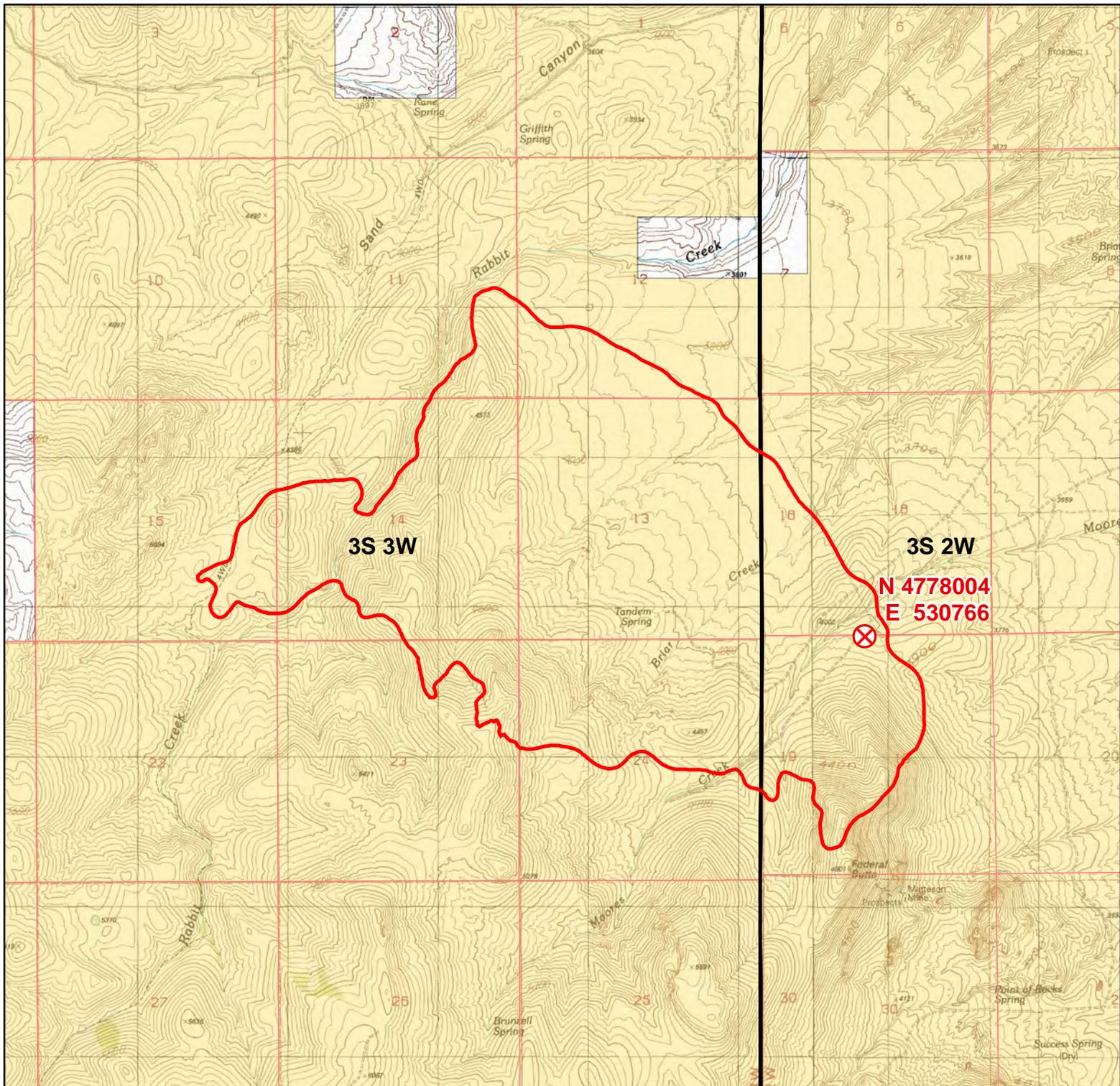
Describe how implementation will be monitored:

Sign placement will be implemented by operations and field office resource staff to ensure proper placement and distances are adhered to. During normal field visits field office staff will ensure sign installation is functioning appropriately.

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

Sign placement will be implemented by operations and field office resource staff to ensure proper placement and distances are adhered to. During normal field visits field office staff will ensure sign installation is functioning appropriately.

