D162

RECEIVED
AUG 0 6 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

IDAHO FISH & GAME
MAGIC VALLEY REGION
868 East Main Street
P.O. Box 428
Jerome, Idaho 83338-0428

Dirk Kempthorne / Governor
Steven M. Huffaker / Director

August 5, 2004

Craters of the Moon National Monument
Planning Team
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 2-B
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352-1522

Dear Planning Team,

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) has reviewed the Draft Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve (Monument). The Monument encompasses 739,682 acres of public land located on the Snake River Plain of southern Idaho. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

In general, the IDFG supports the management direction outlined in the DEIS. The preferred alternative calls for aggressive restoration efforts on degraded sagebrush-steppe communities. As the document correctly states, there has been substantial loss and degradation of these communities throughout southern Idaho and we believe the restoration efforts promulgated under the preferred alternative will significantly improve the condition of the targeted areas. In addition, the restoration efforts will provide for large-scale testing of restoration methods, which will allow evaluation of the most effective methods/techniques to use under a variety of circumstances. This in turn will improve the efficacy of future restoration efforts on degraded sage-steppe habitats throughout southern Idaho.

We are however, concerned regarding the status of livestock grazing management within the Monument and the lack of analysis in the DEIS. The Laidlaw Park portion of the Monument maintains one of the last remaining large, contiguous blocks of low elevation sagebrush habitat in the area administered by the BLM's Shoshone Field Office. This area provides critical breeding, brood rearing, and winter habitat for sage-grouse and other sagebrush dependent wildlife. In addition, the allotment provides important seasonal habitat for pronghorn and elk and important transition range for migrating mule deer. Improper grazing management can constitute a significant impact to vegetation resources and subsequent wildlife habitat. Alteration of plant community structure, species diversity, and plant abundance can impact the availability of food and cover resources for wildlife. In addition, grazing livestock and associated operations can displace wildlife from seasonally important habitats including breeding and nesting habitat and winter range. We recognize grazing has historically occurred within the Monument expansion since post settlement by pioneers. Further, we acknowledge the administrative rationale to address grazing management on the Monument through the BLM's

Standards and Guidelines process. However, analysis relative to impacts of livestock grazing on wildlife resources and other features common to a visitor's expectation should be reviewed in this EIS. In technical correspondence to BLM regarding the standards and guidelines assessment of the Laidlaw Park Allotment, we identified several wildlife related issues and provided management recommendations to address the needs of wildlife in the allotment (see attached). The assessment noted a general lack of species and structural diversity (forbs and large, perennial bunchgrasses) throughout the Laidlaw Park Allotment coupled with a widespread distribution and abundance of cheatgrass. To our knowledge, only one management guideline identified by the IDFG was incorporated in the final decision – prohibiting sheep bedding on active sage-grouse leks during the breeding season. As demonstrated in the assessment, livestock grazing has had a significant impact on vegetation resources within the Monument – suggesting a thorough analysis of impacts is warranted in the EIS. The new designation as a Monument provides an opportunity to examine past grazing practices and evaluate new alternative grazing management strategies that address the needs of important wildlife resources and better fit the Monument designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. If you have any questions please contact Mike McDonald, Environmental Staff Biologist, at this office.

Sincerely,

David Parrish

David Parrish
Magic Valley Regional Supervisor

Cc: IDFG (NRPB)
ECc: IDFG (R4 staff)

September 16, 2002

Mr. Bill Baker
Bureau of Land Management
Shoshone Resource Area Office
P.O. Box 2-B
Shoshone, ID 83352-1522

RE: Laidlaw Park Allotment Assessment

Dear Bill:

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (Department) has reviewed the Laidlaw Park Allotment assessment of rangeland health standards and offer the following comments for your consideration.

The Laidlaw Park Allotment maintains one of the last remaining large, contiguous blocks of low elevation sagebrush habitat found within the area administered by the Shoshone Field Office. This area provides critical breeding, brood-rearing, and winter habitat for sage grouse and other sagebrush dependent wildlife. In addition, the allotment provides important seasonal habitat for pronghorn and elk and important transition range for migrating mule deer.

