

APPENDIX I

Instant Study Area Summary

March 1992

Idaho's Three Instant Study Areas

In 1976, Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). A portion of the act states that lands formally identified as primitive or natural areas before November 1, 1975, should be included in BLM's wilderness review.

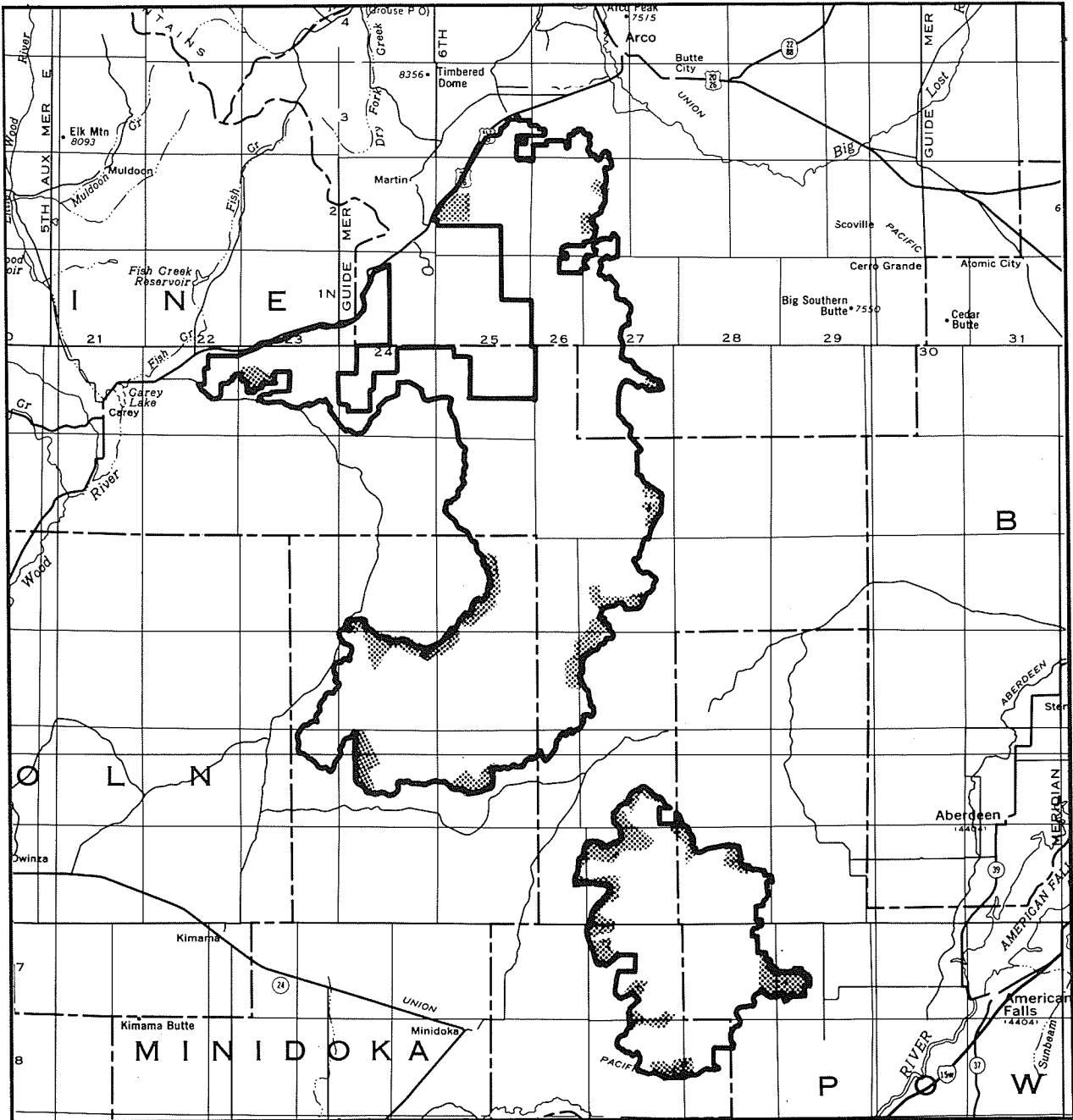
These lands became known as "Instant Study Areas" (ISAs). Three of them exist in Idaho — the Birds of Prey ISA, the China Cup ISA and the Great Rift ISA. The wilderness review for them was completed well ahead of the remainder of BLM lands in Idaho. Recommendations to Congress regarding their wilderness suitability were made in 1985. The Birds of Prey ISA and the China Cup ISA were recommended as non-suitable, while a portion of the Great Rift ISA was recommended for wilderness designation (See Table 1).

