



AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY

CONSERVING WILD BIRDS AND THEIR HABITATS THROUGHOUT THE AMERICAS

Natalene Cummings
Craters of the Moon National Monument
P.O. Box 29
Arco, ID 83213

January 2, 1997

Dear Ms. Cummings:

Thank you for submitting an IBA nomination form for Craters of the Moon National Monument. I have reviewed the materials you provided and have determined that your site qualifies as an Important Bird Area in *American Bird Conservancy's United States Important Bird Areas* program. Your nomination packet was one of the most thorough that I have received to date. Further review will be necessary before I can determine the level (National, Continental, or Global) of the designation. In part, I will need to wait until I receive nomination forms for similar sites so that I can compare them with each other. Once the final designation is made, I will contact you to discuss this designation and possible publicity. Meanwhile, if you have any questions please feel free to call me at 202-467-8350 or e-mail me at jprice@abcbirds.org.

Again, thank you for your submission.

Sincerely,

Jeff Price, Ph.D.
Director, United States Important Bird Areas Program



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Craters of the Moon National Monument
P.O. Box 29
Arco, Idaho 83213

IN REPLY REFER TO:

N1419

November 5, 1996

United States Important Bird
Areas Program
1250 24th Street NW, Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please find enclosed our nomination of Craters of the Moon National Monument for consideration for designation as a United States Important Bird Area.

We are nominating the monument based on **Category 3: Sites regularly holding an assemblage of species restricted to a biome or a unique/threatened natural community**, and **Category 5: Site important for their long-term avian research or monitoring activities**.

Craters of the Moon encompasses a sagebrush steppe ecosystem that is increasingly threatened by pressures from mining, agriculture, off-road travel, grazing and fire activities. As a unit of the National Park Service, communities within the boundaries, and the wildlife species dependant on those communities, are legally protected and preserved as mandated by the park service's guiding legislation, and provide harbor for wildlife species that are being forced out as their habitat is encroached upon by development.

In addition, the ongoing inventory and monitoring (I & M) programs and past, current and proposed research projects that have been/are being conducted at Craters of the Moon have, and will, provide significant information regarding the resources and interdependent relationships related to the sagebrush steppe community; including vegetation and wildlife studies. The monument's annual breeding bird censuses is an inventory and monitoring project that has been conducted every spring since 1988 and will continue to be an important part of the I & M program.

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, the park's Resource Management Specialist - Natalene Cummings, at (208) 527-3257, or at the following e:mail addresses:

^{Jim}
james_morris@nps.gov
natalene_cummings@nps.gov

Again, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

James A. Morris
Superintendent



UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS Site Nomination Form



Thank you for participating in the U.S. Important Bird Areas Program. Please read the accompanying *Criteria and Guidelines* before you fill out this form. Please complete as many sections as you can. Return this form to: American Bird Conservancy, United States Important Bird Areas Program, 1250 24th Street NW, Suite 220, Washington, DC 20037. If you have any questions please call the United States Important Bird Areas Coordinator at (202) 467-8350, E-mail: jprice@mnsinc.com

Review:

Level: G C N S

ID Number:

Name and Address of Compiler:

Natalene Cummings

Craters of the Moon National Monument

P.O. Box 29

Arco, ID 83213

Site Information

1. Name of Site:

Craters of the Moon National Monument (CRMO)

2. County:

Butte and Blaine

3. State:

Idaho

4. Nearest major town:

Idaho Falls

5. General location and directions to site:

Hwy 93/20/26, 18 miles west of Arco, Idaho, 87 miles west of Idaho Falls, Idaho

6. Geographical coordinates (center of site):

Long. 113 32' 28" Lat. 43 24' 5"

7. Approximate area (in acres):

Approximately 54,000

8. Elevation range (in feet):

Lowest: approx. 5,220' Highest: 7,729'

9. USGS Quad or other map used to delineate site (please attach):

CRMO map attached. USGS maps not inclosed, but include the monument are: Inferno, Watchman, Fissure Butte, North Laidlaw Butte, Little Park and Blizzard Mountain South

10. General description of site:

Craters of the Moon National Monument was established by presidential proclamation in 1924. The Monument occupies approximately 54,000 acres in the eastern Snake River Plain, which crosses southern Idaho as a broad arc of low topographic relief, contrasting with the mountainous terrain of the rest of the state (see attachment 2).