PART 9 - MAPS



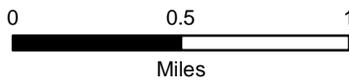
Fire Origin:
T03S R02W, Sec 19

Total acres: 2,121
BLM 2,121 acres

Boise District 2013 Owyhee Field Office Fire: HQ3R Sunk

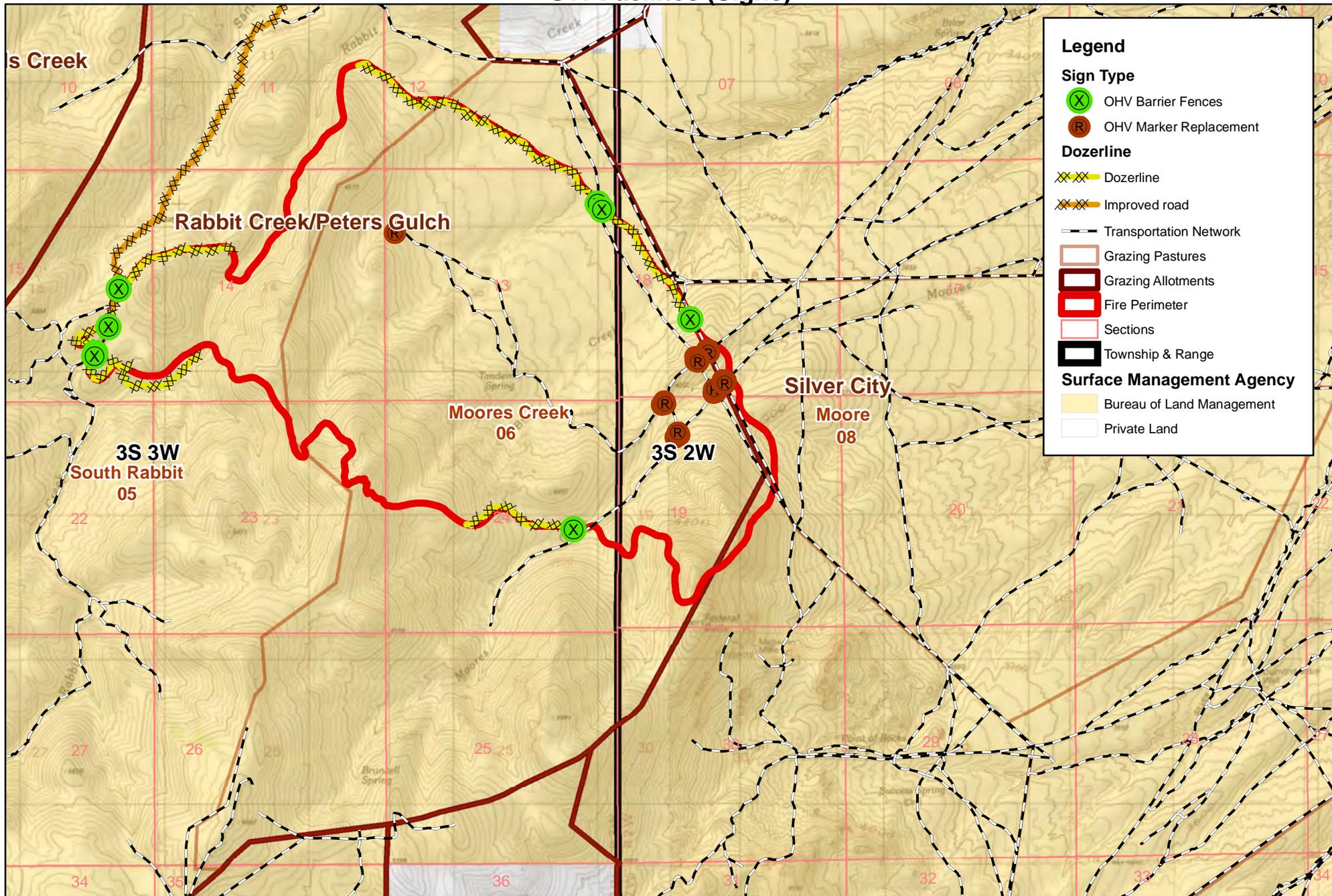
- Fire Origin
- Fire Perimeter
- BLM
- Private
- Township
- Section

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 projection: UTM 11, NAD 1983, meters



Map Date: July 18, 2013

Boise District BLM HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R S11 Facilities (Signs)