TABLE 1

ISA	Suitable Acres	Non-Suitable	Total
Great Rift	346,800	33,400	380,200
Birds of Prey	0	26,713	26,713
China Cup	0	160	160







Congress has taken no action on the three Idaho ISAs. They are now considered to be a part of the overall statewide wilderness recommendations. The three ISAs eventually will be acted on by Congress as part of the total BLM Idaho wilderness package.

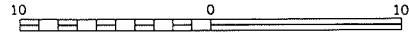
A summary follows of the three Idaho ISAs, with the rationale for BLM's recommendation.



R. 21 E. | R. 22 E.

R. 30 E. | R. 31 E.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------|
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | SPLIT ESTATE |
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR NONWILDERNESS |  | STATE |
|  | LAND OUTSIDE WSA RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | PRIVATE |



Scale in Miles

ISA

**GREAT RIFT
PROPOSAL**

MARCH 1992

T. 1 N.

T. 1 S.

T. 7 S.

T. 8 S.

Great Rift Instant Study Area

General Description

The Great Rift ISA is located in south-central Idaho, covering portions of Blaine, Butte, Minidoka and Power counties. It is roughly 45 miles east of Idaho Falls, Idaho, and adjoins Craters of the Moon National Monument or Craters of the Moon Wilderness Area on all sides except the northwest tip.

The proposed Great Rift Wilderness Area is characterized by thousands of acres of lava dotted with occasional buttes and "kipukas," islands of vegetation surrounded by lava flows. The harsh, barren landscape is interrupted by sparse vegetation and fissures in the earth's surface. The Great Rift itself is believed to be the longest formation of its kind in the United States, stretching 65 miles and reaching depths of 800 feet in places.

The climate is hot and dry in the summer and very cold in the winter. Annual precipitation is 10 to 14 inches. Winds are from the southwest year-round, and usually most intense in the spring.

Water is scarce in the area. Some intermittent water can be found at times in the depressions in lava and crevices.

More than 300 plant species occur in the area. The type and density of vegetation varies widely depending on the availability of soil. No threatened or endangered species are known to occur within the area.

More than 450 kipukas are within the proposed wilderness boundaries. They range from less than an acre to 2,200 acres and usually feature climax vegetation communities. Other volcanic features include craters, cinder and spatter cones, spires and lava tubes.

Mule deer, antelope, coyotes and rabbits are the most common mammals in the area, although populations are not abundant. Sage grouse, mourning doves and about 140 species of non-game birds are found in the area.

Recreation use is generally light in the proposed wilderness area.