Submitted original
11/96

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

As a unit managed under the Department of Interior's National Park Service, the monument, and its resources, have been set aside to be protected and preserved for all future generations. There is no hunting, grazing, mining or timber extraction allowed within the monument boundaries. Recreational experiences such as camping, hiking, skiing, and biking are secondary to the primary objectives of protection and the education and scientific study of the natural and cultural resources within the monument.

The significance of the monument is the relatively young age of the lava flows and the diversity of volcanic features in a small geographic area. The monument contains part of one of the four rift sets that make up the Great Rift, a volcanic rift zone that extends for 60 miles from the Pioneer Mountains south nearly to the Snake River. Spectacular and diverse features along the Great Rift include vast basaltic lava flows and associated volcanic products from eruptions that occurred between 15,000 and 2,100 years ago, specifically are the two different types of lava flows, cinder cones, rafted blocks, fissure cracks, vents, spatter cones, lava tubes, and tree molds.

The monument's fauna, and particularly its flora, reflect the influence of the geologic setting. Plant succession is well illustrated among different aged lava flows. Three subspecies of small mammals were first described from the area and are found only in the vicinity of lava flows of the Great Rift.

Although much of the monument surface consists of barren lava flows, plant communities are surprising diverse (see attachment 3). The varied micro habitats within the lavas, variations in elevation from the lavas up to the foothills, the different aspects created by topography, and the riparian areas in the north end all contribute to habitat diversity. This has resulted in greater plant diversity that might be expected from a first glance at the seemingly barren lava.

The region is part of the Great Basin floristic province. Day and Wright (1085) listed a total of 26 separate vegetation types in the monument (see attachment 4). More than 300 vascular plant species are distributed among those 26 vegetation types. Slightly more

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

than 22% of the monument's total area is covered by shrubs (mostly sage-brush and antelope bitterbrush), grasses, or a combination of the two; the general vegetation type is called shrub steppe, located in the area of the monument referred to as the south unit of the monument (hwy 90/20/26 follows the edge of the lava flows that lay at the base of the foot hills in the northern unit and is used to divide the two units). This once was the common vegetation in southern Idaho, but grazing, fire, and agriculture have reduced incidence and altered the species composition of most areas surrounding the monument.

The northern end of the monument includes a small portion or the foothills of the Pioneer Mountains. The north unit is different from the volcanic shrub steppe of the southern portion of the monument with it's stands of Douglas-fir and quaking aspen. Riparian areas surround the small watercourses that arise from springs in the foot hills. (Most excerpts, maps and tables used to complete this nomination form were taken from the Craters of the Moon National Monument - General Management Plan, 6/1992.

Ornithological Information

11. IBA Site Criteria (check all that apply, see Criteria and Guidelines for further details):

☒	1. Endangered, threatened, or vulnerable species	☐	4c. 5,000 or more pairs of seabirds
☐	2. Species with restricted range (endemic)	☐	4d. 20,000 or more shorebirds
☒	3. Representative bird community	☐	4e. 10,000 or more raptors
☐	4a. 1% or more of a species population	☐	4f. 2,500 or more wading birds
☐	4b. 10,000 or more waterbirds	☐	4g. Exceptional concentrations of passerines
		☐	5. Long-term research/monitoring site

