

# **Proposed Fire, Fuels, and Related Vegetation Management Direction Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement**

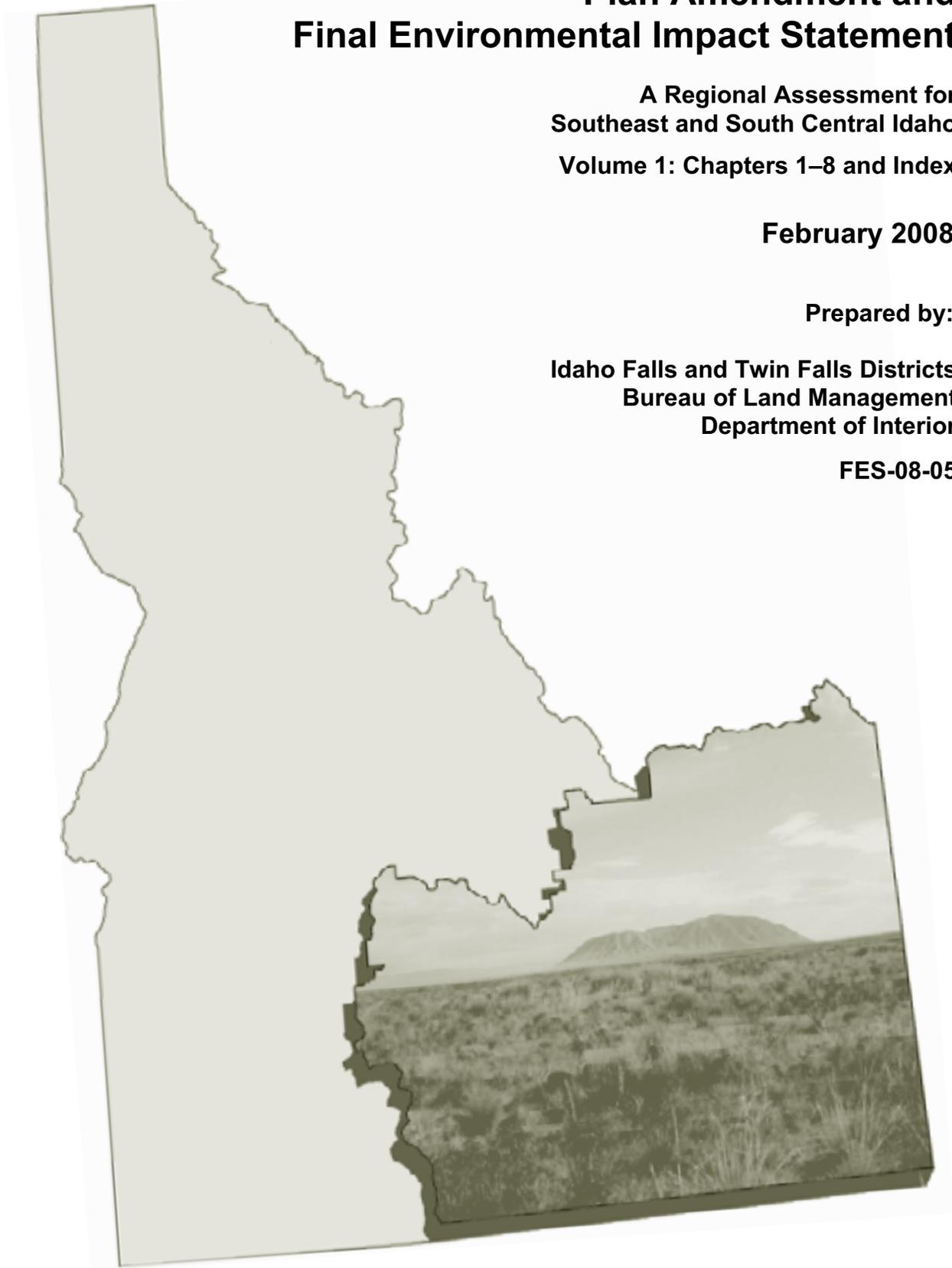
**A Regional Assessment for  
Southeast and South Central Idaho  
Volume 1: Chapters 1–8 and Index**

**February 2008**

**Prepared by:**

**Idaho Falls and Twin Falls Districts  
Bureau of Land Management  
Department of Interior**

**FES-08-05**





# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

### IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT

1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

### TWIN FALLS DISTRICT

2536 Kimberly Road  
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**February 2008**

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your information is the Proposed Fire, Fuels and Related Vegetation Management Direction Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement. This Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS sets forth the management direction for approximately 5 million acres of public lands located on the Snake River Plain of southeast and south central Idaho that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

BLM published a Notice of Intent to prepare the plan and associated EIS in the February 21, 2002 Federal Register. The agency then solicited public input and developed four management alternatives, including a No Action alternative and three action alternatives that provided different strategies for managing the fire, fuels and related vegetation in the future. These alternatives were presented and analyzed in the Draft Plan Amendment/DEIS. A Notice of Availability for the Draft Plan Amendment/DEIS was published in the Federal Register on November 5, 2004, and copies of the Draft Plan Amendment/DEIS were made available to the public through several outlets. Alternative D was identified as the Preferred Alternative in that document.

This document, the Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS, presents an overview of the planning process and planning issues, describes all alternatives and their associated impacts, summarizes public comment received on the Draft Plan Amendment/DEIS, and provides responses to the substantive issues raised. Based on public comment and internal discussions, **Alternative E was created and is identified as the Proposed Plan Amendment** in the Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS. Alternative E was created by combining the sagebrush steppe portion of Alternative D with the forested vegetation portion of Alternative C thereby creating an alternative that addresses the needs of both rangeland and forested vegetation types. It addresses both the Cohesive Strategy issue and the Sagebrush Steppe issue as described at Alternatives C and D above. Alternative E would increase broad treatment levels about 6 times greater than the No Action alternative.

BLM appreciates the public involvement that has taken place throughout this planning process. We believe that this Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS represents a collaborative effort that would not have been possible without the participation of the public, state and federal agencies, and consultation with tribal governments.

The Final Plan Amendment will serve as the guiding management strategy for fire, fuels and related vegetation in the planning area for the next 10 to 15 years by providing a framework for proactive decision making including decisions regarding implementation and site specific project activities.

This Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS is open for a 30-day no-action/protest period beginning with the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes the notice of availability of the FEIS in the Federal Register. During this period, the BLM will take no action to implement the plan. However, the Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS may be protested by any person who participated in the planning

process and who has an interest that may be adversely affected by approval of the Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS. A protest may raise only those issues that were submitted for the record during the planning process (see Code of Federal Regulations 1610.5-2). Protests must be filed with the Director, Bureau of Land Management.

Regular mail protests and overnight mail should be sent to: Director, Bureau of Land Management (210) Attention – Brenda Hudgens-Williams, 1620 L Street, Suite 1075, Washington, D.C. 20036. Emailed and fax protests will not be accepted as valid protests unless the protesting party also provides the original letter by either regular or overnight mail postmarked by the close of the protest period. Under these conditions, BLM will consider the emailed or faxed protest as an advance copy and it will receive full consideration. If you wish to provide BLM with such advance notification, please direct faxed protests to the attention of the BLM protest coordinator at 202-452-5112, and emails to Brenda\_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov.

All protests must be written and must be postmarked on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> day following publication by EPA of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register and contain the following information:

- The name, mailing address, telephone number, and interest of the person filing the protest;
- A statement of the issue or issues being protested;
- A statement of the part or parts of the document being protested;
- A copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues previously submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and
- A concise statement explaining precisely why the decision presented in the Proposed Plan Amendment/FEIS is believed to be wrong.

The Director, Bureau of Land Management, will promptly render a decision on the protest. The decision will be in writing and will be sent to the protesting party by certified mail, return receipt requested. The decision of the Director shall be final.

Upon resolution of any protests, the plan will be approved and a Record of Decision will be issued. The Final Management Plan/Record of Decision will be mailed to all individuals who participated in this planning process and all other interested publics upon their request.

Sincerely,



Joe Kraayenbrink  
Bureau of Land Management  
Idaho Falls District Manager



Bill Baker  
Twin Falls District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management

**Proposed Fire, Fuels, and Related Vegetation Management Direction  
Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement**

**Regional Assessment for Southeast/South Central Idaho**

Draft Environmental Impact Statement       Final Environmental Impact Statement

**Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management**

**TYPE of ACTION:**  Administrative       Legislative

**Abstract:**

The Idaho Falls and Twin Falls Districts of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), comprising the Burley, Upper Snake, Pocatello, and Shoshone Field Offices, proposes to amend 12 existing land use plans to incorporate fire, fuels, and related vegetation management direction to move plant communities in the Districts towards Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 1. Alternative B – The Proposed Action encompasses approximately 646,000 footprint-acres and would involve the establishment of Wildland Fire Use (WFU) areas, the application of fire management restrictions to protect resources, and the implementation of broad treatment levels (i.e., footprint-acres) and treatment methods (e.g., chemical, mechanical, and fire-related vegetation treatments) needed to meet resource objectives.

Five alternatives were considered in detail for this programmatic EIS. They were: Alternative A – No Action, Alternative B, Alternative C, Alternative D, and Alternative E – The Proposed Plan Amendment. Alternative E – The Proposed Plan Amendment consists of the Districts’ proposal to increase the use of vegetation treatments and restoration and increase the use of fire in all plant communities except Wet/Cold Conifer, Riparian, Salt Desert Shrub, and Vegetated Rock/Lava. Alternatives B, C, D, and E were developed in response to issues raised during public and agency scoping. Alternative C would implement fire treatment levels to meet the goals of the Cohesive Strategy and 10-year Comprehensive Strategy. Alternative E was developed to determine the appropriate level and kind of treatments within the sagebrush steppe ecosystem to meet the Purpose and Need while benefiting sagebrush habitat, sage grouse, and sagebrush-obligate species. Alternative E was picked as the BLM's Proposed Plan Amendment because of the protection it provides for the remaining sagebrush steppe habitat left in the Upper Snake River Plain. The No Action Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act for comparison to the other alternatives analyzed in this EIS. Alternative A – The No Action Alternative would continue existing fire, fuels, and related vegetation management direction, as identified in the current land use plans for the Districts.

The Idaho BLM State Director is the officer responsible for preparing this Final EIS.

**For Further Information, Contact:**

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## READER'S GUIDE

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This Proposed Plan Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) contains information about activities and subsequent potential impacts associated with amending 12 existing land use plans within the planning area to incorporate fire, fuels, and related vegetation management direction that is consistent with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The Proposed Plan Amendment would do this by returning the vegetation communities in the planning area to historic fire regime characteristics wherever possible. The information in this Final EIS is organized to facilitate consideration of the impacts of these activities by the public and by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Understanding the structure of this document is crucial to overall understanding of the information required in an EIS. The following provides an overview of the components of this document.

**Executive Summary** – The Executive Summary included in this Final EIS provides a concise overview of information, analyses, tables, and figures presented in the body of the document.

**Table of Contents** – A detailed table of contents is presented at the beginning of Volume I of the Final EIS, which includes Chapters 1 through 8 and the index. The table of contents also includes separate lists of figures and maps, tables and appendixes. Volume 2 of the Final EIS, which includes maps and appendixes, also begins with a condensed table of contents, outlining only the materials contained within that volume.

**Chapter 1 – Purpose and Need** – Chapter 1 describes the Purpose and Need for the proposal and its scope of analysis. It briefly defines the NEPA process, describes the planning area and background, and establishes agency involvement and decisions to be made. The final sections describe scoping and other public involvement activities and list approvals and permits that may be required.

**Chapter 2 – Description of Alternatives** – Chapter 2 includes a description of Alternative A - No Action, Alternatives B, C, D and Alternative E – Proposed Plan Amendment. The potential environmental impacts of these alternatives on various resources and the potential mitigation measures to alleviate these impacts are summarized at the end of this chapter.

