Craters of the Moon
National Monument
P. O. Box 29
Arco, ID 83213 E76





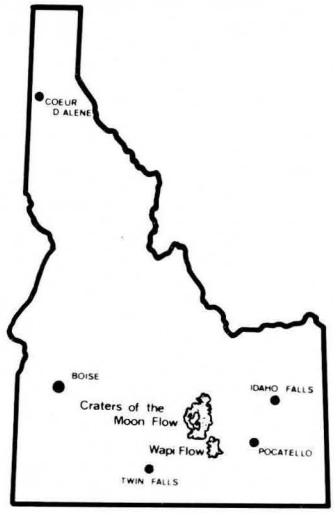
Great Rift

Proposed Wilderness

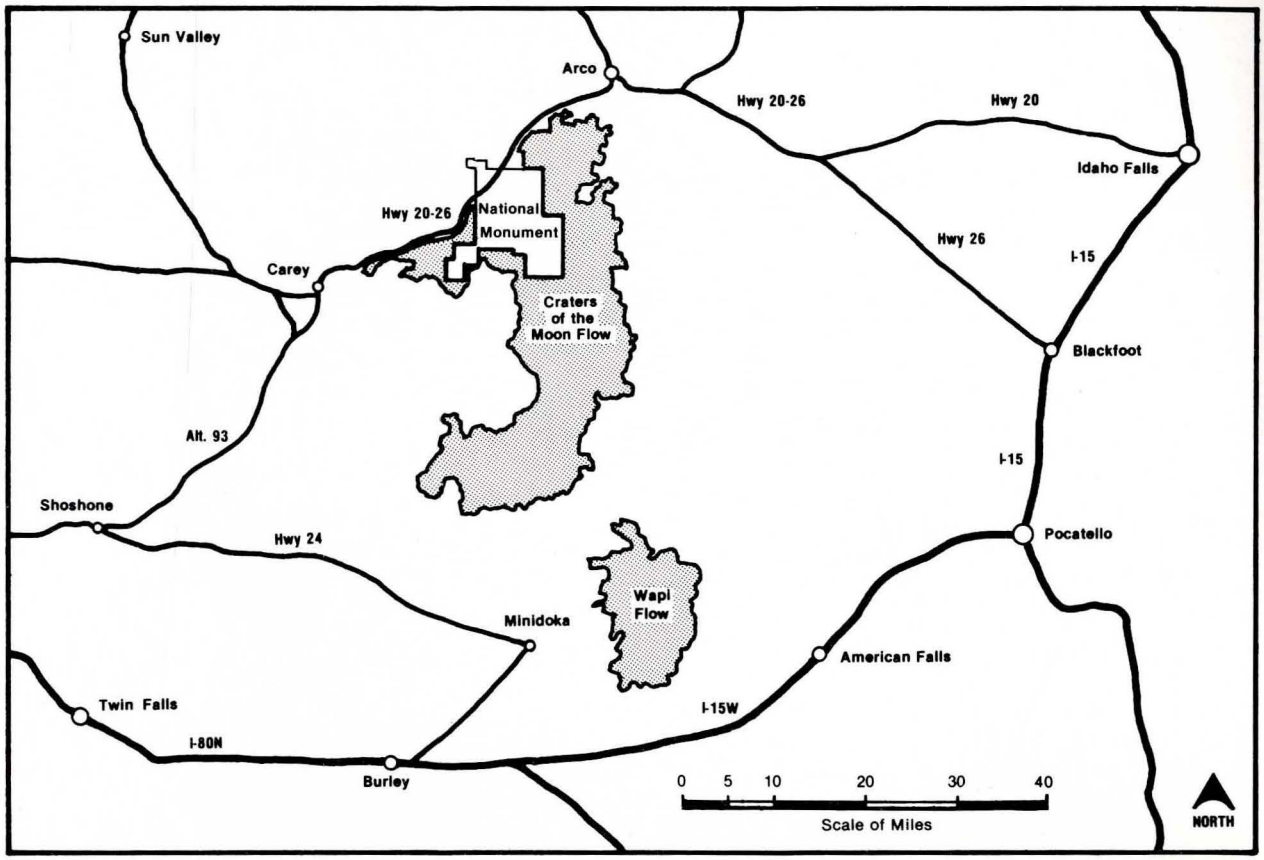
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared by Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho
1980





Location of Proposed Great Rift Wilderness



Study Area

All photos in this publication provided by BLM.

Front Cover Photo: Upper Photo – Blacktail Butte
Center Photo – Rabbit brush on lava
Lower Photo – Pillar Butte

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

GREAT RIFT

WILDERNESS

Prepared by

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



Clair M Whitlock
Idaho State Director

GREAT RIFT WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
BLAINE, BUTTE, MINIDOKA, AND POWER COUNTIES, IDAHO

( ) DRAFT (X) FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

1. TYPE OF ACTION: ( ) Administrative (X) Legislative

2. RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:

Lead Agency: Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Cooperating Agencies: None

3. ABSTRACT: The BLM recommends that the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area be designated as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The proposed boundary includes 341,000 acres, 18,550 acres of which are State land.

Alternatives to the proposed action include:

. Wilderness Study Area Alternatives - Designate an additional 33,400 acres of public lands as wilderness.

. No Action Alternative - Continue the administration of the Grassland Kipuka as a natural area and continue managing the Craters of the Moon and Wapi lava flows for multiple use without wilderness designation.

4. STATEMENT MADE AVAILABLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY & THE PUBLIC:

Draft - March 1980

Final -

5. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUMMARY

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

1. PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM recommends that the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness be designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The proposed boundary includes 322,450 acres of public land in Butte, Blaine, Power, and Minidoka Counties (Idaho). Included in the proposed wilderness boundary is 18,550 acres of State land. If the area was designated wilderness the BLM would work with the State to exchange the State lands for public lands. The area includes the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area (160 acres) and portions of the Craters of the Moon (267,950 acres) and Wapi (72,890 acres) lava flows. This area is being considered for wilderness as a result of of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA, 1976) which requires the Secretary of Interior to conduct a study of all primitive and natural areas for their wilderness potential. The secretary must report his recommendations to the President on the wilderness suitability of these areas by July 1980.

This proposed action would preserve wilderness characteristics on about 341,000 acres. It also would preserve many unique features of this lava flow ecosystem. Commercial enterprises, motor vehicles, and motorized equipment, roads, structures and installations would be prohibited.

Impact Summary

The primary benefits of designating the Great Rift area (341,000 acres) as wilderness would be to preserve the wilderness characteristics and the naturalness of the area from man's imprint. In addition, an outstanding opportunity for solitude and for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation would be preserved. Secondary benefits associated with the proposed action would be to preserve a total ecosystem, including unique geologic, wildlife, soil, and vegetative interrelationships. The ecosystems of some 450 kipukas also would be preserved. A kipuka is an island of old lava surrounded, but not covered by, a lava flow.

The adverse impacts would be the loss of the opportunity to mine lava rubble for building stone, and subject to existing rights, the withdrawl of all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing. In addition, geothermal exploration within the area would only be allowed subject to a "no surface occupancy" stipulation. Off-road (ORV) use would be prohibited along with rights-of-way for powerlines, roads, etc.

2. WILDERNESS STUDY AREA ALTERNATIVES

When the inventory for the Great Rift was conducted, about 374,000 acres were determined to have wilderness characteristics (Wilderness Study Area). However, 33,400 of the total acres were recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation because of managment difficulties. This WSA alternative proposes to include these 33,400 acres for wilderness designation. This alternative is the same as the Proposed Action, except that 33,400 more acres would be devoted to wilderness purposes and would be subject to the same prohibited uses as the Proposed Action.

Impact Summary

Impacts would be the same as for the Proposed Action but would apply to the additional 33,400 acres.

In addition, motorized vehicle use on the Wood Road beyond the first kipuka would be prohibited.

3. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

No action would be taken to include the Great Rift area (341,000 acres) into the National Wilderness Preservation System. The area would be managed according to multiple use and sustained yield concepts as prescribed in FLPMA, except on the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area.

Impact Summary

Beneficial impacts from this alternative would be that lava rubble could be sold for use as building stone, and geothermal exploration on the lava flows could occur. The 322,450 acres of public land also would be open for the exploration and development of locatable, leasable and saleable minerals. Rights-of-ways could be granted to cross the lava flows, and off-road vehicle use could be permitted under existing guidelines.

The principal adverse impacts would be that existing wilderness characteristics could be impacted by lava rubble mining, vehicle use, geothermal activity, right-of-way establishment or other human activities.

MAJOR AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

1. Question of the Need for Wilderness

Some Idahoans feel that the state already has enough wilderness (1.5 million acres presently designated and 3.4 million acres under presidential recommendation for wilderness from RARE II, the second

roadless area review and evaluation). Some other persons feel that additional wilderness is needed in the state. These opinions for and against increased wilderness in Idaho were brought out quite strongly in the BLM scoping process.

2. Need for Protection

Because of the low visitation and minimal activities on the lava, many persons question whether wilderness protection is necessary. However, other persons say that the area needs to be protected against any possible future impacts to wilderness values.

3. Mining

Until December 31, 1983, the United States mining and mineral leasing laws apply to wildernesses to the same extent as they applied to the area prior to its classification.

Effective January 1, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in land designated as wilderness are withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing.

4. Geothermal Energy

Geothermal leasing would be allowed within the Proposed Wilderness Area but would be subject to a "no surface occupancy" lease stipulation.

REMAINING ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

STATE LANDS

If Congress designates the area as wilderness, BLM would promptly explore action to acquire these lands as allowed under section 5(a) of the Wilderness Act. Section 5(a) also stipulates that access to these inholdings be allowed pending possible acquisition.

The Idaho Department of Lands has expressed interest in participating in any exchange or acquisition program as a result of wilderness designation. Their views and recommendations would be considered during the development of any such program. There are 18,550 acres of State lands within the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area.

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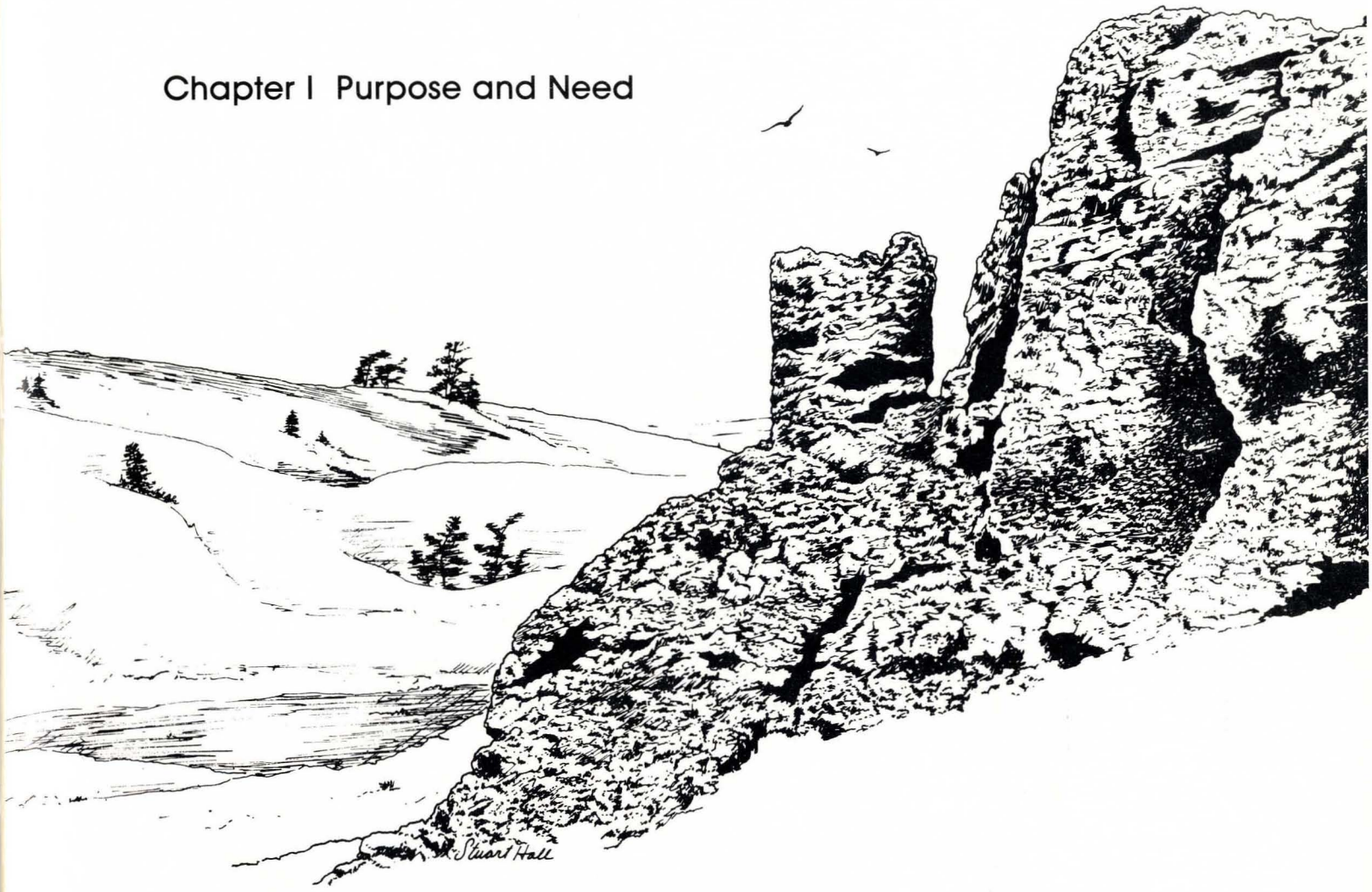
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Chapter I Purpose and Need



CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND NEED

Section 603 (Appendix 2) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA, 1976), states

> "That the Secretary shall report to the President by July 1, 1980, his recommendations (for wilderness designation) on those areas which the Secretary has prior to November 1, 1975, formally identified as natural or primitive areas. The review required by this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure specified in Section 3(d) of the Wilderness Act."

The Grassland Kipuka (160 acres of Public Land located 1.5 miles west of Craters of the Moon National Monument) was designated as a Natural Area in 1965. It therefore falls under the purview of the 1980 reporting requirements. BLM's Organic Act Directive (OAD) #79-40 requires simultaneous review and reporting on roadless lands that are contiguous to such previously designated Natural Areas. The Craters of the Moon lava flow is contiguous to the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area and is thus included in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Both the Craters of the Moon flow (253,010 acres) and the Wapi flow (69,690 acres) were recommended for possible Primitive Area designation when the Big Desert Management Framework Plan was developed (1974). That recommendation led to a contracted study of Primitive Area values which was conductd in 1975-76. Results of the study called for official Primitive Area designation for both flows. However, such designation was halted by Section 603 of FLPMA which mandated a wilderness inventory of all BLM lands. The Wapi flow is also included in this EIS because: it is an integral part of the Great Rift system as studied for Primitive Area designation; it contains the same outstanding wilderness characteristics as the Craters of the Moon flow; ultimately, it would undergo the same wilderness study process of the Craters flow, so including it in this EIS analysis simply accelerates the review and reporting process; and inclusion of the Wapi flow adds several unique features to the proposed Wilderness Area that are not found on the Craters flow.

Therefore, this EIS discusses the wilderness characteristics of the Grassland Kipuka, Craters of the Moon lava flow and the Wapi lava flow collectively as the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness Area. It analyzes the benefits and impacts that would occur if Congress should designate the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. It also analyzes the impacts of two alternatives to that proposal.

BLM conducted an intensive wilderness inventory of the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area and associated roadless lands (Craters of the Moon and Wapi lava flows); solicited public comments on that intensive inventory, and incorporated the inventory data and public comments into the BLM

planning system. Through those processes, considerable wilderness values were identified and few resource conflicts were identified.

Scope

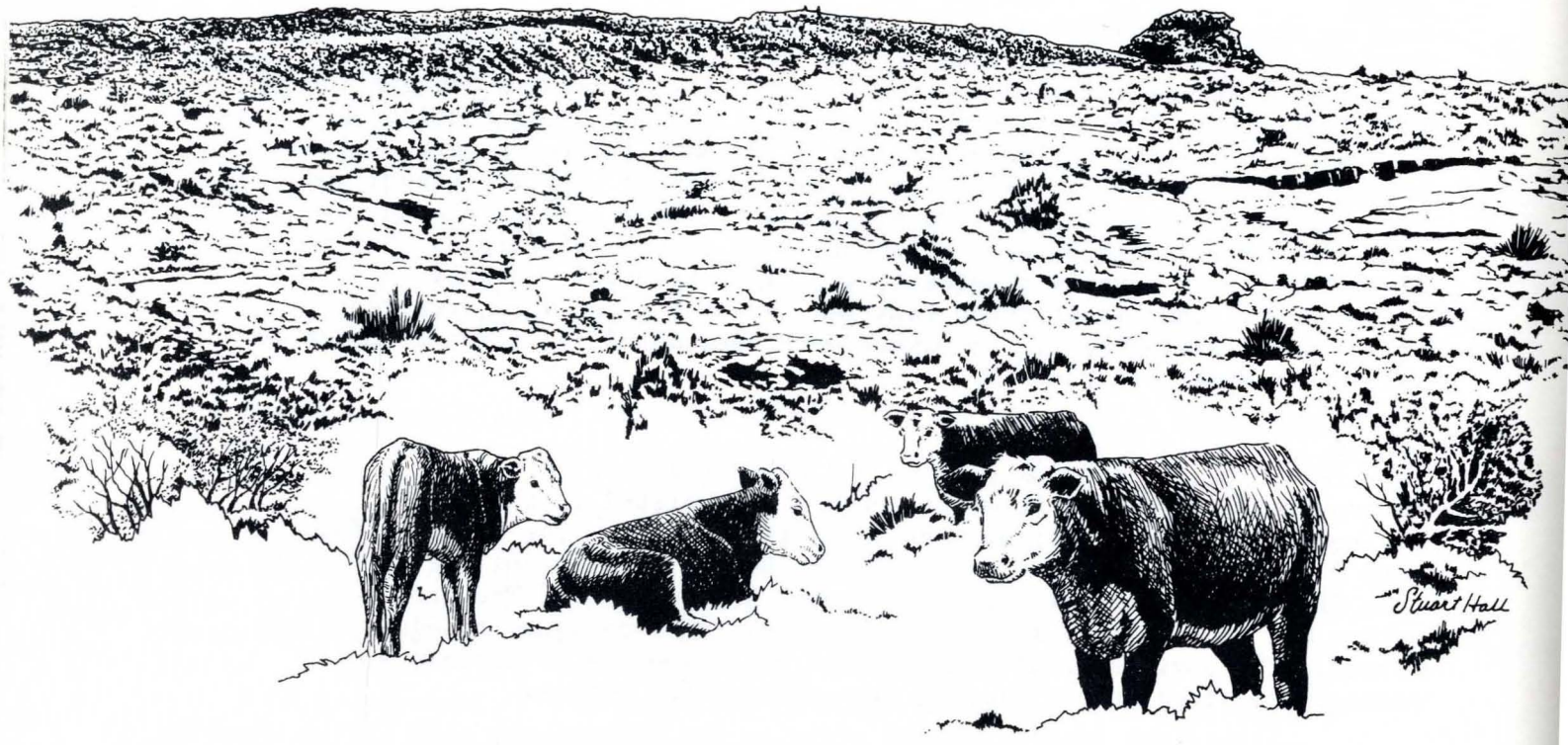
Part of the solicitation of public comments included a scoping session held May 23, 1979. The purpose of that session was to identify significant issues and alternatives for possible wilderness designation of the Great Rift. Individuals who represented a broad cross section of economic, political, environmental and wilderness interests were invited to the scoping session. Participants were asked to identify issues and alternatives that they felt were significant. They were then asked to rank the significance of each alternative on a scale of 0 to 3: 0 = not significant; 1 = cursory treatment; 2 = significant; 3 = highly significant. The significance rankings for each issue were averaged; those issues averaging 2.0 or higher were considered significant enough to warrant treatment in the EIS.

Issues

As a result of the scoping process and other existing data, the controversial areas and items of concern were listed in the draft environmental impact statement as 9 separate issues. The concerns fall into 3 broad categories of issues listed below. The issues are listed in this final environmental impact statement as questions. The proposed action and alternatives included in this EIS were designed to address the issues. The environmental consequences and responses to letters and comments received at the hearing also address the issues.

1. Is a wilderness designation needed for the Great Rift Area? Some people believe that such a designation is clearly needed to protect wilderness, outdoor recreation, esthetic, and other values while other people believe the rugged topography adequately protects the area and no further action is needed.
2. Would a wilderness designation result in adverse impacts to economic users such as farm and ranch or tourist enterprises? Some people are concerned that water hauling for livestock and predator control would be prohibited, no grazing would be allowed, and that more attention needs to be directed to economic uses rather than wilderness uses. Management of state owned lands could be complicated, and no rights of way would be allowed.
3. Would a wilderness designation degrade resources and create a safety hazard? Some people are concerned that such a designation would increase recreation use, resulting in degredation of archaeological and recreation values. Other people believe such a designation would pose safety problems since the area is rough with a hostile climate.

Chapter II Proposed Action and Alternatives



CHAPTER II

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSED ACTION

The BLM recommends that the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area be designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. This area includes that part of the lava flows determined to be suitable for wilderness designation (341,000 acres covering portions of Blaine, Butte, Minidoka and Power Counties, Idaho).

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) requires the Secretary of the Interior to manage all public lands determined to have wilderness characters so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness, until such time as Congress acts on the recommendations for those lands. The Great Rift Wilderness Study Area will be managed under this provision of FLPMA. Details of this management policy, known as Interim Management, are in the Dec. 12, 1979 report, entitled "Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review."