In April 2002 the Department conducted aerial sage grouse lek surveys in an area encompassing the Laidlaw Park Allotment. In addition to documenting new lek locations, all historic leks were visited. The density of active and historic leks in the Laidlaw Park Allotment emphasize the importance of this area as sage grouse habitat (Table 1).

Data provided in the assessment suggests current grazing management practices in the Laidlaw Park Allotment are having deleterious impacts on vegetation resources and subsequent wildlife habitat. The general lack of species and structural diversity (forbs and large, perennial bunchgrasses) throughout the allotment coupled with the widespread distribution and abundance of cheatgrass warrants a thorough analysis of livestock grazing management practices. The Department recommends the BLM's analysis consider the following issues and grazing management strategies:

1. Despite the lack of specific monitoring data, it appears utilization levels in native habitats are too high to facilitate improvement of rangeland vegetation and subsequent wildlife habitat. The assessment acknowledged a general lack of forb and perennial bunchgrass diversity, abundance, and cover throughout the allotment. Literature suggests livestock utilization should not exceed 30-35% for improvement of rangeland vegetation.

Decreased utilization levels will ensure adequate residual cover for nesting sage grouse (7 in. of cover at nest initiation as per Sage Grouse Management Guidelines) and other ground nesting birds, plant diversity necessary for suitable sage grouse brood-rearing habitat, and forage for pronghorn, elk, and mule deer.

2. The season of use (April 16 to June 15 and 23) is contributing to the lack of native forb and large, perennial bunchgrass diversity, abundance, and cover throughout the allotment. Research indicates bunchgrasses are extremely sensitive to utilization during the active growing season (most sensitive prior to the boot stage through flowering). Bunchgrass survival and production can be significantly reduced for several seasons following defoliation during the active growing season. Also, spring domestic sheep grazing negatively impacts native forb abundance. Long-term monitoring of spring and fall sheep grazing at the Sheep Experiment Station near Dubois indicates heavy spring grazing negatively impacts native plant abundance. Specifically, forb and bunchgrass abundance in spring grazed pastures was considerable lower (5% and 16% respectively) than fall grazed pastures (29% and 24% respectively). Given the importance of native forbs and bunchgrasses to breeding and brood-rearing sage grouse and other sagebrush dependent wildlife, we strongly recommend the season of use in this allotment be modified to eliminate negative impacts associated with spring grazing.

3. The Laidlaw Park Allotment has received heavy spring sheep use over the last 22 years. In the study noted above, the cessation of spring sheep grazing did not promote long-term forb recovery. We recommend the BLM implement strategies to reestablish native forbs.

4. Research has shown browse species can constitute a significant portion of domestic livestock diets, particularly in the late fall. The palatability of shrub species found in this allotment for sheep and cattle range from moderate for Wyoming big sagebrush to poor for other species sagebrush. Research in northern and central Utah recommends no livestock utilization of shrubs should occur in the summer and fall on mule deer winter range. The Laidlaw Park Allotment is important seasonal habitat for pronghorn, elk, and mule deer. Livestock utilization of shrubs should not exceed 10% of current year's growth to ensure ample browse for big game in this allotment.

5. The assessment noted ephemeral playa lakes are not protected from livestock and receive heavy grazing pressure. The ephemeral lakes and associated vegetation can provide important brood-rearing and summer use areas for sage grouse, especially in low precipitation zones and/or during periods of drought. We recommend the BLM incorporate specific management guidelines to protect these areas, including long-term rest for areas in poor condition.

A disturbing trend noted in the assessment was the lack of biotic crust throughout the allotment. Biotic crusts serve several important ecological functions in healthy desert plant communities. Unfortunately, biotic crusts are extremely vulnerable to disturbance by livestock and humans. When the integrity of the crust is destroyed, soils become susceptible to wind and water erosion, lowering soil fertility and subsequent plant productivity. In addition, sites where biotic crusts have been damaged or destroyed create opportunities for exotic plants like cheatgrass to become

established. The assessment noted more "at-risk" sites in the lower elevations of the allotment. Coincidentally, these are the sites (below 12 inches annual precipitation) where biotic crusts were historically most prominent. It is unlikely biotic crusts will recover from persistent spring and fall livestock grazing. The loss of plant diversity, disruption of the nutrient cycle, and spread of exotic annual grasses in large portions of this allotment can, in part, be attributed to historic livestock grazing management and the loss of biotic crusts.