**Chapter 3 – The Affected Environment** – Chapter 3 describes current physical, biological, social, and economic conditions within the planning area. This information provides the baseline for assessing and comparing the potential impacts of the alternatives. This chapter is subdivided into 14 resource areas/disciplines. This allows readers to target those resources or disciplines of greatest interest to them. It also allows readers to compare information presented in Chapter 4 with corresponding "current conditions" presented in this chapter. Two of these resource disciplines are described in terms of key issues raised during public and agency scoping. These key disciplines include "Cohesive Strategy and Vegetation Resources (Issue 1)" and "Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem (Issue 2)." The affected environment and environmental consequences for these resources are described at the field office level to better allow the public and the decision-maker to assess potential impacts and implications for field office level planning.

**Chapter 4 – Environmental Consequences** – Chapter 4 provides a comprehensive scientific

and analytical comparison of the potential environmental impacts of the action alternatives in relation to the No Action Alternative. In order to facilitate comparison of information provided in Chapters 3 and 4, this chapter is subdivided into the same 14 resource discipline sections as Chapter 3. Using the No Action Alternative as a baseline for comparison and using the existing conditions described in Chapter 3 as a starting point, Chapter 4 discloses the potential short- and long-term, direct and indirect impacts as well as cumulative impacts of each alternative on each resource. Chapter 4 also provides an assessment of the unavoidable impacts of implementing each alternative.

**Chapter 5 – Coordination, Consultation, and Distribution** – Chapter 5 includes two lists. The first is a list of the Native American Tribes, organizations, agencies, stakeholders, and individuals contacted or consulted with during the scoping process and preparation of the EIS, as well as those agencies, organizations, and persons who provided input to the EIS. The second list contains the names of the agencies, organizations, and individuals who were provided copies of the Final EIS.

**Chapter 6 – List of Preparers** – Chapter 6 provides a summary of qualifications and responsibilities of specialists with direct input into the preparation of this EIS.

**Chapter 7 – Acronyms and Glossary** – Chapter 7 includes the definitions of key words and acronyms used in this EIS.

**Chapter 8 – References** – Chapter 8 provides a list of sources of information and data used to prepare this EIS.

**Index** – This section provides a list of key words used in the document and the pages where they occur to facilitate cross-referencing and the finding of key information.

**Maps** – Although all figures in the document are numbered sequentially within each section, all those figures that are maps are found in the final section of the document. This facilitates use of the fold-out maps.

**Appendixes** – Nineteen appendixes are included in the EIS. They contain support information that is important to understanding the analysis.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The Idaho Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers almost 5 million acres of land in south-central and eastern Idaho (Figure 1-1) in the Upper Snake Field Office (USFO), Pocatello Field Office (PFO), Burley Field Office (BFO), and Shoshone Field Office (SFO). This area is hereafter referred to as the planning area, comprising portions of the Idaho Falls and Twin Falls Districts<sup>1</sup>. The planning areas encompass 23 southern Idaho counties: Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Blaine, Bonneville, Butte, Camas, Caribou, Cassia, Clark, Elmore, Franklin, Fremont, Gooding, Jefferson, Jerome, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Oneida, Power, Teton, and Twin Falls. Major communities in the planning area include Burley, Idaho Falls, Pocatello, Shoshone, Sun Valley, and Twin Falls. Four BLM field offices—Burley, Upper Snake, Pocatello, and Shoshone—manage numerous parcels of public land that range in size from less than 40 acres to more than 100,000 acres (Figure 1-2).

### **ES.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE AND NEED**

#### **ES.1.1 BACKGROUND**

In response to the nationwide increase in wildland fires, fire starts, and fatalities, the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (U.S. Department of Interior [USDI] and U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 1995) was revised in 2001 (USDI et al. 2001). Currently, all federal land-management agencies are implementing or preparing to implement the National Fire Plan (USDI 2000) to various extents, which is the means by which the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy is applied. This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) proposes to amend existing land use plans (LUPs) to provide guidance and aid in implementing the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy in the planning area.

Prior to modern fire suppression, wildland fire had consistently been an integral part of the ecosystems in the planning area, as demonstrated by historical ecological evidence. To withstand this threat, numerous vegetation species and cover types have developed various responses that have enabled them to resist, tolerate, or take advantage of fire.

At present, many of the cover types within the planning area have been subjected to wildland fire that is not within the historical range of variability. Large and/or uncharacteristic fires in these cover types can threaten people and property as well as the resiliency, integrity, and long-term sustainability of ecosystem components and processes. Fires are occurring more frequently and are burning more severely in some cover types. For example, the invasion of the sagebrush steppe by invasive annual species such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and medusahead wildrye (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*) has substantially increased fine fuel continuity in this cover type, making it more susceptible to large, frequent, and uncharacteristic fires. In other vegetation cover types, fires are occurring less frequently than they have historically, which causes undesirable changes in vegetation species composition and structure and an accumulation of hazardous fuels. For example, because of long-term fire suppression, juniper species are expanding their range at the

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<sup>1</sup> When the FMDA was originally developed through September 2004, the four Field Offices comprised the entire Upper Snake River District (USRD). Since October 1, 2004, however, the USRD has been reorganized as the Idaho Falls District (Upper Snake, Pocatello, Challis and Salmon Field Offices) and the Twin Falls District (Burley, Shoshone and Jarbidge Field Offices).

expense of sagebrush steppe, and Dry Conifer cover types are slowly replacing Aspen and some Mountain Shrub cover types.

Since approximately 1996, wildland fires have occurred in the planning area at an overall accelerated rate (Figure 1-3), mostly due to vegetation changes and changed conditions like cheatgrass invasion into sagebrush steppe cover types. To a lesser extent, the planning area has experienced decreases in fire frequency and attendant increases in fire severity in its Aspen, Dry Conifer, and Mountain Shrub cover types. These vegetation cover types require more frequent disturbance to decrease fuel loads, facilitate aspen and forb regeneration, and decrease fire intensity. It has become clear that hazardous fuel conditions need to be managed. Altered fire regimes (i.e., changes in fire frequency, severity, and size) not only threaten resources such as wildlife habitat, cultural resources, air/visual quality, and grazing, but also affect public and firefighter safety within and around areas of human development.

### **ES.2.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION**

**Purpose:** The purpose for this multi-plan amendment is to amend 12 existing land use plans within the planning area to incorporate fire, fuels, and related vegetation management direction that is consistent with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. This approach will allow the BLM to move toward resource conditions that minimize risk to human life and property and allow for efficient and effective wildland fire suppression efforts; to integrate fire's natural role into resource management decisions; to maintain or restore vegetation that would support special status species (SSS) and healthy, diverse, and sustainable vegetation communities; and to provide for other uses by managing vegetative conditions to achieve desired conditions.

The purpose of the Proposed Plan Amendment is to:

- Establish programmatic fire management guidance, objectives, policies, and actions.
- Identify resource goals and methods, including desired future condition of vegetation resources and management actions necessary to achieve objectives.
- Form the basis to update fire management plans (FMPs) and integrate them with allotment management plans, wildlife management plans, recreation management plans, and other applicable guidance.
- Provide LUP-level direction to enable incremental steps toward resource conditions that minimize risk to human life and property and that function within the natural fire regime.

Alternative E, the Proposed Plan Amendment, would incorporate National Fire Plan direction into existing LUPs by emphasizing the increased use of fire, including prescribed fire (RxFire) and wildland fire use (WFU), to more closely approximate the historical role of fire and prepare sites for restoration treatments. Appropriate management response would be used in wildland fire suppression. Full suppression is the appropriate management response where life and property are at risk or in low elevation shrub. Post-wildland fire rehabilitation treatments would be focused to stabilize and rehabilitate burned areas. Restoration treatments would be focused on elimination of invasive annual grass and the reduction of woody fuel buildup. Over a 10-year period, under this alternative, up to approximately 1,538,000 footprint-acres would be treated (approximately six times

the acreage in Alternative A - The No Action Alternative). It is assumed that Alternative E would not be limited by existing operations capabilities and resources.

*Need:* There is a need for the present plan amendments in order to provide contemporary fire management issues in a comprehensive or consistent manner within the planning area. A need has been identified for increased use of vegetation treatments for hazardous fuels reduction. The current LUPs do not provide consistent direction regarding the importance of fire in the ecosystem. The recent increases in wildland fire (natural occurrences and intensities) and the large number of acres recently burned in sagebrush steppe in the planning area has impacted the natural environment of the public lands. This could impact the conservation of sage grouse or other wildlife species and indirectly affect public land users. A need has been identified for increased use of vegetation treatments for hazardous fuels reduction consistent with the National Fire Plan to reduce the risk of fire impacts on communities and resources. Action is needed to move toward resource conditions on BLM administered lands that allow productive use of these lands and enhance the social, cultural and economic stability of the communities that depend on them. As described in the Federal Regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-5): “An amendment shall be initiated by the need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in circumstances or a proposed action that may result in a change in the scope of resource uses or a change in terms, conditions and decisions of the approved plan...”. The advent of the National Fire Plan and resource conditions as a result of fire warrant a revision of existing plans.

Fire management direction in the 12 existing LUPs in the planning area (Figure 1-4; see Table ES-1) emphasizes wildland fire suppression, briefly touches upon using RxFire and fuels treatments, and is generally silent concerning the use of WFU to benefit the resources. The existing LUPs do not address the management of fire's role in the landscape. Other issues not well addressed in the current LUPs include:

- Communities-at-risk and issues surrounding the WUI.
- Public and firefighter safety.
- Fire impacts on air quality/visibility.
- Fire hazard and fuels reduction treatment methods.
- The departure of existing fire regimes from historical conditions.
- The desired role of fire and how fire can help meet resource objectives.

The BLM's planning process forms the basis for every on-the-ground action the BLM undertakes. The proposed plan amendment would update the planning area's FMPs, which are to be prepared based on objectives in the LUPs. The proposed plan amendment would facilitate resource and fire management activities throughout the planning area, as well as set a new standard for integrating resource management and fire management activities at the field office and regional levels. The proposed plan amendment will amend the LUPs listed in Table ES-1.

**TABLE ES-1. LAND USE PLANS (LUPS) CURRENTLY DIRECTING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE PLANNING AREA, WITH DATES OF IMPLEMENTATION**

Year, Land Use Plan	FO <sup>1</sup>	Year, Land Use Plan	FO
1975, Magic MFP	SH	1982, Twin Falls MFP	BU
1976, Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP	SH	1983, Big Lost MFP	US
1981, Big Desert MFP	US	1985, Cassia RMP	BU
1981, Little Lost-Birch Creek MFP	US	1985, Medicine Lodge RMP	US
1981, Malad MFP	PO	1985, Monument RMP	SH/BU
1981, Sun Valley MFP	SH	1988, Pocatello RMP	PO

<sup>1</sup> Field Offices (FO): BU = Burley, US = Upper Snake, SH = Shoshone, PO = Pocatello/Malad

### ES.3 IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

During internal, public, and agency scoping, two major issues were identified. These issues and the means of addressing them via alternatives are summarized below.

***Issue 1: What fire and non-fire vegetation treatment levels for the Upper Snake River Plain ecosystem would best meet the goals of the Cohesive Strategy?***

This issue concerns the recommended level of treatment in the national-scale program option outlined in the draft *Cohesive Strategy for Protecting People and Sustaining Natural Resources* (U.S. Forest Service [USFS] 2000) (hereafter, Cohesive Strategy). It also involves addressing the goals and priorities identified in both the Cohesive Strategy and the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy, (USFS 2000<sup>2</sup>; USDI and USDA 2001).