Legend

Sign Type

- OHV Barrier Fences
- OHV Marker Replacement

Dozerline

- Dozerline
- Improved road

Transportation Network

- Transportation Network

Grazing Pastures

- Grazing Pastures

Grazing Allotments

- Grazing Allotments

Fire Perimeter

- Fire Perimeter

Sections

- Sections

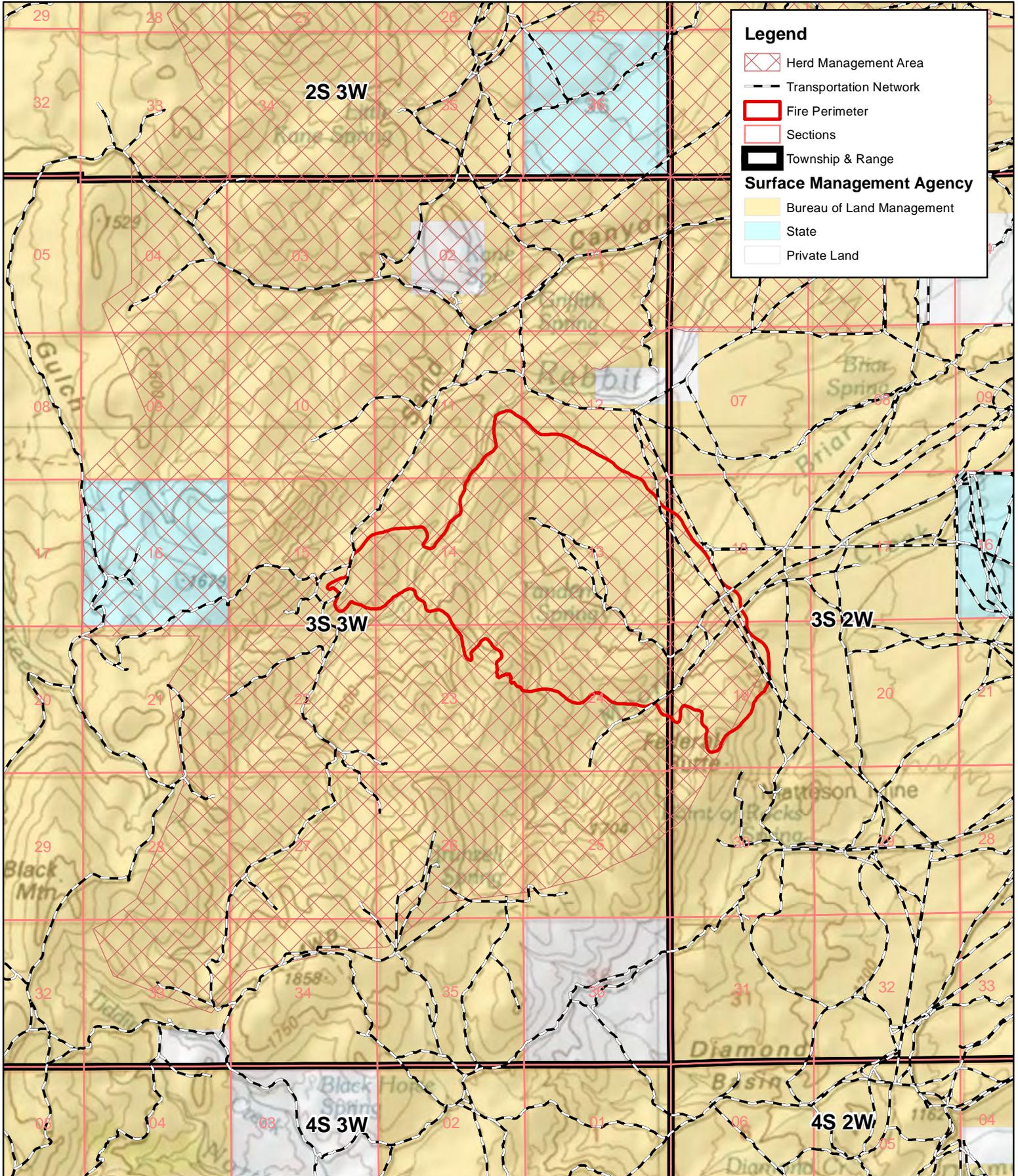
Township & Range

- Township & Range

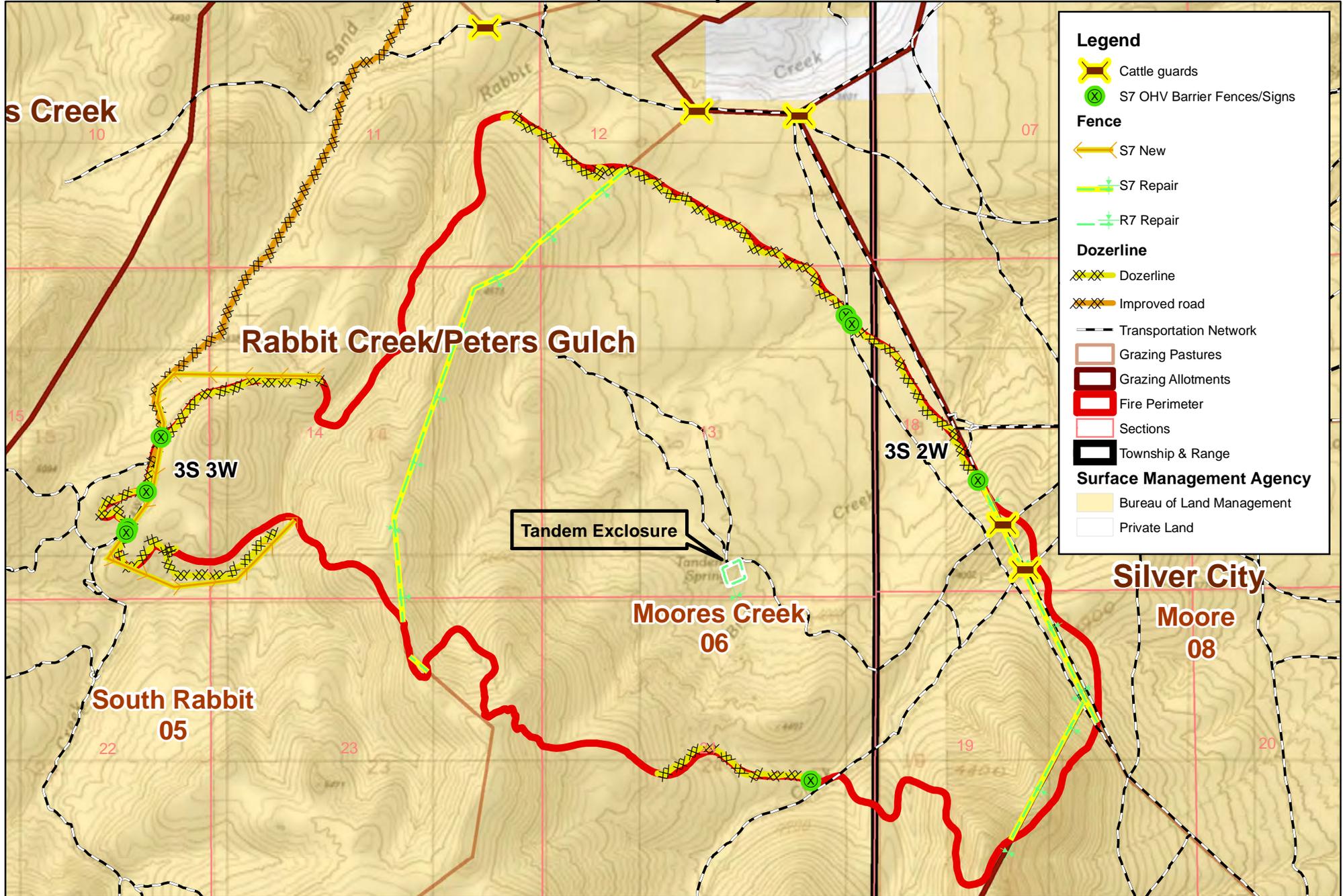
Surface Management Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private Land

Boise District BLM HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R Wild Horse Herd Management Area (HMA)