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

2. Ornithological importance:

Criterion	Species using site	Season	No. of birds	Reference sources
1, 2	Northern Harrier	SM, B	2	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Ferruginous Hawk	B	occ. sighting	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Prairie Falcon	SM, B, FM, W	2	Ann. rpt & dbase
1, 2	Burrowing Owl	B	1	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Calliope Hummingbird	SM, B	1+	Ann. rpt & dbase
1, 2	Rufous Hummingbird	SM, B	1+	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Lewis' Woodpecker	B	1+	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Red-napped Woodpecker	SM, B, FM	1+	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Williamson's Woodpecker	SM	1+	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Olive-sided Woodpecker	B	1+	Wildlife dbase
1	Willow Flycatcher	SM	1	Wildlife dbase
1	Hammond's Flycatcher	SM	1	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Dusky Flycatcher	SM, B	4	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Gray Flycatcher	B	1	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Cordilleran Flycatcher	B	1	Wildlife dbase
1	Swainson's Thrush	SM, FM	1	Wildlife dbase
1, 2	Loggerhead Shrike	SM, FM	1	Wildlife dbase
1	Solitary Vireo	SM, FM	1	Wildlife dbase
1	Yellow Warbler	SM, SM	2	Annual Bird rpt
1	Townsend's Warbler	SM, FM	1	Wildlife dbase
1	MacGillivray's Warbler	SM, B, FM	2	Annual Bird rpt
1	Wilson's Warbler	SM, B, FM	2	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Green-tailed Towhee	SM, B, FM	15	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Brewer's Sparrow	SM, B, FM	45	Annual Bird rpt
1, 2	Sage Sparrow	B	1	Wildlife dbase
1	Yellow-headed Blackbird	FM, W	1	Wildlife dbase

The numbers referring to an Annual Bird rpt come from the number reported on the most recent Annual Bird Census Report. This does not include data for previous census year.

The numbers referring to Wildlife dbase were either observations of a species that was reported and entered into the monument's Wildlife Observations dbase Program and/or it may have been reported on a previous year's bird census which is entered into the dbase

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

rogram. The numbers do not include the total number of birds residing within the monument boundaries.

The birds listed above were taken from the list of Priority Species of Migratory Landbirds in Idaho list distributed by the Partners in Flight - Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

See documents included in Attachment 5 for details on the above information.

13. Additional ornithological information:

There is some concern that all native Idaho sagebrush shrub and grasslands are being reduced and altered from native condition. Although the monument has no significant numbers of individual species residing here, it is an area of this shrinking sagebrush ecosystem that is and has been under federal protection and offers a preserve for species dependent on that vegetative ecosystem. With the increases from grazing, agricultural, mining, and urban development/spread, the significance of the monument as the guardian of the sagebrush steppe ecosystem becomes greater and greater.

14. Topography/climate/hydrology/soils/geology/tides:

Craters of the Moon has a semiarid climate with hot, dry summers and cold winters. The annual precipitation from 1959 to 1982 averaged 42.6 cm (16.77 in), with the greatest amounts in December of January of each year, mostly from snow. There were minor peaks in

May or June of each year from rain. July and August are the driest months. Snow first falls in November, and except in dry winters, it remains on the ground until at least April. Temperatures vary widely, both seasonally and diurnally. Average maximum monthly temperatures range from -1.7 C (28.9 F) to 28.7 C (83.7 F). Freezing temperatures can occur in any month. The prevailing southwesterly winds are most intense in spring, but are also ever present in the summer months.

Craters of the Moon lies at the north edge of the eastern Snake River Plain, a broad, flat lava arc, concave to the north, which covers nearly 10,000 square miles of southern Idaho. It extends from the Yellowstone Plateau and the Teton Mountains on the east to the Oregon state line on the west. The Snake River borders the southern edge of the plain, which occupies almost a quarter of the surface of Idaho and contrasts markedly with the mountainous terrain that dominates the northern, central, and far southern parts of the state. The eastern Snake River Plain is essentially flat in this vicinity: vertical

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

relief is a few hundred feet at Craters of the Moon and less than that elsewhere.

