

# Craters of the Moon National Monument



## A Summary of Economic Performance in the Surrounding Communities



Craters of the Moon National Monument

### BACKGROUND

The 738,000 acre Craters of the Moon National Monument was expanded in 2000 to better protect the region's three major lava fields, cinder cones, and sagebrush. Located in four counties (Blaine, Butte, Minidoka, and Power) in the Snake River Plain of central Idaho, the monument is managed cooperatively by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service.

### PUBLIC ACCESS AND USE OF THE MONUMENT

The monument's central feature is the Great Rift, a 62-mile long crack in the earth's crust that is the source of a remarkably preserved volcanic landscape which was used as a testing area by early American astronauts. Each year, the monument attracts thousands of visitors who hike, camp, and explore this unique area.

### TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Travel and tourism is important to communities in the Craters of the Moon Region, representing about 24% of total private wage and salary employment, or 4,711 jobs, in 2008. In Idaho, the Outdoor Industry Foundation reports that recreation contributes more than \$2.2 billion annually to the state's economy.<sup>6</sup>

### SUMMARY FINDINGS

Research shows that conserving public lands like the Craters of the Moon National Monument helps to safeguard and highlight amenities that draw new residents, tourists, and businesses to surrounding communities.<sup>1</sup>

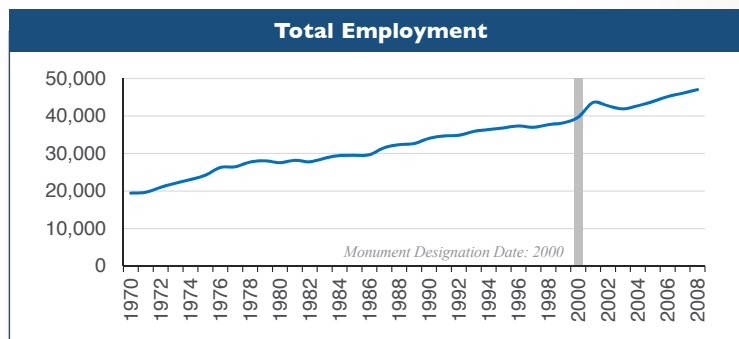
Western counties with protected public lands, like national monuments, have been more successful at attracting fast-growing economic sectors and as a result grow more quickly, on average, than counties without protected public lands.<sup>2</sup> In addition, protected natural amenities—such as the pristine scenery found at Craters of the Moon—also help sustain property values and attract new investment.<sup>3</sup>

### ECONOMY GROWS AFTER DESIGNATION

The economies of Blaine, Butte, Minidoka, and Power counties, Idaho neighboring the Craters of the Moon National Monument (the Craters of the Moon Region) grew after the 2000 expansion of the monument, continuing previous growth trends.

#### From 2000 to 2008, in the Craters of the Moon Region:<sup>4</sup>

- Population grew by 4%
- Real personal income grew by 25%
- Jobs grew by 19%
- Real per capita income grew by 21%

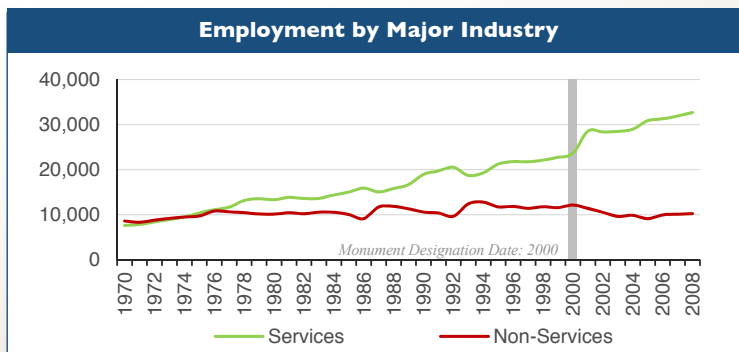


### SERVICES JOBS INCREASING ACROSS THE BOARD

Services jobs—such as doctors, engineers, and teachers—account for the majority of employment growth in the Craters of the Moon Region in recent decades. These jobs are increasingly mobile, and many entrepreneurs locate their businesses in areas with a high quality of life.

#### From 2000 to 2008, in the Craters of the Moon Region:<sup>5</sup>

- Services grew from 23,624 to 32,679 jobs, a 38% increase
- Non-Services shrank from 12,154 to 10,255 jobs, a 16% decrease





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THE ECONOMIES NEIGHBORING THE CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT GREW SINCE ITS EXPANSION IN 2000.

THE INCREASES IN POPULATION, JOBS, PERSONAL INCOME, AND PER CAPITA INCOME ALSO MIRROR OTHER WESTERN COUNTIES WITH NATIONAL MONUMENTS OR OTHER PROTECTED LANDS.