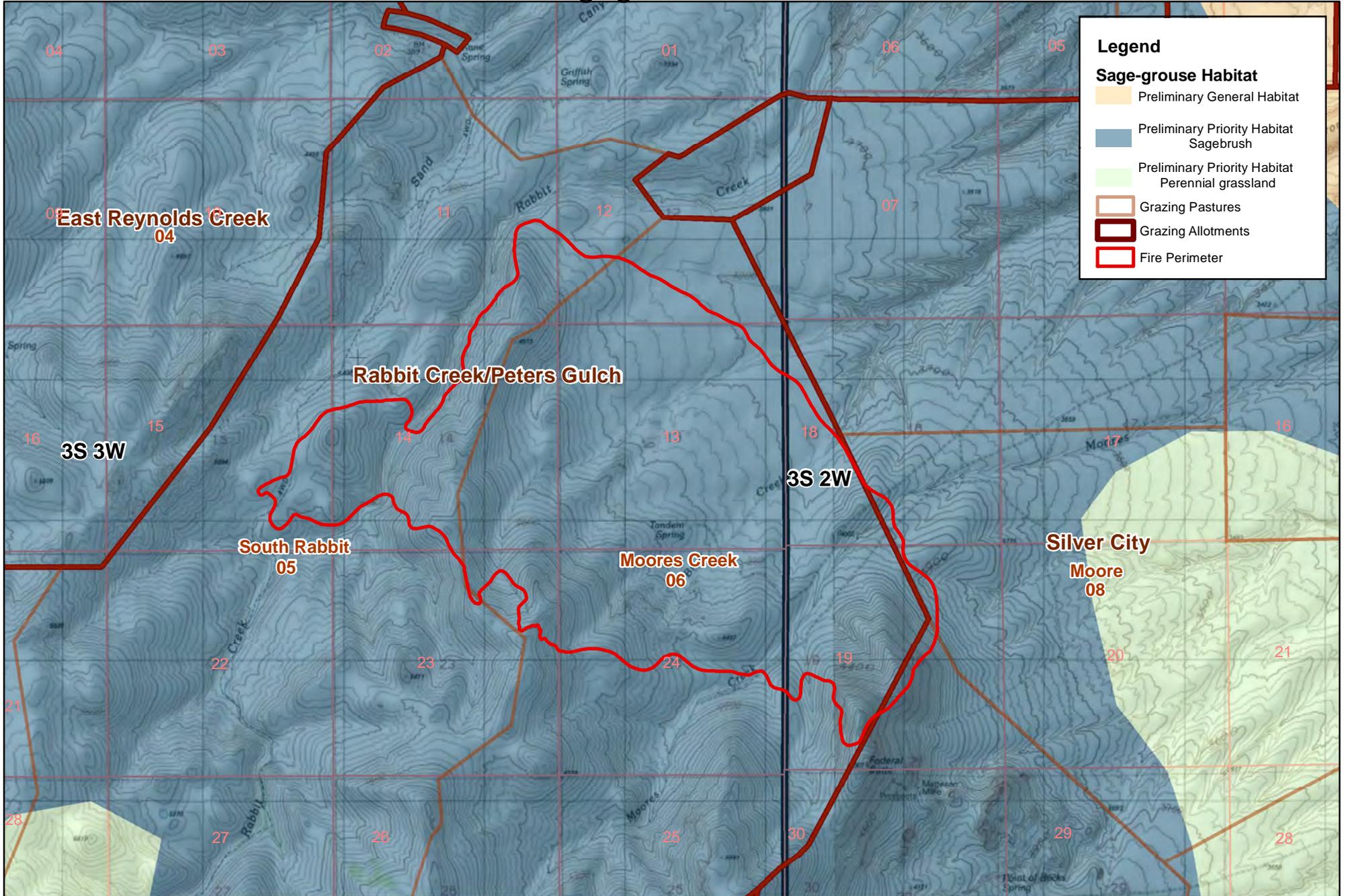
Boise District BLM HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R S7/R7 New Fence, Fence Repair & Cattle Guards



