



**Utah Conservation Corps & National Park Service:
Southern Idaho Parks Projects: 2025 Report**

9/15/25 – 9/18/25, 9/22/25 – 9/25/25 & 9/29/25 – 10/2/25



Sunset behind the guard tower at Minidoka National Historic Site.

UCC: Koh Nomura, Thomas McDonald, Abigail Strom, Leigha Carson, Keelan Mangus, Nina Larsen,
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Conservation Assessment and Background

In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which called for the incarceration of Japanese Americans on the west coast of the United States. They were torn from their homes and businesses and brought to camps in secluded areas, one of which was Minidoka War Relocation Center in Jerome County, Idaho. Today, Minidoka National Historic Site (MIIN) serves to preserve a piece of this historic camp, educating the public and shining a light on this dark chapter of American history.

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve (CRMO) protects a valuable landscape and ecosystem unique in North America. At 618 square miles, it is the largest basaltic Holocene-aged lava field in the US. The monument is a sought-after tourist destination, providing recreational opportunities for hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. The vast patchwork of volcanic lava fields and islands of forest and intact sagebrush communities also provides critical habitat for a variety of native plant and animal species.

Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument (HAFO), located in southern Idaho, preserves one of North America's richest late Pliocene fossil sites, offering a detailed look at life approximately 3.5 million years ago. Thousands of fossils representing over 200 species—mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish—have been found in the bluffs along the Snake River. Recognizing its scientific value, Congress designated the site as a national monument in 1988, ensuring ongoing protection and research.

Goals

Goals of the project were to remove old, derelict, unneeded barbed wire, woven wire and electric fences at MIIN and HAFO. At MIIN, crews also worked to remove invasive Russian olive from along the North Side Canal. At CRMO, crews worked to remove old chain-link fence that once surrounded spring boxes (the historic water sources for CRMO). This fence had become a dilapidated entanglement hazard for wildlife. This challenging project required repeatedly hiking up high into the slopes of the southernmost Pioneer Mountains to cut up and haul down the heavy fence debris.

Summary

The Utah Conservation Corps completed three hitches for the Southern Idaho Parks (SoID) in 2025. Crews removed nearly a mile and a half of unneeded fences at the three different parks. Crews also worked at Craters of the Moon to remove broken and run-down chain-link fences from the park. The crew hiked up and down steep slopes to haul down 5 truck and trailer loads of fence material. Crews also worked on removing invasive Russian olive trees from Minidoka NHS. They were able to remove 0.7 acres of Russian olive, and apply herbicide to the stumps to prevent the trees from regrowing. Crew members greatly appreciated the opportunity to work with park staff on these important projects that would not have been accomplished without the help of the UCC.

Projects	MIIN	HAFO	CRMO	TOTAL
Miles of woven wire / barbed wire fence removed	0.55	0.10	-	0.65
Miles of electric fence lines removed	0.84	-	-	0.84
Piles of fence debris cleaned up	2	2	6	10
Trailer loads of fence debris removed	4	5	6	15
Acres of invasives removed/ habitat improved	0.7	-	-	0.7

Maps



Minidoka Before (top) After (below): (red=woven wire with 1-2 barbwires on top, purple= electric fence, green=wildlife-friendly fence for historic structure protection, tan=historic wooden corrals)



Minidoka: 3-year progression



Minidoka fences 2023



Minidoka fences after
UCC work in 2024



Minidoka fences
After UCC work in 2025



Minidoka: Area of Russian olive work along North Side Canal.



Hagerman Fossil Beds: Fence around the Fossil Gulch substation. Red=312 feet of barbwire fence removed. Yellow = 213 feet of post and rail with barb wires on it removed.



*Craters of the Moon National Monument:
overview map (above) of spring boxes/ chain link fence debris. Close-up below.*



Minidoka National Historic Site (9/15 – 9/18)



Member Keelan sets up a saw (left), Member Tommy assesses a tree to cut (center), Lead Koh working inside of a thicket of Russian olive (right).



Member Leigha rolls up fence wire (left), Member Keelan removes wire from a T-post (center), Member Leigha hooks a T-post to the tractor (right).



Member Keelan hooks a T-post to a tractor (left), Partner Ari removes wire from a post (center), the crew cleans saws at the end of a day (right).

BEFORE



AFTER



Dense Russian olive thicket thinned out by UCC crew.



Old fencing removed by UCC crew.



Old fencing removed by UCC crew.



Dense Russian olive thicket thinned out by UCC crew.



Russian olive thicket thinned out by UCC crew.



MIIN: Margaret limbs (left) & Nina bucks Russian olive (center), HAFO: Jacob low stumps an old wooden fence post (right).



HAFO: Margaret removes t-post (left), Chelsea cuts barbed wire (center), Jacob takes down fence (right).



MIIN: Margaret cutting olive (left), Kylee cutting olive (center), Member Chelsea bucking a branch (right).

BEFORE



AFTER



MIIN: Russian olive tree bucked up by UCC crew.



MIIN: Russian olive removed and piled by UCC crew.



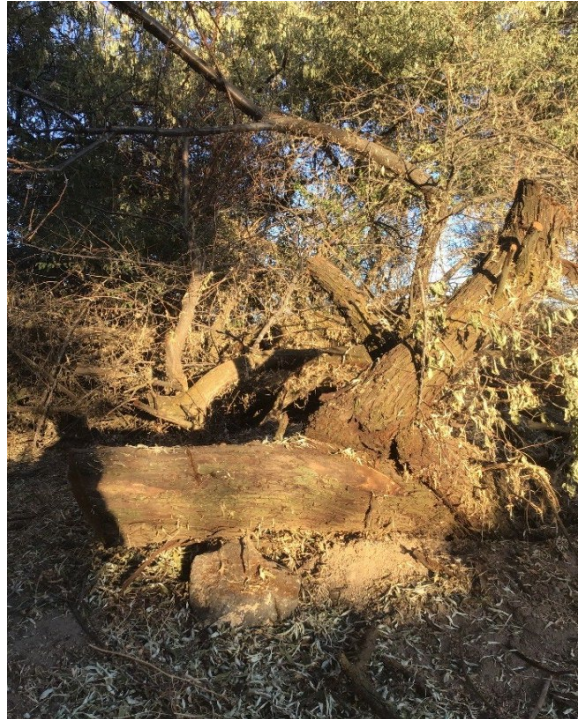
MIIN: Russian olive cut and bucked by UCC crew.



MIIN: Russian olive removed by UCC crew.



MIIN: Herbicide application on Russian olive stumps by UCC crew.



MIIN: Russian olive removal by UCC crew.



MIIN: Russian olive removal by UCC crew.



HAFO: Fence removal by UCC crew.



HAFO: Fence removal by UCC crew.

Craters of the Moon (9/29 – 10/2)

BEFORE



AFTER



Old fencing material removed and put into a trailer for disposal.



Old fencing material removed and loaded in truck for disposal.



Old chain-link fencing material removed by UCC crew.



Old chain-link fencing material removed by UCC crew.



Old chain-link fencing removed by UCC crew.



Old chain-link fencing removed by UCC crew.



Old chain-link fencing removed by UCC crew.