If Congress designates the Great Rift as a wilderness, a comprehensive wilderness management plan would be developed and implemented. Until such a plan could be developed, the following activities would be specifically prohibited:

> "Except as specifically provided for in this Act, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area. Wilderness Act, Section 4(c)."

In addition, effective January, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in land designated as wilderness are withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing (Appendix 1).

Geothermal exploration would be allowed in the proposed wilderness area under a stipulation of "no surface occupancy."

The above prescriptions would be tempered by Sec. 4 (d) (1) of the Wilderness Act which allows "use of aircraft ... where these uses have already become established." The present aerial predator program is controlled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and would be allowed to continue under this section. Cultural resources would be protected from intentional or inadvertent loss or damage in accordance with the American Antiquities Act, 16 U.S.C. 431 et. seq. and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 469 et seq.

Objectives

If Congress designates the Great Rift as a Wilderness Area, the following management objectives would guide the development of the comprehensive management plan:

- Protect, enhance and maintain the natural beauty and wilderness character of the land; preserve the unique wildlife and vegetative communities in the isolated kipukas; and allow natural ecological succession for scientific and other study.

- Provide a meaningful and high quality primitive recreation experience through interpretation and information programs, provisions for adequate staging areas and provisions for other important visitor requirements.

- Continue domestic livestock grazing under the Taylor Grazing Act and FLPMA at a level that is consistent with the grazing capacity of the range.

Boundary Proposal

Figure 2-1 depicts the boundary of the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area. This boundary includes 322,450 acres of Public Land and 18,550 acres of State Land. Basically, this boundary follows the edge of the two lava flows but excludes the Craters of the Moon National Monument and all private lands. Some areas of desert rangeland which are remote and relatively inaccessible to vehicles, and which pose few management problems, also are included. This boundary includes Public Lands which have the essential qualities of wilderness and have been determined to be suitable for management as wilderness. BLM did not evaluate wilderness qualities of State Lands included in the boundary.

Administration and Management

To achieve the foregoing management objectives, the Comprehensive Wilderness Management Plan would incorporate the specific restrictions described on page 5 and would also provide for the following:

- Resource study and research to monitor and evaluate the condition of each natural element, supplemented with visitor carrying capacity studies to determine a visitor use level that is consistent with protecting wilderness values while maximizing recreation enjoyment;

- Information and interpretation programs to educate visitors and assist them in achieving the maximum enjoyment and benefit from the area without inflicting undue or unnecessary damage to the resource base;

- Minimum support facilities necessary to meet visitor needs and protect the resources of the wilderness area.

- Provision for fire protection with stipulations precluding use of on-the-ground motorized vehicles.

-If any of the sites within the proposed wilderness boundary are designated as National Register sites, they will be inspected annually. The purpose of the inspection would be to assess the condition of the sites and to make recommendations concerning mitigation if any sites are deteriorating.

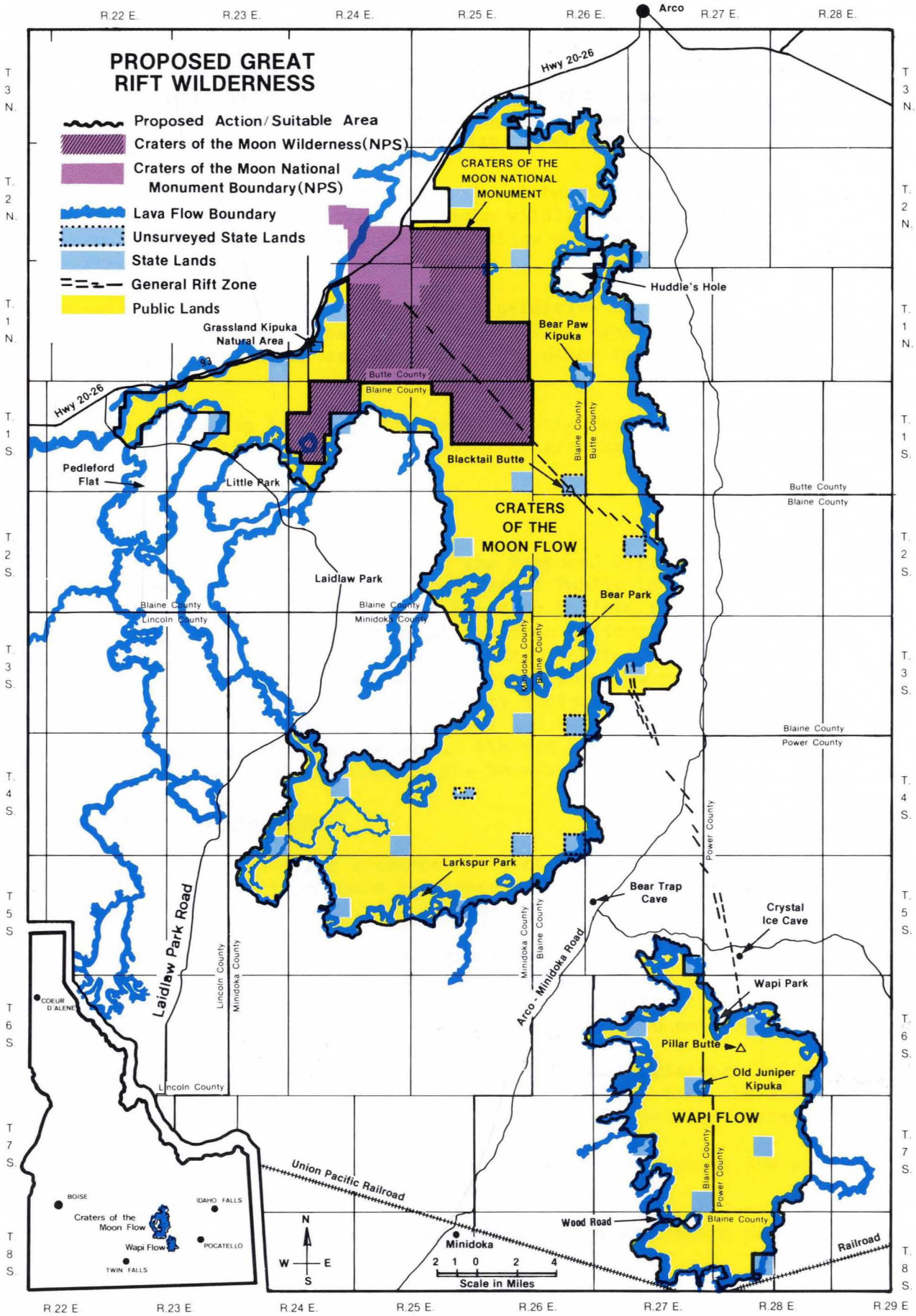

PROPOSED GREAT RIFT WILDERNESS
Proposed Action/Suitable Area
Craters of the Moon Wilderness(NPS)
Craters of the Moon National Monument Boundary(NPS)
Lava Flow Boundary
Unsurveyed State Lands
State Lands
General Rift Zone
Public Lands
R.22 E.
R.23 E.
R.24 E.
R.25 E.
R.26 E.
R.27 E.
R.28 E.
R.29 E
T. 3 N.
T. 2 N.
T. 1 N.
T. 1 S.
T. 2 S.
T. 3 S.
T. 4 S.
T. 5 S.
T. 6 S.
T. 7 S.
T. 8 S.
Arco
Hwy 20-26
CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT
Huddle's Hole
Bear Paw Kipuka
Grassland Kipuka Natural Area
Butte County
Blaine County
Pedleford Flat
Little Park
Blacktail Butte
CRATERS OF THE MOON FLOW
Laidlaw Park
Bear Park
Lincoln County
Minidoka County
Power County
Larkspur Park
Bear Trap Cave
Crystal Ice Cave
Laidlaw Park Road
Arco - Minidoka Road
Wapi Park
Pillar Butte
Old Juniper Kipuka
WAPI FLOW
Union Pacific Railroad
Wood Road
Railroad
Minidoka
Scale in Miles
2 1 0 2 4
N
W
E
S
COEUR D'ALENE
BOISE
IDAHO FALLS
POCATELLO
TWIN FALLS
Craters of the Moon Flow
Wapi Flow

FIGURE 2–1

Successful development and implementation of the management plan would require thorough coordination with other BLM resource activities, federal, state and local governments, and the general public.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA) ALTERNATIVE

This alternative would be the same as the Proposed Action except for the addition of 33,400 acres of Public Land. The WSA includes all those lands determined to have wilderness characteristics.

Wilderness Interim Management Policy does apply to the WSA until Congress acts. If Congress were to designate the WSA as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System, a comprehensive Wilderness Management Plan would be developed. Until such a plan could be developed and implemented, the specific prescriptions identified on page 5 would apply.

Objectives

Management objectives would be the same as for the Proposed Action.

Boundary Proposal

Figure 2-2 depicts the boundary of the WSA. This boundary includes 355,850 acres of Public Land and 18,550 acres of State Land. This boundary is the same as for the proposed action, but includes about 33,400 additional acres primarily around the southern portion of the Craters flow and the west side of the Wapi flow.

Administration and Management

To achieve the management objectives, the specific restrictions outlined on page 5 would apply as well as the broad management procedures identified for the Proposed Action. In addition to these provisions, this WSA alternative would require provision for a strong enforcement policy due to the identified difficulty of managing the WSA peripheral areas as wilderness.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, the Grassland Kipuka would continue to be managed as a Natural Area. Such management would allow most multiple use activities to continue but would prohibit any mineral activity because of the mineral withdrawal on the natural area.

The remainder of the area, 322,290 acres (minus State Lands), would be managed in accordance with the Big Desert Management Framework Plan which calls for managing the volcanic features for their special recreation values. The rest of the proposed wilderness area could be open to other multiple uses because no specific management restrictions have been developed.

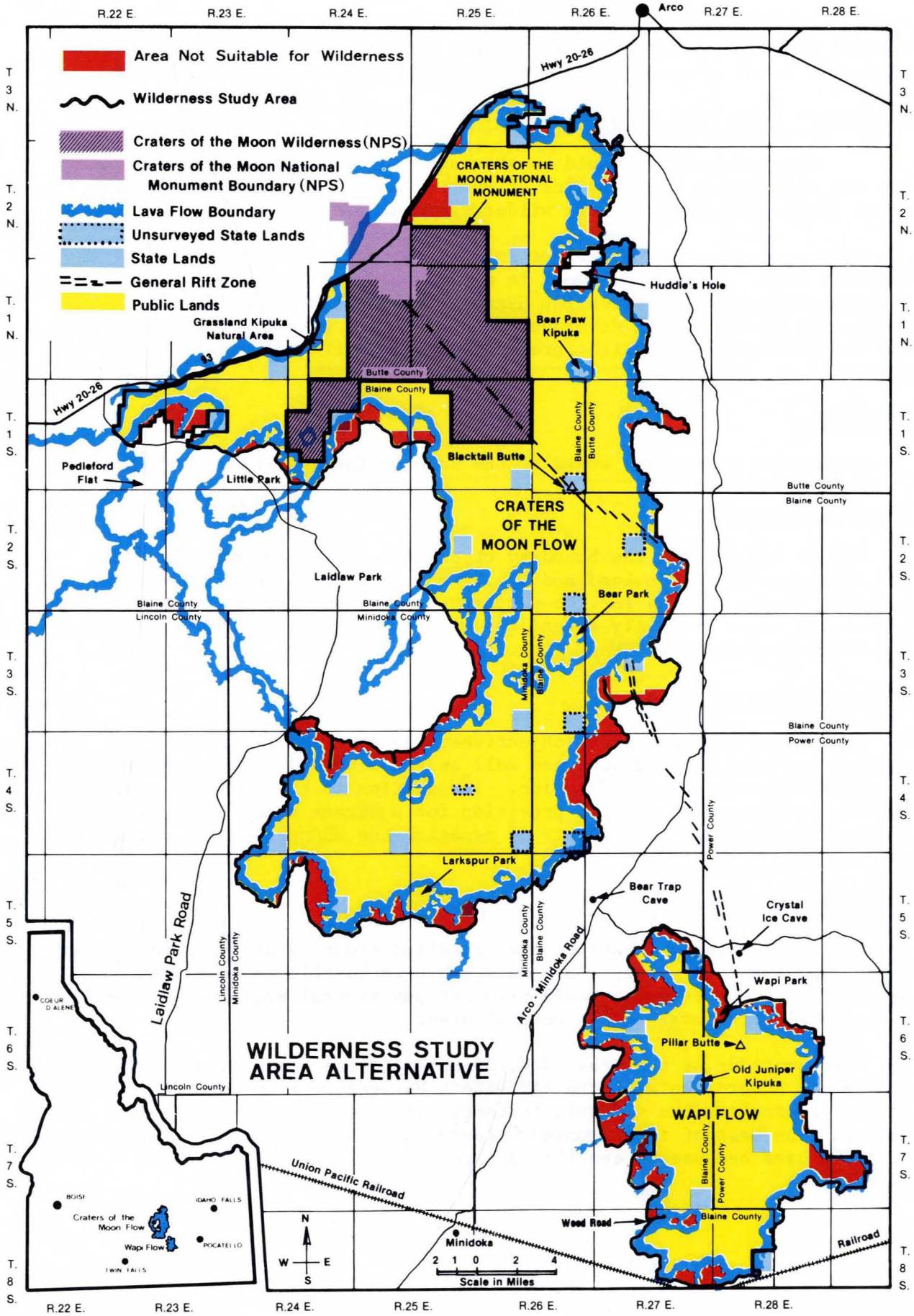

Area Not Suitable for Wilderness
Wilderness Study Area
Craters of the Moon Wilderness (NPS)
Craters of the Moon National Monument Boundary (NPS)
Lava Flow Boundary
Unsurveyed State Lands
State Lands
General Rift Zone
Public Lands
R.22 E.
R.23 E.
R.24 E.
R.25 E.
R.26 E.
R.27 E.
R.28 E.
T. 3 N.
T. 2 N.
T. 1 N.
T. 1 S.
T. 2 S.
T. 3 S.
T. 4 S.
T. 5 S.
T. 6 S.
T. 7 S.
T. 8 S.
Arco
Hwy 20-26
CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT
Huddle's Hole
Bear Paw Kipuka
Grassland Kipuka Natural Area
Butte County
Blaine County
Pedleford Flat
Little Park
Blacktail Butte
CRATERS OF THE MOON FLOW
Laidlaw Park
Bear Park
Lincoln County
Minidoka County
Larkspur Park
Bear Trap Cave
Crystal Ice Cave
Power County
Laidlaw Park Road
Arco - Minidoka Road
Wapi Park
Pillar Butte
Old Juniper Kipuka
WAPI FLOW
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA ALTERNATIVE
Union Pacific Railroad
Weed Road
Railroad
Minidoka
Scale in Miles
COEUR D ALENE
BOISE
IDAHO FALLS
POCATELLO
TWIN FALLS
Craters of the Moon Flow
Wapi Flow

FIGURE 2-2

Idaho Department of Lands would continue to have management authority over State Lands. State Lands on adjacent desert rangeland are leased for livestock grazing. No private lands are involved.

Objectives

Management objectives under this alternative would be to promote multiple use of the land with emphasis on the highest and best uses. Present multiple use management recommendations call for protection of the geologic features and the kipukas. The same protective mandates for cultural resources would apply as under the proposed action.

Boundary Proposal

The Management Framework Plan recommendations would apply to those lands included in the Wilderness Study Area boundary proposal (Figure 2-2, 374,400 acres).

Administration and Management

To achieve the foregoing management objectives, the broad management procedures identified for the proposed action still would apply. However, the specific restrictions listed on page 5 would not apply. Applications for specific uses such as powerline rights of way, mineral patents or leases, etc. would be approved or disapproved based on site-specific environmental assessments.

Table 2-1 presents a comparative analysis of impacts of the Proposed Action and alternative.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

The possibility of excluding the Wapi flow was considered, but was not included as an alternative in the final analysis. Although these flows are physically separated by 5 miles of desert rangeland, they are both a result of the Great Rift System. They are about the same age but have many important differences which increase the value of retaining both units in the proposed wilderness.

The Wapi flow includes a low shield volcanic cone and vent system that is the youngest and best preserved example of its kind in the Snake River plain. The Craters of the Moon flow extruded from the Great Rift fissures in a very eruptive and fluid fashion, creating lavas that differ significantly from the Wapi lavas in silica, iron, and titanium content. Thus, the Craters flow includes "blue dragon" lavas which are coated with a shiny blue surface (a function of electron exchanges in titanium and iron atoms). Part of the Wapi flow has an iridescent surface but does not have the blue sheen of the Craters flow. The Wapi flow contains several geologic features not found in the Craters flow such as driblet spires, hornitoes and Pillar Butte (the vertical remnant found in the top part of the shield cone). The Wapi flow includes at least one outstanding lava tube cave and many undisturbed kipukas.

TABLE 2-1

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

RESOURCE	PROPOSED ACTION	WILDERNESS STUDY AREA ALTERNATIVE	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE
VEGETATION	Natural ecological succession would continue on the lava flows (325,000 acres) and some 440 kipukas.	Natural ecological succession would continue on the lava flows (325,000 acres) and some 440 kipukas.	Some 440 kipukas would probably not be grazed because of small size and inaccessibility.
SOILS	Soil development would continue under natural process in the kipukas.	Soil development would continue under natural conditions in the kipukas.	Undisturbed soils in the kipukas would still remain for future studies.
GEOLOGY	Geologic features on the lava flows would remain in an unimpaired condition for scientific and recreational use.	Geologic features on the lava flows would remain in an unimpaired condition for scientific and recreational use.	The geologic features would not receive any more impacts than presently occurring and this is insignificant.
CULTURAL RESOURCES	Enhance protection and promote management of cultural resources.	Enhance protection and promote management of cultural resources.	Recreationists could remove some artifacts but this has not occurred in the past. Cultural remains would still be protected by law.
WILDERNESS RESOURCES	Enhancement, protection, and preservation of wilderness characteristics on some 341,000 acres.	Enhancement, protection, and preservation of wilderness characteristics on some 374,400 acres.	Area would not be specifically managed for wilderness values or for their preservation. Present wilderness values would probably not change.
LIVESTOCK GRAZING	Ensure continued grazing for 60 livestock permittees.	Ensure continued grazing for 105 livestock permittees.	None
MINERALS	Lava rubble would not be sold on 680 acres, geothermal exploration under no surface occupancy. ORV use would be prohibited.	Lava rubble would not be sold on 840 acres, geothermal exploration under no surface occupancy. ORV use would be prohibited and also the use of the Wood Road for access to kipukas.	Wilderness values could be lost by lava rubble collection and geothermal activity. Collection of lava rubble and geothermal exploration could occur.
RECREATION	Opportunities for solitude and a primitive or unconfined type of recreation would be optimized.	Opportunities for solitude and a primitive or unconfined type of recreation would be optimized.	Opportunities for solitude and a primitive or unconfined type of recreation could be lost. ORV use, although small could be allowed.
RIGHTS OF WAY	Transmission lines across the proposed wilderness boundary would be prohibited.	Transmission lines across the proposed wilderness boundary would be prohibited.	Transmission lines could be constructed on the lava flows which could leave man's imprint. Access to a kipuka, via the Wood Road, would continue.
SOCIAL ATTITUDES	The attitude of people who favor or oppose wilderness designation would not change.	The attitude of people who favor or oppose wilderness designation would not change.	The attitude of those who favor or oppose wilderness would not change.
ECONOMICS	Livestock operations would continue at present levels.	Livestock operations would continue at present levels.	None

Cultural artifacts found in several kipukas add to the cultural information available in the Craters flow as well as for the Snake River Plains. The Wapi flow adds vegetative diversity to the wilderness unit.

Because the inclusion of both flows allows a more complete geologic, cultural and ecologic wilderness unit, this alternative was not considered. Also, as mentioned under "Purpose and Need," the Wapi flow ultimately would have to undergo the same study and reporting process; including it in this EIS analysis simply accelerates that process and eliminates possible delays and duplication of efforts.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

National Park Service (NPS) - The NPS has jurisdiction of the Craters of the Moon National Monument adjacent to the Great Rift Wilderness proposal (see Figure 2-1). BLM exercises continuous coordination of information and management policies with the NPS.

Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) - No endangered species are known to occur in the proposed wilderness area. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires consultation with the FWS whenever any action could affect an endangered species or its habitat. This consultation was initiated September 28, 1979 so that FWS would be notified of BLM's proposal. According to the FWS, no threatened, endangered, or sensitive species are known to exist on the lava flows. However, one species of beetle is under review as a candidate species for the endangered status.

FWS also has predator control responsibility in the area under agreement with the BLM. Aerial predator control by FWS would continue to be allowed in accordance with Sec. 4 (d) (1) of the Wilderness Act.

Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) - The IDL has requested that if Congress designates the Great Rift as a Wilderness Area, State Lands included in the boundary "be scheduled for exchange at the earliest opportunity" (IDL, 1979). In accordance with this IDL policy, BLM recommends that State Lands included in the boundary be acquired, through exchange or otherwise, at the earliest opportunity, should Congress designate the Great Rift as a Wilderness Area.