We question the conclusions regarding sage grouse habitat as it applies to Standard 8. Specifically, resting 25% of the allotment on an annual basis has little bearing on the availability of suitable nesting habitat for sage grouse in the Laidlaw Park Allotment. First, rested pastures that received 50% utilization the previous growing season likely do not meet the residual cover requirements (7 inches) for nesting sage grouse. Second, rested pastures are frequently the first pastures utilized the following year – negating any potential benefits derived from rest. And finally, the statement fails to recognize that sage grouse hens in the other 75% of the allotment will nest in close proximity (generally within 2 miles) to the lek where breeding occurs. To maximize the potential benefits of rest for nesting sage grouse we recommend pastures slated for rest receive no more than 30% utilization of current years vegetation growth the preceding year. This level of utilization will ensure adequate residual cover for nesting. In addition, grazing should not resume on rested pastures until **after** the early brood-rearing period (June 15).

Sheepherder camping and sheep bedding on active sage grouse leks is still an issue in the Laidlaw Park Allotment. Annual camping and bedding on leks disrupts sage grouse breeding efforts. Given the current status of sage grouse, we strongly recommend the BLM implement restrictions on sheepherder camping and sheep bedding to eliminate disturbance during this critical period. We offer our assistance in developing maps to help permittees and herders avoid active sage grouse leks.

We concur with assessment recommendations to inventory, enhance, and protect sage grouse habitat in the Laidlaw Park Allotment. However, we question whether development of a six-pasture rotation grazing system will be sufficient to reverse the observed negative trends. As previously noted, grazing systems that fail to address utilization levels and season of use will be unable to facilitate improvement of native vegetation resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this important natural resource issue. If you have further questions please contact Mike McDonald, Environmental Staff Biologist, at this office.

Sincerely,

/sig

David Parrish
Magic Valley Regional Supervisor

Cc: IDFG (NRPB)
Ecc: IDFG (Region 4 Staff)

D010

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MAY 28 2004

SHOSHONE F.O.

COUNTY OF CASSIA

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Dennis Crane, Chairman
Paul Christensen, Commissioner
Clay Handy, Commissioner

COURTHOUSE
1459 Overland Avenue
BURLEY, IDAHO 83318

Phone: 208-878-7302
Fax: 208-878-9109
www.cassiacounty.org

May 25, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

Dear Members of the Planning Group:

The Board of Commissioners for Cassia County, having been generally advised in the matter, submit this letter in support of an adequate and appropriate road system providing access to the Craters of the Moon Monument and Preserve.

We understand that the designation of the Monument/Preserve has, and will continue to, create demand for public access. We believe it is the obligation of responsive government and the clarion call of orderly planning to provide for the essential needs of the public. We see the need for adequate, appropriate and safe access to such significant places of public interest and history, which the Monument/Preserve constitutes, as the type of need deserving the utmost attention.

We have also been advised by the Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee in this matter. We heartily agree with the Committee's recommendations that Alternative (D) is the preferred option, and should include limited options in Alternative (B), to-wit: 1) including the entire Arco-Minidoka Road as a "passage" route; and 2) including the entire Carey-Kamima Road as a "passage" route. By adopting this Alternative, with designated options, we are confident that you would be serving the best interests of all citizens, especially those seeking access to view our interesting and historic landscape.

We appreciate your consideration of our reasons and recommendations, which we urge you to adopt in the final plan. Thank you.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR CASSIA COUNTY, IDAHO

Dennis D. Crane, Chairman | Paul Christensen, Commissioner | Clay Handy, Commissioner

D024

TREASURER, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR, EX-OFFICIO TAX COLLECTOR

OFFICE OF COUNTY TREASURER

BUTTE COUNTY, IDAHO

ARCO, IDAHO 83213

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JUL 14 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

LORI BECK
TREASURER

PHONE (208) 527-3047
FAX (208) 527-3289

July 13, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Butte County and the City of Arco becoming the Gateway for the Crater's of the Moon National Monument. My reasons are that the City of Arco has two major state highways joining together so that many tourists use to go to the Crater's of the Moon. The majority of the boundaries for the Crater's of the Moon are within the Butte County lines. Because of the farming industry slowly failing Butte County and the City of Arco are relying more and more on the tourist industry. We are only 18 miles from the entrance to the Crater's and so many people choose to stay here in motels, RV parks and they eat at our restaurants and buy fuel from local business. The employees of the Crater's live in Arco and Butte County and their children are a big part of Butte County School system. They are active in local activities, clubs and work with local officials. So I would like have my support show in favorite of this great idea.