***Issue 2: The types of treatments under the Proposed Action may negatively affect sage grouse habitat. What effect would different types or levels of treatment have on the sagebrush steppe ecosystem and sagebrush-obligate wildlife species?***

This issue concerns the impact of treatment levels on sagebrush and the subsequent impacts to sage grouse and other sagebrush-obligate wildlife species. Treatment could occur in sagebrush, potentially affecting sage grouse habitat and populations.

### ES.4 ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives considered for detailed analysis in an EIS are subject to a screening evaluation, which is intended to determine whether they meet the purpose and need for the project and whether they reduce potential environmental impacts, in this case to resources such as soil, vegetation, air quality, and health and human safety. Alternatives must also be technologically and economically feasible.

<sup>2</sup> Since the development of the Draft EIS, the Cohesive Strategy has been updated (USDA and USDI 2006). The issue, as described in the Draft EIS, is appropriate to both the original and updated Cohesive Strategy.

Based on the screening criteria, a number of alternatives were eliminated from consideration (see Section 2.6, Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Environmental Analysis), and five alternatives remain for detailed analysis in the EIS.

Proposed Desired Future Condition (DFC) (see Table ES-2) is a management objective common to Alternatives B, C, D, and E that would produce a distribution of vegetation age classes/seral stages across the landscape. This distribution of vegetation age classes/seral stages would reduce hazardous fuels, promote a healthier and more diverse vegetation structure and composition, and return the currently altered fire regimes to more closely parallel historical fire regimes.

**AGE-CLASSES AND SERAL STAGES** - Current condition of vegetation and DFC were analyzed for seven vegetation groups using age-classes to approximate seral stages (see Table ES-2). It is recognized that age classes and seral stages are not identical, but for any one vegetation group there are rough correspondences between age classes and seral stages. Seral stages better describe the impacts of treatments on resources than do age classes. In the sagebrush steppe ecosystem, for example, it is more meaningful to relate the effects of early-, middle-, and late seral communities on sage grouse populations than it is to relate to the effects of three age classes of vegetation. Furthermore, the planning area does not routinely collect seral stage data at the landscape level. Thus, there were no landscape level data available for these analyses that could be correlated with seral stages other than 'years since last fire'. In the following discussion, age classes are used to roughly approximate seral stages at the landscape level for purposes of analysis only.

Existing seedings of crested wheatgrass would not be treated where they are established. Restoration treatments would use native species to the extent possible. On sites where seedling establishment has a low probability of success, however, non-native placeholder species like crested wheatgrass or Siberian wheatgrass would be used for revegetation to prevent invasion by cheatgrass and other weeds, to prevent soil erosion, and to structurally mimic native perennial grasses.

In addition to the DFC Management Common to All, there are wildland fire suppression and restoration/fuels reduction treatment restrictions common to all alternatives. These restrictions would be applied to suppression activities and vegetation treatment actions with the intent of preventing significant impacts to natural and human resources and to meet current BLM state or federal policy. These restrictions are described in detail in Appendix Q of the Proposed Plan Amendment/Final EIS.

All required community assistance actions consistent with the National Fire Plan (NFP) policy would apply to all alternatives. These include collaboration with federal, state, and local partners to assess WUI areas and update County mitigation plans, provide planning and implementation assistance to private landowners, provide Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) to rural fire districts, and provide funding to implement fire education projects.

<b>TABLE ES-2. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT GOALS AND DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION (DFC) FOR VEGETATION COVER TYPES IN THE UPPER SNAKE, POCATELLO, BURLEY, AND SHOSHONE FIELD OFFICES</b>		
<b>Management Goals</b>	<b>DFC</b>	
	<b>Vegetation/Fuels Age Classes</b>	<b>Percent in DFC</b>
<b><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass</i></b>		
Increase the number of acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Perennial Grass: <15 years old Grass/shrub mix: 15-30 years old Shrub/grass mix: >30 years old	14% 14% 52%
Decrease the number of acres with more than 10% cheatgrass cover and/or weeds.	Cheatgrass/weeds	<20%
<b><i>Mid-elevation Shrub (Including Juniper Encroachment Acres)</i></b>		
Increase the number of acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Perennial Grass: <5 years old Grass/shrub mix: 5-15 years old Shrub/grass mix: >15 years old	23% 45% 23%
Decrease the acres of Mid-elevation Shrub encroached upon by juniper, and/or any other undesirable species present.	Juniper encroachment Cheatgrass/weeds	7% 2%
Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Mid-elevation Shrub types to better represent historical sagebrush steppe cover types.		
<b><i>Mountain Shrub</i></b>		
Increase the acres of early-seral and mid-seral stages. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Perennial grass/shrub: <10 years old Shrub/Perennial Grass: 10-20 years old Shrub dominated: >20 years old	33% 33% 33%
Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Mountain Shrub types to better represent historical Mountain Shrub cover types.		
<b><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer</i></b>		
Increase acres of early-seral and mid-seral Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer cover types (pure aspen and Aspen/Conifer mix). Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Aspen: <30 years old Aspen/Conifer mix: 30-50 years Dry Conifer: >50 years old	40% 40% 20%
Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer types to better represent historical Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer cover types.		

<b>TABLE ES-2. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT GOALS AND DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION (DFC) FOR VEGETATION COVER TYPES IN THE UPPER SNAKE, POCATELLO, BURLEY, AND SHOSHONE FIELD OFFICES</b>		
<b>Management Goals</b>	<b>DFC</b>	
	<b>Vegetation/Fuels Age Classes</b>	<b>Percent in DFC</b>
<i><b>Salt Desert Shrub</b></i>		
Maintain or increase acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Perennial Grass: <30 years old Shrub/Grass/Bare Ground Mix: >30 years old	20% 76%
Decrease acres with cheatgrass, weeds, and/or other undesirable species present.	Cheatgrass/weeds	4%
Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain or improve Salt Desert Shrub types to better represent those historical cover types.		
<i><b>Vegetated Rock/Lava</b></i>		
Maintain or increase acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape.	Perennial Grass Rock/Shrub/Grass/Tree mix	6% 80%
Decrease acres with cheatgrass, weeds, and/or other undesirable species present.	Cheatgrass/weeds	<14%
Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain Vegetated Rock/Lava types to better represent those historical cover types.		
<i><b>Wet/Cold Conifer</b></i>		
Maintain the mix of early, mid, and late seral stands of lodgepole pine forest.	Shrub/grass: <30 years old Shrub/tree: 30-75 years old Tree-dominated: >75 years old	30% 44% 26%
Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain or improve Wet/Cold Conifer types to better represent those historical cover types.		
<i><b>WUI</b></i>		
Decrease fire frequency and size in the vicinity of the WUI to protect public and fire-fighter safety, public resources, and private lands.	Decrease fire hazard from high to moderate or low by implementing vegetation treatments and actions outlined in County/Community Mitigation Plans.	

#### **ES.4.1. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

The No Action alternative reflects current LUP direction, and incorporates new policy, guidance and changes in the National Fire Plan. It emphasizes wildland fire suppression and minimizes the use of wildland fire for resource benefit. Therefore the alternative focuses on reactive stabilization and rehabilitation treatments following wildland fire (about 52 percent of footprint acres) as opposed to proactive restoration treatments (about 48 percent of footprint acres). Vegetation treatments would be conducted on a small scale and emphasize benefits to specific resources, e.g., livestock forage or wildlife habitat.

While existing LUPs lack specific guidance for WFU, restoration actions, hazardous fuels reduction, and WUI protection, the current program includes activities in these areas. These activities are being undertaken in response to new regulations, policy and national direction. These types of activities are compatible with other existing LUP program goals/objectives, and the existing LUPs do not preclude these activities.

No WFU areas are designated in the existing LUPs. Some of the existing LUPs do, however, allow the use of limited fire suppression, which, in some cases, meets the definition of WFU. Currently no WFU or limited suppression is planned because of the lack of current inventory information and the fact that WFU is not currently a high priority. At this time, current priorities are rehabilitation and restoration. Under the No Action alternative, WFU may be considered in the future with further planning and NEPA. Over a 10-year period, up to about 250,200 footprint acres would be treated under this alternative.

#### **ES.4.2 ALTERNATIVE B**

Alternative B would incorporate new policy, guidance, and changes in the National Fire Plan that have been developed since the existing LUPs were approved. This alternative emphasizes the increased use of fire, including RxFire and WFU, to more closely approximate the historical role of fire and prepare sites for restoration treatments.

Post-wildland fire treatments would be focused to stabilize and rehabilitate areas in the Low-Elevation Shrub, Invasive Annual Grass and Mid-Elevation Shrub where juniper encroachment is a problem. Restoration treatments would be focused in Low-elevation Shrub, Invasive Annual Grass, Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer, Mountain Shrub, and Mid-elevation Shrub encroached by juniper. Generally, no WFU areas would be designated where there is important wildlife habitat, past rehabilitation treatments, small tracts of public land, and public health and safety concerns.

Appropriate management response would be used in wildland fire suppression. Full suppression is the appropriate management response where life and property are at risk or in Low-elevation Shrub. Restoration would be emphasized (about 80 percent of footprint acres) while conducting rehabilitation (about 20 percent of footprint acres) as needed. Over a 10-year period, up to about 646,000 footprint acres would be treated (about three times the acreage in the No Action alternative) under this alternative.

### **ES.4.3 ALTERNATIVE C**

This alternative was designed to address *Issue 1*. The goals of the Cohesive Strategy and 10-year Comprehensive Plan include: 1) improve fire prevention and suppression, 2) reduce hazardous fuels, 3) restore fire adapted ecosystems, and 4) promote community assistance. Treatment levels, treatment locations, and priorities were developed with these goals in mind.

The emphasis of alternative C is the replication of historical disturbance patterns and succession patterns for the planning area's 12 vegetation types through use of fire, mechanical, and chemical treatments and adopting the goals and priorities set in the Cohesive Strategy. Alternative C would increase WFU and RxFire in vegetation types that historically had more fire disturbance: Mid-elevation Shrub, Dry Conifer, Aspen/Conifer, and Mountain Shrub. This alternative also proposes to decrease the incidence of wildland fire in the Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass types through aggressive pro-active restoration and post-fire rehabilitation of areas dominated by invasive annual grasses, about 91 percent of footprint acres and about 9 percent of footprint acres, respectively. Over a 10-year period, up to about 1,687,000 footprint acres would be treated (about seven times the acreage in the No Action alternative) under this alternative.

Alternative C differs from alternative B in two major ways: 1) Alternative C would treat all vegetation cover types to a level that returns fire regime to a range of historical variability, and 2) Alternative C is not limited by existing operations capabilities and resources.

### **ES.4.4 ALTERNATIVE D**

This alternative was designed to address *Issue 2*. This alternative recognizes that the sagebrush steppe ecosystem and its associated wildlife species, including sage grouse, are at risk from increased wildfire and other disturbances. The emphasis of this alternative is to maintain existing high quality sagebrush steppe habitat and to increase the quantity of resilient sagebrush steppe through post-wildland fire rehabilitation and proactive restoration. Restoration would be emphasized (about 89 percent of footprint acres) while rehabilitation would be conducted (about 11 percent of footprint acres) as needed.

Under this alternative, wildland fire suppression efforts would emphasize protection of sagebrush steppe habitats. WFU would not be allowed in areas designated as sage grouse Source (isolated/stronghold) habitats without project specific NEPA analysis. Vegetation treatments would focus on the Low- and Mid-Elevation Shrub, Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Mountain Shrub types and sagebrush steppe invaded by juniper. Mechanical, chemical, and seeding treatments would be emphasized. RxFire would be used primarily to prepare areas for seeding and to create mosaics for the improvement or enhancement of sagebrush steppe habitats. Restoration priorities would be identified to enlarge and reconnect sagebrush steppe habitat. Over a 10-year period, up to about 1,522,000 footprint acres would be treated (about six times the acreage in the No Action alternative) under this alternative, assuming that implementation of alternative D is not limited by existing operations capabilities and resources.