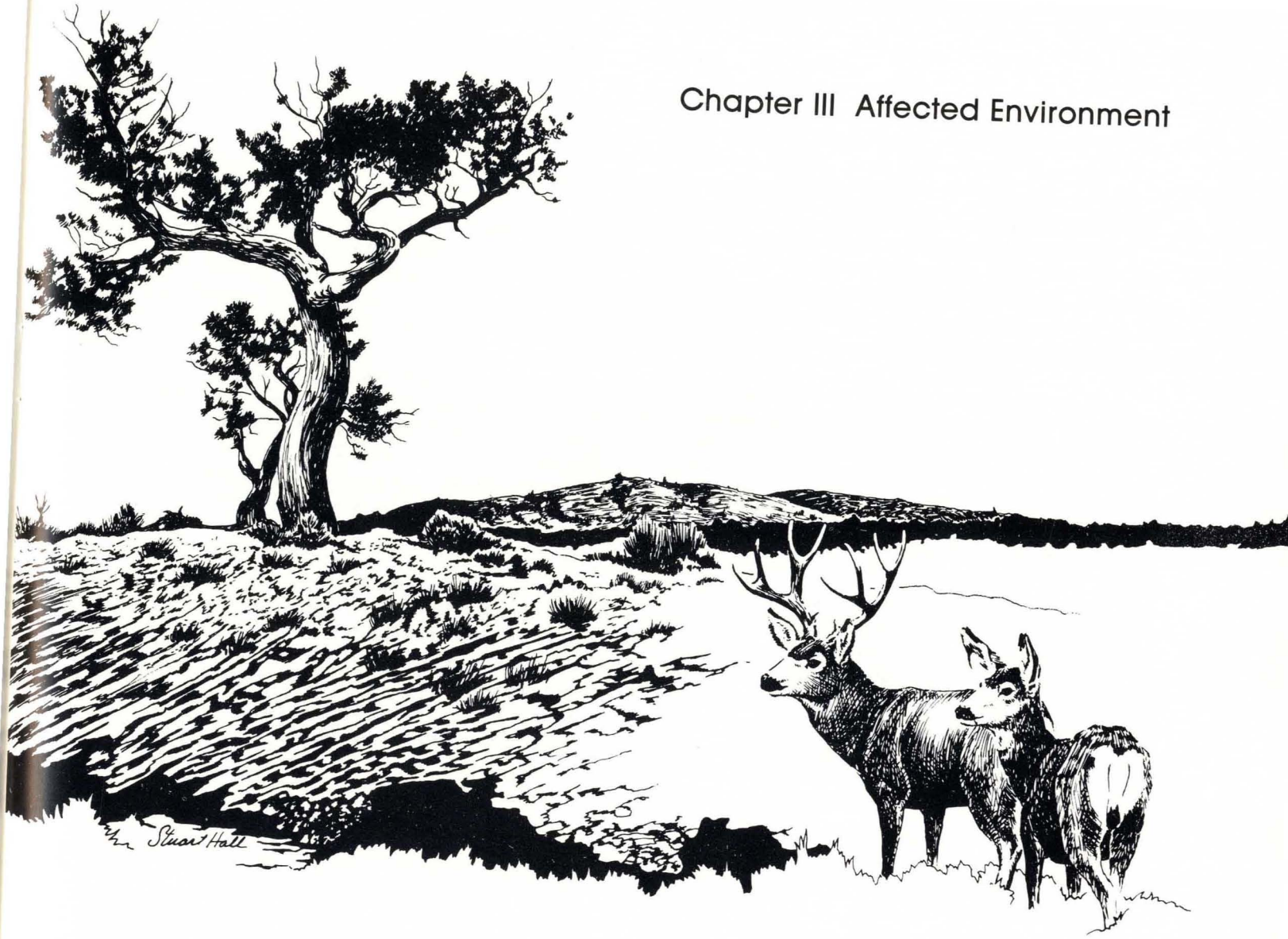
Butte, Blaine, Power and Minidoka Counties - County commissioners for these counties were contacted in October, 1979 to discuss the proposal. The county commissioners in Blaine, Butte, and Power County have no objection to a wilderness designation as long as it does not have an adverse affect on local income. The commissioners in Minidoka County are opposed to wilderness designation.

State Historic Preservation Officer and State Archaeologist - The SHPO and State Archeologist both were contacted on September 28, and November 11, 1979. BLM advised them that 14 cultural sites had been identified within the Proposed Action boundary but that none of those sites were included in the National Register of Historic Places. BLM furnished them with maps depicting those 14 sites during December, 1979.

Idaho Power Company - At one time, Idaho Power was considering a transmission line route for the Borah to Midpoint 500 kv ac line that would cross over the southern part of the Wapi lava flow. This segment would be 14 miles long with 7 miles crossing the lava. After working with BLM personnel from the Shoshone District, Idaho Power decided to propose another route that would not cross the lava because of the proposed wilderness classification. The new proposed route would be 16 miles long and would not be within the proposed wilderness boundary.

U.S. Bureau of Mines and Geological Survey - As required by FLPMA (Appendix 2) the Geological Survey conducted a mineral survey of the lava flows during 1979. In addition, during 1979, the Bureau of Mines determined the value of minerals on the lava flows.

Chapter III Affected Environment



CHAPTER III

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The description of the effected environment in this chapter is for the WSA or 374,400 acres. In this way the proposed action, (341,000 acres) and the two alternatives will be described.

General Description

The Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area is characterized by thousands of acres of lava dotted with occasional buttes and kipukas. The harsh, barren landscape is interrupted by sparse vegetation and fissures in the earth's surface (Greeley and King, 1977). The fissures, a series of aligned vents and discontinuous fractures extending from the Craters of the Moon National Monument southeast to the Wapi flow, are commonly called the Great Rift (Figure 3-1).

The semi-arid climate is hot and dry in the summer and very cold in the winter. Annual precipitation is about 10 to 14 inches and falls mainly in the winter and spring. Wind blows out of the southwest throughout the year but is usually more intense in the spring. Air quality of the area has never been measured, but appears to be good. The prevailing southwest air currents provide good air drainage. The area was designated Class II (see Glossary) as a result of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977.

Few water sources exist in the area, but some water can be found during certain times of the year in crevices and depressions in the lava where precipitation collects. These intermittent pools are used by birds and animals.

Most noises in the proposed wilderness area are natural...winds, insects, wildlife, etc. Sporadic interruptions occur from aircraft and from a railroad south of the Wapi flow.

Roads circumventing the area are mostly unimproved dirt roads. Highway 20-26, which forms most of the northwest boundary of the proposed wilderness, is paved. The road to Crystal Ice Caves (just outside the northeast boundary of the Wapi flow) is not paved but receives more maintenance than other dirt roads.

The proposed Great Rift wilderness area encompasses pristine lands within Butte, Blaine, Power and Minidoka Counties. County comprehensive land-use plans, for Blaine, Power and Minidoka Counties favor such uses as grazing, farming, and open space. Butte County does not have a comprehensive plan.

Vegetation - The lava flows and kipukas show a full range of ecological

succession from the pioneer plants such as lichens and mosses to the highly diversified plant communities on the kipukas, most of which are in climax (or highest) stage (Figure 3-2, Crawford, 1978). Over 300 plant species occur in the area. The type and density of vegetation varies widely depending on the availability of soil (Anderson and Lovejoy, 1979).

The kipukas are one of the most unique features of the lava formations (Figure 3-3). Over 450 kipukas are found on the lava flows varying in size from less than one acre to over 2,200. These kipukas offer the visitor a unique opportunity to observe climax vegetative communities and to compare them with nearby desert rangeland vegetation. No more than 10 of the kipukas have been grazed by domestic livestock. Although some of the kipukas have been visited by recreationists, the visitation levels are so low that the vegetation has not been affected.

Sagebrush and grasses are abundant on the older lava flows and the surrounding desert rangeland where the soils are deep and well developed. Rabbitbrush, bitterbrush, certain buckwheats, and phlox also occur in this association. Native grasses include bluegrass, wheatgrass, squirreltail, and needlegrass. Juniper occurs in several locations: in older lava flows; on the southern Craters flow; and on much of the Wapi flow (Figure 3-4). Limber pine grows on the northern Craters flow. The ecotone (a transition strip of vegetation between two communities) between limber pine and juniper occurs between Blacktail Butte and the National Monument. This ecotone normally occurs only in montane regions and is thus an unusual feature for the lava flows (Urban, 1979). Quaking aspen occurs along the lava's edge in several locations on both flows.

No threatened, endangered, or sensitive plant species are known to occur within the proposed boundary (FWS, 1983).

Soils - Bare lava rock dominates most of the landscape (Figure 3-5). Soil deposits vary widely over the area. Where basalt rock occurs, soil is found only in the crevices. Where decomposed cinders provide parent material, vegetation growth occurs. Only the kipukas and surrounding desert rangelands have deep, well formed soils.

The U.S. Soil Conservation Service has conducted 10 years of research (1958-1967) on three kipukas located on the northeast corner of the Wapi flow. That research focused on soil-vegetal relationships on these so-called "relict areas". This research included a soil inventory on each of the kipukas (SCS, 1979).

Geology - Prinz (1970) redesignated the Great Rift as the Idaho Rift System and divided the system into several rift sets (Greeley and King, 1977). One of those rift sets retains the name Great Rift, which has been used to label the Proposed Wilderness Area. The Great Rift is thought to be the longest and deepest rift system in the United States (approximately

65 miles long and at least 800 feet deep in some locations).

The lava flows include two types of lava referred to as pahoehoe (pa-hoy-hoy) and aa (ah ah). The pahoehoe flows have wrinkled surfaces which formed when the lava's cool crust was dragged into rope-like folds by the hot liquid mass moving beneath (Figure 3-5). In contrast, aa lava is a rough mass of lava blocks which have either been floated along on a pasty lava mass or pushed along the edges (Figure 3-6).

The lava surface evidences: hundreds of craters and lava bombs; one major and numerous minor lava tubes; six spatter and cinder cones; at least three driblet spires and two hornitoes; and various other lava features (Figures 3-7 to 3-10). Coloration of the rock and cinders varies from black to gray and red, to shiny blue ("blue dragon" lava); lichens add yellow, orange, and green to the lava colors; trees and shrubs add greenery; and from May to October, flowering shrubs and forbs create a wide color contrast (Figure 3-11).

Animal Life - Mule deer, antelope, coyotes, and rabbits are the most frequently sighted mammals of the 26 species that occur in the area. Mule deer and antelope populations are low.

Sage grouse and mourning doves frequent the area (Figure 3-12). The doves are present only during spring and summer seasons. The exact population of sage grouse on the lavas is not known, but sage grouse droppings are very common both in the kipukas and on the lava surface. About 140 species of non-game birds are found in the plain area (Anderson and Lovejoy, 1979). Raptors are often seen over high points on the lava such as Pillar and Blacktail Butte.

Presently, wildlife populations are not significantly affected by human activities. Some sage grouse hunting occurs but is very limited.

No known threatened, endangered, or sensitive animals occur in the proposed wilderness boundary. However, a sub-species of blind beetles (Glacicavicola bathyscioides) is known to occur on the lava flows. This sub-species is under review by the FWS for recognition as a "candidate species" for endangered listing (FWS, 1983).

Cultural Resources - Intensive surveys of selected areas within the Great Rift Wilderness were performed by contract (Franzen, 1979) and BLM personnel in 1979. Fifteen prehistoric sites were recorded within the wilderness area. Another sixteen prehistoric sites were recorded in the study area outside the wilderness area. Most of these sites are surface lithic scatters consisting of numerous, small obsidian waste flakes and projectile points. Pottery shards, small hand-sized grindstones and quarzite scrapers were found in some scatters. Caves, rockshelters and rock structures (hunting blinds) also were recorded.



Fig. 3-1 Blacktail Butte and vents and fractures lie along the main rift zone. The Pioneer Mountains are to the northwest.



Fig. 3-3 Kipukas, Hawaiian for "windows", are vegetated islands of older lava surrounded by younger lava.

Fig. 3-2 Climax vegetation in Bear Paw Kipuka shows flowering balsam root.

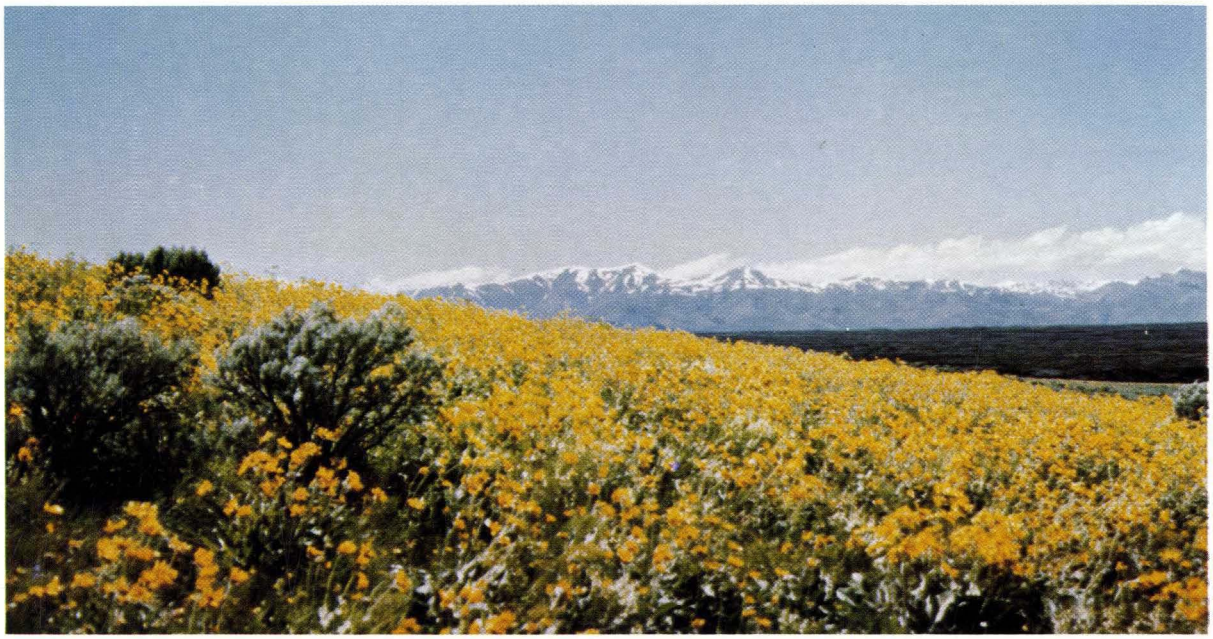




Fig. 3-4 Old Juniper Kipuka on the Wapi flow has many large trees, some as old as 750 years.

Fig. 3-5 Ropey pahoehoe lava with blue dragon surface supports vegetation in shallow cracks where soil collects.

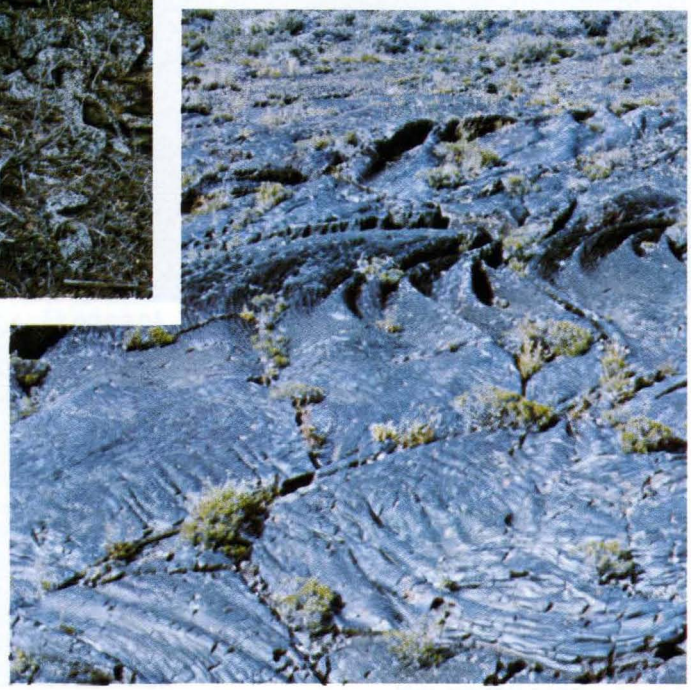


Fig. 3-6 Aa lava wears down hiker's boots as well as ankles.



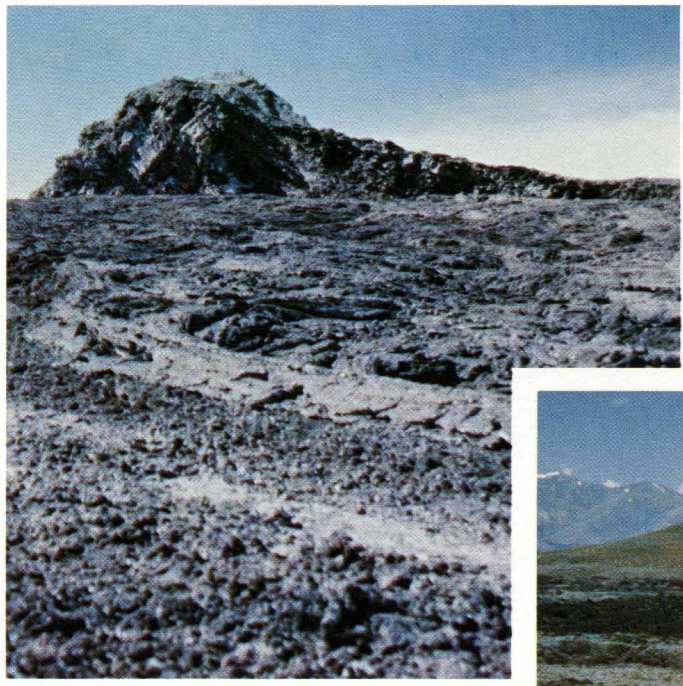


Fig. 3-7 Pillar Butte, a low shield cone, is the source of the most recent lava on the Wapi flow.



Fig. 3-8 North Laidlaw Butte lies near the edge of the Craters of the Moon flow and is surrounded by light gray pahoehoe lava and black aa lava.

Fig. 3-9 A hiker studies a hornito from the edge of a collapsed lava tube.





Fig. 3-10 Recreationists stand at the entrance to a lava tube cave.



Fig. 3-11 Penstemon blooms among blue dragon lava.

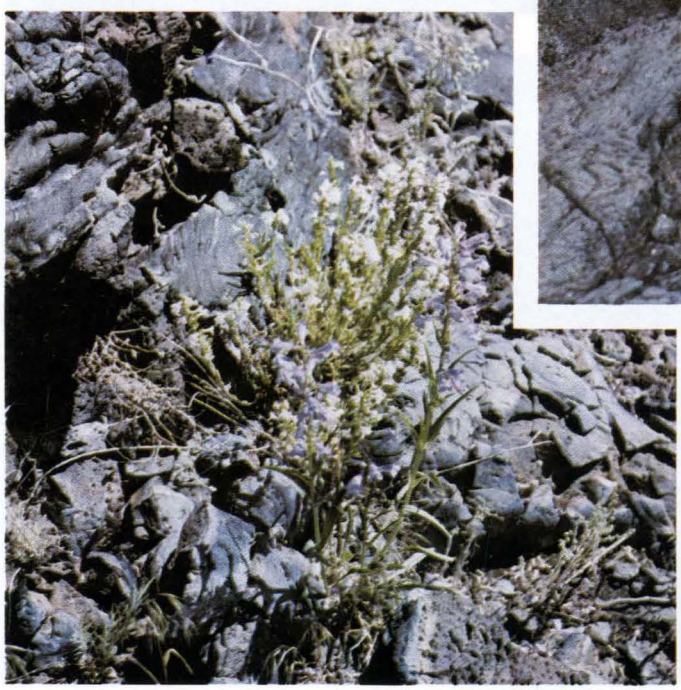


Fig. 3-12 Mourning doves nest on the lava near a water source.

None of the undisturbed 15 sites found in the wilderness area appears to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

However, it is possible that these sites could be combined with the 16 sites recorded in the study area for nomination to the National Register as an archaeological district.

All of the sites in the wilderness area are in good condition. A few sites have been damaged by unauthorized surface collecting, but diagnostic artifacts were present at most of the sites. None of the documented caves or rockshelters within the wilderness have been vandalized. The condition of these sites makes them valuable for comparison to sites in other areas outside the wilderness area which have been damaged by livestock trampling, surface collecting and ORV use.

Wilderness Values - BLM personnel inventoried the Great Rift Wilderness Study Area using procedures outlined in Step 4 of BLM's Wilderness Inventory Handbook (BLM, 1978). That intensive inventory revealed that these lands meet the criteria established in Section 2 (c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964:

> "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

The area presently is being managed so as not to impair its wilderness suitability until Congress designates it as wilderness or removes it from consideration as wilderness.

Livestock Grazing - Approximately 6,000 acres within the Proposed Wilderness Area are grazed by domestic livestock. These acres support about 380 sheep animal unit months (AUMs) and 600 cattle AUMs used by 60 ranchers. The grazed lands are located mainly at the edge of the lavas on the desert rangeland and used primarily as spring and fall range for cattle and sheep. At present, aerial predator control on the lava edges is done by the FWS. Water for livestock must be hauled from six existing wells over some 100 miles of dirt roads. The range survey for this area,

completed in September, 1979, indicated that these desert rangelands have not been impacted significantly by livestock use. Subsequent grazing EIS's on the area around the proposed Great Rift wilderness area will address wilderness characteristics.

Minerals - During 1979, the U.S. Geological Survey (Kuntz, 1979) conducted a mineral survey and the U.S. Bureau of Mines (Ridenour, 1979) determined the mineral values on the lava flows. Approximately 840 acres of lava rubble, which is popular for use as building stone, occur on the two lava flows (Ridenour, 1979; Figure 3-1). This lava is classified as a saleable mineral, but very little of it has been removed for building construction because of poor access and distance from markets. Other lava flows such as Hells Half Acre, Cedar Butte and the Black Butte flow have been used more extensively for material extraction.