Sincerely,

Lori Beck

Lori Beck
Butte County Treasurer

D042

CASSIA COUNTY SHERIFF

129 East 14th St. ★ Burley, ID 83318 ★ 208•878•2251 ★ Fax 208•878•9797

JAMES F. HIGENS, Sheriff ★ CARY BRISTOL, Undersheriff

July 13, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 F Street
Shoshone, Idaho

Dear Sir,

I am writing in support of the improvement of the Minidoka-Arco Road. The Mini-Cassia Search and Rescue is a joint Search and Rescue for both Minidoka and Cassia Counties. I feel it is important to have a good road so searches can be conduced. I also feel the road needs to be in good order for not only S&R, but law enforcement, fire, and EMS.

For the general public I also believe that there should be access to existing roads and trails.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Jim Higens
Cassia County Sheriff's Office
Burley, Idaho

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JUL 20 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

(D041)

OFFICE OF
MINIDOKA COUNTY SHERIFF
P.O. BOX 368
RUPERT, ID 83350

SHERIFF
PAUL E. FRIES, SR.

TELEPHONE
OFFICE
208-434-2324

FAX #
208-436-9561

DISPATCH
208-434-2320

July 13, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

Dear Craters of the Moon Planning Team,

I am writing to express my support for the concept of an upgraded and realigned road connecting the Idaho cities of Minidoka and Arco.

I see this as an important step which would benefit the communities of Arco, Mackay, Minidoka, Rupert, Heyburn, Burley in the Cassia, Minidoka and Butte counties. The benefit would come in several ways. An adequate road upgrade and realignment would provide for recreation, tourism, farm to market, desert access and viewing, INEEL access, fire suppression, hunting, search and rescue access and a very beneficial north-south route.

This office would be supportive of any federal government funding assistance efforts.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Fries Sr.

Paul E. Fries Sr.
Sheriff, Minidoka County

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SHOSHONE F.O.

PEF/kr

DO43

MINIDOKA COUNTY

Board of County Commissioners

Rupert, Idaho 83350

July 9, 2004

Craters of The Moon Planning Committee
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, ID. 83352

Minidoka County strongly supports the building of an improved road, from the city of Minidoka, to Arco. When you adopt the final plan, for administration of the Craters of The Moon National Monument and Preserve, which ever plan is adopted, we urge you to include plans for inclusion of the road.

This road would provide much better access for essential services such as:

1. Fire suppression, in and around the preserve
2. Much improved access for visitors
3. Better access to the Lost River Valley, from Minidoka County
4. Safety and rescue procedures
5. It would be less likely that people would get out there and get stranded, if they have a good road, instead of trying to find their way on unmarked dirt trails.

We also support other access roads, in various places, so that the preserve is easily available to the public, and access roads to the areas that have cattle grazing, and hunting.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter. We expect you to follow our recommendations, as there is broad support from most of the cities and counties involved.

Minidoka County Commissioners:

Dave Teeter, Chairman

Dan Stapelman

Marvin Bingham

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JUL 20 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

ATTEST:

Duane Smith, Clerk of the Board

D120
A
p1of4

THE BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

206 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH, Ste 300
HAILEY, IDAHO 83333
PHONE: (208) 788-5500 * FAX: (208) 788-5576

Dennis Wright, Chairman * Sarah Michael, Vice Chair * Mary Ann Mix, Commissioner

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JUL 30 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

July 21, 2004

Craters of the Moon National Monument Planning Team
BLM Shoshone Field Office
P.O. BOX 2-B
400 West F Street
Shoshone, ID 83352

Subject: Recommend Alternative C

Blaine County has been on the record in previous comments as desiring as little development in the Craters of the Moon National Monument. We are writing to reinforce that position by requesting that you adopt Alternative C. We believe that this alternative ensures the strongest conservation protections for the monument and is particularly proactive in restoring primitive and pristine areas.

