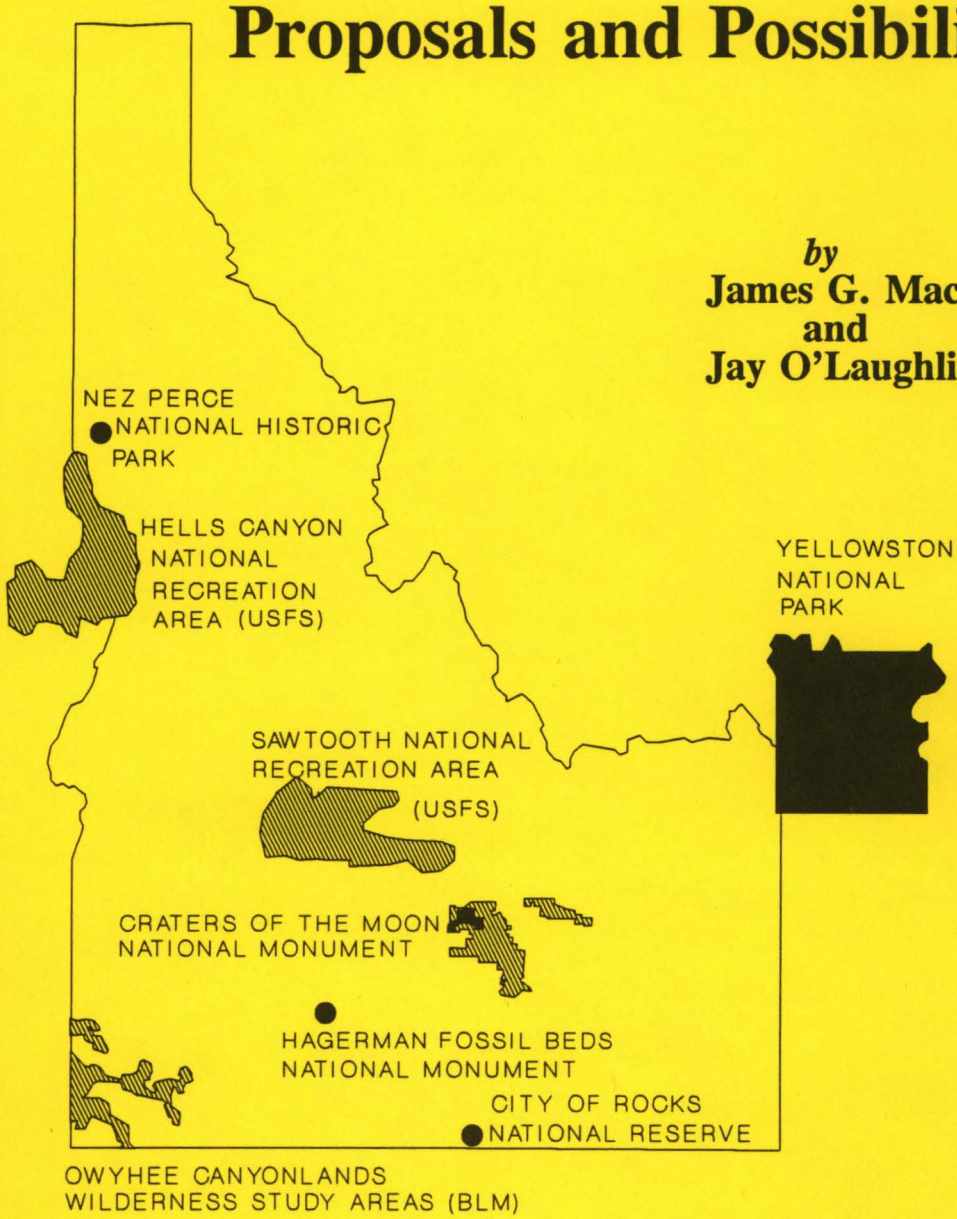
Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group

Report No. 7 June 1992

A National Park in Idaho?
Proposals and Possibilities



by
James G. MacCracken
and
Jay O'Laughlin

Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group
Jay O'Laughlin, Director

Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Experiment Station
John C. Hendee, Director

University of Idaho

- The Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group was established by the Idaho Legislature in 1989 to provide objective analysis of the impacts of natural resource proposals (see *Idaho Code* § 38-714).
- The Policy Analysis Group is administered through the University of Idaho's College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, John C. Hendee, Dean.

Advisory Committee

Policy Analysis Reports

No. 1. Idaho's endowment lands: a matter of sacred trust. *J. O'Laughlin* (March 1990).

No. 2. BLM riparian policy in Idaho: analysis of public comment on a proposed policy statement. *K.L. Johnson, C. Mosley, J.C. Mosley, and J. O'Laughlin* (June 1990).

No. 3. Idaho Department of Fish and Game's land acquisition and land management program. *C. Wise and J. O'Laughlin* (October 1990).

No. 4. Wolf recovery in central Idaho: alternative strategies and impacts. *C. Wise, J.J. Yeo, D. Goble, J.M. Peek, and J. O'Laughlin* (February 1991).

No. 5. State agency roles in Idaho water quality policy. *A.C. Turner and J. O'Laughlin* (February 1991).

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A NATIONAL PARK IN IDAHO?

PROPOSALS AND POSSIBILITIES

Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group

Report No. 7

by

James G. MacCracken[1]
and
Jay O'Laughlin[2]

June, 1992

[1] Research Scientist, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83843.

[2] Director, Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83843.

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Dr. Gary E. Machlis
Professor of Forest Resources
Cooperative Park Studies Unit
University of Idaho

Dr. R. Gerald Wright, Jr.
Professor of Wildlife and Range Resources
Cooperative Park Studies Unit
University of Idaho

Dr. John D. Hunt
Professor and Head
Dept. of Resource Recreation and Tourism
University of Idaho

Dr. Edwin E. Krumpe
Associate Professor
Dept. of Resource Recreation and Tourism
University of Idaho

Steve Mealey
Supervisor
Boise National Forest
Boise, Idaho

Dr. John C. Freemuth
Associate Professor
Department of Political Science
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho

Dr. J. Michael Scott
Research Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Professor of Wildlife Resources, and Leader, Idaho Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
University of Idaho

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FOREWORD

The Idaho Forest, Wildlife and Range Policy Analysis Group (PAG) was created by the Idaho legislature in 1989 to provide Idaho decision makers with timely and objective data and analyses of pertinent natural resource issues. A standing nine-member citizen advisory committee (see the inside front cover) suggests issues and priorities for the PAG. Results of each analysis are reviewed by a technical advisory committee selected separately for each inquiry (see the acknowledgements on page i). Findings are made available in a policy analysis publication series. This is the seventh report in the series. Others are listed in the inside front cover.

The citizen advisory committee asked the PAG to analyze previous proposals for designating a national park in Idaho. As one member put it, there is a need to "separate myth from reality" with respect to the potential costs and benefits of a national park. This report is an analysis of what is known and unknown (mostly the latter) about the costs and benefits of national park designation. Five areas in Idaho have been proposed at one time or another as national parks--City of Rocks, Craters of the Moon, Hells Canyon, Owyhee Canyonlands, and the Sawtooths. All these areas continue to generate active debate, at least locally. The NPS has studied three of these areas; the outcomes of site-specific agency studies are summarized. Although two of these proposals have resulted in active congressional support, Idaho still does not have a National Park.

Consistent with the PAG's mission to provide only objective data and analysis, no recommendations are offered. Only Congress can create a national park. The views of Idaho leaders are crucial. We hope the information in this report will be useful in the continuing debates over a national park for Idaho.

John C. Hendee, Dean
College of Forestry, Wildlife
and Range Sciences
University of Idaho

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide information that will help decision makers and others evaluate the numerous arguments, both pro and con, that surface in the debate over National Park potential in Idaho, and to summarize previous proposals for National Park designation. This information will be valuable to resource managers, conservation groups, and state and federal legislators. The analysis considers three major focus questions around which the report is organized:
[1] What is a National Park?
[2] What are the arguments for and against creating a National Park?
[3] Which areas in Idaho have been proposed as a National Park?

[1] What is a National Park? It is a large natural area with one or more natural resources of ***national significance***. Two other criteria--***suitability*** and ***feasibility***--are used to judge the merits of potential National Parks. Only the U.S. Congress can create a National Park. There are 50 National Parks, which are often referred to as the "crown jewels" of our public land management system. Because the National Park Service manages National Parks, park definition is closely linked to the management philosophy and policies of the agency. Thus, two related questions are addressed. How does a National Park differ from a national forest, national wildlife refuge, national recreation area, and other such public land designations? How do the land uses allowed in a National Park compare to those in a wilderness area?

[2] What are the general arguments for and against National Park designation, and how valid are they? Three general arguments for National Park designation and three against are discussed.

Three reasons are offered for establishing a National Park in Idaho: (1) Better resource protection from land use restrictions that de-emphasize resource extraction is perceived by some people as a benefit. (2) The potential for increased tourism and local economic activity is often mentioned as a benefit. (3) A shift in federal agency management philosophy away from extractive use and toward emphasis on recreation management and visitor education are also mentioned as benefits of National Park designation.

Opposition to National Park designation, which can be as strong as support, centers on three arguments: (1) The likely prohibition of existing extractive resource uses--hunting, grazing, mining, and logging--that accompany National Park status also leads to opposition. (2) Opponents often emphasize the potential for resource degradation due to increased tourism and excessive development. (3) It is argued that National Park Service budgets are already over-extended to the point where existing units are deteriorating, and new parks would just make the problem worse.

Whether any or all of the pros and cons associated with National Park designation become reality depends a great deal on site-specific characteristics and the special provisions that might be contained in the enabling legislation that Congress would design for a new park. Rather than offering generalizations derived from past experiences with existing park units that may or may not apply to new areas under consideration in Idaho, we suggest a focus on specific areas and specific resource management problems that would be associated with a shift to National Park status and could be addressed by enabling legislation. We identify specific areas that have been proposed, but not specific problems.

