



SHEEP FIRE ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES RECOVERY PLAN

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OVERVIEW



1. Development of the Sheep Fire Ecological Resources Post-Fire Recovery Plan
2. Impacts to Ecological/Natural Resources from the Sheep Fire
3. Natural Resource Recovery Objectives for the Sheep Fire
 - Restoration options for meeting recovery objectives
4. Current and Ongoing Post-Fire Recovery Activities

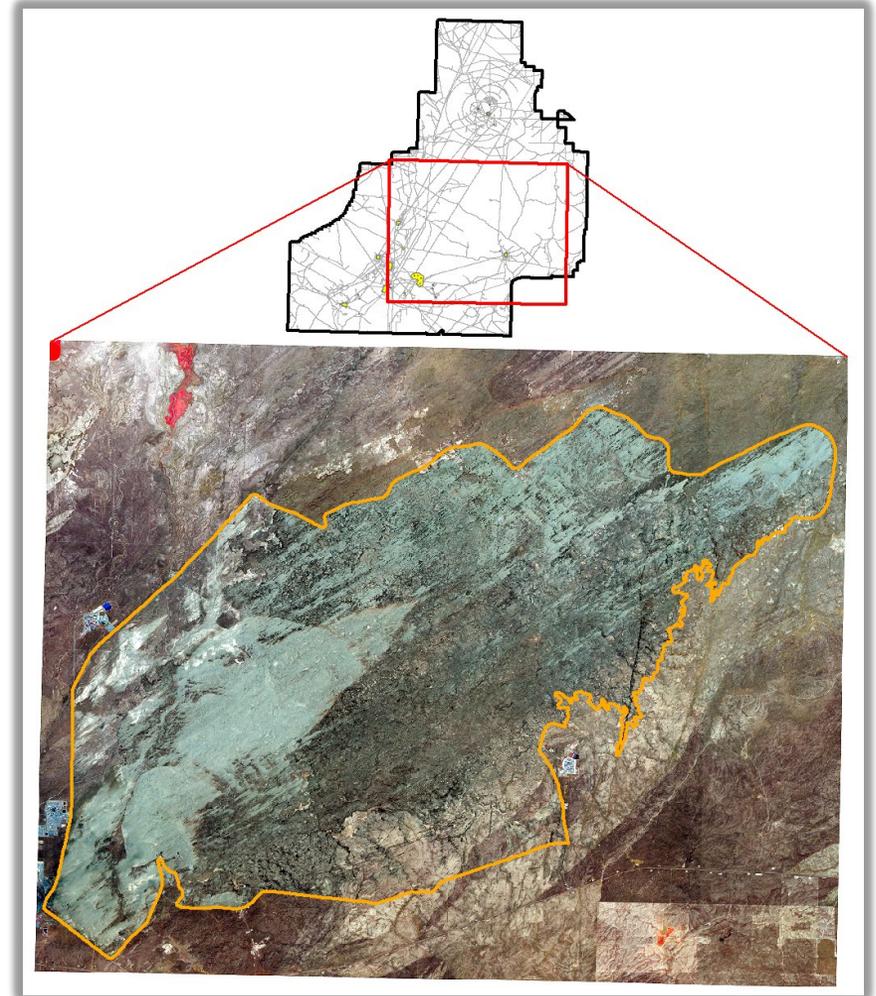
SHEEP FIRE RECOVERY PLAN DEVELOPMENT



- Requested by the INL Wildland Fire Committee
- Consulted with Agency Stakeholders
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - U.S. Geological Survey
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Idaho Office of Species Conservation
 - Idaho Department of Fish and Game

SHEEP FIRE RECOVERY PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Reviewed Applicable INL Resource Guidance
 - Wildland Fire Management Environmental Assessment
 - Candidate Conservation Agreement for Greater Sage-Grouse
 - INL Revegetation Guide
 - INL Sitewide Noxious Weed Management Plan
 - Comprehensive Land Use and Environmental Stewardship Report
 - National Environmental Research Park
- Assessed Impacts of the Fire on Natural/Ecological Resources



SHEEP FIRE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES



- Approximately 80% of vegetation was in fair to good ecological condition prior to the Sheep Fire.

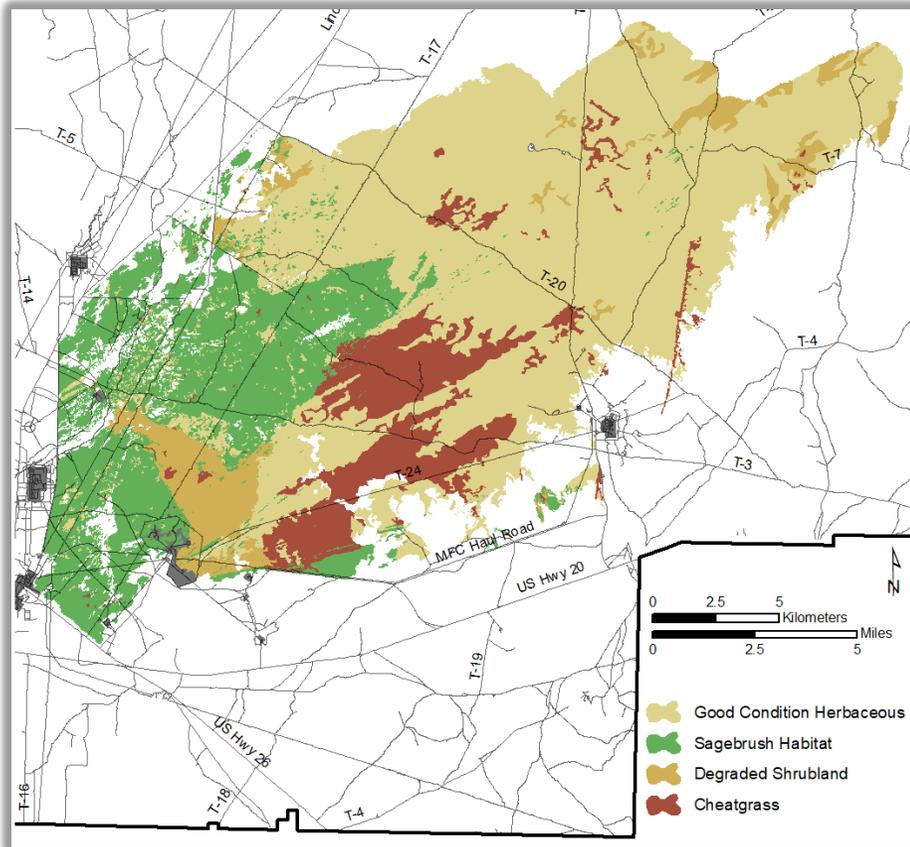


Good condition vegetation with a diversity of native species.



Poor condition vegetation with an abundance of introduced weedy species.

