

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

And

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

RECORD OF DECISION

INTRODUCTION

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) on the *Proposed Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, Idaho* (henceforth, Proposed Plan/Final EIS). This Record of Decision includes a statement of the decisions made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, a discussion of non-impairment of National Park System resources or values, a listing of actions designed to minimize environmental harm, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

BACKGROUND

The Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve encompasses approximately 738,000 acres of BLM- and NPS-administered federal land, 8,000 acres of state land, and 7,000 acres of private land. The decisions made through this planning process apply only to the federal land within the Monument boundary, referred to as “the planning area”.

On November 9, 2000, Presidential Proclamation 7373 expanded Craters of the Moon National Monument from roughly 54,000 acres to approximately 753,000 acres, including the 738,000 acres of federal land. The President signed this proclamation to ensure protection of the Great Rift volcanic rift zone and its associated features. The Proclamation also placed the lands under the administration of both the National Park Service (NPS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), with each agency having primary management authority over separate portions. In addition, on August 21, 2002, Public Law (PL) 107-213, 116 Statute [Stat.] 1052 designated the NPS portion of the expanded Monument as a National Preserve. While BLM and NPS operate under different laws, regulations and policies which apply to different portions of the planning area, the proposed plan provides a jointly developed framework for cooperative management of the area. From this point forward in this document the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve will simply be referred to as the Monument.

DECISION

The decision of the NPS and BLM is to adopt Alternative D from the Proposed Plan/Final EIS, with modifications noted below, as the Monument Management Plan.

Each agency's approval applies only to those portions of the Monument for which it has statutory authority. This Record of Decision (ROD) and the Monument Management Plan (MMP) will provide the overall resource management direction of BLM and NPS administered lands in the planning area. Overall management of the Monument will emphasize the cooperative efforts of both agencies in planning and cost effective operations by sharing resources and providing service to the public.

The Monument Management Plan was prepared by the BLM and NPS in accordance with BLM planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1610) and NPS directives (Director's Order #2). An environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared for the Monument Management Plan in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The EIS assessed the possible environmental and social effects of implementing the Monument Management Plan and other alternatives. The Monument Management Plan is nearly identical to the Proposed Management Plan/Final EIS published in August 2005, which was a refinement of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) from the Draft Management Plan/EIS published in March 2004. Specific management decisions for BLM and NPS administered lands in the planning area are provided in the Monument Management Plan.

Management zone prescriptions only apply to federal lands within the Monument boundaries. Any areas outside of the Monument boundary, and labeled in the Proposed Management Plan (Figure 9, page 65) as Passage or Frontcountry Zones, will be described in the final Monument Management Plan as travel access corridors. These corridors will have road standards similar to the Frontcountry (Class A - paved) and Passage (Class B- graded with improved surface) Management Zones described in the Proposed Management Plan (pages 29 and 151).

Agency Specific Decisions

BLM Decisions: Livestock grazing is an activity that is only authorized on the BLM portions of the Monument. All decisions regarding management of livestock grazing pertain only to BLM-administered lands.

NPS Decisions: Decisions affirming that implementation of the Monument Management Plan will not result in impairment of National Park System resources and values within Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve. NPS decisions related to management of wildlife and hunting are in accord with the National Park Service Organic Act and 116 Statute [Stat.] 1052.

Joint Agency Decisions: These decisions pertain to all other aspects of the Monument Management Plan.

All land use plan decisions are identified in the Monument Management Plan. Land use plan decisions include:

- Goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines that define desired future conditions;
- Management actions which enhance reaching or maintaining desired future conditions.
- Land use allocations such as withdrawals and special management area designations;
- Visual resource management (VRM) classifications; land tenure; and
- Allowable uses and restrictions pertaining to vehicles; minerals; vegetation treatment; and protection of Monument resources including vegetation, wildlife, cultural and geologic resources.