#### **ES.4.5 ALTERNATIVE E - PROPOSED PLAN AMENDMENT**

This alternative was designed in response to comments received on the November 5, 2004 FMDA DEIS and represents a combination of components from Alternatives C and D which were described and analyzed in the Draft EIS. This alternative addresses part of Issue 1 (Alternative C) and the entirety of Issue 2 (Alternative D); for a discussion of Issues, see Section 1.4.1, Issues Driving Development of Alternatives. Alternative E recognizes that: 1. The sagebrush steppe ecosystem and its associated wildlife species, including sage grouse, are at risk from increased wildland fire and other disturbances. 2. Fuels accumulations in the Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer and Wet/Cold Conifer place these forested vegetation types at risk from wildland fire. The emphasis of Alternative E is to maintain existing, high-quality sagebrush steppe habitat, to increase the quantity of resilient sagebrush steppe and to reduce the risk of stand-replacing fires in forested vegetation types by means of post-wildland fire rehabilitation and proactive restoration. Restoration would be emphasized (approximately 90 percent of footprint-acres), and rehabilitation would be conducted as needed (approximately 10 percent of footprint-acres).

Under Alternative E, wildland fire suppression efforts would emphasize protection of sagebrush steppe and forested habitats. About 600,000 acres are considered suitable for WFU under this alternative; see Figure 2-1. These areas were designated by field office personnel where it was determined that WFU would benefit resources and help attain management goals in Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer, Juniper, Mountain Shrub and Wet/Cold Conifer vegetation cover types. The acres mapped as suitable for WFU in Figure 2-1 do not include areas where WFU may be found to be suitable for improving sage grouse habitats. WFU may be allowed in sage grouse Restoration (R1-3), Key, and Source Habitat for the benefit of the habitat (see Figure 3-3) only after site-specific project level coordination with IDFG (see Glossary for definitions of Restoration (R1-3), Key, and Source Habitats).

Vegetation treatments would focus on the Invasive Annual Grass, Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer, Low- and Mid-elevation Shrub, Mountain Shrub, Perennial Grass and Wet/Cold Conifer cover types, as well as sagebrush steppe invaded by juniper. Mechanical, chemical, and seeding treatments would be emphasized. In sagebrush steppe restoration habitats, RxFire would be used primarily to prepare areas for seeding and to create mosaics for the improvement or enhancement of sagebrush steppe habitats. Restoration priorities would be identified to enlarge and reconnect sagebrush steppe habitat. In forested vegetation types, Rxfire would be used to return fire in forested types that historically had more fire disturbance than at present.

Alternative E is designed to improve the ecological health of the sagebrush steppe ecosystem and all of its obligate wildlife species, while at the same time address the goals of the Cohesive Strategy and the 10-years Comprehensive Strategy for the forested vegetation types:

1. Improve fire prevention and suppression.
2. Reduce hazardous fuels.
3. Restore fire-adapted ecosystems.
4. Promote community assistance.

Treatment levels, treatment locations, and priorities were developed with these goals in mind.

In that the desired future conditions of vegetation types, as analyzed in Alternatives C and D, have more natural fire regimes (i.e., more fire in forested types, less fire in shrubland types), Alternative E emphasizes the conservation and restoration of sagebrush steppe while replicating historical disturbance and succession patterns in forested vegetation types by use of fire, mechanical and chemical treatments, and adopting the goals and priorities set in the Cohesive Strategy. About 1.7 million acres are considered suitable for WFU under this alternative (see Figure 2-1). These areas were designated by field office personnel in Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer, Mid-elevation Shrub (including juniper), Mountain Shrub, Vegetated Rock/Lava, and Wet/Cold Conifer vegetation cover types in which it was determined that WFU could benefit resources and help attain management goals.

In general, WFU would not be used where there are critical wildlife habitats, past rehabilitation treatments, small tracts of BLM-administered lands, or public health and safety concerns. Alternative E would increase RxFire in Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer and decrease the occurrence of wildland fires in the Low- and Mid-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass, and Mountain Shrub using aggressive, proactive restoration and post-fire rehabilitation of areas dominated by invasive annual grasses.

Over a 10-year period, under this alternative, up to approximately 1,538,000 footprint-acres would be treated (approximately six times the acreage in Alternative A). It is assumed that Alternative E would not be limited by existing operations capabilities and resources.

#### **ES.4.6 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

Issues and impacts of concern were identified through the scoping process. Alternatives were developed to provide several ways of addressing the scoping issues and reducing potential environmental impacts, while still achieving the identified purpose and need of the project. Several alternatives for meeting the purpose and need were suggested during the scoping process. Some of these alternatives were considered and subsequently eliminated from detailed analysis for various reasons. Descriptions of these alternatives and rationales for their elimination are given below.

The alternative of altering or eliminating grazing practices was suggested in the scoping process. While this is closely tied to vegetation conditions and treatments, it does not, in itself, meet the purpose and need of the proposed project. Therefore, it was not considered further as an alternative. Grazing management as described in the existing LUP direction has been incorporated in this EIS and is included in the impacts to resources analysis of Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences.

A scoping respondent suggested that the BLM consider an alternative that would use several passive treatments for fire management. These treatments include using livestock grazing to reduce invasive species, reducing livestock usage in areas with known non-native infestations, removing livestock facilities, and closing roads and off-road vehicle trails. This alternative was eliminated from detailed analysis because it involves decisions beyond the scope of the EIS. All of these uses are part of the BLM's multiple-use mandate, and eliminating grazing or off-road recreational access is out of the scope of this process and may be addressed during the planning area field offices' LUP revision process.

A Resource Restoration Emphasis alternative was suggested. This alternative would emphasize the active restoration of rangeland habitats, wetlands, riparian, and aquatic areas. This alternative was eliminated from detailed analysis because it involves elements that are not part of the purpose and need of the project. The project purpose and need involves ESR and restoration, but only as they relate to fire management. Non-fire related restoration of rangeland, wetlands, riparian, and aquatic areas is outside of the scope of this project and this EIS analysis.

## **ES.5 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES**

A summary of alternative elements is provided in Table ES-3.

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>									
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>				
<b>Management Common To All Alternatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect human life (the single, overriding priority), human communities and infrastructure, property and improvements.</li> </ul> <p>Suppression restrictions were developed for the following resource disciplines:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire Management</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Noxious Weeds</li> <li>Recreation</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Designations (wilderness study areas [WSAs], Areas of Critical Environmental Concern [ACECs])</li> <li>Vegetation</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> <p>The following fire and non-fire vegetation treatment restrictions would be applied to site-specific restoration and hazardous fuels reduction treatment actions for the following resource disciplines:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Hazardous Materials and Abandoned Mine Sites</li> <li>Livestock Grazing</li> </ul> </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placeholder Species</li> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Management Areas</li> <li>Visual Resources</li> <li>Wildlife</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table> <p>The Field Office Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plans contain ESR restrictions that would be applied to all site-specific ESR actions.</p> <p>The following community assistance actions would occur consistent with National Fire Plan (NFP) policy and would apply to all alternatives, including the No Action Alternative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to collaborate with local partners to assess and define Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas, update existing mitigation plans, and implement a prevention and education program.</li> <li>Work with other federal agencies, state, county, and private entities to update County Mitigation Plans.</li> <li>Provide Rural Fire Assistance (RFA), as identified in Mitigation Plans, to rural fire districts. Assess and increase suppression capabilities and effectiveness by providing RFA to local fire suppression organizations.</li> <li>Provide planning and implementation assistance to private landowners so hazardous fuels can be reduced as identified in Mitigation Plans.</li> <li>Provide funding to implement fire education projects identified in Mitigation Plans.</li> <li>Reduce fuel hazards and the threat of wildland fire, including consideration of any local communities-at-risk.</li> </ul>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire Management</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Noxious Weeds</li> <li>Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Designations (wilderness study areas [WSAs], Areas of Critical Environmental Concern [ACECs])</li> <li>Vegetation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Hazardous Materials and Abandoned Mine Sites</li> <li>Livestock Grazing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placeholder Species</li> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Management Areas</li> <li>Visual Resources</li> <li>Wildlife</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire Management</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Noxious Weeds</li> <li>Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Designations (wilderness study areas [WSAs], Areas of Critical Environmental Concern [ACECs])</li> <li>Vegetation</li> </ul>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetation</li> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>Cultural Resources and Historic Trails</li> <li>Hazardous Materials and Abandoned Mine Sites</li> <li>Livestock Grazing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placeholder Species</li> <li>Riparian Areas</li> <li>Special Management Areas</li> <li>Visual Resources</li> <li>Wildlife</li> </ul>								

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to collaborate with local partners to assess WUI areas and update existing mitigation plans to implement fuels treatments.</li> </ul>				
<b>Management Common To All Action Alternatives</b>	N/A	<p><b>Goals and Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect and enhance sage grouse stronghold habitats.</li> <li>Protect and enhance key ecological components in plant and animal communities.</li> <li>Considered mechanical and/or chemical treatments first where fire is not an appropriate tool due to risk to life, property, or resource impacts.</li> <li>Move all vegetation types toward DFC and from Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) 2 and/or FRCC 3 toward FRCC 1. FRCC is an indicator of fire-related risk to key ecosystem components. A full description of FRCC is given in Section 3.2, Vegetation Resources and Fire's Natural Role (Issue 1).</li> </ul> <p><b>Desired Future Condition:</b></p> <p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass</i>            Increase the number of acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Decrease the number of acres with more than 10% cheatgrass cover and/or weeds.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub (including Juniper encroachment acres)</i>            Increase the number of acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Decrease the acres of Mid-elevation Shrub encroached upon by juniper, and/or any other undesirable species present. Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Mid-elevation Shrub types to better represent historical sagebrush steppe cover types.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub</i>            Increase the acres of early-seral and mid-seral stages. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Mountain Shrub types to better represent historical Mountain Shrub cover types.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer</i>            Increase acres of early-seral and mid-seral Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer cover types (pure</p>			

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
		<p>aspen and Aspen/Conifer mix). Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Increase acres burned to more closely approximate the historical fire regime. Improve composition and structure of Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer types to better represent historical Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer cover types.</p> <p><i>Salt Desert Shrub</i></p> <p>Maintain or increase acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Decrease acres with cheatgrass, weeds, and/or other undesirable species present. Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain or improve Salt Desert Shrub types to better represent those historical cover types.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava</i></p> <p>Maintain or increase acres with a native/placeholder shrub-grass mix. Spatial arrangement of varying age-classes should occur in a mosaic across the landscape. Decrease acres with cheatgrass, weeds, and/or other undesirable species present. Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain Vegetated Rock/Lava types to better represent those historical cover types.</p> <p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer</i></p> <p>Maintain the mix of early, mid, and late seral stands of lodgepole pine forest. Maintain fire frequency and size to approximate the historical fire regime. Maintain or improve Wet/Cold Conifer types to better represent those historical cover types.</p> <p><i>WUI</i></p> <p>Decrease fire frequency and size in the vicinity of the WUI to protect public and fire-fighter safety, public resources, and private lands. Decrease fire hazard from high to moderate or low by implementing vegetation treatments and actions outlined in County/Community Mitigation Plans.</p> <p><b>Prioritization Criteria:</b></p> <p>Following are the top two priorities under all four action alternatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fire-fighter and public safety are the first priority in response to fire suppression. At no time would the activities described in this EIS compromise fire-fighter and public safety.</li> <li>2. The protection of property and WUI is the second top priority.</li> </ol> <p>Vegetation treatment priorities in non-WUI areas would vary by field office as vegetation types vary</p>			

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
		<p>across the planning area. In general, vegetation treatment priorities include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversify Perennial Grass to speed reestablishment of sagebrush cover.</li> <li>• Enhance structural and species diversity in degraded Low-elevation sagebrush steppe.</li> <li>• Reduce shrub and juniper density in Mid-elevation Shrub.</li> <li>• Reduce invasive or noxious weeds in all vegetation types.</li> <li>• Rejuvenate aspen stands, reduce insect infestation and disease, and create a diversity of forest successional stages across the landscape.</li> </ul> <p>In Mountain Shrub, rejuvenate old, decadent shrubs and increase cover and density of desirable herbaceous species.</p>			
<b>Management Goals/Objectives</b>	<b>Goal/Objective 1:</b> Emphasize protection from and rehabilitation after wildland fire within the WUI.	<b>Goal/Objective 1:</b> Make progress toward DFC in Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass cover types where wildland fire should be occurring less frequently and at a smaller scale.	<b>Goal/Objective 1:</b> Make progress toward DFC in Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass cover types so that wildland fire occurs less frequently than currently and at a smaller scale on the landscape. Reduce by half the number of wildland fires in these cover types to create a wildland fire regime within the historical range of variability.	<b>Goal/Objective 1:</b> Make progress toward DFC in the Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass, Mid-elevation Shrub, Mountain Shrub and Juniper vegetation types.	<b>Goal/Objective 1:</b> Make progress toward DFC in the Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass, Mid-elevation Shrub, Mountain Shrub, and Juniper vegetation types.