[3] Which specific areas in Idaho have been proposed for National Park status, and what was the outcome of those proposals? Approximately 62.5 percent of the land in Idaho is publicly owned and managed by the federal government. Although some land areas in Idaho are managed by the National Park Service (NPS), Idaho does not have a

National Park entirely within its borders (a small portion of the southwestern edge of Yellowstone National Park is in Idaho). The NPS administers four units in Idaho: two National Monuments, a National Historic Park, and a National Reserve (Figure 1).

Congressional proposals for a Sawtooth National Park began in 1913 and have been actively considered as recently as 1989. There was a congressional proposal for a Craters of the Moon National Park in 1991. Both of these areas have been evaluated by the NPS to determine if they had National Park potential, and both were judged to be ***nationally significant*** as well as ***suitable*** and ***feasible*** for National Park designation. The Sawtooth National Recreation Area was enthusiastically recommended as a combined National Park and National Recreation Area in 1977, but was not approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The Craters of the Moon National Monument was evaluated as a National Park and Preserve, but the National Park Service study team recommended that its status as a National Monument not be changed. However, there is still active interest in designating Craters of the Moon as a National Park and Preserve.

Three other areas have been proposed as National Parks. In 1992, a local citizen interest group proposed a Hells Canyon National Park; another group proposed an Owyhee Canyonlands National Park. The next step in both these cases is study of their potential by the NPS. City of Rocks has some local support, but its 1988 enabling legislation as a National Reserve suggested the possibility of future transfer to the state, precluding serious consideration of this area as a National Park. In addition, City of Rocks is a relatively small area, and half of it is privately owned, presenting feasibility problems.

No recommendations for National Park designation are offered in this report, but that is not to say that the five areas identified are not worthy of National Park status. Because it takes an act of Congress to create a National Park, and reviews of state and local leaders are crucial, such a determination can only be made within the public policy process. We hope this information will be useful in that process.

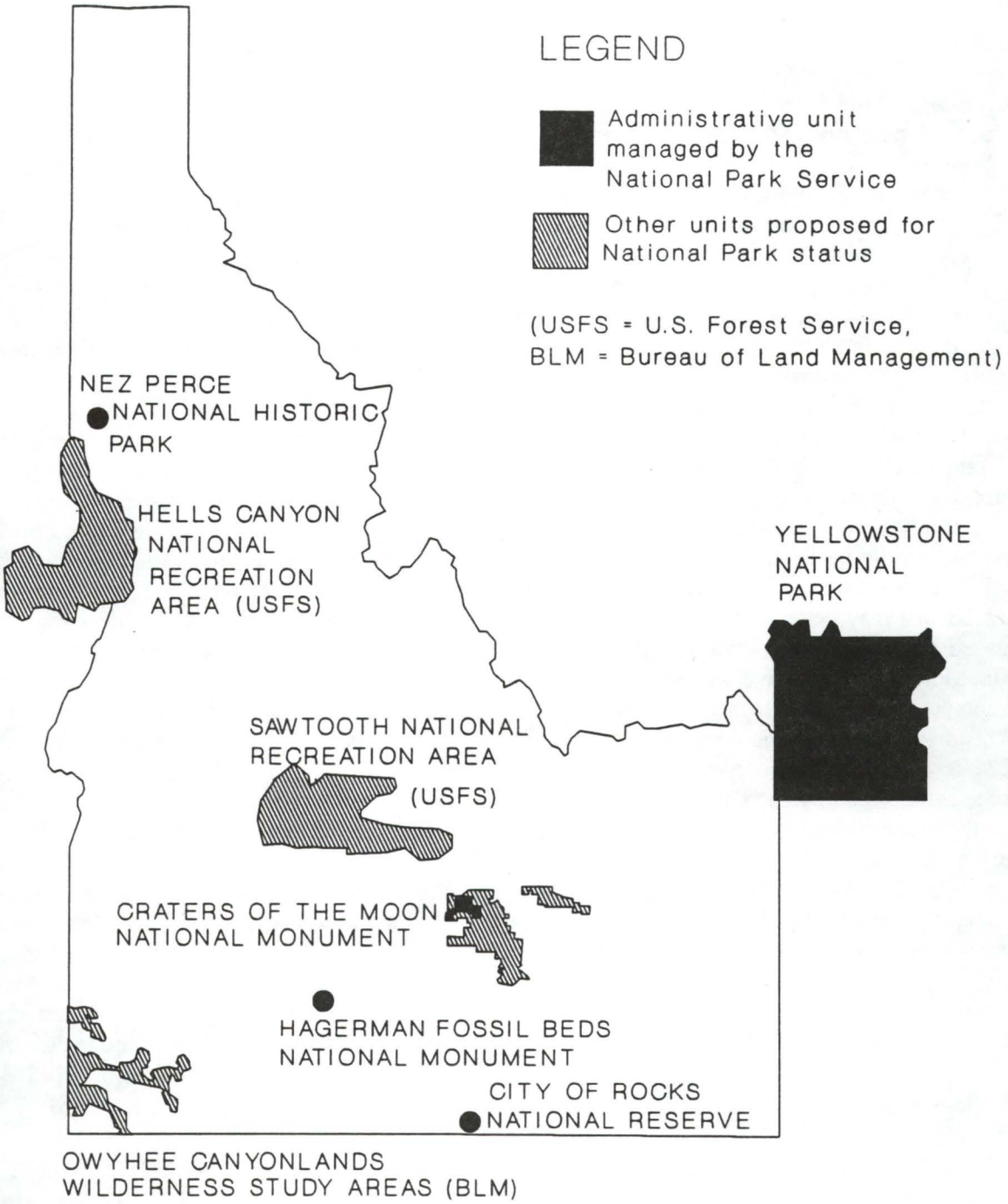

Figure 1. Location of National Park Service units and other areas with National Park potential in Idaho. (The National Recreation Areas include surrounding lands as part of the proposals. Craters of the Moon National Monument includes proposed expansion from surrounding Bureau of Land Management lands.)

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Management Philosophy

The National Park Service (NPS) was created in 1916 to provide consistent and effective management of the 14 National Parks, 21 National Monuments, and 2 Reservations that had been previously created, beginning with Yellowstone National Park in 1872. Prior to the National Park Service Act of 1916, these areas were administered by either the U.S. Army in the War Department or civilian appointees in the Department of the Interior. At that time, most of the areas received minimal custodial management (Mackintosh 1991). The creation of the NPS was strongly resisted by the U.S. Forest Service. Many NPS lands were former Forest Service holdings and further transfers of Forest Service land to the NPS were anticipated. The National Park Service Act of 1916 directed that "all further parks and reservations of like character that may be created by Congress be managed by the NPS within the Department of the Interior." The Act gave the NPS the mission "to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." This mission statement has been implemented under a general management philosophy emphasizing resource protection and outdoor recreation.

The NPS celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a symposium in Vail, Colorado, attended by more than 700 people representing the wide variety of individuals, groups, organizations, and agencies involved with NPS affairs. Working groups at the symposium identified six strategic objectives to guide the NPS into the 21st Century. Resource stewardship and protection, followed by public access and enjoyment, were the top two objectives, respectively. These strategic objectives reiterated the original mission of the NPS (Steering Committee 1992).

Although its dual mission has not changed, the NPS has evolved since 1916. A major event following the creation of the NPS was the transfer of the War Department's historical areas to the NPS as part of the reorganization of the executive branch of government in 1933 (Mackintosh 1991). There are now 22 different classifications for NPS units (Table 1). Some of the better-known designations are National Park, National Monument, National Preserve, National Historic Site, National Recreation Area, National Seashore, and National Battlefield. Less well known units include an International Historic Site, the National Mall, and National Trails (NPS 1989*b*).

The management emphasis of the agency has shifted since it was created. Early park management was primarily oriented toward providing a park or pleasuring ground for the enjoyment of the people. The earliest parks where managed and developed for America's affluent to enjoy nature and modern conveniences (Nash 1973). National Park management today emphasizes resource protection and wilderness experiences, with tourism as a secondary use (NPS 1988).

An act of Congress (i.e., enabling legislation) is required to create most NPS units. Exceptions are National Monuments and National Historic Sites. National Historic Sites are designated from federal lands by the Secretary of the Interior. The Antiquities Act of 1906 gave the President power to create National Monuments by public proclamation. This provision has resulted in the inclusion of many significant new areas into the NPS system. The Antiquities Act was used relatively sparingly until 1978 when a congressional impasse led President Carter to create 13 National Monuments in Alaska. This immediately doubled the amount of land under NPS jurisdiction. In 1980, all of these areas became either National Parks or National Preserves with the enactment of the Alaska

Table 1. National Park System by type of unit, 1989[1]

Type of Unit	Number of Units	Federal Acreage	Recreation Visits, 1987[2] (million)
National Parks	50	47,319,322	56.6
National Historical Parks	29	151,632	29.5
National Monuments	79	4,844,610	23.5
National Military Parks	9	34,047	4.5
National Battlefields	11	12,771	2.1
National Battlefield Parks	3	8,767	1.7
National Battlefield Site	1	1	(NA)
National Historic Sites	68	18,468	10.6
National Memorials	23	7,949	20.1
National Seashores	10	597,096	8.5
National Parkways	4	168,618	39.3
National Lakeshores	4	227,244	3.4
National Rivers[3]	5	360,630	3.6
National Capital Park	1	6,469	8.1
National Wild & Scenic Rivers[3]	9	292,597	(NA)
National Recreation Areas	18	3,686,923	56.5
National Scenic Trails	3	172,203	(NA)
National Preserves	14	22,155,498	0.1
National Mall	1	146	(NA)
Parks, other	10	40,121	8.0
White House	1	18	1.1
Other	1	(NA)	(NA)
International Historic Site	1	35	(NA)
Total	355	80,105,165	287.2

[1] Source: National Park Service (1989*b*).
[2] Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States (1989).
[3] National Park Service Units only.
(NA) = Not Available

National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

The NPS emphasis on resource protection has resulted in a general policy of excluding hunting, trapping, livestock grazing, mining, and logging from National Parks (NPS 1988). However, there are exceptions to this policy; for example, sport fishing has always been deemed acceptable in a National Park. Generally, exceptions for uses that are inconsistent with the overall mission of the NPS have been granted through "grandfather

rights" specified in enabling legislation. Mining has occurred in Denali National Park (formerly Mount McKinley National Park) since its creation in 1917. Enabling legislation creating Great Basin National Park in 1986 stipulated that historically significant livestock grazing would be permitted and managed by the NPS. Recent trends have resulted in the creation of National Preserves that permit extractive uses (primarily hunting and trapping) inconsistent with National Park status. National Preserves are typically lands bordering a National Park (NPS 1990*d*) and represent a means to reduce controversies regarding the establishment of new National Parks. Enabling legislation specifies the purposes and objectives for creating an NPS unit, which usually dictates management programs (NPS 1988).

WHAT IS A NATIONAL PARK?

During the 1800s the idea for the preservation of outstanding natural and historical areas by the U.S. government became reality. Early efforts recognized that not all areas were equal in significance or quality. Initially, the most exceptional areas were designated National Parks. Other areas deserving protection were simply called Reservations. The Antiquities Act of 1906 added the National Monument classification that largely replaced the Reservation classification for most new units (Mackintosh 1991).

From the start, the National Parks were the "crown jewels" of the units in the NPS system. The NPS describes National Parks as large natural areas with one or more natural resources of ***national significance***, which is perhaps the most significant criterion for consideration. A National Park should be an outstanding or rare example of a geological landform or biotic area, a place of exceptional ecological or geological diversity, a site with a concentrated population of rare plant or animal species or unusually abundant fossil deposits, or an outstandingly scenic area. The integrity of the area (i.e., "naturalness") is vital; it must not be so altered, deteriorated, or otherwise impaired that its significance cannot readily be appreciated by the public (NPS 1990*c*).

Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites. National Parks in the U.S. are now part of a global effort to preserve natural areas. National Parks that are internationally significant examples of one of the world's natural areas may be considered for addition to the Biosphere Reserve program administered by the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Culture Organization, through the Man and the Biosphere program (NPS 1988). NPS units may also qualify as World Heritage Sites as defined by the World Heritage Committee. Neither of these designations is meant to supersede the original intent of establishing the NPS unit or to alter NPS management programs (NPS 1988).

Criteria for a National Park

Congress directed the NPS to study and monitor areas to determine their potential for inclusion in the NPS system (NPS 1988). New area studies may be initiated by the NPS, or requested by Congress, other federal, state, or local agencies, or the private sector (NPS 1988). Recently, two local citizen conservation groups have proposed National Park status for two areas in Idaho--Hells Canyon and Owyhee Canyonlands.

Concern over the integrity of the National Parks by the NPS (through the addition of "unworthy" areas) has been an issue for decades (Mackintosh 1991). This concern was heightened by the dismantling of the agency's legislative affairs office during the Reagan administration, which has decreased the ability of the NPS to provide input into the legislative process whereby new parks are created.

Criteria to evaluate proposed new parks are listed in the NPS management policies manual. Additions to the NPS system should meet the criteria of ***national significance***, ***suitability***, and ***feasibility***, as well as require

direct NPS management instead of management by other agencies or the private sector (NPS 1988). Brief descriptions of these criteria follow.

National significance. This is the most subjective of the three criteria. The meaning of "nationally significant" is open to interpretation, yet ultimately it is the most important criterion for determining whether an area qualifies as a National Park. A proposed unit will be considered nationally significant if it meets four standards: 1) it is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource, 2) it possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage, 3) it offers superlative opportunities for recreation, public use and enjoyment, or scientific study, and 4) it retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource (NPS 1988).

Suitability. Units of the NPS are categorized by natural physiographic region (Figure 2), and each region has a number of natural history themes (NPS 1972, 1990*b*). The major natural history themes have been grouped into larger categories (Table 2). For example, Craters of the Moon National Monument falls within the ***Columbia Plateau*** region and represents a number of themes, including ***works of volcanism***, ***caves and springs***, ***oligocene-recent epochs***, and ***desert ecosystems***.

The NPS adopted the classification scheme of regions and themes to assist with the development of management plans for existing units as well as with the determination of the suitability of an area for addition to the NPS system (NPS 1990*b*). Presumably, the goal of the NPS is to have each theme in each region represented by a unit of the NPS system.

Idaho falls within four of the regions used by the NPS (Figure 2). Most of Idaho is within either the ***Northern Rocky Mountains*** or the ***Columbia Plateau*** region. Most of the themes of the ***Northern Rocky Mountains*** region are represented by current NPS units. All of the themes of the ***Great Basin*** and ***Middle Rocky Mountains*** regions--each of which claims a small portion of Idaho--are represented by at least one unit (NPS 1990*b*). However, within the ***Columbia Plateau*** region a number of themes lack representation. These include ***works of glaciers***, ***tundra***, ***boreal forest***, and ***lakes and ponds*** ecosystems (Table 3). Presumably, any area within the ***Columbia Plateau*** region that possessed one or a combination of these themes could be considered a suitable addition to the NPS system.

Feasibility. To be feasible as a unit of the NPS, the natural systems or historic settings in an area must be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and to accommodate public use. The area must have, for example, the potential for efficient administration at a reasonable cost. Important feasibility factors include land ownership, acquisition costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements (NPS 1988, 1990*c*).

The final step in evaluating a new area for designation as a NPS unit is consideration of current land ownership-administration and management plans. The intent of the review is to determine if NPS administration is ***necessary*** to protect the area and its resources. Even though an area may meet the three criteria of ***national significance***, ***suitability***, and ***feasibility***, alternatives to NPS administration may provide an equal degree of protection.

Although the criteria and considerations outlined above are very specific and described in the NPS management policy manual (NPS 1988), they have not been consistently applied when evaluating new areas (Mackintosh 1991). In the past, only the criterion of ***national significance*** carried much weight. All of the studies conducted by the NPS for areas in

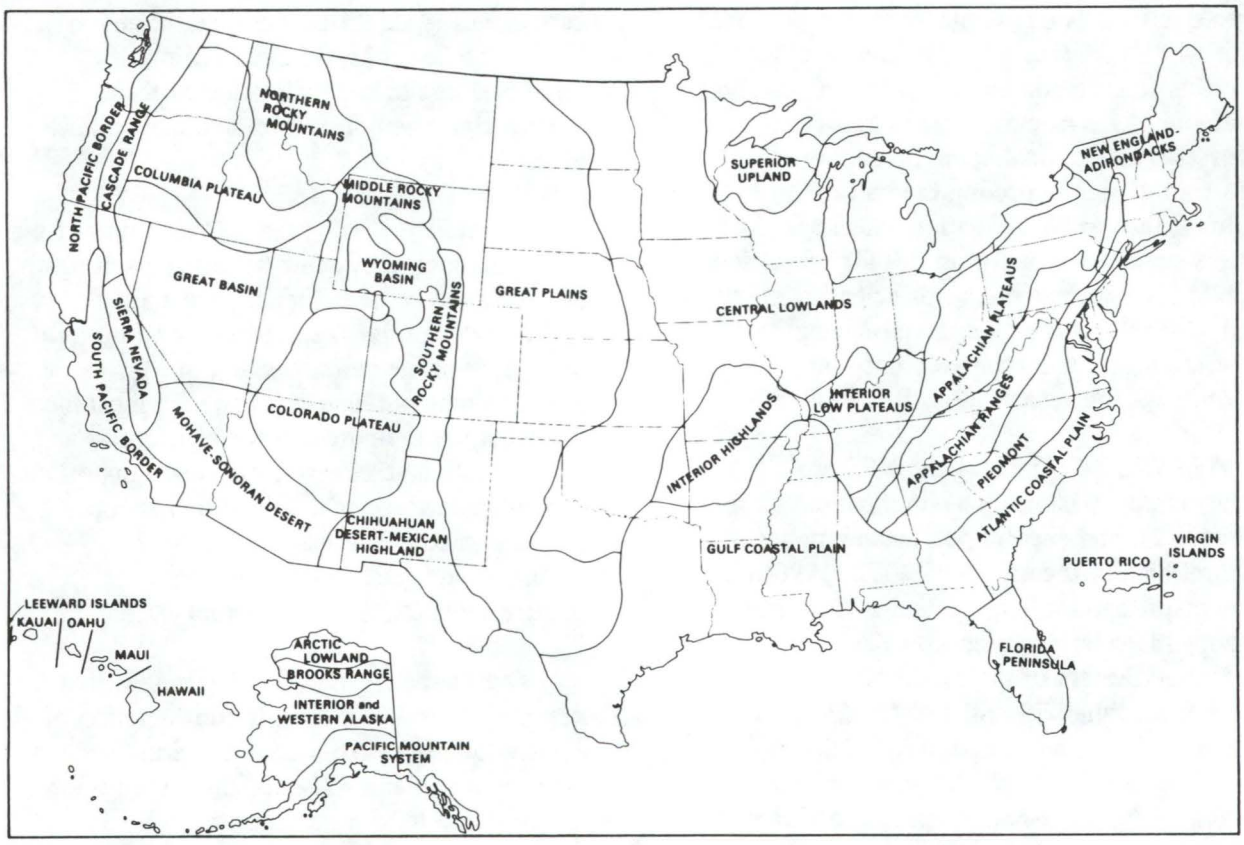

Figure 2. Natural regions of the contiguous United States used by the National Park Service (Fenneman 1928). (Each region has a number of natural history themes that aid in National Park Service planning and evaluating new areas for inclusion into the National Park Service System.)

Source: National Park Service (1990*b*)

Table 2. National Park Service themes.

General Groupings of Themes			
Landforms of the Present	**Geologic History**	**Land Ecosystems**	**Aquatic Ecosystems**
Plains, plateaus, mesas	Precambrian era	Tundra	Marine environments
Cuestas, hogbacks	Cambrian-early silurian	Boreal forest	Estuaries
Mountain systems	Late silurian-devonian	Pacific forest	Underground systems
Works of volcanism	Mississippian-permian	Dry coniferous forest	Lakes and ponds*
Hot water phenomena	Triassic-Cretaceous	Eastern deciduous forest	Streams*
Sculpture of the land	Paleocene-eocene	Grassland (steppe)	
Eolian landforms	Oligocene-recent epochs	Chaparral	
River systems and lakes		Deserts	
Works of glaciers		Tropical ecosystems	
Seashores, lakeshores, & islands			
Coral islands, reefs, atolls			
Caves and springs			

* Numerous subdivisions of these themes are made based on physical factors and water chemistry.

Source: National Park Service (1990*b*)

Table 3. Major natural history regions in Idaho[1] and National Park Service themes (by general grouping).

Region	
Columbia Plateau	**Northern Rocky Mountains**
Landforms of the Present	**Landforms of the Present**
Plains, plateaus, mesas	Plains, plateaus, mesas
Works of volcanism*	Mountain systems
Sculpture of the land	Sculpture of the land
River systems and lakes	River systems and lakes
Works of glaciers†	Works of glaciers
Caves and springs*	Caves and springs
Geologic History	**Geologic History**
Triassic-cretaceous periods	Precambrian era†
Paleocene-eocene	**Land Ecosystems**
Oligocene-recent epochs*	Tundra
Land Ecosystems	Boreal forest
Tundra†	Pacific forest
Boreal forest†	Grassland
Dry coniferous forest	**Aquatic Ecosystems**
Grassland	Lakes and Ponds
Deserts*	Streams
Aquatic Ecosystems	
Lakes and ponds†	
Streams	

* = represented by a National Park Service unit in Idaho.
† = not represented by any National Park Service unit within the region.

Note: If neither an asterisk * or dagger † follow a theme, at least one National Park Service unit in the region represents this theme.

[1] Small portions of the Great Basin and Middle Rocky Mountains natural regions lie in Idaho. All of the themes of those two regions are represented by at least one unit of the National Park Service.

Source: National Park Service (1990*b*)

Idaho have explained how the three criteria were met as well as various alternative management options. Those areas include City of Rocks (NPS 1973), Hagerman Fossil Beds (NPS 1974), Sawtooth National Recreation Area (NPS 1975), and Craters of the Moon (NPS 1989*a*).

National Parks and Other Public Land Units

What land uses are allowed in National Parks, and how does this compare to other federal land management units? Some of the primary differences between a National Park, National Forest, National Monument, National Wildlife

Refuge, National Reserve, National Recreation Area, state forest, and state park are summarized in Table 4. Generally, federal lands are managed for a variety of natural resource products and values. Additionally, special management areas (for example, wilderness areas, National Recreation Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern) focus the agency's scope of management. The basic mission of the NPS dictates a relatively narrow management emphasis compared to the U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The overall mission statements of the various agencies that manage public lands are contained in the original legislation creating the agency, often called their "organic acts." The agencies of today and their missions represent a history of change and adjustment to both political wills and evolving principles in multiple-use management and resource protection (Cubbage et al. 1992). The original mission of the NPS from its organic act of 1916 is still its primary management focus. However, the political compromises that have been necessary to add units to the system have moved the NPS more toward being a multiple-use agency than it was 75 years ago. This trend will likely continue into the future (Steering Committee 1992). Congress has been expanding the duties of the NPS, while placing tighter restrictions on the Forest Service and BLM.

Various segments of the public have different perceptions of federal agencies and land management units. Local residents directly influenced by the management policies of government agencies are likely to understand the differences in management goals of the different federal agencies, but not in areas where only one agency is present. Members and officials of various conservation interest groups can be expected to fully understand the missions and goals of different federal agencies.

How do tourists view different destination points? In a survey of potential tourists about perceptions of federal lands in Utah, Reed (1973) reported that most respondents identified National Parks as their first choice for a vacation destination, followed by National Forests. The preference of the respondents to visit a National Park was significantly greater than for a National Forest visit. National Recreation Areas and National Monuments were ranked near the bottom of the list, indicating that these unit classifications were not closely associated with a specific management agency and their mission.

National Recreation Areas. Idaho has two large National Recreation Areas (NRAs)--Hells Canyon NRA and Sawtooth NRA--managed by the Forest Service. Both the Forest Service and NPS manage NRAs. Generic criteria for NRAs specify that they have high recreation carrying capacity, are greater than 20,000 acres, and located where there are 30 million people or more within a 250-mile radius (Task Force on Outdoor Recreation Resources and Opportunities 1988). Most, but not all, NRAs conform to these specifications.

Twelve of the 18 NRAs managed by the NPS are associated with large reservoirs. Management of these NRAs emphasizes water-based recreation, often through cooperative agreements with the Bureau of Reclamation or the Army Corps of Engineers (NPS 1989*b*, 1990*d*). Most of the remaining NRAs managed by the NPS are located near major population centers and provide recreational opportunities for a relatively localized constituency (Mackintosh 1991). National Park Service management of NRAs emphasizes recreation management as well as resource protection.

In contrast to the NPS, only one NRA managed by the Forest Service is associated with a large reservoir and all are in relatively rural or remote mountain areas. Approximately 60% of Forest Service NRAs contain

Table 4. Land uses permitted in various designations of public land management units.

Unit	Administering agency[1]	Primary objectives or purpose	Permitted uses
National Park	USDI-NPS	Resource protection, recreation, education, research	Defined in enabling legislation[2]
National Monument[3]	USDI-NPS	Same as above	Same as above
National Reserve[4]	USDI-NPS	Same as above	Same as above
National Preserve[5]	USDI-NPS	Same as above, plus sport and subsistence hunting and trapping	Same as above
National Recreation Area	USDI-NPS or USDA-FS	Recreation and resource protection	Developments supporting recreation, motorized recreation, and extractive uses (hunting, timber harvest, grazing, and mining) as defined in enabling legislation
National Forest	USDA-FS	Production and conservation of multiple natural resource values plus special management areas	Numerous and varied
National Wildlife Refuge	USDI-FWS	Wildlife conservation, habitat protection and enhancement	Recreation, grazing, mining, oil leasing, etc., that does not compromise primary purpose. May or may not include hunting
Bureau of Land Management	USDI	Production and conservation of multiple natural resource values plus special management areas	Numerous and varied
State Forest, general[6]	State agency	Production and conservation of many natural resource values and commodities	Numerous and varied
State Forest, federal land grant	State agency	Revenue for trust fund beneficiaries[7]	Timber management, various leases, etc.
State Park, general	State agency	Recreation and resource protection	Developments supporting recreation

(Footnotes are on the next page.)

Table 4. Footnotes.

[1] USDI = United States Department of the Interior, USDA = United States Department of Agriculture, NPS = National Park Service, FS = Forest Service, FWS = Fish and Wildlife Service.

[2] Uses beyond the primary purposes may be specified in enabling legislation or management plans, and may include hunting, grazing, limited development, and mining. According to Coggins (1992), the Secretary of the Interior may permit timber harvesting for disease or pest control in a National Park.

[3] National Monuments are created by Presidential proclamation and represent unique natural areas, cultural areas, or historic sites that lack the size, diversity, and range of attractions of a National Park.

[4] National Reserves are considered temporary, to be turned over to appropriate state agency when feasible, and were created to provide immediate and necessary resource protection in cooperation with state agencies and other federal agencies.

[5] National Preserves typically adjoin National Parks and are areas in which enabling legislation allows for uses inconsistent with National Park status.

[6] State-owned forest land acquired from any source other than federal grant lands.

[7] Required on all federal land grants. See Policy Analysis Group Report No. 1, "Idaho's Endowment Lands: A Matter of Sacred Trust" (1990).

designated wilderness areas or are surrounded by such. Many encompass exceptionally scenic areas (Sawtooth Advisory Board 1989). Forest Service management of NRAs has diverse objectives. Recreation is emphasized, but these NRAs are managed for timber harvesting, livestock grazing, and motorized recreation.

Management Policy

Land uses in National Parks are generally restricted by the NPS mission and dual objectives of 1) protecting natural resources and natural ecosystem function and structure, and 2) providing recreation activities and access for the public. Most National Parks have three types of building developments in them: 1) campgrounds and concessions that support recreation and tourism, 2) visitor centers and nature trails facilitating natural history interpretation and education, and 3) headquarters buildings and housing for administrative activities.

Land development in National Parks is variable and appears to reflect the mood or philosophy of the period as well as public demand. Some of the most extensive development has probably occurred in Yosemite--one of the earliest, best known, and most visited National Parks. Yosemite was established and developed during a period when management emphasized public access for recreation. At that time, expansion of the system was also a top priority (Mackintosh 1991). In contrast, the general management plan for Great Basin National Park--the most recent, least known, and least visited National Park--recommends limiting modern development to 1% of the area, relocation of administrative sites outside of the park, limited concession services, and complete protection of 15% of the park (NPS 1991*b*).

National Park management planning uses a zoning concept (NPS 1988). Parks and other NPS units are divided into four management zones that specify the land uses permitted based on the characteristics and resources of

each area (Table 5). Zones can range from those allowing intensive modern development to an official federal wilderness area. Four primary management zones have been identified: natural, cultural, park development, and special use. Within this framework subzones may be designated to achieve management goals specified in the enabling legislation. This allows management to focus on specific types of protection or development (NPS 1988).

One of the most controversial management policies on federal lands is how commercial services are handled. The NPS manages these concessions through a contract process that is usually, but not always, granted through competitive bids (NPS 1988). In contrast, the Forest Service manages commercial services through special-use permits. Permit applications are decided case-by-case and evaluated based on their ability to help the Forest Service meet its management goals.

Wilderness Management. Because land use is highly restricted on official federal wilderness areas, the designation and management of wilderness is controversial. How do the land uses allowed in a National Park compare to those in a wilderness area? The NPS continues to review areas that may qualify as wilderness as directed by the Wilderness Act of 1964 or subsequent legislation directing that wilderness studies be made (NPS 1988). Any new National Park that may be created in Idaho would be subjected to wilderness review by the NPS and it is quite likely that a portion of the park would be recommended for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. In fact, the areas of Idaho that are possible National Parks either already contain officially designated wilderness or have been officially recommended for wilderness designation (see **PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL PARKS IN IDAHO** section).

Nationwide, 23 of the 50 National Parks (or 46%) contain officially designated wilderness areas, and others have areas under consideration for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Twelve National Monuments (15%) contain designated wilderness, as do 5 National Seashores (50%). The only other NPS unit to contain official wilderness is a National River (Hendee et al. 1990, NPS 1989*b*). The designation of a wilderness area in a National Park requires that the preservation of wilderness character becomes a statutory purpose of the park and the primary management emphasis for the area. Uses incompatible with wilderness designation are only permitted when such use is based on prior use rights granted by the enabling legislation (NPS 1988).

Wilderness management differs among federal agencies, which may influence positions people take on National Park legislation. The NPS probably adheres more closely to the definition of wilderness as "untrammeled by man" than do other agencies. Criteria for a National Park wilderness area are similar to those for other federal agencies as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964. However, lands previously altered by human use may be suitable for wilderness designation, depending on the extent of human impact and the possibility of reclamation. Wilderness management activities involving the use of tools, equipment, and structures may be permitted if necessary for management objectives and visitor safety. Prior uses, such as grazing, may be permitted as long as motorized vehicles and permanent structures are not involved. Mining is prohibited and previously mined areas should only be recommended for wilderness if past claims are to be relinquished in the near future. Areas with underground utility lines may become wilderness if maintenance does not require the use of motorized vehicles. No new utility lines are allowed in a wilderness area. An historic site may remain in a wilderness area as long as it is a secondary attraction and undeveloped.

Table 5. National Park management zones, their purpose, and some subzones used for developing National Park management plans.

Zone	Purpose	Subzones
Natural	Preservation, recreation	Outstanding natural area, Natural environment, Protected natural area, Wilderness, Research natural area, Special management
Cultural	Preservation, protection, and interpretation of cultural areas	Preservation, Adaptive use, Commemoration
Development	Provide and maintain facilities for managers and visitors	Administrative, Visitor support, Landscape management
Special use	Activities not appropriate in other zones	Commercial, Mining, Grazing, Forest utilization, Reservoir

Source: National Park Service (1988).

The NPS also identifies areas of ***Potential Wilderness*** that at the time of review have some temporary, incompatible uses (NPS 1988). A potential wilderness area must be managed as wilderness to the extent possible. The NPS classifies both wilderness or potential wilderness as Natural Zones (Table 5). Natural zones in parks often become an administrative or *de facto* wilderness, without official designation but managed in a similar manner.

Wilderness management in National Parks, as elsewhere, is largely preservation oriented, excluding most activities except temporary human visitation under primitive conditions. Even this may be denied under special conditions, such as in grizzly bear habitat.

As Table 6 indicates, the National Park Service manages 6.1 million acres of wilderness in the contiguous 48 states. Craters of the Moon National Monument contains 43,000 acres of designated wilderness that, along with a portion of Arizona's Petrified Forest National Park, was the first congressionally designated wilderness in the NPS system (NPS 1989*b*). The U.S. Forest Service manages 3,960,221 acres of wilderness in Idaho, out of its total of 27.8 million acres of wilderness in the "Lower 48" states. Only Alaska (57.1 million), California (5.9 million), and Washington (4.3 million) have more designated wilderness acreage than Idaho's 4,004,184 acres.

Allin (1987) examined differences in wilderness management practices between the Forest Service and NPS and concluded that the management styles of the two agencies reflected historical origins and core values as related to their basic missions. National Park Service wilderness management was relatively intense and highly regulatory with strict enforcement, a reflection of early national park management by the U.S. Army. The NPS appeared to be an eager wilderness manager, resulting in lower use of wilderness areas and

Table 6. Extent of the National Wilderness Preservation System (in millions of acres) by federal land management agency, 1989.

Agency	"Lower 48"	Alaska	Total
U.S. Dept. of the Interior			
National Park Service	6.1	33.0	39.1
Bureau of Land Management	0.5	0.0	0.5
Fish and Wildlife Service	0.7	18.7	19.3
U.S. Department of Agriculture			
Forest Service	27.8	5.5	33.3
Total	35.1	57.1	92.2

Note: Totals do not add because of rounding.

Source: Adapted from Hendee et al. (1990).

less resource damage. In contrast, the Forest Service appeared to be a reluctant wilderness manager, with less regulation, greater use of wilderness areas, and higher levels of resource damage. Forest Service management was primarily reactive, controlling use only after damage was extensive. The Forest Service was more likely to try to educate wilderness users in order to modify their behavior rather than impose restrictive regulations, a reflection of the agency's more utilitarian mission (Allin 1987).

If historical origins and core values of federal agencies guide wilderness management as Allin (1987) suggested, then we might expect the BLM to manage the 467,000 acres of wilderness under its jurisdiction similar to the Forest Service. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages 19.3 million acres of wilderness on the National Wildlife Refuges; all but 700,000 acres are in Alaska (Table 6). Refuge management varies. Some refuges are closed to the public and managed as wildlife sanctuaries, others are guided by multiple-use principles. Management of wilderness on the National Wildlife Refuges is dictated by individual Refuge Management Plans that incorporate both wilderness and wildlife management objectives (Hendee et al. 1990), probably resulting in a variety of wilderness management approaches by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION

Arguments For National Park Designation

Arguments for National Park designation seem to be based on three assumptions: 1) better resource protection, 2) increased local economic activity, and 3) better recreation management. Analysis of each argument follows.

Better Resource Protection. Case studies and the management orientation of the NPS both suggest that the agency does a better job of protecting resources than other agencies by implementing and enforcing greater restrictions in land uses (Allin 1987, NPS 1988). The Forest Service and BLM often extract natural resources in ways that alter the resource base. Generally, the harvest of natural resources from NPS lands is limited or non-existent, resulting in little alteration of the resource base

from extractive uses. However, legislative trends and recent park proposals (Bailey 1990*a*, NPS 1991*b*) suggest that additions to the NPS system in Idaho would probably be in the form of a National Park abutted by a National Preserve, or that enabling legislation would be likely to mandate continuation of some extractive uses. Greater resource protection would occur within National Park units, but may not be realized in National Preserves. When the NPS evaluated the proposal to expand Craters of the Moon National Monument--which included adding areas administered by the BLM into a National Park and Preserve--the agency concluded that the NPS could not provide protection greater than that already offered by BLM management (NPS 1990*a*).

Many NPS units were created from lands administered by the Forest Service. In the past, the suggestion of such transfers prompted the Forest Service to specify special management areas--such as primitive areas, the predecessors to wilderness areas--and adopt management plans emphasizing recreation and resource protection (Twight 1983). These actions by the Forest Service suggest only that NPS management would have resulted in greater resource protection prior to the adoption of new Forest Service management plans.

Increased Local Economic Activity. Because a National Park is of national significance, local economic impact viewed from a broader national perspective is not an especially significant argument. Increased tourism in one area is likely to result in a reduction in tourism in another area as visitors substitute one visit for another. Tourism gains from a new National Park may merely substitute tourism lost at another National Park or resource-based tourism destination.

Nonetheless, local economic impact arguments are important. Well-designed and detailed studies are needed to determine if National Park status does confer any local economic advantages. In general terms, most would agree that National Parks attract tourists and that tourism can have positive benefits to local economies (McNeely 1988). However, specific information supporting the hypothesis that National Park designation leads to increased tourism and economic activity in areas surrounding National Parks is limited. Posner et al. (1981) examined the impact of Virgin Islands National Park on the local economy and asserted that the total benefit-cost ratio based on all costs was 11:1. However, they qualified this assessment by noting that it was difficult to guess at tourism levels in the area without a park.

A general shift from extractive to amenity based natural resources has occurred over the last two or three decades in the greater Yellowstone area, which includes 20 counties in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. Rusker et al. (1992) reported that this shift represents greater economic diversity in the region from increases in tourism, recreation, retirement, and other nonlabor income. Most such economic analyses consider the benefits and costs of resource development versus preservation and wilderness recreation. Other examples include hydropower in Hells Canyon (Krutilla and Fisher 1975) and mining in the White Cloud Mountains of Idaho (Bowes and Krutilla 1989).

We are concerned about a different issue that has not received much analytical attention. The question most pertinent to this study asks whether changing federal lands currently under another classification or administered by another agency to a National Park managed by the NPS would result in increased visitation. Perhaps it would, but we cannot say that with any certainty. We could locate only one study of visitation before and after the designation of a National Park. Visitation to two areas in Utah that were National Monuments and then declared National Parks in 1971 increased by 10% in one area and 13% in the other during 1972 (Reed 1973), but visitation rates at both areas had been increasing at an annual rate of

about 11% since 1968. These limited data from two units, twenty years ago, severely limit generalizations that can be made today. Furthermore, the influence of other potentially contributing factors would make such generalizations difficult, including federal highway improvements, national economic trends, park improvements, and increased publicity associated with the change in status as well as national publicity about the National Parks centennial that was celebrated in 1972.

Reed's (1973) study tried to determine if people perceived public lands differently based solely on the title or classification of the area. They seemed to. Reed's results supported the idea of a "prestige hierarchy" in recreationists' perceptions of public lands that influenced which type of area they would choose as a vacation destination. National Parks were at the top of the hierarchy and were preferred significantly more than National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, National Recreation Areas, and National Monuments, respectively. Reed's study supports, to a limited extent, the idea that National Park designation would increase visitation and thus economic activity. However, the full extent and significance of this generalization are unknown. These problems point out a need for research to specifically quantify tourism levels and economic activity associated with changing an existing federal land management unit to a National Park.