The Proposed Plan emphasizes protection and restoration of physical and biological resources and processes. All Management Zones must meet the purpose and significance of the Monument and comply with Proclamation 7373. The Proposed Plan draws primarily upon the Alternative D presented in the Draft Plan/DEIS, but includes more acreage in the Pristine Zone and reduces acreage in the Passage Zone, especially in Laidlaw Park. These changes were made in response to public comments and agency review incorporating some portions of the management zoning proposed in Alternatives B and C. Alternative D emphasizes a proactive Integrated Weed Management program using all available tools. It prescribes the most extensive fire management program to restore sagebrush steppe. Alternative D places a greater emphasis than the other alternatives on promoting partnerships at existing facilities outside the Monument, such as visitor centers, state parks, and gateway communities.

A 30-day protest period was provided by the BLM on the land use plan decisions in the Proposed Management Plan in accordance with 43 CFR Part 1610.5-2. Three protest letters were received. Two of the protests were subsequently withdrawn following clarification of language in the Proposed Plan. Resolutions to the protests resulted in minor editing and clarification of the MMP, and did not result in the necessity for more analysis or repeat publication of the Proposed Plan/FEIS for additional public review and protest. The agreed upon language follows:

1. Management Zones –All Management Zones must meet the purpose and significance of the Monument and comply with Proclamation 7373. The Monument Management Plan will contain language similar to the following language from page 27 of the Proposed Plan/FEIS:

While a different emphasis would be given to various zoned portions of the Monument, the intent is to always be consistent with the purposes for which the Monument was established and with the mission goals identified in the Introduction to this document.

2. Recreational Development of Geologic Features – To clarify the meaning of the word “modified” with respect to geologic features in the Front Country and Passage Zones (Geological Resources, Management Action 1, page 31 in the Proposed Plan), the Monument Management Plan will include additional language describing the intent to minimize necessary hardening or development

impacts that result from facilitating visitor access. The additional language will specifically include “*least impacting*” qualifier language.

3. Limited OHV Designation – To clarify the status of available roads and trails for off-road vehicle (or OHV) use, in accordance with BLM regulation, the Monument Management Plan will state:

All lands except for the existing roads shown on Figure 16 in the Proposed Plan are designated as “Closed” to use by off-road vehicles. Off-road vehicle use is “Limited” to existing roads shown on Figure 16, unless and until such roads are closed, converted to Class II Trails or are further limited by operation of this plan or by the forthcoming Comprehensive Travel Management Plan. (OHV designations do not apply to specifically authorized administrative use.)

4. Acquired Lands – To clarify that any Federal acquired lands within the Monument and Preserve boundary will fall under the direction of the Monument Management Plan, a management action will be added to the Monument Management Plan stating:

Private or state land within the Monument boundary acquired by the agencies would automatically become part of the Monument and subject to the direction in this plan.

5. Material Sites – Language will be added to the Monument Management Plan clarifying reclamation requirements and describing when complete restoration may not be practical, feasible or desirable.
6. Recreation Desired Future Condition – In the Monument Management Plan, the bolded language below will be added to the quoted DFC statement from page 41 of the Proposed Plan:

Impacts associated with recreational uses do not adversely affect the physical and visual integrity of geologic features **or the biological integrity of the ecosystem.**

7. Herbicide Use to Control Weeds – The Monument Management Plan will clarify that Integrated Weed Management principles include an analysis of the tradeoffs involved in herbicide use versus non-chemical methods of weed control. The definition of Integrated Weed Management in the Glossary of the Monument Management Plan will be expanded and constitute a separate definition from Integrated Pest Management.
8. Protection of sage-grouse leks – For purposes of clarification, *a non-exclusive list of examples of potential protective measures* will be added to Wildlife

Management Action 2 (page 64 in the Proposed Plan). The Monument Management Plan will note that the list is non-exclusive in nature.