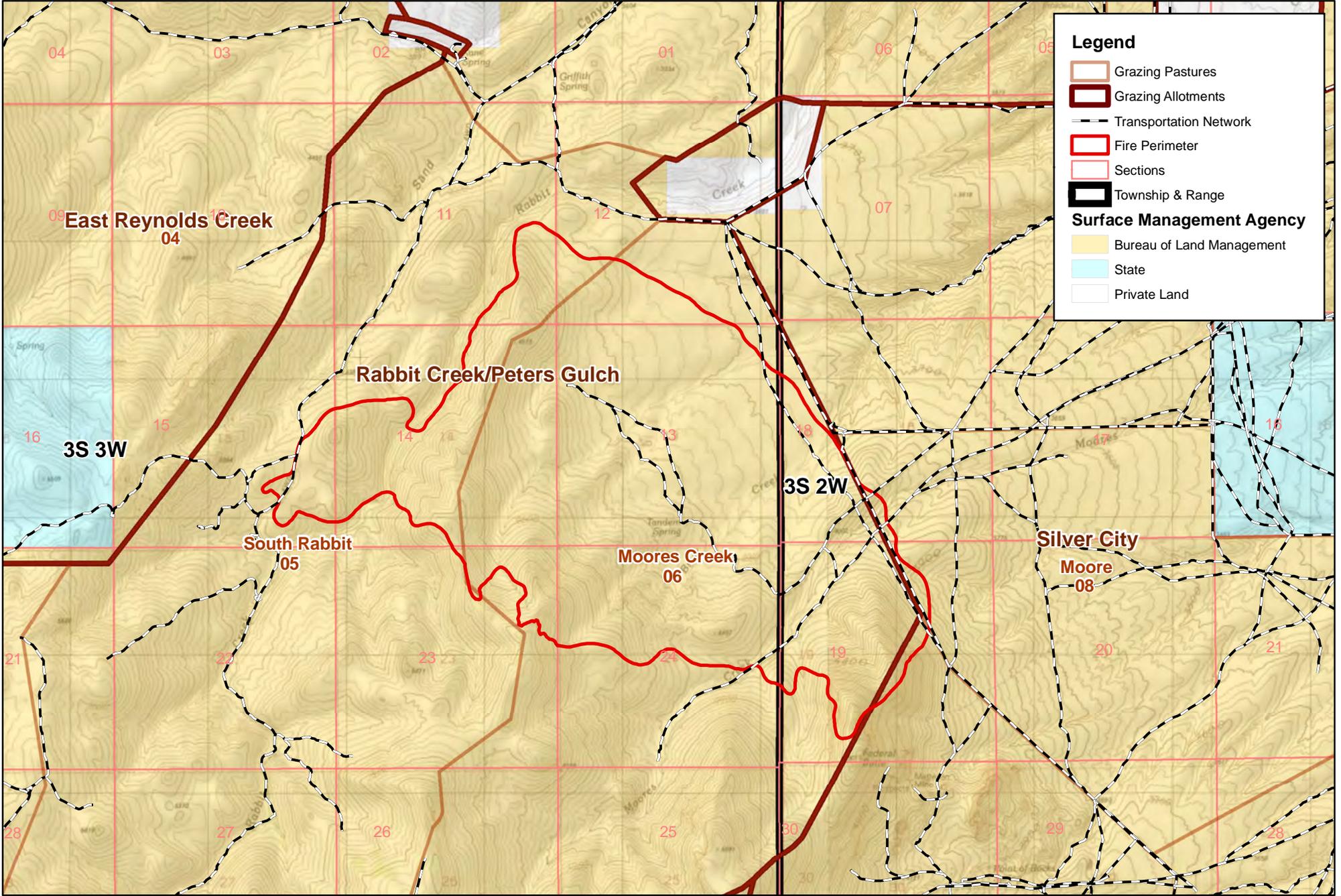
Legend

- Cattle guards
- S7 OHV Barrier Fences/Signs
- Fence**
- S7 New
- S7 Repair
- R7 Repair
- Dozerline**
- Dozerline
- Improved road
- Transportation Network
- Grazing Pastures
- Grazing Allotments
- Fire Perimeter
- Sections
- Township & Range
- Surface Management Agency**
- Bureau of Land Management
- Private Land

Boise District BLM HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R Sage-grouse Habitat



Boise District BLM HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R Allotment and Pasture Boundaries