No known natural gas, oil or mineral deposits occur in the area (Ridenour; Kuntz, et.al., 1979). The draft environmental impact statement listed 13,600 acres as being under application for geothermal lease. A lease was subsequently issued for 4,000 acres. The lease has since been relinquished by the leasee and no geothermal leases or lease applications exist as of September 1983.

Recreation - Some trail bike and four wheel drive use occurs within the proposed boundary on the lava edges, but the full extent of such use is not known. In the southwest area of the Wapi flow, the Wood Road provides access to four kipukas and is utilized by recreationists. Visitor use around the Wood Road has not been monitored.

No general visitor use information is available for the area either. At Craters of the Moon National Monument, which has 43,243 acres under wilderness designation, use figures have been recorded. This data indicates that "use figures from 1971 to 1979 are felt to be too small to indicate an appreciable increase in use due to wilderness classification" (NPS, 1979). In 1978, the monument had 349,000 visitors and only 132 of them stayed overnight in the wilderness area. Contacts with people who have visited the Great Rift outside the National Monument boundaries indicate that visitor use is light. Several factors could account for the light visitor use; remoteness, poor accessibility, lack of awareness of the area, hostile environmental conditions, and lack of exposure to the existing wilderness values.

In relation to the visitor use on the wilderness area in the Monument, the Park Service has indicated that, "It is not felt that there had been any noticeable increase in damage to the resource or the environment due to wilderness classification" (NPS, 1979).

Rights-of-Way - Idaho Power is planning to construct a 500 kv transmisison line from Borah to Midpoint (66 miles). One of the proposed alternative routes would cross the southern part of the Wapi flow. This route would

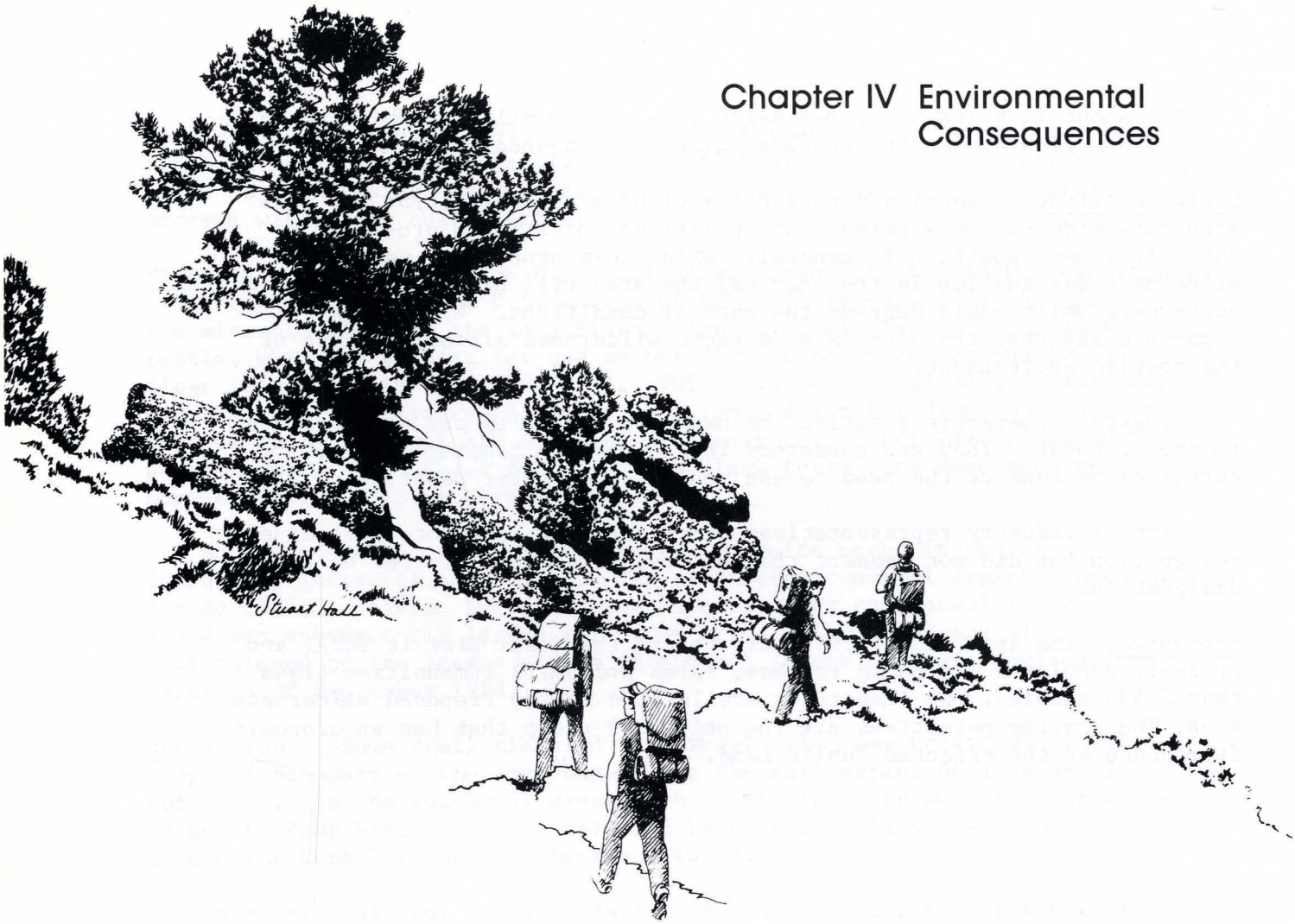
involve about 14 miles of transmission line, seven miles of which would be on the lava flow and in the proposed wilderness boundary.

Social Attitudes - Local and regional attitudes on designation for this area vary widely. Many persons are polarized in either a pro- or anti-wilderness position in general. Wilderness proponents say that wilderness designation is the only way the area will be protected from other uses which would degrade the natural conditions. Wilderness opponents say that the area is a de facto wilderness already because of the hostile environment.

Livestock operators question the need for including any non-lava areas in the proposal. They are concerned that livestock grazing would be curtailed because of the need to use vehicles for water hauling.

Mineral industry representatives questioned the need for a wilderness designation but did not comment that minerals would be affected by the designation.

Economics - The area immediately surrounding the Great Rift is rural and sparsely populated including ranches, farms and small communities (less than 2,500 people). No industries are located in the Proposed Wilderness Area. The grazing permittees are the only user group that has an economic dependence on the effected Public Land.



Chapter IV Environmental Consequences

CHAPTER IV
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter analyzes the significant environmental impacts that could result from the proposed Great Rift wilderness area and two alternatives. No significant impacts to climate, air quality, topography, water resources, access, animal life, land use plans, controls and constraints would occur.

PROPOSED ACTION
(Preferred Alternative)

The proposed action recommends designation of the Great Rift as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Lands within the proposed boundary would be devoted to educational, historical, recreational, scenic and scientific uses for future generations.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made to facilitate the impact analysis and to adhere to BLM policy for measuring the effects of the proposed action.

1. The BLM will have the funding and personnel to manage the Proposed Wilderness Area.

2. A very minimal increase in visitor use would occur as a result of the proposed action (based on the experience at Craters of the Moon National Monument).

Impact Summary

The primary benefits of designating the Great Rift area as wilderness would be to preserve the wilderness characteristics and the naturalness of the area from man's work. In addition, an outstanding opportunity for solitude and for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation would be preserved. Secondary impacts associated with the proposed action would be to preserve a total ecosystem, including unique geologic, soil, vegetative interrelationships. Also the ecosystems of some 450 kipukas would be preserved. A kipuka is an island of old lava surrounded, but not covered by a lava flow.

The adverse impacts would be the loss of the opportunity to mine lava rubble for building stone, and, subject to existing rights, the withdrawal of all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing. In addition, geothermal exploration within the area would only be allowed subject to a "no surface occupancy" stipulation. Off-road vehicle use would be prohibited along with rights-of-way for powerlines, roads, etc.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Vegetation - The existing vegetation pattern on about 325,000 acres of lava -- having a full range of ecological succession from pioneer plants to highly diversified plant communities -- would be maintained. Undisturbed, climax plant communities in over 440 kipukas (10,000 acres) would be maintained. These kipukas are representative of native range plant associations, and because of their relative inaccessibility and small size, they have not been affected by domestic grazing or fire control. They are thus ideal comparative study areas. Thus, the kipukas would be preserved for scientific study in the future.

About ten kipukas have been grazed by domestic livestock. This grazing has not had any significant impacts on the vegetation, but these kipukas do offer the opportunity for comparative study with the ungrazed kipukas. Livestock grazing would continue to be allowed on 6,000 acres within the proposed boundary.

In conclusion, impacts to vegetation would be minimal and would be consistent with protection and enhancement of recreation, educational and scientific values.

Soils - The undisturbed soils in the 440 pristine kipukas offer an opportunity for comparison with the soils that have been disturbed by human influences. As discussed in Chapter III, three of those undisturbed kipukas have been inventoried by the SCS. The soil description resulting from that inventory can be used for comparison with other soils. Wilderness designation would ensure that present soil processes could continue undisturbed.

In conclusion, impacts to soils would be preservation of the soils in the kipukas under natural conditions for future study.

Geology - The dramatic Great Rift System and its associated unique lava features would be preserved in an unimpaired condition for scientific and recreational uses.

Recent planetary exploration has demonstrated that volcanism has played and continues to play an important role in the topography of other planets. At this time, "Studies of terrestrial volcanoes are the only means of gaining some insight into extraterrestrial volcanology until more complete exploration is feasible" (Greeley and King, 1977). The volcanic features of the Great Rift would be preseved for comparative planetary studies in the future.

Cultural Resources - Fifteen cultural sites have been identified within the proposed boundary. Surface lithic scatters, caves, rockshelters and wind breaks have been identified. Although they are protected under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, wilderness designation would ensure the identification and preservation of these sites. The prohibition against motorized vehicles would add an extra layer of protection for cultural sites.

In conclusion, wilderness designation would have positive effects on cultural sites by prohibiting motorized vehicle use.

Wilderness Resources - The wilderness characteristics of size, naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, and a variety of supplemental values would be preserved in the long term.

In conclusion, wilderness values would be preserved.

Livestock Grazing - The proposed action would allow domestic grazing to continue and would not affect present grazing privileges (980 AUMs). None of the six wells or 100 miles of road used for hauling water to livestock are within the boundary for the proposed Great Rift wilderness area. As a result, no present livestock operations based on water hauling to livestock would be affected. Aerial predator control by the FWS along the lava's edge would continue as at present.

In conclusion, the proposed action would continue the existing situation for domestic livestock.

Minerals - Geothermal leasing would be allowed within the proposed boundary with lease stipulation for "no surface occupancy". No geothermal leases or lease applications currently exist.

Lava rubble which is used as building stone would not be sold on some 680 acres within the wilderness boundary. The loss of this acreage for lava rubble collection would not affect the building stone industry because about 20,000 acres of lava flows would still be available for lava rubble outside the boundary.

No known oil and gas reserves or other mineral deposits occur on the lava flows (Ridenour, 1979 and Kuntz, 1979). Effective January 1, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in land designated as wilderness are withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing.

In conclusion, wilderness designation probably would mean that no geothermal exploration would occur and that lava rubble would not be collected.

Recreation - As discussed previously, the Park Service is experiencing little visitor use in the Craters of the Moon wilderness area adjacent to the proposed Great Rift wilderness area. As a result of the Park Service

experience, the increase in visitor use on the Great Rift probably would not be measurable. Unique geologic, ecologic and scenic values associated with the lava flows would be protected, enhancing primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities. Minimal ORV use is occurring on the lava flows. Wilderness designation would prohibit this ORV use.

In conclusion, primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities would be optimized. Any ORV use in the area would be prohibited.

Rights-of-Way - Wilderness designation would render the Idaho Power alternative route over the Wapi flow as an unviable alternative for their project. Other subsequent rights of way applications also would be denied.

Social Attitudes - Persons who feel that the Area needs to be designated as wilderness to preserve the natural conditions would be pleased by a wilderness designation.

Those persons who feel that Idaho already has enough wilderness or who feel that a "wilderness acreage cap" should be placed on the federal agencies studying wilderness areas would be displeased by designation. Many persons question the need for designation because the area is a de facto wilderness due to its hostile environment. These persons would feel that wilderness designation would be a waste of time and money.

In conclusion, wilderness designation probably would not alter any of these social attitudes.

Economics - As discussed earlier, livestock grazing is the only known economic use of the Public Lands within the proposed boundary. Because stocking levels and ranch operations would not be affected by the proposed action, no economic impacts would occur. Because the increase in visitor use would be small, the income generated from recreation would not be significant.

UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Exploration for geothermal resources on areas presently under lease application could occur only without surface occupancy. Lava rubble collection on 680 acres would not be permitted. Effective January 1, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in the lands designated as wilderness will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing. ORV use would be prohibited. The attitude of people who oppose wilderness designation for the area would remain the same. The opportunity for right-of-way across the Proposed Wilderness Area would be prohibited.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Designation of the Great Rift as wilderness would ensure the long term productivity of ecosystems on the lava flows and in the kipukas and would maintain the present wilderness values.

Effective January 1, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in land designated as wilderness will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing. Geothermal leasing probably would not occur and lava rubble would not be collected within the proposed wilderness area.

Over the long term: natural ecological succession on the lava flows and in the kipukas would continue; opportunities for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation would be preserved; unique geologic formations associated with lava formations would be protected and preserved; the opportunity for comparative study in kipukas would be preserved for future generations.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Wilderness designation would mandate that existing wilderness values on 341,000 acres would be preserved. No irretrievable loss of resources would occur.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA ALTERNATIVE

This alternative calls for wilderness designation of the entire 374,400 acres determined to have wilderness characteristics including 33,400 acres of Public Land that were determined to be unsuitable for management as wilderness.

ASSUMPTIONS

Same as for the Proposed Action.

IMPACT SUMMARY

Same as for the Proposed Action.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The only difference between the Proposed Action and this Alternative is the addition of 33,400 acres. This section will discuss the additional impacts that would occur by designating the 33,400 acres as wilderness.

Access - The 33,400 acres includes primarily adjacent desert rangelands (Figure 2-2). Several existing roads either approach or border these

areas. Proximity of the roads and lack of a defined boundary would make these areas extremely difficult to protect from inadvertent or intentional vehicle use.

Livestock Grazing - Domestic livestock grazing occurs on about 32,500 acres of the additional 33,400 acres. This acreage supports 2,390 sheep AUMs and 2,484 cattle AUMs used by 105 permittees. This alternative would not affect this present level of use nor modes of operation.

Minerals - Lava rubble would not be sold on 160 acres located within the additional (USBM, 1979) 33,400 acres after 1984. However, this action would not affect the building stone industry because adequate supply sources are available elsewhere.

There are no known oil and gas reserves or other minerals in this additional acreage (USBM, 1979).

Recreation - The Wood Road, which provides access to four kipukas, is located on the southwestern part of the Wapi flow which is within the additional 33,400 acre area. A few persons use this road to get to the kipukas for recreational purposes. If the area is designated as wilderness, the road would be closed at the first lava crossing, allowing motorized access to only one of the four kipukas.

UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Opportunities for lava rubble collection on 160 acres located within the additional 33,400 acres would be lost. Inadvertent and intentional motorized vehicle use could occur on the additional acreage because of its proximity to existing roads.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Same as for the proposed action.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Same as for the proposed action.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, no action would occur to designate the Great Rift Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The area would be managed according to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield concept as prescribed in FLPMA except on the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area.

ASSUMPTIONS

None

IMPACT SUMMARY

Benefits resulting from this alternative would be that lava rubble could be sold for use as building stone and geothermal exploration on the lava flows, particularly on the 4,000 acres presently under lease application. In addition, the 322,450 acres of Public Land would be open for exploration and development of locatable, leaseable and saleable minerals. Also, rights-of-way could be granted to cross the lava flows and ORV use would be permitted under existing guidelines.

The principal adverse impacts would be that existing wilderness characteristics could be impacted by lava rubble, mining, ORV use, geothermal activity, right-of-way establishment or other human activities.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The 440 kipukas which are not currently grazed, would not be grazed in the future under this alternative because of their small size and inaccessibility. Livestock grazing still would occur on those kipukas presently grazed, and recreation use still would occur on several kipukas via access by the Wood Road. The undisturbed soils in the kipukas would remain undisturbed and would be available for comparison studies.

The unique geologic features of the lava flows would not experience significant impacts. Some of these features could be removed by recreationists, but to date, this has not occurred. Cultural remains at 14 sites still would be protected under current laws. Although recreationists could remove some remains at these sites, such removal has not occurred to any significant degree in the past and would not be expected to change.

Under the multiple use management, the Great Rift area would not be specifically managed to preserve wilderness characteristics for these values. However, the Great Rift has been managed under multiple use for a number of years, and wilderness values have not been damaged, nor have human imprints become noticeable. At this time, making reliable predictions about possible impacts to wilderness values is impossible.

Geothermal leasing could occur on 341,000 acres. If exploration were to occur, human imprints would be left on the area which could reduce or eliminate wilderness values. However, the possibility of geothermal exploration is highly speculative at this time. Future multiple use management plans could exclude the area from geothermal activities by

constraints to protect resource values. Lava rubble could be sold for building stone on 680 acres of the lava flows. However, because of the small acreage involved compared to other available sources, use of these acres for lava rubble collection is highly unlikely.

Opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation still would be available on most of the area. ORV use could reduce the opportunity for solitude. Any geothermal activity also would reduce the opportunity for solitude. At present, the number of acres that could be impacted by these activities and the subsequent loss of opportunity for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation is not known. However, in the past the area has retained its solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation resources. Transmission lines could be constructed on the lava flows which would leave human imprints on the landscape.

The social attitudes of those who favor and those who oppose wilderness designation would remain basically the same.

UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The unavoidable impacts associated with this alternative would be the potential loss of existing wilderness values associated with ORV use and mineral activity. The degree to which the wilderness values would be impacted is not known, nor is it known how much of the 340,992 acres classed as having wilderness suitability would be affected. Geothermal exploration and lava rubble collection could occur, but it is impossible to predict if these activities would or would not occur.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE OF LONG TERM PRODUCTIVITY

ORV use and possible geothermal exploration and lava rubble collection could reduce the wilderness values over the long term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Geothermal exploration and lava rubble collection, if they occurred, would represent an irretrievable commitment of wilderness values. This loss would occur because human imprints would remain and would thus reduce wilderness values.

Chapter V Consultation and Coordination



CHAPTER V

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

October, 1973 - Idaho Mining Association expressed no interest in the mineral values of either lava flow.

1974 Big Desert Management Framework Plan (MFP) recommended Primitive Area classification for both lava flows to "protect the scenic, scientific and wilderness values of the volcanic landscape". Public meetings were held to discuss the MFP.

1975/1976 Wilderness Institute studied the area under contract with BLM for Primitive Area designation. Five public meetings were held to present the proposal and obtain public comments.

October 23 and 24, 1978 - BLM personnel took the Washington Office Wilderness Society Representative on a field tour of the Great Rift.

April, 1979 - BLM personnel informally consulted with Idaho Department of Fish and Game to identify wildlife values and problems within the study area boundary.

January 9, 1979 - BLM presented slide show on Great Rift to Idaho Falls Exchange Club.

January 11, 1979 - BLM presented slide show on Great Rift to Idaho Farm Bureau.

February 15, 1979 - BLM presented slide show on Great Rift to Federal Executive Council.

March 15 - May 15, 1979 - Public comment period to gather input on the BLM State Director's decision to continue study on the Great Rift as a Wilderness Study Area. Several public meetings were held.

April, 1979 - Dept. of Energy was contacted about the geothermal potential of lands within the study boundary. BLM periodically checks on the information coming from a deep drill test site on the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory grounds.

April, 1979 - Letters and explanatory material were sent to various interest groups and individuals, federal agencies, state and local agencies, and congressional delegations inviting them to the Scoping Session to assist in identifying issues to be addressed in the EIS.

May 3, 1979 - Federal Register notice of BLM's intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on the Great Rift proposed wilderness area and announcement of the Scoping Meeting.

May, 1979 - News release distributed announcing intent to prepare the Great Rift EIS.

May 23, 1979 - District personnel conducted a Scoping Meeting on the Great Rift EIS to identify significant issues and problems.

June 9-10, 1979 - BLM personnel conducted a field tour of the Great Rift for representatives from the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Idaho Environmental Council and Idaho Conservation League.

Throughout 1979 - BLM personnel have kept Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) informed of wilderness program.

June 14, 1979 - IDL communicated its wilderness policy to BLM.

Summer, 1979 - Idaho State University prepared a study of the kipukas in the Great Rift to fulfill a contract with the BLM (preliminary report submitted in August, 1979; final report due August, 1980).

September 13, 1979 - BLM presented slide show on the Great Rift to the Idaho Falls Chapter of Idaho Conservation League.

October, 1979 - County commissioners for Blaine, Butte, Minidoka, and Power counties were contacted to discuss any problems with the Great Rift Wilderness proposal.

October 28 and November 9, 1979 - BLM personnel conducted informal consultations with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on threatened and endangered plants and animals. No threatened or endangered species were identified, but a candidate for the "sensitive" list is known to be located in the study area.

October 28 and November 9, 1979 - BLM personnel met with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. After reviewing cultural site reports, the SHPO and archaeologist indicated that they had no concerns over negative impacts of the proposed action.

October, 1979 - District Wilderness Coordinators served as consultants for an article featuring the Great Rift, which appeared in the Federation of Western Outdoor Club's publication in November, 1979.

