

THE BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Dennis Wright, Chairman

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Sarah Michael, Vice Chair

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Mary Ann Mix, Commissioner

March 13, 2003

Craters of the Moon National Monument
Planning Team
BLM, Shoshone Field Office
P O Box 2-B
Shoshone, ID 83352

RE: County Government Comment on Alternative Concepts

Our first comments refer to your Purpose statements, which were well crafted, and we hope are utilized as standards to decide where you go from this point forward. In our view, it is very important to not forget to 'maintain the wilderness character of the Craters, protect the kipukas, and continue the historic and traditional human relationships that have existed for generations'. We believe the traditional relationships like hunting and grazing can be accommodated within managed parameters. Most probably the biggest threat to kipukas would come from vehicles and grazing, both of which could be mitigated by management constraints. By definition, any historical and traditional connection to a proposed use ought to be measured by a time factor. Certainly a use established two or three years ago wouldn't fit these standards.

Secondly, the Draft Goals, if utilized by the team in balancing your efforts, should always focus on the compatibility of competing uses. It isn't sensible to build conflict into the plan at any stage. In addition, team members hopefully will not lose sight of the second goal, which mentions the 'remarkable opportunities for solitude'. If certain noisy uses are allowed, they should be in segregated areas so as not to violate this goal.

While all of the alternatives pose their unique problems, our Board would at this time, support the approximate ideas represented by A and C. We have no problems with accessing the King's Bowl area on the south but would prefer to have it an in-and-out experience, as opposed to the circular pattern in Draft D and we definitely oppose the improved road connection from Arco to Minidoka that is proposed through Blaine County by alternative B. We realize there is pressure from the two

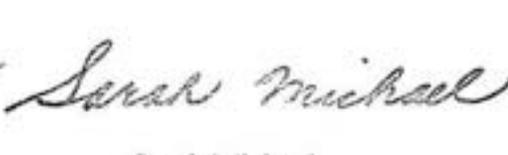
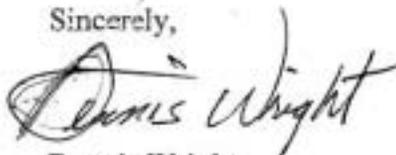
counties to our south to enhance their economies through major travel from Arco to Rupert. However, we think this idea is misguided and wouldn't amount to near the economic benefit that the proponents do. Arco especially, has experience from visitors going through their town and hasn't realized measurable improvements to their area from the approximately 195,000 annual visitors to the present visitor center. Without a doubt, an improved road would bring more traffic, demand more maintenance dollars, and put many more people at peril who may chose to leave the road and not understand the harsh environment they are dealing with. Blaine County does not care to accept any more maintenance responsibilities in that area and may consider abandoning the 4 miles we presently maintain on the Arco-Minidoka road. Road issues on the Carey-Kamama Rd. will have to be addressed also from a maintenance viewpoint. Once again, increased traffic will necessitate increased grading and dust control. These increases to our marginal costs will have to be borne by someone other than Blaine County.

The increased passage zone north of Highway 93 near the visitor's center in Alternative A in an improvement we could support. It would tend to keep visitors near the best road and out of trouble in other areas.

Overall, we urge the planning team to not forget the real purpose behind every Monument creation. That is to protect the area's natural features and vitality from degradation and to preserve it as a legacy to pass on to future generations. Certainly you want to encourage visitors and enjoyment from the general public while at the same time, minimizing the effect of that visitation on the fragile features of the area. Recreational pursuits by certain types of ORV's do not, in our opinion, fit the purpose statements outlined earlier. It should be recognized that there are thousands of acres of BLM lands contiguous to the monument boundaries that are already accessible to these uses. The monument itself should not necessarily accommodate the exact same uses as other desert lands under BLM jurisdiction. Otherwise one needs to ask the question: Why was it set apart as a monument in the first place? Please don't forget, this doesn't prevent people from visiting; it only limits the mode of transportation.

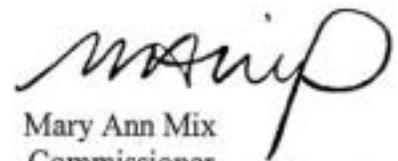
This Board looks forward to more input as your team continues to refine the management plan. We also recognize the enormity of your task and wish you much success as you strive to reach your ultimate objective. Thank you for the opportunity to respond at this time.