SHEEP FIRE IMPACTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

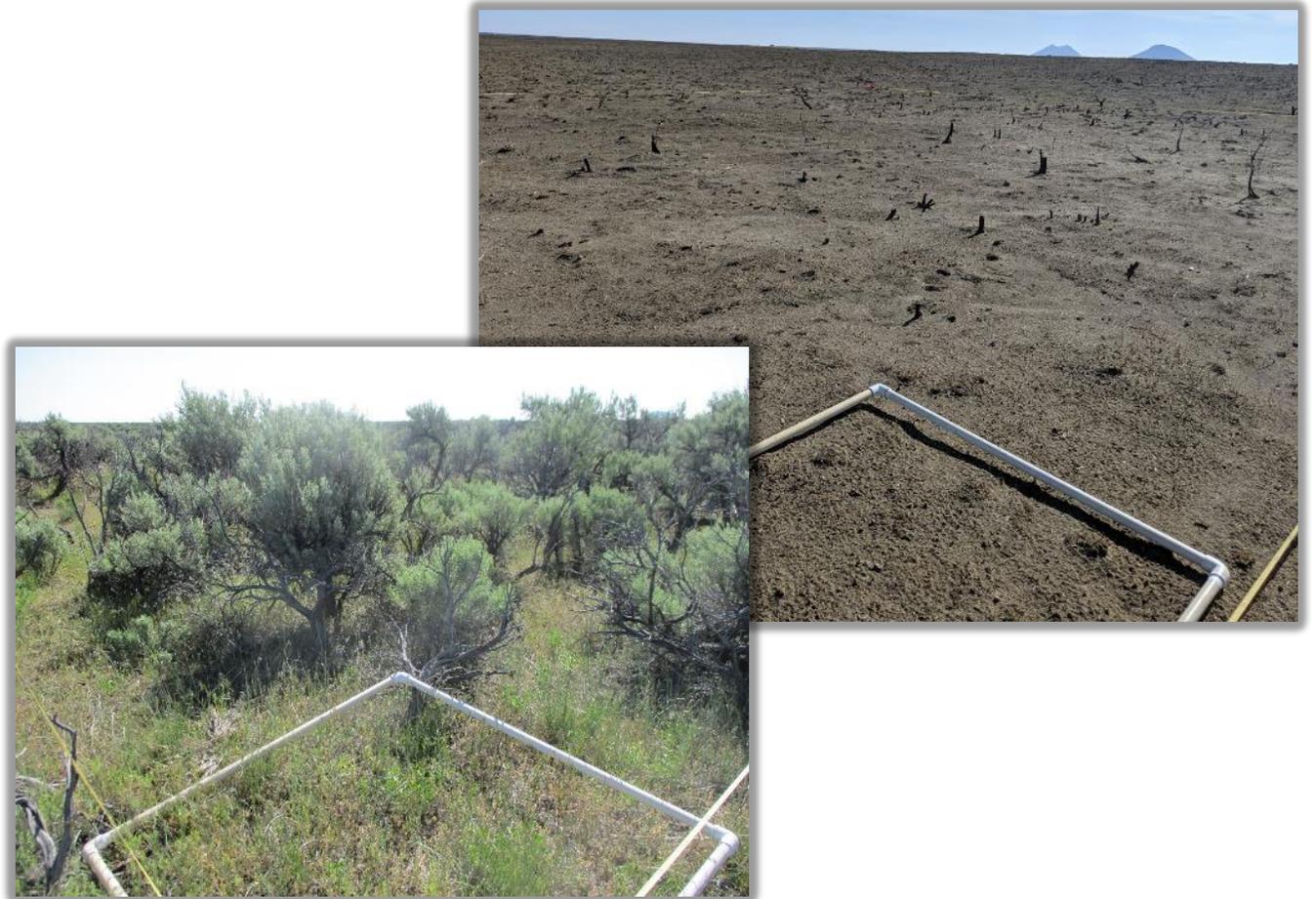


- Total area of sagebrush-dominated vegetation lost was 22,510 acres.
 - Wildlife will experience habitat loss and fragmentation.
- The remaining area was dominated by grasses and re-sprouting shrubs.
 - Previous fires had removed sagebrush from much of the area.
- Cheatgrass dominated 10,700 acres of the area affected by the Sheep Fire.
 - These areas are at risk for poor habitat recovery.
 - Cheatgrass dominance can shorten natural fire cycles.

SHEEP FIRE POST-FIRE RECOVERY PLAN



- **Independent** – One recovery strategy can be implemented separately from another.
- **Phased** – Recovery activities can be implemented over several years.
- **Flexible** – Multiple options are presented for achieving resource recovery objectives.
- **Adaptable** – Monitoring results can be used to inform future decisions.



NATURAL RESOURCE RECOVERY OBJECTIVES



1. Soil stabilization for erosion and weed control immediately post-fire

- Characterize amount/severity of direct soil disturbance and prioritize restoration activities
- Recontour containment lines and seed direct soil disturbance with a native grass mix
- Sign and/or barricade the containment lines to prevent traffic
- Monitor and spray containment lines for weeds
- Assess any soil disturbance associated with powerline repair and restore accordingly

2. Cheatgrass and noxious weed control across the larger burned area

- Identify areas that may benefit from cheatgrass treatment
- Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to selected areas at greatest risk for cheatgrass dominance
- Conduct a weed inventory and treat noxious weeds

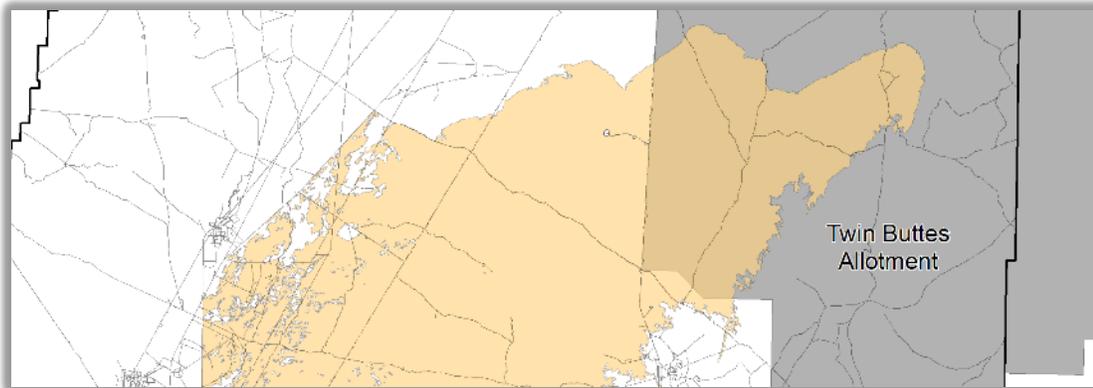


NATURAL RESOURCE RECOVERY OBJECTIVES



3. Native herbaceous recovery, and

- Rest the allotment portion of the burn area for at least two growing seasons
- Identify locations of potentially poor native herbaceous recovery
- Plant native perennial grasses in areas with poor native recovery



4. Sagebrush habitat restoration.

- Prioritize areas that would benefit from planting sagebrush
- Evaluate planting options
- Coordinate a local seed collection effort
- Locate commercially available seed
- Aerially and/or mechanically plant sagebrush seed in high priority areas
- Plant sagebrush seedlings strategically to address specific areas where accelerated recovery would be beneficial to habitat recovery

CURRENT AND ONGOING POST-FIRE RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

- Sheep Fire containment line stabilization
- Aerial sagebrush seeding on the Sheep Fire
 - 25,000 acres in potentially important habitat areas
- Sagebrush seedling planting on older fires
 - 52,000 seedlings over 5 years