October 1978 to November 1979 - BLM personnel have consulted informally with Craters of the Moon National Monument personnel on a continuing basis.

COORDINATION IN THE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Copies of the draft EIS were sent to the following:

Federal Agencies

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Geological Survey
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Heritage Conservation & Recreation Service
- National Park Service
- Natural Resource Library

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
- Soil Conservation Service

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

State Agencies

- State Clearinghouse
- Dept. of Health, Welfare and Environmental Services
- Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology
- Idaho Dept. of Fish & Game
- Idaho Dept. of Highways
- Idaho Dept. of Public Lands
- Idaho Dept. of Water Resources
- Idaho Div. of Tourism and Industrial Development
- Idaho Office of Energy
- Idaho Parks and Recreation Dept.
- State Historic Preservation Officer
- University of Idaho Extension Service

Local Agencies

- Blaine County Commissioners
- Blaine County Planning Commission
- Butte County Commissioners
- Butte County Planning Commission
- Minidoka County Commissioners
- Minidoka County Planning Commission
- Power County Commissioners
- Power County Planning Commission
- East Central Idaho Planning and Development Association
- Arco Mayor
- Burley Mayor
- Idaho Falls Mayor
- Rupert Mayor

PUBLIC COMMENT AND REVIEW

The draft environmental impact statement for the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness was released to the Environmental Protection Agency and the public in March, 1980. About 450 draft statements were distributed for review. The comment letters received required some minor changes in the final statement. Most letters preferred either the proposed action or the larger wilderness study alternative.

All letters received are listed in the following table. Only a portion of the letters contained substantive comments requiring response. The table shows whether or not a response was prepared.

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments	Response Prepared	Letter Printed
1	Blaine County Zoning and Planning Commission	X	X	X
2	Idaho Transportation Dept.,Divison of Highways, District 2	X	X	X
3	Region IV Development Association, Inc.	X	X	X
4	Environmental Protection Agency, Region X			X
5	John and Meri Kuehn	X	X	X
6	Jeffrey S. Green	X	X	X
7	R. B. Anderson	X	X	X
8	Eric Schulz	X	X	X
9	Peter Bowler	X	X	X
10	Ethel W. Thorniley	X	X	X
11	Marguerita Christoph	X	X	X
12	Idaho Environmental Council	X	X	X
13	Randall B. Vance	X	X	X

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments	Response Prepared	Letter Printed
14	Toni Hill	X	X	X
15	David J. Epstein	X	X	X
16	Idaho Transportation Dept. Div. of Highways, Dist.6	X	X	X
17	Jeffrey A. Crook	X	X	X
18	Gary Vesperman	X	X	X
19	Ron Guenther	X	X	X
20	National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region	X	X	X
21	Wilderness Society	X	X	X
22	Clarence F. Bellem	X	X	X
23	Idaho Farm Bureau	X	X	X
24	Heritage Conservation & Recreation Service, Northwest Region	X	X	X
25	Timothy Byrnes	X	X	X
26	Idaho Attorney General	X	X	X
27	Jay E. Anderson	X	X	X
28	J. R. Simplot Company	X	X	X
29	Idaho State Historical Society	X	X	X
30	Committee for Idaho's High Desert	X	X	X
31	Dept. of Energy, Idaho Operations Office			X
32	Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game			X

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments	Response Prepared	Letter Printed
33	Idaho State Clearing-house			X
34	U.S. Soil Conservation Service			X
35	State of Idaho, Dept. of Lands	X	X	X
36	Dennis Baird			
37	PU Cattle Ranch			
38	Institute of the American West			
39	E. Fred Birdsall			
40	Bernice Walker			
41	League of Women Voters of Idaho Falls			
42	Thomas J. Dale			
43	Harry F. Lemoyne			
44	Tim Johnson			
45	Wilia Carraway			
46	Henri Lemoyne			
47	Nancy L. Savage			
48	Don L. Crawford			
49	Fred Ralo			
50	Mary Rosczyk			
51	Danny Simon			
52	Willis L. Tarbet			

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments	Response Prepared	Letter Printed
53	Charles A. Wellner			
54	Jerry L. Dixon			
55	Glenn Ray Downing			
56	Randall R. Rogers			
57	Ruth Bull			
58	Harold Smith			
59	Sam Crace			
60	Henry Deck			
61	Douglas J. Hellie			
62	American Wilderness Alliance			
63	Dave Foreman			
64	C. Jay Dorr			
65	Tim Heffron			
66	Marjorie B. Kernick			
67	John R. Swanson			
68	Charles M. Bagley			
69	Friends of the Earth			
70	Katie Holmes			
71	Michael Burwell			
72	John Unwin			
73	Steve D. Johnson			
74	Richard Spotts			
75	Albert E. Honican			

Letter #	From	Substantive Comments	Response Prepared	Letter Printed
76	Ron Watters			
77	Gary Stone			
78	Sam A. Monger			
79	Dona E. Gasdict			
80	Atlantic Richfield Co.			
81	Dick Wilson			
82	Tharnyne Betsch			
83	Richard D. Tenney			
84	M. Frank Ireton			
85	Karen Larson			
86	Steven E. Payne			
87	Marjorie Hayes			
88	Tim Resinge			
89	Idaho Cattlemen's Assn.			
90	Robert G. Zahary			
91	Morton R. Brigham			
92	Fritz and Janet Ward			

BLAINE COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

POST OFFICE BOX 149 HAILEY, IDAHO 83333 TELEPHONE 208 788-4665

February 28, 1980

(1)

Harold E. Isaacson
Acting District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Isaacson,

After reading the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Draft E.I.S. I became personally interested in the fourteen cultural sites which had been identified by the Bureau of Land Management. If possible, would you please send me a map depicting those sites and any further written information about them.

Additionally, the aspect of geothermal resources is one of concern. In this energy short period is there any alternative to the total exclusion of any surface occupancy in a wilderness area. I support the wilderness concept but see a possible hardship. Perhaps that is like having my cake and eating it too.

Thank you in advance for the information.

Yours truly,

Gary Slette

Gary Slette
Administrator

GS:sm

Response: No geothermal leases or lease applications currently exist -- the lease application was relinquished. Beginning January 1, 1984, public lands in the WSA will not be open for appropriation under the mining laws, nor open for mineral leasing.

STATE OF IDAHO

[redacted]
IDAHO TRANSPORTATION BOARD
CARL C. MOORE - CHAIRMAN
LLOYD F. BARRON - VICE CHAIRMAN
ROY I. STROSCHEIN - MEMBER
DARRELL V. MANNING
DIRECTOR

JOHN V. EVANS
GOVERNOR

DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
KEITH GREEN, P.E., [redacted] ADMINISTRATOR
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

DISTRICT 2 / PO BOX 2-A / SHOSHONE, IDAHO 83352
PHONE (208) 886-2411

(2)

March 11, 1980

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

RE: Draft Environmental Impact of Statement,
Great Rift Wilderness Area

Dear Sir:

We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area and generally find no conflicts with regard to our operation.

Specifically however, we are concerned with both the existing highway corridors and possible future corridors which form the boundaries for a considerable portion of the area.

We definitely feel that the boundary should be no closer than the existing right-of-way, preferably 200 feet. This will permit us to continue our current roadside maintenance practices without conflicting with regulations of a wilderness area designation.

Sincerely,

H. L. JOHNSON, P.E.
DISTRICT ENGINEER

AB

SAFE TRANSPORTATION MEANS PROGRESS
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Response: The Wilderness Study Area and proposed wilderness boundaries were drawn along the 200-foot right-of-way and would continue to provide for the highway corridor.

REGION IV DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

725 SHOSHONE STREET SOUTH
TWIN FALLS, IDAHO 83301
PHONE (208) 734-6586

3

April 1, 1980

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

RE: Great Rift Proposed Wilderness
Draft Environmental Impact
Statement

Dear Sirs:

Region IV Development Association, Inc. is a non-profit economic development corporation, representing eight counties in south central Idaho, and governed by a Board of elected public officials.

The Association has reviewed and discussed the Proposed Wilderness Designation for the Great Rift. The position has been taken by the Board of Directors to support the No Action Alternative for the following reason.

The elimination of approximately 6,000 acres of available grazing land, as proposed in the wilderness designation, would have a negative economic effect on the livestock industry in southern Idaho. This negative economic impact is contrary to goals and policies established by Region IV Development Association for the development of the south central Idaho economy.

Thank you for your consideration of our comment.

Sincerely,

John Yeates
Economic Planner

JY:rj

Serving South Central Idaho

Response: As discussed on page 30 of the draft EIS under economics, livestock grazing on the 6,000 acres would not be eliminated if the area were designated wilderness. Congress specifically allowed in the 1964 Wilderness Act for continued livestock grazing in wilderness areas.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION X
1200 SIXTH AVENUE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98101

REPLY TO ATTN OF: M/S 443

4

MAR 18 1980

O'dell A. Frandsen, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has completed its review of your draft environmental impact statement for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area in the Big Desert Planning Area in southeastern Idaho. We have no specific comments.

From the standpoint of the Environmental Protection Agency's areas of concern and expertise, we are rating this statement LO-1 (LO - Lack of Objections; 1 - Adequate Information). This rating will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our responsibility to inform the public of our views on proposed Federal actions under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, as amended.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this draft environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,

Roger K. Mochnick

Roger K. Mochnick, Acting Chief
Environmental Evaluation Branch

5

Dear State Director:
We are writing to show our support for a 374,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness in Idaho. The 341,000 acres proposed by the BLM leaves out the grasslands which have never been grazed. This is an important criteria in letting them be included, there are not many of those lands left & they would make an important contribution to this lava flow wilderness area.

Thank you
John & Mary Kuehn
John & Mary Kuehn
4347 Fondulac Dr.
Slinger, WI. 53086

Response: See response to letter #10.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SCIENCE AND EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
WESTERN REGION

(6)

U.S. Sheep Experiment Station
Dubois, Idaho 83423

April 9, 1980

O'dell A. Frandsen, Dist. Manager
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear O'dell:

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the draft EIS for the Great Rift Wilderness Area. Following a review of the draft, my only comment deals with the economic considerations associated with the proposed action. On page 30 under Social Attitudes, the statement is made that some feel a "wilderness designation would be a waste of time and money." I was unable to find any indication in the draft as to what the cost of selecting the proposed action would be vs the cost of the no action alternative.

In this case where economic use of the area is not a critical factor, I generally favor the proposed action, thus insuring that the area will retain its wilderness values despite future human events. However, I would be better able to defend that position knowing the costs to the people in tax dollars for implementation of the proposed action.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey S. Green
Research Wildlife Biologist

Response: Existing staff would manage the proposed wilderness. If visitor use increases significantly, one or two temporary employees would be hired as needed for 3 months to supervise visitor use.

District Manager
BLM
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

(7)

Great Rift Wilderness E.I.

After reviewing your wilderness proposal for the Great Rift area I am apposed to wilderness classification.

I believe the BLM should maintain their management options that will be lost by classification. I have no complaint with management as a natural area under existing laws.

I can not support the no action alternative as it is worded. The grassland kipuka area I looked at on the southwest corner of the Monument was an old sheep bed ground and in no way was pristine.

I support multiple use management with controls for proper grazing use, recreation, ORV, wildlife, etc.

R. B. Anderson
St. Rt. H 24
Ririe, Idaho 83443

Response: The Grassland Kipuka has been grazed in the past. Grazing, however, has not affected the area's wilderness characteristics. Wilderness characteristics are not totally based upon the area being pristine (see page 22 of the draft EIS).

Department of Electrical Engineering
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83843
March 20, 1980

(8)

Mr. O'dell Frandsen, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen,

I would like to make a few short comments on the proposed Great Rift Wilderness and the draft EIS that I was sent recently. In addition, I have a request to make of you for some information unrelated to the comment process and so I have included it on the attached sheet. My comments follow:

1. Congratulations on an excellent document. You and your staff are to be commended for a fair and easily digested statement of the facts.
2. I am surprised to see that you apparently did not contact the Gem State Grotto of the National Speleological Society for comment and assistance. Their is probably no group in the state whose experience and interest in features such as the rift area exceed theirs. I would contact Mr. Randy Vance, c/o Department of Geology, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83843. Randy has spent many hours studying and exploring the various volcanic features (particularly lava tubes) in this area. I know because I've been out there with him!
3. The word "effected" is improperly used on page 15--should be "affected."
4. I have spent many hours hiking over and exploring parts of this area--especially near the Wapi flow. This activity has been centered around finding and surveying lava tube systems, but has extended much further. I realize that there are very few people interested in country like this or its development (hence, an EIS of only 50 pages!). However, its timely protection as wilderness is of no less importance--the short time that I've been able to spend in this area has, if nothing else, impressed me with its incredible fragility. There are very few tubes whose features have not already been destroyed by even the sparse visitation they've seen, for instance.
5. I favor the designation of these lands as wilderness. Further, I favor the WSA alternative. The unique features of this area do not end at the lava flow boundary--in fact, in my opinion, the really interesting geologic features lie in the lands adjacent to the flows. This is especially true in my experience for the area to the northeast of the Wapi flow (T5S/R28E). The flows may boast some rather "easy-to-see" and easily protected volcanic features, but near the Wapi flow, the flow itself is not"where it's at." This area should not be neglected simply

because it has been "trammeled by man" or because it would be difficult to manage with regard to grazing or ORV use. I would consult Randy Vance on some of the details of the area. As far as ". . . geological, or other features of scientific, educational, . . ." value, I believe that you've missed these here.

Thank-you for your consideration of these comments. Your effort in this task are appreciated.

Sincerely,

Eric Schulz
Research Associate

Response: A copy of the draft EIS was sent to Randy Vance. The area you mention (Wilderness Inventory Unit 33-14) was intensively inventoried for wilderness characteristics. The proposed inventory decision states the area "does not qualify as a Wilderness Study Area because it fails to meet the naturaless criteria." The Crystal Ice Cave area did not qualify as a wilderness inventory unit because it was less than 5,000 acres.

March 31, 1980

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls Distrcit Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

9

RE: Comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area in the Big Desert Planning Area in southeastern Idaho; Please include this statement in the record

Dear District Manager:

I would like to commend the Bureau of Land Management on the preparation of an excellently done document and what indeed can be called a "major effort".

I am strongly supportive of designating in its entirity (341,000 acres) the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. I have visited the area and am exicted by the prospect of the preservation of wilderness values in the Great Rift region. The cited loss of opportunity (or "adverse impacts" - a poor choice of wording) to "mine lava rubble for building stone, the withdrawal of all forms of appropriations under the mining laws, the addition of a "no surface occupancy" stipulation for geothermal exploration, and prohibition of off-road vehicles along the rights of way for powerline corridors, roads, etc. are of much less consequence than the preservation of the wilderness qualities of this remarkable area. I concur that there is a definite need for protection against any possible future impacts of wilderness values.

In addition to the proposed action's 341,000 acres to receive Wilderness designation, I feel protection of the additional 33,400 acres excluded due to difficult management suitability is also necessary. You have evaluated this large area and found it to be qualified for wilderness recognition under your criteria, therefore it deserves special management and an assurance of the maintenance of its wilderness qualities. Frankly, I cannot accept management difficulties as a valid reason for not protecting an area, nor should the BLM abdicate its responsibility toward this large wilderness segment. I have attached information concerning some of the other strategies for protection aside from direct wildernesss desionation. These are strategies utilized by the Bureau of Land Management in its management of the California Desert Conservation Area, and include designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (which I here propose be done on Wilderness qualities if you choose to go the ACEC route; in California native American values, archeological values, and ecological values have been used to justify ACEC designation - see attached), Wilderness Study Area, Habitat Management Plan area, Special Habitat area, Special Attention Areas, Wilderness Management Plan areas, and Road Desionation Restrictions. An innovative solution can surely be developed so that protection of the wilderness character of the site can survive. It is my belief that when your study identified wilderness qualities in that 33 thousand acres, it became your mandate to manage accordingly.

I would have liked to have seen more dramatic aerial photographs of the Great Rift area along the lines of Greeley and King (1977). This area is photogenic and easily catches the imagination when seen from above.

On page 40 of your Draft, I note that the Committe for Idaho's High Desert and the Native Plant Society were not served with copies of the Draft. I am certain that they would appreciate being added to your service list.

Committee for Idaho's High Desert
1815 Annette
Boise, Idaho 83702

Native Plant Society
The Herbarium
The College of Idaho
Caldwell, Idaho 83605

While I appreciate your only citing references directly mentioned in the text (see "References"), I think the public would benefit from having a brief, yet more complete, literature listing - especially of studies dealing directly with the study area (see below).

Finally, for your enjoyment, I am attaching a xerox of Vardis Fisher's description of the Great Rift area in his 1937 Federal Writer's Project "Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture". I think you should cite this early work which touts the Great Rift area and could well have served to make it much better known.

I congratulate you on a fine job, and hope that your proposed action can be rapidly implemented and that special management plans or other protective designation can be accomplished for the 33,100 acres excluded by your proposed action. Thank you.

Suggestions for additional citations:

Bullard, F.M. 1971. Volcanic history of the Great Rift, Craters of the Moon National Monument, south-central Idaho: Geol. Soc. Amer. Abs. with Programs, Vol. 3, no. 3, p. 234.

Bullard, F.M. and D. Rylander. 1970. Holocene volcanism in Craters of the Moon National Monument and adjacent areas, south-central Idaho: Geol. Soc. Abs. with Programs, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 234.

Murtaugh, J.G. 1961 Geology of Craters of the Moon National Monument: M.S. Thesis, University of Idaho, Moscow.

Stearns, H.T. 1926. Craters of the Moon National Monument: U.S. Geol. Survey open-file report.

Stearns, H.T. 1928. Craters of the Moon National Monument, Idhao: Idaho Bur. Mines and Geology Bull., No. 13, 57pp.

Urban, K.A. 1971. Common plants of Craters of the Moon National Monument: Craters of the Moon Natural History Association, Inc., 30 pp.

Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration. 1937. Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture. Caxton Printers, Ltd. Caldwell, Idaho. (Written by Vardis Fisher although his name is not listed.)

Stearns (1928) and Urban (1971) should at least be cited. You should cite your endangered plant search as well.

Respectfully,

Peter Bowler
Star Route
Bliss, Idaho
83314

Response: Because there are no defined boundaries in these grassland areas (33,400 acres) it would be impossible to keep off-road and other motorized vehicles out of the wilderness. Although there are roads close to the lava edges, they are so fragmented and intermittent they do not form a well defined boundary. The lava edges form the most logical and manageable boundary. For these reasons, the 33,400 acres were recommended as unsuitable for wilderness preservation, but were analyzed as an alternative to the proposed action. A copy of the DEIS was sent to the Committee for Idaho's High Desert and will be sent to the Native Plant Society.

April 10, 1980

Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 942
Boise, ID 83724

(10)

Dear Sir:

While we support the Great Rift wilderness proposal we consider it inadequate.

Because the isolated areas of grassland partially or wholly surrounded by the ancient lava flows have never been grazed we see no need to start grazing them now.

THEREFORE we strongly support a 324,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness to properly protect this place.

Yours truly Ethel W Thornley

Mr. & Mrs. R Boland, Mr. & Mrs. L Busar, Mr. J Kern, Mr.&Mrs. R Angst, M. & M. Fourtoire, Mr. & Mrs. B Park, Mrs. M Trost, Mr. & Mrs. C Wilkins, M.s. S Leslie

MS. ETHEL W THORNLEY
19653 SCHOENHERR
DETROIT, MI 48205

Response: As discussed in the draft EIS, not more than 10 of the kipukas have been grazed by domestic livestock. These kipukas would continue to be grazed, but the remaining 440 would not be grazed (pages 28, 31, 33). There are no kipukas in the additional 33,400 acres under the Wilderness Study Area alternative. About 32,500 acres out of 33,400 have been and are presently grazed and would continue to be grazed under the alternative.

4435 Bumann St
San Diego CA. 92107
April 18, 1980

(11)

Grazing Service Director
Bureau of Land Management
Pc Box 042 - Boise, ID 83724
Dear Sir,

I have just learned that the proposed Great Rift Wilderness of 341,000 acres does not include the grassland adjacent to the lava flow. I urge that these never grazed lands be added to Jackson Great Rift Wilderness proposal making it a 374,000 acre wilderness rather than one of the proposed acreage.

Sincerely,
Marguerite Christoph

Response: See response to letter #10.

Idaho Environmental Council

P.O. Box 1708

Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

March 30, 1980

Great Rift Wilderness

(12)

O'dell Frandsen, District Manager
BLM, Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear O'dell;

The IEC supports the BLM proposal for a 341,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness, consisting of the Craters of the Moon lava flow and the Wapi lava flow. This Wilderness would protect a complete and unusual ecosystem, including the volcanic phenomena and related flora and fauna.

We would prefer the Wilderness Study Alternative, with the additional 33,400 acres of adjacent grassland included, but do recognize the difficulty in managing this as Wilderness.

Although there are no imminent threats to the naturalness of the area, it is difficult to foresee what the future may bring. Twenty or 30 years ago, for example, who foresaw the problem off road vehicles are now creating on the roadless public lands?

In Idaho, we tend to take our natural wonders for granted. The Great Rift is the longest rift in the United State, 65 miles long. At depths of up to 800 feet, it is also probably the deepest. There are many different types of volcanic features. In 1971, with the aid of then-Congressman Orval Hansen, the Great Rift was designated a National Landmark. By 1973 or so, you began considering an administrative designation of Primitive Area for the Great Rift.