Sincerely,



Dennis Wright
Chairman

Sarah Michael
Vice-Chair



Mary Ann Mix
Commissioner





CITY OF CAREY, IDAHO

PO Box 6, Carey, Idaho 83320
208-823-4045

Mayor-Richard Baird: Council President-Robert Simpson: Council- Daniel Parke, Randy Patterson, Craig Adamson

SHOSHONE OFFICE

MAR 26 2003

RECEIVED

March 24, 2003

Mr. Jim Morris, Superintendent
Craters of the Moon National Monument

Mr. Rick Vander Voet
Bureau of Land Management

Dear Jim and Rick,

I want to first let you know how much I appreciate the role that both of you have related to planning for the future of the Craters of the Moon National Monument. The right people at the right time certainly comes to mind. Thank you again for taking the time to give the presentation to the City Council.

In the last regular City Council meeting, the presentation was briefly discussed again. The Council unanimously feels that now is the appropriate time for individual comment and that it would not be appropriate for them to try and develop a City opinion without a significant public process. They therefore instructed me to thank both of you for the presentation and let you know that we want to be a full partner completely through this process and that a more appropriate time will present itself for City comment in the future.

Thank you again and if you have questions, please contact me at 208-788-9003.

Richard Baird, Mayor



CITY OF CAREY, IDAHO
PO Box 6, Carey, Idaho 83320
208-823-4045

Mayor-Richard Baird; Council President-Robert Simpson; Council-Daniel Parke, Randy Patterson, Craig Adamson

June 25, 2002

RECEIVED
JUN 25 2002
SHOSHONE FIELD OFFICE

Craters of the Moon National Monument Planning Team
Bureau of Land Management – Shoshone Field Office
P.O. Box 2B
Shoshone, ID 83352

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Carey City Council, I have been authorized to provide the following comments.

The residents of the City of Carey were not part of the decision making process to expand the Monument. It was a decision that was made primarily at the national level. The Monument will certainly impact the Carey Valley sometime in the future. The extent of impact cannot be determined or even forecasted because appropriate plans and studies related to the monument have not been completed. The City Council, therefore, will insist that local residents not shoulder impact to this community or to the Carey Valley alone. Federal funds should be made available on a timely basis to mitigate impacts that are a direct or indirect result of the new Monument Management Plan. In fact, mitigation measures should be a part of the plan itself.

Carey Valley residents are concerned that the future will bring access restrictions. The area should remain accessible to as many people, by as many different methods as possible. The plan should recognize statistics relating to the baby boomer generation and ensure that our most vulnerable and experienced can enjoy the monument as they could before the expansion.

The area should remain multi-use. Grazing, hunting, four wheeling and as many other activities as possible, should be addressed and made a part of the plan. The BLM was able to manage the area for years and ensure that it essentially remained unchanged. The BLM was continuously under pressure from many permittees to grant more grazing rights, but their management was working. It can remain multi-use and remain unchanged.

The community believes that development inside the Monument is not appropriate. Facilities like campgrounds and other services should be provided outside of the Monument and should not be allowed to change what the expansion designation sought to protect. Roads should be maintained, not improved.

In this era of electronic marvels, the form letter comment sheet or idea has been perfected. Please insure that appropriate weight is placed on particular comments. Organized groups have the ability to overwhelm the comment process with comments that mean nothing more than the push of a button.

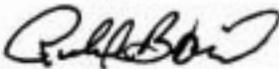


The City of Carey desires to work with the BLM and National Park Service to ensure that the Plan not only protects, but also provides as much opportunity to as many as possible. We are also proud to be considered the western gate/entry to the Monument.

Please place the City of Carey on the mailing list. We would like ten hard copies of the Draft Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and to participate in the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard R. Baird".

Richard R. Baird
Mayor, City of Carey

RESOLUTION

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve

Bureau of Land Management

Upper Snake River District Resource Advisory Council

September 11, 2003

The Upper Snake River District Resource Advisory Council has been involved in the process of developing management strategies for the recent expansion of the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve. Since the Executive Proclamation #7373 was announced, the Upper Snake River RAC has received briefings and updates on the expansion process and the development of new management plans. The USRDRAC set up a subcommittee to offer help to the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service as they planned for the future of the monument. The subcommittee sent representatives to attend various interdisciplinary team meetings of the agencies involved. RAC members also attended public scoping meetings, open houses and alternative concepts workshops. The Upper Snake River RAC was represented at the Choosing By Advantage workshop where the various alternatives were evaluated and voted upon.

BE IT RESOLVED the Upper Snake River Resource Advisory Council supports the efforts of the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service thus far in the management planning process of Craters of the Moon. It was observed that the agencies use a well thought-out process to sort through natural resource information and public comment. The process seemed to be a logical method to gather public comment and create management alternatives. The selection of a preferred alternative was done in a thoughtful and reasonable way.

The USRDRAC lends its support to the preferred alternative, Alternative D, and encourages the agencies to continue developing management strategies that enhance the landscape from the perspective of Alternative D.

The RAC appreciates the opportunity to provide input, and is committed to continue to help at any stage of development and implementation of management plans.

Signed:

