



# Public Comments on Lava Beds National Monument Planning Effort

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## Dave Kruse is Appointed New Superintendent at Lava Beds National Monument

As of April 2007, David F. Kruse, a 27-year veteran of the National Park Service (NPS), became the new Superintendent of Lava Beds National Monument. Kruse replaces Craig Dorman who retired in January 2007.

## Goodbye from Former Superintendent Craig Dorman

I want to thank all of the park's partners, visitors and friends for their support over the past 13 years that I have served here. Much has been accomplished but much also remains to be done. I will miss the park and each of you and I leave knowing that the park is in good hands. The monument is a wonderful place.

Sincerely,

Craig Dorman

## Letter from the Superintendent:

*Dear Friends,*

In May 2006 our first newsletter announced the opportunity for you and our other partners to participate in a General Management Plan effort. We proudly announced that the 1996 Lava Beds General Management Plan had been implemented and it was now time to again ask our friends, partners and visitors to work with us on planning a new future for the park. When completed, the General Management Plan will serve as a blue print that will guide the park in areas of management, development and public programming for the next twenty years. We requested input from you on specific issues that you would like to see considered during the planning process.

The newsletter was followed by three public workshops that gathered input on development, park importance and related issues of interest to you. Many interested citizens and groups provided us with valuable information, suggestions and concerns.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to provide comments. This newsletter summarizes the many comments we received so far in this process. If you provided us with

your comments you can review the summary to see if we adequately captured your thoughts. Please let us know if you have any additional issues that you think are important but you may not have commented on. We want to have everyone's input.

The written comments and public workshops generated a great deal of important information, and provided a diverse range of issues and suggestions. Consultation with stakeholder organizations also revealed important considerations. All of the input we have received is being carefully considered. In the next phase of the planning effort we will be pulling together all of the input we received to develop a range of preliminary management alternatives which will be presented for your review and comment later this year.

Sincerely,

Dave Kruse

## Lava Beds National Monument Foundation Statement

**Park Purpose:** *Lava Beds National Monument protects and interprets volcanic and natural features of scientific interest, and evidence of prehistoric and historic human settlement, use, and conflict.*

### Lava Beds National Monument is nationally significant because:

- Lava Beds National Monument protects and interprets one of the largest concentrations of lava tube caves in the continental U.S., along with unique environments and cave-dependent species.
- Lava Beds National Monument protects and interprets objects, sites, and the rugged volcanic setting associated with the 1872-73 Modoc War.
- Lava Beds National Monument contains archeological evidence of human occupation extending back to the Holocene (11,000 years to present), exceptional rock art consisting of regionally-distinctive petroglyphs and pictographs, and a setting of continued significance to Modoc people as a part of their traditional homeland.
- Lava Beds National Monument protects and interprets outstanding, diverse, abundant, and well preserved lava flows, cinder cones, spatter cones, Maar volcanoes, and other volcanic features associated with the Medicine Lake shield volcano.
- Lava Beds National Monument provides a wilderness experience in the unique volcanic landscape of the Great Basin and Cascade ecosystems.
- Lava Beds National Monument protects and manages native plant and animal species and processes representative of the transition zone for Great Basin and Cascade ecosystems.

### Other Important Resources and Values

Lava Beds National Monument contains sites and resources associated with homesteading and ranching, early cave exploration and use, the Civilian Conservation Corps and war on the home front.

# What We Heard from You

The Lava Beds National Monument General Management Plan (GMP) team launched the planning process in May 2006. The team produced and mailed newsletters announcing the start of the GMP to 145 organizations and individuals on the park mailing list. Over 1,000 newsletter copies were printed for distribution at the park visitor center and in local communities. Three public meetings were held in: Klamath Falls, OR (June 5); Tulelake, CA (June 7); and Yreka, CA (June 8). Throughout the scoping period, park representatives gave presentations about the GMP to local communities, organizations and agencies.

The following summary captures the diverse range of issues raised during the scoping period through public meetings, letters, comment forms, stakeholder meetings and internal National Park Service meetings.

## Comments on Park Purpose and Significance – What you value

In our first newsletter, we asked you for comments on park purpose and significance statements, the “foundation statement.” The foundation statement establishes why the monument was created and why it is nationally significant. Understanding what’s most important about a park is a key first step in the planning process.



Cave Tour at Lava Beds.