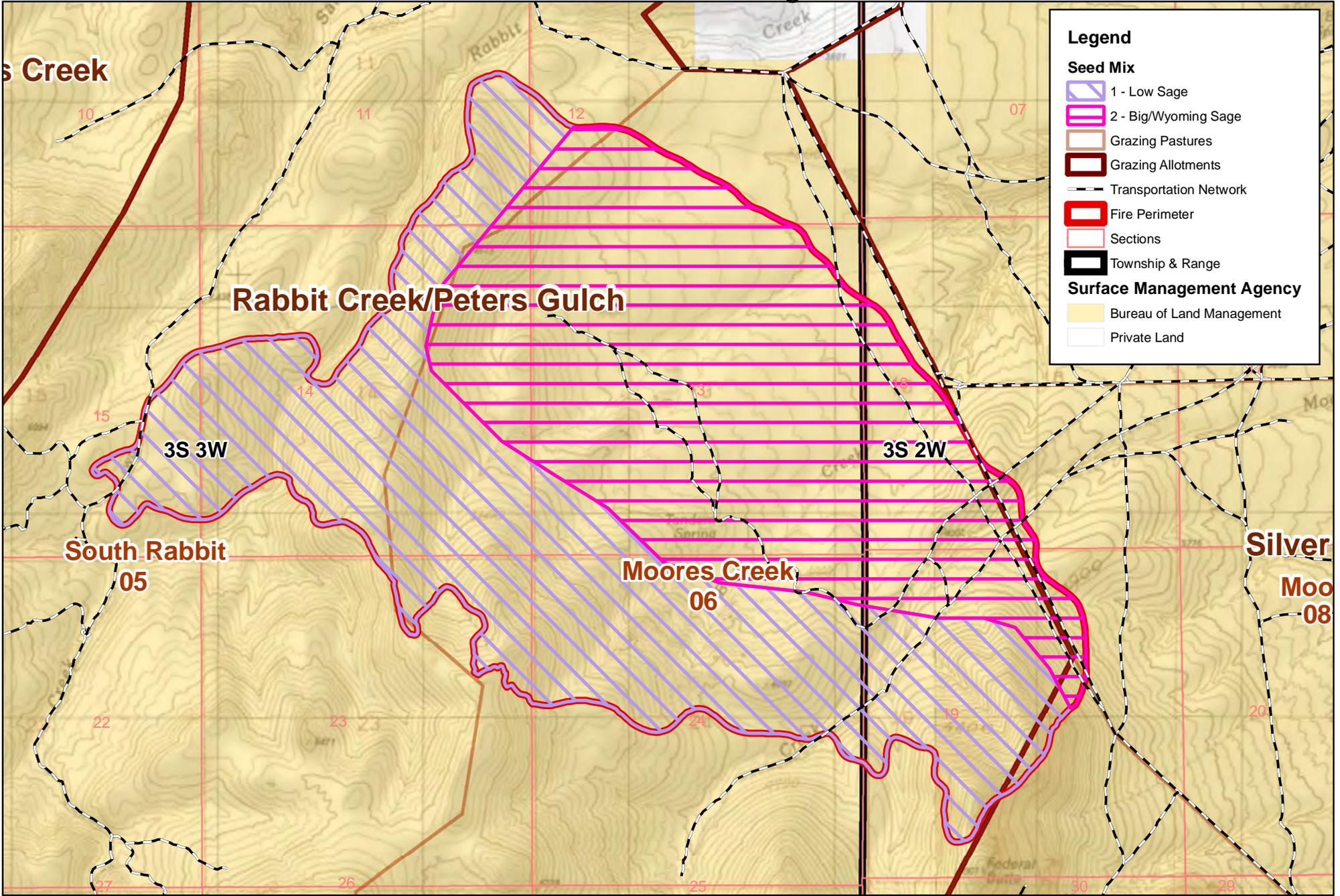
Legend

- Grazing Pastures
- Grazing Allotments
- Transportation Network
- Fire Perimeter
- Sections
- Township & Range