Recommendation and Rationale

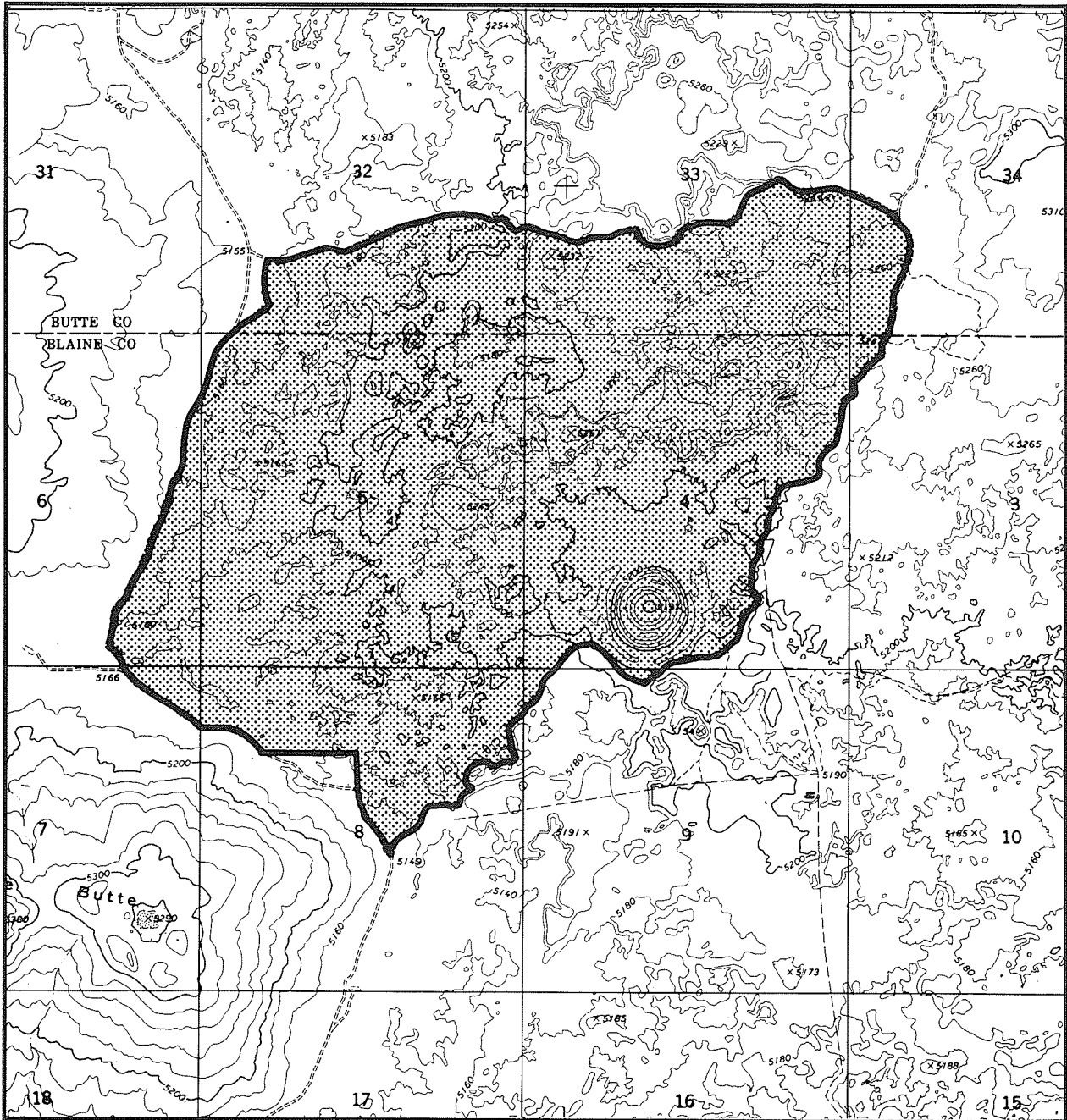
BLM recommended that the 346,800 acres of the Great Rift ISA be designated by Congress as wilderness and 33,400 acres be released for other uses.

The primary benefit of designating the 346,800 acres as wilderness is that the area's wilderness characteristics and naturalness would be preserved. In addition, outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation would be protected. The ecosystems associated with the 450 kipukas would be maintained.

Livestock grazing would be allowed under the designation. None of the wells or approximately 100 miles of road used for hauling water to livestock are within the boundary of the proposed wilderness.

Geothermal leasing would be allowed within the proposed boundary with a "no surface occupancy" lease stipulation. A small amount of lava rubble used for building stone could not be sold under the proposal.