There are two distinct landforms in the monument: the foothills of the Pioneer Mountains in the north give way to the low relief of the lava flows in the rest of the monument. The monument's highest elevation, 7,729 feet above sea level, is in the Pioneer Mountains. Elevations gradually decrease from north to south; the lowest elevation is about 5,220 feet in the southeast corner. Within the lava flows, cinder cones provide the greatest vertical relief. The highest cinder cone is Big Cinder Butte, which stands more than 700 feet above the surrounding plain. Nineteen other cinder cones are at least 100 feet high. The Great Rift is apparent from the linear alignment of the cinder cones. The primary resource value of CRMO is the great diversity of basaltic features in a small area. Almost all the features of basaltic volcanism are visible at the monument. Much of the volcanism of the Snake River Plain was confined to volcanic rift zones. A volcanic rift zone is a concentration of volcanic landforms and structures along a linear zone of cracks in the earth's crust. The Great Rift volcanic rift zone is a zone of cracks running approximately northwest to southeast across almost the entire eastern part of the Snake River Plain. The entire Great Rift is 62 miles long. The CRMO rift set is 34 miles long; 13 miles of this are in the monument. The other rift sets that make up the Great Rift are, from north to south, the Open Crack rift set, 13 miles long; Kings Bowl, 6.8 miles; and Wapi, 11 miles.

Where the Great Rift intersects the earth's surface, there is an array of cinder cones, lava cones, eruptive fissures fresh-appearing lava flows, noneruptive fissures, and shield volcanoes. the Craters of the Moon, Kings Bowl, and Wapi rift sets have predominantly eruptive fissures.

Of the more than 60 lava flows of the CRMO lava field, 20 have been dated; their ages were found to range from about 15,000 years before present (B.P.) to about 2,100 years B.P. The flows were laid down in eight distinct eruptive periods that recurred on an average of every 2,000 years. On the basis of recent eruptive history, the CRMO rift set is due for another eruption within the next thousand years, perhaps as soon as within 200 years.

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

Soil surveys are scheduled for completion during the 1996 summer field season. During a soil survey conducted on Carey Kipuka in the southwest portion of the monument, it was found that soils there are primarily windblown loess or soils that have developed from the area's basalt.

Soils in the north unit differ from those in the rest of the monument in origin and deposition, but lack of soil survey prevents detailed analysis. In general, soils in the north unit and the kipukas are better developed than those in the rest of the monument. Little time has been available for soil development in parts of the monument that are covered by more recent lava flows. Soil accumulation depends primarily on accumulation of loess; this occurs most rapidly in crevices and cracks. Soils in adjacent agricultural areas from which the vegetative cover has been removed are subject to wind erosion.

Surface water is extremely scarce at the monument. The single surface source is Little Cottonwood Creek, which flows from springs in the foothills of the Pioneer Mountains in the north unit. The flow of Little Cottonwood Creek disappears beneath the ground surface before reaching the highway.

Four springs in the Little Cottonwood drainage provide drinking water for the monument; this source is supplemented by two wells in the same drainage. The wells, each approximately 100 feet deep, tap a perched aquifer of unknown origin and size. There are only isolated occurrences of water on the lava flows.

The occasional existence of ice in the lavas is a seemingly strange phenomenon in the desert environment of CRMO, yet ice is often found in the holes and caves of lavas in areas that receive winter snow. Runoff water from snowmelt freezes in the depressions in cold weather and remains frozen because of the excellent insulating properties of the lava and because cold air moves downward, maintaining low temperatures.

The availability of water in water holes varies with seasonal precipitation, particularly snow. Some water holes in CRMO lava have gone dry since their occurrence was first noted.

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The water holes are important for wildlife living in the area of the lava flows.

Craters of the Moon is underlain by the Snake River Plain Aquifer, one of the most productive in the western United States. The production from the aquifer and its depth beneath the surface of the monument are unknown, but wells drilled outside the monument boundaries but near the monument have encountered water about 1,000 feet below the surface.