#### METHODOLOGY

This fact sheet is part of a series that assesses the economic performance of local communities that are adjacent to national monuments. The series examines national monuments in the eleven western continental states that are larger than 10,000 acres and were created in 1982 or later.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Series: *The Economic Importance of National Monuments*

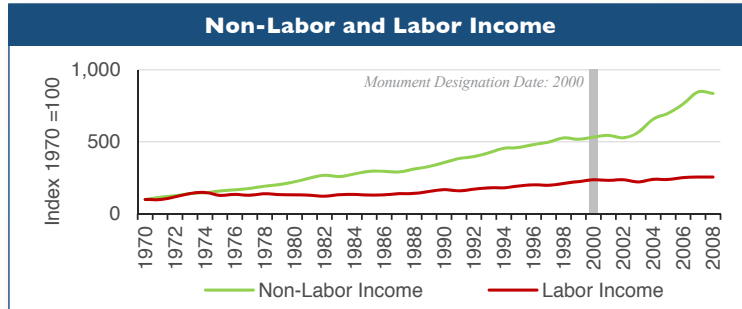
## NON-LABOR INCOME GROWS FASTEST

One of the largest and fastest growing sources of new personal income in the Craters of the Moon Region is non-labor income, which is made up of investment income such as dividends, interest and rent, and government transfer payments such as Social Security and Medicare.

For people with investment income and many retirees, protected public lands and recreation provide important aspects of a high quality of life. Non-labor income already represents more than a third of all personal income in the West—and will grow as the Baby Boomer generation retires.<sup>7</sup>

#### From 2000 to 2008, in the Craters of the Moon Region:

- Non-Labor income grew from \$655 million to \$1 billion, a 57% increase
- As a result, in 2008 non-labor income made up 45% of total personal income



## TRADITIONAL JOBS HOLD STEADY

Long before the monument's creation, commodity industries (agriculture, mining, timber) were becoming a smaller share of the overall economy in the Craters of the Moon Region. These industries remain part of the region's economy today.

#### In 2008, in the Craters of the Moon Region:

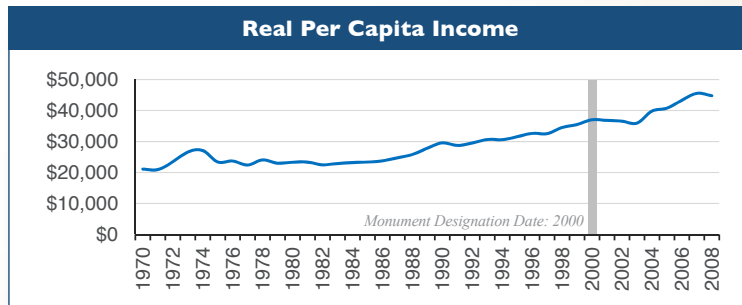
- Agriculture accounted for 6% of total employment
- Mining accounted for 0.2% of total private employment
- Timber accounted for 0.5% of total private employment

## PROSPERITY ON THE RISE

As the economy has grown since designation of the Craters of the Moon National Monument, per capita income has risen as well. This indicates growing prosperity in the region.

#### From 2000 to 2008, in the Craters of the Moon Region:

- Real per capita income grew from \$37,022 to \$44,789, a 21% increase



1 Lorah, P., R. Southwick, et al. 2003. Environmental Protection, Population Change, and Economic Development in the Rural Western United States. *Population and Environment* 24(3): 255-272. McGranahan, D. A. 1999. Natural Amenities Drive Rural Population Change. E. R. S. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Washington, D.C. Haas, W. H., W. J. Serow, et al. 2002. The Baby Boom, Amenity Retirement Migration, and Retirement Communities: Will the Golden Age of Retirement Continue? *Research on Aging* 24(1): 150-164.

2 Rasker, R. 2006. An Exploration into the Economic Impact of Industrial Development Versus Conservation on Western Public Lands. *Society & Natural Resources*, 19(3): 191-207.

3 Deller, S. C., T. H. Tsai, et al. 2001. The Role of Amenities and Quality of Life in Rural Economic Growth. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 83(2): 352-365.

4 All economic data comes from U.S. Department of Commerce. 2010. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Department of Commerce. 2010. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, Washington, D.C.

5 The U.S. Department of Commerce changed with way it classifies industries between 2000 and 2001. To show a continuous timeline for services and non-services employment we subtracted non-services jobs from total private employment to derive services jobs. The national recession from March-November 2001 also may account for short-term employment volatility around 2001.

6 Outdoor Industry Foundation. 2006. *The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy: A \$730 Billion Annual Contribution to the U.S. Economy.*

7 Frey, W.H. 2006. *America's Regional Demographics in the '00 Decade: The Role of Seniors, Boomers and New Minorities.* The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C.