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p><b>Goal/Objective 2:</b> Reduce fine fuels and undesirable non-native plants and create perennial cover types so that wildland fires occur less frequently and at a smaller scale.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 3:</b> Conduct fire and non-fire vegetation treatments in Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, Dry Conifer, Aspen/Conifer, and Mountain Shrub.</p>	<p><b>Goal/Objective 2:</b> Make progress toward DFC in the Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, Dry Conifer, Aspen/Conifer, and Mountain Shrub cover types, where wildland fire should be occurring more frequently on the landscape.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 3:</b> Maintain or make progress toward DFC in the Wet/Cold Conifer, Salt Desert Shrub cover and in vegetation types where fire frequencies are within the historical range of variability.</p>	<p><b>Goal/Objective 2:</b> Make progress toward DFC in the Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, Dry Conifer, Aspen/Conifer, and Mountain Shrub cover types by increasing WFU and RxFire to create a fire regime within the historical range of variability.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 3:</b> In Wet/Cold Conifer, Riparian, Salt Desert Shrub, and Vegetated Rock/Lava vegetation and/or areas in FRCC 1, maintain vegetation conditions using mechanical, chemical, RxFire, or WFU treatments, such that wildland fire regimes are within the historical range of variability (i.e., maintain the current level of fire in these cover types).</p>	<p><b>Goal/Objective 2:</b> Maintain, protect, and expand sage grouse source habitats.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 3:</b> Treat sage grouse key and restoration habitats to expand source habitats. improve and maintain sage grouse Restoration (R1-3) and key habitats.</p>	<p><b>Goal/Objective 2:</b> Maintain, protect, and expand sage grouse source habitats.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 3:</b> Treat sage grouse key and restoration habitats to expand source habitats. Improve and maintain sage grouse Restoration (R1-3) and key habitats.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
					<p><b>Goal/Objective 4:</b>                      Make progress toward DFC in historically frequent fire regimes (Aspen/Conifer Dry Conifer, Mid-elevation Shrub encroached by Juniper, Mountain Shrub) by increasing WFU and RxFire to create a fire regime within the historical range of variability.</p> <p><b>Goal/Objective 5:</b>                      In the Wet/Cold Conifer vegetation type and/or areas in FRCC 1, maintain vegetation conditions using mechanical, chemical, RxFire, or WFU treatments, such that wildland fire regimes are within the historical range of variability (i.e., maintain the current fire regime in these vegetation types).</p>

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
<p><b>Suppression and Treatment Priorities</b> <b>(in addition to the overriding priority of protecting human life, human communities, infrastructure and property)</b></p>	<p><b>Suppression Priorities:</b> Protect cultural and natural resources, WUI, and stronghold, isolated, and key sage-grouse habitat.  Minimize the costs of wildland fire suppression</p> <p><b>Treatment Priorities:</b> Use RxFire and non-fire fuels treatments to improve or enhance FRCC 2 and FRCC 3 acres where public safety or WUI are at risk.</p>	<p><b>Suppression Priorities:</b> Minimize risk to sagebrush steppe, Dry Conifer.</p> <p><b>Treatment Priorities:</b> Protect/maintain and restore sagebrush steppe, restore Aspen/Conifer, Mountain Shrub, Dry Conifer, and protect areas of key ecosystem components at high risk of loss.</p>	<p><b>Suppression Priorities:</b> Minimize risk to Low-elevation Shrub where frequent, uncharacteristic fires occur; minimize risk to other vegetation types where changes in fuel accumulation and fire occurrence have occurred</p> <p><b>Treatment Priorities:</b> Design landscape-scale projects to reduce the combined risk to human life/property and resources; design landscape level projects in conjunction with community participation and the development of stakeholder partnerships.</p>	<p><b>Suppression Priorities:</b> Minimize risk to source, key, and restoration sage grouse habitat.</p> <p><b>Treatment Priorities:</b> Within sage grouse source habitat, treat areas of low resilience. Within Key and restoration habitat: a) Treat areas adjacent to source habitat, b) Enhance key habitat, c) Treat areas that pose a fire risk to source and key habitats, d) Treat areas adjacent to key habitat.</p>	<p><b>Suppression Priorities:</b> Minimize risk to source, key, and restoration sage grouse habitat. Minimize risk to threatened, endangered, and candidate species habitat. Minimize risk to resources where changes in fuel accumulation and fire occurrence have occurred.</p> <p><b>Treatment Priorities:</b> Design landscape-scale projects to reduce the combined risk to human life/property and resources; Design vegetation treatments potentially affecting Greater sage-grouse (in Low-elevation Shrub, Mid-elevation Shrub, and Mountain Shrub), conservation measures identified in Appendix R would be considered.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p>Use RxFire and non-fire fuels treatments to maintain FRCC 1 acres where hazardous fuels pose a risk to public or firefighter safety.</p> <p>Use RxFire and non-fire fuels treatments to improve or enhance FRCC 2 or FRCC 3 acres where sage-grouse habitat, wildlife areas of concern, or other resources are at risk.</p>				In the WUI, where practical and appropriate, design landscape level projects in conjunction with community participation and the development of stakeholder partnerships in the planning and monitoring processes.
<b>Wildland Fire Use (WFU) Areas (approximate)</b>	<p><b>WFU (Suitable):</b> 0 acres</p> <p><b>No WFU (Not Appropriate):</b> 5.0 Million</p>	<p><b>WFU:</b> 2.9 Million</p> <p><b>No WFU:</b> 2.1 Million</p>	<p><b>WFU:</b> 1.7 Million</p> <p><b>No WFU:</b> 3.3 Million</p>	<p><b>WFU:</b> 400,000</p> <p><b>No WFU:</b> 4.6 Million</p>	<p><b>WFU:</b> 1.7 Million</p> <p><b>No WFU:</b> 3.3 Million</p>
<b>Broad Treatment Levels (10-year planning period)</b>	<p><b>Footprint:</b> 250,200 acres</p> <p><b>WFU:</b> 0 acres</p> <p><b>Mechanical:</b> 10,700</p> <p><b>Chemical:</b> 223,000</p>	<p><b>Footprint:</b> 646,000 acres</p> <p><b>WFU:</b> 112,200 acres</p> <p><b>Mechanical:</b> 64,300 acres</p> <p><b>Chemical:</b> 426,100</p>	<p><b>Footprint:</b> 1,687,000 acres</p> <p><b>WFU:</b> 130,000 acres</p> <p><b>Mechanical:</b> 136,000 acres</p> <p><b>Chemical:</b> 993,000</p>	<p><b>Footprint:</b> 1,522,000 acres</p> <p><b>WFU:</b> 14,800 acres</p> <p><b>Mechanical:</b> 1,320,000 acres</p> <p><b>Chemical:</b> 1,503,000</p>	<p><b>Footprint:</b> 1,538,000 acres</p> <p><b>WFU:</b> 19,300 acres</p> <p><b>Mechanical:</b> 1,338,000 acres</p> <p><b>Chemical:</b> 1,504,000 acres</p>

<b>TABLE ES-3. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES A THROUGH E</b>					
<b>Alternative Elements</b>	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<b>RxFire:</b> 36,600 acres  <b>Seeding:</b> 256,800	<b>RxFire:</b> 356,000 acres  <b>Seeding:</b> 620,900	<b>RxFire:</b> 1,035,000 acres  <b>Seeding:</b> 1,161,000	<b>RxFire:</b> 677,000 acres  <b>Seeding:</b> 1,486,400 acres	<b>RxFire:</b> 692,000 acres  <b>Seeding:</b> 1,486,000 acres
<b>Fire Management Restrictions</b>	See Management Common To All above.	See Management Common To All above.	See Management Common To All above.	See Management Common To All above.	See Management Common To All above.

## ES.6 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A summary of the affected environment for each of the resource disciplines analyzed in this Final EIS is given below.

### ES.6.1 ISSUE 1 – COHESIVE STRATEGY (VEGETATION RESOURCES)

Vegetation cover types in the planning area are shown in Table ES-4.

TABLE ES-4. CURRENT VEGETATION COVER TYPES OF THE PLANNING AREA	
Vegetation Cover Type	Characterized By
Low-Elevation Shrub	Sagebrush steppe: Wyoming big sagebrush, basin big sagebrush, etc., with native grass and forb understory. Biological crust in interspaces.
Perennial Grass*	Sagebrush steppe: Seeded areas (native/Invasive Annual Grass) and native grasslands (bluebunch wheatgrass, needlegrass, Idaho fescue, etc.). Biological crust may be present in interspaces.
Invasive Annual Grass*	Potential sagebrush steppe: Principally, cheatgrass and medusahead wildrye. Biological crust may be present in interspaces.
Mid-Elevation Shrub	Sagebrush steppe: Mountain big sagebrush, low sagebrush, bitterbrush, etc., with native grass and forb understory. Biological crust may be present in interspaces.
Juniper	Rocky Mountain juniper, Utah juniper, limber pine and /or single leaf pine. Natural juniper (~12 percent juniper area), pinyon-juniper (~5 percent juniper area), and juniper encroachment in sagebrush steppe habitat (~83 percent juniper area), Biological crust may be present in interspaces.
Dry Conifer	Douglas-fir, limber pine, ponderosa pine.
Aspen/Conifer	Includes healthy stands of aspen and stands of aspen and invading conifer.
Mountain Shrub	Serviceberry, buckbrush ( <i>Ceanothus</i> ), snowberry, mountain mahogany, bigtooth maple, chokecherry, antelope bitterbrush, etc., with native grass and forb understory.
Wet/Cold Conifer	Lodgepole, Subalpine fire, Engelmann spruce, etc.
Riparian Areas	Streamside and wetland areas of cottonwood, willow, etc.
Salt Desert Shrub	<i>Atriplex</i> spp. (four-wing, shadscale), spiny hopsage, winterfat, greasewood, etc., with native grass and forb understory. Biological crust in interspaces.
Other/Vegetated Lava	Lava, sand dunes, barren areas, etc.

\* Historically these areas were dominated by Low-elevation sagebrush steppe

Prior to 1900, fire played an essential role in the landscape by regenerating and maintaining a diverse mosaic of healthy vegetation cover types across ecosystems dominated by vegetation characteristic of Fire Regime Condition Class 1 (FRCC 1 = low risk of losing key ecosystem components). Particular areas (watersheds, benches, swales, plains) would have been in various stages of recovery from wildland fires and other disturbances, classified along a gradient of Fire Regime Condition Classes 1 through 3 (FRCC 3 = high risk of losing key ecosystem components). Over the past century, fire suppression, introduction of Invasive Annual Grass (e.g., cheatgrass and medusahead wildrye), and other land management practices have altered fire ecology and the dynamics of succession across the planning area landscape. Among other effects, this has resulted in a relatively stable annual cheatgrass community, on many potential acres of sagebrush steppe. Other plant communities have been fragmented, have lost vegetation age-class structure, or suffer from fuel loading.