15. Habitats - classify as P(primary), S(secondary), or provide approximate percent cover of each:

☐ 6.8 Deciduous woods	☐ .07 Natural grassland	☐ Tidal wetland	☐ Urban/suburb
☐ .07 Coniferous woods	☐ Other grassland	☐ Non-tidal wetland	☐ Other _____
☐ Mixed woods	☐ Desert/desert Fringe	☐ Lacustrine/Riverine	☐ Other _____
☐ 90.4 Shrub/scrub	☐ Marine	☐ .13 Riparian	☐ Other _____

* Shrub/scrub at CRMO includes areas dominated by Mountain Big Sagebrush, Antelope Bitterbrush, Three-tip Sagebrush (totalling 90.4%). Areas containing exclusively Mountain Big Sagebrush dominating makes up 18.9%. Deciduous woods includes upland aspen areas, totalling 6.84%. See Attachment 6.

16. Major non-bird fauna (especially rare/endemic) and rare/endemic plants:

Please see Attachment 7 for the monument list.

17. Plant communities:

Please see Attachments 3 and 4.

18. Land ownership (include name and address of major land owner/contact:

Department of Interior

National Park Service

Crates of the Moon National Monument

Jim Morris, Superintendent

P.O. Box 29

Arco, ID 83213

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

19. Land Use(s) - classify as P (Primary), or S (Secondary):

☐	Agriculture/cultivation	☐	Forestry	☐	Urban/indust./utility
☐	Rangeland/pasture	☐	Hunting	☒ P	Wildlife Preservation/ research
☐	Water Supply	☐	Mining	☒ P	Other <u>resource preserv.</u> <u>and research</u>
☐	Fisheries	☒ S	Recreation/Tourism	☐	Other _____

20. Threats - Classify as C (Critical), M (Major), L (Local), P (Potential):

☐	Natural pests/desease	☐	Irrigation	☒ *M	Escess. soil erosion
☒ L	Intro. of exotics	☒ L	Drought	☐	Oil pollut./explor.
☒ *P	Over-extrac. ground water	☒ L	Fire	☐	Over-fish./gill net.
☐	Predation	☐	Hurricane	☐	Toxic pollution
☐	Escess. disturb. of birds	☐	Land claim/landfill	☒ *P	Pesticides
☐	Wind turbines	☒ *P	Estrac. industry	☒ P	Other pollution
☐	Deforestation/tree cutting	☒ *P	Dstrct. of Desert Crust	☒ L	Parasitism
☐	Afforestation/tree plant.	☐	Conversion to ag land	☒ P	Excess./irrspn. hunting
☐	Diversion of water	☒ *P	Increase in agric.	☒ L	Rec. devl/overuse
☐	Drainage	☒ L	Succession	☒ *P	Other development
☐	Damming	☐	Over grazing	☐	Other _____

* = threats from areas adjacent to the monument boundaries.

21. Detail primary threats to area:

WITHIN THE MONUMENT BOUNDARIES: On arid lands like those in and around the monument,
vegetation is subject to heat, wind, salinity, drought, infertile soils, and animal
pressure, as well as, natural predation, illness and disease. And, as public interest in
the national parks increases, so does visitation, presenting managers with the challenge
of maintaining a balance of protection of resources while continuing to provide for
visitor enjoyment as is mandated in the Organic Act of 1916, the guiding mandate for the
National Parks Service.

ADJACENT LANDS: Human induced stresses present on the boundaries of the monument that can
be added to the natural stresses listed above include activities such as scraping,
bulldozing, agriculture, water diversion, mining, over-grazing, differential shrub

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

removal, and the use of off-road vehicles.

The air quality at Craters of the Moon is the resource most likely to be significantly affected by external influences. There is concern that gaseous pollutants may be in sufficient amounts to damage vegetation. The source or sources of this kind of pollution are not known at this time. The regional population density is low, but pollutants may increase as the population increases. Air pollution from outside sources occasionally can be seen when winds blow from the east or southwest. Mining activities and agricultural field burning also are sources of air pollution. The Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL), about 25 miles northeast of the monument, maintains a coal-fired power plant for on-site power production. INEL has applied for a permit to expand the plant and increase emissions. In addition, INEL has proposed the operation of, a waste incinerator. Air quality monitoring programs currently operating at Craters include visibility, particulates, ozone and acid deposition. There is strong interest in expanding the air quality monitoring program to include monitoring of additional pollutants.