The NPS has addressed the increased economic activity hypothesis. When they evaluated Craters of the Moon National Monument for National Park and Preserve designation in 1990, the NPS recognized the high expectations of increased tourism held by many people. The NPS cautioned that visitation to the area would not necessarily increase because Craters of the Moon lacked "spectacular" features and most of the area would be managed as wilderness (NPS 1990*a*). On the other hand, when evaluating Hagerman Fossil Beds and City of Rocks for designation as National Monuments, the NPS emphasized the potential economic benefits to local economies (NPS 1973, 1974). The dichotomy of opinion within the NPS--in these Idaho examples spread out over almost two decades--illustrates the uncertainty of economic activity associated with NPS management. Furthermore, visitation to NPS units may depend as much on proximity to major highways and other significant attractions as much as on NPS unit classification.

The impacts, economic and otherwise, of creating new National Parks are likely to be greatest on the "gateway communities" that border National Parks along major access routes. Trends in NPS management are toward moving developments and visitor facilities outside of park boundaries, most likely into gateway communities. An NPS working group recommended that the agency encourage private sector visitor services development in these communities and actively assist local governments in long-term land use planning. With proper planning and adequate assistance, these recommendations could significantly contribute to local economic development (Jordan et al., ca. 1992, Working Group on Park Use and Enjoyment, Draft Final Report to the NPS).

Better Recreation Management. If one is willing to assume that visitation would increase following National Park designation, increased recreational impact on natural resources could follow. This can be controlled by a permit system. Allin (1987) observed that the NPS vigorously enforced the regulations concerning recreation in National Park wilderness areas. Considering the overall mission and other legislative mandates of the NPS compared to other agencies, differences in resource protection and recreation management would be expected. Federal multiple-use agencies--the Forest Service and BLM--have a more complex mission.

Many National Park advocates assume that shifting land from the Forest Service, BLM, or Fish and Wildlife Service to the NPS

would result in better management because of increased funding levels. There is little evidence this would be the case. Like all federal agencies, the NPS budget is limited and additions to the system can take funds away from other areas and programs (U.S. Congress 1976). However, a shift in funding priorities is likely to accompany a change in administration. The NPS is more likely to emphasize recreation programs and adopt and enforce stricter regulations protecting resources.

An often overlooked benefit of National Park designation is the accompanying effort at public education and interpretation of the resources of the park. Interpretation and education is one of the major activities of the NPS (NPS 1988) and NPS efforts in that area probably exceed those of other federal land management agencies. In 1988, the Forest Service had 50 visitor centers with interpretive programs (Forest Service 1989). In contrast, it is NPS management policy (NPS 1988) to provide interpretive programs in all NPS units. The NPS 75th Anniversary Symposium listed education and interpretation programs as one of the agency's strategic objectives (Steering Committee 1992).

Another aspect of NPS management of an area may relate to the organizational structure of the agencies involved. The NPS has one less layer of management authority. Each NPS unit has a Superintendent who reports to a Regional Director who reports to the NPS Director in Washington, D.C. In contrast, each National Forest is divided into districts managed by a District Ranger who reports to the Forest Supervisor, who in turn reports to a Regional Forester, who then reports to the Chief in Washington, D.C. What effect the elimination of one level of bureaucracy would have on the management of an area is unknown, but one that the Sawtooth Advisory Board (1989) said was worth considering. The BLM has the same number of levels as the NPS. BLM lands are divided into Resource Areas that are overseen by a District Manager who reports to the State Director, who then reports to the BLM Director in Washington, D.C.

Arguments Against National Park Designation

Arguments against National Park designation fall into three general areas: 1) changing existing land uses, 2) over-use of natural resources and over-development of the surrounding areas, and 3) inadequate budgets for the NPS to adequately manage the existing National Parks, let alone new ones. Analysis of each argument follows.

Changing Existing Land Uses. Opposition to National Park designation centers around the loss of existing land uses. This objection is most intense at local and regional levels, but national interests also play a role. The validity of this argument depends on stipulations in the enabling legislation. Land use activities such as hunting, trapping, livestock grazing, logging, and mining will most likely, but not necessarily, be foregone in a National Park. Hunting, trapping, and possible other extractive activities are permitted in National Preserves.

One argument against National Park designation is that recent trends in enabling legislation creating National Parks reflect political compromises that often allow for the continuation of existing levels of hunting, livestock grazing, and minerals exploration and extraction. For example, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 created vast acreages of parks and wilderness in Alaska, but preserved sport and subsistence hunting and trapping rights in most of the new Alaska NPS units (Mackintosh 1991). However, this compromise may have been necessary simply due to the large number of units created and land area involved. As another example, legislation creating Great Basin National Park allowed the continuation of livestock grazing permits and valid minerals

claims (NPS 1991*b*). Grazing was allowed because it had historical significance.

These compromises in enabling legislation are moving the NPS in the direction of becoming a multiple-use land management agency, further complicating the already somewhat inconsistent dual mission of resource protection and recreation use. Resistance to this change within the NPS is apparent and understandable, given the agency's mission and history. These mandated multiple-use activities further strap limited budgets. The NPS is likely to adopt stricter regulations governing these activities, decreasing historic use levels if resource damage is evident, and is likely to enforce land use regulations vigorously. However, the NPS may have to initially enter into cooperative management agreements with the agencies previously overseeing these uses due to time lags in budget and staff appropriations. The net effect is a continuation of the status quo, at least temporarily, with the NPS eventually taking control once the necessary staff are in place and NPS management plans have been adopted (NPS 1991*b*, 1991*c*). The BLM has continued to manage livestock grazing following the creation of Great Basin National park (NPS 1991*b*), and cooperative management agreements may increase in the future (Steering Committee 1992).

Over-Use and Over-Development. The possible over-use of resources and over-development of areas in and around National Parks is the flip side of increased tourism. The scenario of a "Disneyland" atmosphere associated with National Parks is based on what has transpired in parks like Great Smokey Mountains, Yellowstone, Yosemite, and, to a lesser extent, the Grand Canyon. These are, of course, among the best known and the most visited National Parks. The potential for increased tourism is real, although difficult to document. When visitation is heavy, the NPS may respond by closing areas or regulating use through a permit system that limits access to the area. Regulated use levels may be based on the best scientific estimates of visitor carrying capacity of the resources or, more often, the judgment of the Park Superintendent (NPS 1988). Permit systems could actually decrease the number of tourists that make certain units a vacation destination if the requirement for limited permits was well publicized. Permit systems have also been used to disperse visitors, even when visitation is low, in order to achieve a quality experience for the visitor. An objection to permit systems stems from perceived backlogs that result in delays of several months or years before an applicant can visit an area. However, permit backlogs are relatively rare, with the notable exception of river recreation in the Grand Canyon.

The NPS recognizes that the park experience is affected equally by conditions both inside the park and outside of it on surrounding lands. The agency seeks to work with adjacent landowners to solve problems associated with over-development. National Park management policies and regulations emphasize out-of-park enterprises whenever possible and tight regulation of in-park concessions (NPS 1988). Although permit systems can set visitor use levels within a park, single day permits are usually unrestricted and the NPS has no control of over-crowding at private facilities or the development of surrounding private lands outside of cooperative agreements.

Inadequate Budget. Another objection to designating new National Parks is based on the condition of existing National Parks. During the last two decades, NPS budgets have not kept pace with operations and maintenance needs, resulting in facilities that are inadequate and in poor condition. This situation was brought to the public's attention in 1975 by a National Parks and Conservation Association survey of National Park Superintendents that documented a facilities maintenance and repair problem. Congressional hearings were held on the subject, and the lack of funds for personnel

increases and maintenance programs were identified as the source of the problem. Blame was placed on the President's Office of Management and Budget (U.S. Congress 1976).

A $1.8 billion backlog in NPS maintenance requirements was revealed by a recent audit by the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of the Interior (1992). The backlog existed despite two funding initiatives specifically implemented to help alleviate the problem. The Inspector General's report stated that the addition of 30 new units to the NPS system between 1980 and 1990 helped contribute to the problem, along with increased visitation rates and other external factors. Opponents often argue that the NPS cannot take care of its current units and that adding new units would only exacerbate the problem. The obvious solution to this problem is modifying funding levels and priorities set by Congress. This objection as it relates to new parks could possibly be overcome with a specific budget appropriation attached to the enabling legislation.

The NPS does not face the budget problem alone. Funding is generally inadequate for all federal land management agencies. Since the extractive use of resources in National Parks is limited, lack of funds has less potential to result in resource damage than other federal lands where extractive uses are near maximum and need to be monitored to insure conservation of resources.

PROPOSALS FOR NATIONAL PARKS IN IDAHO

Efforts to create a National park in Idaho date back to the early 1900s (NPS 1975). We included areas of Idaho in this analysis that had either been officially studied by the NPS, had legislation introduced at some time, or had been officially or unofficially proposed for National Park Status by a citizen conservation group.

Five areas in Idaho may be suitable for National Park designation or have been proposed at one time or another. Four are within the ***Columbia Plateau*** natural region--City of Rocks, Craters of the Moon, Hells Canyon, and Owyhee Canyonlands--and the other--Sawtooth National Recreation Area--is in the ***Northern Rocky Mountains*** natural region (see Figures 1 and 2). The following sections describe these five areas. Table 7 provides a summary of some physical information pertaining to them. Table 8 summarizes information about proposals for making these five areas National Parks.

Because the criteria for determining whether or not an area qualifies as a National Park are subjective and based on professional judgment, such determination is best left to NPS study teams and the public policy process. We therefore do not offer any recommendations as to which, if any, of these areas should be designated as a National Park.

City of Rocks National Reserve

This area is located in southern Idaho (Figure 1) and was added to the NPS system in 1988. We included this area because local residents have suggested that it become a National Park. According to the NPS (1991*c*), National Reserves are to be managed cooperatively by the NPS and other appropriate federal and state agencies. Currently, there are only four National Reserves, each with unique enabling legislation defining management goals and objectives. The general intent of Reserve status is to provide for immediate and temporary protection by the NPS with the possibility of a future transfer to an appropriate state agency. Legislation creating the City of Rocks National Reserve (Public Law 100-696, Title 11, 1988) contained language allowing the Secretary of the Interior to transfer management and administration of the area over to state or local governments if and when they enact ordinances or adopt regulations that will protect the resources of the area.

Table 7. Characteristics of 5 areas in Idaho previously proposed for National Park designation.