The lava flows encompass about 450 kipukas, ungrazed pockets of vegetation evolving without manmade influence. These are invaluable for nature study and enjoyment, as well as for research. In the flows are roughly 300 plant species, about 140 bird species, 26 mammal species, and 6 reptile species. Fourteen cultural sites, mostly lithic scatters, are known.

The draft EIS is well done and easy to read. I would suggest more emphasis be placed on wildlife in the final EIS. It should be included in the impacts table on page 11, and also as a component of the ecosystem in the sentence starting "Secondary benefits...." in the middle of page ii.

I commend you and others in the BLM for this proposal, and for the work leading up to it. Hopefully, Congress will follow your recommendation and designate the Great Rift Wilderness.

Sincerely,

Jerry Jayne

Jerry Jayne
Board of Directors

327 Lauder # 1504
Moscow, Idaho 83843

April 2, 1980

(13)

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear District Manager:

I am currently studying geology at the University of Idaho and am nearing completion of my M.S. degree. My interests include exploration (economic) geology and volcanic geology. I lived in eastern Idaho for over five years and visited many of the areas included in the Great Rift wilderness proposal. Although my interests at that time were primarily of exploring lava tubes, the time spent in these areas has given me an appreciation of the unique geological volcanic landforms and features present there.

The Craters of the Moon flow and Wapi flow are both worthy of wilderness protection. Building stone, the only realistic mineral resource at this time, can be obtained in other areas under the BLM's jurisdiction. I support your proposed action for the Great Rift wilderness. The wilderness study area alternative that adds 33,400 acres is not necessary. The rugged nature of the flows act as a strong enough buffer to outside impacts. A border buffer zone is not necessary to protect the proposed wilderness areas.

Your recognition of lava tubes as unique geologic features is to be commended. Some of the other well known lava tubes on open BLM lands in eastern Idaho that I have visited have been vandalized with spray paint and garbage. This senseless vandalism indicates to me that the general public has no appreciation of the value of lava tubes. Additional protection for the existing lava tubes will hopefully prevent this irreversible vandalism.

I also urge you to realize the scientific value of lava tubes and related volcanic features as pointed out by Greeley and King (1977). Not only do lava tubes serve as a recreational use, but the scientific value also makes them worthy of protection. From my studies and searches in the proposed areas, I believe there are more lava tubes present than what your current inventory indicates. It may be years before all of the lava tubes are found, explored, and studied, but at least they will be in a wilderness state when they are discovered.

Sincerely,

Randall B. Vance

Randall B. Vance

Response: Wildlife species are discussed in Chapter III. Because impacts would not occur to wildlife under the proposed action or alternatives, wildlife was not included in Table 2-1. There are no known species of birds or wildlife on the lava flows that are not also in the surrounding areas. The word "wildlife" will be included in the sentence on "secondary benefits."

Response: As discussed in Chapter IV, Environmental Consequences, page 28 the "unique lava features would be preserved in an unimpaired condition for scientific and recreational uses." The unique lava features, including lava tubes, are described in Chapter III, Affected Environment.

(14)

Bureau of Land Management
and To Whom It Might Concern,

Concerning the Great Rift proposed Wilderness plan, I am opposed to the plan because:

With all due respect to our college students and their studies, I question the wisdom of basing such an important decision on studies conducted by students who were not familiar with the area and who have had very little, if any, practical experience in that area. Maturity in this decision appears to be limited to one person on your list of preparers.

The acreage is far greater than necessary for such a plan.

The closure to motorized vehicles not only is ridiculous, it is extremely dangerous and discriminates against the young, the elderly and the handicapped. The Great Rift is not a backpacker's paradise.

A wilderness classification, as we have seen in other areas, would no longer make the area feasible for grazing.

As a nature lover who considers herself also an environmentalist, I resent this infringement on my rights as a United States citizen by a government agency.

Idaho's land should be managed for the benefit of the majority by Idaho and county governments who are familiar with the problems, the people and the financial concerns....not someone in Washington D. C. who is eastern oriented and indebted to the Sierra Club or other special interest group for political reasons

There is no need for such a designation and the resulting expense to taxpayers. The Great Rift remains a natural wilderness (as it has always been) and, if left alone, will continue as such by its own peculiarities that are not conducive to frequent visitation by people.

In the future there may be a need, because of the so-called energy crisis, a need for water, mineral and geothermal exploration.

The removal of lava rock for commercial purposes can and should be monitored and controlled, but there is no need for complete withdrawal.

There can be no opportunity for primitive recreation if one is barred from the primitive area.

Your definition of solitude is a farce. You're creating havoc....not solitude.

I am in favor of the No Action Alternative. Thanks for listening.

Toni Hill
Rt. 1
Heyburn, Idaho 83336

Response: The draft EIS was written by an interdisciplinary team. The team members and their qualifications are listed on page 41 of the draft EIS. The area is being considered for wilderness as result of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. There are other areas available for commercial collection of lava rubble (page 29, draft EIS). The area would be designated as a wilderness, not a primitive area, and no one would be "barred" from using it for primitive recreation activities.

(15)

Dear State Director, BLM, April 10, 1980

I would like to thank you heartily for the BLM's decision to create a Great Rift Wilderness in Idaho. This rugged, unique and unspoiled area is one of the many components of the American landscape which needs to be protected for its scenic and wildlife values as well as our national heritage for future generations.

My only complaint about the proposal is that it does not include the 33,000 acre grassland adjacent to the lava flow. I would hope that this untouched area could also be included in a 374,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness. Thankyou for your time.

Yours Truly,

David J. Epstein
5214 N. CHAMPLAIN ST.
BURLINGTON, VT 05401

Response: See response to letter #10.

STATE OF IDAHO

[redacted]
IDAHO TRANSPORTATION BOARD
CARL C. MOORE - CHAIRMAN
LLOYD F. BARRON - VICE CHAIRMAN
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DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
KEITH GREEN, P.E., [redacted], ADMINISTRATOR
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

DISTRICT 6 / PO. BOX 97 / RIGBY, IDAHO 83442
PHONE (208) 745-7781

April 4, 1980

(16)

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Subject: Great Rift Wilderness Area

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Personnel from the Idaho Division of Highways have made an on-site review of material source withdrawals near the proposed "Great Rift Wilderness Area." Our recommendations are as follows:

1. SE¼NW¼, Sec. 20, T. 1 N., R. 24 E.B.M. - This area has a small portion that extends to the east side of U.S. 26. This portion appears to be within the 500' from centerline setback requested by the Administrator of Highways, Dean Tisdale, in his June 8, 1979 letter to Mr. William Mathews. This source would be needed when any realignment of U.S. 26 in this vicinity is constructed. Future plans do call for realignment of Tom Cat Hill. This was addressed in our previous comments on other proposed wilderness areas. State retention and continued use is recommended.

2. NW¼NW¼, Sec. 17, T. 1 N., R. 24 E.B.M. - This source is entirely out of the Great Rift Area. Its closest part being approximately 1/2 mile west of U.S. 26. State retention and continued use is recommended.

3. NE¼SW¼, Sec. 8, T. 1 N., R. 24 E.B.M. - This source is all on the east side of U.S. 26, except the SW corner. The portion in the proposed wilderness area is lava flows and cinders. We would be willing to work on an exchange of this area for an area outside the wilderness boundaries.

SAFE TRANSPORTATION MEANS PROGRESS
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

4. Portion of SW¼SE¼, Sec. 24, T. 2 N., R. 24 E.B.M. - This small source is located entirely west of U.S. 26. No effect on wilderness area is anticipated. State retention and continued use is recommended.

5. Portion of SE¼NE¼, Sec. 24, T. 2 N., R. 24 E.B.M. and a portion of SE¼NE¼, Sec. 24, T. 2 N., R. 24 E.B.M. and a portion of Lot 1 and 2, Sec. 19, T. 2 N., R. 25 E.B.M. - This source is east of U.S. 26 and suitable for borrow. It is located just North of the National Monument boundary and is not included in the proposed wilderness area. It is included in the Wilderness Area Alternative. We would prefer to retain this area unless an equal quality parcel could be traded for it.

6. Portion of SW¼NE¼, Sec. 23, T. 3 N., R. 25 E.B.M. - this area is west of U.S. 26 and, therefore, would have no effect on the wilderness area. State retention and continued use is recommended.

7. Portion of NW¼SW¼, Sec. 23, T. 3 N., R. 25 E.B.M. - this small source adjoins the highway on the east side. It appears to be outside the wilderness area on the map in the E.I.S. State retnetion and continued use is recommended.

8. Portion of NW¼SW¼, Sec. 27, T. 3 N., R. 25 E.B.M. - same comments as Item No. 7.

9. Portion of Lot 1, Sec. 5, T. 3 N., R. 25 E.B.M. - this source is west of U.S. 26 and outside the wilderness area. State retention and continued use is recommended.

We hope these specific comments coupled with Mr. Tisdale's earlier letter, help you in your study.

Sincerely,

J. R. DICK, P.E.
DISTRICT ENGINEER

dlh

Attachment

Response: The Wilderness Study Area boundary excludes all material sites. However, the BLM would be working towards exchanging the areas on the east side of U. s. Hwy 26, including lands mentioned in #1, #3, #5, and #8. The Wilderness Study Area boundary were drawn along the present 200-foot right-of-way.

RICHARDS & CROOK
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
P.O. BOX 427
SANDY, OREGON 97055

March 28, 1980

(17)

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83410

RE: Great Rift proposed wilderness impact statement

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft environmental impact statement concerning the Great Rift wilderness area in the Big Desert planning area in Southeastern Oregon. After reading the EIS I have arrived at the following conclusion, that the final environmental impact statement should allocate the wilderness study area alternative as the preferred alternative. This would designate the 341,000 acre wilderness area for preservation. I felt that the EIS was balanced and well written, however, I feel that some areas needed more information supplied. I feel a better inventory of the species of wildlife and particularly the species of non-game birds could have been included. Certainly many of the raptores that may inhabit the area are at least unique, if not threatened species and should have been dealt with at greater length in the EIS.

I do have a question with regard to page 12, where the Fish and wildlife service was consulted with regard to the EIS. The report states that the FWS also has predator control responsibility in the area under agreement with the BLM. And that area predator control by FWS would continue to be allowed in accordance with section 4D1 of the wilderness act. What type of predator control is now ongoing in the area? I assume this is probably a coyote reduction type program. Please advise me as to what type of program and what methods are being used in the area. I am deeply concerned with the past predator control programs, in that their methods have seriously affected, and in some cases depleted, populations of other species who came in contact with the predator control methodology. I am speaking specifically of bird species, but also badgers, foxes, and other species are sometimes affected by the poison or other methods used to kill coyotes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your EIS, and I hope to be kept on the mailing list to hear of the final decision in this area.

Very truly yours,

Jeffrey A. Crook
Attorney at Law

JAC/mec

Response: For the first comment above, see response to letter #12. Aerial control for coyotes is being done along the lava edges. This control is now limited to the Big Desert sheep allotment.

April 12, 1980

Gary Vesperman
1712 Herschel St.
San Mateo, CA 94403

(18)

Idaho State Director
Bureau of Land Management
PO Box 042
Boise, ID 83724

Gentlepersons:

Please include the following comments in the record of the environmental impact statement for the Great Rift Wilderness:

I have visited Craters of the Moon National Monument twice. So I know of the terrain. I have visited well over national parks, monuments, and wilderness areas in the US and Canada. It compares well with similar lava flows in Calif., New Mexico, and Oregon.

I can't believe the BLM would be so short-sighted and stupid as to exclude a few hills of grassland from the proposed wilderness. About half the land area in the contiguous 48 states is devoted to grazing. That a few hills have been left ungrazed is remarkable. Has the BLM lost its marbles and sense of proportion to suggest that a few salty hills feeding a couple cows is essential to the national economic welfare? Such ungrazed areas are valuable benchmarks in the ecological study of grasslands and associated biota.

I strongly favor the full 374,000 acres of Great Rift Wilderness.

Very truly yours,

Gary Vesperman

Response: See response to letter #10.

April 12, 1980

29900 Highway 20
Fort Bragg, California 95437

Idaho State Director
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 042
Boise, Idaho 83724

For the Public Review Record

(19)

RE: Great Rift Wilderness.

Dear Sir:

Please include these comments as part of the public review record for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness.

I would, first of all, congratulate BLM for its recognition of the wilderness potential in the Great Rift Area. This relatively young lava flow adjacent to Craters of the Moon National Park in south central Idaho contains outstanding wilderness qualities, and would make a splendid wilderness adjunct to this park.

However, I must take exception to BLM's deletion,of the isolated, scattered hills of grassland around which the Great Rift lava flowed, from its wilderness proposal.

These grasslands constitute important parts of the wilderness grassland-lava ecosystem, and their deletion would bring with it wilderness management problems.

I urge addition of these grasslands to the BLM Great Rift Wilderness proposal, for a total wilderness area of 374,000 acres.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ron Guenther

Response: See response to letter #9.

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific Northwest Region
Fourth and Pike Building
Seattle, Washington 98101

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L7619(PNR)PCC

April 9, 1980

(20)

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

We have reviewed the draft environmental statement for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area, Big Desert Planning Area, Idaho, and have the following comments.

We favor the Wilderness Study Area alternative because of the buffer zone the additional 33,400 acres would add to the southwest and northern sections of Craters of the Moon National Monument. We are concerned, however, with the fact that geothermal leasing would continue to be allowed, especially near the western boundary of Craters of the Moon. We feel this could cause adverse impacts to the monument.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this statement.

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Kuehn
Acting Associate Regional Director
Planning and Resource Preservation

Response: See response to letter #1.

The Wilderness Society

107 West Lawrence, Helena, Montana 59601 (406) 443-7350
Mail to: P.O. Box 1184

(21)

April 7, 1980

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

I have carefully reviewed the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness, visited portions of the area on two occasions and after consultation with local conservationists I am pleased to indicate the strong support of The Wilderness Society for the Wilderness Study Alternative for a 374,400 acre Great Rift Wilderness.

At the same time, we commend the BLM for recommending a 341,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness which includes the Grassland Kipuka Natural Area, and significant portions of the Craters of the Moon and Wapi lava flows.

The draft EIS states that the 33,400 acre difference between the Wilderness Study Alternative and the proposed alternative is unsuitable for wilderness designation even though the Great Rift wilderness inventory determined that the area possesses wilderness characteristics. Beyond this mere statement of unsuitability there is no documentation in the draft EIS that the 33,400 acre area is actually unsuitable for wilderness designation. In fact, these perepheral areas do meet the minimum criteria for wilderness as defined by the 1964 Wilderness Act. The only justification given for excluding these 33,400 acres is that the "proximity of the roads and lack of a defined boundary would make these areas extremely difficult to protect from inadvertent or intentional vehicle use" (p.32, DEIS). It is our feeling that cultural features, such as roads, would make a well defined boundary for the Great Rift Wilderness. These roads would actually make a more logical and manageable boundary than the edge of the lava flows as presently proposed by BLM.

The statement that a boundary around these perephera' areas would be difficult to enforce is in itself an admission that the 33,400 acre area needs protection from indiscreminate ORV use.

It is important to recognize that under the WSA Alternative the 105 grazing permittees are assured that their grazing leases will continue unimpaired. This is only proper since the Wilderness Act explicitly states that existing livestock grazing shall continue in wilderness. Since livestock grazing is the only commercial use now occuring in the Great Rift, and since the area has little commodity development potential there are no economic barriers to wilderness designation.

Wilderness classification of the Great Rift would preserve the area's outstanding wilderness values as well as a unique and complete ecosystem. The scientific, educational and ecological values of this lava rock ecosystem include climax vegetative communities, some 450 kipukas with relict Kipuka soil types, 14 prehistoric cultural sites and recent volcanic formations.

The Wilderness Society urges the BLM to adopt the full Wilderness Study Alternative for a magnificent 374,400 acre Great Rift Wilderness. We've appreciated this opportunity to comment on this important proposal and we stand ready to assist with its implementation in the future.

Sincerely,

Bill Cunningham

Bill Cunningham
Regional Representative

Response: The wilderness inventory is designed only to determine what part of a roadless area has wilderness characteristics and should be studied. The study considers the feasability of managing all or part of the area as wilderness, and ways to minimize resource conflicts with wilderness.
Since conflicts were not identified during the study, managing the area was the major criteria in determining boundaries.

A large percentage of the Wilderness Study Area boundary follows lines of human-caused impact on and where opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are less than outstanding. Roads and vehicle ways form a smaller percentate of the boundary. The lava flow edge was chosen as a suitable boundary because it could be clearly defined, mapped and identified by visitors. It forms the most feasible and practical boundary for wilderness preservation and management. the lava boundary (or proposed action) would require less signing, enforcement and personnel to maintain the area's wilderness characteristics.

From: Name Clarence F. Bisbee

Street Address RT 41

City, State Rupert, Idaho Zip Code 83350

(22)

Would concur; with the exception: Any roads through the Left Bank or Below dike shall remain for multiple use purpose. Federal government should assume all liability or expenses in regards to People lost in any attempt made to enter or leave the proposed wilderness. Fire suppression should become prohibitive and Minidoka County would be the financial losers if this Area is accepted. If this wilderness area should occur the U.S. Government should be compelled to appeal or secure it F.H.A. type monies to be used primarily by Livestock Raisers locally

Response: There are no existing roads in the proposed wilderness boundary. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 authorizes the BLM to assist in search and rescue operations under the direction of local officials. Provisions exist for providing workpower and equipment at no cost.

PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENT

EXEC. SEC.-TREAS.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation



April 23, 1980

23

Mr. O'Dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Re: Draft EIS - Great Rift Wilderness Area

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

In reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area, the same conclusion seems to come up again and again in all three of the alternatives. That conclusion is, it will make little or no difference to the resources of the area, which of the proposals are adopted. In reading the EIS I can agree, in part, that no damage will be done to the land. However I do have some questions as to the amount of damage done to those presently using this land.

On Page 11, Table 2-1, under "Livestock Grazing." In Proposal No. 1 it states that 60 livestock permittees will be allowed to continue their operations. However in Proposal No. 2 it states that 105 will be allowed to continue. There is no explanation for this 45 permittee difference. Are these extra 45 on the additional 33,900 acres or are some being dropped in Proposal No. 1? In light of these questions I feel that more information, or better breakdown on existing resource use, is needed.

It states that the roads used for water hauling are outside the proposed area. However there is some hauling being done in the proposed area. At the public meetings, the ranchers were told that the roads they used didn't qualify as roads even though they were used as such. Consequently some of the water hauling will be curtailed which will hurt the permittees. There are some other effects of this proposal that should be taken into consideration, namely having management tools taken away, such as being able to fence, develop water systems or do any seeding projects. When all of these things are considered together it seems that quite a bit of damage will be done to the permittees in this area.

845 WEST CENTER – P.O. BOX 4848 – POCATELLO, IDAHO 83201 – (208) 232-7914

BRANCH OFFICE: 500 WASHINGTON STREET – P.O. BOX 167 – BOISE, IDAHO 83701 – (208) 342-2688

23

You also stated, on Page 29, under "Livestock Grazing", that predator control will continue. The permittees in the area have expressed concern over this as past experience with areas that have been given a wilderness designation shows that it continues status quo for a short while, then predator control is curtailed sharply. This causes them to wonder what assurance they have that the Fish & Wildlife Service will be allowed to continue their program of predator control.

It seems that the geothermal possibilities in the area are yet to be determined and that in these times of energy shortages, to remove a possible alternate source of clean energy generation from further development, is very unwise.

In reading this draft I find by your own statement, that under non-wilderness status the geologic impact would be insignificant, soils would remain undisturbed for further study, 440 kipukas would remain ungrazed, cultural artifacts have not, and would not, be removed, and desert wilderness values would not change. The biggest fear seems to be that some lava rubble would be removed or that some geothermal exploration might take place. However, on Page #23, it states that very little lava rubble collection has taken place as there are more suitable sites that are more readily accessible and, as I have previously stated, geothermal exploration may be needed in the very near future. In light of these things it seems that to create a wilderness area just for the sake of creating a wilderness area when little, if any, benefit will result to the natural resources of the area, doesn't make any sense.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this proposal. I would like to conclude by urging, on behalf of the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, that more attention be given to the fears and wishes of those people who are presently using the ground for a productive purpose. I would also like to reiterate our opposition to this proposal.

Sincerely,

Andrew G. Anderson
Assistant Director, Public Affairs

AGA/aw

Response: The reason for the difference in the permittee numbers is that the larger Wilderness Study Area involves more allotments and more operators. As stated in the draft EIS on page 29, "None of the six wells or miles of road used for hauling water to livestock are within the boundary for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness." There are no proposed livestock projects within the area. On page 12 of the draft EIS it states that, "Areal predator control by the Fish and Wildlife Service would continue to be allowed in accordance with Sec. 4 (d) (1) of the Wilderness Act."

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

(206) 442-4706
NORTHWEST REGION
915 SECOND AVENUE, RM. 990
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98174

1202-03
BLM-Great Rift

APR 11 1980

24

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls, Idaho

From: Regional Director, Northwest Regional Office, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

Subject: Review of draft environmental statement for the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject DES. We offer the following comments for your consideration when preparing the final environmental statement.

Pages 12, 13; Interrelationships. The FES should acknowledge the status of the Great Rift as a registered National Natural Landmark (NNL). In April 1968, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Great Rift area as a NNL. The national significance of the 40-mile volcanic rift, which is one of the largest in the conterminous United States and one of the deepest in the world, was thereby officially recognized. The designated area encompasses 1000 acres and includes the Crystal Ice Caves. In May 1970, on request from the Bureau of Land Management, the area was included in the National Registry of Natural Landmarks as a registered NNL.