9. Comprehensive Travel Management Plan – The Comprehensive Travel Management Plan (TMP) will be the first implementation level plan completed and it will be the top implementation planning priority. The Comprehensive TMP will utilize criteria for determining closures or limitations on use of existing roads, which will include, at a minimum, answers to the following:

- What is the road used for?
Does its purpose justify potential threats to the resources for which the Monument was established?
Is this road adequate to provide access for all of its intended purposes?
- Who needs access to this road?
Is it appropriate to limit access to roads based on intended uses?
Limited to administrative uses including fire suppression, restoration activities, livestock management, research activities
Possible further restriction on types of travel
Recreational use restrictions for ATVs, snowmobiles, horses, mountain bikes
- What options do we have to address issues related to roads?
Access restrictions
Conversion to Trails
Road/Trail Closures
Consideration for upgrades if necessary

The NEPA Analysis which accompanies the Comprehensive TMP will include, at a minimum, cumulative effects assessments of road density and fragmentation of sage grouse habitat.

10. Laidlaw Park – There will be no new livestock developments permitted in the North Laidlaw Pasture or Bowl Crater, unless such developments can be shown to provide a net benefit to the objects identified in Proclamation 7373.

11. Protection of Land with Wilderness Characteristics – Description of the Wilderness/Wilderness Study Area Management Plan (see Proposed Plan pg. 16) to be completed will include the following language:

As part of this implementation plan, and consistent with current guidance on inventorying for and management to protect or enhance wilderness characteristics, the agencies may conduct additional inventory, consider citizen proposals, and consider protections of lands with wilderness characteristics.

12. Class 2 Trails – The definition of Class 2 Trails will include a statement that:

Class 2 Trails can only be created from decommissioned roads that will no longer be open to use by full-sized vehicles. No new Class 2 Trails will be created in any other manner.

13. Class D/Class C User-created Roads – To clarify that only user-created roads in existence as of the date of the Monument Proclamation and included in the map on Figure 16 of the Proposed Plan/FEIS, the Monument Management Plan will contain language specifying that:

Class D Roads and other existing roads include only those roads in existence as of the date of Monument Proclamation 7373 and shown on Figure 16. Any routes created by cross-country vehicle or mechanical use since the date of Proclamation 7373 are considered illegal and will be closed.

After consideration of all points raised in the remaining protest, the BLM Director concluded that the Craters of the Moon (CRMO) planning team and decision-makers, including the Idaho State Director, followed all applicable laws, regulations, policies and pertinent process and resource considerations in developing the proposed plan.

Governor’s Consistency Review

A letter was also received from Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne in support of a feasibility study of a proposed upgrade of the Arco-Minidoka Road. The National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management will continue to be engaged in public discussions regarding any upgrade to the Arco-Minidoka Road. The Monument Management Plan is limited to management of the federally-administered lands within the Monument and Preserve boundary. Figure 9, page 65, of the Proposed Plan and Final EIS, features a dashed yellow line indicating a potential passage zone along this portion of the Arco-Minidoka Road through the Monument. The third bullet on page 67 of the Proposed Plan/FEIS under the heading “Travel and Access” Management Actions will be changed in the final version of the Monument Management Plan to read:

Allow for a Class B standard on the Arco-Minidoka Road through the Monument should the adjacent road outside the Monument be upgraded.

This Record of Decision describes the land use plan decisions for the Monument. It is effective on the date it is signed.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

Three other alternatives were analyzed in detail in the Proposed Management Plan/FEIS. General management themes for each alternative analyzed in detail are described below.

Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, proposes no major changes in resource management, visitor programs, or facilities. It depicts current management under the agencies' five existing management plans, as modified by Proclamation 7373, Public Law 107-213, and the agencies' Interim Management Guidelines. Alternative A also serves as a baseline for comparison with the other three alternatives. The management zones depicted in Alternative A represent the planning team's assessment of current conditions. In other words, the management zones were mapped based on actual, existing conditions in 2003.

Alternative B emphasizes a broad array of visitor experiences within the Monument. Alternative B provides the largest amount of multiple-use trail opportunities; improved access both inside and outside the Monument; and extensive educational, informational, and directional signs and interpretive support facilities throughout the Monument. This alternative also allocates large areas in the Passage Zone to allow for potential new developments like designated rustic campsites, high standard motorized and non-motorized trail networks, and a relatively high standard road system that provides easier access to many areas of the Monument. Alternative B also includes suggested management direction for access roads outside of the Monument.