Area[1]	Counties	Acreage[1]	Current Administrator	Physiographic Region	NPS Themes
City of Rocks National Reserve	Cassia	14,320	National Park Service in cooperation with State of Idaho	Columbia Plateau	Sculpture of the land, Geologic History (several), Desert ecosystem, Mountain systems
Craters of the Moon National Monument	Blaine, Butte	53,545	National Park Service	Columbia Plateau	Works of volcanism, Oligocene-recent epochs, Desert ecosystem
Hells Canyon National Recreation Area	Adams, Idaho	652,488	U.S. Forest Service	Columbia Plateau	Has not been surveyed by the National Park Service
Sawtooth National Recreation Area	Blaine, Boise, Camas, Custer, Elmore	753,831	U.S. Forest Service	Northern Rocky Mountains	Mountain systems, Works of glaciers, Tundra, Lakes & ponds
Owyhee Canyonlands	Owyhee	377,560	Bureau of Land Management	Columbia Plateau	Has not been surveyed by the National Park Service

[1] Proposals generally include land surrounding these areas in addition to the specified area.

City of Rocks has some interesting rock formations that have both cultural and natural history significance. Because it was a natural landmark and wayside for settlers traveling west along the California trail, the area is of regional significance and may be considered ***nationally significant*** by some. The area was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1964 and a National Natural Landmark in 1976. About half of the 14,320 acre Reserve is privately owned and has a long history of recreational use by local residents. City of Rocks is becoming nationally renowned as an outstanding recreation area for technical rock climbing. Livestock grazing is a major land use within the reserve. Hunting is allowed by the enabling legislation as amended by an appropriations act.

The NPS states that City of Rocks is within the ***Columbia Plateau*** region and represents the ***sculpture of the land***, ***oligocene-recent epochs***, and ***desert*** themes, and thus is ***suitable***. However, all three of these themes are currently represented by one or more NPS units in the region (NPS 1973,

Table 8. Summary of information on proposals for a National Park in 5 Idaho areas.

Area and Current Status	Proposed by	Affected interests	Studied by[1] and recommendations	Study Outcome
City of Rocks National Reserve	Local residents	Grazing, hunting	NPS, qualified as a National Monument (1973)	Designated a National Reserve in 1988
Craters of the Moon National Monument	Congressman Stallings (1989)	Grazing, hunting	NPS, recommended no change (1990)	No change in status, possible legislative action[2]
Hells Canyon National Recreational Area	Hells Canyon Preservation Council, requested NPS study (1992)	Grazing, hunting, timber, power boating	None as yet	Not applicable
Sawtooth National Recreation Area	Numerous proposals; Congress[3] (1975)	Grazing, hunting, mining, timber, motorized recreation	NPS (1975), recommended combined National Park and National Recreation Area	Denied by Secretary of the Interior (1977), no change in status
			Sawtooth Advisory Board (1989), recommended no change[4]	No change in status
Owyhee Canyonlands	Committee for Idaho's High Desert (1991)	Grazing, hunting, U.S. Air Force	BLM, recommended as wilderness area, and special management area	No change in status

[1] NPS = National Park Service; BLM = Bureau of Land Management

[2] Congressman Stallings introduced legislation in 1991 to create a National Park and Preserve and publicly stated that the legislation would be re-introduced in 1992. However, in April 1992 he said the bill would probably not be introduced during the current session.

[3] Legislation creating the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in 1970 (Public Law 92-400 §14) instructed the National Park Service to study the area for designation as a unit of the National Park Service system.

[4] Formed at the request of Congressman Larry Craig to re-evaluate the Sawtooth NRA for National Park consideration.

1990*b*). Careful examination of Figures 1 and 2 indicates that the area may fall into the ***Great Basin*** region, but all these themes are represented by other parks in that region.

City of Rocks National Reserve is probably too small an area to be ***feasible*** for a National Park and the area is not suitable for wilderness designation. All of the alternatives in the comprehensive management plan for the area suggest that additional lands be incorporated into the Reserve or managed cooperatively to enhance the natural and historic values of the area (NPS 1991*c*). In addition, the amount of private land that would have to be acquired further limits the area's feasibility. As yet, no National Reserve has had a status change to a National Park, and the legislation creating City of Rocks clearly suggested that NPS administration of the area is temporary, thus seeming to preclude it from National Park consideration.

Craters of the Moon National Monument

Craters of the Moon has ***national significance*** (NPS 1990*a*). It is the only example of a volcanic rift system in the continental United States and was added to the NPS system in 1924 by a Presidential proclamation. The boundary of the Monument has since been extended five times and now encompasses 53,545 acres. Craters of the Moon is in the ***Columbia Plateau*** region.

In 1970, an area of 43,243 acres in Craters of the Moon National Monument was designated as wilderness. In 1989, legislation was introduced to create a National Park from Craters of the Moon. In conjunction with the proposal, Congressman Richard Stallings (D-ID) requested that the NPS conduct a reconnaissance survey to evaluate the potential of Craters of the Moon National Monument and surrounding lands as a National Park (NPS 1989*a*, 1990*a*). The study team considered five alternatives and concluded that to be a feasible change, the current Monument and portions of adjacent BLM wilderness study areas should be designated a National Park and that additional surrounding BLM land become a National Preserve allowing for motorized recreation, livestock grazing, and hunting. The National Park and Preserve suggestion would expand the area under NPS administration to 561,016 acres (Table 9) and followed the proposal outlined in the 1989 legislation (H.R. 3782).

Although the NPS study indicated that Craters of the Moon National Monument and surrounding lands met the three criteria of ***national significance***, ***suitability***, and ***feasibility***, the study team recommended that the status of the area as a National Monument not be changed. Of the 50 existing National Parks, 22 (or 44%) were previously National Monuments. The NPS study team stated that current resource protection was adequate under cooperative NPS and BLM management (NPS 1990*a*). However, during the 1991 congressional session, Congressman Stallings re-introduced the bill that would create a Craters of the Moon National Park and Great Rift National Preserve from Craters of the Moon National Monument and surrounding lands. No action was taken on the bill prior to adjournment. In early 1992, Congressman Stallings publicly stated that he would resubmit the bill, but in April 1992 conceded that there was not enough time left in the Congressional session for consideration.

Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA)

This area of 652,488 acres is managed by the U.S. Forest Service and is located in northern Idaho and Oregon along the Snake River (Figure 1). Hells Canyon is deeper than the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona and has a number of world-class white water rapids. Recreation is the current management emphasis for the area. Livestock grazing is also a major land use. Timber harvesting is permissible in a small portion of the HCNRA--approximately 80,000 acres,

Table 9. Proposed Craters of the Moon National Park and associated Great Rift National Preserve ownership status and acreage.

Proposed Unit	Current Ownership	Acreage[1]
Craters of the Moon National Park	National Park Service (Craters of the Moon National Monument)	53,545
	Bureau of Land Management (Wilderness Study Areas 33-1, 33-4)	367,016
	State of Idaho	17,649
	Private	577
Great Rift National Preserve	Bureau of Land Management (Monument and Big Butte resource areas)	117,165
	State of Idaho	5,752
	Private	3
Total		561,707

[1] From Idaho Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Idaho, following expansion alternative B of the National Park Service (1990*a*).

or 12% of the area--with selective harvest methods that have been mandated by Congress. Legislation creating HCNRA defined three wilderness areas encompassing a total of 194,132 acres as well as 12 roadless areas to be reviewed for wilderness status. The Forest Service Comprehensive Management Plan for HCNRA recommends three more additions to the wilderness system, totalling 25,158 acres, (Forest Service 1981).

Some people are unhappy with Forest Service management of HCNRA, and National Park designation has been proposed as an alternative to Forest Service administration by some citizens' groups. To date, no NRA has become a National Park. Livestock grazing management, wildlife management, timber harvesting practices, unlimited powerboat use, lack of funds, and funding priorities of the Forest Service are the primary areas of dissatisfaction (Bailey 1990*b*).

The Hells Canyon Preservation Council is the lead citizen interest group promoting a combination of National Park and Preserve status for HCNRA and surrounding lands (Bailey 1990*a*). In February 1992, the group made a formal presentation of their proposal to the U.S. Congress and the American public and called for an NPS study of the area. Their proposal (summarized in Table 10) included a total of 1.5 million acres in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington and would designate two

Table 10. Proposed Hells Canyon National Park and Preserve[1] units, acreage by state and by current ownership.

State, and current ownership	Hells Canyon National Park	High Wallowas National Park	Snake River Breaks National Recreation Area	Chief Joseph National Preserve
Idaho	114,300	0	4,900	170,200
Oregon	35,800	167,200	8,200	1,000,900
Washington	0	0	0	16,500
Forest Service	150,000	164,200	3,800	1,109,800
Bureau of Land Management	0	0	5,100	28,600
Other[2]	0	3,000	4,200	49,200
Total	150,100	167,200	13,100	1,187,600

[1] As proposed by the Hells Canyon Preservation Council (1992).

[2] Presumably state or private lands.

National Parks surrounded by a National Preserve, and create a Snake River Breaks National Recreation Area centered around Hells Canyon Reservoir (Bailey 1990*a*, 1990*b*, 1991; HCPC 1992). Most of the complex would be in Oregon and involves land currently administered by the Forest Service and BLM.

Hells Canyon National Recreation Area and surrounding lands are in the ***Columbia Plateau*** region. The physical and biological features of HCNRA would likely be considered ***nationally significant*** by most people. We do not know what the judgment of the NPS would be. Hells Canyon National Recreation Area may represent several ***Geologic History*** themes and would represent three other themes--***sculpture of the land, river systems and lakes***, and ***dry coniferous forest***--that are currently represented by one other NPS unit in the region. More significantly, the Seven Devils area in Idaho and the High Wallowas in Oregon would very likely represent the themes ***works of glaciers***, ***tundra***, and ***lakes and ponds*** ecosystems. These three themes are currently not represented by any NPS unit in the ***Columbia Plateau*** region (Table 3), making HCNRA eminently ***suitable***. The proposed area is large enough to be ***feasible*** as a National Park and Preserve, but may be considered too large by some, including the NPS.