We received very positive responses to the draft statements presented. They appear to capture what you value and find most important about the Lava Beds: the caves and other geologic features, the history conveyed (Modoc War, Native American history, settlement), the landscape, the undeveloped character of the park, the wilderness, the plant communities, wildlife, and the rock art. Many of you also value the opportunity to explore on your own and the educational opportunities that Lava Beds provides. While the comments were generally in agreement with the draft statements, one commenter suggested that the stories related to park purpose and significance should be connected to their larger area of interest, e.g. the Great Basin, Medicine Lake Volcano, and the tribal territory of the Modoc.

## Summary of Issues for the General Management Plan

The following section includes a summary of issues and concerns raised during the scoping period, organized by topic. Issues that received the greatest number of comments include: ideas about visitor education programs and interpretation opportunities; support for protection of cultural and natural resources; an emphasis on working with surrounding agencies, tribes and communities; preserving the undeveloped character of the park; and ideas for visitor services such as camping.



Wildflowers along Missing Link Trail.

## *A Summary of What We Heard From You*

### **Access and Transportation**

Comments include concerns about access to services given the park's remote location; road conditions; transportation options; providing access for visitors with disabilities; access to caves; and providing information to visitors before they enter the park. Visitors value the opportunity to explore the park independently without many restrictions. Specific comments include:

- There is a lack of facilities/services outside the park to support one's stay (e.g. food, lodging, showers, and groceries). Suggestions include providing services at Tulelake or Tionesta and providing more signage to direct visitors to where services exist.
- Provide visitor information and orientation at the north end of the park.
- Use a radio station to provide visitors with information before they arrive.
- Improve road access from the south and the east.
- Consider removing underutilized roads for restoration or new trails.
- Alternative transportation options should be considered.
- Limit access to the cave loop to reduce vandalism.
- Provide more opportunities for physically challenged visitors.
- Implement the Fern Cave closure.
- Lava Beds provides a unique opportunity where people can go into caves independently.
- Lava Beds lacks adequate points of access such as turnouts and roadside parking areas, and trailheads.

### **Park Boundary/Adjacent Lands**

Creating connections to areas outside of the monument were suggested.

- Additional areas of the Medicine Lake highlands and volcano could be considered for addition to the park.
- Incorporate the Tule Lake Segregation Center.

### **Collections/Museum Management**

Comments on collections and museum artifacts focus on a desire to see more Native American and Modoc War artifacts displayed at the visitor center.

- More artifacts should be displayed at the visitor center like at the old one.
- The park needs someone to manage the artifact collections.

### **Cultural Resources/Historical Sites and Artifacts**

The preservation and protection of sensitive cultural and historical resources is a concern, particularly at Petroglyph Point, a site isolated from the rest of Lava Beds. Comments also indicate interest in improving the interpretation of cultural resources related to the pre-settlement landscape, settlement history, the Modoc War, and Native American history and pre-history.

- Include standards and guidelines for preserving and protecting historic sites and artifacts.
- Develop educational programs that increase visitor understanding of historical and archeological resources.
- Protect rock art from graffiti and vandalism.
- Focus on sites related to early settlers (e.g. Caldwell, Heppie, Merrill).



Artifacts at Lava Beds Visitor Center.

- Prevent junipers from encroaching on the Modoc War historic landscape.
- Improve protection of the rock art at Petroglyph Point. Suggestions include: increase security; protect the rock art from erosion; remove chain link fence and replace with a clear wall/barrier; build an interpretive center; route road around Petroglyph Point.

### **Education and Interpretation**

The majority of comments received during scoping call for increased visitor education programs and opportunities for interpretation. Some comments suggest more focus on specific types of interpretation, while others call for an expansion in programs.

- Expand education programs, both within and outside of Lava Beds to ensure that existing and future generations of park visitors will have an understanding and appreciation of the park resources.
- Develop better education and understanding of the geology and the landscape. Ideas for new visitor center exhibits were provided.
- Provide more interpretation of rock art, wildlife, native plants, Modoc War history, Modoc history and modern peoples, local history (homesteading) and volcanic features.



School group at Lava Beds.