Alternative C emphasizes the Monument's primitive character. This alternative contains the smallest number of visitor facilities. Management actions that influence resource conditions are as "light handed" and non-intrusive as possible, including weed control and sagebrush steppe restoration. Alternative C allocates the largest acreage of all the alternatives in the Pristine Zone and the least acreage in the Passage Zone, and it would result in the fewest miles of maintained roads. Under this alternative, new interpretive facilities would primarily be located outside the Monument. This alternative includes an 11,000-acre Area of Critical Environmental Concern designation in North Laidlaw Park to provide special protective management for native sagebrush steppe.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

Records of Decision are required under Council on Environmental Quality regulations to identify the environmentally preferable alternative. Environmentally preferable is defined as "the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in §101 of the National Environmental Policy Act." Section 101 states, "...it is the continuing responsibility of the federal government to...

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.

- Ensure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.
- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences.
- Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice.
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities.
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.”

In comparison with the other alternatives analyzed, Alternative D, also selected as the decision, best meets the national environmental goals identified above. Alternative D provides a high level of protection of natural and cultural resources, while providing for a wide range of neutral and beneficial uses of the environment. This alternative surpasses the other alternatives in realizing the full range of national environmental policy goals in Section 101.

Goals related to public enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the Monument resources would be achieved through existing on-site programs and facilities, as well as expanded programs and facilities located off site and through authorized licensed guide operations. Livestock grazing, a traditional land use on BLM lands prior to Monument expansion would continue on BLM administered lands in all the alternatives considered with only minor changes among alternatives.

FINDINGS ON IMPAIRMENT OF NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM RESOURCES AND VALUES

The National Park Service may not allow the impairment of National Park System resources and values unless directly and specifically provided for by legislation or proclamation establishing the park. Impairment that is prohibited by the NPS Organic Act and the General Authorities Act is an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. In determining whether impairment would occur, NPS managers examine the duration, severity and magnitude of the impact; the resources and values affected; and direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the action. According to NPS policy, “An impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is: a) Necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park; b) Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or c)

Identified as a goal in the park's general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.”

This policy does not prohibit all impacts to National Park System resources and values. The National Park Service has the discretion to allow impacts to resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, so long as the impacts do not constitute an impairment. Moreover, an impact is less likely to constitute an impairment if it is an unavoidable result, which cannot be further mitigated, of an action necessary to preserve or restore the integrity of park resources or values.

After analyzing the environmental impacts described in the Proposed Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement and public comments received, the National Park Service has determined that implementation of the preferred alternative will not constitute an impairment to resources and values of National Park System lands within Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve. The actions in the proposed plan are intended to protect and enhance the Monument and Preserve's natural and cultural resources, and provide for high-quality visitor experiences. Overall, the proposed plan will have beneficial effects on air and water resources, soils and vegetation, wildlife and cultural resources.

No major adverse impacts to National Park System lands within the Monument and Preserve (hereafter referred to as the park) resources or the range of visitor experiences and no irreversible commitments of resources are expected. While the proposed plan will have some adverse effects on park resources and visitor experiences, most of these impacts will be site-specific, minor to moderate, short-term impacts. None of the impacts of this alternative will adversely affect resources or values to a degree that will prevent the National Park Service from fulfilling the purposes of the park, threaten the natural integrity of the park, or eliminate opportunities for people to enjoy the park.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Rationale for the Decision

In reaching the decision to approve the modifications to the Proposed Plan/FEIS, the NPS and BLM considered the purposes for which Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve was established, and other laws and policies that apply to lands in Craters of the Moon, including the NPS Organic Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Wilderness Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and the *NPS Management Policies*. The agencies also carefully considered public comments received during the planning process.

Based on the input received during the planning process, there was both support and opposition to certain components of the proposed plan. No formal comments were received from Federal or State agencies or Tribal governments indicating the proposed plan was inconsistent with other existing plans or policies. The majority of comments received on the proposed plan related to transportation, grazing management, wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), and wildlife.