Owyhee Canyonlands

This area is in southwestern Idaho (Figure 1) and is currently managed by the BLM as *de facto* wilderness. In early 1992, Governor Cecil Andrus of Idaho proposed that 154,000 acres in this remote area be used as a bombing range by the U.S. Air Force. The BLM (1989) proposed the area for official wilderness designation encompassing 377,560 acres of the Owyhee river and bordering canyonlands in Idaho, Oregon, and Nevada. The Idaho portion includes 178,295 acres, or 47% of the total proposed wilderness. Portions of the proposed wilderness area and bombing range overlap. The Committee for Idaho's High Desert, a citizen conservation group, is the primary proponent for National Park designation (Crosby 1991). However, no formal plans or proposals have been made as of early 1992.

Owyhee Canyonlands is in the ***Columbia Plateau*** region, may be ***nationally significant*** (P. Fritz, pers. commun.) and would represent several ***suitability*** themes: ***plains, plateaus, and mesas; river systems and lakes***; ***sculpture of the land***; and the ***desert ecosystem***, all of which are currently represented by at least one other NPS unit in the region. At least one ***Geologic History*** theme would be represented. The area is probably large enough to be ***feasible*** as a National Park. An unusual aspect of the Owyhee Canyonlands is that it supports one of the most northerly herds of California bighorn sheep.

Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA)

This area of 753,831 acres is located in southcentral Idaho (Figure 1) and is currently administered by the Forest Service. Of the 15 National Recreation Areas managed by the Forest Service, SNRA and HCNRA are the two largest and account for 65% of the total acreage involved. The primary management emphasis for the SNRA is enhancement of recreational values and resource preservation and protection.

The legislation creating the SNRA in 1972 (Public Law 92-400) designated 216,000 acres as wilderness and directed the NPS to study the area for inclusion in the NPS system as a National Park. The study team considered the area to be of ***national significance*** and both a ***suitable*** and ***feasible*** addition to the system and recommended that it become a combined National Park and National Recreation Area (NPS 1975). The proposed area included approximately one million acres (Table 11). In 1977, Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus stated that the SNRA was worthy of park status, but declined to make such a recommendation on the grounds that the proposal for a National Park and National Recreation Area was too large and that "sensitive" management by the Forest Service could accomplish the same goals as NPS management (Sawtooth Advisory Board 1989).

In the late 1980s, at the request of then Congressman (now Senator) Larry Craig (R-ID), the Sawtooth Advisory Board was established to review Forest Service management of the SNRA, to determine how NPS management might differ, and to describe the impacts of a change in managing agency on the resources and economy of the area (Sawtooth Advisory Board 1989). The opinions of the board members were varied and closely reflected their backgrounds. The board generally concluded that Forest Service management had shortcomings and that the advisory board format should continue in order to provide citizen oversight of Forest Service management of the SNRA. The board also concluded that National Park designation would probably benefit the economy of the region, with proper marketing. However, they also suggested that the same benefits could be achieved with Forest Service administration as a National Recreation Area with a greater management emphasis on recreation, visitor services, and resource protection. The final conclusion was that management of the SNRA was a complex issue and that there was little local support for a National Park proposal to enter the public policy process formally at that time (Sawtooth Advisory Board 1989).

Efforts to establish a Sawtooth National Park date back to 1911 (NPS 1975). Bills supporting park designation were introduced in Congress in 1913, 1916, 1935, 1960, 1969, and 1970. The historical record suggests that opposition by livestock, mining, timber, hunting, and motorized vehicle interests have been significant (Peterson 1976). Numerous individuals, the NPS, and politicians all consider the SNRA and the surrounding region to have ***national significance*** that makes it worthy of National Park status. The SNRA and surrounding areas are in the ***Northern Rocky Mountains*** natural region and would provide an example of three natural themes (***works of glaciers***, ***tundra***, and ***lakes and ponds*** ecosystems) that are represented by at least one other NPS unit in that region (NPS 1990*b*).

Table 11. Proposed Sawtooth National Park and National Recreation Area units, acreage, and management goals and uses.[1]

Unit/area	Acreage	Management goals/uses
National Parks		Wilderness National Parks, grazing and mining phased out, no hunting with exceptions for mountain goats and possibly population control of other ungulates
Sawtooth Mountains	227,800	
White Cloud, Boulder, and Pioneer Mountains	458,240	
National Recreation Areas		
Copper Basin	79,300	Grazing, recreation, mining, and hunting
Sawtooth Valley	252,860	The above plus ranches, commercial services, small towns, and vacation homes
Total Acreage	1,018,200	

[1] As recommended by the National Park Service (1975).

CONCLUSIONS

The benefits and costs of National Park designation for any area in Idaho are untested, presumed, and largely unknown. A variety of value judgments are used in determining whether an area qualifies for National Park status. Reviews of newspaper articles and experienced opinions seem to indicate that state and local public opinion on National Park designation is polarized, and generally conforms to the split in conservation philosophy between "preservation" and "wise use" that has endured in the U.S. for a century now. This generalization on split opinions can be extended to regional and national levels and also would apply to the U.S. Congress.

The economic benefits of having a National Park in Idaho are uncertain. Although many people are of the opinion that a National Park will lead to increased tourism and economic stimulation of the visitor services segment of regional economies, this hypothesis is largely untested. Local economies could be negatively impacted by the withdrawal of public lands from multiple-use management that is likely to accompany National Park designation. Some will argue that the benefits of increased tourism from National Park designation will outweigh lost benefits of existing activities; others will argue exactly the opposite. We do not have enough information to say that one argument is more plausible than the other. Area-specific, in-depth research based on specific management plans would be needed to do that.

Recent experiences suggest that enabling legislation is likely to be a political compromise that would allow the continuation of some traditional land management activities. The most likely scenario for areas in Idaho would be a core National Park area with restricted land uses surrounded by a National Preserve allowing existing uses. In a National Park, resource protection and recreation management would be emphasized more than they are in existing areas currently administered by the Forest Service or the BLM that are under general multiple-use guidelines. However, NPS budget uncertainties and the potential for compromise enabling legislation make even these conclusions uncertain.

Each of the areas identified in this study as having National Park potential possesses unique resources and has site-specific management problems, plans, and programs. Without in-depth analysis of a particular area, it is difficult to determine what special provisions may be included in enabling legislation. The applicability of the pros and cons associated with National Park designation to any particular area are site-specific, and preclude us from making any accurate generalizations.

The only assured benefit of a National Park in Idaho is the accompanying pride that some Idahoans may feel, and we do not want to say that this is insignificant. National Parks truly are the crown jewels of America's resource heritage, and Idaho appears to have five natural resource areas that are ***nationally significant***.

There is a well-established tradition of National Monuments becoming National Parks, which suggests that Craters of the Moon National Monument may be a good candidate for a National Park. Indeed, Congressman Richard Stallings (D-ID) introduced legislation in 1991 to make Craters of the Moon National Monument and surrounding lands a National Park and Preserve. This course of action is likely to be pursued in the future.

City of Rocks may have some feasibility problems. Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, Sawtooth National Recreation Area, and Owyhee Canyonlands all appear to be ***nationally significant***, and may be ***suitable*** and ***feasible*** for National Park status. The two recreation areas are managed by the Forest Service and would be transferred from that agency. However, current management by the Forest Service for both these National Recreation Areas already emphasizes recreation and resource protection. The Owyhee Canyonlands are administered by the BLM, an agency of the Department of the Interior as is the NPS. Changing the administration of this area from the BLM to the NPS might proceed smoothly because the BLM has proposed much of the area for wilderness designation, but there is no guarantee that BLM personnel would be any happier than would Forest Service personnel about a transfer of land from one agency to another.

A National Park can only be created by an act of Congress. Because of this, history reveals two important considerations. First, decades may pass between the time an area is proposed for consideration and park status is granted. Second, the establishment of a National Park is accomplished through the public policy process and involves power struggles and political compromises. For example, consider the following passages from a history of Idaho commissioned for the nation's bicentennial (Peterson 1976):

> *When Idaho's fabulous mountain wonderland is contemplated, it is interesting to note that no national parks are headquartered within the state.... Idaho's national legislators have followed a different track that is unique... [T]hey have not pushed for national park status that would have led to hordes of humans... Instead, they have created one national recreation area in the Sawtooth Mountains east of Stanley and another in*

the lower Hells Canyon south of Lewiston (Peterson 1976, p. 17).

One Idaho native, T.C. Sanford, adamantly opposed the proposal to create Sawtooth National Park in 1922 because it would "close the gates tight against hundreds of thousands of livestock." Sawtooth National Park is still discussed, but the Forest Service and rancher associations fought it to a standstill (Peterson 1976, p. 142).

When [Senator Frank] Church sponsored legislation to create a Sawtooth National Park-National Recreation Area, the Forest Service joined mining, hunting, and timber interests in successfully postponing the measure. The idea of a simple national recreation area is repugnant to conservationists because it would still allow mining and other resource exploitation as well as intrusion by motorized vehicles. If the National Park Service administered the area, which, as proposed, included not only the Sawtooth and White Cloud ranges, but the Pioneer, Boulder, and Smoky mountains, the area would be closed to timber and mineral interests as well as hunters. Church upset the environmentalists again when he agreed to a 1971 compromise which created the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, temporarily banned mining, set aside some wilderness area, and directed the Interior Department to provide a Sawtooth National Park plan. Church worked to strengthen the bill, but some prospecting, subdividing, and cutting continued (Peterson 1976, p. 180).

Federal lands are a national resource. The costs and benefits to the nation of National Park designation decisions need to be considered along with local and regional concerns, and may even supersede them. The mandate of the National Park Service Act of 1916 is that ***nationally significant*** areas should be preserved for future generations. Arguments for and against National Park designation based on objective analysis of facts are either elusive or not well developed. Ultimately, creating a National Park depends on the political support that can be mustered for a particular proposal. However, the objective analysis of existing information needs to be presented in National Park proposal debates and made part of the process that effects political considerations. That is the purpose of this report.

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