Recently, interest has increased in disseminated, low-grade gold deposits amenable to leaching, so exploration and mining activity in the Pioneer Mountains north of the monument is likely to continue and probably will increase. Mining can affect water resources, wildlife, and vegetation and cause visual impacts, erosion, and increased local traffic. In addition, there are several borrow pits adjacent to the monument boundary and within a mile of the boundary to the north. Borrow pits can have the same impacts on the monument similar to those of mining and provide disturbed soils, allowing for the introduction of exotic plant species and providing a staging area for dispersal of exotics following a fire.

During the mid-1980's, extensive oil and gas exploration was conducted on the Snake River Plain basalt flows and bordering regions. While some oil and gas was found, the quantities proved to be uneconomical because of the expense of drilling through basalt. Surface samples collected from the Pioneer Mountains just north of the monument suggest that there is some oil and gas potential.

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The aquifer that underlies Craters of the Moon could be affected by well-drilling or pollution on adjacent lands. The aquifer could be diminished or depleted if large amounts of groundwater were removed. Wells drilled recently at Arco are deeper than previous wells; however, it is not known positively if the Arco wells are tapping a aquifer shared with the monument. Contamination of a part of the Snake River Aquifer by activities of the INEL is well documented within the site and is currently the subject of a cleanup effort. contamination of the perched aquifer and the springs that provide potable water to the monument is highly unlikely.

There is potential for recreational development on private land west of the monument. The development is only in the conceptual stage now, but interest could increase if Idaho tourism grows. A large development would bring significantly more visitors to the monument, with associated impacts.

22. Conservation measure taken, in progress, or proposed:

See Attachment 8, Craters of the Moon Research Summary, for a list of research that has been conducted at Craters of the Moon National Monument. Since the research summary was published, a rare plant survey of the North End Unit and Carey Kipuka have been completed. In addition, the following monitoring programs are currently being conducted in the monument:

WILDLIFE:

- Annual Breeding Bird Census
- Annual Over-winter Success Rate Monitoring of Mule Deer Fawns
- Annual Fall Mule Deer Population Census
- Survey of Bat Species Utilizing Lava Tubes and Caves
- Exotic Vertebrate monitoring and Suppression

VEGETATION:

- Annual Vegetation Trends Monitoring
- Annual Vegetation Photo Point Monitoring
- Informal Exotic Plant Inventories
- Annual Exotic Plant Species Suppression Efforts

GEOLOGY:

- Annual Geologic Features Photo Point Monitoring
- Annual Visitor Trail Use Monitoring

AIR QUALITY:

- Ongoing Ozone Monitoring
- Ongoing Acid Deposition Monitoring
- Ongoing Visibility Monitoring
- Ongoing Particulate Sampling

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

WATER QUALITY:

Annual Surface Water Quality Sampling and Monitoring

PROPOSED:

During the 1997 field season, a soil survey is scheduled for completion.

Formal exotic plant inventories are needed

Air quality programs to monitor additional threats to air quality are being considered.

23. Economic, cultural and social values of site:

ECONOMIC: Craters of the Moon National Monument receives approximately 250,000 visitors each year, primarily from May through September, contributing an estimated 6 million dollars into the local economy.

SOCIAL:

Education:

Interpretation is vital in obtaining public support for programs. Many issues, particularly threats to the environment, can not be resolved without public support and participation. The interpretive program at CRMO is effective in communicating the significance of the monument and the resources and ecosystems contained within. The formidable, hostile, seemingly barren land may appear unsuitable for recreational activities, but by spending some time in the monument, visitors can learn about, and understand, it's features and the sagebrush steppe ecosystem. Interpretive displays, waysides and materials, and the guided walks and evening programs provide the visitor with information and understanding of the landforms and environment. It is through understanding that visitors can come away with a greater appreciation of, and respect for, our natural and cultural heritage.

The interpretation efforts at the monument also include an education program. A 1990 count revealed that thirty-six elementary to high school groups - a total of 1,697 students, visited the park and participated in the park's education curriculum. Additionally, 12 college groups also visited the monument during that time.