Compared to the alternatives considered, the proposed plan best protects Monument resources while providing a range of quality visitor experiences. The proposed plan will have both positive and negative impacts on the Monument's natural resources, but most of the negative impacts will be minor and localized. The proposed plan will continue to provide a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, ranging from pristine and remote backcountry to accessible sites with amenities such as restrooms, campsites, trails, and interpretive media. New management zones provide a framework for determining appropriate public uses and administrative practices. A major element of the proposed plan is an emphasis on resource protection and restoration when appropriate. Management actions include aggressive suppression of wildland fires to protect most existing sagebrush steppe, expanded noxious weed prevention and control, and enforcement of the prohibition on off-road vehicle travel. Active restoration of degraded sagebrush steppe habitat will benefit a variety of wildlife including the Greater sage grouse.

The proposed plan provides greater protection of natural and cultural resources, including Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, than Alternatives A or B through expansion of the pristine management zone to include Wilderness Study Areas. The proposed plan provides for a greater level of vegetation treatment for proactive restoration and post-fire rehabilitation than Alternatives A or B and for more immediate habitat improvement than would be possible in Alternative C.

ACTIONS DESIGNED TO AVOID OR MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL HARM

In order to minimize impacts from implementation of the decisions contained in the Monument Management Plan, actions identified in Appendix A of the Record of Decision will be applied. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been adopted.

PLAN MONITORING

The BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-9) call for the monitoring of Management Plans on a continual basis with a formal evaluation done at periodic intervals. Implementation of the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve MMP will be monitored over time. Plan evaluations will occur at about five-year intervals. Activity-level planning and proposed projects will be evaluated relative to consistency with MMP objectives. Projects will be monitored to determine their effectiveness regarding meeting or progressing towards meeting objectives. This evaluation process is described in more detail in the monitoring sections of the MMP.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The NPS and BLM provided a number of opportunities for the public to participate in the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve planning process. The Notice of Intent (NOI) to jointly prepare a land use plan and the associated EIS for the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve was published in the Federal Register on

April 24, 2002. The NOI initiated the public scoping process by inviting participation in identifying planning issues and developing planning criteria.

Information about the Monument planning process and opportunities for involvement were posted on websites for the National Park Service (www.nps.gov/crmo) and the Bureau of Land Management (www.id.blm.gov/planning/index.htm). Comments were accepted by mail and via e-mail. Local and regional newspapers and radio stations throughout the planning area were used to disseminate information on the Management Plan scoping and planning process.

Approximately 1,500 copies of a newsletter describing the scoping period were distributed in April 2002. Eight scoping open house meetings were held in June 2002 with a total of 166 individuals attending. Input from the open houses and one hundred and sixty-nine letters received by the end of the scoping period identified six major categories of issues: development, transportation and access, visitor use, authorized uses, natural and cultural uses, and general. In the fall of 2002 a second newsletter sent out to approximately 850 individuals and organizations described the issues identified during scoping. A third newsletter sent to the public in January 2003 and three public workshops held in February identified a number of preliminary alternatives to be analyzed in the draft EIS. The newsletter and preliminary alternatives workshops resulted in 160 letters and over 2,500 e-mails from individuals and groups.

Throughout the process formal government-to-government consultation with the Shoshone-Bannock and Shoshone-Paiute tribes was conducted to solicit their input. Consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the management plan's affects on cultural resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places continued during the planning process. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding species listed in accordance with the Endangered Species Act, resulted in the Service's concurrence that the plan is not likely to adversely affect any endangered species.