## *A Summary of What We Heard From You, continued*

- Conduct reenactments of the Modoc War.
- Develop an accurate history of Lava Beds and Tule Lake.
- Expand interpretation on a regional level. Coordinate with other agencies, local communities, Volcanic Scenic Byway groups, and the Klamath Tribes.
- Connect Lava Beds with the Tule Lake Segregation Center. The stories of the Modoc and the Japanese are parallel tales.
- Develop more interpretive panels for trails and caves.
- Better signage and interpretation is needed on the eastern end.
- Provide alternative interpretation mechanisms for inaccessible sites (e.g. photos of caves on the website, install web cams, and create visitor center displays on bat populations).
- Provide more rangers to create opportunities for more direct visitor contact.
- Develop audio tours or radio tours for visitors.
- Value the undeveloped nature.
- Do not build new facilities/ do not want to see the park commercialized.
- Create an entrance station that provides an overview of the “Army Camp” and Lava Beds.
- Need more housing for staff. Lava Beds is remote and it is hard to recruit staff.
- The new visitor center should include more artifacts and exhibits.
- Expand the visitor center.
- Use green building technology, sustainable waste management, and electric vehicles.
- Provide more bathrooms.
- Expand the gift shop.
- Provide food services: restaurant, café, concessions.

### **Geological Resources**

Most comments on geological resources pertain to management of the caves. Other comments recommend ways to emphasize the importance of geology to the significance of Lava Beds.

- The geological significance could be better highlighted (e. g. features related to the Medicine Lake Volcano).
- Value the effort that the monument has made in working with the cave exploration community to expand the park’s collective knowledge.
- Make one cave accessible for physically challenged park users, keep all others natural.

- The caves should remain places for undeveloped exploration.
- Preserve the landscape and network of mostly undeveloped caves.
- Do not gate anymore caves.
- Changes in the water table may impact caves and biological resources associated with caves.

### **Environmental Impacts**

Comments suggest various impacts that should be assessed in the environmental impact analysis that will accompany the General Management Plan. Topics include:

- Spread of invasive species.
- Western juniper encroachment on the Modoc War historic landscape.
- Road impacts on Petroglyph Point.
- Overflights and other noise and visual impacts.
- Changes in air quality/visibility.
- Impacts of management decisions of neighboring agencies.
- Impacts of changing water tables on cave resources.
- Effects of global warming.
- Impacts on vegetation of crowding at the campground.
- Impacts of adjacent land use such as agriculture, logging, fire suppression, utilities, geothermal exploration.

### **Park Facilities**

The undeveloped character of Lava Beds is highly valued. Visitors enjoy the fact that they can explore freely. Many do not want to see new facilities here. Others suggest additional facilities including employee housing, a northern entrance station, more bathrooms, and food services.



Picnic table built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.



Protecting cave resources.



Lava Beds Visitor Center.



Fire Management.

## *A Summary of What We Heard From You, continued*

### **Natural Resources**

Comments related to natural resources address the following topics: use of fire management; control of invasive plants; and protection of native plants and wildlife. Natural resource protection is a priority.

- Resource conservation should take priority over new development.
- Increase visitor understanding and awareness of wildlife and ecosystem processes.
- Consider the effects of global warming.
- Identify the aspects of the park that are critical for monitoring.
- Need to comprehensively manage exotic species and native vegetation.
- Recognize fire as a normal process necessary for restoration of natural vegetative communities.
- Propose ways to minimize the impact of fire-suppression activities when it is necessary to fight arson and accidental blazes.
- Research is needed to understand the effects of fire on archeological resources.
- Exotic plant management should be a priority including measures to minimize the spread of weeds.
- Include standards and guidelines for identifying and protecting sensitive plant species.
- Reintroduce extirpated species (e.g. bighorn sheep population).

### **Public Involvement**

Comments provide suggestions for outreach and public participation in the GMP process. Comments also include offers to assist Lava Beds in the distribution of park information and in the development of interpretive displays.

- Would like to be able to submit comments through a website. The comment form has limited space for comments.
- Suggestions for additional GMP outreach include attending meetings of local community groups and organizations, attending community festivals and providing information at local stores.

### **Park Operations**

Comments address needs for park staffing; maintenance; law enforcement and security.

- Increase ranger patrol to provide more security for the caves, petroglyph point and the campground.
- Provide cleaner bathrooms.
- Staff turnover is a problem at Lava Beds. They develop the knowledge base and then leave to work at another park.
- Lava Beds needs more staff for protecting resources and educating visitors. Increasing staff would enhance the visitor experience.
- It is difficult to recruit staff given the park's remote location. Housing is a limiting factor in attracting staff.
- Local community members would like to be more involved. However, staff does not have time to develop a volunteer program.
- A seasonal ranger is needed for the summer busy season.
- Identify locations for helicopter landing zones in the backcountry.
- Given the small existing staff and the distance from park headquarters, what role could the park have at the Tule Lake Segregation Center?

### **Regional Partnerships and Cooperation**

Comments encourage Lava Beds to explore regional partnerships with local communities, organizations and agencies to protect resources, provide visitor information and services, and in interpreting regional themes.

- Encourage more tribal involvement through providing jobs at the park, concessions opportunities, and participation in archeological surveys.
- Consider connecting the park to the Tule Lake Segregation Center. This would tie together themes such as reclamation, homesteading, homefront/internment.
- Encourage fieldtrips by groups who appreciate your resources (e.g. California Native Plant Society).
- Do not treat the park like an island. Work to create cooperation between the park and its neighbors.
- Keep services such as showers and hotels in the town of Tulelake.
- Work with local communities and organizations to do regional promotion (e.g. create week-long tour packages, retreat opportunities).
- Continue cooperation with parties doing volunteer work within the park and across the Klamath Basin.
- Increased partnerships with local schools would inspire a new generation to protect our National Parks.
- There is a lack of cohesiveness among the federal agencies in the region.
- The agencies should coordinate on: restoration goals; trails and waysides; management of Route 10; interpretive materials; data sharing; cave protection; gateway services, camping and RV services, and fire management.
- Consider sharing offices and facilities with other agencies to collaborate and share resources.



Pika.



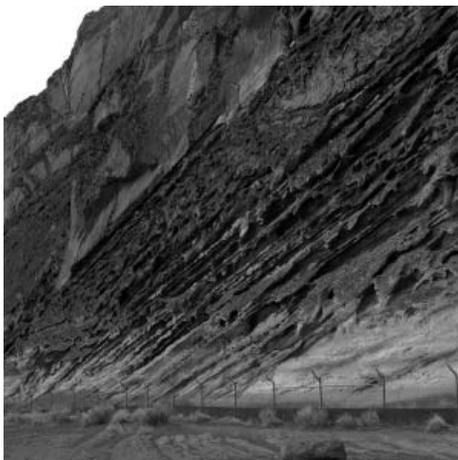
Schonchin Butte.

## *A Summary of What We Heard From You, continued*

### **Tribal Use/Issues**

Concerns include the importance of Lava Beds as part of tribal history and culture, opportunities for tribal involvement with the park, opportunities for greater education of the park's environmental and cultural history, and protection of sensitive resources.

- Lava Beds is part of the Klamath and Modoc people's aboriginal territory and continues to play a significant role in tribal cultural history.
- Encourage more tribal involvement at the park through youth programs, employment opportunities, concessions opportunities (e.g. tribal art), and participation in archeological surveys.
- Provide housing to accommodate tribe members and youth on park staff.
- The religious significance of the area is important to the Klamath Tribes.
- Petroglyph Point should be better used as an educational resource to discuss the natural and environmental history of the area but also the cultural history of the Klamath and Modoc people.
- Petroglyph Point is exposed to the natural weathering elements, graffiti and vandalism. Erect a structure, in place of the cyclone fence, that would allow for viewing of the rock art through a clear window.
- Continue to conduct consistent and open consultation with tribal representatives throughout the GMP process.



Petroglyph Point.

### **Visitor Services and Use**

Comments on visitor services and use include suggestions for visitor contact facilities, campground facilities and trail improvements.

#### *General comments visitor services and use:*

- Need more of a presence at the north end.
- Create an interagency roadside area/contact station.
- Get people away from their cars more often and for longer periods of time.
- \$10 per week entrance fee is inexpensive.
- Do not want to see fees charged for the caves at the park.

#### *Campground:*

- Provide hot water for showers.
- Provide a better group site and a system for group reservations.
- Group camping seems adequate.
- Accommodate RV camping and large motor homes to meet increasing demand.
- Accommodate RV camping on adjacent National Forest lands.
- No RVs in the park.
- Provide concession services for food and supplies. Perhaps outside of the park?
- Provide firewood.
- Don't allow activities that generate noise.
- Provide more spaces for camping, especially spaces with solitude.
- Make electricity available.
- Problem with dogs running off-leash at the campground.



Expansive views across the monument.

#### *Trails:*

- Trail development is a priority.
- No more trails to the lava tubes.
- Provide more loop trails and make more trail connections to features within the park.
- Remove backcountry roads and create more trails.
- Consider equestrian use but also consider its potential impacts on biodiversity and restoration.
- Allow dogs on-leash to be on trails
- Consider allowing bikes on the park roads.

### **Wilderness**

Comments on wilderness express appreciation of the wilderness qualities at Lava Beds and provide suggestions for expanding wilderness areas.

- The most enjoyable aspect of the park is the wilderness ambience and the lack of people.
- Wilderness areas impose unnecessary restrictions.
- Consider impacts on wilderness from development and overflights.
- Assess the suitability of Lava Beds's non-wilderness areas for potential wilderness designation.
- All non-wilderness portions of the park should be recommended for wilderness status with the exception of roads and developed areas.
- Wilderness expansion will provide permanent protection against future development and ensure that Lava Beds remains forever wild.



Tour of Captain Jack's Stronghold.

## How Will My Comments Be Addressed in the GMP?

The GMP will establish a future vision for Lava Beds and provide general guidance on how to achieve that vision. Your comments help us define the future vision and direction for the park's future. All of the comments received through comment forms, letters, public meetings and meetings with park stakeholders will be used to assist our planning. Some comments provided specific ideas for preserving what's important and providing better visitor services and programs. Comments with more detailed ideas will be incorporated into plans that will implement the GMP.

Lava Beds staff have reviewed these comments. Your ideas and suggestions will help us serve you better now and after completion of the GMP.

## Next Steps

Over the next several months the GMP planning team will be gathering information to help identify ways to address some of the planning issues. This information, the foundation statement, and your comments will help the team to develop possible visions for the future (called alternatives). The alternatives will be consistent with the foundation statement, address management issues, and comply with all applicable laws and policies.

We would like your participation in the development of the alternatives. This fall we will send you a newsletter with some preliminary alternative concepts for your review and input. The "alternatives" newsletter will also provide additional information on how you can participate in shaping these alternatives.

## Contact Information

Feel free to contact us anytime with questions or comments about the GMP.

Mail: General Management Plan Team, Lava Beds National Monument, 1 Indian Well, Headquarters, Tulelake, CA 96134

Park Phone Numbers: 530-667-8113 / 530-667-8104

GMP Project Manager: Barbara Butler (510) 817-1322

Park Web Site: <http://www.nps.gov/labe>

GMP Planning Website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/labe>

## Did we miss anything?

If you would like to add any thoughts and ideas to the summary of issues presented, please send us your thoughts.

## General Management Plan Schedule Future Opportunities for your Participation

	Planning Activity	Dates	Public Involvement Opportunities
1	<b>Scoping</b> - Set the stage for planning: Reaffirm purpose, significance, and identify ideas, concerns or issues to be addressed in the GMP.  Summarize scoping comments and report back.	Spring 2006 to Spring 2007	Review newsletter and send us your ideas or concerns on the comment form provided or through our planning website.  Attend public meetings and voice your ideas and concerns.
2	<b>Develop and present preliminary alternatives:</b> Outline different possible futures for the park and provide opportunities for review and comment by the public, agencies, tribes and other park stakeholders.  *****WE ARE HERE*****	Summer 2007 to Winter 2007	Review alternative concepts newsletter and send us your ideas and concerns.  Attend workshops to comment on preliminary alternatives.
3	<b>Prepare and distribute a Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement</b> for review and comment by the public, agencies, tribes and other park stakeholders.	Summer to Fall 2008	Review the Draft GMP/EIS and provide written comments.  Attend public meetings to learn more about the draft document and to voice your ideas and concerns.
4	<b>Revise draft and publish Final General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement:</b> Analyze comments, respond to comments, revise draft document, distribute to the public.	Winter 2008	Review the Final GMP/EIS.



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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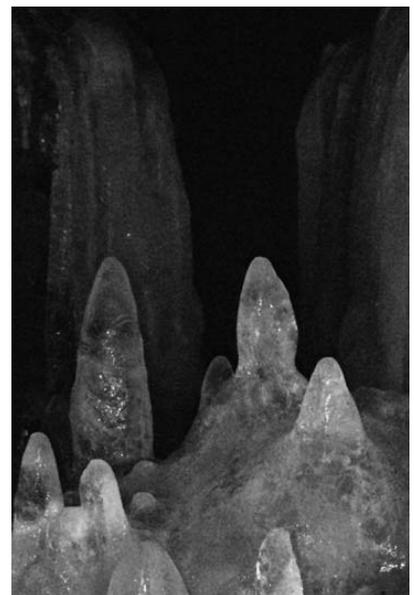
**GMP Planning Web Site:**

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/labe>

**What's in Newsletter 2**

**This newsletter includes:**

- Letter from the Superintendent
- What We Heard from You: A summary of comments we received during the scoping period of the General Management Plan.
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Ice formation in Crystal Ice Cave.