### **ES.6.2 SPECIAL STATUS PLANTS**

Forty-seven special status plant taxa are known to occur in the planning area. Sixteen additional species have "Review" or "Monitor" status. Little is known about the distribution, size, and trend of special status plant populations within the planning area. Most of the information is limited to habitat and population structure information collected with new species locations. Most monitoring programs are recent; and, therefore, long-term data regarding the response of a special status plant to disturbance are rare to non-existent. This includes data on the response of these taxa to fire.

Only one special status plant, *Spiranthes diluvialis* (Ute's ladies-tresses), is protected by its listing as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. This riparian species has a highly limited distribution along the South Fork Snake River. Monitoring of the South Fork populations began in 1997, and modifications to the monitoring methods were adapted in 2001 (Moseley 1998, 2000; Murphy 2000, 2001a, 2001b). A human-caused wildland fire burned a portion of the Annis Island population of *Spiranthes diluvialis* during late spring, 2001. Flowering plants were observed in lightly burned areas of the fire, but it is too early to determine the overall effects of the fire to the population at this time (Murphy 2001a).

### **ES.6.3 ISSUE 2 – SAGEBRUSH WILDLIFE GUILD HABITATS**

The historical extent and distribution of sagebrush steppe communities across southern Idaho has dramatically decreased over the last century from conversion of these lands to agriculture, seeded ranges and most recently, from cheatgrass invasion and altered fire regimes. At present, Perennial Grass and Invasive Annual Grass cover types principally occur in historic sagebrush steppe communities. Perennial grasslands are predominately seeded ranges or recovering burned areas, while annual grasslands are dominated by the invasive, annual cheatgrass.

Sagebrush-obligate wildlife species (Sagebrush Guild) are negatively affected by the loss of suitable habitat through these conversions of shrub steppe habitat to grasslands. Representative sagebrush-obligate wildlife species include pronghorn, pygmy rabbit, greater sage grouse, sage sparrow, sagebrush lizard, and short-horned lizard. These Sagebrush Guild species are highly dependent upon the various subspecies of sagebrush, predominately Wyoming and Basin big sagebrush with Mountain sagebrush occurring in the transition zone between the Mid-Elevation and Mountain

Shrub cover types. Sagebrush Guild wildlife species may utilize Annual and Perennial Grass types adjacent to Low- and Mid-Elevation Shrub. Shrub types provide thermal cover and refuge (hiding) and the grasslands provide foraging areas.

#### **ES.6.4 WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE**

The planning area is an area that has a high potential for damage by wildland fires along the wildland urban interface. The BLM promotes local involvement in wildland fire concerns through approximately 63 mutual aid agreements with the District's counties.

#### **ES.6.5 WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

To facilitate the description of existing wildlife resources at the district-wide level required for this EIS, it was decided to categorize wildlife species into guilds associated with the vegetation cover types described in the vegetation section. This allows impacts analysis to focus on key wildlife species representative of the suites of species that use each vegetation type. These guilds are noted below.

Annual Grassland - Representative species in the planning area that inhabit or use this community include the long-billed curlew, and burrowing owl.

Perennial Grassland - Representative wildlife species that inhabit this community include California bighorn sheep, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, meadowlark, short-eared owl, and montane vole.

Salt Desert Shrub - The horned lark is the only guild species analyzed for this community. The horned lark is a widespread species that occurs throughout the planning area year-round. It occurs in open country, but can be found from the prairies to the tundra, as well as developed areas such as airports and golf courses (Stebbins 1985). It nests on the ground in shallow depressions and feeds on insects, spiders and grass and forb seeds. This species is quite adaptable and is still quite common.

Riparian Community - Species analyzed as part of this community guild include white-tailed deer, bald eagle, yellow-billed cuckoo, northern leopard frog, boreal toad, common garter snake, and Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

Juniper and Mountain Shrub - Wildlife species representative of these communities include mule deer, mountain lion, ferruginous hawk, juniper titmouse, and gray flycatcher.

Wet/Cold Conifer, Dry Conifer, Aspen/Conifer - Wildlife species representative of these communities include the Rocky Mountain elk, moose, snowshoe hare, northern goshawk, three-toed woodpecker, ruffed grouse, and red-naped sapsucker.

Special Status Wildlife Species - Forty-one special status animal taxa are known to occur in the planning area.

Wildlife habitat management on the planning area's public lands consists of maintaining and/or improving food, water and cover for over 100 species of mammals, 300 species of birds, 48 species of fish, 17 species of reptiles and 7 species of amphibians. Big game species in the planning area

include elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorn, bighorn sheep, black bear and mountain lion. Water resources in the planning area support fisheries that include rainbow trout, brown trout, native Yellowstone cutthroat trout, bull trout, redband trout, Bonneville cutthroat trout, Bear Lake whitefish, Bonneville whitefish, Bonneville cisco, and Bear Lake sculpin. Upland game species include greater sage grouse, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, blue grouse, ruffed grouse, gray partridge, wild turkey, ring-necked pheasant, mourning dove, chukar, and black-tailed jackrabbit. In addition to these upland species, the planning area provides habitat for several waterfowl and wetland species.

#### **ES.6.6 AIR QUALITY**

Idaho DEQ operates an extensive ambient air monitoring network to identify attainment and nonattainment areas. Within the planning area boundaries there are two PM<sub>10</sub> nonattainment areas including Portneuf Valley (Pocatello area) and Fort Hall Indian Reservation (a Tribal/EPA PM<sub>10</sub> nonattainment area). Other PM<sub>10</sub> nonattainment areas within the area of consideration (100 km beyond planning area boundaries) include the northern portion of Ada County (Boise area) and the northern portion of Davis County, Utah, including the city of Ogden. Violations primarily consist of an exceedence of the 24-hour standard during the winter months when strong inversions trap pollutants (IDEQ 2002).

#### **ES.6.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

The planning area falls into four physiographic provinces: Columbia Plateau – Snake River Plain (SRP) Section, Basin and Range – Great Basin Section, Middle Rocky Mountains, and the Northern Rocky Mountains. Soils of the planning area are primarily of five soil orders: Entisols, Inceptisols, Aridisols, Alfisols, and Mollisols. Soil depth in the planning area is generally deep (greater than 48 inches to bedrock) on flat, low terrain of the Snake River Plain (0-to-15-percent slope). On gently rolling uplands (0- to 30-percent slope), slightly altered bedrock is often more than 40 inches below the surface. On more rolling lands (20-to-50-percent slope), the depth to bedrock is about 20 inches to 40 inches. On steep slopes (30-to-60-percent slope), soil depths range from less than 10 inches to 20 inches and overlie partly weathered bedrock. Rock outcrops are common on steeper slopes with little or no soil development.

#### **ES.6.8 WATER RESOURCES**

The geologic provinces of the planning area landscape help define various types of surface waters: lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; ephemeral springs and seeps; steep brooks; meandering streams; seasonally flooded meadows and playas; rivers, rapids and riffles; and reaches in narrow, rocky canyons. Surface waters on, or adjacent to, planning area public lands total over 18 square miles and nearly 1,500 linear miles.

#### **ES.6.9 LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

Livestock grazing occurs on 4.6 million acres, or 85 percent, of BLM-administered land within the planning area. For grazing administrative purposes, the planning area is divided into 1,278 grazing allotments. Currently, there are 1,120 allotments actively grazed, 31 allotments under permit/lease

but not currently grazed, 77 allotments not under permit/lease but available for grazing, and about 800,000 acres not allocated and not available for livestock grazing. BLM-administered grazing allotments can be used by one operator as an individual allotment, or by many operators in a common allotment. There are approximately 1,145 livestock operators authorized to graze livestock on the 1,120 active grazing allotments. The grazing allotments vary in size from less than 10 acres to 318,000 acres. Several of the livestock operations include private, state, and NFS lands in addition to BLM-administered lands.

#### **ES.6.10 RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

Public lands provide a setting for dispersed as well as developed recreational opportunities, which in the planning area include, but are not limited to, hunting, fishing, sightseeing, mountain biking, hang gliding, OHV and snowmobile use, cross country and alpine skiing, hiking, camping, caving, river running and boating, horseback riding, and picnicking. These activities are managed through special recreation permits, camping and picnic facilities, roads and trails, information signs, and bulletin boards and kiosks. Some of the major attractions within the planning area include the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, City of Rocks National Reserve, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, the historic Oregon Trail, and the Snake River.

#### **ES.6.11 WILDERNESS RESOURCES**

There is no designated wilderness on BLM-administered lands. However, the planning area contains 31 Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), which the BLM manages, some of which share administration with other districts (Lower Snake River District [LSRD], Upper Columbia Salmon Clearwater District [UCSCD]), or agencies (NPS, US Forest Service [USFS]). Additionally, there is designated wilderness managed by the NPS and USFS within the planning area boundaries.

#### **ES.6.12 VISUAL RESOURCES**

The landscapes within the planning area that could be affected by wildland fire and fire vegetation treatments exhibit an extraordinary range of visual diversity, including rugged, northwest-to-southeast-trending mountains and flat valleys; steep-sided extinct volcanoes; cinder cones; sand dunes; widely-spaced mountains; and high, rugged, glaciated mountains. Lower elevations are characterized by sagebrush, juniper woodlands, and grasslands while upper elevations include spruce, fir, pine, and aspen forest. This diversity of topography, vegetation, and geological formations provides a variety of scenic experiences to those who live, work, or recreate in the area.

#### **ES.6.13 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Despite the small percentage of lands that have been inventoried for cultural resources, approximately 9,100 sites have been documented within the planning area. These sites represent a variety of types and chronological periods, dating from at least 11,000 years old to the present. Identified prehistoric sites include lithic scatters, quarries, rockshelters, rock structures and piles, and pictographs/petroglyphs. Historic sites include homesteads, railroad and trail corridors, agricultural or ranching sites, debris scatters, inscriptions, and other manifestations of historical exploration and occupation.

#### **ES.6.14 NATIVE AMERICAN CONCERNS**

Native Americans and their ancestors have subsisted on lands within the planning area for thousands of years. Existing ethnographic information generally suggests that aboriginal populations constantly traversed the Snake River Plain during their seasonal subsistence rounds, moving to the Camas Prairie in the spring and then further into the mountains for the summer. In the fall, they would return to the Snake River for the winter. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes hunt game on BLM-administered lands today, and they continue to ascribe cultural value to the Snake River corridor and the Camas Prairie. Two other tribal groups, the Northwest Band of Shoshone Nation and the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, also identify portions of the planning area as traditional territory.

#### **ES.6.15 SOCIOECONOMICS**

The planning area encompasses a portion of Idaho with a socially diverse population and a broad economic base. While the diversity is evident, a common characteristic that binds this region is its rural nature. Out of 23 counties in the planning area, 20 are considered rural. Abundant natural resources in rural areas define the important relationship between BLM land management and the socioeconomic condition of a region.

#### **ES.7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

The Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Plan Amendment and the three action alternatives in relation to the No Action Alternative are summarized in Table ES-5 and ES-6 below.