Research:

The 1988 National Park Service (NPS) Management Policies states that "In recognition of

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The scientific value of parks as natural laboratories, investigators will be encouraged to use the parks for scientific studies when such use is consistent with NPS policy. On average, approximately 8-12 permits are issued for research each year.

The monument's museum collection, maintained for research and education, contains over 12,000 items. The majority of the collection is in the geology, biology or archives and includes an extensive herbarium that is nearly complete.

CULTURAL: Based on a number of archeological surveys conducted on the monument, it is clear that Native American groups have been using the area that is now the monument during both the pre-historic and historic period. At least two Indian groups, the Shoshoni and the Bannock, have been known to use the area. The nature of their activity, both from the past up until the present time is unclear, although, findings indicate that the area was visited. No permanent settlements have been found.

Recently, interest in the archeological resources within the monument have increased. In the past two years, archeological excavations were undertaken at two sites within the monument, and a number of inventories conducted, contributing vital information to the knowledge and understanding of the native people.

The North End of the monument contains a portion of Goodale's Cutoff. This cutoff is an alternative route of the Oregon Trail and was used by settlers from the 1850's through the turn of the century. Recent research suggests that Goodale's Cutoff was considered part of the main Oregon Trail during and after the Fourth Emigration Wave. IN 1863, 70% of all wagons leaving Fort Hall, Idaho en route to Boise, Idaho, or Oregon used the cutoff. In 1974, the portion of the cutoff within the monument was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

As a unit of the National Park Service, cultural resources are offered the same protection as all other resources within the boundaries.

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

4. Name and address of existing or potential advocacy group or individuals for this site:

Craters of the Moon Natural
History Association
P.O. Box 29
Arco, ID 83213

Snake River Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2922
Idaho Falls, ID 83403-2922

Committee for Idaho's
High Desert
P.O. Box 2863
Boise, ID 83701

Arco Chamber of Commerce
Arco, ID 83213

The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 165
Sun Valley 83353

Idaho Conservation League
P.O. Box 2671
Ketchum, ID 83340

National Parks and
Conservation Assoc.
Northwest Regional Office
1402 Third Ave., Suite 424
Seattle, WA 98101

Friends Group of Craters of the Moon National Monument
(Not yet established but being considered)

25. Additional supporting comments or references (attach separate sheet):

The low sagebrush/Idaho Fescue habitat of the north unit and the early low sagebrush/Idaho Fescue habitat at Carey Kipuka in the southwest corner of the monument have been evaluated and found to meet the criteria for National Natural Landmark (NNL) status because they are outstanding representatives of the "Low Sagebrush/Idaho Fescue" subtheme in the "Low Sagebrush" theme within the Columbia Plateau natural region. These areas have been recommended for designation as National Natural Landmarks.

The general vegetation type in the proposed NNL is called shrub steppe. This combination of low shrubs and grasses once was the common vegetation over southern Idaho, but grazing, fire, and agriculture have reduced incidence and altered species composition in the area. Some regional biologists are concerned that all native Idaho sagebrush grasslands are being reduced and altered from the native condition.

UNITED STATES IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

Maui Nēaue Kipuka has been designated a Research Natural Area.

A couple of years ago, legislation was introduced in Congress for the creation of a large national park consisting of the present Craters of the Moon National Monument and extensive lands adjacent to the monument that are administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The expansion included, and provide for the protection and preservation of, the entire rift system and all it's associated volcanic and natural resources. The National Park Service prepared the Reconnaissance Survey: Expansion of Craters of the Moon National Monument (NPS 1989b) to evaluate the expansion proposals. The legislation died, however, efforts to expand the monument to include these significant resources continues and is presently headed towards the concept of cooperative interagency management practices with the possible designation of the Great Rift National Monument and Natural Preserve.

All nominations will be reviewed. Those sites not meeting the criteria for being designated a national, continental, or globally Important Bird Area will be forwarded to National Audubon Society for use in their State level Important Bird Areas Programs.