

228-14 - UPDATING OUR PARKS: GIP SCIENCE COMMUNICATION POSITIONS AT CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT AND PRESERVE AS A TOOL FOR MODERN INTERPRETATION

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

5:00 PM - 5:15 PM

Phoenix Convention Center - Room 104AB, West Building

Abstract

The National Park Service offers an opportunity to engage with audiences from diverse backgrounds as the parks attract people from all walks of life (Solop et al., 2003). One of the communication challenges parks face is providing current information about the ongoing research projects in these unique places. Signs and trail descriptions can be decades old and rarely provide up to date reports about the park's plans to address modern issues like climate change and invasive species. Geosciences-in-the-Parks science communication positions provide an opportunity to directly address this issue by having interns split time between the resource management and interpretation divisions within the park. As a GIP science communication intern at Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, I worked directly with active research teams in the park on projects including bat maturity colony surveys, invasive vegetation control, and ecological monitoring programs. I then provided this information to the interpretive staff as well as the park visitors. I presented biweekly updates at interpretative staff meetings so that all of our staff were knowledgeable about what was going on within the park. To engage with park visitors, I designed "pop up" talks about the ongoing research projects in the park. These pop-up programs provided park visitors with a cutting edge understanding of how the park was working to address modern issues like white nose syndrome, invasive species and climate change. By providing visitors with up to date information on current activities within the park, they were better able to engage with the natural world by learning about the effects these modern issues are having on the landscape and what the park is doing to address these questions. Positions like the GIP science communication internship program offer a new approach to connecting park staff and visitors to current research projects that address modern problems. Science communication within our parks will only become more important as climate change continues to intensify and impact our planet.

Geological Society of America Abstracts with Programs. Vol. 51, No. 5, ISSN 0016-7592

doi: 10.1130/abs/2019AM-340709

2019 The Geological Society of America (GSA), all rights reserved.

Author

Michael Murphy