The 33,400 acres recommended as nonsuitable include desert rangelands that are crossed by roads. Wilderness boundaries would be hard to define, making it difficult to protect from vehicle use.

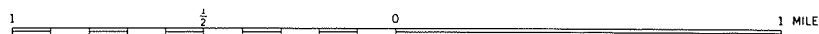


T. 1 S.

T. 2 S.

R. 29 E.

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------|
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | SPLIT ESTATE |
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR NONWILDERNESS |  | STATE |
|  | LAND OUTSIDE WSA RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | PRIVATE |



Scale in Miles



ISA
CHINA CUP BUTTE
PROPOSAL

MARCH 1992

China Cup ISA

General Description

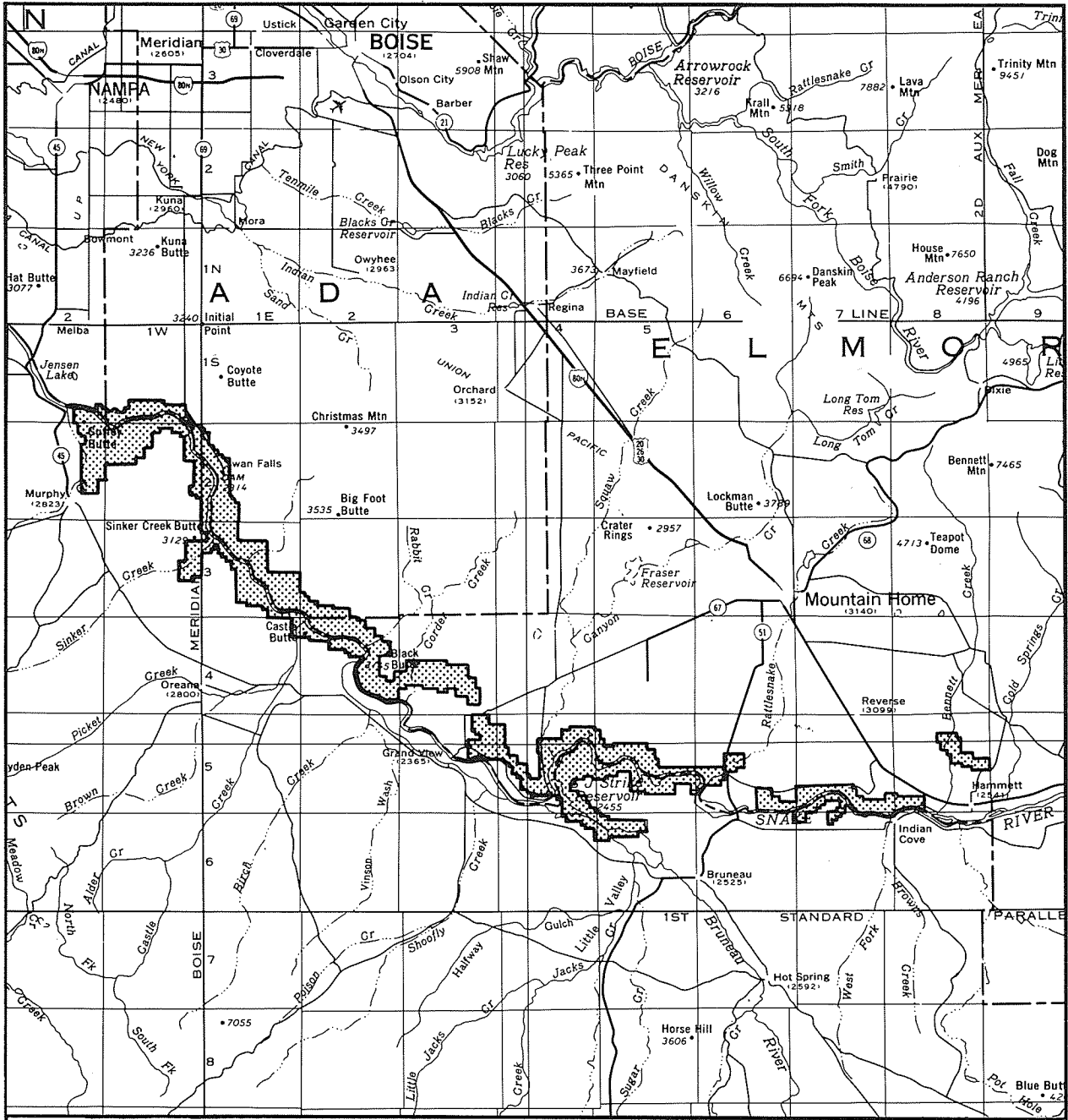
China Cup Butte is a small volcanic cone that is about nine miles southwest of Big Southern Butte in the south-central Snake River Plain. The almost perfectly circular cone is 1,260 feet in diameter and has a crater that is 100 feet deep. Basalt lava flows have encroached the flanks of China Cup, creating a moat-like depression.