While the National Park/BLM preferred alternative, Alternative D, supports aggressive weed control, fire management, and restoration, this proposal would further develop roads. Roads, as you know, will actually increase the threat of noxious weeds and fire risk and will accelerate damage to wilderness values and geologic features.
We believe that preservation of natural and cultural resources must take precedence over development for visitor use and recreation.

Management zoning (i.e. level of development) should first maximize the amount of pristine, and then maintain primitive zones, with a minimum of passage and use. Management goals should include road closure and rehabilitation. We believe that the general public should be directed to the already developed portion of the monument. For those people seeking solitude and a primitive wilderness experience, the more remote areas and lands recently added to the Monument should be designated for this purpose.

1

D 120A
p 2 of 4

Most of the Craters of the Moon National Monument is located within Blaine County. It will be local law enforcement paid by Blaine County taxpayers who will be responsible for problems resulting from the increase use of the Monument. More visitors, and more problems will arise from Alternative D than our preferred Alternative C. This is another reason that we urge you to make Alternative C your preferred management option.

Thank you for consideration on our comments.

Sincerely,

Dennis Wright
Chairman

Sarah Michael
Vice Chairman

Mary Ann Mix
Commissioner

D120
B
p 3 of 4

THE BOARD OF BLAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

206 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH, SUITE 300
HAILEY, IDAHO 83333
PHONE: (208) 788-5500 * FAX: (208) 788-5576
www.co.blaine.id.us

Dennis Wright, Chairman * Sarah Michael, Vice Chair * Mary Ann Mix, Commissioner

July 30, 2004

Craters of the Moon National Monument Planning Team
BLM Shoshone Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, ID 83352-1522

Gentlemen:

Please consider the following comments in addition to the previous letter you have received from our Board.

After reviewing the maps on p. 34,39, 44, & 48, it becomes quickly apparent that none of the alternatives are as good as we know is possible. All have glaring weaknesses and I'd bet that very few people would desire all that is encompassed within the various alternatives. I'll try and comment on each:

Alternative A should be the beginning point for any of the alternatives. It has reasonable access for all needs but could be built upon. Improved access to Kings Bowl from the east, as depicted on Alternative D, is a perfect example I support. A couple tourist access/view points that allowed people to gaze across the vast expanse of the Wapi Lava Field could be developed and would enhance that southern experience. The yellow depicted passage roads in the Laidlaw Park portion have always sufficed and should be the limit of improvement. Some c and d roads should be considered for closure, depending on their real need. A shortcut isn't a real need. On the front country portion, some modest improvement in view sights and turnoffs could be accommodated without any detriment to the resource.

Alternative B surly isn't considered a serious alternative by you people who wrote this draft document. If your goal is to completely trample the resource, go for it. However, the whole reason for getting the status that was obtained was for protecting, not creating a playground for thousands of tourists who would eventually, love the place to death. The fragility of the country should have been an acknowledged starting point for any planning effort and seems to have been forgotten on the creation of Alt. B and to some extent, Alternative D. In short, B should be trashed.

Alternative C road concept in Laidlaw Park works for me. The additional improvement in the northern part, as depicted in A works for me also. Obviously, the access to Wapi Lava Field in the south should be included, as stated above.

Alternative D has far too many improved roads in Laidlaw Park from Blaine County's perspective. The really bad part is the suggested road connection from Laidlaw Park, south and east around the boundary of the Monument. This will obviously entice tourist traffic to travel from the Interstate to Highway 20/26. Let's not forget how unfriendly this country can become to the uninitiated. I can see the need, eventually, of stationing law enforcement/rescue people along that stretch on a permanent basis. That will be very costly and Blaine County doesn't intend on footing the bill. Secondly, Blaine County is not interested in accepting responsibility for any more road maintenance in that region. To put it bluntly, the road issue is terribly overdone in Alternative D. Apparently much thought has been given to the idea that fire vehicles have to crisscross the area and we need pathways for them to speedily get to their destinations. The whole concept seems shortsighted to me. It should also be stated that the Arco/Minidoka road that is primarily in Blaine County, is not something we want to see improved. I realize that some commercial interests in the Mini/Cassia area feel differently, but they would in my opinion be better off trying to better their bottom lines with the purchase of lottery tickets than instilling their financial hopes on another desert road going nowhere.