<b>TABLE ES-5. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 1<sup>3</sup></b>																				
<b>Vegetation Cover Types</b>	<b>Field Offices</b>																			
	<b>Upper Snake</b>					<b>Pocatello</b>					<b>Burley</b>					<b>Shoshone</b>				
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Vegetation - Cohesive Strategy (Issue 1): Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) achieved by alternative after 30 years in respective field offices.																				
LES <sup>1</sup> , Perennial, Annual	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
MES <sup>2</sup> , Juniper	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	1	2	2
Salt Desert Shrub	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	3	1	3	2	2	3	2
Mountain Shrub	3	2	1	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	2
Wet/Cold Conifer	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1
Vegetated Rock/Lava	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Notes:</p> <p>FRCC 1 = low risk of losing key ecosystem components; FRCC 3 = high risk of losing key ecosystem components.</p> <p>There are no treatments proposed for the Riparian cover type in any of the five alternatives. However, they may receive some treatment depending on the needs of the adjacent cover types.</p> <p><sup>1</sup> LES = Low-elevation Shrub</p> <p><sup>2</sup> MES = Mid-elevation Shrub</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Not Applicable (NA): Shoshone has no vegetation mapped as Salt Desert Shrub.</p>																				

<sup>3</sup> All effects summarized in this and subsequent tables and/or text are abbreviated displays of detailed effects analysis described in Chapter 4 of this EIS.

<b>TABLE ES-5. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 1</b>					
<b>Vegetation Cover Types</b>	<b>Alternatives</b>				
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Vegetation - Cohesive Strategy (Issue 1): Planning Area Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) achieved by alternative after 30 years.					
Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial, Annual	2-3	2	2	2	2
Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper	3	2-3	1	2	2
Salt Desert Shrub	1	1	1	1	1
Aspen/Conifer, Dry Conifer	2-3	2-3	1-2	3	1-2
Mountain Shrub	3	1-2	1	1-3	1-3
Wet/Cold Conifer	2	2	1-2	2	1-2
Vegetated Rock/Lava	1	1	1	1	1
<p>Notes:</p> <p>FRCC 1 = low risk of losing key ecosystem components; FRCC 3 = high risk of losing key ecosystem components.</p> <p>There are no treatments proposed for the Riparian cover type in any of the five alternatives. However, they may receive some treatment depending on the needs of the adjacent cover types.</p>					

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
Sagebrush Wildlife Guild Habitats <sup>4</sup> (Issue 2)	Under all alternatives, the proportion of Source Habitat that would be disturbed by vegetation treatments indicates habitat loss over the short term for the Sagebrush Guild. The percentage of mature, Low-elevation Shrub at 30-years old, or more, provides an assessment of long-term benefits to the Sagebrush Guild.				
	<p><b>Upper Snake Field Office (USFO):</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0% Mature shrub at 30 years: 37%</p> <p><b>Pocatello Field Office (PFO):</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0% Mature shrub at 30 years: 20%</p> <p><b>Burley Field Office (BFO):</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0% Mature shrub at 30 years: 12%</p>	<p><b>USFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 6.9% Mature shrub at 30 years: 28%</p> <p><b>PFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0% Mature shrub at 30 years: 20%</p> <p><b>BFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 2.6% Mature shrub at 30 years: 15%</p>	<p><b>USFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 7.7% Mature shrub at 30 years: 40%</p> <p><b>PFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 23.5% Mature shrub at 30 years: 22%</p> <p><b>BFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 13.7% Mature shrub at 30 years: 21%</p>	<p><b>USFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 9.9% Mature shrub at 30 years: 41%</p> <p><b>PFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 15.7% Mature shrub at 30 years: 25%</p> <p><b>BFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 12.4% Mature shrub at 30 years: 21%</p>	<p><b>USFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 9.9% Mature shrub at 30 years: 41%</p> <p><b>PFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 15.7% Mature shrub at 30 years: 25%</p> <p><b>BFO:</b> Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 12.4% Mature shrub at 30 years: 21%</p>

<sup>4</sup> See full description of sagebrush guild species and their habitats in Chapter 3.

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p><b>Shoshone Field Office (SFO):</b>                      Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0%                      Mature shrub at 30 years: 12%</p>	<p><b>SFO:</b>                      Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 0.0%                      Mature shrub at 30 years: 14%</p>	<p><b>SFO:</b>                      Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 2.3%                      Mature shrub at 30 years: 24%</p>	<p><b>SFO:</b>                      Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 8.5%                      Mature shrub at 30 years: 17%</p>	<p><b>SFO:</b>                      Source Habitat disturbed in first 10 years: 8.5%                      Mature shrub at 30 years: 17%</p>
<b>WUI Areas of Concern</b>	<p>Low Risk areas: 15                      Moderate Risk areas: 15                      High Risk areas: 4                      Least amount of treatment in, and adjacent to, the WUI areas would result in:                      - Continued full-scale suppression as the primary tool in reacting to wildland fires,                      - Continued wildland fire damage to property,                      - Increased financial and labor costs, and                      - Risk to public and fire-fighter health and safety.</p>	<p>Low Risk areas: 27                      Moderate Risk areas: 6                      High Risk areas: 1                      Those WUI areas that receive the most treatments would result in cover types that:                      - Are more resilient to wildland fire,                      - Have reduced fuel loads, and, therefore, fire intensity, and                      - Pose less risk to WUI areas.                      If treatment involves WFU and RxFire, there would be some risk to the public and fire fighter health and safety, though it would be expected that the effects of treatment would reduce the incidence of uncharacteristic wildland fire by reducing fuel load, increasing</p>	<p>Low Risk areas: 29                      Moderate Risk areas: 5                      High Risk areas: 0                      Same as Alternative B.</p>	<p>Low Risk areas: 29                      Moderate Risk areas: 4                      High Risk areas: 1                      Similar to Alternative B with the exception that Alternative D focuses on Low- and Mid-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, and Invasive Annual Grass cover types.</p>	<p>Low Risk areas: 30                      Moderate Risk areas: 4                      High Risk areas: 0                      Similar to Alternative B.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
		defensible space, and restoring cover types where feasible.			
<b>Wildlife</b>	<p>- 250,240 footprint-acres under this alternative would be unavailable to wildlife for portions of the following 10 years. However, areas being rehabilitated or restored would continue to provide habitat value to certain species, particularly those that utilize early to mid-seral stages.</p> <p>- FRCC in Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Low-Elevation Shrub would remain at 2 with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife guilds using these cover types.</p> <p>- Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, and Mountain Shrub would remain in FRCC 3 with higher risk of long-term adverse impacts to wildlife guilds using these cover types.</p>	<p>- 646,050 footprint-acres under this alternative would be unavailable to wildlife for portions of the following 10 years. However, areas being rehabilitated or restored would continue to provide habitat value to certain species, particularly those that utilize early to mid-seral stages.</p> <p>-FRCC in Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Low-elevation Shrub would remain at 2 with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife guilds using these cover types.</p> <p>- Mid-elevation Shrub and Juniper would range from 2 to 3 across the planning area with moderate and high risk to species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- 1,686,528 footprint-acres under this alternative would be unavailable to wildlife for portions of the following 10 years. However, areas being rehabilitated or restored would continue to provide habitat value to certain species, particularly those that utilize early to mid-seral stages.</p> <p>-FRCC in Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Low-elevation Shrub would remain at 2 with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife guilds using these cover types.</p> <p>- Mid-elevation Shrub and Juniper would be FRCC 1 across the planning area with low risk to species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- 1,522,270 footprint-acres under this alternative would be unavailable to wildlife for portions of the following 10 years. However, areas being rehabilitated or restored would continue to provide habitat value to certain species, particularly those that utilize early to mid-seral stages.</p> <p>- FRCC in Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Low-elevation Shrub would remain at 2 with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p> <p>- Mid-elevation Shrub and Juniper would have an FRCC of 2 across the planning area with moderate risk to species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- 1,538,022 footprint-acres under this alternative would be unavailable to wildlife for portions of the following 10 years. However, areas being rehabilitated or restored would continue to provide habitat value to certain species, particularly those that utilize early to mid-seral stages.</p> <p>- FRCC in Invasive Annual Grass, Perennial Grass and Low-elevation Shrub would remain at 2 with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p> <p>- Mid-elevation Shrub and Juniper would have an FRCC of 2 across the planning area with moderate risk to species using these cover types.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p>- Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer FRCC would vary from 2 to 3 throughout the planning area with corresponding moderate-to- high risk to wildlife habitat in these cover types.</p> <p>- Salt Desert Shrub, Riparian, and Vegetated Rock/Lava would remain in FRCC 1 with low risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- Mountain Shrub would range from FRCC 2 to 1 across the planning area with moderate-to-low risk to species using this cover type.</p> <p>- Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer FRCC would vary from 2 to 3 throughout the planning area with corresponding moderate risk to wildlife habitat in these cover types.</p> <p>- Salt Desert Shrub, Riparian, and Vegetated Rock/Lava would remain in FRCC 1 with low risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- Mountain Shrub FRCC would range from 3 to 1 with low-to-moderate risk to species using this cover type.</p> <p>- Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer FRCC would be 1 to 2 throughout the planning area with corresponding moderate-to-high risk to wildlife species in these cover types.</p> <p>- Salt Desert Shrub, Riparian, and Vegetated Rock/Lava would remain in FRCC 1 with low risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- Mountain Shrub FRCC would range from 2 to 3 with moderate-to-high risk to species using this cover type.</p> <p>- Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer FRCC would be 3 throughout the planning area with corresponding high risk to wildlife species in these cover types.</p> <p>- Salt Desert Shrub, Riparian, and Vegetated Rock/Lava would remain in FRCC 1 with low risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p>	<p>- Mountain Shrub FRCC would range from 3 to 1 with moderate-to-high risk to species using this cover type.</p> <p>- Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer FRCC would be 1 to 2 throughout the planning area with corresponding moderate-to-high risk to wildlife species in these cover types.</p> <p>- Salt Desert Shrub, Riparian, and Vegetated Rock/Lava would remain in FRCC 1 with low risk to wildlife species using these cover types.</p>
<b>Special Status Plants</b>	Under all alternatives, site-specific project effects on special status plants would be evaluated in light of the status of the taxa, population health and integrity, ecology and response to disturbance, and habitat quality.				
	<p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass:</i></p> <p>- Would treat approximately 6% of cover types to benefit special status plant habitat by reestablishing the structure, species composition, and seral dynamics of the native cover type.</p>	<p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass:</i></p> <p>- Would treat approximately 12% of cover types to benefit special status plant habitat by reestablishing the structure, species composition, and seral dynamics of the native cover type.</p>	<p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass:</i></p> <p>- Would treat approximately 37% of cover types to benefit special status plant habitat by reestablishing the structure, species composition, and seral dynamics of the native cover type.</p>	<p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass:</i></p> <p>- Would treat approximately 30% of cover types to benefit special status plant habitat by reestablishing the structure, species composition, and seral dynamics of the native cover type.</p>	<p><i>Low-elevation Shrub, Perennial Grass, Invasive Annual Grass:</i></p> <p>- Same as Alternative D.</p> <p>- RxFire on approximately 500,000 acres would benefit species that require open light and openings in early to mid-seral stages.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p>- RxFire on approximately 14,000 acres would benefit species that require open light and openings in early to mid-seral stages. Species characteristic of late seral stages would possibly be less tolerant of burning treatments due to shading or nutrient requirements.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, including areas of juniper encroachment:</i></p> <p>- SSS that occur on relatively fire-resistant, sparsely vegetated, rocky sites would not be impacted.</p> <p>- Would treat approximately 3% of cover types with benefits dependent upon seral stage status and tolerance to fire, as well as competitive ability and shade tolerance. Potential negative long-term effects would be due to lack of treatment and continued degradation of habitat.</p>	<p>- WFU and RxFire on approximately 320,000 acres would benefit species that require open light and openings in early to mid-seral stages. Species characteristic of late seral stages would possibly be less tolerant of burning treatments due to shading or nutrient requirements.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, including areas of juniper encroachment:</i></p> <p>- Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>- Would treat approximately 15% of cover types with benefits dependent upon seral stage status and tolerance to fire, as well as competitive ability and shade tolerance. Potential negative long-term effects would be due to lack of treatment and continued degradation of habitat.</p>	<p>- WFU and RxFire on approximately 258,000 acres would benefit species that require open light and openings in early to mid-seral stages. Species characteristic of late seral stages would possibly be less tolerant of burning treatments due to shading or nutrient requirements.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, including areas of juniper encroachment:</i></p> <p>- Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>- Would treat approximately 50% of cover types with benefits dependent upon seral stage status and tolerance to fire, as well as competitive ability and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral community/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>	<p>- RxFire on approximately 500,000 acres would benefit species that require open light and openings in early to mid-seral stages. Species characteristic of late seral stages would possibly be less tolerant of burning treatments due to shading or nutrient requirements.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, including areas of juniper encroachment:</i></p> <p>- Same as Alternative A.</p> <p>- Would treat approximately 28% of cover types with benefits dependent upon seral status and tolerance to fire, as well as competitive ability and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral community/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>	<p>Species characteristic of late seral stages would possibly be less tolerant of burning treatments due to shading or nutrient requirements.</p> <p><i>Mid-elevation Shrub, Juniper, including areas of juniper encroachment:</i></p> <p>- Same as Alternative A</p> <p>.- Would treat approximately 28% of cover types with benefits dependent upon seral status and tolerance to fire, as well as competitive ability and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral community/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p><i>Salt Desert Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately 3% of cover type. Unlikely that treatment would impact any special status plant populations.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer:</i> - Would treat approximately 3% of cover types with benefits dependent upon the seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately &lt; 1% of cover type with benefits dependent upon seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance. Potential negative long-term effects would be due to lack of treatment and continued degradation of habitat.</p>	<p><i>Salt Desert Shrub:</i> - No treatment proposed. No impact to any special status plant populations.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer:</i> - Would treat approximately 21% of cover types with benefits dependent upon the seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately 9% of cover type with benefits dependent upon seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance. Potential negative long-term effects would be due to lack of treatment and continued degradation of habitat.</p>	<p><i>Salt Desert Shrub:</i> - Same as Alternative B.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer:</i> - Would treat approximately 14% of cover types with benefits dependent upon the seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately 42% of cover type with benefits dependent upon seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral stage and/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>	<p><i>Salt Desert Shrub:</i> - Same as Alternative B.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer:</i> - No treatment proposed. Unlikely to impact any special status plant populations though may indirectly impact SSS that require openings in the Aspen vegetation cover type.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately 13% of cover type with benefits dependent upon seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral stage and/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>	<p><i>Salt Desert Shrub:</i> - Same as Alternative B.</p> <p><i>Aspen/Conifer and Dry Conifer:</i> - Same as Alternative C.</p> <p><i>Mountain Shrub:</i> - Would treat approximately 13% of cover type with benefits dependent upon seral stage status, tolerance to fire, competitive ability, and shade tolerance. Potential positive effects would be due to maintaining a seral stage and/or expanding potential habitat on a landscape scale.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	<p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer:</i> There are no special status plant species associated with the Wet/Cold Conifer cover type.</p> <p><i>Riparian:</i> It is not anticipated that areas supporting special status plants would be treated, unless site-specific information indicates that small-scale RxFire use would maintain a seral stage beneficial to the taxa.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava:</i> No treatment proposed. Unlikely to impact any special status plant populations.</p>	<p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p> <p><i>Riparian:</i> No treatment proposed. No impact to any special status plant populations.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p> <p><i>Riparian:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p> <p><i>Riparian:</i> Same as Alternative B.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p>	<p><i>Wet/Cold Conifer:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p> <p><i>Riparian:</i> Same as Alternative B.</p> <p><i>Vegetated Rock/Lava:</i> Same as Alternative A.</p>
<b>Air Quality</b>	<p>Emissions (tons/10-years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PM<sub>10</sub> 1,463</li> <li>- PM<sub>2.5</sub> 1,233</li> </ul>	<p>Emissions (tons/10-years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PM<sub>10</sub> 20,235</li> <li>- PM<sub>2.5</sub> 17,054</li> </ul>	<p>Emissions (tons/10-years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PM<sub>10</sub> 26,172</li> <li>- PM<sub>2.5</sub> 21,797</li> </ul>	<p>Emissions (tons/10-years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PM<sub>10</sub> 9,052</li> <li>- PM<sub>2.5</sub> 7,468</li> </ul>	<p>Emissions (tons/10-years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PM<sub>10</sub> 12,473</li> <li>- PM<sub>2.5</sub> 10,371</li> </ul>
<b>Soil Resources</b>	<p>Least amount of water and wind erodible soils disturbance (37,987 and 154,731 acres, respectively).</p>	<p>Would disturb 98,068 acres of water erodible soils and 399,471 acres of wind erodible soils.</p>	<p>Most amount of water and wind erodible soils disturbance, 256,010 and 1,042,829 acres, respectively.</p>	<p>Would impact 231,076 acres of water erodible soils and 941,263 acres of wind erodible soils.</p>	<p>Would impact 233,467 acres of water erodible soils and 951,003 acres of wind erodible soils.</p>

