Fact Sheet

Pre-Schooner II, Idaho | Site

A PLOWSHARE SITE

This fact sheet provides information about the **Pre-Schooner II, Idaho, Site.** Long-term stewardship responsibilities for this site are managed by the **U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management** under the **Plowshare/Vela Uniform/Weapons Related Program.**

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Site Information and History

The Pre-Schooner II, Idaho, Site is in southwestern Idaho about 40 miles southwest of Bruneau, Idaho, on remote public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

In 1966, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), a predecessor agency to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), conducted activities at the site in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nuclear Cratering Group. The activities were conducted as part of the Plowshare Program. The Plowshare Program explored peaceful industrial applications of underground nuclear and nonnuclear explosives.

Pre-Schooner II was a nonnuclear explosive test and served as a precursor to the Schooner nuclear test that was conducted at the National Nuclear Security Site (formally the Nevada Test Site) in 1968. The Pre-Schooner II test used 85.5 tons of nitromethane, a liquid high explosive, buried about 71 feet below ground in hard volcanic rock (rhyolite). The detonation was conducted on Sept. 30, 1965, and it produced a crater roughly 190 feet wide and 61 feet deep. The project was completed successfully and provided essential engineering and geologic data for future nuclear tests. The site was decommissioned in 1966. The site remained inactive until 2019 when it was transferred from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to the DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM).

Surface Conditions

The surface area around the crater stabilized naturally over time through erosion and vegetation growth that includes native desert plants. Today, the surface conditions are typical of Idaho's high-desert terrain — dry and sparsely vegetated. Some debris from the test remains at the site, providing a reminder of the past activities.

In 2022, LM installed an interpretive sign at the site to inform visitors about its historical significance as part of the Plowshare Program. The sign describes how the experiment contributed to understanding ground shock, seismic effects, and cratering mechanics.

Land Use

The Pre-Schooner II site lies within public land managed by BLM's Jarbidge Field Office. BLM maintains a fence around the crater and the site is open to public recreation

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and livestock grazing. There are no land-use restrictions, although the crater area remains visible and is occasionally visited by researchers and history enthusiasts.

Regulatory Setting

Responsibility for the Pre-Schooner II site transitioned to DOE after the dissolution of the AEC in 1974, and in 2019 the site transitioned from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to LM. The site is now part of the LM program, which ensures that closed project sites remain protective of human health and the environment.

Environmental oversight follows federal and state requirements and National Environmental Policy Act frameworks. Pre-Schooner II involved no radioactive materials and is classified as a no-further-action site under DOE stewardship.

Legacy Management Activities

Long-term surveillance of the site includes site inspections, maintenance of site records, and communication with stakeholders. The site is maintained to ensure it remains protective of human health and the environment.

Pre-Schooner II interpretive sign.

Contact Information

In case of an emergency at the site, contact 911.

LM toll-free emergency hotline: **(877) 695-5322**

Site-specific documents related to the **Pre-Schooner II, Idaho, Site** are available on the LM website at **https://www.energy.gov/lm/pre-schooner-ii-idaho-site**.

For more information about LM activities at the **Pre-Schooner II, Idaho, site,** contact:

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