D 120 B
p 4 of 4

Finally, I desire to see the pristine/primitive percentages of Alternative C maintained. Obviously my suggested access and road additions mentioned above would impact that percentage, but hopefully, only in minimal way.

Thank you for accepting some further comment from Blaine County. We appreciate all that both agencies have done to date in creating the draft document and wish you nothing but excessive wisdom as you strive to create the management plan that will protect the majority of the resource while at the same time allowing individuals to experience the beautifully remote and harsh landscape that is The Craters of The Moon.

Sincerely,

FOR THE BOARD

Dennis Wright
Chairman

D127

BUTTE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COURTHOUSE
P.O. BOX 737
ARCO, IDAHO 83213
(208) 527-3021
FAX (208)527-3295

SETH E. BEAL
MARK L. STAUFFER
JOHN C. TRAUGHBER

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AUG 02 2004
SHOSHONE F.O

July 29, 2004

Craters of the Moon National Monument Planning Team
BLM Shoshone Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352-1522

Re: Draft Management Plan

Before offering comment on the Craters ongoing management; Butte County would like to recognize the long standing relationship with the Craters of the Moon and we celebrate the Craters success.

As to the continued management of the Craters, Butte County first priority is expecting the multiple use policy will be followed which allows for continued grazing and hunting on the parts of the monument as was promised at the time the Craters was expanded.

Our seconded priority is in regard to maintaining and improving the facilities on the monument. We believe it is important with limited budgets to concentrate on those improvements to the facilities at the existing entrance west of Arco. Arco has been and should continue to be the gateway to the Craters and the improvements should be directed towards the headquarters.

We also recognize access to the monument is an issue with the development of the Arco-Minidoka road but with limited budgets, this would be our third priority.

Seth E. Beal
Chairman
Butte County Board of Commissioners

Cc: file

D025

BUTTE COUNTY JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 111

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICES – 246 SUNSET DR. – P.O. BOX 89 – ARCO, IDAHO 83213
Scott A. Rogers, Superintendent Susan I. Glenn, Business Manager/District Clerk
PHONE (208) 527-8235 – FAX (208)527-8950 – www.buttecountyschools.org

"Excellence in Education"

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SHOSHONE F.O.

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Butte County Joint School District # 111 in support of Arco as the "Gateway To The Craters Of The Moon National Monument." We are proud to have this wonderful park located in our county. This monument and the staff who works there are an important part of our community heritage. We have enjoyed a close association for many years.

Our students spend a great deal of time on field trips at the monument and we have various pictures in our buildings of the monument. We have been honored to host many tourists and travelers who come through our town to visit Craters. We have always been proud of this National Park and the many wonderful and unique things it offers.

We believe that the City of Arco is truly "The Gateway" to this national treasure. We pledge to do all we can to represent and preserve this relationship and designation. We would like to add our energies to any programs designed to highlight or increase awareness and visits to Craters.

Please consider our district as a ready and willing to do whatever it takes to continue our support of this honored designation. If you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Scott A. Rogers
Superintendent of Schools

D028

American Falls, Idaho

"Best Town by a Dam Site"

Power County Museum
Max Newlin, President
(208) 226-2377

The Power County Historical Society met on the 23rd of June. We discussed your management plans. We are in favor of Alternative D, which is your preferred. We wish to express our interest in being a gateway facility at our new museum.

Sincerely,

Max Newlin
President

His Soc Craters plan D preferred 7-11-04

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JUL 15 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

D003

Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee

Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee

May 12, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

The Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee (MCTC), representing Minidoka and Cassia County's local cities, highway districts, legislators and others, voted unanimously today to strongly support an adequate road system for access to the Craters Monument and Preserve. We propose that the preferred Alternative (D) should include limited options in Alternative B.

It is proposed that the following items from Alternative B be included in Alternative D:

1. Include the entire Arco-Minidoka Road as a "passage" route.
2. Include the entire Carey-Kimama Road as a "passage" route.