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
<b>Water Resources</b>	Less than 1% of the proposed treatments in all cover types would occur on water-erodible soils. Thus, overall, short-term impacts to water resources would be negligible across the planning area.	Approximately 7% of the proposed treatments for all cover types would occur on wind-erodible soils, while less than 2% would occur on water-erodible soils, with accompanying risk of sedimentation and short-term impacts to water quality in the planning area.	Approximately 19% of the proposed treatments for all cover types would occur on wind-erodible soils, while approximately 5% would occur on water-erodible soils, resulting in accompanying risk of sedimentation and short-term impacts to water quality in the planning area.	Approximately 17% of the proposed treatments for all cover types would occur on wind-erodible soils, while approximately 4% would occur on water-erodible soils, resulting in accompanying risk of sedimentation and short-term impacts to water quality in the planning area.	Approximately 18% of the proposed treatments for all cover types would occur on wind-erodible soils, while approximately 4% would occur on water-erodible soils, resulting in accompanying risk of sedimentation and short-term impacts to water quality in the planning area.
<b>Livestock Grazing Management</b>	Would result in approximately 47,500 AUMs (0.7%) being temporarily unavailable annually.	Would result in approximately 122,783 AUMs (1.8%) being temporarily unavailable annually.	Would result in approximately 320,467 AUMs (4.8%) being temporarily unavailable annually.	Would result in approximately 289,268 AUMs (4.3%) being temporarily unavailable annually.	Would result in approximately 292,242 AUMs (4.4%) being temporarily unavailable annually.
<b>Recreation</b>	Could have direct impacts by decreasing public access to recreational areas during treatment and recovery periods.	Would have short-term direct impacts by decreasing access to more recreational areas during treatment and recovery periods than Alternative A.	Would have short-term direct impacts by decreasing access to more recreational areas during treatment and recovery periods more than for any of the other alternatives. Dispersed recreation, such as hunting and all-terrain vehicle riding, could be adversely affected in the short term through decreased access to treated areas.	Would have short-term direct impacts by decreasing access to recreational areas during treatment and recovery periods at levels close to Alternative C. Dispersed recreation, such as hunting and all-terrain vehicle riding, could be adversely affected in the short term through decreased access to treated areas.	Would have short-term direct impacts by decreasing access to recreational areas during treatment and recovery periods at levels close to Alternative C. Dispersed recreation, such as hunting and all-terrain vehicle riding, could be adversely affected in the short term through decreased access to treated areas.
<b>Wilderness</b>	Treatments in Wilderness Study Areas that follow the guidance in BLM handbook H-8551 (Interim Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review) would not impair wilderness values under any alternative.				

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
	Effects of current direction's full wildland fire suppression would not result in any short-term, discernible change from current conditions.	Treatments in Vegetated Rock/Lava (approximately 50% of the WSAs) would only include WFU. The remaining cover types that are within Wilderness Study Areas would receive, in general, approximately 2.6 times more treatment than under Alternative A. Treatment impacts may be perceived to decrease the wilderness values of these Wilderness Study Areas in the short term.	Anticipated treatment impacts would be similar to those under Alternative B for Vegetated Rock/Lava cover types. The remaining cover types that are within Wilderness Study Areas would, in general, be 6.7 times more likely to receive treatment than under Alternative A.	There are no treatments proposed in Vegetated Rock/Lava. The remaining cover types that are within Wilderness Study Areas would, in general, be 6.1 times more likely to receive treatment than under Alternative A.	Impacts to WSAs would be the same as those described for Alternative C.
<b>Visual Resources</b>	Views from key viewpoints would be maintained in FRCC 3 with the exception of some portions of the Ohio Gulch viewshed that would be FRCC 2. This would result in moderate-to-high visual quality degradation from atmospheric particulates and large-scale landscape scorching as seen from these viewpoints.	Views from key viewpoints would be maintained in FRCC 3 with the exception of Appendicitis Hill Wilderness Study Area viewshed, where vegetation could move to FRCC 2, resulting in lessened potential for visual quality degradation.	Views from key viewpoints would be maintained in FRCC 1 with the exception of some portions of the Appendicitis Hill Wilderness Study Area, which would remain in FRCC 2. This would result in substantially reduced potential for major visual quality degradation from atmospheric particulates and large-scale landscape scorching as seen from these viewpoints.	Views from key viewpoints would be maintained in FRCC 3, 2, and 1 with similar visual impacts to those described for Alternative B.	Views from key viewpoints would be maintained in FRCC 3, 2, and 1 with similar visual impacts to those described for Alternative B.

<b>TABLE ES-6. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE EFFECTS-ISSUE 2</b>					
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>	<b>Alternative E</b>
<b>Cultural Resources and Native American Tribal Concerns</b>	An estimated 250,200 footprint-acres would be subject to mechanical treatment, chemical treatment, RxFire, or seeding over a 10-year period. However, standard BLM practice entails measures such as pre-action inventory and avoidance that would likely mitigate these impacts.	An estimated 646,000 footprint-acres in most cover types would be treated over a 10-year period. However, standard BLM practice entails measures such as pre-action inventory and avoidance that would likely mitigate these impacts.	An estimated 1,687,000 footprint-acres would be treated over a 10-year period, resulting in a corresponding increase in risk to cultural resources or Tribal concerns. However, standard BLM practice entails measures such as pre-action inventory and avoidance that are expected to mitigate these impacts.	An estimated 1,522,000 footprint-acres would be treated over a 10-year period. Impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative C.	An estimated 1,538,000 footprint-acres would be treated over a 10-year period. Impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative C.
<b>Socioeconomics</b>	<p>-The loss of revenue to the BLM in the form of grazing fees would be \$65,075 over the next 10-year period.</p> <p>-Total fire management costs over the next 10-years would be approximately \$107 million, of which approximately \$37 million would be funneled into the local economy.</p>	<p>-The loss of revenue to the BLM in the form of grazing fees would be \$168,213 over the next 10-year period.</p> <p>-Total fire management costs over the next 10-years would be approximately \$114 million, of which approximately \$40 million would be funneled into the local economy.</p>	<p>-The loss of revenue to the BLM in the form of grazing fees would be \$439,040 over the next 10-year period.</p> <p>-Total fire management costs over the next 10 years would be approximately \$199 million, of which approximately \$70 million would be funneled into the local economy.</p>	<p>-The loss of revenue to the BLM in the form of grazing fees would be \$396,297 over the next 10-year period.</p> <p>-Total fire management costs over the next 10 years would be approximately \$184 million, of which approximately \$64 million would be funneled into the local economy.</p>	<p>-The loss of revenue to the BLM in the form of grazing fees would be \$400,371 over the next 10-year period.</p> <p>-Total fire management costs over the next 10 years would be approximately \$185 million, of which approximately \$65 million would be funneled into the local economy.</p>

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