The Notice of Availability for the Draft Plan/DEIS was published on April 30, 2004, and the document was filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA announced the availability of the Draft Plan/DEIS for public review and comment in the Federal Register on April 30, 2004. This announcement began a 90-day comment period, which ended on July 29, 2004. Four public open house meetings attended by 75 persons were held in May 2004 to help answer any questions about the Draft Plan/DEIS. The 90-day comment period resulted in 153 letters with 570 substantive comments. In addition, 975 e-mail letters were received. Letters were received from twenty-five government organizations, twelve private organizations, and one hundred and sixteen individuals. A summary of the key topics of the comments is presented in Chapter Five of the Proposed Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Notice of Availability of the Proposed Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement was published in the Federal Register on August 26, 2005. The 30-day "no action" period ended on September 26, 2005. Copies of the Proposed Plan/FEIS (printed or on Compact Disk) were mailed to all persons or organizations that had

participated during the planning process. The complete document was also made available on both agencies' websites.

Public Participation in Implementation

Land use plans or General Management Plans and planning decisions are the basis for every on-the-ground action the BLM and NPS undertakes. They provide a framework to guide subsequent actions or plan implementation decisions. Implementation decisions are generally site-specific land management projects or actions designed to meet direction in the planning documents and decisions.

Following signing of this Record of Decision, an implementation strategy or "business plan" will be developed, allowing opportunities to determine future implementation priorities. As each project is considered, the public will be given the opportunity to be involved in the project level planning. Each project will be subject to additional site specific NEPA analysis and documentation, associated Tribal consultation, agency and public involvement, and appropriate National Historic Preservation Act consultation.

The highest planning priority for NPS is updating the current fire management plan to include the NPS-managed Preserve. NPS personnel will work closely with BLM-Shoshone Fire Staff to insure goals and objectives for fire management activities are similar along agency boundaries. The NPS Fire Management Plan revision will include "Wildland Fire Use" in Preserve wilderness study areas where it is appropriate. All NPS wildland fire use projects will be managed under a strict set of guidelines to minimize negative impacts. Wildland fire rehabilitation efforts, within the Preserve, will follow protocols for NPS-administered lands. In the future, subsequent fire management planning for the Monument and Preserve will address both BLM and NPS-administered lands as one unit.

CONCLUSION AND APPROVAL

Among the alternatives considered, the selected plan best protects Monument resources while also providing a range of quality visitor experiences, meets the BLM and NPS goals, statutory and policy requirements for managing the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, and meets national environmental policy goals. The selected plan will not result in the impairment of National Park System resources and values. Having considered a full range of alternatives, associated resource impacts and public comments, we adopt the Monument Management Plan as it applies to the respective agencies areas of jurisdiction. As a delegated EIS, the officials responsible for approving the Plan are the Idaho State Director, Bureau of Land Management, and the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service. Subsequently, the officials responsible for implementation are the BLM Monument Manager and the NPS Superintendent for Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve.

Approved: /s/Bud C. Cribley **Date:** 9/7/06
Bud C. Cribley,
Acting State Director, Idaho, Bureau of Land Management

Approved: /s/Jonathan B. Jarvis **Date:** 9/12/06
Jonathan B. Jarvis,
Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service

APPENDIX A

ACTIONS DESIGNED TO AVOID OR MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL HARM

The following management actions will be used by NPS and BLM during implementation of the Monument Management Plan to avoid or minimize potential impacts to natural and cultural resources.

Natural Resources

Geological Resources and Caves

Significant cave resources in the Monument would be identified and protected. Prior to any ground disturbing activity, areas would be surveyed for unique, rare, or special geologic resources, including fossils. BLM would identify significant caves on federal land and restrict or regulate use according to the Federal Caves Resource Protection Act (FCRPA) of 1988. All caves on NPS-managed land are considered “significant” and in accordance with NPS policies would be protected to the greatest extent possible with current funding and staffing levels. Threats to unique or representative geologic resources would be identified and mitigated according to NPS and BLM management policies.

Soils and Water

Whenever possible, new development by NPS would be carried out on previously disturbed sites or in carefully selected sites with as small a footprint as possible. During design and construction, Monument staff would identify areas to be avoided.