We are adamant in our support for the Arco-Minidoka route. The Monument/Preserve designation has created a demand by the public for access. The road from Minidoka will become an attractive alternative to those wanting to go through the Monument/Preserve and to have that as an alternative to reaching the National Park Service Visitor Center. People will attempt to use the existing road with potential catastrophic results so it must be adequate.

This route would facilitate safety, fire suppression, access, and other legitimate concerns. When Secretary of the Interior Babbitt held hearings in Rupert he assured us that the Arco-Minidoka route would be an integral part of the Monument/Preserve. The designation created the demand for access and it should be addressed accordingly.

We would expect our recommendations and concerns be adopted in the final plan.

Thank you,

Milo Ross

Milo Ross, Chairman
Mini-Cassia Transportation committee
2979 East 1010 South
Hazelton, Idaho 83335

D017

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
The City of Carey is an Equal Opportunity Employer

June 29, 2004

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JUL 0 1 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

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 offer the following comments:

First, the City of Carey would like to thank the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the National Park Service (NPS), specifically Rick VanderVoet and Jim Morris, for their selfless dedication to the Craters of the Moon National Monument and the public process associated with the Draft Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement, which sets forth the future direction for the use and management of the Monument. They both have traveled the extra mile to ensure that this community has had the opportunity to understand the plan and have the opportunity to give informed comment.

After reviewing the Draft Management Plan and attending an open house, the Carey City Council unanimously authorized support for Alternative D (Preferred Alternative), for obvious reasons. The Council felt that this alternative would provide the best possibility of ensuring protection of the Monument and its associated features. Alternative D emphasizes off-sight commercial services and visitor opportunities, which should do volumes to ensure that the interior of the Monument remains pristine and unchanged. Alternative D also seems to ensure that the Monument remains multi-use with a wide range of possibilities available for many.

The community has shared their concern with regard to local impact several times in the past and that concern is more ominous than ever before. The impact related to the enlargement of the Monument will most certainly be shouldered by this area in the near future and, for that matter, may already be present but unrecognized. It has been and continues to be our position that this valley should not shoulder the impact alone.

The City Council also recognizes the obvious. The City of Carey and the Carey Valley are the West Gate of the Monument. We are not sure exactly what effects that will have on the area, but we look forward to the possibilities and would like to work hand in hand with the BLM and NPS to ensure that the Monument and the Carey Valley are enjoyed by many for years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for the exemplary leadership displayed by the NPS and BLM Managers.

Very truly yours,

Richard R. Baird, Mayor
City of Carey

D020

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JUL 08 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

CITY OF PAUL
P.O. BOX 130
PAUL, IDAHO 83347

July 2, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

It is our understanding that you are seeking federal funding for the purpose of improving and maintaining an adequate road system for access to the Craters Monument and Preserve. We propose that the preferred Alternative (D) should include limited options in Alternative B.

It is proposed that the following items from Alternative B be included in Alternative D:

1. Include the entire Arco-Minidoka Road as a "passage" route.
2. Include the entire Carey-Kimama Road as a "passage" route.

We are adamant in our support for the Arco-Minidoka route. The Monument/Preserve designation has created a demand by the public for access. The road from Minidoka will become an attractive alternative to those wanting to go through the Monument/Preserve. It is important that the road be adequate as people will attempt to use the existing road with potential catastrophic results.

The City of Paul feels it would be beneficial to our community to have a well maintained access road to the Craters Monument and Preserve.

Sincerely,

Randy E. Jones

Randy E. Jones
Mayor
City of Paul

Cc: Milo Ross

CITY OF HEYBURN

WHERE PEOPLE ARE IMPORTANT

D026

RECEIVED

1 4 2004

SHOSHONE F.O.

July 9, 2004

Crater of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, ID 83352

RE: Arco-Minidoka Road

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Heyburn supports the Arco-Minidoka Road improvements. We believe this road will offer many economic opportunities for the area. These include strengthening the draw for tourism. As this area continues to develop, the Arco-Minidoka Road will provide a strong base for this future development.

Sincerely,

Scott Spevak

Scott Spevak
City Superintendent

D027

CITY OF BURLEY

1401 Overland Ave.
P.O. Box 1090
Burley, Idaho 83318
Phone: (208) 878-2224
Fax: (208) 878-4436

RECEIVED
14 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

June 13, 2004

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

As a participant in the Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee the City of Burley is happy to have the opportunity to urge you to strongly support an adequate road system for access to the Craters of the Moon Monument and Preserve.