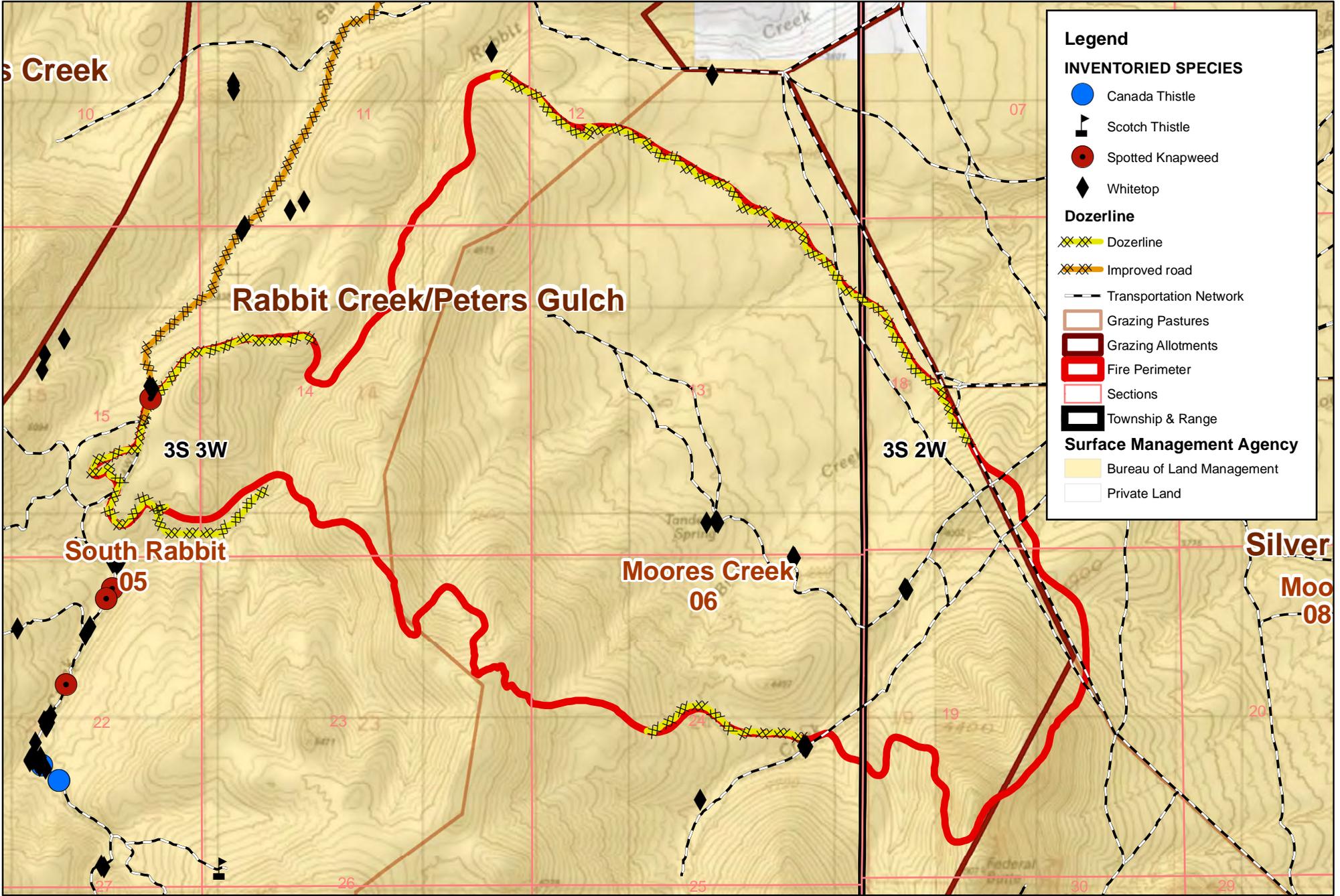
Surface Management Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Private Land

**Boise District BLM
 HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R
 S3 Broadcast Seeding**



**Boise District BLM
 HQ3R Sunk Fire ES&R
 S5/R5 Noxious Weeds**



Legend

INVENTORIED SPECIES

- Canada Thistle
- ▣ Scotch Thistle
- Spotted Knapweed
- ◆ Whitetop

Dozerline

- ▣ Dozerline
- ▣ Improved road

Transportation Network

- Transportation Network

Grazing

- Grazing Pastures
- Grazing Allotments

Fire Perimeter

- Fire Perimeter

Sections

- Sections

Township & Range

- Township & Range

Surface Management Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private Land

PART 10 - REVIEW, APPROVALS, and PREPARERS

TEAM MEMBERS

Position	Team Member (Agency/Office)	Initial	Date
Team Leader	Sarah C. Garcia (BLM Fuels/Four Rivers FO)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Resource Advisor(s) on Fire	Raul Trevino (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Operations	Cindy Fritz (BLM Boise District)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Botanist	Beth Corbin (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Cultural Resources/Archeologist	Kelli Barnes (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	Pete Torma (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Outdoor Recreation Planner	Ryan Homan (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Wildlife Biologist	Brad Jost (BLM Owyhee Field Office)	Initialed	08/02/2013
Operations	Alex Webb (BLM Boise District)	Initialed	08/02/2013

PLAN APPROVAL

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

/s/ Loretta V. Chandler

08/02/2013

FIELD OFFICE MANAGER

DATE

FUNDING APPROVAL

The funding of ES treatments is approved through the appropriate administrative approval level in coordination with the National Office Budget Shop. As funding is available, ES

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