HCRS is proposing that the area originally designated as a NNL be expanded to include 169,880 acres. This enlarged area would include the Open Crack Set, the King's Bowl Set and Wapi Lava Field. A draft brief and map describing the proposed enlargement are enclosed.

HCRS' Washington D.C. office has requested comments on the Great Rift NNL proposal from BLM's headquarters office. Also, in a letter dated February 14, 1980, this regional office notified BLM's Idaho State Director of all proposed NNL designations in Idaho that involved BLM administered lands. To date, no comments from BLM have been received on the proposed designation of the Great Rift System as an NNL.

We expect that within the next few weeks the Director of HCRS will decide whether or not to nominate the Great Rift NNL proposal to the Secretary of the Interior for designation. For additional information about that proposal, proposed landmark boundaries, or about the NNL program in general please contact Gordon Atkins of this office at FTS 399-4720.

Pages 17-22; Cultural Resources. The DES speaks of 14 prehistoric sites identified within the proposed wilderness area but is unclear relative to conformance with 36 C.F.R. 800 procedures for determining the eligibility of these sites for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The final statement should reflect compliance or intended compliance with these requirements, including those for consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer on the adequacy of surveys and application of National Register eligibility criteria.

Maurice H. Lundy
Regional Director

Enclosure

Response: The part of the Great Rift designated as a National Natural Landmark is outside the boundaries of the proposed wilderness area, and therefore not discussed in the draft EIS. The uniqueness of the Great Rift is noted on pages 16 and 17 of the draft EIS. Regarding compliance with 36 C.F.R. 800 requirements, BLM personnel met with the State Historic Preservation Officer and State Archaeologist in November, 1979. BLM informed them about the proposed action and gave them site record forms for 15 sites, not 14 which was a typographical error. Another 16 sites are located in the Wilderness Study Area, but outside the boundary of the proposed action. The State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist have reviewed the draft EIS.

Recent conversations with the State Archaeologist confirmed that the proposed action should have no adverse effects on cultural resources, and the 15 sites in the wilderness area, are potentially eligible for the National Register on either an individual or group basis. When written comments are received from the Preservation Officer, the district will send a letter of mutual agreement along with a statement of eligibility from the Preservation Officer to the Keeper of the National Register, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 20240 (36 C.F.R. 63.3).

40 Fowler Ave
Kenmore, NY 14217
April 24, 1980

(25)

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Sir

I would like to thank you for sending me a copy of the DEIS on the proposed Great Rift Wilderness. Unfortunately, my copy which came today, April 24th, was a bit late as an accompanying letter indicated I had only until April 14th to comment. Since my request for a copy was mailed March 22nd, I can't understand the delay. I hope my comments, although after your deadline, will be included and addressed in the FEIS.

I support the proposal to designate 341,000 acres of Idaho as the Great Rift Wilderness. I do however, propose that a more indepth study of the impacts of wilderness withdrawal on mineral and geothermal uses be undertaken. If impacts prove to be detrimental, an alternative with areas under lease application etc. removed, should be developed and considered

I question your statement "The attitude of people who favor or oppose wilderness designation would not change" identifying an impact under social attitudes in Table 2-1. Is this to say everyone is stubborn. I think that something better could be done on the sociological impacts of the three alternatives. We're questioning whether people would rather have wilderness, multi-use land, power lines, cattle grazing or what have you in their back yards. What about the idea of outsiders coming into their area? What about the effects on the area's tax base and potential development possibilities. What impact will it have on the people involved? Social Impacts need to be quantified or qualified further.

Thank you for allowing me to comment.

(25)

APR 29 1980

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT
940 LINCOLN ROAD
IDAHO FALLS, ID. 83401

Sincerely
Timothy E. Byrnes

40 Fowler Ave
Kenmore, NY 14217

Response: The draft mineral survey report by the U.S. Bureau of Mines and Geological Survey was used as a reference document for the area's mineral potential. The impacts on minerals resulting from a wilderness designation are analyzed on page 29 of the draft EIS. The subject of attitudes relating to wilderness designation was discussed on pages iii, 11, 25, and 30 of the draft EIS. As discussed on pages 23 and 30, the increased use of the area as a result of wilderness designation would be small. The grazing permittees are the only user group that has an economic dependence on the affected public land, and they would not be impacted by the proposal (pages 25 and 29 of the draft EIS).

STATE OF IDAHO
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
BOISE 83720

DAVID H. LEROY
ATTORNEY GENERAL

TELEPHONE
(208) 384-2400

April 18, 1980

26

Harold E. Isaacson
Acting District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Re: Comments on the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness DEIS

Dear Director Isaacson:

After having reviewed the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness DEIS, we would like to offer the following observations upon the proposal:

1. On March 10, 1979, the State Land Board unanimously approved and forwarded to you a Resolution which expressed our concern about school endowment lands included within the proposed boundaries and the affects that a unilateral wilderness designation by the Department of Interior might have on our constitutional ability to manage and produce income from those lands. The Resolution and cover letter were basically an invitation to the federal government to consult with and cooperate with the State of Idaho in exploring the feasibilities and impacts of this proposal in appropriate detail well before the Draft Environmental Impact Statement stage of direction was reached. To my knowledge we have not had a response to that request for consultation and cooperation despite the federal statutes which require the same.

26

2. On page 12 of the draft EIS you make reference to a request previously submitted to you by the Idaho Department of Lands that if Congress designates the Great Rift as a wilderness area, then state lands included in the boundary "be scheduled for exchange at the earliest opportunity." In your covering letter which accompanied the draft EIS, you state that there are 18,550 acres of state land included in the proposed wilderness area. Because of our past experience in attempting to effect an exchange of land with the federal authorities, we have reconsidered our respective positions on this problem and herewith suggest to you the following: The proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area not be submitted to the Congress unless and until a written agreement between the Idaho Department of Lands and the U. S. Department of Interior has been executed which will designate therein the legal description of both the land to be given to the federal authorities by the State of Idaho and those lands to be exchanged therefor from the federally held public lands within this state.

3. We formally request that this letter be made a part of the record of those hearings to be conducted on March 25 and 26, 1980, and that you acknowledge receipt hereof by return mail.

Sincerely,

David H. Leroy

JOHN V. EVANS
Governor and President of the Land Board

DAVID H. LEROY
Attorney General

PETE T. CENARRUSA
Secretary of State

JERRY LJ EVANS
Superintendent of Public Instruction

JOE R. WILLIAMS
Auditor

Response: The following letter was sent in response to letter #26. Also see response to letter #35.

GRW/1792

Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

May 2, 1980

David H. LeRoy
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
Statehouse
Boise, ID 83720

Dear Mr. LeRoy:

The Idaho Falls District Office has received a copy of the State Land Boards comments on the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness Draft EIS. These comments will become part of the public record and appear in the final EIS, but not as part of the transcript. Only comments from those present at the hearings are included in the hearing transcripts. Public hearing comments and written comments will receive the same consideration in the decision process.

We appreciate your comments on the proposal.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ O'dell A. Frandsen

O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager

Idaho State University
Pocatello, Idaho
83209

Department of Biology

13 May 1980

27

O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Idaho Falls District
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

I am writing in support of the proposal to designate the Proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. I have previously testified in support of the proposal; however, we have just completed the analysis of the results of an intensive field study in a portion of the area, and I think it is important to further emphasize its uniqueness and importance.

Our study examined the distributions of plants and animals on kipukas, isolated islands of vegetation surrounded by lava, primarily in the northeastern portion of the Craters of the Moon lava flow. The area obviously meets the criteria for Wilderness designation; these values are adequately documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. However, the kipukas offer unparalled opportunities for scientific study. These opportunities are a consequence of the wilderness character of the region, and wilderness designation would insure that such values would be preserved. I will discuss a couple of practical examples that serve to emphasize the importance that such undisturbed sites can have for resource management.

The kipukas represent a range of environmental conditions with associated species distributions and plant "communities". Some kipukas are heavily dominated by big sagebrush, others by grasses such as needle-and-thread or bluebunch wheatgrass. Some stands were dominated by rabbitbrush, despite the facts that they were never grazed and there was no evidence of past fires. These differences can be explained by differences in environmental factors, such as aspect or soil texture.

The kipukas serve as important references for grazed areas having similar environmental conditions, but uncertain disturbance histories. For example, SCS personnel have apparently told members of your staff (Richard Maggio, personal communication) that much of the area adjacent to the lava flows would be dominated by Wyoming big sagebrush if it were not for its past grazing history. Our data clearly show that the presence of three-tipped sagebrush on those sites is probably related to differences in soil moisture conditions rather than differential grazing pressures. Without the kipukas to provide baseline data, such conclusions might not have been apparent.

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Rabbitbrush is often considered to be a seral species which will be dominant only on sites that have been disturbed. Our study suggests that there are unique combinations of environmental factors that produce stable communities (that would be considered "climax" in the classical sense) which are dominated by rabbitbrush. It is interesting to note that the non-forest habitat type scheme for southern Idaho, developed by Hironaka and Fosberg, does not include any rabbitbrush habitat types. The presence of such stands on kipukas suggests that such habitat types should be recognized.

These are but two examples of the practical implications that scientific studies in a wilderness area can have. Additional details and information will be found in the final report of our project. Our studies have only scratched the surface of the useful biological research that could be conducted in the area.

I have two minor points concerning the draft EIS. On page 17, Franzen (1979) is cited but no such name appears in the bibliography. On that same page, Anderson and Lovejoy are (by implication) credited with sighting 140 species of non-game birds. We did not inventory birds, and I do not know the basis of the citation.

Your staff is to be complimented on the draft EIS. It is refreshingly concise, but complete. It is well written and attractive. I certainly urge the Bureau of Land Management to submit the proposed action to Congress.

Sincerely,

Jay E. Anderson

Jay E. Anderson
Associate Professor

Response: Franzen completed the Class II Cultural Inventory on the Big Desert, and his name will be added to the references. Concur, the sentence will now real: "About 140 species of non-game birds are found in the lava plain area."

Simplot

MINERALS & CHEMICAL DIVISION
CONDA MINE / P.O. BOX 67 / CONDA, IDAHO 83230

May 22, 1980

28

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District Office
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

I wish to comment on the proposed Great Rift wilderness area. I just finished reading the minerals evaluation report on the Great Rift area and several items concern me. I have listed them below:

1. There are locatable minerals around the edges of the lava flows which indicate there probably are minerals of economic value under the lava flows.
2. The close proximity of the Idaho Batholith indicates a very real potential for mineralization under the lava flows.
3. Creating a wilderness would exclude any exploration for minerals in the future.
4. The proposed Great Rift wilderness area is not what one would consider a wilderness area. The lava fields and desert-like climate are not conducive to a wilderness experience. The Craters of the Moon National Monument provides a large enough area for a wilderness experience if one chooses to explore a lava field. The low visitor day attendance at the Craters of the Moon indicates that people do not use this type of environment for a wilderness adventure.
5. The low visitation rate experienced at the Craters of the Moon National Monument shows that people do not use this area extensively. The additional personnel and equipment expense necessary to maintain another wilderness area are not justified.
6. The marketing of slab lava from the Wapi lava field should be continued.

To summarize my comments: This area does not have wilderness characteristics. The low visitor day attendance at the Craters of the Moon National Monument shows that people do not use this type of environment for a wilderness experience. The potential for locating minerals beneath the lava flows should be explored before creating a wilderness area.

Sincerely,

Willis L. Tarbet

Willis L. Tarbet,
Environmental Geologist
P.O. Box 62
Conda, Idaho 83230

Response: The environmental consequences of designating the area as wilderness and the subsequent effects on the mineral resources has been analyzed in the draft EIS. Pages ii, 5, 12, 13, 23, 29 and 32 discuss mineral resources and the impact on them. The information for the impact analysis was obtained from the mineral report provided by the U. S. Bureau of Mines and Geological Survey. The environmental consequences on the mineral resource by not designating the area as wilderness was also discussed on Page 33 and of the draft EIS. Impact on the marketing of lava rubble are also discussed on pages 29 and 32.

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
610 NORTH JULIA DAVIS DRIVE BOISE, IDAHO 83706

STATE MUSEUM

29

May 14, 1980

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
BLM District Manager
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

Thank you for sending a copy of the draft EIS for the Great Rift proposed wilderness area. Please excuse our delay in responding.

Designating this area wilderness would have no effect on the archaeological and historic sites in the area as long as certain monitoring activities are included in the management plan. Neglect of National Register properties is considered an adverse effect on such properties and requires the federal agency to obtain the comments of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36CFR800). To avoid this, a program of inspecting the archaeological sites in the wilderness area every year or every other year should be included in the management plan for the area. The purpose would be to assess the condition of the sites and to make any recommendations concerning mitigation if any sites are deteriorating. We believe this would solve your obligations under federal regulations.

Sincerely,

Tom Green

Thomas J. Green
State Archaeologist
State Historic Preservation Office

Response: Concur. Page 6, Administration and Management will now read: "If any of the sites within the proposed wilderness boundary are designated as National register sites, they will be inspeced annually. The purpose of the inspection would be to assess the condition of the sites and to make recommendations concerning mitigation if any sites are deteriorating."

Committee for Idaho High Desert
1815 Annett Street
Boise, Idaho 83705
April 25, 1980

30

Mr. O'dell Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls District
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

The Committee for Idaho's High Desert would like to express its support of Wilderness designation for the Great Rift Wilderness Area. This is wild and beautiful country, and exemplifies the values and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude which are the cornerstones of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The BLM is to be commended for its efforts to protect this outstanding area.

The Committee strongly supports the Wilderness Study Alternative proposing a 374,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness. The entire WSA qualifies for wilderness protection under the criteria set by Congress in the 1964 Wilderness Act; we strongly disagree with the concept that the final boundary be determined by ease of management rather than the wilderness attributes of the site. This is not a valid criteria in the federal law, and we believe it should not be a determining factor in drawing the final boundaries of the Great Rift Wilderness. Because there would be no reduction in the grazing AUM's within the 33,400 acre periphery, there would be no adverse ecomonic impacts from protecting this wilderness. The fact that this border area meets the criteria for wilderness but is recommended for exclusion due to possible management difficulties indicates all the more that the 33,400 acres need protection.

At the present time, the recreational use of the Great Rift wilderness is low, and it will probably grow slowly. However, as the population of Idaho and the nation continues to grow and as more and more defacto wilderness areas are destroyed, the opportunities for recreation and solitude provided by the Great Rift will become increasingly important. To exclude areas now because of potential management problems would be short-sighted, and could impair future management options for the wilderness. Existing roads would make a more logical boundary than the edge of the lava flow, and would better protect the lava rock on the perimeter of the flow from clandestine mining operations. We also believe it would be valuable to ensure the protection of grassland areas as part of the Great Rift ecosystem. Again, since protection of this wilderness along the edge of the lava flow would not affect grazing operations, there should be no objection from cattle and sheep operators.

The Committee for Idaho's High Desert urges the BLM to adopt the Wilderness Study Alternative for a 374,000 acre Great Rift Wilderness. We appreciate the opportunity to comment and to offer our support for protection of this outstanding wilderness.

Sincerely,

Bruce R. Boccard

Bruce R. Boccard
Chairman

cc: Senator Frank Church
Governor John Evans
Senator James McClure
Bill Cunningham
Buck Parker
Pat Ford
Jerry Jayne

Response: The alternative referenced in this letter of designating 374,400 acres as wilderness has been analyzed in the draft EIS along with associated impacts. Congress will make the final decision on the total acreage to be included as wilderness. The impacts of existing roads on the WSA alternative have been analyzed on pages 31 and 32 of the draft EIS.

Department of Energy
Idaho Operations Office
550 Second Street
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

31

MAR 25 1980

Mr. O'dell Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

We have reviewed the draft environmental impact statement of the Great Rift Proposed Wilderness. We have no comments to contribute on this document.

We appreciated the opportunity to meet last week with you and your staff to discuss mutual interests.

Sincerely,

R J Beers

R. J. Beers, Assistant Manager
Environmental, Safety and Health
Programs

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STATE OF IDAHO
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
600 SO. WALNUT ST. — P.O. BOX 25
BOISE, IDAHO 83707

32

April 3, 1980

Mr. O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. O'Dell Frandsen:

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game anticipates no problem with wilderness classification for the Great Rift. The area is quite inaccessible and very unlikely to change. Such classification would have little effect on wildlife.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Robert L. Salter
Acting Director

cc: Clearinghouse
00303914

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

State Of Idaho
DIVISION OF BUDGET, POLICY PLANNING AND COORDINATION
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JOHN V. EVANS
Governor

April 7, 1980

Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83720

33

District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Sir or Madame:

The Idaho State Clearinghouse has completed its review on your Draft Environmental Impact Statement: GREAT RIFT PROPOSED WILDERNESS (our SAI# 00303914). We distributed copies of your DEIS to the following agencies for their review and comment.

Idaho Department of Lands
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Region IV Development Association
Southeast Idaho Council of Governments
Idaho Division of Budget, Policy Planning and Coordination, Natural Resources Bureau

The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments supports your Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Region IV Development Association supports the No Action Alternative for the reasons discussed in their attached letter. Also, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game anticipates no problem with wilderness classification for the Great Rift. Please see their attached letter. None of the other agencies listed above returned comments to the Clearinghouse.

Thank you for including us in your review process. We would appreciate receiving a copy of the Final Environmental Impact Statement when it is published. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Holly Holmes or myself at 334-3412.

Sincerely,

Gloria Mabbutt

Gloria Mabbutt, Coordinator
Idaho State Clearinghouse

GM:hh

Enclosures

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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United States Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service

Room 345
304 North 8th Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

May 6, 1980

34

O'dell A. Frandsen
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
940 Lincoln Road
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Dear Mr. Frandsen:

My staff has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area in the Big Desert Planning Area in southeastern Idaho and have no objection to a wilderness designation for the area described in this statement.

Soils, vegetation and livestock grazing are the main fields mentioned in the draft in which the SCS has expertise. The proposals made concerning these fields do not differ significantly from any the SCS would make.

We wish to thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this draft environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,

Amos I. Garrison, Jr.
State Conservationist

The Soil Conservation Service is an agency of the Department of Agriculture

SCS-AS-1
10-79

STATE OF IDAHO

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS
STATEHOUSE, BOISE, IDAHO 83720
GORDON C. TROMBLEY
DIRECTOR

STATE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS
JOHN V. EVANS
GOVERNOR AND PRESIDENT
PETE T. CENARRUSA
SECRETARY OF STATE
DAVID H. LEROY
ATTORNEY GENERAL
JOE R. WILLIAMS
STATE AUDITOR
JERRY L. EVANS
SUPT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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June 13, 1980

STATE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
BLM - IDAHO
JUN 16 1980
910 SD
ASD
912 PAS
920 P&CS
930 RES
940 TS
950 MS
951 ADM
DRIES! YOU
1-6 Acquisition Records

Mr. Robert O. Buffington
Idaho State Director
Bureau of Land Management
Room 334, Federal Building
550 West Fort Street
Boise, Idaho 83724

Dear Mr. Buffington:

By unanimous vote, the State Board of Land Commissi[illegible] adopted as formal policy the following information which submitted to you in letter form.

1. On March 10, 1979, the State Land Board unanimously approved and forwarded to you a Resolution which expressed our concern about school endowment lands included within the proposed boundaries and the effects that a unilateral wilderness designation by the Department of Interior might have on our constitutional ability to manage and produce income from those lands. The Resolution and cover letter were basically an invitation to the federal government to consult with and cooperate with the State of Idaho in exploring the feasibilities and impacts of this proposal in appropriate detail well before the Draft Environmental Impact Statement stage of direction was reached. To our knowledge we have not had a response to that request for consultation and cooperation despite the federal statutes which require the same.

2. On page 12 of the draft EIS you make reference to a request previously submitted to you by the Idaho Department of Lands that if Congress designates the Great Rift as a wilderness area, then state lands included in the boundary "be scheduled for exchange at the earliest opportunity." In your covering letter which accompanied the draft EIS, you state that there are 18,550 acres of

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

35

state land included in the proposed wilderness area. Because of our past experience in attempting to affect an exchange of land with the federal authorities, we have reconsidered our respective positions on this problem and herewith suggest to you the following: The proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area not be submitted to the Congress unless and until a written agreement between the Idaho Department of Lands and the U.S. Department of Interior has been executed which will designate therein the legal description of both the land to be given to the federal authorities by the State of Idaho and those lands to be exchanged therefor from the federally held public lands within this state.

3. We formally request that this letter be made a part of the record of those hearings and that you acknowledge receipt hereof by return mail.

Sincerely,

Jack E Gallett

For GORDON C. TROMBLEY,
Director

GCT/cg
cc: Mr. O'Dell A. Frandsen

Response: The following letter was sent in response to letter #35.

(Retyped from xeroxed copy for reproduction clarity)

8500 (910)

Idaho State Office
Federal Building
550 W. Fort Street
P.O. Box 042
Boise, Idaho 83724

June 24, 1980

Mr. Gordon C. Trombley, Director
State of Idaho
Department of Lands
Statehouse
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Mr. Trombley:

We have received your letter of June 13, 1980 and are somewhat disappointed by its implications.

POINT # 1 - You indicated we have not responded to requests for consultation and cooperation prior to the Great Rift Draft EIS. We did in fact, initiate such consultation and cooperation when we first considered the Great Rift for Primitive designation (1975-1976). We listed specific State sections involved in that proposal and sent that list to the Department of Lands. Public meetings were held, and exchanges were proposed.

You refer to the Land Board Resolution of March 10, 1979, which states that *wilderness designation could restrict the income producing ability of State* Lands by blocking access. We were apprised of this policy on March 20, 1979, (letter to State Director Mathews from you), April 17, 1979, (letter from Area Supervisor L. S. Benedick to the Idaho Falls District), and June 15, 1979 (letter from Area Supervisor H. K. Kestie to Idaho Falls District). The letters from Benedick and Kestie also stated that, "If an equitable solution cannot be agreed to within three years of the date of the Wilderness Classification, the subject State Lands may be subject to sale at public auction."

An early and equitable exchange would be as much to our advantage as to yours. If a wilderness designation were to materialize, we would prefer to consummate an exchange in less than three years if possible.

Second, the State Lands within the Great Rift Proposal are not now nor have they been in the past used for any income producing purpose (with the possible exception of some minimal livestock grazing on the extreme periphery of the unit). Livestock grazing is, of course, considered a compatible use with wilderness designation and would therefore not be affected.

Third, we cannot block access to State Lands and thereby impair their income producing abilities (State of Utah vs. Andrus, C-79-0037 and United States vs. Cotter Corp., C-79-0307). We can only regulate method and route to prevent impairment of wilderness characteristics.

In summary, cooperation and consultation with your Department have been and will continue to be integral elements of our wilderness process. Our policy has been to make such efforts at the field level where they can usually be most effective. No steps have been or will be taken to limit the income producing potential of the State Lands involved.

POINT # 2 - On May 23, 1979, we held a scoping workshop on the Great Rift to identify significant issues that should be addressed in the EIS. Benedick participated in that workshop and followed up with a letter dated May 25, 1979, which spelled out several specific problems and proposals. Besides Benedick's concerns as the Land Department representative, many other workshop participants identified State Land exchange as a significant issue. Benedick's involvement, the Land Department letter, concerns of the general public, and our own concern over consolidated land status in the event of wilderness designation prompted us to include the paragraph on State Land (p. 12) in the Draft EIS. You will also note that in the Draft EIS Summary, page iv, State Lands are listed as the key remaining issue to be resolved pending designation, which certainly emphasizes the priority we place on that issue. We have, in fact, already had some preliminary correspondence and discussion at the field level regarding a potential exchange.

On November 30, 1979 we sent Benedick a letter and a map identifying State Lands within the Great Rift proposed boundary. W. J. Michell of your Department responded to that letter pointing our a few discrepancies between our information and yours. As a result, we amended some of the acreage figures in the Draft EIS before it went to print.

We received no formal comments from your Department during the comment period on the Draft EIS. However, we did receive a letter from the State Land Board dated April 18, 1980 which became part of the public record and will be printed in the final EIS. We responded to that letter on May 2, 1980.

In addition to the Great Rift scoping workshop and Draft EIS public comment period, we have held many other meetings and open houses on the various steps in our wilderness process. Department of Lands is always included in our notices for such meetings, and any specific comments received from the Department are carefully considered in developing our recommendations. Also, our Area Manager and Realty Specialist at Idaho Falls have met with representatives of your Area Office on several occasions to discuss a potential exchange.

You suggest a written agreement be consummated regarding a possible exchange. We agree, but we feel that at this point in the process, such an agreement should be quite general. Given the complexity of the exchange process and resultant costs coupled with the uncertainty of an eventual wilderness designation, the investment of substantial time or money in an exchange proposal is not yet realistic or desirable. However, we have made some preliminary efforts at identifying tentative selected and offered lands as well as "ball park" value estimates. Some of these preliminary efforts were discussed with three of the Governor's aides and a representative from the Attorney General's

office on May 2, 1980. We concur wholeheartedly with your recommendation for a written agreement if its purpose would be to formalize these efforts.

Because a formal exchange proposal would be premature and because we are working under a Congressionally mandated deadline (FLPMA established a July 1, 1980, reporting date for areas such as the Great Rift), postponing our report to the President is not an option. You request that we postpone submission to Congress pending such a written agreement, but BLM makes no such submission to Congress. The President will submit his recommendation to Congress, but we have no indication of when he will do so or what he will recommend. Since any exchange must be based on land values prior to wilderness desingation, your Department would not necessarily gain anything by requesting further delays.

POINT # 3 - Your June 13, 1980 letter cannot be made part of the public hearing record because the deadline was May 27, 1980. However, your letter of April 18, 1980 (which was almost exactly the same as the June 13 letter) was incorporated as part of that hearing process.

In conclusion, we feel that we have been consulting and coordinating with your Department on the Great Rift for several years now. We hope these efforts will be effective, and we look forward to any suggestions you might have for improving our working relationship or negotiation process.

We appreciate your comments and hope you will let us know if we can be of further help.

Sincerely,

/S/ Robert O. Buffington

Robert O. Buffington
State Director

cc: Idaho Falls
WO (430)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Name	Representing	Oral Testimony	Response Prepared
Jay Anderson	Self	X	
Pat O'Donnell	Self	X	X
Elwood M. Rich	Rich Livestock Company	X	
Ned Horner	Minidoka Planning and Zoning Board	X	
Lyle Barton	Minidoka County Commissioners	X	
Pete Cole	Portneuf Valley Audubon Society	X	
John Remsbery	Self	X	
G. F. Irwin	Self	X	
Henry Etcheverry	Minidoka Grazing Association	X	
William P. Rogers	Idaho Conservation League	X	
Gerald A. Jayne	Self	X	X
Ralph Maughan	Sierra Club, Northern Rockies Chapter	X	X
Cyril Slansky	Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs	X	X
Robert J. Hentges	National Park Service, Craters of the Moon National Monument	X	
Tom Stroschein	Self		
Bill Schroeder	Idaho Cattlemen's Association	X	

Gerald Jayne

Comment: I'd like to make a couple of recommendations for improvement of the EIS: I think more emphasis should be given to the wildlife. Many EISs list species; I don't know if that's necessary. It's a suggestion.

Response: The general wildlife species occuring within the wilderness boundary are described on page 17 of the draft EIS. Also see response to letter #12. There is a list of species within the area in the Idaho Falls District Office.

Comment: I definitely would think that on page 11, where the table lists the comparative analysis of the impacts of the alternatives, wildlife should be listed. It isn't even listed there.

Response: See response to letter #12.

Comment: On page ii in the front under the Impact Summary, under the Proposed Action in the center of the page it says: "The primary benefit of wilderness designation would be to preserve wilderness characteristics...and provide an opportunity for solitude..." and then it says: "Secondary benefits associated with the Proposed Action would be to preserve a total ecosystem, including unique geologic, soil, and vegetative inter-relationships." There's no word "wildlife" in there, and obviously wildlife is part of the ecosystem. It should be in there.

Response: See response to letter #12.

Comment: I also question the use of the term "secondary benefits." I realize if you look at a strict interpretation of the Wilderness Act, that's probably true, but I think more and more people are coming to realize that wildlife is a primary benefit of wilderness. I would at least rank it on an equal par with recreation.

Response: A strict interpretation of the Wilderness Act was used in the draft EIS. This interpretation considers wildlife protection or enhancement a "secondary benefit."

Comment: On the very first page--well, the second page, really, where it lists "Responsible Agencies," it lists two alternatives that were considered, and under the "No Action Alternative," it says: Continue the administration of the grassland kipuka as a natural area and continue managing the Craters of the Moon and Wapi lava flows for multiple use." I think the impression may be given there that wilderness is not multiple use when it is in fact multiple use for recreation and wildlife.

Response: Concur. The sentence will now read: "...for multiple use without a wilderness designation.

Comment: On page ii under one of the "Major Areas of Controversy," which keeps popping up is the question of the need for wilderness. The figure of 3.9 million acres under presidential recommendation for wilderness from RARE II is a little high. It is about 3.4 million. That paragraph might be rewritten to clarify the difference between established, designated wilderness with a capital "W", and defacto wilderness with a small "w".

Response: The sentence on page iii will be changed to read: "...3.4 million acres under presidential recommendation..." Concerning the use of the word "wilderness," the sentence intends to place equal emphasis on both words.

Ralph Maughn
Sierra Club, Northern Rockies Chapter

Comment: The Environmental Impact Statement indicates there will be no impact on the grazing; however, I think a perception remains among many. I suggest in the final statement you include a map of the grazing allotments and the developed livestock facilities such as watering troughs, salting areas, and so forth so people can see for themselves what the relationship is of the existing grazing activities to the wilderness proposal.

Response: In order to keep the document short and consise, resources that are not impacted were not discussed in detail.

Comments: Finally, I'd like to see a little more discussion on how the exchange of approximately 18,000 acres of state lands which are in the proposed wilderness area, how that will take place. How the state will - and the Federal Government, both -- will receive a fair value for their lands, and of course not more than a fair value.

Response: Correspondence has already occured between the State of Idaho and the BLM on the exchange of State lands. Since this is a proposed action, it would be premature to work out the details on an exchange. Details of the exchange will not be worked out unless Congress designates the area wilderness.

Cyril Slansky
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs

Comment: Now, let me make a few specific comments: On page 23, the tone of a future use of wilderness in terms of man-years is very pessimistic. I think too pessimistic.

Response: The only data base available for visitor use on the lava fields was that from Craters of the Moon National Monument. This data is summarized on page 23 of the draft EIS, and it indicates no "appreciable increase in use due to wilderness classification."

Comment: On pages 22 and 32 we have reference to the impact of the proposed wilderness status on grazing. I think this area is incompletely described. This is one of the places where an uninitiated person who has never been out there who has little feeling for cattle and sheep might conclude some queer things. The 6,000 acres that the BLM option and the nine--with its 980 animal unit months and the 60 ranchers is similar to the WSA Alternative of 38,500 acres for 4,807 of animal unit months for about 105 ranchers.

Now, what is the impact of having this land as part of the wilderness? Well, I think we should look at the overall picture. Remember this is only part of a number of allotments that circumnavigate the whole area. I am sad to say I don't have the complete data, but I was able to get an area that is adjacent to the wilderness from the Idaho Falls District side, and this amounts to 371,000 acres.

Now, if you look at the map, the Idaho Falls District is approximately equal in area and nature to the Shoshone District, and you can almost double this, and you end up with something like 700,000 acres of lands that is being used by permittees.

Now, I don't know exactly how many this amounts to in terms of ranchers, but I can tell you that the 6,000 acres of the BLM Proposal is about .85 percent of this overall area that's being grazed, and if you went to the other Proposal, it's 38,000 acres additional. It would amount to something like five and a half years.

Now, I didn't have the data for the animal unit months. It might be a more valid comparison, but -- so you double or triple these figures I just gave you, it's still a pretty small factor, a fraction of the area that is used in total.

I don't think it's fair to ignore this overall picture. I'm not criticizing the general tenor of the report. I'm simply pointing out when it comes to the impact, that we have to see a little more data.

Response: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FPLMA) states the following in relation to livestock grazing in wilderness areas: "(c) During the period of review of such areas and until Congress has determined otherwise, the Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this act and other applicable law in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness, subject, however, to the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was being conducted on the date of approval of this Act..." Grazing uses are allowed to continue on 6,000 acres under the proposed action and on 32,500 acres under the Wilderness Study Area alternative would not affect the wilderness characteristics of the area. Although the acreage grazed is small, it still represents use by some ranchers who depend on public lands for part of their income. Under FLPMA this use will continue.

Comment: The predator control on page 22 might have been expanded a bit. If the Fish and Wildlife would have revealed from their data how many coyotes are killed in this interface and so on, I think this would be interesting information when it comes to discussing wildlife.

Response: As discussed on page 12 of the draft EIS, predator control would continue. Also, see response to Letter #17.

Comments: Finally, I think the uniqueness of this area should have been discussed in more detail.

Response: The area's unique characteristics, such as geologic formations and relic vegetation areas, have been described in Chapter III, Affected Environment. However, the major reason for describing this area is for wilderness characteristics and naturalness from man's imprint.

Pat O'Donnell

Comment: Who is going to get the benefit out of this if it's closed out of that (motorized vehicles) -- some of the best sage hen country. (Note: if designated wilderness, the area would be closed to motorized vehicles.

Response: The proposed wilderness boundary is the lava edges, except in a few cases, and does not include any significant sage-hen habitat.

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APPENDIX I

MINERAL LEASES AND CLAIMS IN RELATION TO THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (P.L. 94-579) AND THE WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964 (P.L. 88-577)

Until December 31, 1983, the United States mining laws and all laws pertaining to mineral leasing apply to wildernesses to the same extent as they applied to the area prior to its classification.

Effective January 1, 1984, subject to existing rights, the minerals in land designated as wilderness are withdrawn from all forms of appropriations under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing.

The Wilderness Act recognizes the rights of minerals claimant under existing mining laws and allows for prospecting and mining in wildernesses while still recognizing the wilderness resource.

The authority to permit prospecting or mining for minerals not subject to location and entry within a wilderness area is discretionary with the Secretary of the Interior. Authority to give a favorable recommendation to lease in wilderness is reserved to the Secretary of Interior. The Secretary will not normally recommend mineral leases or permits in wildernesses or primitive areas unless directional drilling or other methods can be used which will avoid any invasion of the surface.

SECTION 603(c) FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (P.L. 94-579)

During the period of review of such area and until Congress has determined otherwise, the Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this Act and other applicable law in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness, subject, however, to the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was being conducted on the date of approval of this Act: **Provided**, That, in managing the public lands the Secretary shall by regulation or otherwise take any action required to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands and their resources or to afford environmental protection. Unless previously withdrawn from appropriation under the mining laws, such lands shall continue to be subject to such appropriation during the period of review unless withdrawn by the Secretary under the procdures of section 204 of this Act for reasons other than preservation of their wilderness character. Once an area has been designated for preservation as wilderness, the provisions of the Wilderness Act which

apply to national forest wilderness areas shall apply with respect to the administration and use of such designated area, including mineral surveys required by section 4(d) (2) of the Wilderness Act, and mineral development, access exchange of lands, and ingress and egress for mining claimants and occupants.

SECTION 4(d) (2) OF THE
WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964
(P.L. 88-577)

Nothing in this Act shall prevent within national forest wilderness areas any activity, including prospecting, for the purpose of gathering information about mineral or other resources, if such activity is carried on in a manner compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment. Furthermore, in accordance with such program as the Secretary of Agriculture, such areas shall be surveyed on a planned, recurring basis consistent with the concept of wilderness preservation by the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines to determine the mineral values, if any, available to the public and submitted to the President and Congress.

Mineral leases, claims, etc. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act, until midnight December 31, 1983, the United States mining laws and all laws pertaining to mineral leasing shall, to the same extent as applicable prior to the effective date of this Act, extend to those national forest lands designated by this Act as "wilderness areas"; subject, however, to such reasonable regulations governing ingress and egress as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture consistent with the use of the land for mineral location and development and exploration, drilling, and production, and use of land for transmission lines, waterlines, telephone lines, or facilities necessary in exploring, drilling, producing, mining, and processing operations, including where essential the use of mechanized ground or air equipment and restoration as near as practicable of the surface of the land disturbed in performing prospecting, location, and, in oil and gas leasing, discovery work, exploration, drilling, and production, as soon as they have served their purpose. Mining locations lying within the boundaries of said wilderness areas shall be held and used solely for mining or processing operations and uses reasonably incident thereto; and hereafter, subject to valid existing rights, all patents issued under the mining laws of the United States affecting national forest lands designated by this Act as wilderness areas shall convey title to the mineral deposits within the claim, together with the right to cut and use so much of the mature timber therefrom as may be needed in the extraction, removal, and beneficiation of the mineral deposits, if the timber is not otherwise reasonably available, and if the timber is cut under sound principles of forest management as defined by the national forest rules and regulations, but each such patent shall reserve to the United States all title in or to the surface of the lands and products thereof, and no use of the surface of

the claim or the resources therefrom not reasonably required for carrying on mining or prospecting shall be allowed except as otherwise expressly provided in this Act: Provided , That, unless hereafter specifically authorized, no patent within wilderness areas designated by this Act shall issue after December 31, 1983, except for the valid claims existing on or before December 31, 1983. Mining claims located after the effective date of this Act within the boundaries of wilderness areas designated by this Act shall create no rights in excess of those rights which may be patented under the provisions of this subsection. Mineral leases, permits, and licenses covering lands within national forest wilderness areas designated by this Act shall contain such reasonable stipulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture for the protection of the wilderness character of the land consistent with the use of the land for the purpose for which they are leased, permitted, or licensed. Subject to valid rights then existing, effective January 1, 1984, the minerals in lands designated by this Act as wilderness areas are withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing and all amendments thereto.

APPENDIX 2

THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (P.L. 94-579)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT WILDERNESS STUDY

Within fifteen years after the date of approval of this Act, the Secretary shall review those roadless areas of five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands, identified during the inventory required by section 201(a) of this Act as having wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (78 Stat. 890; 16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and shall from time to time report to the President his recommendation as to the suitability or nonsuitability of each such area or island for preservation as wilderness: Provided , That prior to any recommendations for the designation of an area as wilderness the Secretary shall cause mineral surveys to be conducted by the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines to determine the mineral values, if any, that may be present in such areas: Provided further , That the Secretary shall report to the President by July 1, 1980, his recommendations on those areas which the Secretary has prior to November 1, 1975, formally identified as natural or primitive areas. The review required by this subsection shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure specified in section 3(d) of the Wilderness Act.

GLOSSARY

Aa - a lava flow with a rough clinkery or loose blocky surface. The rock contains deflated and stretched vesicles. Hawaiian word for "hard on the feet."

Air Quality Classes - classes established by the Environmental Protection Agency that define the amount of pollution considered significant within an area. Class I applies to areas where almost any change in air quality would be considered significant; Class II applies to areas where the deterioration normally accompanying moderate well-controlled growth would be considered insignificant; and Class III applies to areas where deterioration up to the national standards would be considered insignificant.

Animal Unit Month (AUM) - the amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or five sheep for a period of 1 month.

Ash - sand- or dust-size volcanic ejected matter.

Basalt - a dark lava rich in iron and magnesium and comparatively poor in silicon; the common lava in the Craters of the Moon and Wapi flows.

Blue Dragon Lava - lava with a sky-blue to cobalt-blue surface caused by electron exchanges in titanium and iron atoms.

Bombs - volcanic ejecta molten when thrown out and having particular forms, such as ribbon, bread-crust, spindle, etc.

Cinder Cone - a mound built by small ejecta around a vent, with most of the fragments larger than 1/2-inch across, very vesicular, and mostly loose.

Climax Vegetation - the final vegetative community that emerges after a series of successive vegetational stages. The climax community perpetuates itself indefinitely unless disturbed by outside forces.

Crater - a depression at a volcanic vent.

Cultural Resources - those fragile and nonrenewable remains of human activities, occupations and endeavors as reflected in sites, buildings, structures, or objects, including works of art, architecture and engineering. Cultural resources are commonly discussed as prehistoric and historic values, but each period represents a part of the full continuum of cultural values from the earliest to the most recent.

Driblet Spire - a hornito which is more vertical in nature, with a rise to run ratio approaching 1:1 or steeper. Formed by the accretion of lava globs as they are projected from gas vents or blowholes and fall on one spot.

Ecosystem - complex self-sustaining natural system which includes living and non-living components of the environment and the interactions that bind them together. Its functioning involves the circulation of matter and energy between organisms and their environment.

Endangered Species - a species of fish, wildlife or plants found by the Secretary of Interior to be threatened with extinction because its habitat is threatened with destruction, drastic modification or severe curtailment, or because of over-exploitation, disease, predation or other factors. Its survival requires assistance.

Fault - a fracture in the earth's crust along which movement has occurred.

Hornito - a low oven-shaped mound of lava with a rise to run ratio from 1:5 to 1:3. Formed by the accretion of lava globs as they are issued from gas vents or blowholes.

Kipuka - an island of old lava surrounded, but not covered by, a lava flow. It can be higher or lower than the lava flow. Hawaiian word for "window."

Obsidian - volcanic glass formed by lava chilling too quickly to crystallize. Tachylyte is the technical name of basaltic glass.

Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) - any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland or other terrain.

Pahoehoe - lava with a smooth or ropey surface spread chiefly through tubes and characterized by round vesicles. Hawaiian word for "ropey coils."

Pressure Ridges - dome like ridges which are usually cracked open at the top throughout their length, formed by lateral pressure in the surface of a lava flow.

Public Land - formal name for lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

Rift - a lengthy fissure in the earth's crust.

Scoping Session - an early and open public process for determining the scope of the issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.

Sensitive Species - animals classified by the BLM and Idaho Fish and Game Department are those: 1) not yet officially listed but which are undergoing a status review or are proposed for listing, 2) whose populations are consistently small and widely dispersed, or whose ranges are restricted to a few localities, and 3) whose numbers are declining so rapidly that official listing may become necessary as a conservation measure.

Shield Volcano - a broad, fairly flat lava cone having the shape of a shield. An example is the Pillar Butte area of the Wapi flow.

Site - (archaeological) a physical location where human activities or events occurred.

Spatter Cone - a cone built by spatter around a vent. The clots stuck together when they fell.

Succession - the orderly process by which plant communities develop toward the climax plant association.

Threatened Species - any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and which has been designated in the Federal Register by the Secretary of Interior as a threatened species.

Tree Mold - a hole in a lava flow caused by lava making a cast of a tree trunk.

Tube - a lava cavern through which pahoehoe lava flowed.

Wilderness Study Area - an area of Public Land which has undergone BLM's initial and intensive wilderness inventories, including public involvement, and has been determined to have wilderness characteristics and to warrant further wilderness study.

Wilderness Suitability - BLM's judgment of the suitability of a wilderness study area to be managed as wilderness. The judgment process includes a conflict analysis with other resource values.

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