Soil erosion and associated water quality impacts would be minimized by limiting the time that soil would be left exposed and by using, when possible, various erosion control measures such as the placement of silt fencing, retention and replacement of topsoil, revegetation of sites with native species, and selective scheduling of construction activities. Conserving topsoil from major construction sites would minimize potential compaction and erosion of bare soil. The use of conserved topsoil would help preserve the microorganisms and seeds of native plants. Topsoil should be re-spread as close to the original location as possible and supplemented with scarification, mulching, seeding, and/or planting with species native to the immediate area. This would reduce construction scars and erosion. In an effort to control the spread of exotic plant species, only certified weed-free hay, straw, or mulch would be used.

All new major construction by NPS would be completed using sustainable practices, such as the use of environmentally friendly materials and efficient utility systems. Components of such projects would be assessed for visual quality. Utilities and support functions such as water, sewer, electricity, and roads would be evaluated and designed to mitigate visual impact.

Vegetation, including Special Status Species, and Fire Management

Monument staff would survey proposed development sites and project areas for special status plants. New development would be relocated or project design modified if special

status plant populations are present. Similarly, new trails, roads, and campsites would be located to avoid impacts to special status plant populations.

Damage to natural and cultural resources by fire suppression, prescribed fire, or restoration treatment operations will be avoided by following the operational protocols in Appendix J. Areas burned by wildland fire will be examined and the need for treatment under Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) will be determined. The Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan for the Shoshone and Burley Field offices (USDI BLM 2005) will be used to guide ESR treatments on BLM-administered lands. Revegetation efforts would emulate the natural form, spacing, abundance, and diversity of native plant communities and would use native species whenever feasible.

To help minimize the spread of non-native plants, Monument managers would allow only the use of weed-free materials and equipment for operations. A variety of measures to prevent weed introduction and spread within the Monument would be implemented. These measures would include: cleaning vehicles and equipment that may have been used in weed-infested areas prior to entry into the Monument; identifying, treating and posting weed locations; and educating staff, livestock permittees, visitors, and contractors.

Trails in the NPS-managed portion of the Monument would be monitored for signs of disturbance of native vegetation. To control potential impacts on plants from trail erosion or social trails, sustainable, low-impact barriers would be used, and disturbed areas would be revegetated with native plants

Wildlife and Special Status Species

A variety of techniques would be employed to reduce the impacts on wildlife, such as visitor education programs and restrictions on visitor activities. NPS, in conjunction with the State of Idaho, would designate areas within the Preserve and periods of time when no hunting would be permitted for reasons of public safety, protection of the areas' resources, administration, or public use and enjoyment.

Special status species in the Monument and Preserve would continue to be inventoried. Actions and stipulations necessary to protect special status species and their habitats would be made part of use authorizations and fire planning.

Air Quality

Dust control measures would be used during construction activities, and all construction machinery would be required to meet air emission standards. Appropriate smoke management controls will be incorporated in plans for prescribed fire operations to protect the air quality related values of Class 1 air sheds.

Cultural Resources

In accordance with agency policies and procedures, the Monument and Preserve would continue to protect cultural resources to the greatest extent possible with available funding and staff levels. Disturbing these resources would be avoided whenever possible. Where avoidance or preservation cannot be achieved, mitigation would be carried out

under the guidance of the procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800).

Before any land-modifying activity, a professional archaeologist would inspect the present ground surface of the proposed development site and the immediate vicinity for the presence of cultural remains, both prehistoric and historic. Should newly discovered or previously unrecorded cultural remains be located, additional investigations would be accomplished prior to earth-disturbing activities.

Through consultation with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), areas for Section 110 cultural resource inventories would be prioritized. At-risk sites eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) would be monitored for vandalism. A Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP), which describes how specific sites would be managed, defines what areas need additional inventory, and designates potential-use categories for sites, would be completed for the Monument.

Should Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) materials be inadvertently discovered within the Monument, the agencies would follow the tribal consultation procedures outlined in the NAGPRA of 1990. All preservation, rehabilitation and restoration efforts for historic structures would be carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitation, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

Wilderness

Minimum requirement analysis will precede any proposed management activities within designated wilderness areas and WSAs managed by the National Park Service. Bureau of Land Management-administered WSAs will continue to be managed under Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review. (See Appendix B, page 352 of the Proposed Management Plan and Final EIS.)