We would urge that you include the entire Arco-Minidoka Road as a "passage" route and that you include the entire Carey-Kimama Road as a "passage" route.

Our local citizens would love to have access to the Craters of The Moon Preserve without having to go through Blackfoot and Idaho Falls. The recent change to the area makes it a much more desirable destination as a National Park Service Visitor Center. We often hear of people that drive the present route and have trouble because they do not realize how poor the route is.

We also have been made aware that the better route would facilitate safety and fire suppression and that is a major reason for the improvement. I was at the meeting when Interior Secretary Babbitt assured the local community that access to the Monument/Preserve would be an integral factor considered when the facility became reality. We would appreciate your consideration of the needs of our area.

Yours truly,

Jon R. Anderson
Mayor

D029

CITY OF MINIDOKA
OFFICE OF CLERK
PO BOX 85
PHONE 208-531-4101
FAX 208 531-4196
MINIDOKA, IDAHO 83343

July 13, 2004

Craters of the Moon
National Monument Planning Team
BLM Shoshone Field Office
400 W. F Street
Shoshone, ID 83352-1522

To Whom It May Concern;

The City of Minidoka would like to express our support and desire to have the road from Minidoka to Arco improved. We would very much like to see the road suitable for all vehicles, as we have numerous tourists stopping for directions to Arco and we have to turn them around and discourage desert travel.

We as a City, see the possibility of Minidoka also growing to provide services for travelers through our town.

We truly feel this road would benefit not only travelers, but destinations on both ends.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Maxine Homer

Maxine Homer
Mayor

RECEIVED
JUL 15 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

c: Dwinelle Allred

D030

City of Arco

P.O. Box 196
Arco, ID 83213
Phone (208) 527-8294
Fax (208) 527-8951

First City in the World
to be lit by Atomic Power

Gateway to the Craters of the
Moon National Monument

RECEIVED
JUL 16 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

July 13, 2004

Planning Team
Craters of the Moon National Monument
BLM Shoshone Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Id. 83352-1522

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the Arco City Council and the residents of Arco, I am writing to you concerning the Visitor Centers and the Gateway to the Craters of the Moon. We would encourage you to retain this honor in Butte County.

We would like you to know that the businesses, residents and local officials do now and always have supported the Craters of the Moon to the fullest.

We would appreciate your consideration in leaving the entry to the Craters as it is presently in Butte County.

Sincerely,

Carol Jardine

Carol Jardine, Mayor
City of Arco

D009

P.O. Box 426
624 F Street
Rupert, ID 83350

CITY OF RUPERT

(208) 436-9600
Fax (208) 436-9920

May 12, 2004

RECEIVED
MAY 24 2004
SHOSHONE F.O.

Craters of the Moon Planning Team
Shoshone BLM Field Office
400 West F Street
Shoshone, Idaho 83352

To Whom It May Concern,

The Mini-Cassia Transportation Committee (MCTC), representing Minidoka and Cassia County's local cities, highway districts, legislators and others, voted unanimously today to strongly support an adequate road system for access to the Craters Monument and Preserve. We propose that the preferred Alternative (D) should include limited options in Alternative B.

It is proposed that the following items from Alternative B be included in Alternative D:

1. Include the entire Arco-Minidoka Road as a "passage" route.
2. Include the entire Carey-Kimama Road as a "passage" route.

We are adamant in our support for the Arco-Minidoka route. The Monument/Preserve designation has created a demand by the public for access. The road from Minidoka will become an attractive alternative to those wanting to go through the Monument/Preserve and to have that as an alternative to reaching the National Park Service Visitor Center. People will attempt to use the existing road with potential catastrophic results so it must be adequate.

This route would facilitate safety, fire suppression, access, and other legitimate concerns. When Secretary of the Interior Babbitt held hearings in Rupert he assured us that the Arco-Minidoka route would be an integral part of the Monument/Preserve. The designation created the demand for access and it should be addressed accordingly.

We would expect our recommendations and concerns be adopted in the final plan.

Thank you,

Audrey R. Neiwerth

Audrey R. Neiwerth, Mayor