In recognition of the importance of this feature, China Cup Butte became a Research Natural Area (RNA) in 1965. A withdrawal from mineral and agriculture entry, public sale or state selection and exchange of the 160 acres of public land around China Cup Butte was completed.

Recommendation and Rationale







BLM recommends that China Cup ISA not be designated as a wilderness area. The area does not possess the wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

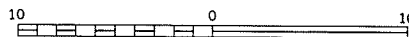
A road divides the RNA into two areas; both were disqualified from further consideration. The smaller unit, which contains the circular cone, does not meet the size requirement for wilderness and livestock improvements, trails and other human features prevent the larger area from qualifying as wilderness.



R. 1 W. | R. 1 E.

R. 4 E. | R. 5 E.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------|
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | SPLIT ESTATE |
|  | RECOMMENDED FOR NONWILDERNESS |  | STATE |
|  | LAND OUTSIDE WSA RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS |  | PRIVATE |



Scale in Miles

ISA

BIRDS OF PREY

PROPOSAL



MARCH 1992

T. 1 N.
T. 5 S.

T. 5 S.
T. 6 S.

Snake River Birds of Prey

General Description

The Snake River Birds of Prey Area is roughly 30 miles south of Boise. It includes 26,714 acres of public land along 33 miles of river canyon and basaltic cliffs which cut through a high desert plateau. The area long has been recognized as prime habitat for birds of prey, and in 1971, the Secretary of the Interior designated it as a Natural Area. It is believed to have the highest density of nesting raptors in North America. Each year, more than 600 pairs of birds representing 15 species return to the area to breed and rear their young.

Since it was classified as a natural area, the Snake River Birds of Prey Area qualified as an ISA. An inventory identified 11 units within the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area to study for wilderness characteristics. That study occurred in 1979.

Recommendation and Rationale

The recommendation by BLM is that the area not be designated as wilderness. The inventory found the natural character of the area and its contiguous public lands to be lacking in wilderness characteristics. A long history of power site development, powerline rights-of-way, ORV use, military training activities, road development, irrigation pipelines and pump stations, and agricultural development detracted from the wilderness qualities. Impacts are so concentrated and substantial that most of the units clearly lacked wilderness characteristics.

Summary

Sixty-seven "Wilderness Study Areas" (WSAs) totaling 1.8 million acres were studied by BLM for their wilderness suitability. Three of the WSAs were "Instant Study Areas," because of their status as natural or primitive areas. Recommendations about their wilderness suitability were made to Congress in 1985. Two ISAs, the Snake River Birds of Prey and China Cup, were recommended as non-suitable. Most (346,000 acres) of the third ISA, the Great Rift, was recommended as suitable.

Congress has not acted on the three ISAs. They are now considered part of the total Idaho BLM wilderness recommendation and will be acted upon at some future date by Congress.

For further information on the three Idaho ISAs, you may write to Wilderness Coordinator, BLM Idaho State Office, 3380 Americana Terrace, Boise, ID 83706.